

Media Center serves as information hub for Cooper students

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The Quill

Tues., Sept. 5, 2023 Ninth Grade Orientation

Winter sports teams seek incoming ninth graders to join rosters

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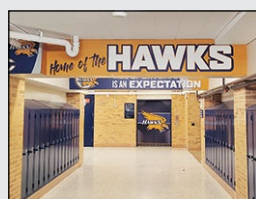
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Music department has many options

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Hawks can still join fall teams

The first sports season of the 2023-2024 school year features a number of outside, inside competition options

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MS. SMITH WELCOMES COOPER CLASS OF 2027

Ninth graders are now embarking on a four-year journey through high school



Photo by SHENG VANG

Ms. Smith encourages ninth graders to make use of the many resources available at Cooper to support student success.

By SHENG VANG
Quill staff writer

Cooper's Head Principal Ms. Smith is excited to welcome the class of 2027.

Smith just transitioned from being an assistant principal to head principal of Cooper during fourth quarter of last school year. She said one of her favorite aspects

about being head principal is having the ability to work and meet with all the students, staff and people in the building on a "broader level."

"As the assistant principal, you are focused on a certain grade level and you deal with a lot of disciplinary things and things of that nature. As head principal, you get this overarching ability

to work with all our students, all of our staff, and the overall picture of the building and people that we work with," she said.

According to Smith, the first day of school during the 2023-2024 school year will consist of only freshmen. During this first day, freshmen will be given the ability to acclimate to the building

and get to know their classroom and teachers. Freshmen will also be participating in fun activities and learning about being in high school in general.

"We want to make sure that we take some time at the start of the year, the first few weeks of school, to just talk about how to be a high school student. We know that

the transition from middle school to high school is not easy, so we make sure that they understand how credits work so they don't get behind and how the system works in high school," Smith said.

On that note, some other challenges Smith sees freshmen struggling with are negative influences, academic struggles and navigating their way to class. Smith said staying away from negative influences is "not always easy." As for credits, Smith said that freshmen struggle to understand why it is important to pass class, which can cause them to "fall behind and not gain their credits." Finally, moving from class to class is challenging because students have to deal with different teachers.

However, one good thing, according to Smith, is that Cooper has the BARR program to help ninth graders with these issues.

"[The BARR program] gives a team aspect that is similar to the middle school level, so that helps our ninth graders to have a team of teachers that is consistent who can meet with them and come up with interventions for them when needed," Smith said.

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New Hawks learn how to navigate building

Mastering the complex layout of Cooper will make it easier for incoming freshmen to find their way to class on time

By LA'SHAYA TAYLOR
Quill staff writer

Navigating around the school can be a challenge for incoming freshmen. With all the routes that can be taken at Cooper, it isn't surprising that trying to find a destination is hard. However, navigating around the school will be easier for new students once they learn the basic design of the school.

The buses stop at the east side of Cooper when they drop off students in the morning. As you enter the school from this side of the building, you will either take the stairs up to the second floor or take the stairs down to the first floor. All three floors have a hallway and at least one circle, which is where most classes are located.

On the first floor, there is only one circle. When entering from the east side of the building, the circle is located on the right. The global language, business and art classrooms are located in this circle.

As you travel down the main hallway on the first floor, to the right, or north side of the building, you will find the main gym, weight room, community gym, locker rooms, the health classroom, the FACS classroom and the AVID classroom. At the end of the main, first-floor hallway, you will find several special education rooms and one art classroom.

Meanwhile, on the second floor, the B and C circles are located on the east side of the building. B circle is where English and ELL classes are located, while in C circle, you will find the Media Center, the ABC Lab, the Coaches' Corner room and two social studies rooms.

Down the second-floor hallway to the left, you will find the main office and the Student Services office. Across the hallway from the Student Services office is the College and Career Center. At the end of the hallway to the right is the cafeteria and to the left are the auditorium and music classrooms.

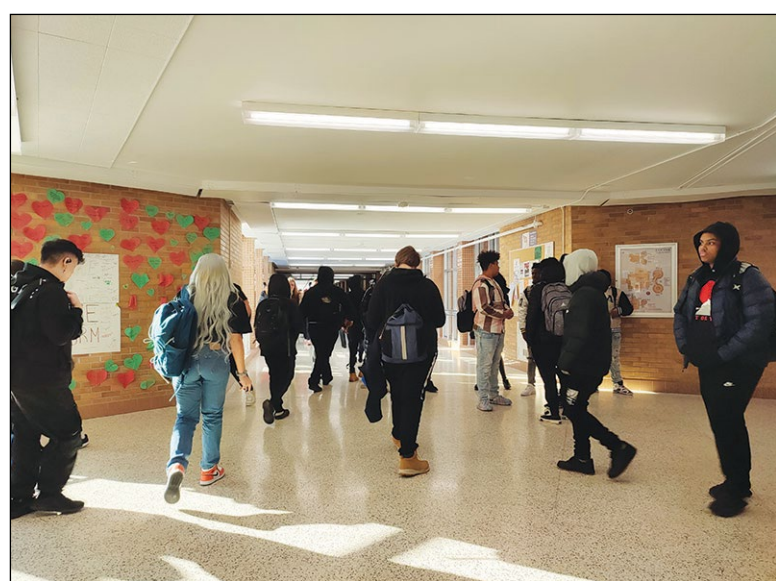


Photo by SHENG VANG

The second-floor Y is a key traffic area on the main floor of the school.

The third floor also has B and C circles. Science classrooms are located in the B circle to the left if you are coming in from the east side of the building, while math and social studies classrooms are located to the right in the C circle. At the end of the third-floor hallway, you will find the TRIO room and a staircase that leads down to the second floor.

One simple way to find the exact classroom you are looking for is by looking at the room number. For example, rooms that start with "1" are on the first floor and will have numbers like 120. Likewise, second-floor rooms will have numbers like 241 and third-floor rooms will have numbers like 389.

Advisory brings consistency to high school experience

Students will attend the weekly class, and have the same advisory teacher, throughout their four years at Cooper

By YUSEFF SHABAZZ
Quill staff writer

Going to the same class every day at the same time is what most people think of when it comes to their schedules at school. However, at Cooper, there is one class students attend only one time each week: advisory.

Advisory is a 30-minute class students attend every Wednesday during fifth period.

"The advisory period is a time for students to get more familiar with Cooper," science teacher Ms. Domenichetti said.

Despite it being the shortest and least frequently held class, advisory is still one of the most informational and important classes students will have during their four years

at Cooper.

"In advisory, freshmen plan for college, learn about the IBMYP program, register for courses and learn how to be a good student," student counselor Ms. Hough said.

Each freshman is assigned to an advisory teacher during orientation on the first day of school. Students will then see that teacher every Wednesday during fifth period for the next four years. The purpose of the advisory structure is to connect students with an adult and other students with whom they can build friendships.

Over the four years of advisory, students move through different activities, lessons and topics that are connected to their grade level in school. The payoff for this process comes

during a student's senior year, during which the advisory class plays a central role in preparing for graduation.

"The advisor gets to read the names of their graduating students during the commencement ceremony," Domenichetti said. "This is a great connection to the four years we get to spend together in advisory."

Ultimately, a key purpose of advisory is making sure all students understand the Cooper culture.

"Advisors work with the freshmen students in the first days of school, as well as throughout the year, to continue to reinforce school expectations and show them the Cooper way and the HAWK expectations," Hough said.

Student council amplifies voice of all Hawks

New ninth graders can apply to represent their class in this organization

By OWEN SANDLUND
Quill staff writer

Cooper's Student Council is responsible for representing the student body, organizing events and initiating new programs. Every year, the council changes because it "brings new students with new ideas, so each year looks different," according to Student Council advisor Ms. Geise.

In the 2022-2023 school year, for instance, the Student Council hosted a multicultural night, rotating information booths in the cafeteria concerning topics such as women's history, and even a candygram fundraiser.

The Student Council also places a heavy emphasis on spotlighting issues affecting the community, such as mental health awareness. Because of this, 2023 Student Council president and Cooper graduate Connor Brynteson said involvement in the group is a great way to be a part of "creating change" within the school. Brynteson explained that being involved in Student Council also "promotes good leadership" and looks good on college applications.

If you would like to be involved in Student Council, keep an eye open for updates on the Schoology homepage, where you will find information both on how to run for and how to vote for Student Council. Every grade level has representatives within the council, which includes incoming freshmen who may be interested in trying their shot at being elected.

For the constituents of the Student Council, communicating with your student representation is easy. The community tip line can be found on the Schoology homepage, and there is a suggestion box present in the main office as well. You can also approach a Student Council member to voice your suggestions and concerns.

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In addition, Smith advises freshmen to seek support, utilize resources and use their voice to self-advocate in order to ensure success in high school.

"Cooper is like a big family and there are so many adults and people who are there waiting for you to come and ask for support. Find some adults you can trust and go to for support and use that support when it is necessary," Smith said.

According to Smith, self-advocacy is important in high school because it "prepares you for college." It also helps students avoid getting in trouble with another student or staff member, according to Smith.

"We want our ninth graders to come talk to us if they have an issue or concerns. We want them to use their voice to say, 'Is this a good time to talk to you, Ms. Smith?' By advocating for themselves and letting us know, they don't get themselves in trouble with another student or with a staff member," Smith said.

As for the overall culture of Cooper, Smith said it is a "beautiful array of cultures."

"There are so many different cultures and people here at Cooper who identify themselves in a special way. We have different clubs and communities that come together to share who they are," Smith said.

An example of these cultures can be seen through the wall murals around the building. Smith said you can see the different cultures in students' artworks and that is the beauty of Cooper's culture.

"We are all different and those

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IB program provides rigorous classes

Beginning in their junior year, students can get involved in coursework that will prepare them for college



Photo by SHENG VANG

Hawks who pursue the IB diploma complete tasks like the Extended Essay, which is celebrated in a ceremony.

By LA'SHAYA TAYLOR
Quill staff writer

Students interested in joining the International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma program can do so in their junior and senior years at Cooper. This program involves students completing a series of advanced classes, taking exams related to those courses, writing an extended essay and engaging in a series of service activities, all of which can help them earn credit hours for college.

The IB program was first authorized at Cooper in 1998 and the first class of diploma

candidates graduated in June 2001. Ms. Christensen has been the school's IB coordinator since 2013, while Ms. Meyer is in her eighth year as the IB administrative assistant.

Christensen presents information about the program to all English 10 classes in January of each year and explains the differences between taking individual IB diploma courses and doing the full IB diploma.

"Students who are interested in pursuing the full IB diploma must meet with me or Ms. Meyer in order to formulate a two-year plan, where we map out courses

and exams," Christensen said.

Christensen and Meyer meet regularly with the IB students for the two years they are in the program to "support them in the various components of the program," Christensen said.

Cooper offers more than 20 IB diploma courses for students to take. Students can take as many of those courses as they believe they can handle.

"IB diploma students must test in each of the six subject groups: studies in Language and Literature, Individuals and Societies, Mathematics, the Arts, Sciences and Language Acquisition,"

Christensen said.

In addition to these courses, all diploma candidates take the Theory of Knowledge class during their senior year. They must also work on an extended essay, which begins during their junior year and is turned in halfway through their senior year. Additionally, they must complete a series of CAS activities and reflections during their junior and senior years.

The final main component of the IB program is testing. Some common IB exams that students take are chemistry, math and English, which are the biggest testing groups.

When it comes to the IB exams, registration information is presented to juniors and seniors in October based on the IB courses the students are currently taking. The tests themselves are administered in May and they are scored on a seven-point scale that helps determine whether or not the students earn an IB diploma and qualify for credit hours at the college of their choice.

"IB exams range quite a bit as far as individual marks are concerned. However, eventually, the IB composite scores are based on a seven-point scale," Christensen said.

One Cooper student who did the full diploma program was 2023 graduate Manuel Panora. He said that he enjoyed challenging himself and recommended the program to incoming freshmen.

"Being able to challenge myself helped prepare me for college," he said. "I was able to get into Johns Hopkins University and get scholarships thanks to my work in IB."

Media Center is information hub for students

From checking out print materials to printing out assignments, the center has much to offer Hawks in all four grades

By REANA GREEN
Quill staff writer

The Media Center is home to work areas, multimedia equipment and thousands of books that students can take advantage of. Many resources are provided through the Media Center in order to ensure that students enjoy full academic success at Cooper.

Media Specialist Mr. King is the main person who helps keep the Media Center organized and accessible.

"The Media Center offers two kinds of resources: physical and digital. The staff maintains both the textbook collection and the library collection of physical books, both fiction and non-fiction. We also offer manga, graphic novels, magazines, atlases, board games and technological devices," King said.

Supplies that can be used to create projects are available to students in the Media Center.

"We have creation tools like colored pencils and magic markers and rulers," King said.



Photo by SHENG VANG

The group study area is one place in the center where students can work.

In recent years, Cooper has been moving away from the use of paper. As a result, printer access has become minimal simply because there has not been as much of a need for students to print due to the extensive use of Chromebooks. The Media Center is one place in the school where students can access printers.

"We still have a computer

lab where students can print their projects if they are required to," King said.

The Media Center also features collaboration stations where students can hook up their Chromebooks to monitors and share what they have been working on with their partners.

In addition to their physical resources, King said the Media

Center's website is another place where students have access to education-related tools.

"We offer ebooks and audiobooks through MackinVia, databases for doing research, the library catalog and links to all kinds of web-based tools to help students with school work," King said.

The Media Center's ebooks have been growing in popularity among students. The ebooks can be used for a variety of different reasons and they assist in bettering students skills with technological resources.

"Students can look up the definition of a word just by clicking on it. They can highlight text or make notes, and the highlighting and notes are attached to the book," King said.

Ebooks also come with the ability for the reader to choose the "read out loud" option. This helps when a reader is too busy to sit down and read a book word by word; instead, they can listen

MEDIA CENTER
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Managing stress can make school easier for ninth graders

Transitioning into a new academic environment makes it important for incoming freshmen to take care of their mental health

By CHIMUAL VANG
Quill staff writer

Stress is something that everyone deals with. It is one of the complications that can have an impact on a person's mental health. Stress is typically considered to be something hazardous and it can serve as a warning sign about one's mental exhaustion.

Fortunately, there are many ways for students to deal with stress and relieve their anxiety while still managing their time in a proper manner. Though it seems complicated, dealing with stress is a great way to help you be more productive. This is especially important for incoming ninth grade students, who are soon going to be dealing with the stress of getting used to life in high school.

1. Get proper rest

Getting enough sleep is essential for stress management. Not only does sleeping reset your mind, it allows your body to recover and return to a neutral state.

2. Use your time well

Prioritizing your time is a great way to manage stress. Balancing your time is the first step to being productive. One way to plan your time is to write a to-do list that indicates what you should be doing that day from morning to evening. Then, the following day, you can write another to-do list. If you can't achieve a goal on the day it was assigned, you can write it down on the next to-do list.

3. Do not multitask

Focusing on one thing at a

time can greatly reduce stress. Having only one goal at a time helps you concentrate better. Giving something your full, undivided attention, and repeating this process repeatedly toward multiple goals in your day, will aid in your mental health and productivity.

4. Eliminate distractions

Removing distractions when trying to complete work is challenging, but it can help you manage your mental health and stress. Putting down your electronics and not checking your social media are simple ways to avoid distractions.

5. Take a break

Instead of constantly working throughout the day, it is important to occasionally do something you like in between

all of your other responsibilities. While doing something you like or enjoy may take time, knowing when to put distance between work and play will guide you into being in a healthier mindset.

6. Give your brain a rest

Relaxing your mind is a quick yet effective strategy to manage stress. Just taking a brief moment to not think about anything bothering you, and taking in a deep breath, will help your mind relax.

7. Take care of your physical health

Don't forget to stay hydrated. Your mind requires water and fluids to stay functional and healthy. Additionally, eating a balanced diet and avoiding junk food and sugar-filled drinks will keep you feeling better.

HAWK values guide student behavior

Cooper emphasizes the traits of honesty, accountability, work ethic, kindness in all students who attend the school



Photo by SHENG VANG

Multiple wall decals and posters reminding students about the HAWK acronym can be seen throughout the school building.

By SHENG VANG
Quill staff writer

There are four characteristics that Cooper values for incoming freshmen transitioning to high school: honesty, accountability, work ethic and kindness. These traits make up the acronym HAWK, which is based on Cooper's hawk mascot. Cooper Head Principal Ms. Smith said these traits are significant because they amplify and display what it means to be a Cooper student.

"If you follow those HAWK

values and you really live those values, think about honesty, accountability, work ethic and kindness, it embodies positive characteristics," Smith said.

The HAWK characteristics can be demonstrated by students through various actions. Honesty, according to Smith, is being honest with your teachers and classmates. It is also being honest about how you are doing in your day-to-day life.

Next is accountability. Smith said this is owning up to your mistakes and learning from those mis-

takes because "no one is perfect."

As for work ethic, this trait means one does not give up and they try their best and hardest in class, even when they do not receive the score they want. According to Smith, going to a Hawk Lunch and Learn academic session to get additional support from you teachers and simply going to class and doing your assignments are examples of hard work.

Finally, there is kindness, which Smith said consists of actions as simple as holding the

door for others or giving compliments to your classmates.

"You can show kindness in every aspect of your life," Smith said. "Me, personally, I try to live by those HAWK values, because we can all be kind and we all can have those characteristics that make us a better person, whether it is academically, at work, at home or at school."

Furthermore, there are benefits for those students who follow

HAWK VALUES
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Class of 2023 offers advice to Class of 2027

The advice of Cooper graduates can help newly arriving students enjoy high school

By JOSEPH METZGER
Quill staff writer

The Class of 2023 graduated from Cooper on June 5 at the Minneapolis Convention Center. However, before they left Cooper for the final time, many of them shared pieces of advice for incoming freshmen.

A common theme to the advice shared by members of the Class of 2023 is how important freshman year is when it comes to your future success in high school. What follows are some key suggestions last year's seniors had for making ninth grade a better experience and enjoying one's four years of high school.

Zahair Evans: "Be yourself, don't try to fit in, live life, and don't take high school for granted, because it's going to go faster than you expected."

Sam Massaquoi: "Do your school work and enjoy every high school moment."

Darius Mulbah: "Join activities."

Amalia Ranstrom: "You should take AP U.S. History."

Anita Vongkaysone: "You should take IB classes."

Jeffrey Bailey: "Don't let other people stop you from having a positive experience. Build relationships with your teachers; they're people, too. Know what work you need to do and always communicate with teachers when you need help."

Donovan Johnson: "Get all your work done during freshman year, otherwise it will come back to bite you during your senior year."

Jada Robinson: "Don't get into fights."

Hamza Ahmed: "Take your freshman year seriously. It's going to count in the end."

Jaaziel Claveria-Martinez: "Ask questions and try not to get behind."

Cameron Massie: "Think about taking elective classes like acting."

Manuel Panora: "Stay consistent no matter what."

Biruk Bediye: "Grudges are garbage."

Elizabeth Menges: "Don't be shy or scared to show who you are. We are all still figuring out who we are as people so you don't have to be the only one that is in on this. Also, take chances in things at school because high school gives you many options of what to do and maybe you can even find new hobbies or even a possible career or future."

Christian Kabunangu: "Do what you want to do. Never listen to what people say."

Noemi Gonzalez Ruiz: "Be involved as much as possible and don't be afraid to join things."

Derreal Tyson: "Don't do drugs."

Celeste DeLaPaz: "Challenge yourself, work as hard as you can and find things you love to do. School is a time for change and growth and it's important to face those head on and always with a positive attitude."

Salah Mohamed: "Do the summatives and the formatives."

Ferid Seid: "Stay out the way and don't get into trouble."

By following these pieces of advice, the incoming freshmen are guaranteed to succeed during ninth grade and the years that follow.

Lunch and Learn system brings variety to day

Students have the ability to seek academic help, enjoy leisure activities during the lunch period

By JESSE GARCIA
Quill staff writer

Fifth period at Cooper features what is known as Hawk Lunch and Learn (HLL). This is a daily system that offers students time to eat, work and relax during the school day.

"The reason for wanting to provide this opportunity was to offer time during the school day to students who may need extra help and provide enrichment time for those who are excelling," Administrative Intern Mr. Mahan, who helps oversee the HLL system, said.

HLL occurs during the fifth period of the school day, which lasts for 60 minutes. During the first half of this period, freshmen and seniors have lunch. Meanwhile, sophomores and juniors have the reverse schedule, with lunch first and the academic and leisure activities second.

Signing up for the academic and leisure activities takes place once a week during Advisory using the Edificency program,



Photo by SHENG VANG

Groups like the Asian American Culture Club use Lunch and Learn as a time to hold weekly meetings.

to which there is a link on each student's Schoology page. There are many unique choices for the leisure activities, such as gaming, crafting and watching movies. While students have a good deal of choice in the system, Mahan said that if you are missing something or have to make up some work, "a teacher can assign you to

their class for the day."

Mr. Rooney, a health teacher, said he likes the HLL system.

"Lunch and Learn gives students time to redo formatives and summatives they might have missed. This is useful because there are times when students want to get extra help but staying after school is not an option for

them," he said.

Veteran students also have positive opinions about the system.

"For the most part, I liked the new Lunch and Learn," 2023 graduate Biruk Bediye said. "I feel it's a good way to reward the kids that are doing well and also give an option for teacher help."

NHS organization gives high-achieving Hawks a chance to give back

Students earning a GPA of 3.6 or greater are eligible to join the group, which engages in many community service events

By OWEN SANDLUND
Quill staff writer

Cooper offers students in all grades a wide variety of clubs and activities in which they can take part. One such group is the National Honor Society (NHS), which sophomores, juniors and seniors are invited to participate in if they possess a grade point average (GPA) of 3.6 or greater.

NHS is an organization that, according to staff advisor Ms. Kilsdonk, promotes the four pillars of "scholarship, leadership, service and character." Participating in the

group requires members to perform a certain number of volunteer hours, to remain in good academic standing and to step into leadership positions within NHS.

Kilsdonk said there are multiple benefits to participating in NHS, such as networking with other academically motivated students, having access to NHS scholarships, adding activities to one's college resume and giving back to the local community.

Not only will the act of belonging to NHS help students get accepted into prestigious post-sec-

ondary institutions, it can help pay for them as well. According to the NHS website, during the organization's lifetime, the group has given out more than \$19 million in aid to graduating high school seniors since 1946.

2023 graduate Manuel Panora is one Cooper student who participated in the NHS program during his junior and senior years. Panora said his NHS participation was one of several factors that led to his acceptance at John Hopkins University for college.

"NHS provided me the op-

portunity to give back to my community by broadening the scope of my volunteering and it helped me meet like-minded individuals in a culture of academic success that will benefit me in college," he said.

In order to get involved, students should speak to Kilsdonk in the spring of sophomore or junior year if they have a cumulative GPA of 3.6 or greater after first semester. Due to this academic requirement, interested ninth graders are reminded that it is important to start maintaining high grades in freshman year.

All ninth graders need to focus on credits, grades

Problems during senior year stem from failed classes, poor performance as a freshman

By CHIMUAL VANG
Quill staff writer

One common issue students face during their early years of high school relates to earning their credits and maintaining a good grade point average (GPA). According to student counselor Ms. Hough, problems in these areas is often a case of students simply not putting in the effort.

“Unfortunately, a lot of students don’t work to their full capabilities,” Hough said.

During high school, a student’s credits and GPA matter. One reason it is extremely important that freshmen take those issues seriously is that credits and grades are permanent once students get to high school. Hough said that students ignoring this as ninth graders directly relates to the reason why there are so many seniors struggling to catch up on credits in order to graduate from high school on time.

Since credits and GPA are recorded on a transcript over time, they can affect a student’s options and opportunities after high school. According to Hough, the best way to improve one’s GPA is to be diligent and successful each semester.

“If a student has a 2.0 GPA after ninth grade, that student needs to do better than a 2.0 the following semester if they want to improve their GPA,” Hough said.

For a student missing credits, Hough said they should attend summer school to assure that they have enough credits for graduation. If that option is not available, additional opportunities to regain those missing credits are available during winter break or spring break.

According to Hough, the best strategy to earn credits on time is to not “put it all off until senior year.” Instead, she recommends that students start working hard right when they arrive at high school.

One teacher who has witnessed the struggles that ninth graders sometimes face is Ms. Prillwitz from the English department. She said that students who maintain an adequate GPA and earn their credits in freshman year do not have to worry about catching up later in high school.

“Take advantage of the resources we have here at Cooper. If you’re struggling with a class, talk to your teacher. You can also stay after school to get help at Hawk’s Nest,” Prillwitz said.

If you do miss credits in your earlier years, Hough said it is important not to get discouraged, and to work in the following years to make sure you improve your overall GPA.

However, Prillwitz added that a simple strategy to maintain your credits from the outset is to keep focused.

“Start off strong and don’t procrastinate,” Prillwitz said.

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differences are embraced,” she said.

Smith also mentioned how there are many different ways freshmen can contribute to the school’s culture. They can be student leaders, and they can participate in groups, clubs, sports and teams.

“There is something for everyone here at Cooper. You just have to find that place for you,” Smith said.

Coming to high school is challenging and Smith wants to reassure freshmen that they are not alone.

“I want my ninth graders to know that we are not oblivious to the fact that this is not an easy process, but we are here for you. We got your back. We really do,” Smith said.

AVID program guides students to college

Elective class teaches Hawks the academic skills that will lead them to success during, after high school years



Photo by SHENG VANG

AVID Coordinator Ms. Lieser (left) works alongside subject-area teachers to give students the skills they need.

By JOSEPH METZGER
Quill staff writer

The AVID program at Cooper prepares students for their next step after high school.

AVID, which stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination, is a college-readiness elective program created to help students prepare for post-secondary education. The program primarily targets young people with academic achievement levels between

middle and high.

Leading the AVID program at Cooper is Ms. Lieser. Lieser explained that students who are interested in getting involved with the program typically have several shared traits in common.

“We look for students who are in the academic middle-high range,” Lieser said. “Many of our students will be the first in their families 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.”

One of the things Lieser said that she and the other AVID teachers enjoy are the long-lasting connections they form with students.

“I love that the AVID teachers loop with their AVID classes, so they are together for four years. It’s such a perk of the job. 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,” Lieser said.

During a typical AVID class, students engage in the WICOR approach, which stands for writing, inquiry, collaboration and reading. Students participate in a variety of activities that include these components in various ways throughout the AVID class.

In addition to WICOR, Mondays and Wednesdays of a normal week are set aside for investigating the AVID curriculum, while Tuesdays and Thursdays involve tutorials.

“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,” Lieser said.

AVID students are expected to have a weekly planner to keep track of their assignments. Additionally, the students are expected to take notes in their

AVID PROGRAM
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Schoology is central to classroom experience

All students are expected to use the application to work on assignments, check grades, communicate with teachers

By SHENG VANG
Quill staff writer

Students at Cooper use Schoology to work on class assignments, check grades and communicate with teachers.

According to 2023 graduate Noemi Gonzalez Ruiz, she used Schoology on a daily basis because all of her work and assignments are posted there. She also used Schoology to stay updated on school events and information.

“[Schoology] made it easier for me to find and see my assignments and due dates and upcoming assignments,” Gonzalez Ruiz said. “It’s [also] good to see the updates.”

English teacher Ms. Prillwitz said almost all of her assignments are posted on Schoology for her students to work on. According to her, the functions offered by Schoology have made teaching and learning more convenient for both teachers and students. An example of this can be seen through the way Schoology works with Google Drive.

“I post almost all my assignments through Schoology using the Google Drive Assignments function,” Prillwitz said. “This allows me to create one document and Schoology will create copies for each student. This also allows me to check students’ work as they

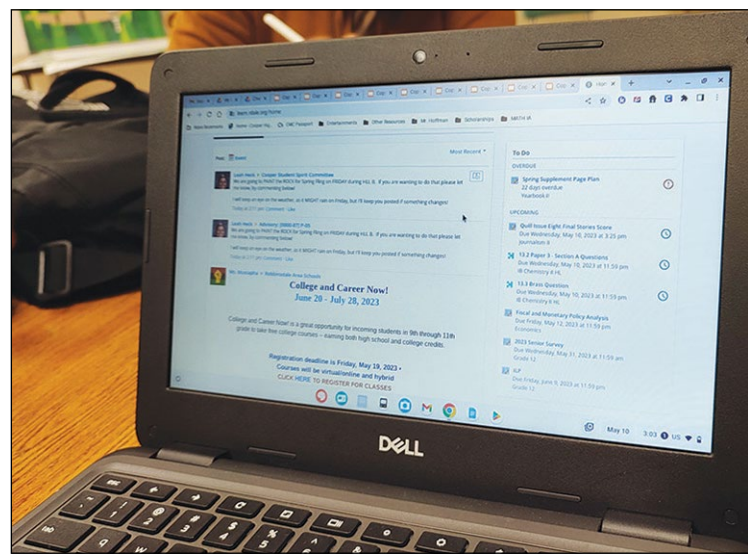


Photo by SHENG VANG

Schoology lists assignment due dates, which helps students stay organized.

progress. I can give instantaneous feedback on their documents or in person. Furthermore, Schoology allows me to organize all our units into folders and I can create patterns within the folders to make it easy for students to stay organized.”

Gonzalez Ruiz mentioned that another function on Schoology that helped her stay organized throughout her high school career was the course tab.

“Students can rearrange their classes through the course tab and that can help students see their classes easier,” Gonzalez Ruiz said.

Another advantage of School-

ogy use, according to social studies teacher Mr. DiSalvi, is that it helps “cut down on wasting paper” and has prevented him from “wasting time passing paper out.”

He also added that, even when a student is absent, all work is posted on Schoology so students can access assignments at home. Easy access at home also allows students to access their grade conveniently, which makes it easier for parents and students to ask questions regarding grades and assignments.

Although Schoology may have many advantages, getting used to the platform can be challenging. Prillwitz said using

Schoology can be difficult and it will take time for new students to get used to the format and functions, especially because each teacher will organize their Schoology course differently. However, she encourages incoming freshmen to be patient with the platform and become familiar with Schoology early as it can help them navigate through their first year in high school and keep them on track.

“When using Schoology for the first time, be patient with yourself. If it is frustrating and overwhelming, don’t give up on using Schoology. The more familiar freshmen are with Schoology, the easier it is for students to stay organized, to find important information about school events and deadlines, to keep up with current work and much more,” Prillwitz said.

In addition, DiSalvi pointed out that another challenge is for students to remember to bring their Chromebooks. Although he doesn’t mind making paper copies of assignments, DiSalvi said that if someone forgets to bring their Chromebook, they are missing out on all of the benefits that Schoology provides.

“If there is one thing I could emphasize to freshmen, it is this: bring your Chromebooks,” DiSalvi said.

Doing well in high school requires academic mindset

Being intentional about classroom work habits will help new students succeed in ninth grade and beyond

By BRIGHT DEKU
Quill staff writer

It’s easy for freshmen to fall behind and feel overwhelmed with schoolwork in high school. That is why knowing how to stay on top of things is a key asset for any student. Here are six tips to get you ready for the 2023-2024 school year.

1. Stay organized with a calendar

Keeping track of assignments, test dates and project deadlines is crucial. Use a calendar or planner to jot down all important dates and commitments. By organizing your schedule, you can effectively manage your time, avoid last-minute cramming and

reduce stress.

2. Establish a study routine

Finding a study routine that works best for you will help you better complete the work that comes your way. You should set aside specific times for studying each subject and be consistent. This helps break your study sessions into manageable chunks and allows you to take short breaks in between each subject. By sticking to a routine, you’ll develop discipline and make studying more productive.

3. Tap into available resources

It is a good idea to take advantage of the resources your school offers. You can visit the Media Center for additional reference

materials, seek help from teachers during their prep periods and join study groups with classmates. Online platforms and educational apps also provide valuable resources for supplementary learning and revision.

4. Actively participate in class

It is helpful to engage in discussions, ask questions and share your thoughts during each one of your classes. Active participation helps deepen your understanding of the subject matter and builds stronger connections with classmates and teachers. Additionally, collaborating on group projects and contributing your ideas helps create a more dynamic learning environment.

5. Master time management

Time management is crucial when you enter high school. One skill you need to develop is balancing school work with your personal life. A second skill is making enough time for each of your classes. Breaking down larger tasks into smaller, more manageable ones will help you make better use of your time.

6. Seek support when needed

It is important to ask for help when you need it. By talking to teachers, school counselors or other students, you can get the support you need. The people around you at school will be good resources as you attempt to overcome academic challenges and reach your goals.

Counselors strive to meet student needs

Incoming ninth graders will work with counselor Ms. Hough throughout the next four years of high school



Photo by SHENG VANG

The grade-level counselors are located in the Student Services office on the main floor of the building near the school's foyer.

By SHENG VANG
Quill staff writer

Cooper's student counselors are located in the Student Services office near the front foyer as a resource for students. They help students navigate and organize themselves, preparing them for success in high school.

Each grade level has a student counselor who will stay with them for all four years. Ms. Hough, who was last year's class of 2023 counselor and will work with this year's ninth graders, said one of the biggest advantages of having the same group of students with the same counselor through the course of four years is that "you get to know each other, build strong relationships and really become involved and know what is going on in

each grade." Hough added that there is a "sense of pride" that comes along when the counselor's group of students eventually graduates.

Given the fact that Hough's students graduated last year, she gets to cycle back to the beginning and oversee the incoming freshmen class of 2027.

"I have the class of 2027, and it's me and them together for four years. It's the one steady thing they have throughout high school, and I think it's a good thing for me and for them to have that one steady resource," Hough said.

As incoming freshmen transition to high school, one of the initial reasons they come to see Hough is because of issues with their schedules. Hough said it is her job as the counselor to make sure students are put in the cor-

rect classes and "to make sure they are in the right level." If students want to take Advanced Placement (AP) or honors classes, for example, they will come talk to her.

To make counselor appointments or access support, there are QR codes around the building that students can use. According to Hough, ninth and twelfth grade students are the ones who most frequently need appointments because these are the most challenging years for students.

"For ninth grade, it is a lot about the transition to high school and learning to become a high school student. Twelfth grade is a lot about: we are at the end here, what is going on after high school, and let's make sure everyone gets to graduate and figure out the plans after high

school," she said.

According to Hough, some other challenges incoming freshmen may encounter as they transition to high school include "getting overwhelmed by the large high school population" and "figuring out where they fit in." Hough added that, during middle school, current ninth graders were the "leaders" of their buildings, but now that they have arrived at high school, they have to start again from the beginning. Learning how to juggle their classes and everything else may be challenging.

"Learning and realizing that this is the year that everything starts to count and is finalized on the transcript is important to do-

COUNSELORS
continues on page 7

Roundelay seeks writers, artists for annual magazine

The publication, which comes out in May, showcases the creativity of Cooper students

By LLEWELLYN BOUTHIM
Quill staff writer

Cooper's literary arts publication, *Roundelay*, is an annual magazine that is released at the end of the school year. Soon, the magazine will be seeking contributions from students in all grades, including incoming ninth graders.

Overseeing the magazine is English teacher Ms. Major, who also teaches Cooper's creative writing course.

"I have always loved both reading and writing, so it was a perfect fit for me," she said. "I'm so excited that I get to work with such creative students."

While a school publication like *The Quill* focuses on covering news content, *Roundelay* is focused on student-produced poetry, songs, short essays, short stories and art work.

"The magazine celebrates the creative voices and talent we have here at Cooper," Major said.

The process of getting pieces for *Roundelay* starts during first semester in Major's creative writing class, although participation in that class is not required to be involved in *Roundelay*.

"There are quite a few students who aren't in that course who have contributed their art and writing," Major said.

During second semester, Major said she continues to get submissions for the publication and begins the process of assembling it through a Hawk Lunch and Learn (HLL) session that any interested student has the ability to sign up for.

"[In May,] we'll work on compiling the art and writing pieces into magazine format," she said. "My creative writing class will assist with this, as well as students who choose to come during HLL."

While details for an exact release date are slightly different from year to year, Major said she expects *Roundelay* to be released in early-to-mid May. She said the magazine will be published in both print and digital formats.

"There is something special about reading and seeing art work from a physical copy of a text," she said.

Students who are interested in submitting work to *Roundelay* can email their writing, photography and art to olivia_major@rdale.org or they can hand in a copy of their work to Major in room 244. Meanwhile, students who are interested in designing the magazine can contact Major or sign up for her HLL session during April and May to get involved.

"I know that we have very talented people here at Cooper," she said. "The magazine is another way to show off your talent and express yourself. And, of course, being published in the school's literary magazine might look good on a resume."

Being to class on time is an expectation at Cooper

Punctuality will not only help students avoid punishment at school, it is a good habit to develop for later in life

By REANA GREEN
Quill staff writer

The switch from middle school to high school brings with it a changed start time for incoming ninth graders. The importance of being on time to school and to class is a concept many Cooper staff members strongly encourage students to prioritize.

"Arriving on time is important so that you are able to get all of the instructions and directions for the day," English teacher Ms. Obranovich said. "You'll avoid feeling lost or behind."

Obranovich said there are many impacts that being late will have on students academically.

"Being late makes it harder to grasp what is happening in the class and what you should be doing. You don't have to waste time getting caught up or asking questions that have already been covered and you will have more time

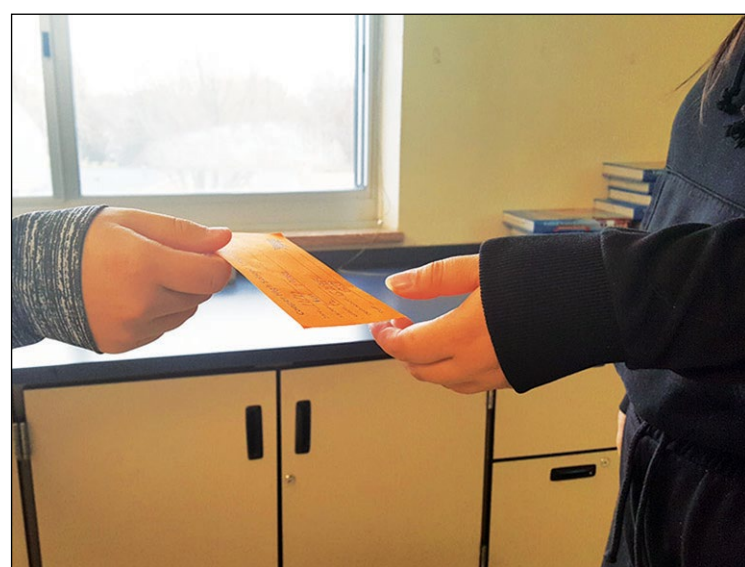


Photo by SHENG VANG

Students who are late to school will receive an orange "unexcused" pass. "to work and progress," she said.

Obranovich recommends that students talk with their friends while walking to class rather than stopping in the halls and for students to be aware of where their classes are in the building so that

they can plan where they are going.

Also emphasizing the importance of being to class on time is Assistant Principal Mr. Nelson.

"Freshman year is a fresh start for students. Ninth graders

have the ability to reinvent themselves, take on new challenges and start over. This all starts with going to class and getting there on time," he said.

Additionally, Nelson said students who are tardy may "put themselves in line for disciplinary action."

Furthermore, Nelson stated that he and the administrative team at Cooper are focusing on building a disciplinary progression system that will motivate students to arrive to class on time.

As for tips for freshmen on how to get to class on time, Nelson suggested that freshmen "leave their class as soon as possible, but if they need to speak with a previous teacher, get a pass to not be marked tardy."

Nelson recommends that students always check in with a teacher to receive a pass if they will potentially be out in the halls before or after passing time.

The Quill

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Robbinsdale Cooper High School's *The Quill* is a member of the National Scholastic Press Association.



Improv squad on the hunt for new performers

The group will be holding tryouts for students in all four grades this fall



Photo by LOGAN VOIGT

The 2022-2023 troupe had seasonal shows throughout the year.

JESSE GARCIA
Quill staff writer

Improvisational theater, or “improv,” is a form of comedic theater in which most or all performances are unplanned or unscripted. Cooper’s improv team is currently seeking new cast members from all four grades in preparation for the 2022-2023 performance season.

“I wanted to join the improv team because I love making people laugh,” former team captain and 2023 graduate Logan Voigt said.

There are two types of improv: short form and long form.

“Short form mainly consists of a variety of short improvisational games. These are usually only a few minutes long and they can consist of a number of activities from speaking only words from a book, recreating someone’s vacation photos, or going to a party with a funny quirk. Long form consists of longer acting performances where everyone has unlimited creative freedom and creates a comedy sketch on the spot. These can change direction and go anywhere at a second’s notice,” Voigt said.

Since there is not really an improv coach, the captains usually take command in organizing the troupe’s activities.

“An improv captain teaches the other members of the troupe the basics of improvisation. We lead every practice and give everyone feedback and guidance to get better at improv. We also organize every practice outside of school and every show we have. We stand as role models for the younger and less-experienced members and do our best to create a fun and inviting environment,” Voigt said.

Hunter Olson, a 2023 graduate and long-time member of the improv troupe, said his experience with improv was excellent. He added that the troupe members accepted him as one of their own and treated him with a lot of respect.

“The Cooper improv team is one of the most welcoming environments at Cooper,” Olson said. “Students get the opportunity to express themselves in whatever way they want. For me, improv was a way to escape the stress of high school. I had a lot of fun playing all sorts of characters. The people on the improv team were also great, as some of my best friends now are friends I met on the improv team. Overall, joining the improv team was one of the best things I did during my time at Cooper.”

Current team member Malik Williams (11) said he strongly believes that the troupe helps high school students express themselves in whatever creative way they want to. Williams added that he thinks the new members of the troupe “will be challenged to think outside the box and will be put out of their comfort zone.”

“I have enjoyed watching the other people in improv and they almost never fail at making me laugh,” Williams said.

Ninth graders interested in getting involved in improv are encouraged to check out the announcements during advisory and look for signs in the hallway about the time and location for fall tryouts.

Theater program planning '23-'24 shows

Incoming ninth graders are encouraged to get involved with one or more of the four shows either on stage or behind the scenes



Photo by ANNA NIEMANN

One highlight of the 2022-2023 school year was the winter musical, *Newsies*, which is based on the classic Disney film of the same name.

By LLEWELLYN BOUTHIM
Quill staff writer

Cooper has an award-winning theater program that is looking for incoming ninth graders who are interested in getting involved on stage or behind the scenes in one or more of the year’s four shows.

The year begins with a fall show that is typically a non-musical drama or comedy. After this comes a winter musical and a winter one act.

“The one act is a 32-minute show with a smaller cast that competes in the one act competition sponsored by the Minnesota State High School League,” Cooper theater director Ms. Wurzer said.

The final performance of the year is the spring show, which is a series of one act plays written, directed and produced by the students in Wurzer’s International Baccalaureate (IB) theater class.

For students of all grades who are interested in getting involved, Wurzer said she uses many methods of communication to keep students notified about theater opportunities.

“We post all auditions and information about shows on Schoology and on the door of the Black Box Theater, which is my classroom, in room 257,” Wurzer said.

According to 2023 graduate and frequent participant in theater Elizabeth Menges, there are many ways for students to get involved in the program.

“There is, of course, acting and performing on stage, but there are also other roles as well. A big part of every show is the backstage crew that moves the sets and helps with scene changes and transitions. There are also roles like student director, who helps Ms. Wurzer with rehearsing and takes notes about the choreography. There is also the

sound operator and light operator, which are also student roles,” Menges said.

According to Menges, there are many benefits to getting involved in theater, no matter what grade a student may be in at school.

“It’s a great way to meet people and get out of your shell, especially if you’re new to the school,” she said. “Along with making connections, you also build up confidence from being on stage and learning to project your voice. It is a great time commitment, but it’s a great way to build endurance and learn to persevere.”

Agreeing with Menges is Wurzer, who pointed out that students who join theater learn the value of teamwork.

“I think the students involved in theater would agree that theater kids are one big family. We work hard and get to perform for large audiences. We feel their energy

and appreciation and learn what it’s like to make a commitment to each other and a piece of theater,” Wurzer said.

Another benefit of taking part in theater is the chance to put on some entertaining shows. Wurzer said some of her recent favorites included *The Addams Family*, *Ragtime* and, most recently, *Newsies*.

“I loved the challenge of teaching all the actors how to tap dance,” she said.

For ninth graders who are considering theater as an extracurricular option, Menges said they should “go for it.”

“Just try it out, and if at the end of it you decide it isn’t for you, then you don’t have to continue with other shows,” she said. “Theater is very open minded with so many extroverted and introverted people who would love to have you involved, so just try your best and things will work out.”

Art classes help Hawks explore their creative sides

Cooper offers a variety of art courses in the areas of drawing, painting and photography to students with room in their schedules

By LLEWELLYN BOUTHIM
Quill staff writer

Cooper ninth graders with room in their schedules have the opportunity to take one of three art courses: Drawing 1, Painting 1 and Photography 1.

Drawing 1, which is taught by Ms. Lasar, focuses on the fundamentals of drawing, such as drawing from observation. Throughout the semester, the basic skills worked on in class are built upon to help students improve to intermediate-level abilities.

“I really enjoyed learning drawing skills when I took the class,” 2023 graduate Angel Gutierrez said.

Another option for first-year art students that also focuses on basic skills is Painting 1. The concepts learned in this course, which is taught by Ms. Mielke, include drawing and painting from observation and a lot of skill-building.

According to Mielke, students in Painting 1 work on assignments like monochromatic still life, where “it’s all one color with different variations.”

Mielke added that Painting 2 is available to freshmen as well if they pass Painting 1 and sign up for Painting 2 for the second semester. She mentioned that Painting 2 is “definitely a harder version” of the first class. At the same time, she added that the class is “a lot more personalized to students’ interests.” In this class, students will learn difficult concepts like reflective still life, in which the objects they will paint are shiny



Photo by SHENG VANG

Art classes feature a lot of studio time so students can work on their various pieces and projects.

and metallic or glass and transparent.

A third option offered to ninth graders is Photography 1, which is taught by Mr. Molitor. Like the other two introductory art courses, Photography 1 focuses on fundamentals. Students get an opportunity to learn about composition, photo-shopping and editing techniques and demonstrate them in their projects.

According to Molitor, the photography students get a different project to work on every week. Some projects will involve using ring lights and some will use color LEDs. The majority of students’ photos are

taken in class, but depending on the weather, Molitor will take his students outside to capture photos.

A typical day in any art class will consist of studio time. Mielke said there will be brief instructions at the beginning of the class when new topics are introduced. Meanwhile, Molitor added that class will involve time for organizing equipment and materials. In the photography class, for example, there will be time to set up lights to help create different scenes and poses. Additionally, Mielke said she puts on music in the background as students work and practice their painting tech-

niques.

Regardless of what freshmen choose as their elective courses, Mielke said that “art classes are a safe way to become creative problem solvers and it is a good way for students to express themselves.”

Although these introductory-level art classes are the only ones that ninth graders can take, more art options become available to students as they move into the higher grades of school. Molitor said that taking art classes throughout one’s high school years can help students

ART CLASSES
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Musicians have many ways to perform at Cooper

The school's music program has curricular and extracurricular options in the areas of band, orchestra and choir



Photo by SHENG VANG

Cooper's orchestra performs at a variety of events throughout the school year, including the Fall Festival at Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis.

By BRIGHT DEKU
Quill staff writer

Incoming ninth graders have the option of taking part in Cooper's band, choir and orchestra programs. No matter what level of previous experience a student might have, they are welcome to take part in the music classes at Cooper. According to music teachers and students, Cooper's music programs are a great way for interested students to learn to play music at a high school level.

Band

The primary band group freshman musicians will take part in is Ninth Grade Band.

"Ninth Grade Band, for many, is where you share the same class with the same group of students you were with in middle school," band director Mr. Hahn said. "Therefore, you get to share the new experiences of high school with people you are familiar and comfortable with."

Hahn added that there are other groups in which ninth graders can take part, including Marching Band and Jazz Band.

"In Marching Band, we perform at parades and football games," Hahn said. "There is also Jazz II, our non-auditioned jazz band that teaches an introduction to jazz and improvisation, and Jazz I, our top jazz band. It's hard for a ninth grader to get into, but we've had about one a year."

Hahn said he enjoys many aspects of working with ninth graders.

"What I love about teaching Ninth Grade Band is exposing students to their ability and possibilities that exist when they start having band every day," Hahn said. "For many students, they start thinking, 'Yeah, I can do this.' There is also the fun that they start having in the different types of bands we have at the high school, like Pep Band, Jazz Band and Marching Band. The amount of growth freshmen experience is tremendous. It's very fun to see."

One Cooper musician who took part in band during his time at Cooper is 2023 graduate Arlo Hollander. The thing Hollander said he enjoyed most about band is how easy it is to "see the progression of your musical ability."

"Sometimes evaluating your own ability can be a blinding process, for both the good and

the bad, but it is such a gratifying thing when you can finally understand how far you've come and how far you can go," he said.

Choir

For freshmen who enjoy singing, Cooper also has a wide-reaching 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.

"The energy and excitement that freshmen bring to our choir program is so important," Rowan said. "We welcome both students new to choir and students who have sung in choirs before. Seeing the growth in vocal, music and performance skills along

who want to take their singing to the next level.

One Cooper student who had lots of choir experience was 2023 graduate Natalie Karnick, who took part in Concert Choir, Bella Voce Choir and Chamber Singers. According to Karnick, the community formed in choir and the friendships she has made were the two best aspects of her involvement in Cooper's music programs.

"My favorite choir memory so far was the spring concert last year when a lot of alumni came back to sing with us," she said.

Orchestra

Ninth graders who would like the opportunity to be involved in orchestra can join Freshman Orchestra, which was formerly directed by Ms. Pflaum, who left Cooper at the end of last school year.

much they improve so quickly. I also enjoy really getting to know students when they're in ninth grade because orchestra 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.

One student who took part in orchestra is 2023 graduate Manuel Panora, who was involved with Cooper's Symphony Orchestra and Chamber Ensemble.

After starting in school orchestras during fourth grade, Panora eventually joined Cooper's orchestra program when he



Photo by BRIGHT DEKU

Mr. Hahn (right) oversees all of Cooper's band groups, from Ninth Grade Band to Marching Band.

with confidence during freshman year is one of my favorite aspects of being a high school choir director."

In addition to Freshman Choir, Hawks singers can eventually move into Varsity Choir, which consists of students in grades 10-12; Bel Canto Choir, 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

"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.

Pflaum said that ninth graders usually improve quickly in their orchestra class because the whole ensemble gets to practice together at the same time.

"One of my favorite aspects of working with Freshman Orchestra students is seeing how

arrived as a ninth grader. In fact, he auditioned and was accepted into the Chamber Ensemble during his freshman year. Later, he auditioned for and was accepted into Symphony Orchestra in his senior year.

"What I have enjoyed most about being a part of the Symphony Orchestra is having the opportunity to play with other talented students and create music with them," he said. "For the Chamber Ensemble, I have enjoyed playing for the community most."

MEDIA CENTER

continued from page 2

to the book while cleaning their room or doing the dishes. The ebooks are available all summer long, and when the due date arrives for the books, they automatically turn themselves in, which means students do not have to fuss with overdue books and accumulating late fees.

The Media Center is also home to traditional print books of all genres.

"In our print fiction collection, we have twelve genres: adventure, fantasy, historical, horror, humor, mystery, romance, sci-fi, sports, supernatural, urban and general fiction. We also have lots and lots of non-fiction covering a galaxy of topics," King said.

King added that he often buys print materials requested by students, which means the items in the Media Center are always student-focused.

In addition, King said he will also be hosting special events in the Media Center this year. One item he is planning is a book club for mystery novels.

"I hope to meet some new faces in this book club," he said.

Students are able to visit the Media Center during lunch or a study hall by going to Sign-up Genius and making a reservation. When entering the Media Center, students need to sign in and get to work immediately in whatever workplace they signed up for.

HAWK VALUES

continued from page 3

the HAWK expectations. Tangible rewards such as certificates and HAWK Tickets are given to students who meet the HAWK expectations, which can provide students the opportunity to receive prizes and rewards. HAWK Tickets are usually given to students by teachers electronically with the student's name on them. Every Friday, HAWK Ticket winners are called down to the main office to pick out a prize.

Smith said an additional benefit may be feeling good about how you treat someone else. This is not a tangible benefit, but it makes you feel good as a person.

On the other hand, consequences for those who do not meet the HAWK expectations can range from being in Coaches' Corner to missing class time to losing the ability to go to school events.

"We understand that accountability is important," Smith said. "However, we do not expect you to be perfect. No one is perfect and our teenagers are not perfect. As ninth graders, you are not coming in perfect, or what is the point coming here? We are here to help you grow and learn from mistakes and things of that nature. We want to teach you to be productive citizens in society, not just here at Cooper."

AVID PROGRAM

continued from page 4

different classes.

"We expect students to have a weekly planner in which they write down what they do for each of their classes and we check their planners every Monday," Lieser said. "AVID teachers also check focused notes from the student's other classes."

The AVID program is open to all students who are interested and the application can be done electronically.

"Applications are electronic and available via our school website. They can also reach out to me, the AVID coordinator at Cooper, and I can email you the link," Lieser said.

COUNSELORS STRIVE TO MEET STUDENT NEEDS

continued from page 5

ing well in school," Hough said.

To resolve some of the challenges freshmen may encounter, Hough plans to be more "proactive" this fall by visiting advisory classes and getting to know incoming freshmen, especially

because the first few weeks of school may be confusing.

She also advises students to "take advantage of and utilize their resources" at Cooper. Some of these resources include the Hawk's Nest, Lunch and Learn

and other after-school programs where students can get academic support.

"Getting involved in extracurriculars is also important," Hough said. "Cooper has a lot of opportunities, but not a lot of

students know about them or take advantage of them."

There are sports teams that students can join, and if sports are not their thing, there are a variety of clubs and activities, such as Relay for Life and the Spirit

Committee, that are also open to students.

"I think getting involved in school just makes school more fun, and you get to meet people, meet adults in the building, and things like that," Hough said.

Student fitness central focus of weight room

The facility is home to day-time weight training class, after-school program



Photo by BRIGHT DEKU

The after-school workout program is overseen by Mr. Chisley.

By BRIGHT DEKU
Quill staff writer

Ninth grade students who are looking to stay in shape or get in shape are encouraged to check out the Cooper weight room. There are programs and classes you can take to step up your fitness and there are Hawk staff members to assist and teach you the proper way to lift.

During the school day, Cooper offers a weight training class taught by Mr. Connors. Connors said he takes special steps during supervising his weight training class to make sure no one “messes around and hurts themselves.” He also assists students with learning new lifts.

According to Connors, weight training is a “slow-paced” course that focuses on technique and “muscular endurance.”

Connors said he is not just there to supervise because he has goals in mind for his students. He intends to give students an “outlet” when they come to the weight room. He also said that

According to Mr. Connors, the weight training class during the school day is a “slow-paced” course that focuses on technique and “muscular endurance.”

students can use the weight room workouts to “kind of manage their emotions.”

In addition to working on weight-related fitness, Connors said the class deals with general wellness issues. For instance, he said he spends class sharing “health-based information.”

The weight room opportunities don’t stop there. If your school schedule is packed, you can always come to the weight room after school. Mr. Chisley is the supervisor for the weight room after school.

According to Chisley, the weight room is open from 3:40-4:45 p.m. for the after-school program. Students are able to take the activity bus home after training with Chisley.

Chisley said he always emphasizes safety for the students making use of the facility after school. Additionally, he always makes sure that students have a spotter for free weights. According to Chisley, he wants to make sure students “see results no matter what their fitness level might be.”

New Cooper students interested in training in the weight room are encouraged to explore the opportunities the facility has to offer.

ART CLASSES

continued from page 6

build life skills.

“Art classes really provide students the opportunity to accept that failure is part of the learning process, and once you start to embrace the fact that you are trying something and not expecting to be good at it, there’s a lot of learning that can happen in that. Not just in the contexts of photography or drawing or painting or ceramics, but in life, you have to be okay with not being perfect the first time,” Molitor said.

Fall sports teams still seek new athletes

The first sports season of the 2023-2024 school year features a number of outside, inside competition options



Photo by ROBYN ROUB

The Hawks cross country squad is heading into its second season in the Tri-Metro Conference.

By DAMARIUS HAMILTON
Quill staff writer

Most athletes are ready to get out and show what they have after an entire summer away from school, which is one thing that makes the fall sports season fun. During every fall season, teams are looking for more students to join their programs. With recent drops in athlete numbers across the athletics department, freshmen are key to growing fall sports rosters and brining excitement to the teams.

The following fall activities are a great way for incoming freshmen to stay healthy and active while enjoying something they love to do with their new Cooper peers. Fall sports allow ninth graders to meet other students in other grades who can help them connect with their new school.

Adapted Soccer

Head Coach Mr. DeMorett said the 2022-2023 fall season saw the team come together to win a fair number of games by one or two goals. He also noted that the team welcomed some new middle school players who “blended in nicely with the veterans.”

Heading into the new season, DeMorett said the outlook is positive.

“Some of the key players will return and should have more experience,” he said.

A typical practice for adapted soccer starts with the players arriving at Cooper from the other schools in the area they attend. Once everybody is there, the players “warm up, practice some soccer drills and usually finish with a scrimmage.”

Adapted soccer matches have some similarities and differences when compared to non-adapted teams.

“A typical competition is two, 20-minute halves stopping at five minute intervals for substitutions,” DeMorett said. “Six players and a goalie are on the floor at a time.”

Incoming ninth graders who might be interested in joining adapted soccer are encouraged to do so.

“Freshmen would benefit by being on the team because they would have something to do after school a couple of days a week, they would meet new friends and get some activity,” DeMorett said.

Football

The Hawks football squad is looking forward to another season of hard work and competing for a chance at a state title. 2023 graduate and player John Barrow said last year’s squad was a dedicated one.

“We were just grinding day in and out trying to get better as a team. I wanted to see others and myself improve every day, no matter what the record said, because that did define our team last year,” he said.

Looking ahead to the new season, Barrow said he is confident the squad will continue its winning ways.

“They will go 1-0 every week no matter the opponent and just have a grind mentality,” he said.

Barrow said a key to football is practice and that players quickly get used to putting in maximum effort.

“Coaches ask for that every day no matter what. If you are not able to give 100 percent, then you shouldn’t be a player for the football team,” he said.

Barrow said that incoming Cooper freshmen will benefit by taking part in

football.

“Football at Cooper taught me how to be a true man,” he said. “You improve on leadership skills and grow as a man. Football brought the real out of me and made me 100 percent comfortable every day. It is a really good staff who will do anything in the world for their players.”

Girls Swimming

The girls swim team welcomed a new coach, Ms. Karol, during the 2022-2023 season. The addition of that new leader plus several new swimmers made for a strong season.

At the same time, 2022-2023 saw the graduation of several key swimmers, which will make recruiting important in 2023-2024.

“The team will definitely be younger with all of the exiting seniors,” 2023 graduate Camille West said.

The swimmers usually start practice after school at 4 p.m. with a warm up, after which they work on their main set of the day. Once they have completed their main set, West said they “do either a smaller set, a game or work on technique.” At the end of practice, they head into a cool-down swim.

Swim meets start with a warmup at the pool they are competing at, after which the team has a short meeting. West said this meeting is meant to get the team ready to compete.

For ninth graders considering taking part in swimming, West said it is a fun sport that helped her develop many friendships and “a lot of discipline.”

Boys and Girls Cross Country

The boys and girls cross country teams had a positive 2022 season, their first in the Tri-Metro Conference.

“Our teams in 2022 added some incoming freshmen, which was a big highlight of the season. We also enjoyed the continued improvement of our large number of sophomore and junior runners, all of whom ran career-best times during the season. Finally, we moved into the Tri-Metro Conference, which was a better fit competitively for the two teams,” Head Coach Mr. Zuccola said.

As they move into 2023, the team’s primary goal is to retain current athletes and to continue to bring in new runners.

“We also look forward to our new section, which will provide runners with a better chance of qualifying for the state meet,” Zuccola said.

A typical cross country practice starts with a warm-up run of one mile followed by plyometrics and static stretching. The runners then move into that day’s running workout, after which they do strength and conditioning.

“We usually conclude with some stretching and closing announcements at the end of practice,” Zuccola said.

According to Zuccola, ninth graders who are interested in joining the team will see many benefits.

“The cross country team is a great community of student athletes who know how to work hard and have fun. 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. Cross country provides an excellent chance to get fit and engage in an activity you can do for the rest of your life,” he said.

Boys Soccer

2023 graduate and boys soccer player Leo Garcia said the team had

many enjoyable moments during the 2022 season.

“I think one of the many highlights from this past season with the team was playing on senior night,” he said. “Both teams scoring back-to-back-to-back was definitely nerve racking, especially after being up the whole game. Unfortunately, we let up and were forced into overtime. We lost the lead and then ended in a draw after a fantastic goal from far out.”

While Garcia and several other graduating seniors will not be back in 2023, he said he still is optimistic about what awaits his remaining teammates.

“Those that remain will step up to better the team,” he said.

Given the importance of running in the sport, Garcia said the soccer team does a lot of conditioning before the season starts. During the season, a typical training session is mostly focused on staying sharp for the next game.

“The drills rotate from working on defense, building up play and scoring on goal,” Garcia said.

As he leaves Cooper, Garcia said he is hopeful incoming ninth graders will get involved with the team.

“Freshman year is the best year to start. Yes, you are joining a team where you hardly know people, but starting early and getting to know the team and the style of play helps someone to just become a better player as the next seasons come,” he said.

Girls Soccer

The girls soccer team wrapped up its 2022 season with a record of seven wins, eight losses and one tie. Head Coach Mr. Wetherall said there were several highlights of the 2022 season.

“The biggest highlight was the successful combination of two programs. Numbers were down at both Robbinsdale high schools the past few years, and it became obvious that creating a cooperative program was our best option to provide opportunities for both communities. I have to give credit to the players for coming together, working hard, supporting each other and really embracing Armstrong Cooper Football Club, our name for the combined program,” he said.

As for the competition highlights of the season, Wetherall said he enjoyed when 2023 graduate Lauren Jones scored a goal within the first few minutes of their first game, that they fought hard in a 1-0 loss to a highly ranked Holy Angels team, that they had a 3-0 win versus DeLaSalle and that they had a comeback 2-2 tie versus Osseo on senior night.

After an all-around positive season for the team, Wetherall said he is looking forward to the 2023 season.

“There will be some rebuilding as we lose a number of outgoing seniors, but we have the numbers to have two levels and are looking forward to the growth of some of our younger players,” he said.

According to Wetherall, the ninth graders who join the squad in 2023 will benefit from taking part in girls soccer.

“It can sound cliché, but our aim is to build better citizens by focusing on respect, kindness and inclusion,” he said.

Girls Volleyball

2023 graduate and team captain Melissa Truong said the team enjoyed some definite highlights during the 2022 season.

“One highlight of the 2022 season

was one of the first games that we won in three straight sets against Edison. The whole entire team was elated. Another highlight was our game versus Osseo. During the game, I was digging up the balls swung at me, which made me feel good. One last highlight was the team’s pre-season pasta dinner at the house of one of the captains,” she said.

Truong said two standout athletes last season were 2023 graduates Savannah Ballard and Sharissa Ross. According to Truong, Ballard “always works hard and makes sure to lift team spirits,” while Ross “improved so much this season as a player and with her confidence on the court.”

Although Truong will not be playing volleyball for the Hawks in 2023, she said she has high hopes for the team.

“I believe that the girls on the team will work hard and deliver,” Truong said.

Incoming ninth graders who come out for volleyball this fall will enjoy many different benefits, according to Truong.

“I believe student-athletes benefit from playing volleyball by learning how to effectively communicate and working with other people besides people they’re comfortable with,” Truong said. “Players also benefit from the new friendships they form throughout the season.”

Girls Tennis

The 2022 season was a positive one for the Hawks tennis squad according to 2023 graduate and team captain Katlin Doan.

“A highlight of the 2022-2023 season would be whenever we were on the bus to or from an away game,” she said. “We bonded through having conversations and listening to music. After every match, win or lose, we would always end the day in a good mood and talk about our highlights from that day.”

Doan said she expects the 2023-2024 season to be exciting with the addition of many new players.

“New and returning players are going into the 2023-2024 season with a competitive spirit,” she said.

A typical tennis practice starts with warm-up stretches and a lap around the courts. After that, players do drills to work on their ground strokes, serves, footwork and volleys.

“To end off every practice, we would play an interactive group game,” Doan said.

As the 2023 season gets started, Doan said ninth graders should consider getting involved with tennis.

“Incoming freshmen would benefit from playing tennis because it is both a mental and physical sport,” she said. “Tennis is also a sport you can keep playing for a long time. It’s very interactive and people from all levels are able to play. The girls tennis community at Cooper is so welcoming to new players. By joining you’ll have a great opportunity to create long-term friendships.”

Fall Dance

Ms. Chilson, the head coach of the fall dance squad, said the 2022-2023 season was an enjoyable one.

“Some highlights of the 2022-2023 season for the dance team would be the halftime performance we did at the homecoming game during the fall season, and placing second at two of our competitions during the winter season,” she said.

Heading into the 2023-2024 season, Chilson said the team looks poised to have success thanks to the skills of the returning participants.

“We are going to have a good season and hopefully continue to score higher than we have in years past,” she said.

The dance team practices three days a week. In the fall season, practices are shorter, typically an hour long. Meanwhile, in the winter season, practices are two hours long “because it is competition season and there are higher expectations,” Chilson said.

“For each practice, we will start with stretching and do some conditioning and warmups before continuing on to learning the dance and practicing techniques and skills that are included in the dance,” Chilson said.

With the addition of many new ninth graders to the Cooper community in the fall, Chilson said she is hopeful some of them decide to get involved with the dance team.

“We have great team spirit,” she said. “We work hard so that we can have fun later on and it’s just a great experience overall. It is a good way to be active while also being able to have fun and learn from it.”

Winter teams help students stay active during coldest months

Cooper offers multiple winter sports opportunities, including several teams that are shared programs with Armstrong High School

By NOAH PLAHN
Quill staff writer

After the conclusion of the fall sports season, new Cooper students will be looking for sports to play in the winter. The Cooper athletics department offers a wide variety of sports that ninth graders can join this winter.

Winter Dance

Ms. Braden is the head coach of the winter dance team. She said the 2022-2023 season was memorable.

"Some highlights from the winter dance season included hosting the conference championship, placing second in JV jazz in our conference meets and our pancake breakfast fundraiser," Braden said.

Braden said she is looking forward to the 2023-2024 season.

"We are projected to continue placing this year in our new conference. We expect both jazz and kick dances to place next season," she said.

Dance practice has things in common with other sports, but things that differentiate it as well.

"We typically practice three days a week for two hours. Two days are spent on high kick and one day is spent on jazz. Not everyone is on both teams, so some athletes may only dance two days a week," she said.

Braden explained that the team takes part in four or five competitions each season.

"There are four conference meets and one invitational at another school. We dance both jazz and kick. If you are not dancing, then you sit in special chairs on the gym floor and cheer on your teammates. We then usually watch other schools compete and cheer for them as well. We were recognized at nearly every competition last year for our team's amazing sportsmanship," she said.

As the team prepares for the upcoming season, Braden said incoming freshmen can benefit from taking part in winter dance.

"We have a close-knit group that values school, friendship, dance and community," Braden said. "My assistant coach, Lauren, and myself are supportive and bring a lot of fun energy to practice. We are here to support you both in the sport of dance and in life too."

Girls Hockey

Head Coach Mr. Cook said the 2022-2023 hockey season featured many favorite moments, but one in particular stood out to him as he looks back.

"A fun team bus trip and beating Wayzata in the section tournament," he said.

Cook said his outlook for this coming season is optimistic.

"We have a strong, fun group of returning girls, but if anyone is interested, hockey is a fun game and we are happy to teach it," Cook said.

Unlike most teams at Cooper, the girls hockey team practices away from the school.

"We practice at New Hope Ice Arena after school," he said. "We work in groups, working on skills and team play."

Cook said the hockey season is busy for players.

"We normally have two games a week: one home and one away. JV games are generally at 5 p.m. and varsity games are normally at 7 p.m.," he said.

Any incoming freshmen looking to join girls hockey are encouraged by Cook to do so.

"Hockey is a great sport, he said. "It can teach you everything you would ever need to know on how to work together inside of a group. It creates great relationships and gives you a chance to compete and be aggressive."

Boys Swimming

A member of the boys swimming team, Andrew Brooks (11), said he enjoyed the 2022-2023 season.

"One major highlight of the team was the Maroon Gold Meet at the University of Minnesota. In this swim meet, we went up against multiple teams and had a blast doing so," he said. "Another highlight from our season was our going-to-be-senior captain, Rowan Tiemey (12), making it to state for the second season in a row for the 100 Butterfly event."

Given Tiemey's success, Brooks said his outlook for the upcoming season is positive.

"I hope that the team expands and, as we recruit, our opportunities within meets and our abilities as a team aquat-



Photo by BRIGHT DEKU

The Hawks wrestling team welcomed a new coach, Mr. Wong (left), and sent a wrestler to state last season. ically will too," he said.

Brooks said that swimming practice follows a pattern seen in most other Cooper sports.

"During swimming practice, our coach will arrive with a plan for the day in mind relative to the week objective for improvements that we work on as a team. He often will then write that out for us and begin with a warm up. After our warm up, we proceed to take a small break and then begin the main exercise set. After that, we can choose to get advice from our coach or more experienced members," he said.

Along with practice comes competition, and Brooks said that swim meets are fun.

"Typically, a swim meet consists of a bus ride or carpool to the hosting school or to Plymouth Middle School for a meet that Cooper would be hosting," he said. "Sometimes we talk with the other team and make small talk and cheer on our opponents for the evening. Afterwards, there is typically a chocolate milk sharing session and review of how we did."

With the team hoping to grow its roster, Brooks encourages all freshmen to join boys swimming.

"This is the time of your life to challenge yourself, try new things and become comfortable in what you weren't previously," he said. "There are many benefits to being on the swim team. One major one is the bonds you create with your new comrades that could last you a lifetime."

Nordic Skiing

The Nordic skiing squad had a strong 2022-2023 season that saw the boys and girls skiers improve their times.

Team member Malik Williams (11) said his personal highlight of the season was a unique one.

"My personal highlight was the annual costume competition at the end of the season," he said. "It's always so much fun seeing people race in costumes. This most recent season, I wore my Jedi costume from Halloween. It was a lot of fun."

Heading into the new season, Williams is hopeful the team will recruit some new skiers.

"We have a very small roster of racers for both genders right now and expanding that would be very beneficial," he said.

For skiers who join the team, practice starts with everyone meeting in the AVID room or in the foyer next to it.

"Our coach will go over the plan for the day, whether it be an indoor weight-lifting day, a distance run or an off-site ski practice," Williams said. "We then stretch while going over the question of the day and then we get into our workout."

On competition days, Williams

said the team starts by going "down to the wax room after sixth period to grab our race gear and outfits."

"Once everyone is accounted for, we load up the trailer and get on the bus. After getting to the meet, we set up the tent and warm up for the race," he said.

Williams said that any ninth graders thinking about joining the team will benefit greatly from participating.

"I joined as a freshie and it did wonders for my running technique," he said. "I also met lots of really cool people and I was pushed to raise my limits and work harder. By the end of the season, I was so much better as a person and as an athlete."

Girls Basketball

2023 graduate Bella Davison just played her final season of basketball at Cooper. Although the team lost in the sections tournament, the Hawks had a winning record overall, which Davison said was a highlight of the season. An additional highlight she mentioned was the second time the team played and beat DeLaSalle.

"The energy the team played with was just different than any other game," she said.

As for the 2023-2024 season, Davison said there will be some changes and challenges.

"There will be a new head coach and the team will be really young," she said.

A typical basketball practice begins with a team stretch, after which the freshman, JV and varsity players split up. When it comes to game nights, Davison said there is a usual routine.

"On game nights, because the varsity game doesn't start until 7 p.m., we would watch the freshman and JV games before going to the locker room at halftime of the JV game. With about seven minutes of warm-ups left, we would have a pre-game meeting and pray as a team before lining up for the national anthem," she said.

With the team losing several seniors last year to graduation, Davison encourages ninth graders to get involved.

"It's an opportunity to build sisterly relationships with upperclassmen. Also, if you're a quieter person, just being on the team will help you open up to the other people and make new friends," she said.

Boys Basketball

2023 graduate and basketball player Sam Massaquoi said the team had a strong 2022-2023 season.

"A good highlight for us is when we went on a five-game win streak and we beat most of the teams by like 10 or 20 points," he said.

Although he is moving on from Cooper, Massaquoi said he has high ex-

pectations for this year's team.

"I feel like it's a young crew, but they definitely have potential. They can get better if they stay consistent in the weight room," Massaquoi said.

For new players, Massaquoi said team practices follow a similar pattern.

"It usually starts with running around the gym for like 10-15 minutes because the coach wants the guys conditioned. We then play a lot of defense and then we get into shooting and just working on plays," he said.

According to Massaquoi, the team typically takes some time to gel, but once that happens, the results are positive.

"Usually, the start of the season is slow because that's when guys are learning how to play with each other, but by the end of the season the chemistry gets way better and that's when everyone knows the plays and really gets into playoff mode," he said.

When it comes to new Cooper freshmen, Massaquoi said joining basketball is a great experience.

"You can stay in shape, have fun and just stay consistent in what you do," he said. "It's just a really fun sport to play."

Winter Cheer

Precious Cephus (12) is a returning member of the of the cheer team. She said the best part of cheer is a game day.

"My favorite highlight of last season was obviously game days. Game days were so much fun because the people who I was with on the team, and the energy and vibes that they gave off, were so positive," she said.

Heading into the new season, Cephus said she has some specific goals.

"What I really want to focus on is making sure everyone is comfortable with where they're at. Sometimes, people don't think that cheer is a lot of work, but, to be honest, when you really get into that position of being a cheerleader, there's so much that you have to put into in order to be successful," she said.

During cheer practices, Cephus said team members can expect a specific daily routine.

"We start out with stretching and then we do these workouts as a team," she said. "We then start practicing cheers."

One focus of the team is performing at pepfests, which Cephus said requires a lot of preparation.

"I feel like one thing we really work hard for is pepfests. There were lots of stunts that people were skeptical about, but we ended up pulling through with that," she said.

For ninth graders who are considering cheer as a fall activity, Cephus said it is fun.

"You're going to meet people who you've never met before who have their

own personalities. Honestly, it's really fun to see," she said.

Boys Hockey

The Armstrong-Cooper boys hockey squad consists of players from both high schools. Zachary Allen (12) is one of only three athletes at Cooper who were part of the hockey team last year.

"I would say probably the biggest highlight from last season was us having a winning record," he said.

Given the team's success in 2022-2023, Allen believes the upcoming season will be a strong one.

"[Last] year, we competed with some teams that were better, but we now want to face off against teams like Maple Grove, Edina and Rodgers," he said.

Allen said that hockey practices begin with warmups before moving into skill-building drills.

"Usually, all the drills we do we already know, so we don't have to take much time out of practice to explain them. We just hop into them. Near the end, we just talk strategy," he said.

Although Cooper did not have many players on last year's squad, Allen is hopeful that will change in 2023-2024. One trait Allen said incoming ninth graders should have is the ability to work hard.

"The coaches really like to see hard workers," he said. "They also like you to be very communicative with them so that they know what you're doing and see how much you're working."

Wrestling

The Hawks wrestling squad saw one of its members, 2023 graduate Bright Deku, make it to state last season. Deku said this was a personal highlight from 2022-2023, but not his only one.

"For me, going to state I guess would be my biggest highlight," he said. "For the team, I would say it was a lot of new faces."

Although Deku won't be wrestling for Cooper in 2023-2024, he said his outlook for the team is positive.

"We most definitely have a lot of potential," he said. "There were some really good wrestlers who just had their first year on the team. If they keep showing up, they will be top stars next year."

Wrestling practices begin with a warm-up run and stretching. After that, the coaches discuss the plan for the day and the wrestlers start working with their partners on drills.

"We also do live matches where you and your partner are going at it 100 percent to improve," he said.

One key to the team's success in the upcoming season will be the addition of new ninth graders. Deku said he has some specific memories of how he felt competing in wrestling as a freshman.

"My first-ever meet my freshman year, I was very scared. You're always going to be scared, but once the match starts, all that nervousness and butterflies go away."

Despite that initial nervousness, Deku said all ninth graders who join wrestling will enjoy the benefits.

"It most definitely changed my body," he said. "I was a little flimsy and had loose fat everywhere, but once I started wrestling, I became more toned out and buff."

Adapted Hockey

The adapted hockey team enjoyed a positive 2022-2023 season that saw them take the Minnesota state title. This impressive outcome was a result of the team's dedicated players and attentive coaching staff.

"We have a great coach, good skills being learned and we met people from other schools," team member Nicholas Johnson (12) said.

As Johnson heads into his final year of adapted hockey, he is hopeful the team's roster will grow.

"We need more players," he said. "We have fun but need to sub in. Most players keep on playing every year. Even siblings are on the team."

Johnson said a typical practice includes warmups, instructions from the coach and a look at the playbook. He said they then "practice passing, walking fast and eyeballing the net."

One element of being on the team that Johnson said he enjoys is that everyone is "kind to each other so nobody gets hurt." In fact, he said that is one reason why he encourages incoming ninth graders to take part in the sport.

"You can make new friends, get better and more skilled at something. We are rock stars and win a lot," Johnson said.

Ninth graders encouraged to go out for sports this spring

The return of warm weather brings with it a large number of team-based athletic opportunities for players of all skill levels



Photo by BRIGHT DEKU

The boys and girls track teams are hoping to grow their rosters as they move into a new section during the 2023-2024 season.

By NEMO PONDER
Quill staff writer

When March comes around and it starts getting warmer outside, the sports that Cooper offers in the spring season can let you go outside, compete and make friendships. The spring season is also a great time for fall and winter athletes to keep in shape for their sports in the coming school year. All of the following Hawks squads are looking to grow their rosters with the incoming ninth graders starting at Cooper this year.

Adapted Softball

Head Coach Mr. DeMorett said the 2022-2023 adapted softball team did a good job of working together.

"A highlight for this season was the camaraderie of all the players who have really bonded together with good friendships," he said. "Other highlights include our pitching staff, who turned out to be three good pitchers."

As they head into the 2023-2024 season, DeMorett said the loss of last year's seniors will be a challenge.

"We are losing a couple of good players to graduation," he said. "New players will have to step up."

On a typical day of practice, DeMorett said players arrive from their schools and take part in a warmup routine.

"Once all are there, we play catch with the whiffle balls, take some grounders and pop flies, and finish with batting practice," he said.

Unlike traditional softball, adapted softball is played indoors using a whiffle ball.

"Games are seven innings unless a 10-run rule has been achieved," DeMorett said.

For ninth graders who might want to play adapted softball, DeMorett said there are many benefits.

"Incoming freshmen would benefit from participating by making new friends, participating in a non-threatening varsity sport and enjoy some activity rather than sitting at home," he said.

Softball

Head Coach Mr. Dreher said the 2022-2023 season saw some wins for the varsity and JV squads.

"Some big highlights would be the JV squad getting an opening-day win against DeLaSalle and varsity getting their first win of the year against Edison," he said.

One positive aspect of the upcoming 2023-2024 season will be the return of all of the team's members because the squad did not lose any seniors to graduation last year.

"2024 will be big for softball with our girls coming back and being more competitive in our games," he said.

Softball practice starts off with stretches and warm-up throws, after which the team meets to talk about previous games and what they need to learn and build on.

"We then go into our infield and outfield drills and usually finish off with

some live pitching and batting," Dreher said.

Cooper ninth graders considering softball as a spring sports are encouraged to come out for the team.

"You'll learn to play another sport that you'll fall in love with, plus meeting new girls and building friendships on and off the field that you'll be able to keep throughout high school," he said.

Girls Track

The girls track team enjoyed some individual successes in 2022-2023 that Head Coach Ms. Geske hopes to build on this year.

"Attoria McDonald (12) took first in the 100 hurdles at the Conference Championship Meet," she said.

Given the large number of newcomers in 2022-2023, Geske said she is hopeful they will return and improve in 2023-2024.

"We are looking forward to retaining them next season and having a more seasoned team," she said. "We also look forward to welcoming new members."

With the track season starting in late winter, the first three weeks of the season are usually spent inside.

"We focus on total body strength and conditioning as well as team bonding," Geske said. "After that, we try to get outside. Outside practices are a team warmup, followed by athletes going to their individual event coaches for workouts that are specific to what they compete in."

Track meets happen once a week and they usually start around 3:30 p.m.

"Athletes are responsible for warming up and being prepared to compete in their individual events based on the meet schedule. They work with their event coaches to understand when and where they should be throughout the meet," Geske said.

According to Geske, ninth graders who take part in girls track will enjoy the experience.

"Track and field has something for everyone and it's a great supplement to other sports as well," she said.

Boys Track

The 2022-2023 season saw team captain and 2023 graduate Peyton Sanders make it to state in the 100-meter dash and the long jump. In addition to these achievements, Sanders said the season had other highlights as well.

"We had a lot more athletes come out for track and field and a lot of athletes that were able to meet goals they set throughout the season," he said.

Coming into the 2023-2024 season, Sanders said he hopes the team's current athletes return and improve.

"I hope we have athletes that want to put in the work time and effort to be better on and off the track," he said.

The boys track team joins the girls track team during practices and meets, so the practice routines and meet procedures are identical between the two squads. Sanders said that the team bonding that takes place between the boys

and girls athletes, and among the boys athletes specifically, is a selling point for any ninth grader who elects to join track.

"Track can benefit you in so many ways, such as keeping you in shape, building sprint stamina and good sportsmanship. Also, it teaches you the will to go out and try something new," Sanders said.

Girls Lacrosse

The girls lacrosse squad was small but supportive during the 2022-2023 season according to player Sophia Berg (12).

"One of my favorite highlights from our 2022-2023 season is making new friendships. The Cooper girl's lacrosse team is such a welcoming and positive place that I always look forward to going to practices and games," she said.

Heading into the 2023-2024 season, Berg is hopeful that they can grow the team's roster.

"The main outlook for our 2023-2024 season is to have a bigger team. Last season, we were only able to have four games compared to the usual 10-15 games because we didn't have enough players. Usually, lacrosse teams have around 15-20 players, but last year, we officially only had nine," Berg said.

Despite this challenge, Berg said the team's coach helped make 2022-2023 an enjoyable experience.

"Our dedicated coach, Kate Duffey, made it possible for us to have games. Even with low attendance, every single player on the team regularly attends practice and puts in the effort," Berg said.

The camaraderie between the players is one aspect of lacrosse games Berg said she enjoys.

"A typical girls lacrosse game is competitive. As a whole, our entire team works together and praises each other when someone scores a goal or makes a good pass," she said.

Given the team's growing roster, Berg said she hopes ninth graders decide to join the squad in 2023-2024.

"I believe incoming freshmen would 100 percent benefit from joining Cooper's 2023-2024 lacrosse team. They will get to make many new friendships, learn new skills and overall have a lot of fun. We are very excited to meet new faces," she said.

Girls Golf

New Head Coach Mr. Bruce said the girls golf team saw its biggest roster in years during the 2022-2023 season.

"Our biggest accomplishment was that our team increased our numbers to 10 golfers," he said. "Many of them started playing for the first time. These players came a long way since March and have really hit the ball a long way. They got better each time we had a meet. Most importantly, they had fun each and every day and really bonded together as a team."

Looking ahead to the 2023-2024 season, Bruce said he is hopeful his current players return and serve as leaders

for the new players.

"With players with more experience, we can really start the work to improve their swings as much as possible. We have some younger players who could turn into decent golfers in another year or two. We want to do more varsity events next year and really show the rest of the conference just how far we have come," he said.

Golf practices are usually held at a golf course or a driving range.

"When we are at the driving range, we are doing putting and chipping drills to hone in the short game and doing a lot of teaching of the finer points. In addition to the drills, we try to add some stakes and fun into the mix by giving them challenges, such as everyone has to make a putt from a certain distance to win a prize or who could get the closest on a chip to simulate meet conditions as much as possible," Bruce said.

Meanwhile, when they are on the golf course, the girls are sent out in groups to play.

"This would provide learning opportunities for the girls to simulate meet conditions while having some fun in the process," Bruce said.

Bruce said he is hopeful Cooper ninth graders consider trying golf as a spring sport, even if they have no prior experience.

"This is a sport that you can play for the rest of your life," he said. "This is a way that you can get great exercise by walking around the golf course and being outside. It is an excellent way to challenge yourself and build character. As a freshman, this is something you can do all four years here at Cooper and be a part of a fun experience."

Baseball

Sam Thomas, a 2023 graduate and captain of the Hawks baseball team, said the 2022-2023 season saw the team hold its own in the Tri-Metro Conference.

"There has been huge development as a team," he said. "Every day, the team got better. We have been keeping up with some of the best teams in our section for the most part."

Heading into the 2023-2024 season, Thomas said the younger players will need to develop their skills.

"We currently have a very young team, so next year we will have an older team with development and practice. I believe we can have a very good team, especially with cleaning up the things we have been needing to work on so we don't fall apart towards the end," he said.

Thomas said a daily baseball practice lasts for about two hours.

"We start off with warmups and throwing the ball. Then, we move into position drills. After we do a couple of those drills, we move into hitting drills," he said.

With the team always looking for new members, Thomas encourages all ninth graders to try out for baseball.

"Baseball will help your hand-eye coordination, quick decision making and it will help you with mobility,"

Thomas said. "Those split-second decisions will help you off the field as well. Baseball will help you be successful in anything you do."

Boys Golf

The boys golf team welcomed Mr. Oscarson as its head coach in 2022-2023 after he served for two years as the coach of the girls golf team. Team captain and 2023 graduate Brady Enger said this was one of many highlights of last season.

"Practices have been really enjoyable this year. Getting to practice and hanging out with my teammates at the same time has been fun," Enger said.

According to Enger, a challenge to the team in 2023-2024 will be the loss of seniors due to graduation. However, he remains optimistic about the squad's future prospects.

"It will be interesting for sure. Two seniors are leaving this year but it sounds like there be a few new kids that are going to join," Enger said.

Much like the girls golf team, practices are spent at the driving range or at golf courses. During matches, the team is split into varsity and JV levels to face off against the other golfers. Enger said the matches have both a team and an individual aspect to them.

"We do compete against other teams, but it's more about looking at your own score. You're trying to do the best you can. In a match, there will be people that beat you, but there are also times when you will beat them. Golf is a sport about yourself," he said.

Enger said that ninth graders who want to try golf for the first time will not regret that choice.

"High school is the best time to start golf. You'll make friends and the team will make you better and teach you how to play. Also, playing for the school literally pays off. You only have to pay for the activity fee, which is way less than the amount of courses we go to and balls we end up hitting. It is really worth it," Enger said.

Boys Volleyball

The upcoming 2023-2024 season will be the first one in which boys volleyball is recognized as an official high school sport in Minnesota. Kaden Knoblauch, who was captain of the 2022-2023 Cooper club volleyball team, said he is excited for the squad, even though he will not be joining them since he graduated at the end of last school year.

"It looks like the team has a lot of potential. They will have some struggles because they did lose a lot of seniors. The seniors were almost the whole team, so they will need some more players to step up," he said.

Knoblauch said volleyball practice begins with setting up the nets and doing dynamic stretches.

"Then, we practice hits and serves," he said. "Every practice isn't the same most of the time."

Given the loss of many seniors, Knoblauch said he hopes incoming freshmen decide to play volleyball.

"I think most freshmen will benefit from volleyball because it is the only sport that forces you to work as a team. It will honestly teach them to work together and communicate as well," he said.

Boys Lacrosse

The boys lacrosse team enjoyed a 2022-2023 season that saw the team improve on offense despite its limited roster size.

"We scored a lot of goals and there has been a lot of improvement since the first practice," 2023 captain and Cooper graduate Mason Stachowski said.

According to Stachowski, there will be a large number of returning players in 2023-2024.

"We have a lot of juniors that will be returning next year and the improvement is there," he said. "I'm excited to see this team next year."

Lacrosse practices start with warm-up drills, after which the team works on passing.

"We then break off into the offense and defense and we scrimmage at the end of practice," he said.

Stachowski said a lacrosse game consists of four, 12-minute quarters with 10 players on the field for each team.

Given the number of young players already on the team, Stachowski is hopeful Cooper's new ninth graders pick lacrosse as a spring sport.

"The first time I stepped onto that field, I fell in love with the game," he said. "Also, you gain a ton of friends."