



The Gata Data

ST. AMANT HIGH SCHOOL • 12035 HIGHWAY 431, ST. AMANT, LA 70774 • ISSUE 1 • AUGUST 2024

Phone ban or phone fan?

BY: MICHAEL MUMPHREY, SAVANNAH MATLOCK, JAYDEN PINO, VICTORIA RODRIGUEZ

Gata Data Reporters

St. Amant High School introduced a new cell phone policy, prohibiting the use of phones during school hours - 7:10 to 2:40 - sparking a polarizing conversation around campus. The policy stems from a ruling by the Louisiana State Senate requiring students to turn off the phone and stow it away during instructional time.

"We want them engaged in lessons and learning," says Principal of St. Amant High school Christina Carter, "We have noticed just in trend that teenagers can get distracted easily, and one of the things that is causing the big distraction is their cell phone."

Carter says that she is impressed with the lack of disciplinary issues at STA surrounding the policy. "We really have not had the volume of phone issues that we typically would, or the negatives that come with that like consequences and suspensions. We had a few, but not nearly as many as we might have anticipated in worse case scenarios." She continues, "I am honestly very proud of our student body. When there are rules and changes, change is very scary."

Some teachers, like Choir Director Sara Bray, affirm Mrs. Carter's statement. "I honestly think it's not an issue. The kids have

adapted really quickly." Bray says, "I think they understand that it's important that we're here to learn, so I think when you realize that you can live without it, it gets easier."

While some of the student body is passive about the new law, others feel the opposite. Many students have been vocal about their disdain for the new policy like one student who says, "I think it's really dumb and I actively disobey it."

"I'm completely fine without using my phone in class," another student says, "but outside of class like during lunch and in the mornings I do find it a bit agitating because I have nothing much else to do."

After surveying 107 students, 89% say that they consider themselves to be anti phone ban. A common thread between many students is the argument that the ban is too extreme and unnecessary. One junior says, "I mean I focus in all of my classes. I never have my phone out in any of them, but for lunch I just want a 30 minute time window to text my mom." Others say that they want to listen to music or have a brain break during breakfast or lunch.

Brandy Foret, a freshman teacher at STA, contends that the harshness of the ban is necessary to see change. "If it wasn't across the



board, you're always gonna have that feeling of 'oh well they're getting away with it so I can get away with it,' which was very hard to manage from a fairness standpoint." Foret continues, "You don't have that anymore. There's no adjustment. It's great."

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St. Amant Gators are ready to chomp the competition

BY: LAILAH GRANIER, LIBBY WILKINSON

Gata Data Reporters

Friday Night Lights is back in action which means football is now in full swing. St. Amant's coaches are eager to show off their skilled players.

David Oliver, St. Amant football's head coach is in his 17th year of working with the Gators. Coach Oliver is confident that several of their young players have plenty of playing experience and will be well conditioned for the upcoming season. "It's gonna be an exciting time, I feel like we are going to have a chance to have a very good football team again," said Oliver.

Throughout the summer, the team prepared for the season by participating in training camps. "Over the summer, we've built chemistry. By the time the season starts it's like you've been playing with them forever." Quarterback Cooper Babin said. Oliver added on by saying that they had a great fall camp and were able to get a lot of positive work done. "We're counting on some young guys that will be sophomores to come up and contribute on Friday nights and I thought they did a good job at camp growing in these positions," said Oliver.

Coach Oliver explains that Babin makes a lot happen as quarterback. Oliver also highlighted some lead players such as: running back Tyree Williams, wide receivers Reid Mayers, Jermichael Millien, Quinten Elisar, Connor Darr and many others. "I'm comfortable putting any of those guys in the game at any time. It's really a deep and talented group," said Oliver.

Oliver also speaks on how facing other Ascension schools will be for the new season. He says that getting their first shot at Prairieville High will be exciting, followed by East Ascension and Dutchtown. Many players commented on being most thrilled to play against East Ascension and Dutchtown. The rivalry between St. Amant and East Ascension has been going on for decades, making the atmosphere intense. Although there is no direct rivalry between St. Amant and

Dutchtown, it was revealed that many Gators want a victory over the Griffins.

Sophomore Jacoby Davis, an outside linebacker, describes how he feels for the season. "I'm excited that I am given the opportunity to start and be exposed to the game while I'm young," says Davis. He explains that the community and student section help bring the energy to The Pit. Davis anticipates that this season will be a special season for him, especially playing in the East Ascension game. "I've spent years watching those who have come before wear that bright orange and to finally get the opportunity to do it myself and be a part of the tradition. I can't explain how much it means to me."

"This is a good group of kids, they are fun to be around, they have good chemistry and we're excited for the fall," Oliver added. On August 30, the team will be able to show their determination with their first game at The Pit against Assumption High in the annual Jamboree. Be sure to show up to support your St. Amant Gator Football Team.



STAFF PHOTOS BY LIBBY WILKINSON AND LAILAH GRANIER

Lights, camera, GNN is back!

BY: AVERY LAMBERT, CHANCE GOMEZ
Gata Data Reporters

St. Amant's Gator Nation News (GNN) is back in action for another year of daily morning broadcasts. Students a part of the GNN crew have already begun the process of brainstorming and gathering broadcast ideas. However, GNN has also introduced new members to their team that are still getting used to the broadcasting lifestyle. These new members include juniors: Addey Ohmer, Lila Robinson, Ali Cunningham, Jessie Tengler, Kha Nguyen, Savannah Miller and Sophia Hernandez. Seniors: Julia Haddon, Blake Becnel, Bailee Barger, Hollis Messer, Brea Bailey, Talon Phaivong and Fresno Swindle.

First year GNN member Ohmer says that watching GNN since her freshman year inspired her to join the class. She also says she is looking forward to learning about editing and being able to interact with the school in ways she has not been able to before. Another first year member, Lila Robinson, says, "The people made me want to join. I knew Emma, Briley, Mary and a lot of people who had done it and I enjoy watching them, so if they like it I figured I'd like it too."

To prepare for this semester of GNN, Ohmer says, "We're all reviewing with the cameras, reviewing the camera settings and the certain science behind angles and mics. Soon we'll be learning editing."

Senior and second year GNN member Briley Brooks says that GNN is her favorite class. GNN teaches you to talk to others and bring out your creative side. The most important skill

that comes from it is interacting with people and talking." Brooks also believes that GNN to be beneficial to every aspect of life. "It is more real world preparatory than other classes. I do not expect everyone to leave high school and do video editing or broadcasting but I have had students that did Tiger TV or go to WBRZ or WAFB," said GNN Teacher Randon Gilmore.

Although GNN is a known fun class to take, there are also many obstacles members face. Both Robinson and Brooks mention tech issues that continue to emerge while preparing for the upcoming semester. Brooks explains that she's most confident in her editing abilities and adds, "I'm more concerned with camera work." On the other hand, Ohmer says, "I'm very opinionated, so when everyone is pitching ideas people are going to want to go with their own. That will probably be the biggest thing for me."

"You have to be good at a lot of different skills not just one. Some students are good with camera work but not as good with editing and some better with computer but not speaking on camera," Gilmore said. "To meet all the standards minimally is the challenging for most students."

Robinson says she'd recommend students take the class because, "It's really educational it makes you step out of your comfort zone and explore different things."

For more information, feel free to contact Randon Gilmore through email at randon.gilmore@apsb.org.



STAFF PHOTO BY AVERY LAMBERT
GNN's 3rd block class takes a group picture after being assigned their partners.



STAFF PHOTO BY SANIYA SMITH

Gatoresses leaping into the new season

BY: HAYDEN LOUPE
Gata Data Reporter

From football performances to performing at nationals, Gatoresses are getting ready to conquer the dance floor.

However, there's more that goes into the Gatoresse team than just technique. "I feel like the Gatoresses are held to a higher standard," says freshman Peyton Kelley. For many years the Gatoresses were the number one dance team in Ascension Parish. Due to the Gatoresses many accomplishments, they have been held to a high standard of excellence. Gatoresses are meant to be role models for St. Amant. They must follow several different rules in order to maintain their reputation.

Although Kelley and other team members look forward to getting awards at nationals and other

competitions, they also look forward to growing as a team and getting closer together. Gatoresses spend so much time with each other, "It becomes like a family," says sophomore Nila Landry. The girls become so close, spending nearly every day together, creating lifelong friendships. Landry talks about how Friday Night Lights has created memories for her and her friends and hopes to continue making these lifelong memories. As the Gatoresses season begins, they will be performing at Meet the Gators on Monday and will make an appearance at a retirement home next month for a special performance for the elderly.



STAFF PHOTO BY HAYDEN LOUPE
St. Amant High School Gatoresses practice jazz routine in preparation for football season on August 19.

STA Volleyball team embraces new leadership

BY: CHAD HERBERT, SANIYA SMITH
Gata Data Reporters

STA welcomes new head volleyball coach, Lucie Hunt, to the court for the 2024-25 season. "I think we have a promising season ahead and I'm excited to start playing," said Hunt.

Hunt emphasized her excitement about coaching the STA volleyball team this year. "I feel pretty good. We have veterans that played varsity last year, we have some girls that play multiple positions so it's fun to change up some lineups a little bit to see what we can do."

Hunt's inspiration for coaching the sport stems from her own experiences in high school volleyball. "I played a lot of sports in high school and volleyball just kinda stuck with me." She says she enjoys breaking down skills and helping girls grow in the game. Hunt continues, "Volleyball brings a lot to girls athletics. Overall, I just get joy from watching them grow in the game."

Hunt was the head coach

at Weston High School for eight years in addition to coaching basketball, track and softball for the past 12 years.

When asked what she hopes to achieve this year, she said that she would like to make it to the playoffs and the state tournament. "We'd have to win two playoff games to get there, and I would love to host a first-round playoff game."

Hunt is also excited about the changes in her own environment, at St. Amant. "I came from a smaller 5-A and so I'm at a bigger 5-A now, so it's different. Class schedules are different. The whole school environment is different but it's good. Change is always good in my opinion so I'm excited for the school year."

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When it comes to team motivation, she says, “Our theme this year is ‘build the ship’. Companionship, friendship, mentorship, ownership, all the ships basically. I want to ingrain that in this program.” She says it is not just about being on the court, “it’s owning the position you play and getting better every day. Anytime you’re called off the bench or your position needs to change, it’s the willingness to just go, do it and be great at it.”

Hunt says she encourages the girls to hold each other accountable, be responsible for their actions, be great teammates and great leaders. “It individually reflects on the court as well when you have six girls around you. Just establishing that through the program and making sure that the girls understand what we’re trying to do.”

On August 19, the team played against the Baton Rouge High Bulldogs in a scrimmage and experienced their first dominant win at home. Senior Gabi Saucier says, “It feels good coming from last year. We struggled a lot and having a new coach and atmosphere makes everything feel extremely positive.”



STAFF PHOTOS BY SANIYA SMITH
Lucie Hunt coaches the Lady Gator volleyball team at their first game on Monday, August 19.



STAFF PHOTOS BY SANIYA SMITH

Senior Sunrise Photo Gallery



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Some have expressed concern for parents not having direct contact with their child during school hours. One student says, “It’s very complicated especially when Hispanic parents can’t communicate. Not knowing English, they can’t directly speak to a counselor.”

The St. Amant staff has addressed the obstacles that these new limitations pose. Mrs. Carter says, “We couldn’t do QR codes with kids but we started a student website that we are trying to start pushing. We have a faculty one for last year and teachers really loved it.” She continues, “But we need to have a place for students to access things then there wouldn’t be a need to always have a QR code or a Google Form. You would have a one-stop-shop to do those things.”

The new website, the “Gator Hub,” has information regarding buses, counselors, student services, school maps and more.

The phone ban may not be completely one sided as the staff themselves are trying to make an effort to limit their phone usage. Carter adds, “Something that I love seeing is that we have adults on campus that are trying to engage in that as well. We’ve done it in a couple of our meetings where everybody has put their phone away so that we are paying attention to whatever we are doing.” Supporters of the phone ban see this as a way to improve concentration and productivity among the school as a whole.

Students are having to adapt to a new school life without cellular devices. For example, students can no longer use phone payments at in school concessions, and they no longer have their phones to keep them occupied during lunch.

Freshman Tori Abbott says, “During lunch everybody is talking to each other more instead of being on the phones.” Teachers

agree, expressing that they have noticed a more interactive student body just in the first week. Foret says, “I get a lot more eye contact and good mornings from everybody which is fantastic. They seem more aware of their surroundings instead of just looking at their toes all the time.”

The Louisiana phone bill has brought immense change to the St. Amant High School campus in only two weeks. As the 24-25 school year moves forward, STA will have to adapt to a new norm in an age where life is intertwined with technology.

“I appreciate students embracing a change and giving it a chance,” Carter said. “We can get really down if we look at things negatively but I’d rather approach it from a more positive perspective. This is a new opportunity for us versus something that was taken away.”