

# The Signal



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## FHS Musicians Honor Veterans with Music

by Abby Hernandez

On Friday, November 11th, a select group of students from band, choir, and winning essay writers attended the annual VFW Veterans Day brunch.

Veterans Day originates from providing a day to honor the people who served our country; it is a celebration of all the hard-working people who have dedicated and sacrificed themselves to protect us.

During this event, the band played patriotic songs, the choir sang the national anthem, and three students shared their essays about what veterans mean to them.

The band goes to perform at the Veterans Day breakfast every year to honor our veterans and provide a little bit of entertainment; however, after going, this event is so much more than just celebrating the veterans.

A veteran from the Pentagon during 9/11 went on stage to give a speech, but not only did he share his experiences and gave advice on how to treat veterans and what to ask them, the speaker reminded us that though they have seen tragic things, that's what it is; tragic and trauma-inducing. So when you have the opportunity to meet a veteran, ask them about the good moments they had during the time they served rather than asking them for their gory story.

Hearing everyone talk gives you a new perspective on how to interact with the heroes among us. The honorary breakfast gives the whole day brand new importance.

When I asked Julia Windham why she thought it was essential to attend this event, she said, "I think we accomplished bringing spirits up and honoring veterans; we brought recognition for everything they went through. I think we

do this every year to ensure we remember their bravery."

Though some younger generation members have families in the military or are veterans, we haven't seen everything they've sacrificed. The importance of going was to honor our veterans and ensure their efforts are never forgotten.

Germany introduced bands to military life. Band director Mr. Garret George brought back the history of bands; he said, "I think it is important to share our gifts and provide a musical service. So when there are community events with opportunities to share, musicians must know they have a service to provide. Historically, we are responsible for ceremonies, such as the presidential inauguration and graduation ceremonies. While Veterans Day may not be ceremonial, music is valid. The military is the beginning of band tradition; to honor people with their military song brings the tradition of band full circle."

The tradition of the band started in the military, representing each of the branches with a song, and the Fenton Band was there to carry the tradition.

Not only did it carry the tradition of bands, but it also carried on the importance of community building. Bensenville and Wood Dale consist of many veterans, and today's youth may not be aware of their sacrifices.

"I think it's an important community event, bringing in the youth to educate the new generation on the importance of honoring our veterans," Delilah Johnson said.

This event builds community relations, brings back traditions, and educates citizens on how to treat veterans. We must keep the tradition alive and further honor our heroes as they do so much to ensure we live safe lives.

## Senior Angel Acosta Leon Recognized by NHRP

By: Sarah Guerrero Gorostieta

Senior Angel Acosta Leon was recently recognized by the College Board's National Hispanic Recognition Program (NHRP) for outstanding academic performance and was awarded the National Hispanic Recognition Award. The NHRP highlights academically well-prepared students across the United States who have achieved high academic success throughout their high school years.

Acosta Leon has always been quite reserved, but as he takes on senior year, he reflects on the growth that is possible when you trust yourself.

"I've always been hesitant to take opportunities. My fear of failure discouraged me for a long time, so I refrained from trying new things. As a senior, though, I realized that I needed to instill change, so I started by taking risks- not only with the NHRP but with other programs such as QuestBridge," Acosta Leon comments.

Bowling coach, Matthew Lynch, commends Acosta Leon.

"Angel truly is a fantastic young man. Throughout my time as his coach, Angel has never failed to prove that he is respectful, humble, and brilliantly hardworking. I'm very proud of him, he is incredibly deserving of this award- his character is a testament to that," Lynch praises.

With gratitude, Acosta Leon expresses that his "parents played the most important role" in shaping his newfound sense of determination.

"I'm grateful to have parents that have continuously supported my siblings and me. When it comes to chasing our dreams and goals, our parents have always encouraged us to keep pushing forward with our best efforts," Acosta Leon explains.

Additionally, Acosta Leon remains indebted to the influence of his family's history, stating that his "parent's stories, accounts of hardship and resilience, have also served as a primary influence. They took a risk to move to the United States and start a family with very little at the beginning. Through hard work, they built themselves up and fostered a home in which their children could

do anything and everything they dreamed of. I hope to live up to that someday- it truly is the ultimate sacrifice."

At the moment, Acosta Leon is looking to study finance in college.

"I'm excited to further my academic endeavors, moving forward with a path towards higher education. That is something my parents always

encouraged and something I have always dreamed of," Acosta Leon states.

With a concluding message to Fenton's student body, Acosta Leon reminds us to "put 100% into everything you do, because your efforts will inch you closer to your goals and aspirations. Remember that sí, se puede, and ¡Viva Mexico!"



Photo courtesy of Rick Kambic



# Fenton High School Mock Election Results

by Sarah Guerrero Gorostieta

Mock Election Day at Fenton High School was on October 28, 2022. Our student body’s results steadily aligned with the local Illinois election numbers, and though percentages wavered, Democratic candidates prevailed over Republicans in both elections.

In the races featured on mock ballots, Democratic candidates championed their races both at Fenton and in the general election, taking an average of approximately 67% of the mock votes, and 61.5% of the general votes. Meanwhile, Republicans only averaged 24% of the votes during the mock election and approximately 36.8% of the general election votes. Independent and Libertarian candidates performed better in the mock election than in the general election, receiving about 17% of the votes in their respective mock races, while averaging below 10% across Illinois.

However, one particular question on the ballots seemingly sparked an irregularity when comparing Fenton’s mock results to local Illinois results. The Fenton High School Referendum was the outlier, losing the vote in the general election with 58% of voters voting AGAINST the proposition. Conversely, 76% of Fenton’s mock voters voted IN FAVOR of the Referendum. Additionally, the Referendum question received 891 votes in total, just below the 900 votes submitted for the gubernatorial election, while the remaining elections only averaged about 865 votes each.

So, what made the Referendum election different? Primarily, Fenton students are overtly aware of the current state of our building and its facilities, so it’s no surprise that it was a prominent race. The concept that the student population becomes more civically involved with topics that directly involve us parallels the disruptive and newfangled trends in 2022 midterm data.

According to AP VoteCast, about 1 in 8 voters overall were under the age of 30, and more than half of said voters supported Democratic candidates this election. However, young voters seem to be characterizing themselves as more “issue-oriented” voters in comparison to their voting counterparts, which explains an increase in support for independent candidates from young people, and a decrease in support for them from the Silent Generation. The number of young people voting in 2022 was recorded to be the second highest of all time, just below 2018 data.

But Gen Zers aren’t just running to the voting polls, they’re running for Congress too.

Maxwell Alejandro Frost, Congressman-Elect for Florida’s 10th Congressional District, became the first ever Generation Z member of Congress at the young age of 25. An avid fighter for gun reform and the

national organizing director for the March For Our Lives movement, Frost led a campaign that was carried to victory by a community of supporters that believed in his message: “Don’t count us out because we’re young. What we’re experiencing is valid. We’ve been through more mass shooting drills than fire drills, and that perspective is important. We need a Congress that looks like our country, as far as age and experience. That is how we are going to pass legislation that champions working-class families.”

Ultimately, societal issues that are affecting our generation the most drive Gen Zers to the polls at an unprecedented rate. Recent occurrences, like the overturning of Roe v Wade, an alarming upsurge in gun violence, and a disturbing hike in the spread of hateful rhetoric that not only incites but justifies bias-motivated hate crimes like the November 19, 2022 tragedy at LGBTQ+ bar Club Q, in Colorado Springs, where Anderson Aldrich opened fire, killing 5 and injuring 18, all draw young people to the polls as they realize that lives are, and have been, on the line.

Mock elections are crucial to inspiring civic engagement in new and future voters. Director of Learning and Division Leader of English and Social Studies Kate Ward thanks a specific organization for their longtime support, saying that “our continued partnership with the League of Women Voters has led to our school’s success with the increase in civic involvement. Fenton’s administration is thankful for the opportunity to work in collaboration with them during every election. Without their guidance and support, incentives like the mock election, or voter registration before the primaries and midterms, would not be possible.”

Moreover, Ward adds that “moving forward, Fenton hopes to incorporate more authentic voting factors, like paper ballots, to create a more realistic simulation.”

Furthermore, she details that “Generation Z is no longer just our future, they are our present, too. It’s our responsibility as educators to empower students to show up at the voting polls as educated citizens prepared to vote on issues that matter to them with a confidence that is acquired through researching candidates and causes.”

Fenton’s Social Studies department equipped mock voters with resources that provide impartial information and guidance, and this research method assists citizens in making informed decisions, rather than voting solely with preconceived notions.

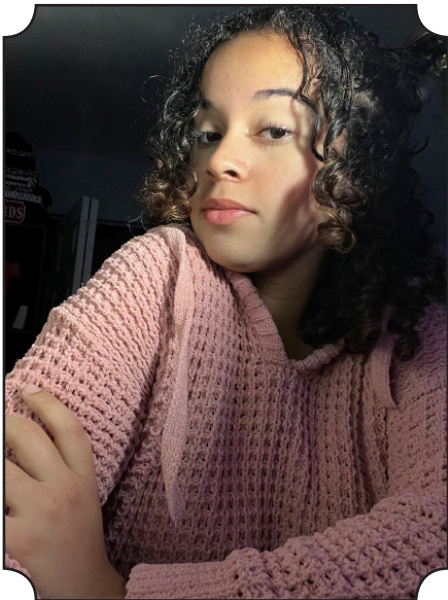
Reflecting on his first voting experience, Senior Angel Santiago comments “I was nervous to vote at first because I didn’t know much about the candidates besides their parties, but after I did some research, I actually felt really confident on Election Day.”

Governor				
	Name	Party	Votes	
	JB Pritzker	Democrat	620 (68.88%)	
	Darren Bailey	Republican	179 (18.88%)	
	Scott Schluter	Libertarian	101 (11.22%)	
	Total Votes: 900			
U.S. Senate				
	Name	Party	Votes	
	Tammy Duckworth	Democrat	601 (67.38%)	
	Kathy Salvi	Republican	184 (21.63%)	
	Bill Redpath	Libertarian	107 (12%)	
	Total Votes: 892			
II Secretary of State				
	Name	Party	Votes	
	Alexi Giannoulas	Democrat	589 (68.01%)	
	Dan Brady	Republican	277 (31.88%)	
	Total Votes: 866			
	II Comptroller			
	Name	Party	Votes	
	Susan A. Mendoza	Democrat	482 (54.77%)	
	Shannon Teresi	Republican	307 (34.88%)	
	Deidre McCloskey	Libertarian	91 (10.34%)	
	Total Votes: 880			
II Treasurer				
	Name	Party	Votes	
	Michael W. Freichs	Democrat	423 (48.18%)	
	Tom Demmer	Republican	264 (30.07%)	
	Preston Nelson	Libertarian	181 (21.75%)	
	Total Votes: 878			
IL Attorney General				
	Name	Party	Votes	
	Kwame Raoul	Democrat	632 (71.8%)	
	Thomas DeVore	Republican	180 (20.48%)	
	Daniel Robin	Libertarian	67 (7.82%)	
	Total Votes: 879			
Amendment 1, the Illinois Right to Collective Bargaining Measure				
Name		Yes Votes	No Votes	Total
Amendment 1, the Illinois Right to Collective Bargaining Measure		788 (92.51%)	62 (7.49%)	828
5th Congressional District (U.S. House)				
	Name	Party	Votes	
	Mike Quigley	Democrat	451 (51.18%)	
	Tommy Hanson	Republican	300 (34.06%)	
	Jerico Malies	Independent	130 (14.78%)	
	Total Votes: 881			
38th Legislative District (IL Senate)				
	Name	Party	Votes	
	Don Harmon	Democrat	807 (100%)	
	Total Votes: 807			
77th Representative District (IL House)				
	Name	Party	Votes	
	Norma Hernandez	Democrat	688 (75.77%)	
	Anthony Airdo	Republican	213 (24.23%)	
	Total Votes: 879			
District 100 Referendum				
Name		Yes Votes	No Votes	Total
District 100 Referendum		678 (78.09%)	213 (23.91%)	891

Senior Photo Opinion:  
Any Advice for the Underclassmen?



**Stephanie Gutierrez:**  
“Don’t be afraid to step out of your comfort zone and try something new. That’s how I found my favorite sport!”



**Dayanara Adorno:**  
“Go outside of your comfort zone and experience a variety of things offered in highschool. Might as well stay focused and have fun at the same time before adulthood right?”



**Olivia Beecroft:**  
“My advice would be to take advantage of all the class options we have. You’re here anyways, so take classes you’re actually interested in and learn as much as you can, it makes school fun!”



**Ariana Hurtado:**  
“Try out different clubs, you never know what you’ll like!”

Referendum Failed; Calls for Rennovation Remain

by Rosalie Nalborczyk  
In the past year, Fenton High School has attempted to pass a Referendum twice, first during the primaries in June, and finally during the midterms in November. With the Referendum, Fenton had planned to fix school-wide issues in order to modernize and rebuild a better school for current and future staff and students.  
However, the voter turnout was less than expected in both elections, and about 60% of the community voted no to the Referendum. Though the Referendum did not pass, “people are now more

aware of the importance of civics,” according to Superintendent Mr. Ongtengco.  
More people are starting to get involved in conversations about important topics, like the Referendum, opening up a new door for the future of the Fenton community.  
The Referendum has sparked new conversations about the well-being of the student body at Fenton, and how the state of our building impacts students and faculty.  
“Our building issues aren’t going away, and as administrators, we want what’s best for our kids,” Ongtengco explains.

The main issue remains the facilities, not the election results.  
Junior Sarah Guerrero Gorostieta, who canvassed for and spoke about the Referendum across our community, explains in a statement that “the Referendum campaign brought a lot of people together. We invited families inside to view their children’s school in person, and we fostered conversations about a multitude of topics between students, staff, administration, and parents. I know I’m graduating next spring, but my mom went to Fenton back in the 90’s, and I have tons of cousins coming through the District 2 and 7 school

systems. We can make this school a better place for future generations, its all a matter of time, patience, and perseverance. The Referendum isn’t something we want, but its something we need.”  
Bettering the school will provide Fenton students with an environment that inspires innovation and growth, as a modernized and up to date building will create more opportunities for current and future Bison. Though the Referendum did not pass, there is still so much work to do, and a lot of room for improvement, not just with our building, but with our local civics too.

Boys’ Bowling Updates

by: Reagan Dakins

The Fenton Boys bowling team is hitting strikes left and right on the lanes. Senior leaders Joshua Kallis and Dylan Thompson have goals to bring the team to state. This self-motivated team has had a fantastic start to the season.

Last season Senior Dylan Thompson went to state with an average of 202.5 in the lanes, finishing 61st out of 125 bowlers. New head coach, Mike Chappell, hopes “to win conference and go back to state.”

With the team’s starting five all playing, they rolled a 28.76 against Hinsdale.

Our Bison have a few

changes to the team as well, with Coach Mathew Lynch stepping aside and new Head Coach Mike Chappell and assistant Coach Kevin Banks taking over.

Banks is a familiar face to many of us who attended Blackhawk Middle School. We know him as school police liaison Officer Banks.

This changeup proved to be no challenge for the Bison as they beat Hinsdale Central by 399 pins, which is an amazing feat for the team.

Be sure to support our Bison Boys Bowling team for the remainder of the season. Matches are played at Wood Dale Bowl.

Boys’ Hoops Advances

by Reagan Dakins

The boys’ basketball team started their season off with a win against Clemente High School, 65-47, going 1-0 in the Annual Chuck Mitchell Tourney. Whoever wins this game goes on to the next round of the tournament.

Captain Senior Nick Tinajero hopes to “beat the win record of last year, to win the regional championship, and do the best.”

Head Coach Charles Taft states that a couple of major strengths for the Bison is that “this group is very, very together as a team, but also [their] ability to shoot the basketball.”

Captain Nick Tinajero claims that the hustle, defense, and way they move the ball are all major strengths as well. This team works together on the court, whether in a game or in practice “with motivation coming not only from within but from Supercam, Coach Taft’s son,” remarks Nick Tinajero.

When looking towards the season, Coach Taft is looking to his players for the goal “to play hard every game, play together every game, and to play smart every game.”

Come to see the boys’ basketball team shoot some hoops and win at the next home game against Rolling Meadows. You can also get a season pass for all games, tourney, and regular, for \$25!



# Say it Like You Mean it With the New Speech Team

By Edgar Martinez

Fenton speech team recently began its season. This year the team is feeling confident going into tournaments with the mixture of veteran competitors on the team and new recruits led by three longtime coaches, Melissa Feinberg, Nicole Hendricks, and Mollie O'Connor.

The speech team opted to stay in house for a mock tournament the first weekend.

According to Mrs. Hendricks, "We didn't go due to the state the team was in, not that we weren't ready but rather that there were so many things happening with our members in their personal lives that we decided to give them a break for the week."

The day played out just like any other tournament, with 3 full rounds, critiques, and peer coaches judging the other members, eventually leading to the finalists of the night performing their respective events to the entire team, all being amazing.

The team's first off campus tournament was at Fremd High School on November 12th, where a couple of the peer coaches earned their spots in the finals and represented the school.

The next tournament afterwards was the Turkey Tournament held at Hoffman Estates for Varsity members and Schaumburg for the JV team on November 19th. On the varsity side, many peer coaches and seasoned members brought home medals, including Tera Pabico bringing home 1st place in her event.

On the JV side, the rookies went hard against the competition as well, placing in the finalists in multiple events.

Feinberg said, "I want to see how the new members and even the old ones fill the shoes of the graduated seniors that left a bit of a gap in the team," also adding "I want these kids to be here to conquer a very common fear and to reconnect with others whilst doing so."

Hendricks echoes this sentiment, saying, "I really want to see the kids take up leadership roles and improve who they are and what they can do, I believe that speech is one of the most important skills to have and here we can give it to them."

O'Connor says, "I'm just here for the ride and being able to see these kids grow into something bigger than themselves."

The speech team is full of intelligent and determined people who face hard competition with other school's teams. So if you have any friends or family who participate in this season, wish them good luck (and make sure they're memorized!).



Cartoon by Samantha Lang

## Student Council's Blood Drive

By Lucy Johnson

Student council ran a successful blood drive during school on November 10<sup>th</sup>. Students 16+, community members, and Fenton staff came out and donated blood. The goal was 46 units of blood, and by the end of the day, the total donated by the Fenton community was 56 units. The blood donated was able to go on to help 168 future patients.

Delilah Johnson, a student and one of the blood donors says, "The blood drive was a great experience that made me feel like I was doing something good for the community! Plus, It was a good time for me to get over my fear of needles."

Janelis Rivera Mayos, another student and blood donor

states, "It didn't go as bad as I heard it could. Overall, it was a fine experience for a good cause."

Ms. Chris Casterton, special education teacher and student council advisor, encourages people to come together once again for the second blood drive.

She said, "This is just another way that our school and community come together to help out those in need. If you missed it or couldn't donate this time, don't worry. There will be another drive on March 22<sup>nd</sup>."

If you want to help your community, get community service hours, or simply want the free snack that goes with donating, make sure to stop by the next blood drive!

## Bison Wrestling Team

By Reagan Dakins

Fenton's state wrestling team is back at it again this season. Coach Brian Hastings views this season with high hopes of "doing well in conference, getting through regionals, and being one of the top teams in the state."

With a team full of leaders, this team leads its way through tournaments for lots of pins to the mats.

Our team consists of a big group of dedicated wrestlers, male and female, always fighting for the wins and putting in hard work.

Hastings vocalized how "committed our team" is, saying they were a "tough group."

This team has "had a bunch of improvement and continues to improve more than any other team I've coached."

Last year Fenton had two females be state qualifiers, Junior Yamile Penaloza and Yannel Perez Castaneda.

This is a huge accomplishment for our female wrestling team, and both women are hoping to go back to state and do even better.

The next home meet is Saturday, December 3rd for the 42nd Annual Weiss Invite. Be sure to wish our Bison wrestlers good luck for lots of wins and a great season.

## University of Minnesota

By Jadyn Golz

University of Minnesota Twin Cities  
240 Williamson Hall,  
231 Pillsbury Drive SE,  
Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA  
Established in 1851

Hubert H. Humphrey  
Walter Mondale  
Dave Arneson  
Jessica Lange  
Henry Fonda  
Bob Dylan (Didn't Graduate)

Average SAT: 1337  
Average ACT: 28  
Test Optional

Specialties:  
Research (R1)  
Athletics (D1)

In State Tuition: \$13,532  
Out of State Tuition: \$23,048  
Application Fee: \$55  
81% of Students Receive Financial Aid





# Graceling Written by Kristin Cashore; Book Review

By Jady Golz

Written by Kristin Cashore, *Graceling* is a book on my shelf for a while. I read it a couple of years ago and loved it--and I've been looking for a reason to re-read it. That reason came in a bookstore in Woodfield Mall. I saw one of the most eye-catching book covers I'd seen. Swirls of blue, green, and gold hid the figure of a girl dressed in white with green-blue eyes matching the scenery. I picked up the book and saw the same one sitting on my shelf at home.

It's one of the prettiest covers I've ever seen. They say not to judge a book by its cover, but I've thoroughly enjoyed it already. So, am I judging it by its cover? Even so, a gold-plated cover can't save a bad story. However, I'm happy to report that *Graceling* was just as good (if not better) than I remember.

Cashore calls this world "The Graceling Realm," which contains four other novels besides *Graceling*. Our story starts with Katsa, the main character, sneaking into a dungeon to save a frail older man. Katsa is a Graceling, indicated by her heterochromia. If her blue-green eyes didn't make her stand out, her fighting abilities as a woman did.

Katsa is the niece of the King of the Middluns, King Randa. Katsa's parents are both deceased well before the story starts. Katsa recalls when her Grace manifested. She was at one of Randa's banquets when one of her male relatives tried to make a move on her. She was very young at the time, younger than twelve. Katsa didn't understand the political

goal that her relative was trying to achieve, but she did understand that she didn't like him. So, she punched him--and accidentally killed him.

People in the Middluns don't like Gracelings. All Gracelings must be taken before the King to see if they're useful to him. Randa has a graced chef and multiple graced archers in the King's Guard. Graces can also be quite disappointing. Some people are graced with being able to hold their breath for an extended time. But graced swimmers aren't very useful in a land-locked kingdom like the Middluns. So they're sent back to their home. If they were an innkeeper's child, they would practically curse the business because people wanted to avoid Gracelings at all costs. Randa, on the other hand, was clever.

Randa declared that Katsa's Grace was killing and has since used her as a dog to make people fess up to their actions. Randa calls her his "lady-killer" and flaunts her at dinners and banquets. Katsa hates the attention. She doesn't like being seen only as her Grace. Still, there wasn't any other place for her than at Randa's court--until she met Po.

After Katsa breaks out with the old man she was looking for at the beginning of the book, she runs into another Graceling. He wasn't with the guards but wasn't on her side either. He caught her gaze, and his eyes glowed silver and gold. She knew he was graced, and he knew she was graced. Katsa had never encountered someone who could put up a decent fight against her. Of course, Katsa

won, and she left the boy, and the incident, behind her.

When she returned to Randa's court, the silver-gold-eyed stranger showed up at the court banquet. Rumor said that his name was Prince Greeting of Lienid looking for his missing grandfather--the same person that Katsa had rescued the night they met.

Katsa met with the Prince and realized they were after the same objective: who kidnapped the old man? The Prince introduced himself as Po, a nickname his family gave him. Katsa and Po began to train with each other, growing closer and closer by the day. He could relate to her and her Grace.

After talking with Po, Katsa realized she didn't want to do Randa's dirty work anymore. She wanted to be free, to use her power to save people instead of hurting them. She confronted Randa in one of the most spectacular scenes I've ever read. The wit, dialogue, and subtext were magnificently written.

And so, with the leash to Randa severed for good, Katsa rides south through Sunder with Po to uncover a mystery that would eventually take her across four separate kingdoms, three mad kings, two deadly mountain ranges, and one tough decision.

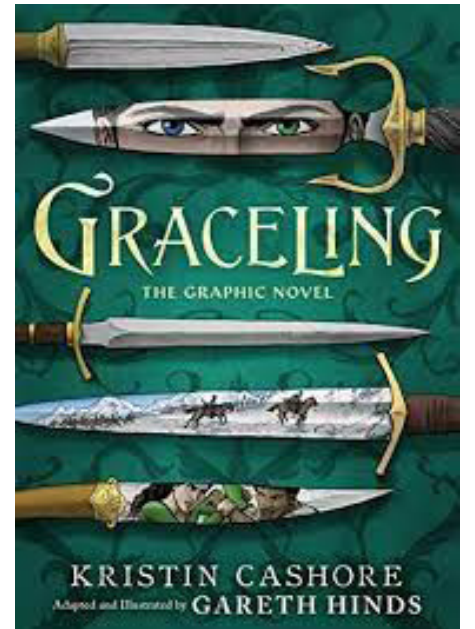
This book is a slow burn, but the catharsis at the end is worth it. By the end of the book, Katsa is tired, and rightfully so. There are scenes in this book that are cute and playful but filled with a sense of unease for what's to come. A new (much larger) issue arose with each new clue uncovered. It kept me on my toes throughout the novel.

I need to highlight the prose in this novel. It's as if the standard YA prose and the sophisticated, high-fantasy prose of Tolkien had a child: and that child is beautiful.

Here's an example of Katsa's inner dialogue about her self-image: "It was a strange monster, for, beneath its exterior, it was frightened and sickened by its own violence. It chastised itself for its savagery. And sometimes it had no heart for violence and rebelled against it utterly."

Cashore's prose is one of many things I respect about her. *Graceling* was published in 2008 and wrote the first draft entirely by hand. Cashore continues to write by hand for all of her books. For her most recent book, *Seasparrow* (2022), Cashore used notebooks that reflected the main character.

Another thing I like about Cashore is her transparency. I own two copies of *Graceling* and one copy of *Bitterblue* and *Fire*. After the conclusion of the actual book, Cashore includes FAQs, reading lists, and other insights into her writing process. As a fellow fantasy writer



who likes to haggle over little details, I significantly related to her common writing issues.

In an author's note titled "Hot Dog, Katsa!" for *Fire* (2009), Cashore writes about her experiences writing *Graceling* and how her decisions have affected how she writes the rest of the Graceling realm novels.

Cashore writes, "I had these incredibly exciting ideas. I had these characters who had particular magical abilities, and they were inside my head fighting each other, and I was just bursting to tell their story. I sat in front of a blank piece of paper and wrote the first scene...But the next thing I thought was, *Oh, crap*. Because what I saw in my head was a skeleton that was only partially formed. I had some of the bones...I knew the really big stuff--I knew the plot. But I didn't have the sinews that held all the bones together."

Cashore's attention to detail, down to how long a journey takes from Sunder to Monsea, is phenomenal. She puts a lot of effort into her work. I like reading her reflections in her books and on her blogs at [kristincashore.com](http://kristincashore.com). I enjoy reading about her experiences picking the right words, and how she shapes her world. And I especially like reading about her anxieties and regrets.

Many writers can understand Cashore's anxieties about what she puts on the page. And it's nice to know that someone else is going through the same thing you are. I know I feel that way.

All in all, *Graceling* was a lovely re-read. If not for the story, then for the insights I uncovered while writing this article. Cashore has made her way onto my favorite author list.

I highly recommend this book to anyone looking for a high-fantasy novel but don't want to get confused by the intricacies of *Lord of the Rings* or *Game of Thrones*. I also recommend Cashore for anyone looking to write a hard-worldbuilding fantasy but isn't sure where to start or how to continue.

## Jenkins' Malibu Rising Depicts Family Struggle, Triumph

By Maelyn Birchfield

Taylor Jenkins Reid's book, *Malibu Rising*, describes a family's devastation and the shocking events leading up to the 1983 fire in Malibu.

The story jumps between the present and the past. The book follows four individuals including Nina, a well-known surfer, and supermodel. Jay, a champion surfer, Hud, a prominent photographer, and the little sister of the family, Kit Riva, and parents Mick and June Riva.

When Mick and June Riva first met one another in 1956, they formed a family quickly after they met, their love for each other was unconditional, and soon after they welcomed their first child, Nina into the world. Mick is rarely home to raise his child since he is developing into a world-famous artist. He begins getting busier and busier by

the minute, almost missing the birth of his second child, Jay.

Once Hud comes into the family, things change. Despite the instability in their relationship, June continues to love Mick and forgives him. With the birth of their youngest, Kit, their relationship again deteriorates, and the Riva family shatters.

With a major turn of events, Nina, the oldest, at the age of 17 steps up to care for her three siblings. The four kids grow up to become successful and well-connected socialites.

Making the best of their past situation, they throw a yearly celebration. This year, as the Riva siblings are preparing for their spectacular party, they have no idea that this party would go down in history as a memorable one for all.



# Social Emotional Learning at Fenton

By Sarah Guerrero Gorostieta

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) has become a popular subject of conversation nationwide, and Fenton’s SEL committee is prepared to advance our school’s understanding of the importance of SEL in our classrooms. Through the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework, the committee has decided to focus on furthering Fenton’s approach to teaching self- management during the 2022-2023 school year.

So, what is self-management? According to the CASEL Competency Wheel, self-management is “the ability to manage one’s emotions, thoughts, and behaviors effectively in different situations to achieve goals and aspirations, including the capacities to delay gratification, manage stress, and feel motivation and agency to accomplish personal and collective goals.”

Fenton’s SEL committee meets monthly to discuss research and recommendations, creating practices that will be implemented as resources for our student population so that the Fenton community can build self-management skills.

2018 graduate Stephany Padilla, who is currently a Girl’s Track & Field coach and substitute teacher here at Fenton, reflects on the school’s SEL culture today.

“When I was a student, access to self-management resources felt limited, and the general topic of mental health was a hushed conversation. Today, I’m glad to see the student body, along Fenton faculty, advocating for our community’s access to SEL,” Padilla expresses.

Heritage Spanish teacher Candice DeMauro was able to innitiate the SEL conversation in her own classroom by inviting Edith Reynaga, Fenton faculty and SEL committee member, into Heritage Spanish 3 classes on November 21.

Demauro explains that “in Heritage Spanish 3, we are currently reading the book *I Am Not Your Perfect Mexican Daughter*, a novel that covers depression, and the stigma around mental illness on a very relatable level for our students.

Discussing mental health with your family can look differently across different cultures, and Ms. Reynaga isn’t just a young, Latina woman who advocates for SEL, but she is also qualified social worker. I knew she would bring a new perspective to our students and offer great insight.”

When discussing the presentation, Junior Arantza Jimenez, a Heritage

Spanish 3 student, comments that she “really enjoyed the presentation because the way Ms. Reynaga elaborated on confusing topics made the lesson feel interactive and relatable.”

Jimenez further explains that “the conversation felt very well-rounded because Ms. Reynaga didn’t just state the problems with depression and its causes, but she offered solutions, and they were creative.”

“It’s time to break the taboo around mental illness,” Reynaga states.

“The stigma surrounding mental illness is dangerous, and there is so much we can do as individuals to truly refine our self-management skills. An easy way to start is to speak up, but sometimes it may be easier to just listen, and that is just as powerful,” she concludes.

The thing is, we are already building and practicing SEL skills here at Fenton; the mood meter, for example. According to a study published in the Journal of the American College of Radiology, “physicians enjoy highly actionable tools that require minimal time to learn and implement, aka “micropractices.”

Micropractices only require a few seconds to a few minutes to implement. A favorite micropractice from our physician workshops is taking a moment to name one’s emotions, especially challenging emotions. For example, when I notice that I am feeling upset, is it anger? Concern? Exhaustion? Such naming aids self-awareness and self-management. This “name it to tame it” practice has been show to shift brain activity from the amygdala, the emotional center of the brain, to the higher-order thinking area of the brain, specifically the right ventrolateral prefrontal cortex. In so doing, it can help bring calm and ease.”

Taking this into perspective, I was able to identify that my well-being was in a languishing state - “a sense of blah-ness that dulls your motivation,” from 2020 to even today. I wasn’t depressed, but in no way was I “okay.” In adding the word “languishing” to my lexicon, I not only understood my symptoms, but I gained a deeper understanding of myself, and my mental health. While no Fenton student is a physician just yet, these practices, or micropractices are proven to be effective and can be executed by anyone. With time, we can develop these self-management skills and carry them far into our adult lives.

Connect with the SEL committee as a student advocate by emailing @ [sarah.guerrerogorostieta@fenton100.org](mailto:sarah.guerrerogorostieta@fenton100.org) today!

## Winter Spirit Week Bringing Treats, Music, & Festive Fun

By Samantha Lang

The holiday season is coming up, and with it comes many exciting events held before winter break and finals.

Starting in December, you can find holiday trees from several of our Cultural Clubs displayed in the commons, along with the decorations that student council helped set up around the school to help us get into the winter spirit.

Along with this festive display, other fun events will be hosted during the week. Such events include free hot chocolate and games during lunch, and an afternoon showing of *Christmas Vacation* sponsored by the film club.

To add onto the spirit of the holidays, starting from December 12th to December 16th, student council has a full week of themes for students to dress up to have some fun before exams and break.

Monday is *Long Winter’s Nap*. Wake up and wear your pajamas; Tuesday is *Channel your Flannel*, stay warm in your favorite flannel; Wednesday is *Winter Wonderland*, dress up like your favorite holiday character (Santa, reindeer, snowman, elf – anything winter-themed); Thursday is *Baby, it’s cold outside*, wear a hat, gloves or scarf; and lastly, *Festive Friday* on Friday, wear your ugliest holiday sweater or Blue and Orange.

We hope to see you all dressed up for spirit week!

Assistant principal Ms. Julia Bray mentions, “My personal favorites are the pajama days and the flannel days. These days are the coziest!”

Lastly, to end off the week on the 16th, we will finish the week with the holiday assembly which features Concert Choir, Swing Choir, Jazz Band and Symphonic Band. This concert will take place during Bison Time and be part of a special schedule for the day.

The spirit week held before finals and winter break is a way to share music and help get everyone to finals and build up the winter spirit.

This year, final exams take place Monday, December 19 through Wednesday, December 21. In a slight change that will ultimately add two days to what winter break usually looks like, break begins on Thursday, December 22, and students will return for second semester on Tuesday, January 10.

## Winter Spirit Week

DECEMBER 12-16

MONDAY-DECEMBER 12TH

LONG WINTER’S NAP

Just wake up and wear your pajamas

TUESDAY-DECEMBER 13TH

CHANNEL YOUR FLANNEL

Stay warm in your favorite flannel

WEDNESDAY-DECEMBER 14TH

WINTER WONDERLAND

Dress up like your favorite holiday character  
(Santa, reindeer, snowman, elf-anything winter themed)

THUSDAY-DECEMBER 15TH

BABY, IT’S COLD OUTSIDE

Wear a hat, gloves or scarf to keep you warm

FRIDAY-DECEMBER 16TH

FESTIVE FRIDAY

Wear your ugliest holiday sweater or  
Blue and Orange