

The latest news and updates from Preparatory Academy



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MICROWAVE ETIQUETTE: THE DRAMA IS HEATING UP

by Nathan Cardona, Janitza Cruz, Valentina Delgado, Bryanna Najera

It's lunch time at STPA. Instead of braving the long lines for cafeteria food, you've decided to bring your own lunch. But, you need to heat it up. Lucky for you, STPA provides microwaves for students to use. Unlucky for you, students are way behind on microwave etiquette.

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Students wait patiently to warm up their food using one of the STPA microwaves.

Photograph credit by Mrs. A. Salinas

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From splattered food to actually breaking the microwave because someone heats up foil or metal (which is a microwave 101 don't!) students need a quick lesson on how to use microwaves properly at school.

First, many students will take longer than a minute or two to heat up their food and the entire lunch period is only 25-30 minutes. Some will take as long as 5 minutes just for one meal! This eats up precious eating time for other students waiting in line. Sixth grade

Sophia Del Rio, said, "Sometimes the lines are really long and people are yelling at each other to hurry up. It effects the time that I have to eat and my friends always wonder why I take so long."

Second, many students don't just need to learn microwave etiquette but line-waiting etiquette as well. Many will cut in line and if you are just patiently waiting you could end up missing your entire lunch period.

Finally, don't put anything metal or aluminum in the microwave. If you haven't learned in science yet, microwaves and metal don't mix well. This will break the appliance or worse cause a major issue at school. There are already only so many microwaves to go around so we can't really afford to lose one. Plastic is the way to go. Ethan Garza, sixth grade student, "Some of the microwaves, like the older ones, don't heat up the food as much. So you have to heat it up even longer which takes up more time."

As students it's pretty cool that we have microwaves to use when we need them, but that won't always be the case if we don't know how to use them right. Jiselle Gallegos said, "I only use the microwaves sometimes. It's cool that we have them, but we definitely need more because it takes forever to use them."



*Students wait for the microwaves as the lines slowly grow in the cafeteria.
Photograph credit by Mrs. A. Salinas*

STPA PAVILION FINALLY OPEN TO STUDENTS

by The Oracle Journalists



*Students wait after school in the new pavilion for their parents to pick them up.
Photograph credit by Mrs. A. Salinas*

STPA has a new addition to its already beautiful campus: a new pavilion. Students have waited patiently all year and have waited until the fence surrounding the area would finally be removed. What seemed like forever ago, a construction company began to build a new area for students to hang out in or wait after school. The fence surrounding it was a little frustrating at times since it forced students to walk around to their classes the long way. But now that it is done, the area can finally be put to good use. Students are allowed to hang out in the new pavilion after school as they wait for parents. Student, Caleb Canales, said, “I think that the pavilion seems like a good place to eat or hangout. I like that it gives shade to just wait after school.” For now, the space just provides shelter from the sun or if it's raining. But hopefully in the future, benches or tables will be added so it can be used for more. Teacher, Mrs. A. Salinas says she looks forward to hopefully moving a lesson outside under the pavilion. “I really hope I can take my class out to enjoy the fresh air and get a break from the four walls of the classroom. It will make the perfect spot for creative writing.”

NEW FACES AT STPA

by Abdeljalil Oumeddour, Neriah Oriekwu, Abby Contreras, Mulan Cao, and Mia Franco

Every school year brings new faces of students joining the STPA family. This year, however, there are more than just new faces among the students. STPA has added many new teachers and staff across the campus. The Oracle newspaper would like to feature each of these new staff members to give students and family a chance to get to know who's who among our newest teachers. In this first issue, we will introduce our new 6th grade teachers and administration.

Ms. C. Cisneros - 6th Grade Science - Ms. Cisneros joins the STPA staff after teaching for 10 years. She taught at Donna ISD for 5 years and McAllen ISD for 5 years as well teaching grades from 6th to 8th along with some Algebra classes. Ms. Cisneros said, "I definitely enjoy this school. The labs are great and the students are great with participation and engagement. I'm very thankful for the opportunity to teach here." Ms. Cisneros will be assisting with soccer this coming school year and is leading the Yoga and Relaxation enrichment class.



Ms. J. Scoggin - 6th Grade Science - Ms. Scoggin joins STPA as an alumni after graduating from Science Academy High School. She also attended STPA and now can serve as a colleague to her past teachers. This is Ms. Scoggin's first year teaching; she said, "I went to school here when I was younger and I always knew I wanted to apply to work here. All of the teachers are so welcoming and friendly. I can always ask them questions or for help when needed." Ms. Scoggin is sponsoring TSA and leads the Harry Potter enrichment class.



Ms. M. Mata - 6th Grade ELA - This is Ms. Mata's third year of teaching and first at STPA. She comes to our campus from Weslaco's Early College High School where she taught English I through English IV. Ms. Mata enjoys our students' willingness and excitement to learn. One interesting thing about her is, she used to be a lifeguard!



Mrs. S. Hinojosa - 6th Grade History - Mrs. Hinojosa joins STPA and brings with her 20 years experience! She has taught history at many grade levels. Mrs. Hinojosa said, "I love everything about STPA!" She is UIL Coordinator this school year leading our students to victory every weekend! One thing you may not know, Mrs. Hinojosa, she was a veterinary technician in her past!



HOOPS, THEY'RE DOING IT AGAIN!

by Caleb Canales, Sofia Munoz, and Arianna Trevino

It's basketball season here at STPA and it looks like both teams are making another run for the TSCAAL championship. Last year, the girls' team finished in 3rd place at the State Championship tournament, while the boys were runners-up at the Regional game. Returning for the girls' side are 7th grade students Ava Thomas, Ily Lopez, Brooke Garza, and Sophia Saenz. On the boys' side it is Liam Hernandez, Rush Rodriguez, and Aiden Garcia.



Ava Thomas drives the ball in against Idea McAllen.
Photograph credit by preparatoryacademy.stisd.net



Coach Muhammad strategies in a huddle with the MSP boys team.
Photograph credit by preparatoryacademy.stisd.net

This year, the girl's have managed a 4-0 season. In their latest victory, the team beat Idea Tres Lagos 30-16. The success of the team isn't by chance. Both teams put in long hours of practice every week. Returning starter, Ava Thomas said, "I practice basketball every single day. Both in school and with out of school training. I can't even count how many hours I put in." Brooke Garza,

another returning starter, said its going to take teamwork if they want to get back to State this year. "We need to focus on passing the ball more and counting on each other if we want to do better at State this year," Brooke said.

For the boy's team, they have managed a 4-1 season also defeating Idea Tres Lagos on December 11th with a score of 49-22. Head girl's basketball coach and assistant boy's coach, Perla Barrientes said, "The boys and girls team look really good. The more we practice the more we'll come together since there are so many new faces."

Both basketball team's regular seasons end Dec. 18th, but their regional games will begin after the break. Be sure to catch your Spartan basketball team as they continue their hunt for the State Championship trophy.

TAYLOR SWIFT: PERSON OF THE YEAR 2023

by Ashira Trehou, Anna Galvan, McKenna Santos, Jordyn Avalos

As the Chinese New Year approaches, the Year of the Dragon is ahead of us. With any new year tradition, it is important to take the time to reflect back on the past year and what you've experienced. Well, unless you've been living under the rock, 2023 had one thing in common: it was the Year of Taylor Swift! Ever since the start of her ground-breaking Eras tour in March 2023 the Taylor Swift rage has yet to slow down. Taylor Swift is now so successful and popular that she has become a billionaire and was named Time magazine's person of the year. We decided to check in with Swifties and anti-swifties at STPA to find out whether they agree that 2023 was the Year of Taylor Swift.

New teacher at STPA, Ms. J. Scoggin said, "I like Taylor Swift a lot! My favorite song is a sad one from Folklore."

Die-hard swiftie, Camila Carreno said, "Taylor Swift is the best. She cares about her fans and very caring to her family and friends. Her music is relatable and creative."

6th grade student, Natalia Castaneda said while she didn't get to see Taylor Swift's Era Tour, she still saw the movie version. "I like her because her music is awesome. All of her songs are awesome!"



Natalia Cardenas sports her Era's Tour merch.
Photograph credit by Mrs. A. Salinas



Student Jordyn Avalos and Ms. Scoggins share their love of Taylor Swift.

Photograph credit by Mrs. A. Salinas

But, sadly, not everyone is a fan. Sixth grade student Sebastian "AJ" Hernandez said, "Travis Kelce?" when asked what his favorite song was by the artist.

Hernandez said while he doesn't know much about Taylor Swift, he has strong opinions about her when it comes to football. "Taylor Swift and Travis Kelce are never in a lifetime going to last. She will just make sad songs about it."

Student, Jesus Salinas, says, "I feel like I have to like Taylor Swift because the kids on my bus listen to her so loud and if I say I don't like her, they play even louder!" Whether you love Taylor Swift or not or just tolerate her, its hard to argue with the facts: Taylor Swift is hands-down 2023's artist of the year!

SPARTAN OLYMPICS RECAP

by Isabella Villarreal

The 10th Annual Spartan Olympics were another success at STPA on November 16, 2023. Students looked forward to the event for weeks leading up to it, and its safe to say, Spartan Olympics definitely lived up to its hype.

This year, the PSTO and STPA decided to raise money for the South Texas Juvenile Diabetes Association. Mrs. Salinas's 6th grade SAM earned the title of SAM with the most donations and the top earning student overall was

As for the games themselves, students were able to compete in volleyball, basketball, soccer, corn hole, and puzzles. Each game won would earn the SAM team a medal, but no medal was given if a team ended up tying. The SAM classes with the most medals at the end of the day would be allowed to attend the celebration during the second semester. Parents in PSTO worked for weeks to put together this event and volunteered their time to make sure the day was a success.

From running the 5k, to passing out snacks, and even referring the events, the entire day was put on by the parents for the enjoyment of all students at STPA. As for the teachers, Mr. Gill and Coach Muhammad helped to organize the events and schedules. Mr. Gill said, "[Planning] is a monster effort between the administration, the teachers, and the parents, and everyone did their parts to make the event as successful as it could be." In terms of success, Mr. Gill said, "I think the day went very well, the weather was very cooperative, and the kids all had lots of fun."

Spartans can't wait to see what is in store for the 2024 Spartan Olympics!

MUSINGS

Attention creative Spartans! Send us your artwork, lyrics, and creative writing! Musings will feature student-created art or writing every issue. If interested, please email your work to annalisa.salinas@stisd.net or stop by room 101.

The Oracle Journalism staff is also looking for a graphic artist to create a comic section. Please contact Mrs. A. Salinas at annalisa.salinas@stisd.net or stop by room 101 if you are interested.

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