



Lunch and Learn gives students choices during fifth period

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# The Quill

Tues., Sept. 7, 2021 Freshmen Orientation

Fall teams want new Cooper students to join their rosters

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## HEAD PRINCIPAL HERMAN WELCOMES CLASS OF 2025



Photo by KIRA JOHNSON

Mr. Herman maintains an open-door policy for any Cooper student who needs his help and support.

By MAX REKELA-JASPER  
*Quill* staff writer

Mr. Herman, the head principal at Cooper High School, is excited to welcome the Class of 2025.

Herman is entering his seventh year as principal at Cooper. One of his favorite things to do as head principal is to watch all the student activities throughout the school year.

"[I enjoy] going to all the activities throughout the school year to watch our Hawks," Herman said.

According to Herman, there are various ways he supports incoming freshmen at Cooper. One of those things Herman does is communicate with families during their eighth grade year.

"Doing this helps them learn about some of the amazing things we have going on here at Cooper," Herman said.

Herman also encourages incoming students to attend the Great Cooper Community Get-Together in the fall.

"This helps [incoming freshmen] get somewhat acclimated to the layout of the building," Herman said.

One of the biggest challenges Herman sees freshmen facing is the number of people in the building at one time.

"We will have 800 more students in our building than the [incoming freshmen]

Cooper's incoming freshmen are about to embark on their four-year journey through high school

are used to, so that can be intimidating for some," Herman said.

Additionally, Herman said that a big change from middle school to high school is that "classes matter from the very start of freshman year" because grades get posted on a transcript that will follow students after high school.

Herman had some key pieces of advice for incoming freshmen when they start at Cooper.

"As students transition to Cooper, it is a great time to reset and explore different interests, develop [their] own unique identity and keep an open mind to the possibilities that may await [them]," Herman said. "We have so many people here that are cheering you on to be successful and resources to take advantage of. Don't be afraid to use them."

Herman added that "finding balance" between academics and activities along with reflecting on who a new student surrounds themselves with is critical for success in ninth grade.

As for the overall culture at Cooper, Herman said that staff members and students work to accept di-

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## Freshmen acclimate to brand new building

Making one's way through Cooper's three floors and four circles becomes easier for incoming students over time

By LUKE REKELA-JASPER  
*Quill* staff writer

Navigating any foreign building can be tough, especially when you have to be going from place to place every period. Freshmen at Robbinsdale Cooper High School often have a little bit of a tough time navigating the building, but once they get to know the layout of the building, it's pretty simple. This article will explain the general layout of the building, which will hopefully be helpful to all incoming freshmen at Cooper and new students in general.

The first thing to know about Cooper's layout is where classrooms are. Generally, they exist on the three main floors, and are placed in "roundabouts" on either ends of the building. There are stairwells and signs all around the building, especially at the start of a new school year, so getting around to general classes like English, math, social studies, science, art and more should be pretty basic for all newcomers.

Since all freshmen have a physical education course, it also is critical to know that there are a few gyms in the school. The main gym exists on the first floor, which is right beside the boys and girls locker rooms and down the hallway from the AVID room. Meanwhile, the Community Gym is near the two back exits of the school. Ultimately, if you just follow what your physical education instructor has to say, you'll be fine.

In the locker room area, the lockers decked out in orange are the athletic lockers for those students who are doing after-school sports, like football or cross country in the fall. Students only needing lockers for their gym classes should skip the orange lockers and use the regular ones to avoid any conflicts.

Last, but definitely not least when it comes to most students, is the location of the cafeteria. If you enter the building through the front entrance or the Performing Arts door, it's just on your left. Around the caf-



Photo by DAVINA BELLINGER

The second-floor "Y" is a high-traffic area in between classes.

eteria entrance, you'll also find the Performing Arts hall, which includes the theater, band, choir and orchestra rooms.

While it may seem intimidating at first, the unique layout of Cooper can eventually be easy to remember and navigate. As time goes on, you'll definitely get familiar with your room numbers and maybe some shortcuts, but for the first few weeks of every semester, it's best to have your class schedule with room numbers on hand. If you're ever struggling and need some assistance, the best thing to do would be to ask a teacher or hall monitor. They definitely know how to help you navigate the building.

## Student behavior governed by the HAWK approach

The HAWK acronym stands for the four character traits of honesty, accountability, work ethic and kindness

By ANTA'JA JOHNSON  
*Quill* staff writer

Every school has a way of making sure new and veteran students follow certain rules. At Cooper, the primary behavior guidelines are contained in the "HAWK" acronym, which stands for honesty, accountability, work ethic and kindness.

"The HAWK acronym was developed to reflect our building-wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) core values," Assistant Principal Ms. Smith said. "The HAWK acronym supports student learning and behavior at Cooper through the use of clear, school-wide expectations."

Each of the letters in the acronym is designed to promote positive behaviors in all students. "Honesty" covers the idea that all students should tell the truth, especially in academic situations. "Accountability" deals with the idea that students should meet deadlines that are given and be aware of how their actions and words effect themselves and others.

"Work ethic" means that students should always try to do their best in school. Finally, "kindness" encourages all students in the building to show respect to one another and to staff members.

"All of these should be traits we expect in ourselves and others," social studies teacher Mr. DiSalvi said. "I think seeing it on posters and hearing it from school staff members frequently is a good preventive measure for when students have that itch to do something that they know is not appropriate."

There are many benefits to meeting the HAWK behavior expectations. Instead of students always being called out for doing things the "wrong way," students who display the HAWK values can receive HAWK tickets that make them eligible for a prize drawing. According to Smith, these prizes include tickets to school events, school supplies and gift certificates.

Another benefit to following the HAWK guide-

lines is that it sets students up for success outside of school.

"Students who regularly meet the HAWK values will continue to use them throughout their lives and may even spark positive changes in the world," Mr. Nelson, an administrative intern, said.

However, there are consequences for students who do not follow the HAWK rules. These consequences are determined based on the needs of the student and they can include parent meetings, conferences with grade-level Personal Learning Coaches, out-of-school suspensions or placement into alternative settings. However, Smith pointed out that many of these consequences are typically only used as a last resort.

"Interventions are put into place in an attempt to avoid the use of consequences," she said. "The

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## Schoology helps Cooper students achieve success

There are many ways ninth graders can make use of the online system

By DAVIS RUPPERT-KAN  
*Quill* staff writer

The importance of Schoology as a tool for students and teachers became apparent when the school moved to distance learning due to COVID in 2020-2021. Even though we are now back in the building, Schoology's importance remains unchanged, especially for ninth graders. Whether it is completing assignments, reviewing course materials or communicating with a teacher, Schoology is a central part of each student's day during the school year.

One way in which Schoology plays a role in the school experience this year is through the review and completion of assignments.

"It is important to check Schoology to see when assignments are due so you don't forget about them or turn them in late," Logan Voigt (11) said. "It's best to stay on top of things."

Helping students stay on top of their assignments is Schoology's calendar feature, which English teacher Ms. Prillwitz said is an important function to make use of.

"The calendar feature of Schoology can help students plan and organize their work by due dates," she said. "This can allow students to be proactive in turning in their work on time."

Another way in which teachers are using Schoology to help students is through the posting of the recordings of class lectures and instructional videos. Students can then access these recordings after the fact for additional help or if they were absent from class.

"[Many] teachers record lessons so students that miss a lesson are able to get caught up and stay caught up," Administrative Intern Mr. Nelson said. "It gives students an opportunity to rewatch lessons if they are struggling with the content. If you think about it, the recordings give students more opportunities than in-class learning, because a student can stop, rewind or pause during the lesson while they think out what they're learning."

Voigt added that class recordings can also help if students get distracted during class "because the teacher might have assigned something or given important information that you wouldn't want to miss."

As first quarter gets underway, teachers will begin posting daily updates to their Schoology pages for each class. That makes it important that students check in every day so they are not missing critical information.

"The daily updates are a way for teachers to communicate timely, important information to students," Prillwitz said.

Another component to these daily Schoology updates is the information that is conveyed to students from Cooper's administrators.

"Things come up unexpectedly daily," Nelson said. "The teachers, administration or Cooper staff may send out information or news that will affect the way your day will go. If you don't check the updates every day or multiple times a day, you could miss something important."

Another central feature of Schoology is that it is a place where students can check their grades.

"It is important to check your grades in Schoology to see

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## Fifth period provides Hawks with choices

Cooper's Lunch and Learn system allows students a chance to eat, socialize and get academic assistance



Photo by KIRA JOHNSON

During leisure days, students can get involved in a wide range of activities such as playing basketball.

By ERIN CHUNN  
*Quill* staff writer

Have you ever needed extra help with a class but have no time after school? Have you ever wanted a chance to do something fun during the school day like sing karaoke?

Both of these activities and many

more are possible at Cooper thanks to Hawk Lunch and Learn (HLL), a program that gives students extra time during the lunch period to either receive academic help in the class of your choice or participate in a fun activity.

HLL happens Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays during fifth period. Mondays and Thursdays

are academic days, while Tuesdays and Fridays are leisure days. Before the sessions, you can choose which teacher you want to be with or event you want to take part in so you can get the most out of the time available.

"The goal of HLL is to strengthen relationships between students and staff, create meaningful interventions and

provide our students with a measure of choice when it comes to their own learning," Mr. Mahan, who coordinates the HLL program, said.

To sign up for HLL, Cooper has a scheduling application called EdEfficiency. The website is [chs.edf.school](https://chs.edf.school). Once you enter the link, you can sign into the system with Google. From there, you can choose your classes for the next two weeks.

For academic days, students can get help with a specific subject or teacher to work on assignments or complete retakes. Study hall sessions are also available. Since this is a support program, the class sizes are only about 15 students for personalized instruction.

"Beyond providing students with the ability to take an active role in their education, HLL is a time when freshmen can meet with their teachers in a small and more intimate setting," Mahan said.

For leisure days, there are dozens of activities around the school, including ping-pong, basketball in the gym and watching Disney movies. These days give ninth graders a chance to learn more about the school, meet staff members and get to know other students.

"HLL is an excellent opportunity for these freshmen to build positive relationships and have some fun in the process," Mahan said. "They may even find out something new about themselves as they explore engaging leisure activities with like-minded peers."

## Link Crew helps freshmen adjust to high school

Senior, junior mentors work with ninth graders during advisory sessions throughout the year

By CHRISTOPHER NGUYEN  
*Quill* staff writer

High school is a huge transition for incoming freshmen. That is where Link Crew comes in. Link Crew is a group of juniors and seniors that helps welcome ninth graders into the Hawk community and serves as mentors during their first year at Cooper.

"Link Crew runs orientation activities for freshmen on the first day of school. They also do regular check-ins throughout the school year. These check-ins take the form of both formal visits and lessons in freshmen advisories and informal interactions outside of class," Ms. Huebsch, a Link Crew advisor, said.

On the first day of school, it is strictly freshmen and Link Crew leaders for the first half of the day. This gives the Link Crew leaders the opportunity to have fun and build relationships with the underclassmen.

"Freshmen enter their first day of school having at least two upperclassmen know them by name," Huebsch



Photo by LORPU SUMO

Link Leaders present lessons designed to help ninth graders thrive.

said. "They also know that they can go to any Link Leader for help or advice. Finally, they have older peer role models available to answer questions and offer advice. These peer role models have already experienced life as a Cooper freshmen and can offer practical guidance."

Link Crew leaders are proactive throughout the year and visit freshman advisory classes to conduct different lessons that they created themselves.

"These lessons are designed to help students learn more about academic or social skills needed for success in high school. They should also

expect the opportunity to interact with the upperclassmen and to ask them any questions that they might have about school," Huebsch said.

The academic support provided by Link Crew members goes beyond the lessons during advisory.

"Link Crew leaders make sure to be available for academic questions and issues during the school year. Perhaps most importantly, the leaders are there to offer advice and to help younger students. The freshmen benefit from the personal experiences that the leaders share with them," Huebsch said.

A second area of support for ninth graders that is provided by Link Crew members involves the social aspect of being in high school.

"Link Crew leaders make sure to be available for social questions and issues during the school year. They also work to promote social activities at Cooper by informing freshmen about opportunities to make friends and become active members of the school community," Huebsch said.

## Advisory class is part of every student's weekly schedule

During fifth period on Wednesdays, Hawks report to their advisory room, which remains the same throughout high school

By FAITH KING  
*Quill* staff writer

High school can be hectic sometimes and it's nice to be able to touch base with a specific teacher and receive some guidance. That's what advisory class is all about.

Advisory takes place once a week for 30 minutes during fifth period. It is designed as an opportunity for students in all four grades to get any academic or social help that they need. Cooper students are in the same advisory with the same advisory teacher for all four years of high school.

While all Cooper students participate in advisory, ninth grade advisories feature a number of activities that are

specifically designed to help support freshmen at Cooper. For example, members of Cooper's Link Crew visit freshmen advisories once a month for academic support. AVID and physical education teacher Ms. Schaffer said these visits can help incoming students reach their full potential in high school.

"Academically, there are a few lessons that focus solely on 'What is a GPA?' and 'How does one calculate their [GPA]?' Also, there are lessons on goal setting and decision making that help guide the students toward positive choices," she said.

Schaffer added that the ninth grade advisories also focus on students' social needs.

"The ninth grade advisory curric-

ulum does a good job of balancing out both the academic and social aspects of being in high school," she said. "Some of the lessons we do are focused on skills that can help students in the social realm. We talk about communication, community engagement and service, community building and gratitude."

Another component of advisory is participating in school-wide events like spirit week activities.

"We decorate our doors, we dress up for dress-up days and we learn about the different clubs and opportunities at the high school level," English teacher Ms. Eisfelder said.

The structure of advisory classes allows teachers to form a connection with their advisory students. Schaffer

said the ability to witness the growth in her advisory group is one thing she enjoys about this class.

"My favorite aspect of working with freshmen in advisory is how much you see them grow over the course of one year. Most of them come in quite timid at the beginning and you really get to see their personalities blossom as they become more comfortable at Cooper and with you," she said.

According to Eisfelder, another positive element to advisory comes from the enthusiasm of her advisory students.

"They have an energy and excitement for high school which can be crazy, but it's also contagious. They remind me of some of the best things about high school," she said.

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verse ideas and help one another find their voice.

"We work to create a special community here at Cooper," Herman said. "A part of that is emphasizing tolerance of others, acceptance of diverse ideas and a place where students can find

their voice."

According to Herman, he hears from many students and staff that the culture of Cooper feels like a "big family," which is something Herman is proud of.

Freshmen contribute to this culture by taking risks, getting

involved and being open to new ideas. Additionally, there are many leadership opportunities, challenging courses and new experiences along the way to graduation that every incoming student will face. Joining an activity will help ninth graders face

these challenges and learn how to overcome them.

"I strongly encourage students to get involved in something such as a sport, theater, music or one of the several clubs, as there is something for everyone here at Cooper," Herman said.

## STUDENT BEHAVIOR GOVERNED BY HAWK APPROACH continued from page 1

HAWK acronym looks like fairness and consistency when working with students. It also reflects kindness and understanding, providing students with interventions and love when support is needed."

When it comes to the ways in which HAWK expectations appear during the daily routine of school, incoming freshmen will notice that ninth grade teachers work that acronym into their various classroom

policies and procedures.

"I always remind students what a HAWK looks like in my class any time we are going to start a longer activity," DiSalvi said. "I specifically define what honesty, accountability,

work ethic and kindness are, ask my students if they are clear what that looks like in the activity, praise students who follow those expectations, and redirect students that don't follow the expectations as necessary."



# School counselors support all Hawks

From planning class schedules to helping with life's challenges, counselors work hard to meet student needs



Photo by DAVINA BELLINGER

The Student Support Center on the second floor is home to Cooper's grade-level school counselors.

By ANDREA TRIBBLE  
*Quill* staff writer

Cooper's school counselors provide support to all students, whether they need help with signing up for classes or addressing personal concerns unrelated to school. These areas of support are especially important for ninth graders as they are getting started at a new school.

"School counselors see students in three broad areas: academic issues and planning, career planning and social-emotional issues. School counselors are open to any questions and will help students to try to find answers," Ms. Senger, a school counselor, said.

When it comes to academic concerns, Senger said counselors can give students options if they are struggling in a class or a class is too easy, help change student schedules if they need to be adjusted and make sure students

are earning their credits to stay on track to graduate.

While the second area where counselors can help may seem a long way off to incoming ninth graders, beginning to think about college and career issues is important. Senger said school counselors can provide tips and resources designed to help students on their journey to life after graduation.

"Based on student answers, groups of careers are suggested for further investigation," she said. "[We] instruct students on how to research various careers of interest."

Counselors are also helpful when it comes to personal concerns. When students are dealing with issues at home, with friends or with the environment at school, Senger said counselors can offer support.

"[We] work with students to improve decision-making and problem-solving skills," she said.

One way school counselors are effective at providing these areas of support to students is that each counselor works with the same group of students during all for years of their time in high school.

"This allows students to get to know the counselor and the counselor to get to know the student," Senger said. "With the high caseloads of about 400 students or more for one counselor, students may not need to see their counselor in the first years of high school. As students progress through the grades, their needs range from information and a plan for credit recovery to meet graduation requirements to future planning and college applications and selection. It also helps teachers remember which counselor is working with a group of students."

As a school counselor who has worked with many freshmen over the years, Senger said there

are some common struggles she has seen ninth graders deal with when starting high school.

"Many freshmen treat their first year of high school like middle school," she said. "They don't realize that the classes they have count towards graduation requirements. If they fail English, geography, math, physical science or physical education, they will have to make the class or classes up or they will not graduate."

In order to be academically successful during the first year of school, Senger said that it is important to do organizational things like using a planner and making use of resources offered by the school. She also said it is important to remember to do the formative work in class in order to improve one's learning.

"Practice work, what many call homework, is needed in order to learn what is needed to be successful on the summative assessments or tests," she said. "Since practice work is not worth a lot of points, many students don't do the work. The result is doing poorly on summative assessments and getting a failing grade."

While academics is important during the high school years, Senger said ninth graders should also explore other ways to make the most of being at Cooper.

"Try something new," she said. "Get involved in something at school: athletics, clubs, music, theater, school newspaper, etc."

Senger also added that ninth graders benefit from developing healthy relationships with other students they meet in school.

"Having positive social relationships is important. It is finding a balance between being social and doing school work. It also can be challenging keeping those relationships positive," Senger said.

## Class of 2021 offers advice to Class of 2025

Enjoying your time at Cooper involves making the most of academic, social opportunities

By MAKAYLA HOTT  
*Quill* staff writer

As the Class of 2025 arrives at Cooper for the first time, the Class of 2021 has left the building for the last time. However, before leaving high school, some of Cooper's graduating seniors wanted to share brief pieces of advice and words of encouragement to the incoming ninth graders in order to inspire them on their journey toward graduation.

Victoria Ombuna: "My advice to all incoming freshmen would be to simply try to make friends. You should have a solid five friends. They will come in handy a lot. I know some people may not be social and may like to keep to themselves, but I promise making a couple friends will be worth it. Try to have at least one friend from each class if possible. They can also help with school work when you might be stuck. Overall, they will just come in handy in so many situations. Step outside your comfort zone this one time and you won't regret it, and if by any chance you do, at least you can say you tried."

Jerry Okari: "Find time to open your mind."

Heaven Shaw: "Enjoy your time because it goes by fast."

Aryah Adams: "Take advantage of the opportunities given to you."

Stephanie Vega: "Remember to breathe. Don't overwhelm yourself too much."

Zoey Morris: Just be yourself because high school is very hard."

Fallon Shine: "Things are going to change a lot and that's normal so don't be scared."

Cyrus Jones: "Start doing more at school and in the community than school assignments. Strive to get out of college without even paying a dime and strive to walk during graduation with honors and medals. That will make your families even more proud of you."

Jaquan Jones: "There is no elevator to success. You have to take the stairs."

Keanu Vang: "Do your thing. Don't worry what anyone gotta say. You know how it goes: you're gonna get the work done but also you gotta have fun."

Angel Akala: "Avoid procrastinating, stay focused and don't be afraid to try new things. Remember to have fun during your journey and make the most of it. It's just the beginning."

Austin Williams: "Don't think that you can slack because it is a new school. Try your hardest from the start."

JJ Collier: "Find the right friend group because those are the people who will have the most impact on you."

Timothy Okoroafor: "High school is the beginning of a great journey. Every decision and action that you take affects the outcome of the journey."

Aylet Hernandez Ochoa: "My advice for incoming ninth graders is always try your best until the very end. You have to be living to try your hardest because no one is going to hand you success. You need to be willing to be independent and get what you are willing to fight for. Also, of course, ask for help if needed. Don't try to be so independent when you need help."

Xavier Harris: "Stay out the halls."

## Ninth graders learn to navigate the cafeteria

Getting the most out of your 30 minutes for lunch requires some familiarity with the layout of the room

By KIERRA WHEELER  
*Quill* staff writer

The best and worst thing about coming to a new school is figuring out the cafeteria. Fortunately, the organization of the Cooper cafeteria makes it easy to meet your food and seating needs despite the occasionally long lines.

There are three primary lines for students who are not bringing their own lunch from home. Two lines are for hot food and one is for cold lunches. Located closer to the front entrance to the cafeteria are the two hot food lines, which feature different menu choices every day, ranging from pizza to tacos. In the cold lunch line, which is farthest from the front entrance, students can get sandwiches and salads.

After waiting in line and getting your food, students have to type in their pin number at the



Photo by LOU VANG

The hot food line is the most frequent destination for people who buy lunch.

check-out kiosk. One thing new students can do to remember their pin is bring along their printed class schedule, which has the pin number at the top.

In addition to the three main food lines, there is also an A la

Carte area. This line features healthy snacks and drinks you can purchase like a normal school lunch. The A la Carte area is to the left when you first walk in the main cafeteria door.

Once the food has been

picked up and paid for, students are ready to sit and eat. The lunch tables are spread out into three main sections and students can simply sit where they please. Over the first few days and weeks, most students tend to establish a set area where they sit each day for lunch.

The other key aspect to conquering the lunchroom is exiting. The room supervisors will make an announcement two minutes before the bell rings that it is time to throw away your trays and exit the lunchroom. When this announcement is made, students can immediately pack up and get ready to leave. When leaving, students can exit out the back door, which will lead you to the first floor by the gyms, or you can exit out the front door, which leads you to the front foyer. As you exit at the end of lunch, you will have five minutes to get to class.

## AVID program gives high schoolers a pathway to college

Students can be involved in this elective, college-preparation program throughout all four years at Cooper

By ANDREA TRIBBLE  
*Quill* staff writer

The next academic step for high schoolers is college, which means freshmen have four years to prepare to enter those college doors equipped for success. Cooper has a college readiness program called AVID, which stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination.

AVID is an elective class for students in all four grades who are focused on college success after graduating from high school.

"We look for students who are in the academic middle-high range. Many of our students will be first in their family to go to

and graduate from a four-year college. We are looking for students who are driven to be successful and are willing to put in the work to reach their goals," Ms. Lieser, Cooper's AVID coordinator, said.

Students in AVID are given many learning opportunities. They are exposed to multiple guest speakers who discuss their college experiences and experiences in the workforce. AVID seniors also get the opportunity to stay overnight on an actual college campus, rooming with students.

Every day in the AVID class looks different.

"The foundation of AVID is WICOR [Writing, Inquiry,

Collaboration and Reading]," Lieser said. "In the AVID elective class, we do many things that cover WICOR in different ways. A typical week would be on Mondays and Wednesdays we cover the AVID curriculum, be it reading an article and participating in a Socratic Seminar, researching colleges, learning study tips, etc. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, it's tutorial day. Students bring problems and questions from their other classes. Students work in small groups with AVID tutors to help each other out with their problems and questions."

While AVID is focused on preparing students for college, students in the program also

have lots of fun. Lieser said they frequently do interesting research projects and get to create different assignments representing who they are. Another benefit of AVID is that students work with the same AVID teachers during their four years of high school.

"It's such a perk of the job," she said. "I love being connected to my students and being there to help them with anything. I consider them my school kids. Life can be hard at times and I believe the connections we make together as a class really helps students get through the day."

If AVID is something you are interested in, you can reach out to Lieser at amanda\_lieser@rdale.org.



## Personal Projects allow students to explore interests

Components of the capstone assignment are completed during ninth, tenth grades

By DAVIS RUPPERT-KAN  
*Quill* staff writer

Ninth and tenth grade Cooper students work on a Personal Project that shows their mastery of the skills they developed through the International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Program (MYP).

“This project is based on the student’s interests and talents, resulting in a product or outcome. Students choose a topic that interests them, research an aspect or two about the topic and create a project around their chosen topic,” IBMYP Coordinator Ms. Christensen said.

Current sophomores will get more information about the projects “via presentations in English 10 and Hawk Lunch and Learn sessions,” according to Christensen. A similar process will likely be used next fall for this year’s freshmen, although the details for that are still being worked out.

Essentially, the Personal Project is a solo assignment that allows students near-complete freedom in terms of subject matter, which is meant to show, demonstrate and utilize “skills developed through MYP’s Approaches to Learning,” Christensen said. Students either choose or are assigned teachers to supervise and guide their projects over the course of the experience via a combination of face-to-face

“Time management is probably the biggest challenge in completing the Personal Project,” Ms. Christensen said. “This includes students setting up time to meet with their supervisors, as well as carving out time to work on their project in their daily schedule.”

and Google Meet conversations. Completing the project will earn students an elective credit. Additionally, the project’s completion will appear on students’ academic records and can be listed on students’ resumes, helping students in their academic and professional futures.

Students aren’t expected to work on their respective projects every single day, but are instead expected to figure out a schedule that works well for themselves. In total, the approximate time it should take to complete the entire project is 25 hours.

“Time management is probably the biggest challenge in completing the Personal Project,” Christensen said. “This includes students setting up time to meet with their supervisors, as well as carving out time to work on their project in their daily schedule.”

Working on the project helps students develop several skills that will benefit them academically over the years of high school. Chief among the skills students can master is staying organized.

“[Students need to] take time to develop a task list, so you know exactly what needs to be done to complete your project, and when those items should be completed so you finish on time,” Christensen said.

One aspect of the project that Christensen said students tend to enjoy is that they can pick a topic that they find personally interesting.

“The Personal Project is the ideal way to take a subject [or] topic a student cares about, produce work that pushes boundaries and grows the student as a person, and connects to an audience through a shared passion,” she said.

# Media Center supports student learning

In addition to providing access to resources like books and periodicals, the facility is also a place where Hawks can study



Photo by LOU VANG

Students in the Media Center have access to games and puzzles they can collaborate on with friends.

By SANDY VUE  
*Quill* staff writer

The Media Center is a place for students to access books and other class materials, to use various forms of technology and to get work completed.

Students can use the Media Center to access a variety of printed publications. First, the Media Center holds all of the school’s textbooks for students’ classes. In addition, students can find materials for research and recreational reading in the Media Center thanks to its

large collection of fiction and nonfiction books covering a wide variety of topics.

“We have an impressive comics collection and one of the best manga collections around. We also provide magazines and newspapers,” Media Specialist Mr. King said.

During the pandemic, these materials were only available in digital format. However, print versions will once again be available in fall 2021.

Cooper also offers a vast library of digital eBooks and audiobooks.

“These can be accessed 24/7, 365

days a year at [rdale.mackinvia.com](http://rdale.mackinvia.com) or on the Mackinvia app,” King said.

King said there is also a large database collection where students can learn and explore topics while also getting real-world facts.

Another good resource connected to the Media Center is its website, [rdale.libguides.com/chs](http://rdale.libguides.com/chs). On the site are items like reading recommendations and spoken word poetry. There are also links to the print catalog, Mackinvia, Encyclopedia Britannica and all the databases to which the school subscribes.

## Chromebooks central to class work at Cooper

Whether it is typing an essay, doing research or keeping track of grades, student laptops play an important role at school

By SANDY VUE  
*Quill* staff writer

The Chromebooks students receive free from the district to use during school are a central part of the work ninth graders do in all of their classes.

Most incoming freshmen had a chance exchange their old Chromebooks for new ones during the Cooper open house in late August. During that event, they also had a chance to pay for the Device Protection Plan. According to Media Specialist Mr. King, who helps oversee the distribution of Chromebooks, students who did not attend the open house can still get their devices.

“If they [did not] attend [the open house], they will be able to make the exchange and pay for the protection plan during the first week of school,” he said.

The policies surrounding the Chromebook are clear. Every day at school, every student should have their Chromebooks charged and with them at

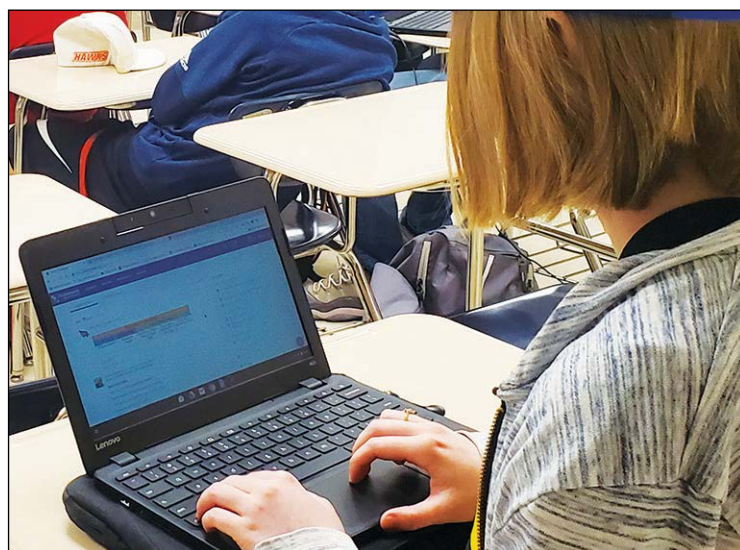


Photo by KIRA JOHNSON

Many teachers rely on electronic assignments as opposed to handouts.

all times. However, the chargers should remain at home.

“Chargers are lost or stolen all the time and they cost around \$20,” King said.

King added that students should be using their devices responsibly.

“Students may only use their devices for school-related work,” King said. “Students shouldn’t stream videos

or play games, as this kills battery life and it’s against district policy.”

King said there are some basic ways students can care for their Chromebooks during the year. First, he suggests setting the brightness down so the battery can last all day. Additionally, he encourages students to keep the devices safe in their cases when they are not being used, which can prevent damage to the Chromebook.

Should a student experience hardware issues with a Chromebook, they can see King for help.

“Students can visit the Media Center for any Chromebook issues,” he said.

Students will eventually turn in their Chromebooks at the end of the school year.

“In a normal year, students are instructed to clean up their devices, wind their chargers and go to the Media Center by classroom and by grade to turn in their Chromebooks,” King said. “Hopefully, the 2021-2022 school year will be normal.”

## IB classes give upperclassmen a chance to challenge themselves

Starting junior year, Cooper students can get involved in the IB program, which can translate into earning college credit

By ERIN CHUNN  
*Quill* staff writer

Cooper has multiple preparatory programs for life after high school. One that is especially helpful in preparing students for college is the International Baccalaureate (IB) program.

“The IB Diploma Program (DP) is an academically challenging and balanced program of education with final examinations that prepares students, aged 16 to 19, for success at university and life beyond. It is Cooper’s most challenging academic coursework,” IBMYP Coordinator Ms. Christensen said.

The IB program is a rigorous series of junior- and senior-year classes that can help you get college credit

based on a series of tests you will take at the end of each course. Students in the program also have the option to graduate with a full IB diploma.

“In the diploma program, students will be encouraged to think independently and drive their own learning, take part in programs of education that can lead them to some of the highest-ranking universities around the world, become more culturally aware through the development of a second language and be able to engage with people in an increasingly globalized, rapidly changing world,” Christensen said.

Since these classes are college-level, getting involved with IB is a good option if you plan on furthering your

education after high school. In addition, the potential for free college credits is another benefit.

“If students take the IB exams for these courses, they have the opportunity to earn potential college credit. Students [also] can complete the full IB diploma. Doing so gives students the opportunity for the maximum amount of potential college credit,” Christensen said.

While there are a number of academic benefits to the IB program, Christensen said taking IB classes can also help with a student’s public speaking skills, professionalism and preparation for the real world.

Although IB doesn’t start until junior year, freshmen and sophomores still have a chance to get ready for tak-

ing part in those courses.

“Almost all freshmen are involved in our IB Middle Years Program (MYP). The IBMYP is a rigorous curriculum framework, rather than a college-preparatory program. Students are exposed to many facets of IB philosophies and practices, [including] inquiry-based instruction, concept-based teaching and learning, international-mindedness and learner profile attributes,” Christensen said.

According to Christensen, there are multiple success stories related to Cooper students taking part in IB. In fact, she shared the story of an IB student who got a full-ride scholarship to Duke University, where they earned a medical degree for free.

## Incoming freshmen need to adjust thinking about credits, grades

Not earning a passing grade in any class will lead to a student needing to make up that course in the future

By MAKAYLA HOTT  
*Quill* staff writer

When you are close to graduating high school and start thinking about what you want to do after leaving Cooper, your course credits and grade point average (GPA) become very important. That is because you need to have all of your credits finished by the end of your senior year in order to graduate on time. Additionally, getting into college is made

possible by getting the highest GPA you can. It is for these reasons that incoming ninth graders need to take their classes and grades seriously from the moment they enter Cooper’s doors.

The first thing to talk about is course credits. School counselor Ms. Hough said that a big part of her job is to help students manage their credits.

“Credits are required to graduate. Each semester, students earn credits based on how many classes they pass. So if a

student passes six classes, they earn six credits,” Hough said.

Students want to make sure they pass the classes in order to avoid credit recovery.

“If a student gets an NC at the end of the semester, they have to make up the credit,” Hough said.

While it isn’t an ideal way for students to get their credits, failing students can make up credits they missed. One way to make up credits is by going to summer

school. Also, you can make up your credit by doing credit recovery. However, credit recovery can take longer to complete than summer school.

“The best option always is to do well in class and earn your credits right away. No one wants to be worrying about ninth grade credits when they are seniors,” Hough said.

**CREDITS, GRADES**  
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# School lab supports writing, math needs

The Write Place and Math Lounge, located in room 246 in the English circle, are important resources for Hawks who need help

By ZACARI WATSON  
*Quill* staff writer

Ninth graders who need extra help or support in their English or math classes during the school day can make use of the Write Place and Math Lounge, both of which are housed in room 246. The Write Place and Math Lounge, which are open on alternating days, are staffed by English and math teachers who work with students during their study halls if they need extra help.

“Students benefit because they are getting one-on-one help from a teacher and questions can be asked without multiple interruptions. The teacher and student can concentrate on a specific problem or topic,” educational assistant Ms. Olesen, who helps oversee room 246, said.

Students who want to use either lab can do so by getting a pass from their classroom teacher or study hall teacher. There is a sign-in computer in the lab and signing in on that computer is proof of attendance.

“Students can come to the Write Place or Math Lounge only during their study hall. Currently, students have their study hall teacher write them a pass and enter the information on a form so that the lab staff knows there is a student coming,” Olesen said.

The services offered in the two labs is slightly different. In the Write Place, students can get support with their writing across any class, not just English. In addition, students can make use of the lab for completing or making up work in their English classes.

“It is staffed by the English department, so the help comes from the teachers who have assigned the work or who have a working knowledge of the writing tasks that students may need



Photo by MR. ZUCCOLA

Students can visit the lab for help throughout the school day during a study hall or open period.

help with. Students may bring any written work they need help with and the Write Place staff member can help edit, revise or even brainstorm what a student has to complete,” English teacher Ms. Eisfelder, who helps monitor the Write Place, said.

According to Eisfelder, the Write Place can be a good asset for students seeking different kinds of feedback on their work than they might be getting from their usual classroom teacher.

“Students get a second set of eyes on their written work,” she said. “We are often our own worst editors, so an-

other set of eyes can really clarify or polish up a written piece of work. It also builds confidence for students in their own writing. It should feel like a supportive place for feedback and help, not a judgment or evaluative place. We do not grade the work. We are there to help students improve and complete their writing.”

Meanwhile, the Math Lounge is a place where students can work on math homework, make up math tests and get teacher help with math.

“Here, students can get help with any of their practice or group work

from their math class. Students can also find a quiet place to take or re-take any summative assessment that they have qualified for,” math teacher Mr. Simpson said.

Given the fact that it may sometimes be tough for a student to get extended time to work with a teacher during a normal class period in math, the Math Lounge can help support students looking for more personalized help.

“The students that use the Math

**SCHOOL LAB**  
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# Student Council gives voice to all four grades

Incoming freshmen have the chance to get involved with this school leadership group

By ANTA'JA JOHNSON  
*Quill* staff writer

One way students can get involved in their high school is through student council. Student council helps interested students develop leadership skills by organizing and implementing various school activities and initiatives. Additionally, the student council is the voice of the student body and its members work with the school administration on projects and policies.

“Student council is important to Cooper because it allows students to develop leadership through organizing and carrying out school activities and service projects,” 2021 graduate Grace Hambike said. “In addition to planning events that contribute to school spirit and community welfare, the student council is the voice of the student body. This is what makes school a better place for everyone.”

During recent school years, the student council has been involved in a number of big projects.

“We have worked on the recycling bill for the school, we have been in charge of mental awareness on Schoology, volunteering in our district, working with Feed My Starving Children and many other projects,” Hambike said.

All students have the opportunity to get involved. Members of each grade level are elected to the student council and one serves as the class president. There are also other leadership positions on the council such as secretary, treasurer, public relations officers and vice president. Students can become an elected member or an un-elected member. Students can also assist with the events and activities hosted by the council. In the fall, elections take place using an online poll.

“A freshman can get involved with the student council by applying on Schoology. They usually have to fill out a Google form and explain why they want to join,” Hambike said.

Student council members have duties that must be completed. These duties include 15 hours of service per semester and attending weekly meetings held during fifth period on Wednesdays.

“A typical student council meeting usually starts with finding out how everyone is doing. We then do an overview of what we are planning to achieve during the month. If there are new activities we distribute the leadership around. We sometimes have snacks and bring up ideas of new ways to help the student body as well as the teachers,” Hambike said.

Being involved with student council can help its members give back to their community and develop life skills.

“I joined the student council because I wanted to make a difference in the school, especially for my classmates. Being in the student council has taught me a lot about being a leader and catering to the needs of others. It has taught me to become a better listener,” Hambike said.

# Being on time to class is key to academic success

In addition to it being a useful life skill, punctuality helps students stay on top of their performance at school

By LUKE REKELA-JASPER  
*Quill* staff writer

Getting to class on time during the pandemic usually consisted of clicking into a Google Meet or Zoom at the assigned start time to class. Once some students started returning to their buildings after in-person learning started again last spring, they had to get used to traveling between classes in a set amount of time before the next period started.

With all students now back in their buildings, the importance of being on time to class is a necessity for everyone. This is especially the case for incoming freshmen, who are getting used to a new building and adjusting back into the normal routines of attending school in person. Ninth graders will soon find that being on time is something that every teacher at Cooper expects, encourages and endorses.

## Being on time is a life skill

Math teacher Mr. Borgos, who works with many ninth grade students, said that learning to arrive to class on time will help students later in life.

“Being on time is a life skill that is valuable. It promotes that you care about your craft and those that are involved with the activity. Others depend upon you and being on time provides others the ability to trust that you’ll be there. Availability is the best ability. Being in class makes you available to learn,” he said.

Additionally, Borgos said that being late can have a negative academic impact on students, who could miss important instructions or lessons, which adds unnecessary weight to



Photo by LOU VANG

Tardy students have to get a special pass to get into class.

their academic plate and may cause unnecessary stress.

“Students miss out on our intro activity, which is a review of prior learning objectives,” he said.

In order to avoid this situation, Borgos suggested that ninth graders plan their travel from one class to the next.

“Know your limits,” he said. “What can you do before class starts and still be able to get to class on time?”

## Being on time helps you in class

Ms. Obranovich, an English teacher who has many freshman classes, cited academics as a key reason to be punctual during the school day.

“It’s important for freshmen to arrive to class on time so that they don’t miss any important instructions,” Obranovich said.

Obranovich added that the positive impact of being on time to class can

be seen in a student’s academic performance. When they are on time, students are able to be ready to learn and participate right away, they get to hear all the instructions, they know what the plan is for the day and they are prepared to be successful in the lesson that day.

According to Obranovich, the consequence for being late to class is being marked tardy for attendance. She said that too many of those tardies can result in “phone calls home to parents.”

To make sure ninth graders are on time to class, Obranovich suggested walking and talking while in the hallways as opposed to stopping to talk.

“Make sure you know where you’re going and head that way as soon as the bell rings,” she said. “If you get to class early or at the bell, you’ll have a moment to settle in, get your supplies ready and have a good mindset for the period.”

## Being on time helps you connect with teachers and students

Ms. Wineberg, who works with freshmen in social studies and AVID courses, said that being punctual helps students form connections with their teachers and classmates.

“Most teachers start class promptly and usually have some important information to share. If you miss this, it is possible that you will miss out on a change in due dates, information about an upcoming summative or funny jokes from your teacher. Additionally, teachers are often available to help if you have questions or concerns before class,” she said.

Regarding the consequences of arriving late to class, Wineberg explained that getting marked tardy is just one component.

“When students are late for class, there are a few natural consequences. First, they might miss important information. Second, it is often embarrassing to walk in late,” she said.

In order to get to class on time, Wineberg encourages ninth graders to develop a routine.

“The beginning of the year can be intimidating, but you will soon develop a routine. This helps a lot. Try to plan ahead for your day. If you only have to move a few rooms down between class periods, you might also have time to go to the bathroom. If you have to travel from the gym locker room up to the science circle, you will not have time to stop at your locker. Make plans accordingly for when you’ll see your friends. Don’t go out of your way to meet up in between every class,” Wineberg said.

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## Academic tips help freshmen prosper in class

From mindset to proper sleep, there are many ways to help yourself do well in school

By MAX REKELA-JASPER  
*Quill* staff writer

One of the toughest things for incoming ninth graders is the transition from middle school to high school. Whether it's making new friends, waking up earlier or adjusting to the challenging classes, the transition can be a rough ride if ninth graders are not ready. Luckily, there are some basic academic tips that ninth graders can follow to get off to a solid start in their first year of high school.

### Enter each day with a positive mindset

Believe it or not, entering the school day with a positive mindset is beneficial to everyone, especially incoming freshmen. Freshmen essentially have a "clean slate," which means that their past middle school grades do not necessarily count toward their future, whereas their grades starting in high school do. Going into each day with a positive mindset will improve work ethic, quality of work done and the overall grades earned.

Logan Voigt (11) said that going into the day with a positive mindset helps set up the day.

"If you go into the day with a positive mindset, you'll improve your academic performance," Voigt said. "Your mindset towards school greatly affects your learning capabilities."

### Organize your materials

Organizing classroom materials can help students adjust to their environment in a timely manner. Organizing things such as a binder, Google Drive and notebook can help you find what you need to do on that given day. When you assemble your materials, organizing each folder by class is beneficial because it will make sure you will turn in your work on time and avoid missing assignments.

Chemistry teacher Ms. Hawkins said that "staying organized" can reduce student stress.

"If [students] are organized and know where things are and when they are due, it's less stressful," she said.

### Be on time for class

While this tip sounds rather simple, some people still struggle with getting to class on time. New students, especially incoming freshmen, do not want to rack up tardies. Getting to class on time will help you know what's going on in class and it will prevent your teacher from having to explain instructions for the lesson again.

Isaac Bickler (11) said that students who are late to class miss out on classroom instructions.

"Students who are late to class miss out on instructions, a warm up and other things that are there to get them engaged in their learning," Bickler said. "Students who come to class late are setting themselves up to not reach their full potential."

### Ask for help when needed

Many students believe that asking for help is a sign of weakness. It is not; it is a sign of growth and improvement. Cooper has a lot of resources that can help students. The Write Place and the Math Lounge are two places where students can seek help with their assignments from teachers. Additionally, students can sign up for helpful academic sessions during their Hawk Lunch and Learn time.

Every teacher in the building appreciates when students ask for help. It shows that students are willing to improve the quality of their work. Social studies teacher Mr. Moore thinks it's "great" when students ask their teachers for help.

"Asking your teacher for help is a pretty low-stakes place to practice reaching out to others when you're struggling and it's actually a pretty valuable skill," Moore said. "Your teachers won't know you need help if you never ask. Teachers wouldn't

**ACADEMIC TIPS**  
continues on page 8

# NHS celebrates student achievement

National Honor Society gives qualifying seniors, juniors a chance to get involved in their school, community



Photo by MR. KNUTSON

The annual NHS induction ceremony is one highlight of student involvement in the organization.

By ANDREA TRIBBLE  
*Quill* staff writer

Cooper is a school that values academic success along with encouraging students to engage in community. The National Honor Society (NHS) is a perfect example of those core values. NHS is a service and academic-oriented organi-

zation that honors students for their excellence in the classroom, while also creating space and opportunity for them to become involved with the community.

"It recognizes both students' academic excellence and also their commitment to their community," 2020-2021 NHS advisor Mr. Darsow said.

NHS is an invite-only organization. Students in grades 11 and 12 can qualify for NHS if they have a GPA of 3.6 or more and are recommended by a staff member. If interested, students should focus on keeping their GPA high, while also exhibiting leadership traits by being a dedicated member of the Cooper community and the outside

## College and Career Center provides paths to one's future

Students can visit the room to investigate schools, prepare for college-entrance exams, explore career options

By DAVIS RUPPERT-KAN  
*Quill* staff writer

Ninth graders may not realize where the College and Career Center is, but you walk past it going to your classes every day. The room is located on the main floor across from the Student Services Office. The College and Career Center can help you start looking into the things you might want to do after high school.

Overseeing the center is Educational Assistant Ms. Warndahl, who helps students in each grade level with college and career readiness. Even though the room is most frequently used by seniors and juniors, Warndahl said it benefits younger students to visit the center as well.

"It's important for ninth graders to become familiar with the College and Career Center because the more questions they ask, the more comfortable they will be coming to the office when they are in 11th and 12th grade," Warndahl



Photo by DAVINA BELLINGER

Helping students who visit the College and Career Center is Ms. Warndahl. said.

The help Warndahl most often provides at the College and Career Center includes sending transcripts to colleges, finding scholarships, preparing the FAFSA and applying to college. Warndahl said she likes helping students with these issues.

"I enjoy working with the students who come into the office because I want to make sure they are looking towards the future and not the present," she said.

Warndahl also helps set up the many college visits that happen at the center throughout the year. If there is a college you're

interested in, Cooper might have a visit with that college scheduled at some time during the year. According to Warndahl, meeting up with college representatives is never a bad idea, especially if you're thinking about applying. Having a representative who recognizes you can greatly increase your chances of being admitted.

The center is also a resource for PSAT, ACT and SAT testing. In fact, ACT and SAT preparation books can be checked out from the center by any student looking to do some in-depth studying, which is important during one's junior and senior years.

Also available through the office is help looking for jobs. Warndahl can assist students with finding jobs in the community.

Overall, Warndahl encourages ninth graders to stop by and take advantage of the help she offers.

"It is never too early to start thinking about what you would really like to do after you graduate," Warndahl said.

## Nursing staff helps meet an assortment of student health needs

From addressing sudden illnesses during the school day to storing student medications, the health office staff serves many purposes

By CHRISTOPHER NGUYEN  
*Quill* staff writer

The Cooper health office is one of the most important locations in the building to go when you are feeling sick or need other medical support.

"The health office is located in the Student Services area on the second floor of Cooper in room 209," Licensed School Nurse Ms. Kraft said.

There are a variety of services students can receive in the office during the school day. One area in which the office is helpful relates to medications.

"Students can come into the health office for their daily medications, including pain meds. Diabetic students come in for insulin. Students can also come in for their ADHD meds," Kraft said.

There are also instances in which students might need emergency medications. Kraft said the office provides resources like "inhalers for asthma or epi pens for allergic reactions."

However, Kraft emphasized that there are limits to the medications the office can provide.

"We do not offer pain meds to anyone that comes in needing that. They have to bring in medications of their own in order for us to give them. We also don't do any suturing or diagnostic tests," she said.

When it comes to unforeseen medical issues throughout the day, the health office can also be an important place.

"Students can come in for panic attacks, to rest if they have migraines or menstrual cramps, or for any injury, such as a sprained ankle during gym class, a burn

during cooking class, a cut from a fall, etc.," Kraft said.

The health office is also where supplies are distributed for Kody's Closet, a non-profit organization that provides free hygiene products to at-risk youth. Included among the Kody's Closet supplies students can access are items like deodorant, extra clothes and toothpaste.

During a regular day in the health office, Kraft said roughly 60-80 students come by for needs ranging from "a band aid for a cut or an emergency situation where the nurse needs to dial 911." When students enter the office, they typically see Mr. Rosenblum, who is a nursing assistant in the health office, first.

"[Rosenblum] tends to be the one that sees the students more. He is the first point of contact for

students when they come into the health office. I am more behind the scenes, doing more of the paperwork," Kraft said.

According to Kraft, the amount of paperwork that is involved in running the health office is considerable.

"I work on special education evaluations; third-party billing; individual health plans; emergency seizure, diabetes and allergy action plans; and, this year, COVID case reports and contact tracing," she said.

As the new school year begins, Kraft said there are some simple tips students can follow to stay out of the health office during the fall and winter seasons.

"Wash your hands, get a good amount of sleep each night, eat healthy foods, get some daily exercise and drink water," Kraft said.

## SCHOOLGY HELPS COOPER STUDENTS ACHIEVE SUCCESS continued from page 2

where you're at," Voigt said. "You don't want to be surprised later on or find out that you could've raised your grade if you redid an assignment."

Additionally, Prillwitz pointed out that with most assignments being assigned through Schoology, "students are able to access their assign-

ments through the hyperlinked assignment titles that appear on the grades page."

"This allows students to see and also open each outstanding assignment that needs to be completed," Prillwitz said.

Another feature of Schoology that is useful for incoming freshmen is the ability of stu-

dents and teachers to communicate with one another using the message system.

"If a student has questions about their classes or about their progress in a class, it is important for them to contact their teacher," Nelson said.

From the student perspective, this communication fea-

ture of Schoology may be its most valuable asset.

"It is important to email your teachers on Schoology if you have questions because they will answer something," Voigt said. "It's not always good to guess or be unsure so you should ask your teachers if you have any questions."



# Ninth graders have access to many art classes

Getting involved with art during one's freshman year opens opportunities to higher-level courses in the future



Photo by LOU VANG

Students in art classes get large portions of time during each period to work on their latest projects.

By LOU VANG  
Quill staff writer

A variety of art classes are provided for incoming ninth graders at Cooper. First-year students have the opportunity to explore four main types of courses: drawing, painting, photography and digital arts.

For those who prefer the more traditional “paper and pen” art, Drawing I and Drawing II are a great choice for exploration. These courses aim to help students develop resiliency, divergency and creativity in order to succeed in future, higher-level art courses. The elements of art and principles of design are strongly focused on and students will be challenged to draw from observation, do experimental practices, work with various materials and more. Through the use of a process journal, experimentation and projects, drawing abilities are developed in this course.

Cooper graduate Kayla Konz said she took Drawing I as a freshman,

which was her “first art class that had a main focus.” Her least favorite part about taking the class was that, because these freshman art courses are also available to upperclassmen, she was surrounded by older students as a freshman taking art. However, she said she loved “the freedom” that came with her art class.

“It didn’t matter what grade you were in or how passionate you were about art,” Konz said. “Although your artwork had to fit in with the given prompt, there was a lot of guidance and freedom at the same time.”

Also available to ninth graders are Painting I and Painting II. In these classes, one can expect to learn about the elements of art and principles of design while mastering color theory. Concepts such as color combinations and how emotions are connected to colors are explored, and there is an investigation of painters and painting from history. Students are encouraged to learn from the teacher as well as ex-

periment on their own with content, media and painting methods to expand their technical skills. Similar to drawing, a process journal is used in painting classes to document artistic growth and learning.

Ms. Mielke, one of Cooper’s art teachers, teaches painting. According to Mielke, a typical day for a freshman painting class includes “up to 10 minutes of instructions and demonstration,” with the remainder of class used for “work time and checking in with the instructor.”

Another art subject ninth graders can get involved in is photography. Photography I and Photography II are classes designed to teach students the fundamentals of artistic photography. Students will explore the effect of lighting on a photograph, photo editing and how to develop a thematic body of work. All learning is documented in a process journal and students are expected to photograph assignments both in and out of class and school hours. Since students will

learn to manage and use a digital camera, they are required to have something with camera capabilities, such as a smart phone.

A final art option for freshmen is digital arts. In Digital Arts I and Digital Arts II, the concepts, processes and uses of subject-specific terminology are studied to develop and gain a better understanding of digital art. Students will get experience using design programs such as Bridge, Photoshop, InDesign and Weebly. Additionally, students will analyze trends in design, meet artists working in the field and learn why graphic design skills are crucial in the 21st century workforce.

No matter which class a ninth grader might take, Mielke said it is a good idea to get involved with art early in high school because students can continue with it all four years.

“I love seeing the growth in students, personally and through their artwork,” she said. “It’s devastating meeting a senior who is just then taking art and seeing that student finding a love for art at the end of their high school years.”

Mielke also thinks that freshmen benefit from art classes due to the friendly learning environment.

“The benefit is spending time in a safe, accepting and fun space,” she said. “Also important is developing skills that can benefit students in all areas of life.”

While only these four types of courses are available for freshmen, many more art classes will be available for exploration as students move up grade levels.

“I would advise any freshman interested in art to take an art class,” Konz said. “Starting early definitely makes a difference if you decided to join IB art.”

According to Mielke, art is a “subject that can always incorporate your interests and passions.”

“It’s so fun, even if you don’t think you are good,” Mielke said. “And [it has] the coolest teachers, if I do say so myself.”

# Theater program has open spots for freshmen

Students interested in performing, working in technical areas are encouraged to try out

By TJ WATSON  
Quill staff writer

Cooper’s theater program is open to all students who have an interest in the performing arts. Ms. Wurzer is the primary director of Cooper’s shows and is in charge of the theater department.

“The Cooper theater group is a family. Students will find that this will be your friend group all four years of high school,” Wurzer said.

Cooper theater typically performs three shows a year: a fall show, a winter show and a spring show.

The fall show usually takes place near the beginning of December each year.

“This historically has been an original show written by me and the cast or it is a dramatic piece,” Wurzer said.

Next up is the winter show. This is usually a musical that makes its debut in February.

“It has a large cast and a student pit orchestra,” Wurzer said.

The year ends with a spring show, which is done either in an arena seating performance space or in the Black Box Theater in room 257.

“Every other year, this show features one-acts written by the IB Theater class. The other year is usually a comedy,” Wurzer said.

Although there is a theater class that older students can take, that doesn’t mean ninth graders can’t get involved in theater. In fact, Wurzer said freshmen should definitely take part in the shows.

“Actors are cast by auditions, but we welcome any student to work backstage crew or learn the light and sound boards. Information for auditions and shows are sent out via Schoology and all information is posted on the Black Box door,” she said.

Students who are involved in a given show can expect to be part of daily rehearsals. Wurzer said that rehearsals are a lot of work but that they can also be a lot of fun.

“If we aren’t writing the show, rehearsals consist of character work, staging the play and refinement. If we are conceiving the play, most rehearsals are writing workshops, read-throughs, revising the script and then we move on to staging [and] characterization. The week or two prior to production are full run-through rehearsals when we add light and sound cues and eventually costumes,” she said.

The theater program has been responsible for many well-received shows over the years. These performances have been diverse in nature, ranging from a modernized version of the classic play *12 Angry Men* to a show called *Lights, Camera, Action!*, which was filmed, produced and streamed virtually during the pandemic last winter. Two other shows Wurzer cited as her favorites were *The Addams Family* and *Ragtime*.

“In *The Addams Family*, I loved the music, the characters and the dance numbers,” she said. “I [also] really enjoyed working on *Ragtime*. The characters were so rich, I loved the way the script was written and the message of the piece was so timely and poignant.”

While the end product of a show is important to the students who take part in theater, Wurzer emphasized that the journey to that show is the primary reason to get involved in the program.

“You learn so much about yourself when performing,” she said. “You get to try on different personalities as you take on different characters. If you’re not a dancer or singer, students try each of these areas. You learn what you like and what you’re good at, and work on those areas that are a little more uncomfortable to you. Some students start in the ensemble and work themselves up into lead roles, taking on more responsibility with their roles and commitment.”

When it comes to ninth graders who are considering taking part in theater, Wurzer said that coming to the meetings at the start of the year and auditioning are key.

“Give it a try. If you don’t make it in your first show, work backstage and try for the next. High school is all about experiencing new things,” she said.

# Cooper music programs available to new Hawks

Orchestra, band, choir groups give incoming freshmen a chance to develop as musicians during their high school years

By KIRA JOHNSON  
Quill staff writer

Incoming freshmen have three options for music classes: orchestra, band and choir. All three music groups are available in need of new members, regardless of previous experience. According to students and teachers alike, Cooper’s freshman music classes are a great place for students who have been playing for years and for students who have never played an instrument before to come together and learn to play at a high school level.

Ninth grade musicians who would like the opportunity to be involved in orchestra can join Freshman Orchestra, which is directed by Ms. Pflaum.

“Freshmen benefit from being in a music class because it is a wonderful way to get involved with the school community. Music is a way to express yourself and be creative, and music classes feel like a home to many students at school,” Pflaum said.

When it comes to what a typical day in orchestra is like, Pflaum said there are several routines that are key to success in class.

“During a typical day in orchestra, students have a setup and tuning routine, followed by technique instruction and music rehearsal,” Pflaum said. “One of the biggest differences between middle school and high school orchestra is that in high school, we spend most of our time rehearsing music for concerts. All of the skills students work hard on building in middle school are put into action.”

Pflaum said that freshmen tend to improve quickly in their orchestra class because the whole ensemble gets to practice together in one group.

“One of my favorite aspects of working with freshman orchestra students is seeing how much they improve so quickly. I also enjoy really getting to know students when they’re in ninth grade because or-



Photo by KIRA JOHNSON

The annual fall performance at Orchestra Hall is a central component to Cooper's award-winning music programs.

chestra is a class that you are involved in for four years of high school and it is important to build a positive community,” Pflaum said.

In addition to Freshman Orchestra, musicians can eventually get involved in Philharmonic Orchestra, which is for students in grades 10-12, and Symphony Orchestra, which is an auditioned orchestra for students in grades 10-12.

Ninth grade musicians who would like an opportunity to expand their musical capabilities can also consider joining band. There are three different band classes available to Cooper students: Freshman Band, Concert Band and Symphonic Band.

When it comes to Freshman Band, Cooper graduate Nathan Herrington said he has fond memories of being in the class and working with band director Mr. Hahn.

“The class was made up of all the freshman students at Cooper who were in band. During class, we practiced many different songs, scales and rhythms to help us become better musicians and to prepare for the three concerts which we played in throughout the year,” he said.

In addition to the work that took place during class time, Herrington

said he also benefited from extra practice sessions with Hahn.

“Band members would also schedule times to meet one-on-one with Mr. Hahn for individual lessons related to personal improvement with their instruments,” he said. “Overall, it was a very fun experience.”

For incoming ninth graders who enjoy singing, Cooper also has a choir program directed by Ms. Rowan and Mr. Vidal. The choir class that all incoming freshmen go into is Freshman Choir, which requires no auditions. Rowan said she is excited to meet the incoming freshmen because she enjoys watching them progress over the years.

“I am looking forward to seeing new students that will be joining Cooper choirs because I can’t wait to see how they will grow throughout their next four years of high school,” Rowan said.

The next level of choir is Varsity Choir, which consists of students in grades 10-12. Additionally, there is Bel Canto, which is an all-soprano-and-alto choir group for grades 10-12, and Concert Choir, which is for singers in grades 10-12. There are also specialty choir groups such as Chamber Singers, which is made up

of upperclassmen who want to take their singing to the next level. Kaitlyn Peterson, a Cooper graduate who sang in various choir groups, said she was glad she joined choir during her freshman year.

“I have been singing in a choir ever since it was first offered in high school,” she said.

Peterson said she enjoyed the different activities that they do in choir depending on the grade level.

“I loved the fun activities that we do in Chambers, including caroling and Valegrams, as well as the gigs we do in the community such as singing at city events, nursing homes and elementary schools,” she said.

Peterson also said she enjoyed performing at Orchestra Hall during the district’s annual fall music festival.

“It was an amazing experience,” Peterson said.

Freshmen are encouraged not just to join a music class, but to continue with music classes after their freshman year.

“My biggest piece of advice to incoming freshmen is to continue with your music classes,” Pflaum said. “Sticking with music in high school can open up so many opportunities. Music classes are also a place where many students find they build lifelong friendships and there is a lot of value to being a member of a music community.”

Agreeing with Pflaum is Cooper graduate Katelyn Gisvold, who was in orchestra and choir during her time at Cooper. Gisvold said her interest in music came from the emotion and teamwork that goes into each music activity.

“My favorite thing about choir is when there’s a piece you really like and you can put all your emotions into it. The same thing goes for orchestra as well. There’s also lots of opportunities that both music groups bring you like singing with people from different schools, Orchestra Hall and tours. My favorite thing about music is the people,” she said.



## Ninth grade gym class aids student health

Freshman physical education course designed to teach about lifelong fitness

By FAITH KING  
Quill staff writer

Every incoming ninth grader will take one semester of an International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program (IBMYP) physical education class during the first year of high school.

“All ninth grade students take IBMYP PE 9, which is kind of an overview course for lifelong fitness. Students will have the opportunity to learn and to engage in several different team or partner activities,” Ms. Schaffer said.

Included among the sports activities ninth graders will learn are football, soccer, team handball, speedball, basketball, volleyball, aerobics and badminton. There is also a classroom component to the IBMYP PE 9 class.

“Students are expected to change for class and to participate to the best of their abilities each day,” Schaffer said.

Beyond the sports in which students take part, Schaffer said the key to the class is that students are in motion.

“A typical day in PE 9 starts out with a warm up and stretches. Then, we usually get into our teams and get active in the day’s activity. Our philosophy is that PE is one of the only places for activity in a student’s day, so we try to maximize the opportunity for movement,” she said.

Another aspect to the class that is important for incoming freshmen is the focus on communication and team-building skills.

“It can teach students about communication and problem-solving with others, and it can teach them about teamwork, which is a skill that they will need in most jobs in their futures,” Schaffer said.

With respect to looking toward the future, the PE 9 class is also geared toward teaching students about lifelong health and fitness.

“The biggest thing is to make good decisions with regards to exercise and taking care of themselves. I always tell them that they can be the best at whatever their future job is, but it won’t matter if they’re not healthy enough to go to work,” Schaffer said.

Unlike elective PE classes for upperclassmen that might feature students in multiple grades, PE 9 is just for freshmen, which makes it a different experience for the students and teachers alike.

“I have taught PE 9 for 18 years, which sounds a little crazy. I do it, though, because I love it,” Schaffer said. “The kids are generally happy and excited, and it provides a movement break in the day that is so desperately needed by our kids. I genuinely get the biggest kick out my students in PE because they are free to be a little less structured and a little bit silly. They make me smile or laugh every single day.”

## ACADEMIC TIPS

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be teachers if they didn’t want to help you.”

### Get the right amount of sleep

A solid night of sleep can make a considerable difference when it comes to being successful in the classroom on any given day. Sleep improves memory and concentration, which are critical, especially if a big test is the next day. Additionally, with a good night’s sleep, students will be less prone to distractions in the classroom, which will improve their learning.

John Myron Owens (11) said that getting enough sleep on a school night is “very important” for classroom focus.

“Students who sleep less at night will have less focus during the school day,” Owens said. “It’s very important to get enough sleep so that you are prepared for the day.”

# Fall teams seeking freshman athletes

From volleyball to swimming, the wide variety of fall sports means that there is something for everyone



Photo by JAMIE STOIA

The Hawks football team had a 4-3 record, including a section win over Southwest, before the 2020-2021 season was cut short by COVID.

By NOLAN ANDLER  
Quill staff writer

There are many different fall sports that are fun and exciting to play when you start your high school life at Cooper. One of the biggest reasons why playing a fall sport as a freshman is a good idea is that you can make friendships that last for all four years of high school.

### Football

COVID delayed the start of the 2020 football season and led to the cancellation of the state tournament. However, the team still went 4-3 in a shortened season and won their section playoff game.

Heading into the new season, coach Mr. Patterson said that the team’s winning ways should continue.

“We are returning 10 starters on offense and we expect to be explosive this upcoming season,” he said.

Football practice usually lasts around three hours. The team tries to break up the practices so Freshman, B Squad and Varsity players are getting reps throughout the practice.

“Monday of each week, we introduce the game plan for the week; Tuesday and Wednesday are our more intense practices; and Thursday is more of a walk-through and review of the game plan for Friday night,” Patterson said.

Incoming ninth graders considering football are encouraged to get involved

with the team.

“The lessons that are learned from football can be applied in all aspects of life,” Patterson said. “For example, teamwork and discipline are crucial to the development of young people.”

### Volleyball

One fall sport that is big at Cooper is volleyball. With COVID interrupting this sport last year, 2021 graduate Lamiaha Irons said she and her teammates worked hard to stay committed and focused.

“We just wanted to keep making progress and try our hardest to play the best we could,” she said.

During practice, the team runs different drills based around the skills they need to work on. A typical volleyball match consists of Freshman, B Squad, JV and Varsity games.

“Each team except Varsity has three potential sets, whereas Varsity has the potential to play five sets,” Irons said.

Irons said that ninth graders who come out for volleyball will learn some valuable life lessons.

“Volleyball teaches determination and being a team player. This sport literally cannot progress without every player doing their part,” she said.

### Boys and Girls Cross Country

One fall sport that depends on individual performance as much as team

performance is cross country. Last year’s pandemic caused smaller-than-normal rosters for the boys and girls teams, but with veteran athletes returning and new ones joining the teams for the first time, the 2021 season should be a strong one.

“We have a great batch of hard-working athletes on the teams,” Head Coach Mr. Zuccola said.

Anomal cross country practice starts with a warm-up run of one mile followed by plyometrics and static stretching.

“We then move into that day’s running workout, after which we do strength and conditioning,” Zuccola said. “We usually conclude with some stretching and closing announcements at the end of practice.”

No matter what one’s prior experience might be, Zuccola said cross country is an enjoyable fall sports option.

“Most freshmen who join the team stay with it for all four years of high school, which is testimony to how much they enjoy their time in this sport,” Zuccola said.

### Girls Swimming

Head Coach Mr. Mau said that the biggest swimming highlight of fall 2020 was “getting a season in” despite COVID.

“The girls practiced every day and competed in conference dual meets and the Section 5AA swim meet,” he said. “Even better than that, all of the girls posted lifetime-best racing times.”

Heading into 2021, Mau thinks the

returning swimmers and new additions to the team will be important to the squad’s success.

“Our senior class is very strong, so I really like our chances to stay competitive in the conference and to get that first Metro West Conference win,” he said.

Mau said the team welcomes any ninth grader who is considering getting involved in swimming.

“Regardless of how fast the girls get, they all leave the pool deck with confidence in their swimming abilities and can enjoy a future on the water moving forward,” he said.

### Girls Soccer

Another one of the sports Cooper provides in the fall is girls soccer. Head Coach Mr. Wetherall said the fall 2020 season included a number of upsets that energized the team’s players.

“On the field, important highlights were beating St. Louis Park 1-0 at their place [and] following that up with a 3-1 win over Chanhassen,” he said.

After watching many starters graduate last spring, Wetherall said recruiting new players will be important in 2021.

“We have a good core group that will lead the way and we continue to welcome all players,” he said.

Soccer practices typically run 90

## FALL SPORTS

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# Winter season provides Hawks with chance to compete

Whether you want an indoor venue with basketball or an outdoor setting with skiing, there are many options in winter

By ANDREW HAGGE  
Quill staff writer

Many people get cooped up inside in winter due to the cold, but this season is the perfect time to try something new and have a good time by joining a winter sport. Starting a sport as a freshman is great because, as you get to know more faces and learn more about the school, you’ll get to learn important life lessons that can be applied in the future.

### Boys Basketball

The 2020-2021 boys basketball team was just one win away from the state tournament at the Target Center after beating Armstrong in the playoffs, but they fell to Wayzata in the section championship. This success means the outlook is bright for 2021-2022 thanks to a number of returning players who are averaging more than 20 points a game.

“Next season is going to be nice, real nice,” 2021 graduate Majay Murphy said.

According to Murphy, a typical basketball practice involves working on free throws, conditioning and running plays.

“We have a lot of competition in practice because we try to make each other better every day,” he said.

Murphy encourages incoming freshmen to take part in basketball.

“It’s a good sport,” he said. “It’s fun and you make family.”

### Girls Basketball

After winning state four years ago, the girls basketball team hopes to see more freshmen join as they move into the future.

“I believe the outlook for next season is to work hard, to keep going and to have a positive mindset,” Timiya Reese (12) said.

Given the number of starting seniors the team lost to graduation in 2021, Reese said the squad is “going to have to work harder for wins.” One way they will work hard is through practice, during which players “work on key dynamics like ball handling, driving to the basketball and being ready for the shot when the ball is given to you,” Reese said.

Reese said she is hopeful ninth graders join the squad.

“Incoming freshmen would benefit us by giving us a new look,” she said.

### Boys Swimming

Freshmen who join the swim team will have “lots of fun, great friends, improved strength and life balance,” according to Head Coach Mr. Johnson.

New swimmers will be joining a team that has had some recent successes. At sections during the 2020-2021 season, all swimmers managed to get record times for each of their events. With no graduating seniors in 2021, the team will be largely intact in 2021-2022.

“We should be able to improve on

this year’s results,” Johnson said.

During a typical swim meet, the team faces just one other squad.

“Athletes score for placing top five for varsity,” Johnson said. “The team with the most points after 13 events wins.”

### Winter Dance

The winter dance team works hard to choreograph and perfect a piece to perform during competitions.

“The highlight of the sport is seeing the finished product after weeks of practice,” 2021 graduate and team captain Sophia Scheveck said.

A typical winter dance practice begins with a run around the gym and some stretching as they try to build stamina for the dances. After practicing the dance itself, there is a cool down at the end of practice. All of this is in preparation for the competitions.

“Dance competitions are one day a week after school,” Scheveck said.

Although several seniors graduated in 2021, Scheveck said she hopes incoming ninth graders will join the squad.

“Freshmen can benefit by making friends with girls from different grades,” she said. “The dance team also gets to participate in pep rallies, football games and decorate for the spring dance.”

### Alpine Skiing

The Armstrong-Cooper Alpine

skiing team continues to expand its roster with new members joining all the time. Team member Owen Smith (12) said freshmen should join “because it’s fun.”

“Downhill skiing works your legs and core muscles and can introduce many students to an activity that not many people usually do due to the cost of equipment,” he said.

Smith added that the team has donated gear and skis for new athletes who cannot afford their own new equipment.

Practices for Alpine skiing are held at Highland Hills.

“In the chalet, we get ready together, then we split into two groups,” Smith said. “The first group is made of the stronger racers who need more time on the course; the second group has everyone else. They practice drills and work on techniques that don’t need to be on a set-up course.”

### Girls Hockey

After an early end to the 2020 season and the early-season pause on the 2021 season due to COVID, Emma Launderville (12) said the Armstrong-Cooper team was just happy to play a full season last winter.

“The players and coaches were just thankful to have a season,” she said.

As she looks ahead to 2021-2022,

## WINTER SEASON

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# Weight room program helps Hawks stay fit

Students in all four grades who are not in a team sport are welcome to get involved in after-school weight program



Photo by MR. ZUCCOLA

The weight room is open for students who want to work out Monday through Thursday from 2:30-4 p.m.

By MAJAY MURPHY  
Quill staff writer

The Cooper weight room has an after-school program for students to get in shape. Located in room 106, the program is open to all students Monday through Thursday from 2:30-4 p.m.

"The room is a place for students to become more fit. It is open to anybody that wants to improve themselves physically, reduce their anxiety, get stronger, be more flexible or learn about fitness," Mr. Nelson, who oversees the program, said.

Whether you're a student athlete

preparing for an upcoming season to become better at your sport, or if you just want to improve your strength and conditioning, Nelson said he can tailor workouts to your needs. All the equipment in the weight room is accessible for student use under Nelson's direction, which gives students many options to exercise.

"Most students lift weights to become stronger. However, students also use equipment to run or bike," he said.

Students who are interested in using the weight room must be there by 2:30 p.m.

"Students must be dressed to lift or work out," Nelson said. "For example, students should be wearing athletic clothes and workout gear. Students must also be active when they are in the weight room; [there is] no loitering. Finally, students must clean up after themselves. If you use any of the equipment, you need to put it back in the correct place."

Nelson has now been running the weight room program for five years. He first started lifting at the age of 14 and continued to lift weights through college at Southwest Minnesota State University, where he was a football player who also minored in coaching. He said he enjoys getting to help others learn about lifting and fitness in the weight room.

"Lifting and exercise helps build a person's self-esteem," Nelson said.

Students who are interested in taking part in the weight room program are encouraged to try it out.

"Weight training is a great way to build confidence, make friends and relieve stress. High school sports are much more competitive than middle school sports. Weight training will give you an advantage over other student athletes," Nelson said.

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minutes and progress through a dynamic warm-up, a technical skill activity, a small-sided game and a big game.

"We mix it up with a number of different activities and add in some games just to have fun," Wetherall said.

Getting involved in the soccer program is something Wetherall suggests all interested freshmen do.

"We welcome players with any level of experience, from those who have never played to veteran club players," he said.

### Boys Soccer

The Hawks boys soccer team has been competitive in the Metro West Conference in recent years. Despite the challenges of COVID, the team saw a large number of athletes join the program in 2020 and the hope is for that trend to continue in 2021. Player Tamue David (12) said a key aspect of the new season will be a focus on fitness.

"One of our weak areas last season was not having a lot of practice and playing time, so a lot of other schools were ahead of us. This season, we plan on conditioning and practicing early," he said.

Tryouts for the soccer team start in the middle of August each year and there are usually two practice sessions, one in the morning and one in the evening. Once the official season begins, the team trains after school every day of the week.

"We do warm ups, drills and break off into our specific teams to do our specific training sessions," David said.

Members of the team agreed that ninth graders will enjoy joining soccer.

"Incoming freshmen could meet some new friends and some close friends to take along with them through this high school journey," 2021 graduate Prince Arku said.

### Adapted Soccer

The adapted soccer team is looking forward to competing in 2021 after COVID limited their 2020 season.

"We only had practice due to the pandemic and the high school league limited us to just training sessions," Head Coach Mr. DeMorett said.

Helping lead the squad in 2021 will be several veterans.

"I feel confident that the team will bring back some established players and some new players have mentioned joining, which would make us a respectable team," DeMorett said.

While an adapted soccer game has a different schedule than the one followed in outdoor soccer, the same rules apply.

"Two 20-minute halves are played indoors with play stopping every five minutes to allow for substitutions. Soccer rules are followed," DeMorett said.

Incoming freshmen who join adapted soccer should expect "to be a part of a team, be active, make friends and have fun," DeMorett said.

### Tennis

After COVID diminished the team's roster last fall, Head Coach Ms. Navalta's goal for the 2021 season is to get the numbers back up.

"We are collaborating with the boys and trying to get student interest for both boys and girls teams next year," she said.

Navalta said she tries to keep practices fun in order to retain her players.

"For practice, we always have the captains lead the warm up. I have a speaker that I bring to the courts and play music to help the girls get excited and pumped for practice," she said.

As a former tennis player at Cooper, Navalta said she is acutely aware of how joining the team as a ninth grader pays benefits during high school.

"Tennis was the first team sport I played when I was a freshman here at Cooper and, honestly, I'm so thankful for it, especially since the season started in the summer before school did," she said.

### Dance

The dance team did not have a fall season in 2020 due to COVID. Instead, the season got pushed into the winter.

"Getting a winter season was for sure a highlight of 2020," team captain and 2021 graduate Madison Sandvig said. "Another highlight was getting new coaches who helped us improve a lot."

Heading into 2021, Sandvig said the team is "just hoping to have a normal year." She also said the returning dancers and the new team captains "will provide great leadership" for the team.

According to Sandvig, incoming freshmen benefit from joining the dance team because it is a fun way to stay active.

"If you join the dance team, you get to participate in so many fun activities such as dancing at football games and, of course, dancing at the pep fests," she said.

# Activities Office supports student athletes

The first-floor office is where Hawks hoping to join school sports and activities can get and turn in the required paperwork

By KIERRA WHEELER  
Quill staff writer

The Activities Office is a place where student athletes can get forms for joining sports and activities. Additionally, students can get forms for physicals, which are needed in order to be eligible to play for a high school sports team.

The Activities Office is located by the back door of the school near the gyms and the weight room. Overseeing the office is Activities Director Mr. Oelfke and Activities Secretary Ms. Thurston.

"The main reason a student would come to the Activities Office would be to pick up or drop off registration paperwork for any athletic teams or activities during the school year," Thurston said. "They also will pay all athletic and activities fees in this office."

In order to get signed up for a sport, students should start by watching updates on the Cooper website about the next athletic season. The necessary forms will be located under the "Athlet-



Photo by LOU VANG

Ms. Thurston assists students with all of their sports registration needs.

ics" tab on the Cooper website.

"Forms can also be picked up in the Activities Office," Thurston said. "It's important to remember that fees and forms must be turned in together."

Another important aspect of signing up for sports is getting a physical.

"A student needs to have a sports-qualifying physical before they start playing a sport," Thurston said.

"The sports-qualifying physicals are good for three years. It's important for the student to let the doctor know they need a sports physical, not just a regular

physical. The student will need to turn in that paperwork with their registration."

During the school year, the Activities Office is open to students from 7 a.m.-3 p.m. on weekdays.

"Students can stop in before or after school or between classes," Thurston said.

According to Thurston, there is always something happening in the Activities Office.

"During the school year, it will depend what games or practices are on Cooper campus that day," she said. "On game days, we have to make sure we have officials scheduled, any workers that are needed, ticket boxes available for varsity events and the field or gym set up for the event. When it rains and teams are supposed to practice outside, Mr. Oelfke has to juggle gym space for teams to practice."

Thurston said she encourages all students to get involved with a sport or activity.

"That is how you will meet some of your closest, lifelong friends," she said.

## WINTER SEASON PROVIDES HAWKS WITH CHANCE TO COMPETE continued from page 8

Launderville hopes that "things get back to normal" and that "more team bonding" can happen without COVID restrictions.

During practice, Launderville said players work on the skills that will pay off during games.

"We have around five coaches at any given practice and they are all committed to improving the skills and strength of all of their athletes," she said.

Launderville said that hockey "is both physically and mentally demanding," so incoming ninth graders need to be ready. However, she encourages them to come out for the team.

"There is a strong sense of support, no matter what level you play in," she said.

### Boys Hockey

With a bunch of seniors graduating from the team last year, the Armstrong-Cooper boys hockey squad is looking for more players to join them.

"We will be in a rebuilding year," Head Coach Mr. Charleston said. "It will be exciting to watch our program grow

over the next few seasons."

Practices usually take place five days a week with the varsity and JV players each getting 75 minutes on the ice.

"We work on skating, shooting, passing, competition, special teams and team play," Charleston said.

Since ninth graders have to wait another year before joining the team, Charleston encourages them to stay involved in the sport so they are ready.

"Freshmen are encouraged to stay and play for their bantam program at Armstrong-Cooper Youth Hockey Association," he said.

### Wrestling

Mr. Stanton, head coach of the wrestling team, said that 2020-2021 was rough for his squad.

"We had a delayed start, a reduction in the number of matches and tournaments, and restrictions on the number of competitions a week," he said.

Despite these challenges, the team had one All-Conference wrestler, one

All-Conference Honorable Mention wrestler and one wrestler make it to the state tournament. Stanton is hopeful to keep this momentum going in 2021-2022 through the addition of new wrestlers.

Typical wrestling practice starts out with a warm up led by the team captains, after which they will practice wrestling moves they already know before moving on to learning new moves.

"Then, we will try and put it all together with a wrestling match," Stanton said.

According to Stanton, incoming ninth graders can have an immediate impact on the team while learning some great life lessons.

"Wrestling is the oldest and greatest sport. It teaches wrestlers how to be disciplined, develop mental toughness and increase strength and quickness. [You can] meet new friends and learn body awareness. It also can help you train for other sports you are interested in," he said.

### Nordic Skiing

The Cooper Nordic skiing squad is

looking for incoming freshmen to participate on the team.

"When freshmen are a part of a sport, they are getting to know people in all grades and in all classes that they might not interact with on a daily basis," Head Coach Ms. Hoffman said. "For Cooper Nordic specifically, freshmen are welcomed into a close-knit team that is genuinely excited about having new people join the sport."

The team has been competitive in recent seasons. Hoffman said one highlight of last season was "beating Benilde-St. Margaret's in quite a few races."

Hoffman said an important part of the sport is that athletes realize the benefits of pushing themselves.

"Some skiers on the team realized a little too late in the season that they could ski faster than they thought," Hoffman said.

As the team looks to increase the number of participants in 2021-2022, Hoffman said a key focus will be to "build on a foundation of Nordic skills."

## INCOMING FRESHMEN NEED TO ADJUST THINKING ABOUT CREDITS, GRADES continued from page 4

The next big thing that ninth graders need to focus on is their GPA. The GPA is a number on a four-point scale that represents the average of the letter grades students receive in their classes.

"A student with all As would have a 4.0 GPA and a student with all Bs would have a 3.0 average," Hough said.

Students hoping to attend college need to pay attention to their GPA. You want to have the highest GPA you can because, when you start to apply to colleges, they look at it to get an idea of what kind of student the applicant is.

"The easiest way to maintain your GPA is to never let it get low in the first

place," Hough said. "It's a lot easier to bring down your GPA than to bring it up. Students should take high school as serious as they can from the beginning because this is when things matter the most."

Earning course credits and maintaining a good GPA are both important to high school students. The best way to be

successful in high school is to never put yourself in a position where you have to catch up. If you stay ahead and stay on the right path to graduate, high school will be much easier.

"Start high school on the right foot from the start. Everything counts once ninth grade starts," Hough said.

## SCHOOL LAB SUPPORTS WRITING, MATH NEEDS continued from page 5

Lounge will benefit from getting one-on-one support on their own questions," Simpson said. "They can work with a teacher to get all their questions answered in a low-pressure situation."

While working in room 246, the expectations are simple: sign in at the computer, have work to do and be respectful of others. Olesen said that no food is allowed in the room nor is cell

phone use.

Students using the lab are encouraged to bring their materials with them. However, Olesen said there are some basic supplies available to borrow while

students are in the room, including calculators, writing utensils and staplers.

"I set the room up to be a calm, quiet, safe, welcoming room that students will feel comfortable in," she said.



# Incoming ninth graders sought for spring squads

After a long winter season spent inside, spring sports teams give Cooper athletes a chance to train and compete outdoors



Photo by DACK NEHRING

The Hawks boys baseball squad faces tough competition from their many rivals in the Metro West Conference.

By NOLAN ANDLER  
Quill staff writer

Cooper gives its students the opportunity to play many sports in the spring. As the third sports season of the year, spring sports starts in March, a time when everyone is ready to get outside and exercise.

## Girls Track

The 2020-2021 girls track season saw athletes getting back into shape after the previous season was canceled due to COVID.

“We saw continuous PRs throughout the season,” Head Coach Ms. Schuelke said.

As she looks toward the 2021-2022 season, Schuelke said younger athletes will be important to the team’s success.

“Our freshman and sophomores have been experimenting with different events throughout this season,” she said. “Next year, we will be able to build on the foundational skills that they’ve acquired in this first season.”

A typical girls track practice starts with team warm ups, then athletes divide up into sprints, long distance and throws for workouts. After the sprint workout, jumpers break off for practice at the pits.

Typically, track athletes have one meet each week.

“At each meet, we compete against two or three other schools in our conference,” Schuelke said.

For ninth graders considering girls track as a spring sports option, Schuelke said that everyone is welcome and there are a wide variety of events in which new athletes can compete.

“Being a part of our team will strengthen your core athletic skills: running, jumping and throwing,” she said.

## Boys Track

The Hawks boys track squad saw some success in 2021 across a variety of events.

“We have seen some successes in our sprint events, especially the 100 and 200,” assistant coach Mr. Zuccola said. “We also have some exceptionally competitive athletes in the long and high jumps and in the throws.”

This success looks like it should continue into the 2021-2022 season thanks to the small number of graduating seniors on the 2021 team.

“Having not lost many seniors to graduation last year, our team’s primary focus this year is on continuing to develop the young talent we already have,” Zuccola said.

Boys track practices start with a team meeting, which is followed by a warm-up run, plyometrics and group stretching. After that, the athletes break up with their specific event coaches for that day’s workout.

Meanwhile, when it comes to meets, Zuccola said there are multiple things happening at once.

“A track meet traditionally begins with field events such as shot, disc, high jump, pole vault, long jump and

triple jump getting underway before the running events begin. There are then 12 running events that take place as the field events continue concurrently,” he said.

No matter what area of interest a freshman athlete might have, Zuccola encouraged them to consider boys track in the spring.

“Track is a sport that can teach athletes about lifelong fitness and healthy living,” he said. “Track is also a way to gain speed and strength for other sports in which the athletes might participate.”

## Girls Lacrosse

Head Coach Ms. Gelhar said the 2021 girls lacrosse team did an excellent job working on the skills that will pay off with wins in the future.

“We have seen some tremendous improvement in our transitions and quick passes, as well as amazing goalie saves, and hustles up the field,” Gelhar said.

As she looks toward 2022, Gelhar said that having a “normal” season would be great after the challenges of COVID.

“We would like to continue to add games from different teams to change up our competition. We will have about eight seniors [in 2022], so lots of leaders and talent are being brought back with the team,” she said.

Each girls lacrosse practice starts with captain-led warm ups before heading into other drills.

“We often end practice with a fun game that incorporates essential skills or a scrimmage,” Gelhar said.

Lacrosse games are composed of two, 25-minute halves with stopped time after a goal or in the last two minutes.

“Fifty minutes total of play is plenty of time to get lots of touches and games are generally high scoring,” Gelhar said.

With so many seniors on the team in 2022, Gelhar said she welcomes all interested ninth graders to join the squad.

“Lacrosse is a great way to meet new people and stay active. Any experience level is welcome,” she said.

## Boys Lacrosse

The boys lacrosse team saw the addition of many new players in 2021, which meant that work on basic skills and strategies was a big part of last season’s agenda.

“We had a lot of new people to the sport and, by the end of the season, they grew a lot and became way better,” team captain Josh Skoglund (12) said.

As a small team, Skoglund said that recruiting new players, especially ninth graders, will be important in 2022. Skoglund said these players should expect a similar routine during daily practices.

“We start with passing and stick work and then sometimes we spit offense and defense players and work on those skills. Then, at the end, we scrimmage,” he said.

One challenge for the Hawks lacrosse team is the tough competition they face in the Metro West Conference.

“Our team plays some good teams,” Skoglund said. “We play Benil-

de St.-Margaret’s, which is a very good lacrosse school,” he said.

Given that tough competition, Skoglund said he is hopeful more freshmen come out for lacrosse in 2022.

“It can be a good way for a freshman to know some good upperclassman and others and have a good friendship with them,” he said.

## Girls Golf

Cooper’s new girl golf coach, Mr. Oscarson, said the 2021 season brought growth to the skill set held by the members of the team, who also had “a good time playing a sport they can do for the rest of their lives.”

One challenge the team will be facing as they prepare for the 2022 season is the small number of athletes on the team.

“We are a small team that is in the growing stages. Three girls participated in 2021: a senior, a ninth grader and an eighth grader. We would love to have more girls come out for the team next year. Grades seven and up can sign up for



Photo by JULIE BOSWELL

The boys lacrosse team looks to add new players this year.

golf and everyone will make the team,” Oscarson said.

During a typical day on the golf squad, players go to the driving range and putting green or play a course.

“We played at three different courses: Theodore Wirth Golf Course, Columbia Golf Course and New Hope Golf Course,” Oscarson said.

For competitions, girls golfers play nine holes at whatever course is hosting the match. For conference and section finals, athletes play 18 holes.

Oscarson said he is hopeful that incoming freshman girls will give golf a try in 2022.

“Golf is the best value of any high school sport. All time spent at the driving range and golfing on the course is included in the registration fee,” he said.

## Boys Golf

Head Coach Mr. Fitze said the 2021 boys golf squad saw a growth in its numbers, which led to a positive season.

“We’ve had more golfers compete in varsity meets than we have had in the past few seasons,” he said.

Contributing to the growth in the team’s numbers was a large group of underclassmen, which means the team

will have a large group of golfers return for 2022.

“This also helps us recruit new golfers to the team,” Fitze added.

A practice for the boys golf team consists of a warm up and stretching. The team then splits into two so coaches can instruct in smaller groups.

“Towards the end of practice, golfers work on areas of their game that they choose: putting, chipping irons or off the tee,” Fitze said.

During competitions, golfers play a different number of holes depending on whether or not they qualify as varsity. While varsity players play a full, 18-hole match, the JV squad plays nine holes.

No matter what their skill level might be, Fitze encourages Cooper ninth graders to join the team in 2022.

“The team is extremely welcoming and work well together with each other and new golfers,” Fitze said. “[New freshmen] get to be a part of a team where initial skill level won’t exclude them from being on the team or

competing for that matter.”

“We then move to practicing on our defense and our coach will hit softballs at us to make plays,” Drinkwine said. “We then move to offense practice and will use Ts to practice and also use the hitting cage. We also do some live hitting off of our pitchers for them to get more practice in as well.”

Softball practice usually starts with warm-ups that emphasize shoulder and leg stretching since those are two areas prone to injuries in the sport.

“We have had sleepovers and bonded before and after the games,” team captain and 2021 graduate Arianna Drinkwine said.

One challenge facing the team as the 2022 season approaches is the loss of four senior players to graduation, all of whom were varsity starters on the team.

“The team will have to adapt to that change and replace [those players] to continue to have a strong defense,” Drinkwine said.

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## Girls Softball

A big emphasis of the 2021 girls softball team was developing social connections between the players after they missed the 2020 season due to COVID.

“We have had sleepovers and bonded before and after the games,” team captain and 2021 graduate Arianna Drinkwine said.

One challenge facing the team as the 2022 season approaches is the loss of four senior players to graduation, all of whom were varsity starters on the team.

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Given the loss of leadership that will occur in 2022 with so many seniors graduating in 2021, Drinkwine said the incoming ninth graders will have a chance to take on important team roles right from the outset.

“Incoming freshmen would benefit by joining softball because you learn how to play on a team and contribute to team work,” Drinkwine said. “You also get to experience things like team bonding trips, traveling to out-of-town tournaments and the opportunity to grow in your knowledge in the sport.”

## Boys Baseball

The boys baseball squad was similar to the girls softball team in that its members emphasized team bonding in 2021 after the loss of the 2020 season due to COVID.

“Our team learned how to grow and have fun together as team,” team captain and 2021 graduate Spencer Niebuhr said. “We just have a lot of fun and go out and compete against these other teams.”

According to Niebuhr, one thing that will be interesting about the 2022 season is the number of seniors who will be playing on the team.

“They have the talent do some damage. But they are also a team that is going to go out and compete and just have fun,” Niebuhr said.

When it comes to practice, Niebuhr said that baseball players are there to learn and improve their skills. Niebuhr added that mindset is a big part of success in practice and in games for boys baseball players.

“Attitude will win over any position on the field because, if you make a mistake and shake it off and compete for the next play, they will see that your a hard-working athlete,” he said.

Given the large numbers of players who will be graduating at the end of the 2022 season, Niebuhr said the addition of incoming freshmen to the roster will be important.

“An incoming freshman would benefit from this sport because you will make friends and, more importantly, have a family there for you,” he said.

## Adapted Softball

COVID restrictions meant that the adapted softball team had a practice-only season in 2021. However, Head Coach Mr. DeMorett said that approach was “fun and beneficial for the players.”

“We had a few new players join, so the slower pace [helped them] learn routines,” he said.

Since the adapted team consists of players from several schools inside and outside of the Robbinsdale district, a typical practice usually starts with some down time as everyone arrives at Cooper. Once everyone is present, DeMorett said they do “warm-up exercises, specific skills related to softball, followed by some game-like scrimmaging.”

DeMorett said that adapted games take place indoors and follow regular softball.

“Games last seven innings unless a team is up by 10 runs or more, in which case the game would be shortened to five or six innings,” he said.

After several new players joined the squad in 2021, DeMorett said he hopes that trend continues in 2022 with the addition of incoming ninth graders.

“Incoming freshmen would benefit from joining because it would be another place where they could feel they belong,” DeMorett said.

## Boys Tennis

The lingering effects of COVID led to a smaller-than-normal roster in 2021. However, 2021 graduate Tucker Tracy said players still had a good time.

“Skills improved greatly for everyone,” he said. “We had lots of fun.”

During boys tennis practices, players work on those skills with which they might be struggling. They also take part in competitive activities designed to look like a real match.

When it comes to playing against other teams, Tracy said the coach will decide whether individual athletes will be playing as singles or doubles.

“Players are assigned first, second, third and fourth singles, and first, second and third doubles, ranked by skill,” Tracy said. “They then play against the corresponding singles or doubles team from the other school.”

While the 2021 roster was small, Tracy said he hopes “the 2022 team sees growth through the addition of ninth grader players.”