



## CHOATE CELEBRATES INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION WEEK

By **Ethan Zhang '26**  
Copy Editor

As a national joint initiative of the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Department of Education, the goal of the annual International Education Week is to expand students' horizons by fostering connections and mutual understanding between Americans and other countries.

Choate's third year celebrating International Education Week made the School a cultural playground, allowing students to explore, learn, and connect through food, dance, and music. Clubs and faculty collaborated to promote programs that prepare students for a global environment and expose them to new cultures that they haven't engaged with before. From learning the foot placements of Levantine dabke dance to kneading dough for homemade samosas, this weeklong celebration put diversity at the forefront of the School.

This year's celebration took place from October 12–19, with student-run organizations and faculty working in tandem to offer community members the chance to participate in various events that represent essential and unique parts of different cultures and heritages.

On October 12, the Middle Eastern North African (MENA) Club opened International Education Week by hosting a drumming and dance event in the Colony Hall Dance Studio, followed by a "Drama with MENA" gathering in Gelb Theater on October 16. The club taught dabke, a Levantine folk dance typically performed at celebrations like weddings. MENA



Photo by Finn Wikstrom '26/The Choate News

Mariana Verdi '25 paints a fan for Spanish Club fan painting event.

Secretary Aidan Cha '25 explained the importance of teaching dance. "Dabke dancing is an important part of Middle Eastern culture. It's usually done at social gatherings, which helps people to bond together," he said. More broadly, MENA's goal, especially during International Education Week, "is not only to help the Choate community learn more about Middle Eastern culture but also educate them on current events in the region," Cha said.

Hispanic Latine Forum (HLF) also hosted an international dance lesson on October 12 in the St. John Hall Main Activity Space. Director of Student Activities Ms. Alex Long invited an instructor who led Hispanic dance sessions, teaching styles like salsa, merengue, and bachata. HLF President Mariana Verdi '25 said, "The event went well, and it was a really diverse group of kids. But, I wish more people showed up and weren't scared to just dance."

On October 13, Director of the Andrew Mellon Library Dr. Sherry Marrotte-Newman brought students to Sly Fox Den Too, a Northeastern Indigenous

restaurant created by James Beard Award-winning Mashpee Wampanoag Chef Sherry Pocknett, in Charlestown, Rhode Island. Students tried a variety of traditional Indigenous dishes including venison, biscuits, cranberry beverages, fry bread, and grits. Izzy Cook '27, who attended the trip, enjoyed learning about Indigenous cuisine and said, "Everything was super fresh, and they also emphasized the importance of using all the parts of the animal, which I thought was really cool."

Later that day, Chinese teacher Dr. Carol Chen-Lin brought a group of students to G-Mart, an Asian grocery store in Milford, Connecticut. The trip lasted three hours, and students were able to purchase Asian products such as aloe vera drinks and Hong Kong-style fish balls that are hard to access at Choate.

There were also numerous cultural cooking events throughout the week hosted by Caribbean Club, Africanah Club, Choate South Asian Association, and Le Club Culturel Français.



Photo by Emily Ma '25/The Choate News

Choate students make crepes at crêpe making event.

One such cooking event was hosted by Caribbean Club in the Student Activities Center (SAC) Kitchen on October 13, where they made chicken, rice and peas, plantains, and Bahamian potato salad. President of Caribbean Club Jei Han Hall '25 said, "It was just great to listen to music and eat authentic food, and that's our main goal during International Education Week."

On October 18, Choate South Asian Association (CSAA) hosted a samosa-making event in the SAC Kitchen. The SAC provided plates and utensils while students and CSAA's club adviser, Science teacher Ms. Malika Beach-Mehrotra, used the International Education Week fund to purchase ingredients like potatoes, flour, and spices. CSAA aimed to increase club engagement and celebrate International Education Week by providing an opportunity for students to learn more about South Asian culture. According to CSAA Vice President Sundari von Wentzel '25, plans for Diwali, Holi, and cricket events are also in the making.

To promote this year's study abroad programs, Choate hosted a Global Opportunities Fair on October 15 from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the Library Reading Room. Director of Global Engagement Ms. Ashley Sinclair, one of the main organizers of International Education Week, said, "We talk about cultures on campus through most of the events. This [fair] is where we say to students, 'Okay, now it's your turn to go out into the world, too.'"

Other clubs also hosted fun opportunities for artistic cultural immersion, such as The Spanish Club, which hosted a fan painting event on October 18 in the St. John Hall Main Activity Space. The SAC provided fans, paint, and brushes for the event. "[Spanish Club is] trying to teach Choate about the Spanish culture of fans and how they have a greater purpose and cultural impact than just helping people cool off," Spanish Club Vice-President Owen Holbrook '25 said. "I hope the people who come get the chance to be creative and excited about culture in Spain."

International Education Week enabled students to learn about

different cultures, but there was also feedback from students and teachers about how it could improve. For example, Ms. Sinclair commented on the G-Mart trip: "[Dr. Chen-Lin] ended up only going with five kids who originally signed up [out of 13] and three kids from the waitlist at the last second. It was really disappointing because we had the interest of twenty kids on the waitlist." In the future, Ms. Sinclair hopes to "work more with other adults on campus who face the same concern." She said, "As of now ... I hope that [students] are mindful of others on the waitlist or for the adults that plan the programming, and give proper notice of cancellation rather than no show."

Cook also spoke about how there should be more advertising for students to learn about opportunities like her trip to Sly Fox Den Too. "It was such a good experience, but a lot of people didn't know that it had happened," she said. "I think the information about these trips can be more or better publicized because the experience is so much better than what's represented by how many kids show up."

While the official International Education Week has ended, students' curiosity and desire to learn about the world's unique cultures will persist long after the last step in a bachata routine or the final bite of venison. Choate community members were not only able to learn more about culture, but they also were able to live a small part of it.

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## LOOKING FORWARD: STUDENTS AND TRUSTEES IMAGINE CHOATE'S FUTURE

By **Francesca Howard '26**  
Copy Editor

On October 9, a group of students met for lunch at the Sally Hart Lodge with two of Choate's newly inducted Board of Trustees members: Mr. Julian C. Salisbury P '26 and Ms. Patience P. "Duby" McDowell '78.

Dean of Students Mr. Will Gilyard '98, with the input of form deans, selected a diverse cohort of students who have demonstrated leadership skills and showed a commitment to the betterment of the Choate community.

For both students and trustees, this was an opportunity to discuss successes and potential improvements regarding Choate. While trustees aren't involved in the minutiae of Choate's daily operations, they oversee Choate's long-term projects and help make decisions about major issues like campus infrastructure and student life policies. Mr. Gilyard described board members' role as "stewards for the School [who] make sure that the School continues to be one of the best schools in the nation and continues to live out its mission."

Students, in turn, were equally enthusiastic about sharing their perspectives on the Choate experience. One of the key topics broached by the students was the current state of Choate's facilities. They pointed out that while the School offers many resources, some of the older buildings on



Photo courtesy of Chief of Staff Ms. Lauren Lentine

Board of Trustees convene to discuss Choate's future.

campus need updates such as air conditioning. Because of Ms. McDowell's personal ties as an alumna and Mr. Salisbury's as a parent, the need for campus-wide modernization resonated deeply.

Friday Acuna '26, a student at the lunch, also appreciated how the cell phone policy discussion was handled, especially its focus on student experiences and concerns. "That person-to-person conversation and connection is invaluable," he said.

Students also expressed their appreciation for various aspects of life at Choate. Kiran Makam '25 emphasized the sense of community fostered by the recently introduced advising block. Makam noted that this change has helped students forge stronger connections with their advisers.

capability to shape institutional values and policy, then that's the most important thing because our voices are then being heard at the highest level of leadership at the School."

The students left the lunch with a better understanding of what the Board of Trustees does and how decisions are made at Choate. Makam noted that the trustees were invested in understanding the student experience: "The trustees really want to know truly and authentically what is working and what isn't," he said. Acuna echoed this appreciation for Mr. Salisbury and Ms. McDowell's friendliness, describing how it set the tone for the conversation: "They were very attentive and responsive whenever one of us students spoke but maintained a lighthearted air that I think really helped to calm my nerves," he said.

As Mr. Salisbury and Ms. McDowell take on their new roles as board members, this lunch marks the beginning of what will hopefully be an ongoing conversation between students and trustees. The event demonstrated that student opinion is not just welcomed at Choate but is a core part of the conversation about the School's future.

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## SCOPE Adjusts Club Budget Allocations

By **Bella Welch '26**  
Staff Reporter

At the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year, student club leaders were informed that the Student Committee on Programming and Engagement (SCOPE) would no longer allocate a set budget to each club. "[For] the past 2 years, we have taken a portion of the SCOPE budget to allocate \$200 to each club," Assistant Director of Student Activities Ms. Colleen Kazar said. "The SCOPE budget does not replenish each year. It is built only by fundraising, and we have not hosted a fundraiser in the past few years, so the pool of money is simply smaller." Thus, due to the smaller SCOPE budget, SCOPE is not able to financially support individual clubs with a lump sum this year.

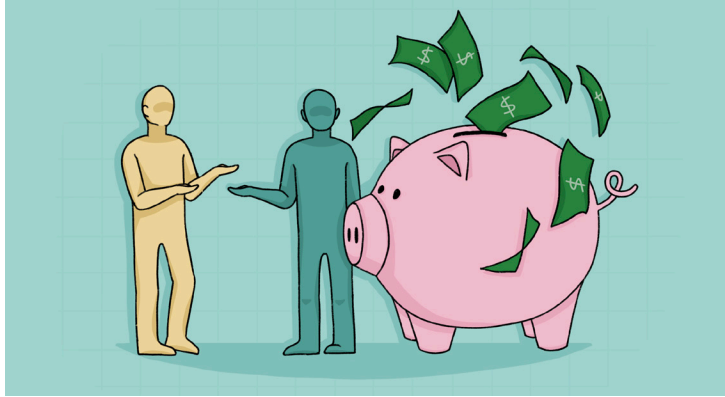
As a result, club leaders must now submit a request for funding whenever they need financial assistance from the Student Activities Center (SAC), specifying the

amount needed and a justification for the expense. While the SAC is willing to cover the cost of food for one meeting per club each year, any additional costs for food at club meetings will need to be covered by the clubs themselves.

Due to the limited funding, club leaders can resort to alternative methods of raising money for their clubs. To support expenses like food, trips, or other activities, clubs can organize fundraisers or have members work in the Call Center, reaching out to alumni for contributions to the annual fund.

The SAC hopes that this change will be temporary and that more funding for clubs will return. "[Director of Student Activities] Ms. [Alex] Long and I are looking into ways that we can increase the budget for next year so that hopefully, we can allocate more funding," Ms. Kazar said.

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Graphic by Leah Han '27/The Choate News

**Drive-thru Coffee**  
7-brew opens up its first New England location in Wallingford  
**Local News • P3**



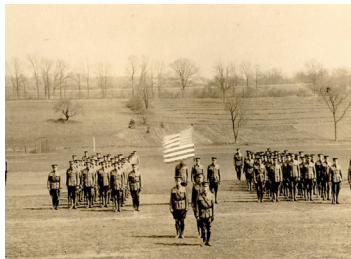



### What is All the Beef?

Unpacking the feud between Kendrick Lamar and J. Cole

**Opinions N/W • P5**

**Choate in WWII**  
The School's contributions to the war effort  
**Features • P6**





### Feeling Inspired

Student artists share their sources of inspiration

**Arts • P7**

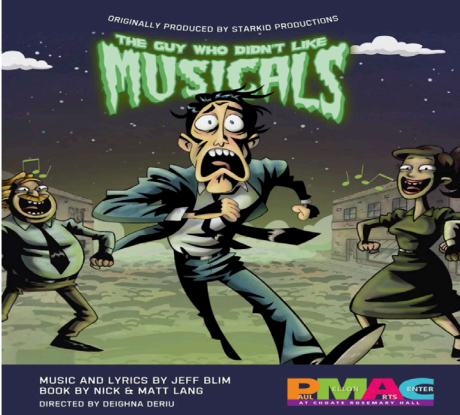
### What's Inside

School News.....	1-2
Local News.....	3
Opinions: Campus.....	4
Opinions: Nation/World.....	5
Features.....	6
Arts and Leisure.....	7
Sports.....	8



Read it, then recycle it.

Visuals by Evelyn Kim '25, Finn Wikstrom '26, the Choate Rosemary Hall School Archives, and Bowen Jin '26



ORIGINALLY PRODUCED BY STARRED PRODUCTIONS

## THE GUY WHO DIDN'T LIKE MUSICALS

MUSIC AND LYRICS BY JEFF BLIM  
BOOK BY NICK & MATT LANG  
DIRECTED BY DEIDRA DEBU

**PMAC**



## CHALLENGE SUCCESS COMMITTEE BRAINSTORMS NEW PHONE POLICY

By **Bella Welch '26** and **Elizabeth Burgstahler '26**  
*Staff Reporters*

The impact of social media and phone usage on the well-being of teenagers and adults has been brought to the attention of Choate faculty members and students alike. Choate's Challenge Success Committee, composed of six faculty members and four students, is working to develop approaches to a new phone policy using feedback from the School community. The committee has partnered with Challenge Success, a non-profit affiliated with the Stanford University Graduate School of Education, to elevate student voices throughout the policy-making process.

"The goal of the committee is essentially to create a recommendation for a policy that the School could then implement for next year," committee member and U.S. History teacher Ms. Abby Kandel said. Members of the committee are learning about the impact of social media and cell phone use on different communities to enrich and prepare themselves for the policy-making process that will happen at Choate.

A few members of the committee attended the Challenge Success Conference at Bentley University on September 27-28. Each day consisted of several workshops and get-to-know-you activities. The Choate representatives went into the two-day conference focusing on issues surrounding phone usage, although the conference covered multiple areas of wellness as well.

Adam Fleischman '25, a member of the committee, shared that the conference helped him shift a critical eye towards "looking at the culture, the environment, and campus around phones and finding more roundabout ways [to] provide suggestions on how students are using phones [but] still give students autonomy."

Fleischman, a sixth-form Student Council Representative, felt encouraged to join the Challenge Success Committee because of his



Photo courtesy of Chief Communications Officer Ms. Alison Cady

Challenge Success Committee attends the Challenge Success Conference at Bentley University. connection to the Student Council and his personal standpoints on education. "I was interested in the first place because I have tried to be a bit more conscious of my own [cell phone] usership," Fleischman said. "Both my parents are educators, and my dad was involved with my school's board growing up ... I have talked to them a lot about it, and particularly about phones in classes because it's a pretty prevalent issue."

Fleischman also attended some workshops at the conference that were not solely focused on technology usage. He attended four workshops throughout the two days, one of them being "Cultivating Mental Resilience: Mindfulness in the Work." This session taught Fleischman many valuable skills on how to manage time and maintain healthy habits. "I noticed a big difference in my focus as soon as our speaker started talking about different practices, like forms of meditation, relaxation, breathing and basically improving that focus, [which] I brought into my own classes," Fleischman said.

Committee member and conference attendee Ana Bury '25 also learned new strategies of mindfulness that she hopes to incorporate into her life at Choate: "Every

person has their own version of mindfulness ... [We are] trying to communicate that there are other ways that we can destress that aren't technology-based, that don't cause us more stress, that don't [just] give us this instant hit and rush of dopamine," she said.

Other than simply attending the workshop sessions, committee members also had the opportunity to form connections with students and faculty members from other schools. Committee member and Third-form Dean Ms. Emily Osterhout noted how vital it was for Choate students to be involved in the trajectory of decisions revolving around technology. "[Choate] definitely had the most student representation of all the other schools, and so they would go off into conferences or different sessions that were more student-focused. And then when we came back that first night, ... they had already formed connections with students from the other schools," she said.

Having worked with Challenge Success before, Head of Student and Academic Life Ms. Jenny Elliott echoed this idea and said, "What I appreciate so much about [the work of Challenge Success] is their insistence on including student voice in problem-solving."

Although Choate has taken large steps toward student wellness, attending the conference has also encouraged members of the Choate community to prioritize faculty wellness. "One of the challenge success counselors was walking around and looked at our [list of policies] and said, 'This is all student-based,'" Ms. Osterhout said. "You can't have student well-being until you have faculty well-being. What are we doing at Choate for faculty well-being so that they're at their best to then help promote student well-being?"

Social media and cell phone use have both benefits and drawbacks. It's important for the community to compromise when finding ways in which students and faculty can engage with the digital world and forge connections in the Choate community. The hope for the Challenge Success Committee and the Challenge Success Conference is to provide all community members with a policy in which their voices are heard and their well-being is put first.

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## Newest Additions to Students' Academic Toolbox

By **Sofia Rubenstein '27**  
*Reporter*

Whether you are looking to improve your personal productivity, studying for an exam, or writing a paper, the right tools can make all the difference. Starting this year, the School has provided all students with memberships to Grammarly Premium and QuizletPlus, two software systems that can elevate writing and learning skills. From refining grammar and style to enhancing study techniques, these platforms provide practical solutions to common academic challenges.

Last year, Student Council members proposed to the Director of Academic Technology Mr. Morgan Harris that the School should cover the cost of QuizletPlus and Grammarly Premium. After working with Information Technology User Services (ITS) and putting in a formal capital request, Mr. Harris was able to get the budget for QuizletPlus and Grammarly Premium. At the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year, all students received an email with a link that gave them access to Grammarly Premium for free. Students can access QuizletPlus by scanning a QR code posted in the library.

So far during this academic year, these two resources have had positive impacts on students. "QuizletPlus has made a huge difference in my studying because it creates personalized study paths that help me stay on track," Leanna Robie '25 said. "Also, I can now

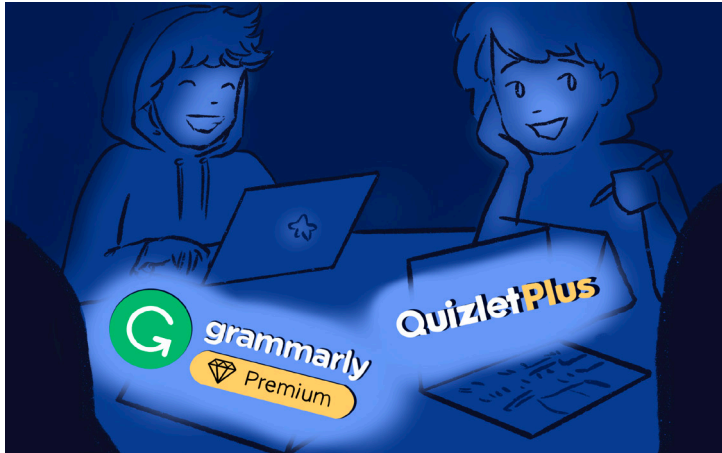
upload photos to my flashcards, which has been really helpful in my Spanish class."

For Ale Martinez Beltran '27, Grammarly Premium has allowed her to advance her writing skills through the site's feedback on grammar, content, and flow. She said, "[Being told] small details like passive and active voice and things like that [and] when you're not supposed to use it is helpful." Similarly, Robie stated, "Grammarly Premium is super in-depth with its feedback on things like clarity, engagement, and delivery."

Alongside Grammarly Premium, students and faculty also have access to Grammarly Authorship, a set of features that are able to distinguish between text that is typed, pasted from a browser-based source, like Wikipedia or ChatGPT, and pasted from an unknown source, like a private browsing window. "[This] kind of transparency is something that we [as teachers] are absolutely trying to encourage with any kind of AI use," Mr. Harris said. "Part of our role as teachers is to help work as a guide and a coach for responsible and ethical use of these tools."

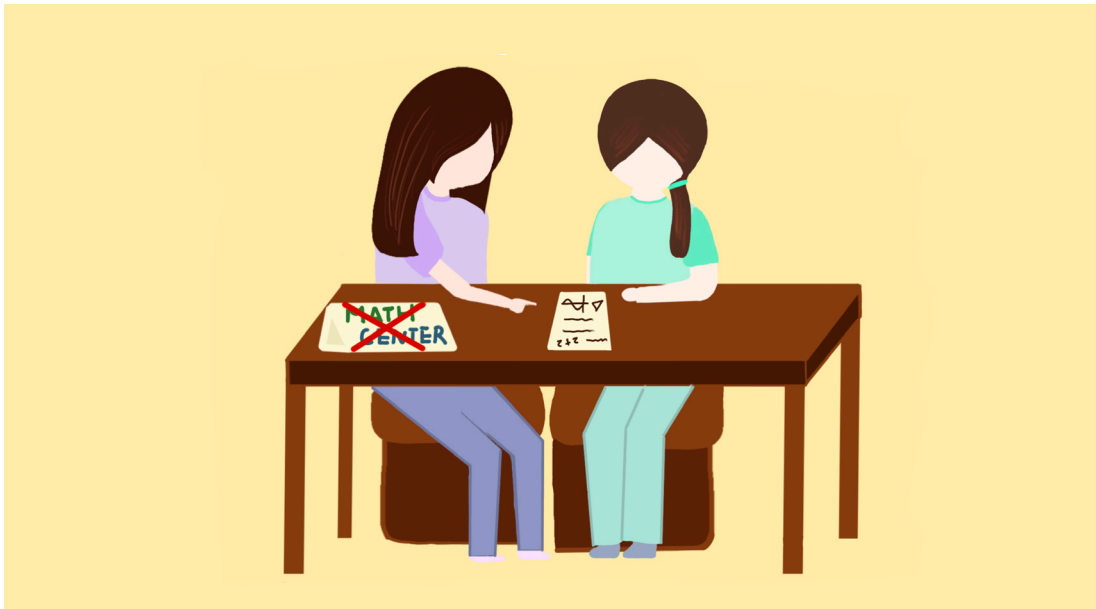
With these upgrades, students are seeing improvements in their studying and writing, and teachers are able to encourage increased academic transparency.

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Graphic by Evelyn Kim '25/The Choate News

## MATH CENTER SHUTS DOWN AFTER THREE YEARS



Graphic by Grace Ju '27/The Choate News

By **Matthew Zhang '28**  
*Reporter*

After three years, the Math Center will cease operations, as the Math Department seeks to provide more direct oversight in the training and support of student tutors. The Math Center was founded right after the Covid-19 pandemic by several upperclassmen students in high-level math classes who wanted to offer help to other Choate students. It was held in the library every Sunday through Thursday during study hours, where multiple tutors were available to assist with homework, questions, and test preparation. However, there are a myriad of ways that students can still receive math help, such as through the peer tutoring program and during extra help hours.

According to Math Center Coordinator and Math teacher Mr. Dan Proulx, the environment of the Andrew Mellon Library, where the Math Center was held, wasn't conducive to mathematical in-

struction, and because the program was totally student-run, it didn't have any on-site teacher supervision. Occasionally, the librarian staff would have to step in and help when the tutors would get sidetracked. "Having students teaching students is a really good idea, but we often found that tutors needed a little bit more guidance and oversight from someone whose job it is to teach math," he said.

There were also multiple occasions when tutors were not knowledgeable enough to help students work on more advanced math topics. This occurred because there was no duty schedule for the sessions, meaning students of varying abilities were often matched with tutors who were not qualified to help. Additionally, some tutors had not taken the math subject they were helping with for many years, which limited their ability to provide assistance. Without a math teacher overseeing the program each night, it was difficult to assess

how accurate or how much help was being given.

Despite the closing of the Math Center, there are several alternatives that students can resort to for assistance. For example, the peer tutoring program is a strong substitute for the Math Center. In this program, tutors are recommended by a current or previous teacher who knows what subjects a student can tutor well. The program is overseen by Math teacher Ms. Rachel Hudelson, who keeps records for the program to ensure students are paired with tutors who are capable of giving adequate help.

Students can also schedule one-on-one meetings with their teachers during conference periods, mutual free blocks, or when they're doing dorm duty. While the Math Center may not be running this year, there are still plenty of resources for students to get the help they need.

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## LIBRARY CELEBRATES LGBTQ+ HISTORY MONTH

By **Sabrina Liu '28**  
*Reporter*

This October, the Andrew Mellon Library created a vibrant and meaningful display in honor of LGBTQ+ History Month, continuing its tradition of celebrating Choate's diverse student voices. In collaboration with the Spectrum Club, the display was curated to ensure that the representation of the community was both authentic and inclusive. The Library worked closely with Spectrum's members and gave students a chance to highlight media and resources that reflect their own stories and experiences. The club's members suggested books, films, music, and other media for LGBTQ+ individuals at Choate to resonate with and allies to learn from.

The Library's main goal is to foster an environment where all students feel represented and heard. As Assistant Director of the Library Ms. Sam Nelson explained, the effort is about "making sure that [students'] voices were represented here in the library, that they can see stories that reflect their own stories, and that they have access to media that they want access to, that reflects their community and their voices." This philosophy drives the library's commitment to making the space inclusive, welcoming, and celebratory of every student's identity.

The display, filled with diverse resources, showcases not only books but also eBooks, audiobooks, films, and curated playlists accessible through QR

codes. These resources allow students to explore LGBTQ+ history in numerous ways, acknowledging that some may not have the time to read for leisure but can still engage with the material.

One standout feature of the display is its thoughtful use of visual aids. LGBTQ+ flags are placed next to specific books, indicating themes that portray aspects of the LGBTQ+ experience. Additionally, pronoun stickers are available for students to take and use.

The Library will continue to collaborate with student clubs and work towards ensuring that "the resources we have actually reflect the needs of the community," Ms. Nelson said. With their dedication to creating an inclusive and meaningful display for everyone to feel represented and valued, the Library strives to equally and accurately represent the plethora of diverse voices within the School.

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Photo by Eliza Aldrich '27/The Choate News

Andrew Mellon Library sets up display for LGBTQ+ History Month.



## Celebrating a Century: Sleeping Giant’s 100th Birthday

By **Chelsea Branch ’25**  
*Copy Editor*

A larger-than-life figure is resting cozily under a leafy blanket in Hamden, Connecticut. Take a closer peek and you’ll find that you’re not looking at a monster, but rather 32 miles of sprawling greenery known as the Sleeping Giant State Park. One hundred years ago, state conservation of this beloved landmark began.

Sunday, October 12, 2024, marked a century of slumber for the colossal character, called Hobbomock by the Quinnipiac. In honor of this milestone, the Sleeping Giant Park Association (SGPA) threw the mountain a birthday blowout. The SGPA team is a band of volunteers dedicated to ensuring Sleeping Giant’s conservation. Through both their diligence behind the scenes and their hands-on work in the park, the board members are living out their mission of making Sleeping Giant a haven for hikers, nature lovers, and wildlife alike.

Mr. Aaron Lefland, the Vice President of SGPA, played an integral role in organizing and executing the centennial celebration. “We thought it fitting that we throw the park a 100th birthday party,” Mr. Lefland said. The bash opened with several compelling remarks made by both elected and appointed officials, including some indigenous tribal representatives. In keeping with the day’s spirit of education and awareness, “The festivities included some guided hikes,” Mr. Lefland said. “We led four different hikes, sort of a beginner, intermediate, and advanced, and then a history hike.”

The Connecticut community showed up and showed out for the celebration; hundreds of outdoor enthusiasts populated the mountain that day, affirming Sleeping Giant’s statewide esteem. Counter Weight Brewing Company of Hamden’s neighboring town, Cheshire, Connecticut, even designed and



Photo courtesy of Mrs. Niroupa Shah, P ’25, ’27

View from hiking trail at Sleeping Giant State Park.

manufactured a limited-release beer for the event. “Counter Weight was incredible to work with,” Mr. Lefland said. “They donated all the beer to us to then sell that day, so we got 100 percent of the proceeds from those sales.” Complementing the drinks were tasty food truck treats for party-goers to enjoy. And what celebration is complete without music? Sleeping Giant was serenaded by a band of Quinnipiac University professors and a student acapella group on its special day.

Though accessible to the greater community for only the past 100 years, Sleeping Giant existed long before that. Mr. Lefland said, “Going way back, Sleeping Giant was a really important, sort of culturally and spiritually important landmark for the Quinnipiac people.” The mountain’s historians have uncovered several Quinnipiac artifacts scattered across the land, serving as evidence of this Native community’s long-standing relationship with the site. Mr. Lefland continued, “As European colonization happened, the Quinnipiac,

one way or another, were effectively forced out, and there were also some inter-tribal wars happening. And so over time, the ownership transferred to private landowners.” Gradually, settlers morphed Sleeping Giant into a residential and commercial space rather than a sacred one. One landowner even sold his portion of the land to be quarried. It was this act of exploitation that Mr. Lefland said, “spurred [the community] into action to protect the mountain.”

For many, the value of Sleeping Giant State Park extends far. “[The park] just means so much to so many different people, and the park has such a wide range of offerings ... there’s the picnic area, there’s fishing, there’s obviously hiking, and bird watching,” Mr. Lefland said. “I grew up in North Haven, just down the road, so early memories of hiking up the really steep trail, going up the Giant’s head, looking out from the tower — I did my Eagle Scout project there back in the day.” For Mr. Lefland and many others, Sleeping Giant is

a vault of memories. To celebrate the park’s centennial is to honor all of the stories intertwined with it.

Sleeping Giant’s 100th birthday celebration represented the power of community. From the collaboration between SGPA and other organizations that made this event possible to the enthusiasm of the Connecticut community in joining the festivities, this event is a reflection of nature’s ability to bring us together, in Mr. Lefland’s eyes. “I think it’s really important to underscore that the Sleeping Giant, he’s lost part of his head, but that would have continued, were it not for a small at the beginning and then larger and larger group of community members who voiced their concern and got together and took collective action,” Mr. Lefland said. It has taken a village to preserve Sleeping Giant for the past 100 years, and it will take a village in order for the mountain to achieve 100 more.

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## IRIS PAPALE’S LEGACY LIVES ON

By **Ha Jin Sung ’28**  
*Reporter*

On October 9, the Wallingford community gathered to celebrate the renaming of the Wallingford Senior Center, now officially named the Iris F. Papale Municipal Center, dedicated to Ms. Iris Papale, the town’s first female Town Councilor and former Town Council Chairwoman. “It was wonderful, and many people showed up to honor Iris,” Mr. Bill Viola, the Executive Director of the Iris F. Papale Municipal Center, said.

Guests included members of Ms. Papale’s family, Wallingford Mayor Mr. Vincent Cervoni, and members of the Wallingford Town Council. U.S. Congresswoman Ms. Rosa DeLauro also attended the unveiling of the new senior center sign and spoke about her experience with Ms. Papale. “What was special about Iris was that level of energy and a level of enthusiasm that she brought to what she did. She was known for her kindness, for her compassion, and her ability to work with anyone,” she said.

Ms. Papale was elected to the Wallingford Town Council in 1975 and served for 32 years, creating a lasting impact through her leadership. “She was a beloved person in the town,” Mr. Viola said. “She served on the board of directors here for nine years. She was a chairman of the nominating committee of the Wallingford Committee on Aging [and] volunteered at

the Senior Center.” He also added that Ms. Papale was simply a lovely human being: “I always enjoyed talking to her, and she was very kind. She got along with everybody, really,” he said.

During her time on the Council, Ms. Papale also held prominent positions in the Adult Education Advisory Board, Lyman Hall Vocational Agricultural Committee, and Council Merit Review Committee, where she was especially committed to the well-being of seniors and regularly advocated for new initiatives at the Senior Center. She was also involved in the Connecticut Electric Work Examining Board, the Wallingford Board of Ethics, and the Spanish Community of Wallingford. Ms. Papale often spoke about loving these organizations as it allowed her to meet people in the Wallingford community.

After her passing in 2021 at the age of 86, Mayor Cervoni and former Mayor Mr. William Dickinson Jr. implemented renaming the Wallingford Senior Center after Ms. Papale. Mayor Cervoni spoke highly of Ms. Papale, with whom he had an amicable relationship, despite their diverging political views. “Iris Papale was very much Wallingford, as anyone else might have been ... she really, really was such an integral part of this town, for most of her life,” he told CT Insider.

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Photo by Finn Wikstrom ’26 / The Choate News

The Wallingford Senior Center’s new signage.

## 7 Brew Coffee Shop Opens in Wallingford



Photo by Kazuma Iwata ’28 / The Choate News

Behind the counter at 7 Brew.

By **Claire Liu ’28**  
*Reporter*

A brand-new coffee shop has just opened in Wallingford! On September 14, 7 Brew Coffee Shop launched its first location in New England, attracting many excited customers. This drive-through coffee shop offers a variety of drinks, from 7 Fizz (flavor-infused sparkling water) to a Cinnamon Roll coffee to Pixie Stick Nightshade, a 7 Brew energy drink.

Before making its way to Connecticut, 7 Brew operated in 29 states with nearly 300 locations around the country. Mr. Garrett Wilmoth, the stand manager of the Wallingford 7 Brew, said, “It’s not just about selling coffee, but we like to sell experiences, and we feel that we give that to everybody, everywhere we go.” He also mentioned that because Connecticut had never had a 7 Brew before, many community members were unfamiliar with the brand. “So, it was just the opportunity to be able to bring that here to show the culture of 7 Brew and who we are,” Mr. Wilmoth said.

Despite being new to the community, 7 Brew has already

made an impression on many Wallingford residents. One customer, Ms. Kristen Curtis, said, “The variety of the drinks is what separates 7 Brew from other coffee shops. There is coffee, smoothies, shakes, teas, and many other drinks.” Another customer, Mr. Zay Carr, added, “7 Brew is not pricey like the other coffee shops.”

Mr. Wilmoth believes that 7 Brew has been successful in achieving its goal of connecting with the Wallingford community. “I think we wanted to show everybody, starting in Wallingford, that we can branch out, hopefully later across Connecticut in different places,” he said. 7 Brew aims to familiarize everyone with its unique offerings and create a fun, interactive atmosphere for customers to enjoy a tasty drink. “It doesn’t have to be a boring drive-through, or someone takes your card and pays with it, and they just shut the window,” he said. “We have someone always talking to the customers, and we have fun with them. We include them. It’s like a family.”

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## LOGAN CHALLENGES INCUMBENT HAYES IN CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT DEBATE

By **Reid Bock ’27**  
*Staff Reporter*

On Wednesday, October 9, Democrat Representative Ms. Johana Hayes and Republican Candidate Mr. George Logan faced off in a debate for Connecticut’s 5th Congressional District (CT-05). Congresswoman Hayes, as the incumbent, had the advantage of showcasing her record and accomplishments during her time in federal office. There are also some disadvantages associated with incumbency. As Ms. Lisa Hagen, a journalist for the CT Mirror, pointed out, “[Being the incumbent] does open you up to scrutiny,” she said, “[On] the flip side for someone who’s a challenger ... you are more of an unknown quantity.”

CT-05 has a history of being a swing district. The last time a Republican held the seat ended in 2006 when Democrat Mr. Chris Murphy defeated Republican Representative Ms. Nancy Johnson; Mr. Murphy now serves as a U.S. Senator. The 2022 election between Representative Hayes and Mr. Logan saw one of the tightest races in the district’s history, with Representative Hayes defeating Mr. Logan by less than 2000 votes.

The debate was held at the Naugatuck Valley Community Technical College in Waterbury, Connecticut. It drew a large crowd as the candidates discussed their stances on major issues. The debate began with a sharp exchange on the current state of the economy and rising inflation. Representative Hayes defended the Biden Administration’s economic policies, arguing that they have helped stabilize the economy. Conversely, Mr. Logan blamed the Biden Administration’s overspending as a cause for increased inflation, which he said would hurt working families.

Healthcare was another point of contention that emerged between the candidates. Representative Hayes praised the Inflation Reduction Act and its approach to strengthening Medicare. On the other hand, Mr. Logan criticized the impact of government overreach in stifling healthcare innovation.

Educational policy and the recent student loan forgiveness program sparked further debate. Representative Hayes, a former National Teacher of the Year, emphasized the importance of investing in public education and defended the loan forgiveness program. Mr. Logan, however, expressed concerns about the fairness of broad loan forgiveness and questioned if it was a transfer of obligations.

The debate turned particularly tense during the discussion on gun control and public safety, given that CT-05 includes Newtown, where the 2012 Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting took place. Representative Hayes reiterated her support for stricter gun laws, including universal background checks and assault weapons bans. On the contrary, Mr. Logan discussed the importance of Second Amendment rights while calling for improved mental health services and enforcement to address gun violence.

In their closing statements, Representative Hayes highlighted her track record of service and commitment to the district, while Mr. Logan described himself as a fresh voice wanting to bring a new perspective to Washington, D.C.

When reflecting on the night’s events, Ms. Hagen said, “[It was] a

generally bitter, contentious night between the two of them, and that was just evident in most of the issues that came up, where they were drawing a pretty stark contrast with one another.”

With CT-05 considered one of the most competitive House of Representatives seat races this year, the stakes are high. Ms. Hagen noted that “[This election] has the potential to play into whichever party gets control of the House. It’s not guaranteed, but definitely part of the calculus for both parties in terms of who gets to stay in control.” With election day approaching on November 5, both candidates will continue to campaign vigorously until the end.

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Graphic by Rielle Reyes ’27 / The Choate News



## THE CHOATE NEWS



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## Reflecting on a One-Week Instagram Cleanse

By **Jai Midha '27**  
*Opinions Writer*

This morning, I instinctively grabbed my phone from my nightstand and swiped right to open Instagram, only to realize that I had removed it. Many of us have developed a response similar to this. When bored, social media is the first thing many people turn to in the morning, late at night, or in those few seconds during passing periods. It now seems like muscle memory. Social media is often attacked for how it wastes our time, even with the enjoyment and connection it offers. As a result, I deleted Instagram for a week to see how much of my life it had subtly claimed.

With my thumb hanging over the blank space where Instagram used to be, my mind felt confused. It was crazy to see how often I used the app mindlessly. Despite having much to do, I would get this strange, fidgety sensation as if I

was bored. I would sit there hoping Instagram would miraculously appear to fill the void, but it never did. There were no stories to check, no posts to like. It was awkward — akin to sitting in a silent room after years of having background noise.

On day three, the consequences of FOMO — fear of missing out — began to appear. I lived completely in the moment, which felt as though I was excluded from a continuous dialogue happening on Instagram. I questioned what stories my friends shared, what they were doing, and whether they had messaged me via the app. I detested the sensation that felt like I was observing a whole other life on the outside — it made me feel like I had lost connection and even friends. On the other hand, I had far more time. With Instagram gone, I would have nothing to do, and knowing that I usually wasted so much time on social media made me feel terrible.

Nevertheless, the bored sensation also felt like a relief. Unlike the

many times I was aimlessly scrolling, it was almost as though I had finally let go of a burden that had been weighing me down. This experiment helped me see how social media subtly impacted my habits, friendships, and even self-worth. It's not only about the time it consumes; it's also about how it divides our focus and drains our will to pursue real-world experiences.

With Instagram gone, I was not under the typical pressure to keep up with everyone else. And while I felt alone at first, I discovered that my relationships held together and might have even gotten a bit stronger. I got to talk to many more people face-to-face. The week seemed whole: instead of always being on my phone, I had an incentive to engage in daily exchanges. It was filled with far more enthusiasm and enjoyment.

One lesson from my week without Instagram is this: allow yourself the opportunity to distance yourself from social media—

even if it's just for a few days. Although there are numerous school meetings and films emphasizing the dangers of social media, having some personal experience is different. It forces you to confront how ingrained these platforms are in your life, and you might just discover that the space they leave behind isn't a void but rather an invitation to live differently.

Reflecting further on my experience, I liked the peace of mind, but I hated feeling left out. I plan to reinstall Instagram; however, I will reduce my screen time by installing an app to ensure that I am not constantly scrolling through endless videos. We all have a limited time to spend doing the activities we enjoy, and Instagram drains this time while providing minimal benefits. By setting limits, I will gain valuable time back, allowing me to freely do what I love.

**Jai Midha** is a fourth-former from Singapore. He may be reached at [jmidha27@choate.edu](mailto:jmidha27@choate.edu).

## PRESERVING CREATIVITY: WHY ENGLISH DOESN'T NEED HONORS



Graphic by Cora Slowe '27/The Choate News

By **Rachel Fan '27**  
*Copy Editor*

During my freshman year, conversations among students often circled around the recurring topic of course comparisons. Who had the “best” class? Which class was harder? Which teacher graded tougher? In the English department especially, the comparisons were endless. “Wait, you guys watched *Heartstopper* today? We had a grammar assessment — this isn't fair!” was something I heard more times than I could count. The inconsistency between classes was striking, and students frequently discussed which curriculum seemed easier or more engaging.

With all this variation, it's understandable why some might long for a clearer structure that differentiates difficulty levels. High-achieving students may want to see an “HO” next to their English course on their transcript to feel confident that the curriculum aligns with their academic goals. But in truth, keeping English without honors ensures that the subject remains true to its core purpose of creativity and personal expression, avoiding the consequences of creating an unnecessary hierarchy.

### A Subject Built on Interpretation:

Unlike subjects like Math or Science, where there are palpable right and wrong answers, English can often operate without measurable benchmarks. Every student's interpretation can be valid as long as it is supported by evidence, which is why students shouldn't be divided by their abilities. Diverse

perspectives enrich the learning experience for everyone and help broaden one's understanding of classroom information. “Our department believes that every student's voice is important,” English Department Head Mr. Mark Gosztyla said, “so they feel like they're being heard, regardless of whether they have been somehow designated as a ‘normal’ student or an ‘honors’ student.”

The freedom of English is what makes it unique. English thrives in its ability to blur the lines between right and wrong, encouraging students to explore their perspectives and challenge conventional ideas. As English teacher Ms. Cahaley Markman said, “It is valuable to have students with different relationships to English working together on analysis. They learn from each other's perspectives, allowing for a more dynamic understanding of a text.” Why complicate that with a hierarchical honors system that divides students?

### Honors is Appropriate for History, Not English:

Although both subjects are humanities-related, history often involves more specialized research methods. There's an inherent structure of dates, events, and analysis that can be advanced for more serious students. In English, however, the focus is different. English teacher Ms. Leela Woody believes that beyond technical skills, a significant aspect of English is honing students' critical thinking abilities. “Our work centers on strengthening critical thinking and identifying the best way to communicate that thinking, which does not require being

at a certain level or pace to engage in,” she said.

Although Mr. Gosztyla acknowledged that literature could be viewed through a historical lens, with English, students often have more freedom to choose where their writing could take them. “[English] doesn't limit to certain critical frameworks,” he said. Students can opt to use a “reading response framework” or a “sociology manuscript format” to illustrate their understanding of the text, and both, while having notable differences, are acceptable.

### Personalized Challenges Over Standardization:

Without establishing an honors curriculum, the English department still provides numerous opportunities for students to challenge themselves individually. Teachers often work with students on a case-by-case basis, allowing them to take on more advanced tasks or deepen their engagement with papers and projects. This flexibility ensures that every student has the chance to grow without the need for an honors label. There are also numerous avenues outside of English class for students to improve their abilities. “Fringe Festival is an excellent opportunity for students to write and see their writing come to life on stage,” Ms. Markman said. “Working as a writing tutor is a wonderful way to build your editing skills. And, of course, writing for *The Choate News* is the best way to grow as a writer.”

Adding honors sections to English might seem like a solution to unify the curriculum or provide more advanced students with a challenge, but in reality, it would only complicate things further. Choate was right to erase the “HO” label for English because it allows the subject to stay true to its core purpose: encouraging each and every student to find and express their own voice.

**Rachel Fan** is a fourth-former from Shanghai, China. She may be reached at [rfan27@choate.edu](mailto:rfan27@choate.edu).

## LATE TO THE RACE: THE PROBLEM WITH CHOATE COLLEGE COUNSELING

By **Francesca Howard '26**  
*Copy Editor*

You're at the starting line of a marathon, ready to give it your all, only to find out that the race started ages ago without you. Panic sets in as you scramble to catch up, but no matter how fast you run, the finish line seems miles away.

Most juniors facing the college application process know this feeling all too well. Though most of us aren't track stars, surviving junior year is no easy task. From drowning in schoolwork, stressing over college applications, or just trying to function before 8 a.m. classes, junior year is not for the weak of heart. This exhaustion only grows come January when juniors are assigned a college counselor and suddenly have to make sense of a complex process that's been in the works for years. College counseling is designed to guide students through the admissions process by helping them choose schools, meet deadlines, and put their best foot forward in their applications.

While students can research schools and prepare on their own, counselors can offer crucial professional insight and expertise. They have insider knowledge of admissions trends, understand what specific schools are really looking for, and know what makes for a strong application. However, by the time students get any advice to navigate the college admissions process, they've already registered for Advanced Placement (AP) exams, worked as a camp counselor (despite not liking little kids), and developed a crippling caffeine addiction. It's only then that it dawns on them: they've been sprinting without so much as a warm-up.

Beginning the college counseling process before junior year would give students a much-needed head start. A study conducted by the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) found that 59% of those who had applied to college wished that they had more support in the process. This is no different at

Choate. With more support earlier on, students would have time to break in their shoes, stretch, and figure out when to push and when to pace themselves. Just like marathon runners don't sprint from start to finish, students would be able to take their time and plan accordingly for the long haul. This would encourage them to choose their classes thoughtfully, explore their interests, and avoid the pressure of last-minute scrambling.

Junior year is hard enough as it is, especially at a prestigious school like Choate. With its rigorous academics, top-notch athletics, and competitive atmosphere, Choate fosters an environment of near-constant pressure. Whether it's staying up until late at night to study for a calculus exam, pushing to the brink of collapse on the soccer field, or playing the piano until fingers go numb, Choate students don't back down from a challenge.

However, when college application season rolls around, they must balance their packed schedules with the added stress of standardized tests, college essays, and high-stakes decisions about their futures. If we began discussions in freshman or sophomore years — or even just had more informal workshops — we could use that time to figure out what we want from a college experience and make decisions without feeling like we're racing against the clock.

I spoke to Dean of College Counseling Ms. Marcia Landesman, who made a strong case in defense of Choate's current timeline. According to her, the focus of the early high school years should be on personal growth. This is a fair point: high school should be about more than just preparing for college. While it's true that starting too early could potentially detract from the genuine joy of learning and the quintessential high school experience, we need to seek out a middle ground. We want to avoid over-preparation; however, preparation in itself isn't necessarily a bad thing.

I've been thinking about college since my freshman year

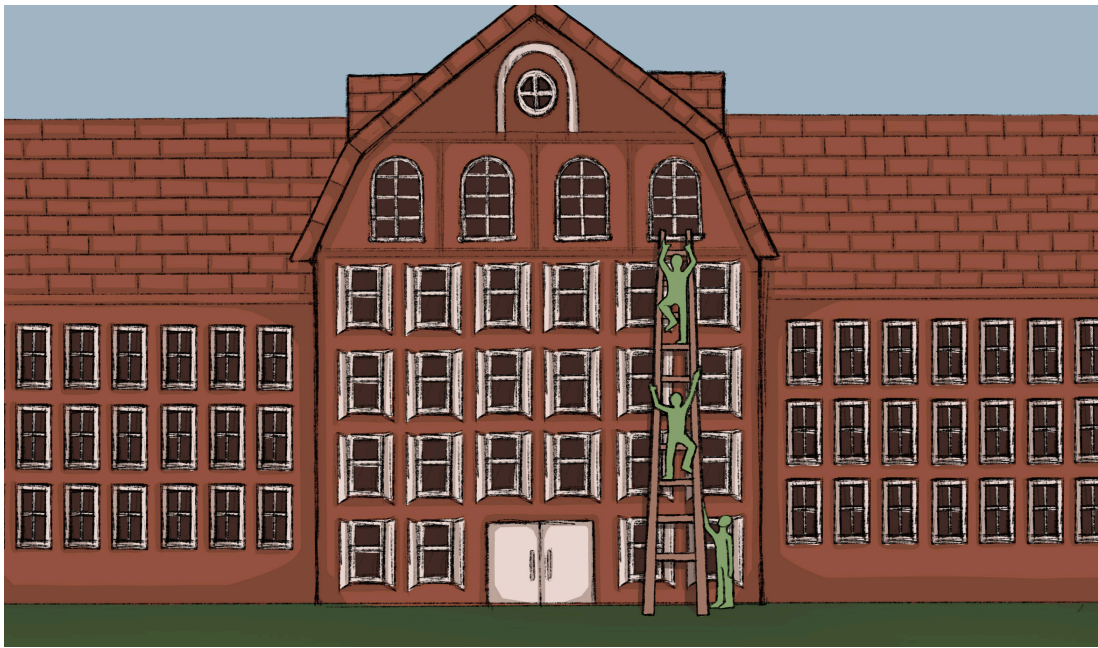
and I'd wager that most of my classmates have too. We're told not to worry and that our time will come, but for many of us, it already feels like we're behind. We've been making choices with college in mind for quite some time, whether or not Choate acknowledges it. Waiting until junior winter to address these anxieties doesn't stop them from existing earlier; it just means we're left to navigate them alone.

Another argument I've heard is that starting earlier could lead to burnout. There's no denying that the college admissions process is exhausting, and if we stretch it out too long, students could feel worn down by the time senior year arrives. However, I think this risk could be minimized by pacing ourselves.

Instead of diving into intense college prep during one's sophomore year, we could start with introspection. What do we want from college? What types of environments do we thrive in? These are tough questions, and they take time to figure out. While the current college counseling system encourages students to consider these questions, it's simply too late by junior year. This isn't to say that a freshman should have all these answers, but rather that they should be thinking about these questions well in advance. This way, when the time comes, they feel more confident in their decisions.

The college admissions process is daunting no matter when it begins, but an earlier start might help students feel more in control. With increasing competitiveness and decreasing admission rates, getting ahead could alleviate some stress and better prepare students for what's to come. As I am getting ready to lace up my shoes for the lengthy yearlong race starting this winter, I hope Choate considers giving students a little more time to warm up.

**Francesca Howard** is a fifth-former from New York, NY. She may be reached at [fhoward26@choate.edu](mailto:fhoward26@choate.edu).



Graphic by Leah Han '27/The Choate News

## Correction

An article in the October 14, 2024 issue about renovations to the Library Reading Room stated an incorrect statistic. The article states that the Reading Room capacity went from 100 to 200, when in actuality, the Reading Room capacity went from 27 to 76 and the capacity of the entire library went from 120 to 200.

The Choate News regrets these errors. To submit a correction, email [thechoatenews@choate.edu](mailto:thechoatenews@choate.edu).



MIDDLE CHILD: J. Cole’s Authenticity Admist the Rap Beef

By Stan Cho ’25  
Opinions (Nation/World) Editor

The three most threatening and anticipated words in the music industry this past summer were “Kendrick dropped again.” In the aftermath of a feud in which rapper Kendrick Lamar claimed himself a cultural visionary and rapper Drake boasted about his record-breaking career, rapper J. Cole released a new single “Port Antonio.” J. Cole’s humble clarification for why he avoided involving himself in the conflict parallels my confusion about a hip-hop feud seemingly built on exaggerated insults instead of artistic authenticity.

These feuds, known as “beefs,” are commonplace in the hip-hop genre. Notable feuds in the past include street-cred brawls between 2Pac and The Notorious B.I.G. or personal disagreements between Jay-Z and Nas. Yet the single factor consistent throughout all rap beefs (as well as the most important variable in determining who “wins” a beef) is to figure out who the better rapper is. And that very same factor was found in the Kendrick-Drake feud.

This beef started with Drake’s “First Person Shooter,” in which featured artist J. Cole asserts that the rap industry is helmed by Kendrick (who previously performed under the pseudonym K-Dot), Drake (whose legal first name is Aubrey), and himself — a supposed “big three.”

Kendrick’s response shocked the rap community, as he positioned himself as the sole figurehead of the genre and viciously tore down Drake and J. Cole. Kendrick’s



Graphic by Evelyn Kim ’25/The Choate News

response was a direct challenge to Drake and J. Cole’s artistic integrity, critical reception, and influential reputation. In an industry shaped by clicks and streams, Drake and J. Cole were forced to rebut. Drake took an offensive stance, responding not only to Kendrick but to any other artist he deemed necessary, including A\$AP Rocky and The Weeknd. But public perception shifted against Drake after Kendrick’s back-to-back releases — “Euphoria,” “Meet the Grammys,” and “Not Like Us” — dealt a devastating blow by questioning Drake’s capability to be a father, labeling Drake as a pedophile, and criticizing Drake’s commitment to Black people. These insults positioned Drake as the “loser” of the feud.

J. Cole initially defended himself with “7 Minute Drill” on his album *Might Delete Later*,

where he claims that Kendrick’s discography is overpraised. But just after two days, on April 7, J. Cole took the song off of streaming services and publicly apologized for involving himself in the feud, explaining that his diss track misaligned with his authentic respect for Kendrick and Drake.

Many have criticized J. Cole for his decision to back out of the feud. They claim that J. Cole could have been a substantial competitor in the feud, but his cowardice prevented him from releasing highly anticipated music in response to the feud.

But when you take away the Metro Boomin-produced beats and the anticipation for each artist’s response, these diss tracks come off as churl-

ish to me. In the chase to win the competition, both Drake and Kendrick have not only neglected the beauty of collaboration but also the need for authenticity. Kendrick’s disdain towards Drake’s parents was met with cut-throat disses questioning Kendrick’s adultery and refusal to marry his fiancée. In favor of a memorable track or two, we fail to address the implications of exaggerated defamation to both the integrity of the genre and the safety of these artists (take 2Pac and The Notorious B.I.G., who were both murdered during their feud).

In “Port Antonio,” J. Cole reaffirmed the impressive legacies left by these two artists, expressing his gratitude for their personal involvement in his career

and his pride in collaborating with such figures. Drake is the highest-certified digital singles artist in the United States and holds multiple records on the Billboard Hot 100, including being tied with Michael Jackson for most number-one singles by a male solo artist. Kendrick has won 17 Grammy Awards (the third most for any rapper), has received the Pulitzer Prize for music in his album *DAMN* (becoming the first person to win the award for music that isn’t classical or jazz), and is helmed by the entire West Coast scene as a spiritual successor to the revolutionary rapper 2Pac.

Given these impressive resumes, J. Cole criticized the feud. “I understand the thirst of being first that made them both swing. Protecting legacies,

so lines got crossed, perhaps regrettably,” he said. And J. Cole’s right. While it’s important for these artists to be aware of their impact to fuel ambitious projects and impressive performances that add to their repertoire, this entire feud started with fragile pride and ended in ad hominem attacks.

In his new single, J. Cole went on to explain that his involvement in the feud would have resulted in more than just public humiliation: “I wouldn’t have lost a battle, dawg, I woulda lost a bro. I woulda gained a foe, and all for what? Just to attain some more props from strangers that don’t get a clue what I been aiming for?”

The key word here is “exaggerated.” It’s difficult for me to resonate with the hatred spewed between Kendrick and Drake, as I’m not fully convinced that these artists care much for the feud beyond preserving their reputations — Kendrick as some messianic lyricist and Drake as a global hitmaker. This genre shines most brightly when the songs truly reflect the artist’s authenticity. Some part of me is disappointed that Kendrick and Drake have seemingly forgone this authenticity and clarity in favor of destructive intent. J. Cole might not have “won” this feud, but at no point does he allow himself to fall into a malicious chain of lies and deceit. By acting in accordance with authenticity and maturity, J. Cole remains the sole bona-fide survivor of this feud.

Stan Cho is a sixth-former from Busan, South Korea. He may be reached at scho25@choate.edu.

HURRICANE HELENE: BROKEN HOUSES MEET BROKEN INSURANCE

By Zaki Shamsi ’26  
Opinions Writer

In the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, one thing is painfully clear: our insurance system is broken. When I say broken, I don’t mean the kind of broken that you can fix with a little duct tape. I mean a full-scale catastrophe that leaves people abandoned in their times of greatest need, watching as their livelihoods are swept away. Insurance companies have mastered the art of collecting premiums and denying claims, while those caught in the crossfire of climate disasters are left to fend for themselves.

Take the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey in Texas as an example. Thousands of homeowners discovered too late that their policies didn’t cover flood damage, even though flooding was responsible for 90% of the storm’s destruction. The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) offers flood protection, but less than 20% of homes affected by Harvey had this coverage. Hurricane Helene is a carbon copy of this failure, with inland areas like Asheville, North Carolina, seeing massive devastation — yet under 1% of homes there carried flood insurance. In Asheville’s Buncombe County alone, 17 homes are at risk in a 100-year flood event for each home insured against it. People simply aren’t being covered where it matters most.

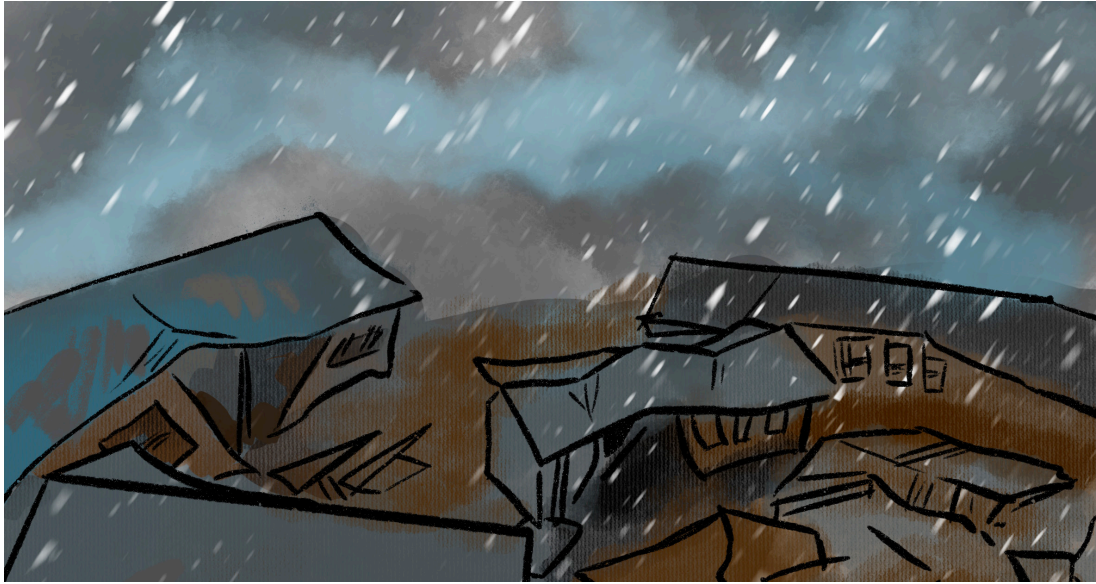
Now, let’s be clear: hurricanes don’t care about your financial status. They don’t check your zip code or your insurance policy. But when the winds calm and the floodwaters recede, it’s the poorest among us who are left standing in the rubble, with nothing but empty promises from an industry designed to profit off of their misfortunes. After all, it’s not a disaster for the companies who jack up rates, limit coverage, and then walk away like nothing happened. In 2022 alone, U.S. property insurers recorded \$15 billion in profits, as rates for consumers rose by an average of 15%. Some companies, like Farmers Insurance, have even begun pulling out of high-risk hurricane states like Florida, abandoning vulnerable households and residents.

The real scandal here is that the government, the one entity with the power to step in, has chosen not to. Politicians wring their hands about the tragedies unfolding on the news but do nothing to regulate these corporations. Instead, they leave it to market forces, as if profit margins and corporate shareholders can rebuild a life, replace family heirlooms, or erase the trauma of watching everything you own wash away. Over 20 insurance companies in Louisiana went bankrupt or fled the state after hurricanes Laura, Delta, and Ida, leaving thousands of Louisiana residents without insurance protection.

The government is complicit in this disaster by failing to regulate the insurance industry. Hurricane Helene is only a preview of what’s to come. As climate change intensifies, storms are expanding their reach inland, and previously safe areas are now marked as “disaster zones.” Scientists at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory estimate that global warming increased Hurricane Helene’s rainfall by up to 50%, turning inland rivers into torrents that destroyed towns far from the coast. But those in power act like this is business as usual — it’s not.

We need reforms that ensure affordable, comprehensive coverage for all people, especially those in high-risk areas. The Federal Emergency Management Agency’s National Flood Insurance Program needs expansion, and insurance companies must be required to cover climate disasters without loopholes. The inability to achieve this promise is a moral failure. Without these changes, we’ll continue to see a growing divide between those who can rebuild and those who are left to pick up the pieces alone — victims not only of natural disasters but also of a system designed to let them fall through the cracks.

Zaki Shamsi is a fifth-former from Glastonbury, CT. He may be reached at zshamsi26@choate.edu.



Graphic by Evelyn Kim ’25/The Choate News

How to Incorporate the Hippocratic Oath in Modern Medicine



Graphic by Evelyn Kim ’25/The Choate News

By Laveenya Seenivasagam ’27  
Opinions Writer

What is expected of a medical practitioner, who has dedicated their life to saving the lives of others, when their patient requests a do-not-resuscitate (DNR) order? Though the Hippocratic Oath has long been considered outdated for its inability to address modern advancements in medical technology and ethical norms, the philosophy of putting the patients first could be an integral part of addressing major problems in America’s healthcare.

Preserving life is emphasized in the Hippocratic Oath, a commitment that has molded the moral basis of medicine since its inception in Ancient Greece. I can see how physicians would feel motivated to employ every resource available to them in order to preserve and restore life. After all, modern medicine has given us the ability to save patients who might otherwise have died — people who suffer from heart attacks, strokes, or traumatic injuries often recover fully, and in these situations, resuscitation offers a second chance at life.

However, the Hippocratic Oath fails to address the nuances of medical treatment that weren’t prevalent when the guideline was

founded. Consider DNR orders, where patients are given the ability to maintain their autonomy and dignity when the preservation of life won’t preserve their quality of life. Pushing forward with resuscitation when it could cause more suffering is a difficult concept to accept, especially when there is minimal to no prospect of recovery.

The Hippocratic Oath, which was built upon the purpose of protecting the patient’s life, supposedly fails in the face of a DNR order. It may seem that doctors under the oath would theoretically fail in doing “no harm or injustice to them” if they deliberately abstain from saving a life. Moreover, the document explicitly states that doctors must not harm human life in any way, whether it’s administering euthanasia or performing an abortion.

While there exist numerous conflicting interpretations of the earliest document of the Hippocratic Oath, it’s reasonable to assume that the guideline was built with the core value of protecting life. In an age with less developed medical technologies, it’s possible that practitioners had no room to consider ethics — if life could be saved, it should be saved. This black-and-white view of human life is no longer reciprocated in modern medicine.

If the Hippocratic Oath were to be amended to address the importance of quality of life, it would not only grant doctors a motive but also ensure the guideline’s compliance with contemporary treatment.

Moreover, it’s possible that the incorporation of an amended Hippocratic Oath in medical practice will decrease the cost of healthcare. When describing the role doctors should play in educating future generations of doctors, the Hippocratic Oath states: “If they want to learn it, without fee or indenture.” In encouraging doctors to place responsibility for their patients over their own monetary benefit, the Hippocratic Oath presents interesting opportunities to gradually remodel national healthcare systems by adjusting the priorities of physicians.

The Hippocratic Oath’s commitment to life preservation, though antiquated, has the potential to weave around pre-established medical procedures while inspiring doctors to practice their profession with passion, and potentially work towards a more compassionate, affordable healthcare system.

Laveenya Seenivasagam is a fourth-former from Puchong, Malaysia. She may be reached at lseenivasagam27@choate.edu.



## POTATOES & PLATOONS: CHOATE AND ROSEMARY HALL’S CONTRIBUTIONS TO WORLD WAR I

By **Jocelyn Rivard ’28**  
*Reporter*

Few events have affected the world as much as World War I. Yet, even fewer have caused communities and countries to unite and achieve what was once deemed impossible. While World War I was a time of chaos and fear for the American people, both The Choate School and Rosemary Hall collaborated to support the war effort.

The former Headmaster of The Choate School, Mr. George St. John, knew it was only a matter of time before boys from the School would be drafted. Thus, he started preparing them for the inevitable. The boys were divided into four companies, training three times a week on what was then the Varsity Football field, which serves as the Girls’ JV Soccer field today.

Dubbed “The Choate Battalion,” the unit followed the United States Army Infantry Drill Regulations, with the younger boys practicing with wooden rifles and the older students using real rifles. The purpose of this training was to prepare gradu-

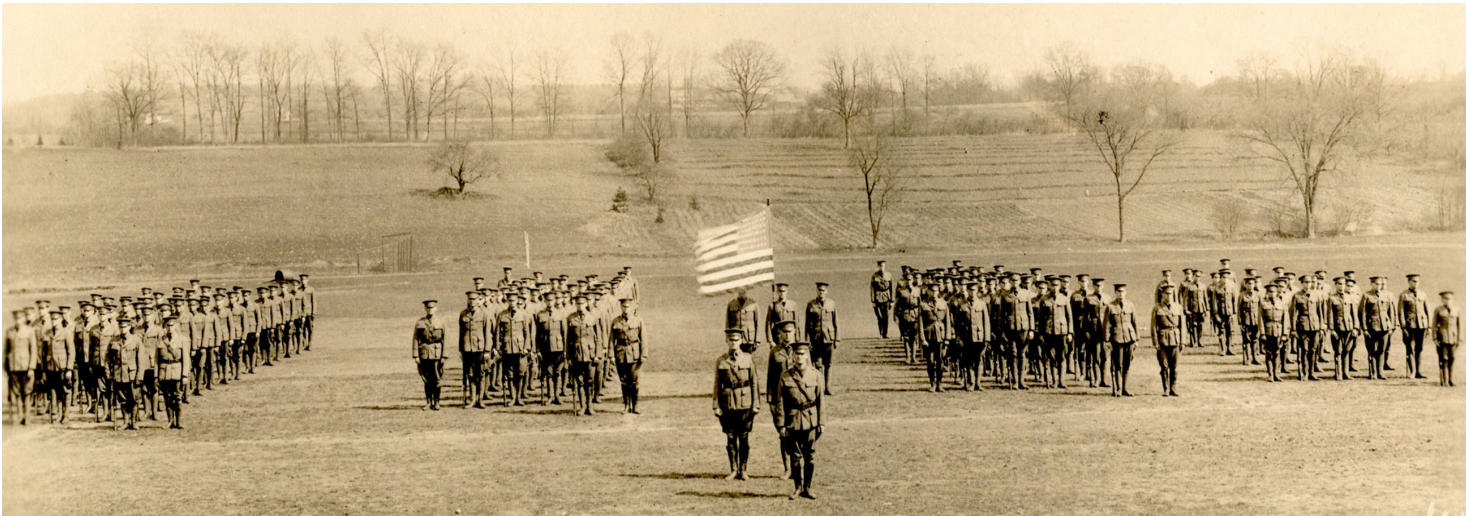


Photo courtesy of the Choate Rosemary Hall School Archives

The Choate Battalion in formation on the then-Varsity Football field (now the Girls’ JV Soccer field).

ating students for the Students’ Army Training Corps, a program that allowed them to continue their studies in university while undergoing military training. The School Archives holds unique artifacts from this period, including a uniform worn during the war, which was donated by an alumnus. The Archives also possess the bugle — a small trumpet — used by Mr. Ray Brown, a battalion leader. According to Choate Archivist Mrs. Stephanie Gold, it would be used to “wake everybody up in the morning,

and call them to the fields to start with their training [at Choate].”

During World War I, victory gardens were planted on both public and private land to help address food shortages, as much of the food supply was being shipped overseas; The Choate School similarly founded one of these farms. The School bought a 25-acre plot of land and planted potatoes; the crops were cultivated throughout the school year and into the summer.

All of the money earned from the potato harvest and various fundraisers was donated to the

Red Cross to support war efforts. In fact, the School had raised enough money through their fundraisers to send an ambulance to France. The final batch of potatoes was harvested on November 15, 2017, and the 1918 Choate yearbook, *The Brief*, read, “Company lists of the Battalion posted. Sergeant Higgins!! Great joy — potatoes finished.”

Although the graduates of Rosemary Hall would not go on to fight, their Headmistress, Caroline Ruutz-Rees, was determined to contribute to the war

effort. Like the boys at The Choate School, the girls at Rosemary Hall planted and tended their own potatoes in a victory garden.

Aside from holding multiple fundraisers to support the war effort, the Rosemary Hall girls vacated campus and traveled to Miami, Florida on January 15, 1918 to escape the cold winter weather. At the time, a majority of coal resources were being sent abroad to support the war effort, leaving insufficient fuel to heat the many buildings on campus. The boarders re-

mained in Miami until March 27. This trip was documented in Rosemary Hall’s yearbook, *The Answer Book*: “At first it was very hot, and we were all quite irritable. But the salt sea restored our good humor.”

After the war ended, the staff at The Choate School felt a need to memorialize the Choate boys who had died in service of their country. Headmaster St. John proposed the idea of a “Memorial House” to remind students of the sacrifices their predecessors had made. Today, Memorial House, or “Mem,” is a dorm for fourth- and fifth-formers. In addition to this project, *The Choate News* also published obituaries honoring the alumni and students who died in service.

From preparing students for military service to relocating students to Miami, World War I had a significant impact on student life at The Choate School and Rosemary Hall. Through the efforts of both schools, the students learned firsthand the importance of putting one’s nation before themselves.

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## Rest Assured: Choate’s Best Napping Spots

By **Chloe Yeung ’28**  
*Reporter*

As fall term end approaches, students find themselves in intense study sessions, shuffling through notecards and textbook pages at alarming speeds. Amidst non-stop cramming, academic performance and quality of work is bound to take a dive. Fortunately, naps, both long and short, can help to rejuvenate students, allowing them to stay sharp in class and present their best work. Here are some of the best napping spots the Choate campus has to offer.

### Your Dorm

Most popular among boarders seeking solitude, quiet, and shade, dorms are the perfect place for long naps after a tiring day of classes. Maddie Bloom ’28 described her dorm as a “home away from home,” emphasizing its comfort and personalization. Dorm rooms are customized to fit one’s unique preferences, making it an ideal napping spot. Unfortunately, day students are out of luck with this one!

### PMAC Couches

With snug, plush couches, the Paul Mellon Arts Center (PMAC) is a perfect spot for day students in need of a long nap. “It’s very quiet there most of the time, if you go during the day,” Sofia Schmidt ’25 said. Nestled against the tall glass panels, students can restfully bask in the sunlight as they unwind and relax. “It just seems to have a quiet vibe in which you can just relax,” Nile Djata ’28 added. With the many sumptuous sofas, lengthier naps in the PMAC help students — especially musicians and theater aficionados — stay well rested.

### The Library’s Quiet Section

Opting for a nap somewhere more convenient? The Library is not only a favorable spot for completing your math homework but is also perfect for mid-study naps.

Sectioned off from the Library’s main area, the quiet section ensures privacy and tranquility. “When you are in the quiet section, you can just put on a hoodie and curl into the chair,” Schmidt said. Although mid-study naps may seem counterproductive to some, if you start to see the words of your textbook swimming on the page, a quick doze can help you regain your faculties to ensure that your work is up to par.

### Lanphier Cafe Commons

Looking for a quick siesta at the end of the day? Pop into the Lanphier Cafe to grab a tasty snack and curl up in one of the common area’s multitude of cozy chairs. “They are so soft and they are also wide enough to curl up comfortably, and just a perfect spot to take a nap,” Isa Marvin ’26 said. As the school day winds down and others head to their afternoon activities, the area clears out into a clean and comfortable naptime haven.

### Third Floor of St. John Hall (The SAC)

The SAC serves as a bustling hub by night and a prime nap spot by day. With a diverse array of seating options (namely couches, plush chairs, stools, study chairs, and more), it is an all-inclusive spot where anyone can find an ideal cushion for a quick snooze.

While there may be some traffic to the School Store and the Tuck Shop on the floors below, the SAC’s third floor is near-silent during the school day. More specifically, “the quiet environment in the third-floor study rooms is a perfect opportunity to get away from the class day,” Maya Salisbury ’26 said.

So, next time you’re feeling swamped with work and facing a growing to-do list, try treating yourself to a nap at one of these cozy locations!

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Graphic by Rielle Reyes ’27/The Choate News

## ANSWERING CHOATE STUDENTS’ MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Graphic by Leah Han ’27/The Choate News

By **Steven Kee ’27**  
*Copy Editor*

We all have questions on our mind that we can’t be bothered to find the answers to. With the help of *The Choate News* readers, we’ve gathered a couple of those burning queries and found the answers for you!

### Is it true that you can leave class after 15 minutes if the teacher doesn’t show up?

Yes, it is true. While this information is not readily available to students via the school portal, it is indeed part of the School’s policy. According to page 15 of the Academic Handbook, which students do not have access to, “If no one can be found to give guidance, the students are allowed to leave the room.”

Associate Dean of Students Mr. Pat Dennehy confirmed that this has been a long-standing rule. “I think it was a 20 [minute waiting period] when it was 70 minute [class blocks], then 10 minutes when it was 45 minute classes. And now it’s 15,” he said. So, the next time your teacher goes AWOL — feel free to just leave. Stick to your gut and don’t be swayed by your peers who claim that the 15 minute rule is just a myth.

### Where is the Health Center?

The Health Center is located at 283 North Main Street. It is behind St. John Hall (the SAC) and can be accessed via Beaumont Avenue or the ramp behind the mailroom.

### What would happen if you swam in the Carl C. Icahn Science Center pond?

Medical Director Dr. Meredith McNamara advises against swimming in the Science Center pond. She stated that the quality of the water itself should be relatively safe, as the water is well-oxygenated and harbors similar amounts of water-borne illnesses to any other naturally occurring body of water thanks to the solid water cycling system from the fountain. But besides being a major school rule violation, the temperature of the water could be a source of sickness if someone swam in the pond. “It depends on the time of year and what the water temperature is. Hypothermia is no joke,” Dr. McNamara said. “Do I recommend it? No.”

### Why are physics and biology science diploma requirements but not chemistry?

Science Department Head Mr. Kevin Rogers explained that balancing scientific fundamentals and having flexible diploma requirements were important in designing the requirements. He said, “We wanted students to have backgrounds in both the physical sciences and the natural sciences ... [not having chemistry as an official diploma requirement] maintains flexibility. If someone wants to study abroad, they can do that and not worry about having to manipulate and get chemistry in there unless they want to.” Nevertheless, he emphasized that chemistry is a “de facto diploma requirement,” as he

estimates that around 95% of students take the class.

### Why does Choate use a 4.3 GPA scale?

Choate uses a 4.3 grade point average (GPA) scale to calculate student grades because it is the standard for most institutions. Director of Studies Ms. Ellen Devine said, “Many peer schools and universities use the same scale.” Head of Student and Academic Life Ms. Jenny Elliott added, “I think it has to do with the complexity of weighted and unweighted grading.” As some courses, such as honors classes, are more difficult than others, it affects the weight of the GPA.

Ms. Elliott also expressed that she thinks the system has room for improvement. “I think grades and how we grade are always a topic for discussion. I think we’re trying to find ways to appropriately measure and assess student learning and also promote student learning.”

### Why doesn’t Choate have AP courses?

In the 2015-2016 school year, Choate removed College Board Advanced Placement (AP) designations for its courses to allow for greater flexibility and autonomy in class curriculums. Ms. Devine said, “Choate determined that its classes would not have the AP designation because there is a specific curriculum that must be followed when courses have the AP designation.” She noted that some upper-level courses — formerly designated as AP — still have curriculums that overlap with the AP curriculums. However, not restricting the courses to

the AP curriculum gives students a learning experience that is more aligned with the learning goals of each course and department.

Ms. Devine further emphasized that many of these upper-level courses still prepare students well if they wish to take the corresponding AP tests. Ms. Elliott echoed a similar message. “Choate, along with some of its peer schools, did not feel that they wanted to be bound to the AP curriculum in terms of the ways that they taught and the content they covered, and felt quite confident that the rigor, skills, [and] content that we are covering were sufficient to make these really strong courses,” she said.

### Why do third-formers get fewer academic options?

Third-formers have fewer course options to ensure that all students meet diploma requirements for graduation while also making sure that certain fundamental developmental needs are met. “Some of those required courses introduce and sharpen foundational skills that you’ll need in [later courses],” Ms. Elliott said. Ms. Devine expressed a similar perspective. “We emphasize participation in certain core classes that are designed with the developmental needs of our newest students in mind,” she said.

Choate is a very big school; with hundreds of students and faculty, there’s bound to be confusion! Hopefully, this article answered some of your pressing questions.

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## Love Your Locs: Hair at Choate

By **Chelsea Branch '25**  
*Copy Editor*

For many of us, styling our hair is a means of expressing our unique style, but to Choate's POC community, hair represents something deeper. It is not just a physical feature but rather something that is inherently and historically intertwined with our identity. The styles we choose to wear are a reflection of who we are and how we choose to be perceived by others.

For many students of color, attending boarding school means beginning a new chapter in their hair care journey. Reflecting on how his relationship with his hair has shifted over the past few years, Jeremiah Olubowale '25 said, "When I was younger, I didn't really have hair because my parents always cut my hair, so when I got to come to Choate, it was nice to grow with my hair." Similarly, Favour Olagunju '25 has explored several new hairdos since her freshman year. "I have experimented with styles. I personally have braided my hair. I've tried out different colors — from red to blue to purple ... I've had a 26-inch length braid before, I've had short braids, I've experimented and taken risks," she said. Students explore a different facet of their identity

with every new style, regardless of whether it is big and bold or short and chic.

While exploring new hair-styles is certainly amusing, it is also critical to navigating life as a minority student in a predominantly white institution. Dani Aseme '25 said, "I think as a Black person at Choate, you already are kind of stigmatized into a little group, and I think how you present yourself really does matter." She added, "I try to take advantage of it as much as possible, but I also think sometimes it can be limiting because I want to do certain styles, and I don't feel fully comfortable doing them here because of how people may receive it." This is the reality for many students on campus. Whether it be the challenge of taking care of your natural hair or the hope of avoiding curious fingers poking your 'fro, campus culture dictates what many students choose to do with their crowns.

Fortunately, there is a club on campus that guides students through all the ups and downs of their hair journeys. Love Your Locs, led by Olagunju and Jeffery Uwukhor-Ikele '25, creates a supportive environment where students can celebrate and embrace their hair by learning helpful tips and tricks. Olagunju defines the group as a space for

"Black women [to] gather to celebrate their unique beauty and the journeys they've taken to find peace with their hair, their identity, and their sense of self." Throughout the year, Love Your Locs hosts several events open to the entire school, with the most notable one being the Make-Your-Own-Hair-Oils event, in which students create their own hair care oils and growth serums. All proceeds from the event are donated to underprivileged communities. Club member Aseme, who appreciates this space, said, "It's just a really good group of people who are like-minded, and even if we do have different opinions, it's still really nice to be in a comforting space where everyone's able to express themselves and say what they want to say and how they feel."

From waves to cornrows and goddess braids to locs, our hair-styles are the ultimate form of artistic expression. Next time you walk across campus, take note of the variety of hairdos you see. Draw inspiration from the "crown creatives" you pass by. Consider how you can experiment with your own hair. After all, your hair is an extension of yourself. So own it.

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Dani Aseme '25 and Favour Olagunju '25 are two members of Love Your Locs.

## How Choaties Find Inspiration on Campus



Photo by Bowen Jin '26 / The Choate News

The PMAC is home to artists and their inspirations alike.

By **Sophie Park '27**  
*Reporter*

Choate's arts programs successfully support aspiring artists throughout their high school careers. On top of support from the school, student artists also derive inspiration from their everyday lives on campus. From the Arts Concentration program to student-led clubs, there are numerous opportunities for students to embrace their creativity and transform their ideas into tangible masterpieces and unique performances, each with distinctive and original themes. Whether in the Paul Mellon Arts Center's Little Theater or in the Colony Hall Dance Studio, students are always showcasing their talents. How, then, do Choate artists get inspiration on campus, and what opportunities are available for them?

Choate's Arts Concentration Signature Program gives budding artists the space to freely explore their creative passions, whether that be on stage or backstage. Through classes and workshops provided to this select group of students, program members are given extensive time to hone their artistic skills.

Suleika Sandi '26, a student currently enrolled in the Theater Arts Concentration Program, described her growth and experience over the past three years. "When I first came

to Choate, I was terrified to go outside of my comfort zone," she said. "Choate arts really gave me the space to be proud of who I am." As a part of her program requirement, Sandi is now participating in the upcoming fall play, Eurydice. "Since my freshman Spring, I've been doing Choate productions, and the environment is always amazing," she said.

Dana Tan '25, one of the Presidents of Choate Dance Company, reflected on where she got the inspiration for her dance choreography. "I find a lot of inspiration from my friends and also in nature. A lot of my choreography reflects my personal experiences," she said. "Being constantly surrounded by my friends in the classroom, in the dorm, and in the studio, the vibrancy and happiness they bring to my life comes through in my choreography."

Kaho Hoshi '25, a dancer and choreographer for Dance Company, has had a similar experience as Tan. "My last dance at the Fall Dance Showcase was inspired by the friendships that I was able to make [at Choate]," she said. "I feel like they're so much different than the friends you have back home. They're a lot closer, and you have that foundation of living away from home at such a young age, and so that creates a stronger connection between people."

Hoshi credited Dance teacher Ms. Pamela Newell for aiding her artistic growth at Choate. "I grew up strictly on ballet, contemporary, and modern, but [Ms. Newell] really wanted me to try new things. And so, she exposed me to different styles within genres," she said. "I was more of a competition dancer, meaning I was doing tricks and turns, and it was a very flashy, showy kind of dance. But with [Ms. Newell], she emphasizes more movement rather than the quantity [of tricks]."

The opportunity to reside with peers and faculty is one of the most significant puzzle pieces in the Choate experience; thus, it's no wonder that boarding school inspires developing student artists. In addition to the Arts Concentration Signature Program, classes with professional faculty members and clubs are also available to foster students' growth as artists.

Choate's arts programs and campus environment provide students with the support and inspiration they need to grow as artists. Through programs like Arts Concentration, as well as the influence of friends, faculty, and daily life, students are encouraged to explore their creativity and develop their unique artistic voices.

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## Discovering Passions Through Introductory Art Classes

By **Ha Jin Sung '28**  
*Reporter*

For many students, Choate is a place where they are introduced to the diverse realm of art. The School offers a wide array of introductory courses across the visual, performing, and musical arts, such as mixed media, dance, and music. It provides budding creatives with a solid foundation to explore their potential passions.

Choate's Choir Director, Dr. Julie Hagen, teaches Music Fundamentals, introducing students to basic music structure and notation through playing the ukulele. As an affordable and relatively straightforward instrument, "the accessibility of the ukulele is really great," Dr. Hagen said.

Dr. Hagen also said that she strives to help her students learn more authentically by fostering creativity and passion rather than strict assignments. "I always try and make sure that for the students, they know that it's low stakes," she said.

Dr. Hagen appreciates that her students leave with newly developed musical skills and confidence. "I love the idea that they can leave our 12 weeks together and go, 'I am a musician, I am an artist,'" she said.

Caroline Kim '25 took Mixed Media I as a third-former and Music Fundamentals as a fourth-former. She learned various skills in these classes, from



Photo by Harry Kim '28 / The Choate News

The PMAC is home to many introductory art classes, across all disciplines.

linoleum printing, to painting, to creating collages to learning chords on the ukulele.

Mr. Matt Kelsey teaches Digital Filmmaking I, Digital Media Design I, and Digital Photography I. In each of his classes, students start off by checking out a camera from the Library, which they work with throughout the term. Through hands-on assign-

ments, students can hone their technical skills and explore the intricacies of digital art.

Mr. Kelsey noted how in his classes, students learn about the technicalities behind digital art and the importance of personal expression and storytelling. "They're thinking about their identity. They're thinking about how to show, not tell," he said.

Mr. Kelsey also expressed how he values the passion and joy for digital art his students discover in his classes. "They find it themselves, I just gave them the space to do it. That's exciting," he said.

Camila Granda '25 noted that her main takeaways from Photography I were that there was so much one could do with a camera and photo editing soft-

ware. She said, "I learned you can convey so many different things with photography. You can make a lot of things look like a multitude of other things."

Granda also took Acting I to improve her acting skills and learn more about the field. She particularly expressed how taking Acting I helped her increase her confidence. "They

should call the class 'Confidence 101,'" she joked.

Head of Dance Ms. Pamela Newell teaches Introduction to the Moving Body and Dance. Students start by learning about broader topics, such as shape, space, and time, and then use these ideas to explore specific disciplines in dance, such as jazz and ballet. "We're just taking a little bit of a wider approach to dance into the body, so that students can, from any discipline, come and just experience their body," Ms. Newell said.

Bruce van Wingerden '28 is currently taking Drawing I. Up until now, his class has mainly focused on observational drawing. Van Wingerden explained that while the course is heavily focused on independent work, there are also opportunities for students to get together and share their drawings. He noted his appreciation for group work and casual conversations with his peers. "It's really nice, because no one there is judgmental, it's all just constructive feedback," van Wingerden said.

Whether through playing the ukulele, mastering digital media, or finding personal expression through dance, Choate students can explore the numerous aspects of art that the School has to offer. Taking one of Choate's introductory art classes is the perfect way to discover a new passion or to find a creative outlet through the arts.

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FIELD REPORT

Choate Fall Record

89 - 43 - 9

Varsity Games

Girls' Cross Country (3-3)  
vs. Hotchkiss, 43-18

Boys' Football (5-0)  
vs. Hotchkiss, 44-0

Girls' Volleyball (10-2)  
vs. Hotchkiss, 3-2

Boys' Soccer (10-2-1)  
vs. Hotchkiss, 3-1

Girls' Soccer (10-0-2)  
vs. Hotchkiss, 3-1

Boys' Cross Country (2-4)  
vs. Hotchkiss, 17-44

Girls' Field Hockey (3-8)  
vs. Hotchkiss, 0-3

J.V. Games

Girls' Cross Country (2-3)  
vs. Hotchkiss, 43-16

Boys' Soccer (7-1)  
vs. Hotchkiss, 3-1

Girls' Volleyball (6-1)  
vs. Hotchkiss, 3-2

Boys' Cross Country (3-3)  
vs. Hotchkiss, 16-42

Girls' Field Hockey (5-3-1)  
vs. Hotchkiss, 2-3

Choate Sailing Team Competes in NESSA Healy Trophy

By Alexis Lee '28  
Reporter

On September 21-22, the Choate Sailing Team reached a significant milestone by competing in the prestigious New England Sailing Schools Association (NESSA) Healy Trophy. Held at the American Yacht Club in Rye, New York, the competition is a singlehanded district championship regatta held for high school students.

The NESSA Healy Trophy is a high-level competition for laser class boats, which consist of a demanding design that requires swift responsiveness and focus; these boats are frequently used by Olympic sailors for training. This year, the fleet consisted of 19 skippers, which are commanders of a boat, from different high schools in New England. Among the competitors, Brayden Bratti '27 and Everett Royall '27 represented Choate in the Boy's International Laser Class Association (ILCA) 6 Class Boys. "It is something of a milestone to have competitively-driven sailors who are looking to get the in-league competition outside of our normal spring, competitive season — and they made it happen," Head Sailing Coach Sam Doak said.

Bratti has been sailing competitively for five years and raced against Royall over the summer. For him, the NESSA Healy Trophy meant more than just a simple race — it was a way to measure the growth of Choate's sailing program. "It was nerve-wracking since we were the first Choate students to compete in this regatta. We knew how big of a step it was



Photo courtesy of Everett Royall '27

Brayden Bratti '27 and Everett Royall '27 attend the prestigious NESSA Healy Trophy sailing competition.

for the program itself," Bratti said. Along with the physical preparations required to succeed in the event, Bratti also had to prepare mentally. "From the time I get to the event to the time I'm racing, it's more just like ... getting in the mental headspace of recognizing that what I'm going to do is going to be really hard, but that what's coming after it is going to be more beneficial," he said.

Similar to Bratti, Royall has had prior experience with sailing, and his participation at the ILCA Atlantic Coast Championship in New Jersey this summer was helpful preparation for the NESSA Healy Trophy. Moreover, Royall studied videos of professional sailors and practiced "image training," where he visualized

different scenarios on the water. "I was nervous, excited, and worried all at the same time," Royall said, reflecting on his experience at the Healy Trophy. "But I was proud to represent Choate."

The conditions were tougher than expected during the regatta, with winds gusting upwards of 25 knots on the second day. "It was already challenging for us, our boats, and our rigging," Bratti said. "Two sailors had to go to the hospital, and four sailors had their boats break." Despite these difficulties, Bratti and Royall persevered through the event.

While the NESSA Healy Trophy is a singlehanded event, Bratti and Royall worked together as a team both before and during the competition, relying on each other

for feedback and advice without a coach present. Although unable to attend, Coach Doak provided significant support and assistance behind the scenes. "He gave us strategies and was very involved even though he wasn't at the event," Royall said. Bratti and Royall's teamwork proved invaluable as they navigated difficult conditions, with every piece of input from each other making a big difference. "Over the summer, [Royall] and I raced against each other, so we were able to give constructive criticism to each other between races," Bratti said.

Finishing in 11th and 16th places, respectively, Royall and Bratti reflected on their experience. They both emphasized the importance of quickly adapting to changing

conditions and staying focused on the present. Bratti said, "Using the knowledge and fundamentals we already have is key when facing big challenges." Royall added, "You should never be discouraged. The hardest moments are the ones where you grow the most."

Looking ahead, both Bratti and Royall are determined to continue their journeys as sailors. "My favorite thing about sailing is the feeling of speed — the wind, the water, everything," Royall said. Bratti, who initially disliked sailing when his dad introduced him to the sport, now finds it both a personal and team-driven pursuit. "Something just clicked five years ago," he said. "When I got to Choate, I wasn't just doing it for myself anymore but for others, too."

Despite this achievement, Choate's sailing program still has room to grow. "The team's momentum was disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic, which prevented the students from sailing for two years," Coach Doak said. Despite these challenges, Coach Doak remains optimistic about the team's future as they prepare for their upcoming spring season. Bratti and Royall's work at the NESSA Healy Trophy marks an important milestone in Choate's sailing history, signaling the team's revival after a long dormant period following the pandemic. This is just the beginning, helping to lay a strong foundation that sets the team up for even greater achievements in the future.

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Choate Athletes Advocate for Mental Health

By Eliana Li '26  
Copy Editor

In the high-pressure world of being a student-athlete, mental health struggles often remain hidden. For many high school and collegiate athletes, the stigma surrounding conversations about mental health makes it difficult to seek the support they need. At Choate, Tori Vollero '27 and Karolina Zaccareo '27 are ambassadors of Morgan's Message, a campaign aimed to raise awareness about mental well-being in sports.

Inspired by the life and legacy of Morgan Rodgers, a former Duke University lacrosse player who tragically lost her life to suicide, Morgan's Message was founded to commemorate her and address mental health challenges in the sports community. The initiative provides a platform for student-athletes to receive support. The organization's website states, "As athletes, there is no shame in seeking physical healthcare — the same should be true for mental healthcare. To close the gap, we must work together to eliminate the stigma surrounding mental health."

Vollero shared her personal motivation for joining the cause. "I lost my mom in 2022 at the same time that I tore my ACL. Sports helped me through it so much. I was able to sit on the sidelines, which sucked, but I was there, and that's what mentally got me through everything," she said. Reflecting on the challenges many athletes face, she added, "Personally, I got through it very well, but other people struggle with that a bit more. I feel like if people can learn the proper ways to navigate their way through those mental blocks, they are able to come out so much stronger."

Zaccareo also stressed the importance of normalizing conversations about mental health. "Through Morgan's Message, I

hope to encourage people to feel more comfortable discussing mental health and help them realize how important it is to treat mental health as equally as physical health," she said.

As ambassadors, Vollero and Zaccareo organize games dedicated to Morgan's Message and participate in leadership training to be better equipped to support others. "It's a growth-mindset-focused group, and they show us how we can help student-athletes in our own communities," Vollero said.

Choate's first game dedicated to Morgan's Message took place on October 10 during the Girls' Varsity Field Hockey match against the Canterbury School. Vollero and Zaccareo handed out wristbands and stickers for players to place on their sticks in support of the cause. Before the game, both teams came together in solidarity as Vollero and Zaccareo delivered a speech dedicated to Rodgers. "Having everyone together in that one moment gave us a chance to recognize something that's greater than the game," Vollero said.

In the future, Vollero and Zaccareo hope to expand Morgan's Message into a wellness club, serving as a safe space for student-athletes to connect. "As an athlete, you feel like you have to maintain this standard — being able to succeed athletically, academically, and socially. There are so many aspects to it that it could get overwhelming, and we hope to provide a safe environment so students don't have to go through it alone," Zaccareo said.

With the help of dedicated ambassadors like Vollero and Zaccareo, Morgan's Message continues to amplify the conversation surrounding mental health in the athletic community. Their mission to create safe spaces for student-athletes reminds us that mental health is just as important as physical health.

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TOUCHDOWNS THROUGH TIME: EVOLUTION OF CHOATE FOOTBALL

By Kaitlyn Yu '27  
Reporter

There is no doubt that Choate's football program has stood the test of time as one of the best teams in the New England Preparatory School Athletic Council (NEPSAC), currently holding the NEPSAC Class A Leon Modeste Bowl Champions title. How did the team achieve the success it has today? Let's take a trip down memory lane and look at some highlights of football at Choate through the ages.

The Early Years: 1900-1940

Football was first introduced as a sport at the all-boys Choate School in 1900. The 1901 issue of the School yearbook, *The Brief*, reported that there was "great difficulty in organizing a team" out of the limited number of students on campus. Additionally, the rules of football during the early 1900s varied from those we know today. Alfred Hague '04, Captain of the 1904 Football Team, wrote in the 1951 Choate Alumni Bulletin, "The opposing lines were separated by inches instead of feet ... kicking was unheard of."

As the sport itself developed, so did Choate's football teams. In 1922, the Varsity Football Team won a total of six games against Central High School of Springfield, the Taft School, the Pomfret School, the Loomis Chaffee School, Deerfield Academy, and the Yale University Second Freshman Team, while only suffering one loss to the Kent School. The 1935 season was similarly victorious, resulting in six wins as well.

Further Development: 1941-1970

In 1952, Choate faced the Hotchkiss School for the first time, which resulted in a 12-0 victory for the Bearcats. Although the Wild Boars returned home without any points scored, Hotchkiss Football Head Coach DeLaney Kiphuth marveled at the "fine sportsman-



Photo courtesy of the Choate Rosemary Hall School Archives

The Choate 1993 New England Champions in a 1994 Campus newsletter. ship of the opposition," marking the first memorable game of many others to come.

The 1961-1962 team was undefeated for the ninth time since football began at the School. Under Head Coach Jack Davison, the team won all seven games and allowed only 13 points to be scored on them all year. The most significant victories included an impressive 32-0 win over Deerfield and an 18-7 triumph against the Lawrenceville School, which ended Lawrenceville's three-year undefeated streak. Coach Davison credited Choate's success to the "spirit and enthusiasm" of the team, remarking that "the boys gained pride in their play and developed far beyond any expectations." With the success of the football team, the program expanded in the 1960s with the establishment of a junior varsity team.

The Saga Continues: 1971-2010

The 1978 game against Deerfield was perhaps one of the most exhilarating games in Choate's football history, with the team scoring the winning touchdown in the last few seconds, breaking a 3-3 deadlock with the School's traditional rival.

2007 also marked a special occasion when the Varsity Boys' Football Team opened the season with a 20-17 victory over Kent in the first outdoor football match held under the lights. In the October 5, 2007 issue of *The Choate News*, reporter Rick Song '09 wrote that

this change of scenery "brought the Choate community closer" and created a highly memorable game.

Soaring to New Heights: 2010-Present

Current Head Coach LJ Spinnato joined the Choate community in 2009. Since 2014, he has been coaching the Varsity Football team and boasts seven Bowl Championship wins in nine seasons. He remarked that the program's continuity and consistency have improved over the years, raising expectations and imploring him "to go out there and recruit talent" of equal measure to the academic and artistic rigor of the School. Coach Spinnato reflected on his first team at Choate, which had a "magical season" that helped create a culture of the sacrifice and commitment needed for the program, boosting morale and maintaining "bonds ... that stay long after their playing days" at Choate.

Coach Spinnato's journey has been filled with many memorable moments. He admires the teams' competitive nature, particularly how each team member "play[s] the game with passion." Football has left an insurmountable impact on the Choate community, yet its legacy is still in the making. Currently, the Varsity Football team has a 5-0 record and recently beat Hotchkiss 44-0. Here's to more years of undefeated seasons and memorable games!

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