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1st Place award-winner from the American Scholastic Press Association



The Lion's Roar

The voice of Liberty High School students

Liberty High School
850 Second Street
Room T-13
Brentwood, CA 94513

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FREE

Welcoming Liberty's new APs

By Frankie Brown
Editor

With the start of a new school year, Liberty gained more than just a new cafeteria; two new assistant principals joined the staff.

Mrs. Amy Wallace, the new Assistant Principal for Den Three, was born and raised in California, and even graduated from Liberty High School. She started teaching in elementary schools, and later worked to become the Principal of Ron Nunn Elementary School here in Brentwood. However, the opportunity to work at Liberty was one she couldn't pass up. In her words, "I wanted to get the full TK-12

experience."

When asked about the personality of students and staff at Liberty, Mrs. Wallace has nothing but praise. She explained, "I have been treated very

well... This is a special community that has a strong tradition of Lion Pride." She further stated that the staff and students have been very welcoming. Mrs. Wallace's main goal, simply put,

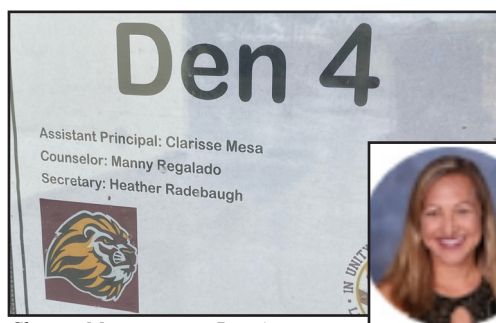
is to ensure students leave Liberty as their best selves, fully prepared for life beyond high school.

Dr. Clarisse Mesa, the new Assistant Principal for Den Four, chose Liberty

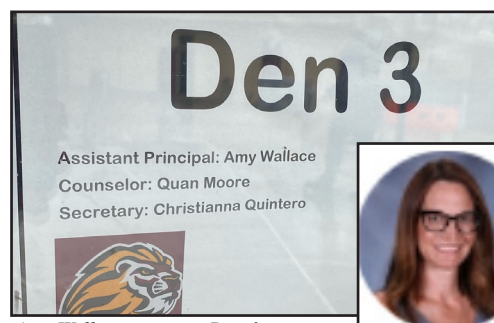
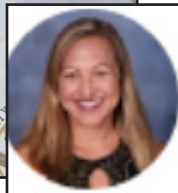
specifically because she loves working with high school kids. She explained, "I've worked with all grade levels, from kindergarten to college, and I just love high school."

In her day-to-day life at Liberty, Dr. Mesa works with all of the students in Den Four and specifically students who are English Learners. She also oversees the accreditation program at our school, to ensure the school can function properly and improve in the future.

"Something I personally believe could improve would be campus culture," Dr. Mesa states. "It's a challenge to encourage students to go to school events, but the events are a great way to include the entire student body."



Clarisse Mesa oversees Den 4.



Amy Wallace oversees Den 3.



Party's over : Elon Musk's takeover of Twitter

By Gabbie Munoz
Editor

Being a billionaire seems like the dream, with never having to worry about money or costs. But what happens when you buy a multibillion-dollar company? Elon Musk now knows, after taking over Twitter in October. The process started after various claims of Musk buying the company came to life. Musk went back and forth with the company for months before finally gaining ownership on October 27, 2022.

With his arrival, several changes came quickly. From firing the CEO within the first week of purchasing to offering a verification plan to everyone on the app for \$8 a month. It's apparent Musk had big plans in mind for Twitter.

One of his main focuses is the impersonation accounts that plague the app. But with his new verification option, the problem has only gotten worse. Many people took to

the app to "tweet" in the identities of politicians, influencers, and even Musk himself. This led to "Twitter Blue" getting suspended after only a day of being up, and remaining down. Many people are slamming Musk for allowing controversial figures to get the blue checkmark of "legitimacy." The push

for Twitter Blue has also caused an uproar in far-right subscribers; including users that had been tracked by Cornell University for pushing election fraud (NYT).

Along with this uproar has come the suspension of over 300 Twitter Blue subscribers, most of the accounts being

made after Musk's takeover (NYT). While this shows how some of Twitter's policies are still in place, many political extremists are getting excited about the possibility of Musk bringing back permanently banned accounts, including former president Donald Trump.

Musk has been very vocal about his dislike of the permanent banning system on Twitter, but is continuing to suspend users who are accused of hate speech stating: "freedom of speech, but not freedom of reach."

This came after the suspension of Kanye West's Twitter profile after more anti-semitic tweets.

Though Musk does plan on giving less traction to hate speech and accounts that promote it. It is still concerning to know that he plans on reinstating banned accounts that have been known to spread false information online. While freedom of speech is important, Musk must realize the weight his decision will have on the social media website. Not only will it be harder to moderate the amount of hate speech being posted, but if people think there is no consequence to their actions then they will continue to post whatever they want online. It's obvious a lot of people idolize Musk and with his push for "freedom of speech" online, many people might take to the app to only spread hate.



It was reported that Musk paid about \$44 billion dollars to purchase Twitter.

Photo courtesy of Dimitrios Kambouris

Destruction before construction

Liberty has been no stranger to construction over the last few years, with the new Cafeteria and Administration Building getting finished right before the new school year. But this year students have gotten to experience the smashing of the B, C, and D wing by the PAC. Whether it was seen or heard, no one can ignore the giant excavator that have been spotted on the now empty plot of land.



Photo courtesy of Summer Rodriguez



Photo by Mrs. Busch

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Upcoming events:

1/27 Winter Dance

2/2 Liberty Idol

2/17 No School-Lincoln's Birthday

2/20 No School-Washington's Birthday

2/22 Honor Roll Breakfast

Missing girl cases on the rise

How can students stay safe?

*By Kei Jones
Staff Writer*



Photo by Kei Jones

Sometimes, personal items such as hair accessories or lip gloss can help lead authorities to someone's location.

Photos of missing girls are plastered all around as you walk into school, so to distract yourself you open Tik Tok but the first video you see is "how young girls should stay safe while walking alone." Suddenly young women are under the shadow of fear of being next to go missing

However, the missing girl phenomenon in California is nothing new. Statistics show that thousands go missing each year.

According to oag.ca.gov, California's Department of Justice, in 2010 14,830 women went missing, 16,865 went missing in 2015 and 16,553 in 2021.

It is obvious that from 2015-2021 there is a clear decrease, which is likely related to the COVID-19 lockdown. But why do you hear about missing girls so much these days?

Unfortunately, human sex trafficking rates are on the rise. 15,000 to 50,000 women and children are trafficked each year in the U.S. (deliverfund.org). There are multiple ways that this can occur. Pimp trafficking (one person controls the victim), gang trafficking (victim is controlled by multiple people), survival sex (victim performs sex to survive) and familial trafficking (victim is controlled by their family members).

So, how do women end up being trafficked in the first place? According to polarisproject.org, the top five risks are substance use, runaways and homeless

youth, unstable housing, poor mental health and recent migration/relocation. All of these women are vulnerable because they can easily be manipulated due to their lack of knowledge or resources.

Now, the only question left is how can young women stay safe? There's no predicting the future but there are ways to prepare for it. Some safety tips from marshfieldclinic.org and raisingteenstoday.com. Are always be aware of your surroundings. Eliminate objects that can limit focus, like cell phones and earbuds. If people are too distracted they'll become an easy target. Always let parents or a trusted figure know about all whereabouts. In a misfortunate turn of events it is important for other people to know where a

person's last location was and who was last seen with them. Don't post about locations on social media, this way a person won't be digitally stalked. However, if you really want to post content, wait until you get home from the event. Remember, anyone can be a criminal. Don't assume someone is safe just because they look a certain way. Lastly, keep pepper spray and a whistle on at all times. If the worst comes to worst these two items can save someone in a threatening situation.

On the whole, many women go missing because the world has become such a dangerous place. It is unfortunate to have to prepare for what could be a life threatening situation, but it is necessary.

California clears the way for cleaner air



Teslas are becoming the new trend for cleaner air.

Photo courtesy of Evan Thomson

*By Theresa Aitchison
Staff Writer*

In an attempt to confront climate change, California's governor, Gavin Newsom signs an executive order stating that all new cars and passenger trucks sold are to be electric, or plug-in hybrid vehicles.

"By 2035, in the next 15 years, we will eliminate in the state of California the sales of internal combustion engines," said Newsom in a press release. Executive order (N-79-20) will make California the first state to ban the sale of all new gas-powered cars.

However, the governor says that no cars will be taken away. "If you like your internal combustion engine car, you can keep it." Newsom claims in an article with ABC7. The executive order is to be a commitment to reaching zero emissions. Nevertheless, a market for gas powered cars will still exist. With substantial changes like these comes many different outcomes. Plenty of communities have already begun looking into the environmental effects of switching to all electric vehicles.

Evan Thomson, a student here at Liberty, is the owner of a Tesla Model 3. He speaks on what it will do for the environment, accessibility, and experiences.

"The batteries themselves require a lot of materials that a lot of internal combustion engines don't," stated Thomson to produce an electric vehicle bat-

tery, lithium extraction that pollutes the air is required.

He says that the Co2 emissions from the mining of rare earth metals almost make up for the fact that a normal engine is not being used.

Furthermore, Thomson says that owning a Tesla in the state of California does not make charging accessibility a problem. "At least here in California, it's not very different from owning a gas car because there are so many charging stations in the whole state."

Except, he claims that the use of a charger is not ideal if you are in dire need, but newer models can go up to 300 miles on a single charge.

On the other hand, how will electric vehicle requirements affect low-income communities economically? In the fight for clean air, there will be assurance of equal access to clean technology.

"By that time, there'll be more choices, more opportunities to advance new technologies-not just electric vehicles, but other zero-emission technologies that will substantially advance poor and underserved communities for one fundamental reason: the cost of maintaining those cars is much lower, and the cost of fueling those cars is much, much lower," says Governor Newsom in an interview with NowThis.

Thus far, as the state go into the uncharted territory of 2035 with this new executive order, compromises will have to be made to assist with carbon emissions.



LHS art teacher's work displayed in local museums

Art teacher Jake Edwards was able to revive the Dodo Bird with his sculpture shown at the Blackhawk Gallery on December 10th, showcasing his new artwork before it gets sent to Gregangelo Museum in San Francisco. It stands at 10 feet tall, its main medium being mostly metal. The piece is also able to spin in the wind, making it an interactive experience.

Also featured at the gallery was Edwards' 'Mighty Tiger' piece. Standing at four feet tall, it weighs 300 pounds and is mostly made out of metal. The tiger is strong enough to withhold the weight of a person sitting on it.



Want to visit the Gregangelo Museum?

*It is located at
225 San Leandro Way in San Francisco
(415) 664-0095*

The flair of the Elective Fair

While seniors attended an informational meeting, the remainder of the student population visited Liberty's annual Elective Fair on Friday, January 13th. Teachers were available in both gyms to chat and provide information on the various elective courses offered before students participate in the course selection process for the next school year.



Photo by Mrs. Busch

Lingering lunch line issues

By Ella Follett
Staff Writer

Lunch time at school shouldn't be spent in a line that is filled with overwhelming crowds, cutting, and a frustrating wait.

Although some students may not believe the lunch lines are an issue, others do. Marie Bouso, a student at Liberty High School, who regularly gets school lunch, agrees that lunch lines are an issue. Including the selections of food students get on campus. "Those pizza lines are only pizza lines for the people that get there on time or for the people who barge their way through," she says.

But, Bouso believes the issue can be fixed by, "Adding more staff members to the line, or opening up another



Liberty students can acquire lunch from a couple of different places, but serving 3,000 people takes time.

Photo by Ella Follett

lunch line on campus."

In short, students such as Bouso argue that lunch lines at school are an issue; yet it is a problem that is fixable. However, not only students believe lunch lines are an issue; for instance, authorities like Liberty High Schools Nutrition Service Director Rosy Ayers accepts that with only 30 minutes to serve lunch with a student population of around 3,000, it is obvious that the lunch lines will be long.

Ayers says, "One main issue we have to obtain faster lines is for students to have their student ID ready to scan." She says typing student ID numbers can take up time, making the lines slower. However, new computers for scanning IDs have replaced the old and slower ones, making everything more efficient.

"Mama, I'm in love with a criminal" The glamorization of serial killers

By Loujain Habibi
Staff Writer

Fans, edits, thirst tweets, love letters, cosplays: expected for celebrities, not



Photo courtesy of Reddit

Some people have turned to dressing up as their "favorite" serial killer for Halloween, as shown above.

serial killers. Yet a morbid fascination has grown for them, reaching the point of people dressing up as Ted Bundy's victims at his trial.

The romanticization of serial killers has been around for decades, made worse with the extensive media coverage and Hollywood glamorization. Whenever a new tv series detailing a killer's crimes airs, the fan base grows. People begin to fantasize about the killer themselves, not just the actor playing the role. But what really attracts people to serial killers?

Ghost Pellegrino, a Liberty High School Junior, mentioned several reasons people would be attracted to serial killers, including their voice, looks, charms, intelligence, creativity (in regards to their murders), and not looking like 'stereotypical killers'. They also mentioned that empathy towards killers can cause people to feel bad and believe, "I would be the one

to love them."

Besides feeling empathy towards killers, Christine Kinori of *The Review Geek* wrote, "Romanticization and delusions ensue when the physical attraction to serial killers makes it difficult for the audience to connect the killer's appearance to their actions."

For some, the attraction runs deeper than what the eye sees—known as hybristophilia. It is defined as a "sexual interest in and attraction to those who commit crimes" by the APA (American Psychological Association) Dictionary of Psychology, hybristophilia contributes to the romanticization of serial killers.

An analysis done by Dr. Melissa Matuszak acknowledges the four patterns that are universal in defining hybristophilia, which are women who: "pursue romantic relationships with incarcerated offenders, participate in/facilitate criminal behavior with a romantic

partner, are sexually attracted or sexually satisfied by partners participating in criminal behavior, pursue relationships with and/or are sexually attracted to serial violent offenders (i.e. serial killers)."

As mentioned by Dr. Matuszak, women are typically more likely to have hybristophilia, making them more likely to be attracted to serial killers than others. According to a study published in *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, women are also more likely than men to choose true crime media. Additionally, a study done by Kelli Boling and Kevin Hull in 2018 revealed the audience of true crime podcasts is 73% female.

Beyond glamorizing killers, what effect does romanticization have on the families of victims? In an interview with *Insider*, Rita Isbell, sister to Erol Lindsey [victim of Jeffery Dahmer], spoke about how seeing her victim im-

pact statement in the 'Dahmer - Monster' Netflix series made her relive her trauma, "That's why it felt like reliving it all over again. It brought back all the emotions I was feeling back then."

Similarly, Eric Perry, cousin of Erol Lindsey, went on Twitter to state that "it's retraumatizing over and over again."

In regards to how society is affected, the Editorial Board of UC Davis' *The California Aggie* wrote, "Pop culture has played into society's morbid fascination with these individuals, creating countless TV shows, podcasts and documentaries humanizing the killers and detailing their methods."

Additionally, Josie Lockwood, of Palatinate, stated that, despite the industry continuing to cast Hollywood heartthrobs for serial killer roles, it is crucial that audiences are aware that the movies and series should not glorify the killers they are based on.

Liberty lock up As more students ride bikes to school, how can bike security improve?

By Anthony Correa
Staff Writer

Liberty has approximately 3000 students and over 50 of those students get to school by bicycle. With that number of students, comes a requirement for space to lock up their bikes. Unfortunately, there is simply not enough space for a safe place to lock up this mode of transportation. "Theres not enough racks over here for all these bikes to fit." - Unknown.

Colgan Correa was asked about how he felt about this overflow situation. He briefly mentioned that there should be more racks in this area, and something needs to change. The easy fix is to add more racks.

"They need more around the school... its not enough," he stated.

Correa was questioned about this problem, he replied that there needs to be more racks inside the school grounds, and explained that there are too many bikes crammed in one area. He was also asked what can be done but gave the same answer. "Theres a lot of things the school can

do... have a rack at every gate and have another rack by the auto shop... problem solved."

Placing lock up racks at every entrance to the school would help save time and crowding. The auto shop entrance is the most crowded lock up area at the school because of its easy access from Second Street and the city parking garage. But with crowding, comes problems, sometimes there might be twenty bikes on one rack.



Photo by Anthony Correa

A simple fix would be the addition of more bike racks, but they end up costing around 200 - 500 dollars each. Even with all the construction going on at Liberty, it wouldn't be an issue to just put some bike racks up to help students save time and hassle with the fiasco going on at the bike rack.

Lion's Cafe: A review of La Costa Insight on Liberty's local spot

By Michael Davidson
Staff Writer

Greetings and pleasantries, impeccable service and good food are all things to expect from the restaurant on the corner of Oak street & Brentwood boulevard. For \$18.50 I had gotten a burrito with rice, beans, cheese, and

horchata with no ice.

Walking up to the window I was greeted while I looked at the menu, asked if I was ready with a kind word and had my order taken. I was asked if I needed anything more then paid for my food and told it would be ready shortly. I waited at the many available tables, all



Although a bit pricey, the portion sizes at La Costa were worth the money.

Photo by Michael Davidson

asada but also 2 asada tacos with only onions and cilantro but I added the lemon that came with it, and finally an

of which were clean. I only waited for roughly five minutes until my number was called.

"Gracias": A simple word that makes the whole difference for the patron of a business. Being thanked for choosing them is an important thing to know about the establishment and how they truly appreciate their patrons.

I sit down to eat and the tables again are remarkably clean, with ample napkins in the dispenser, and hot sauce available at the tables. The food was quite good and very filling, so much that I had left overs for my lunch the next day (the burrito had excellent reheating quality). After I had finished my meal there were trash cans at all exits of the outdoor seating. A place to dispose of all the waste and where to set the tray. Again being thanked as I left.

Overall, I would recommend this nearby eatery, not only for the flavorful food, but also for the friendly service and cleanliness. If it were just slightly less expensive, it would be a high school student's dream spot for Mexican food.

La Costa is just a short walk from Liberty, located at 335 Oak Street. They are open daily from 10 am to 9 pm

When is the best time to begin figuring out your future?

By Brianna Burns
Staff Writer

High School is filled with stress worthy topics and events. One of the most common worries a high schooler has is their future.

Questions are often thought of such as “When is it a good time to look at your future?” Is there ever a bad time?

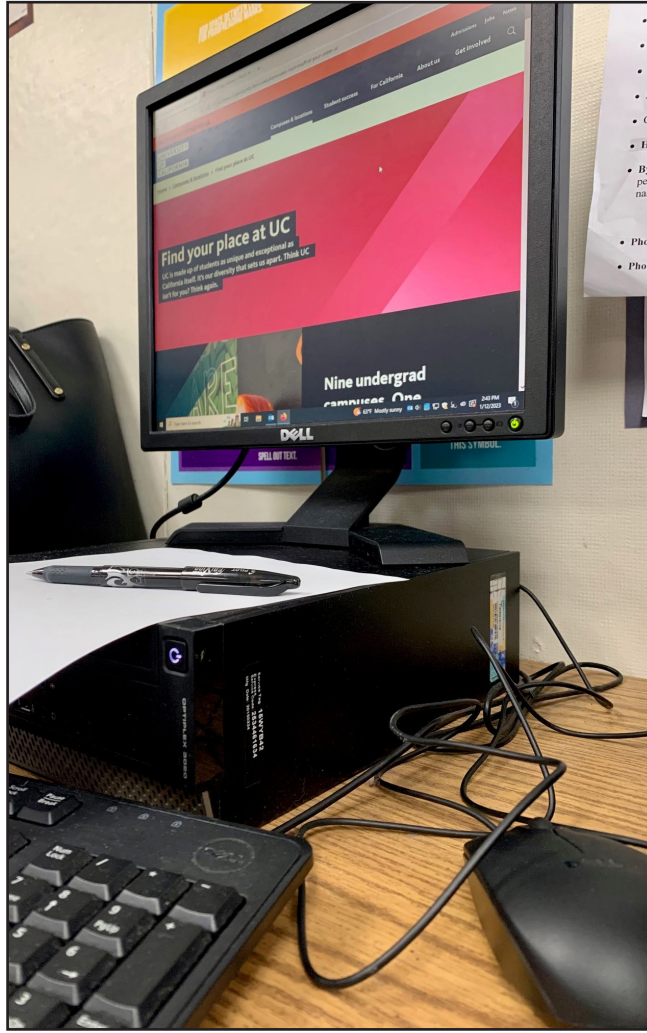
If considering a pathway to college, it is best to start researching options in 9th grade, according to usnews.com. This will give students a solid four years to consider factors such as college location, price, courses offered, and class sizes. Many students wait until their junior year in high school to begin the selection process, but waiting this long could possibly lead to stress caused by feeling rushed in the process. Some experts even recommend starting the research process as early as middle school.

Alex Hargreaves, a journalist for Griffith University, believes people should start thinking about their future career once they go to college. This is often around the age of 18, but not always this exact time.

“...The reality is the time to start thinking about your career is: the moment you start University,” she said.

A lot of the time, people already know what they want to be when they grow up, and an idea for this can be to not always rely on that or shut down every other job that might come their way.

Hargreaves states that it is important to look into other career ideas and “Even if you may have been dreaming about working in a certain company or in a certain position since you left high school, it doesn’t mean that you



Schools typically offer opportunities for college exploration, including assignments, courses like PUSH, and after-school help sessions.

should reject every other opportunity that comes your way.”

However, Lori Fimoff who is a journalist for “Skill Crush Blogs,” talks about how it is never too late to look at one’s future or start over with one’s plans.

Lori states, “No matter how old you are, it’s easy to think there’s some sort of cutoff point with starting a new career (or starting anything new in life, for that matter) is impossible. But that’s simply not true.”



ANGRY CHICKZ coming soon to Brentwood

If Nashville-style hot chicken is what students have been craving, they’re in luck: Angry Chickz chicken is opening a location in Brentwood, off of Sand Creek Road. The relatively new restaurant chain, which first opened in Southern California in 2018, has grown to 20 locations throughout California, Nevada, and Arizona. Known for its spicy chicken, the restaurant offers six heat levels to choose from, starting at “Country,” all the way up to “Angry,” which is “so hot you need to sign a waiver,” according to their Instagram page. The chain claims that the Brentwood location will be open in the next few weeks.



Photos courtesy of Angry Chickz



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Students who have turned 18 and are interested in working at Angry Chickz can apply online at www.angrychickz.com/hiring.

Architecture as art

3-D Art class turns waste into wonder



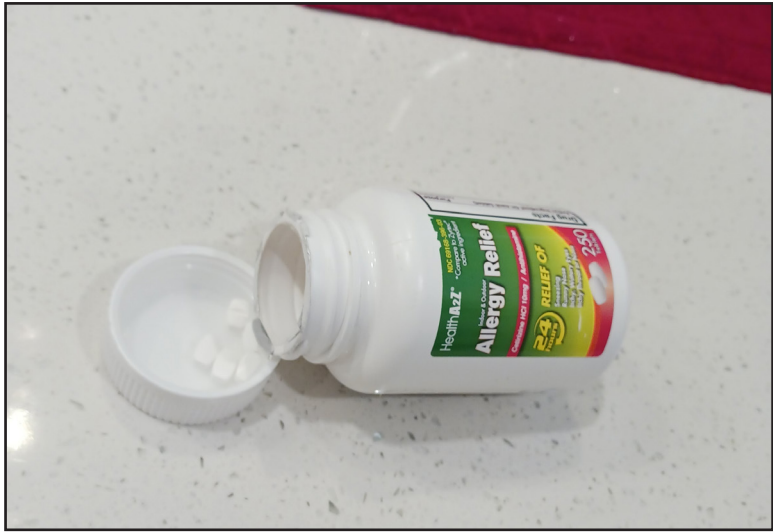
Photos courtesy of Ms. Swanberg-Kerns



Pizza boxes: Prime candidates for the garbage can, right? Not in the hands of Ms. Swanberg-Kerns’ Advanced 3-D Art class. Students in this class used recycled pizza boxes as the base structure for their end-of-semester architecture projects, all of which were hand-painted. The structures were judged by teachers and staff in a friendly competition during finals week in December.

January 20, 2023

Living with food allergies: An everyday struggle



Common symptoms of food allergies include itching in the mouth, hives, swelling of the face, and wheezing.

Photo by Aize Idehen

By Aize Idehen
Staff Writer

Food allergies are a huge problem in today's world, and they have caused a lot of problems for people who have them. It is estimated that more than 50 million Americans have an allergy of some kind. You probably even know some yourself.

The American College of Allergy states that "a food allergy reaction occurs when an individual's immune system overreacts to a food or a substance in the food." But don't worry, there is a bright side to it: while allergies tend to run in families, it is possible to predict whether a child will inherit a parent's food allergy or whether siblings will

have a similar condition and if it can be outgrown.

According to the American College of Allergy, "Because of the rate at which food allergies are increasing, new measures are being taken, for example, by creating foods or beverages without the chemicals or content that make food allergy victims react."

Medical professionals state that "...up to 20% of the world's population is allergic to proteins." They added that the most common food allergies are peanut, wheat, and milk, and that peanut is the most fatal of all food allergies. Soon, many hope that allergy medications will be available in schools in case of a food allergy victim reacts to school or forgets his or her meds. According to MayoClinic.org,

"...if you have a food allergy, avoid exposure to the food until your medical appointment." But what becomes problematic as a student is when other students bring foods to school that may cause a reaction in others. If one does consume the food and experiences a mild reaction, he or she can obtain antihistamine medication over the counter. And students who already have a diagnosed allergy may have an epi-pen on campus in case of emergency.

Additionally, athletes may be slightly more susceptible to food allergy symptoms, making food allergies a problem. After all, sports can make a food allergy worse because blood pressure increases dramatically when exercising.

Have parents gone too far in pushing their kids in sports?

By Colette McMeans
Staff Writer

There is a limit that some say parents cross when it comes to sports. They don't see the line from inspiring their kids to pushing them too hard. Pushing kids into sports can impact their mental and/or physical health either positively or negatively.

"Children who are pushed from a young age and continue to be pushed as they get older can eventually start to burn out," lancasteronline.com explains.

In consequence to parents pushing kids too hard in sports, all of the intense pressure is on their shoulders. This can cause stress to start forming

and their mental health can be negatively impacted. Kids will start paying more attention to sports than school which can cause grades to drop and even more stress to keep building up. Emotions will be damaged, as well as the bond between parent and child due to the fear of disappointing their parents. Sometimes the reason why parents push so hard for kids to play sports is because they want their kids to be more like them and play the same sport that they did when they were younger. However, "Our job as sports parents is to look into your children's true motivation for playing the sport," youth-sportspsychology.com says.

Generally, when parents push their kids into sports they feel like they're doing it for a good cause. A lot of parents when pushing their kids can see



Is yelling at a child the most effective way to get one's point across?

Photo courtesy of faithandathletes.com

the line between pushing just enough and pushing too much, and most only push so hard because they want for their

child to get better. Sports can help with benefits such as keeping your body in shape and healthy. Sports also have

good social aspects like having a special bond with your team. There is also the competition against other players' side in sports which normally can attract kids to sports the most.

"The child may not be very dedicated to a sport they're pushed into," according to coppellstudentmedia.com.

If the parent pushes their kid into a sport and they eventually start to like the sport it can have great benefits and can teach them the morals and values to more than just the sport. On the flip side, if parents push their kid into a sport and the kid ends up not liking the sport it can become very challenging for the parent which could be the cause for trying to push kids past their limits into playing a sport whether they like it or not.

Getting heads out of the gutter

Bowling as an up-and-coming sport



Bowling was one of 12 sports being considered for inclusion at the 2024 Olympic Games, but was ultimately not selected.

Photo by Jeremy Cheatwood

By Jeremy Cheatwood
Staff Writer

There are a lot of sports in America, but there is only one that is getting more popular with each day.

Teenagers everywhere are starting to get into professional bowling and getting scholarships out of their skills, and some people don't even consider this a sport, they think it is like roller skating. But some junior bowlers don't believe that bowling is just for fun, but instead if you are competitive then anything becomes a sport. For example, a Junior in high school,

Alex Bassi, said, "Bowling is a sport, there are teams and points." More students have been bowling competitively because of scholarship, here is what Jackson Gandara has had to say about scholarship: "I believe it is good to have something to look forward to in a sport."

There are currently a lot of young professionals at Liberty and other schools, most of them believe that bowling will thrive and will become something bigger, like Maverick Little, a sophomore and has a 204 average. "I don't care what people say, it's a sport."

Heart over height:

Does being tall automatically make someone good at basketball?

By Elijah Sandoval
Staff Writer

Can the saying "Heart over Height" really take someone as far as the professionals? There's a common stereotype: if you're taller than 6 feet, then you belong on a basketball court with the rest of the giraffes making millions. However, there have been countless times throughout all levels of basketball where height differential doesn't come close to being a problem. Surprisingly, being blessed with height doesn't make a 7-digit job guaranteed.

When asked if his height affects his game negatively, Quinton Bundage, point guard for Liberty's varsity team responded with, "It doesn't phase me... my height allows me to be substantially quicker than players that are taller than me, as well as dribble the ball better than those with longer wingspans."

As unbothered as Bundage can be, he is still well aware of the obstacles that lie ahead being a 5'10 hooper with dreams of playing under the spotlight. "Yeah the odds are bearing on me but I don't let it get to me. I stay focused on my grind and hope that eventually it all pays off."

Hard work is the recipe for success in Quinton's eyes. Similar to former NBA player, Muggsy Bogues. Bogues is the shortest player in NBA history to this day, listed at 5'3. His career lasted 14 years, with his best year being in '94 averaging 11 points and 8 assists. Countless days of blood, sweat and tears were shed to achieve his place in

the Hall of Fame. However, is that hard work necessary for someone taller with the same ambition?

"(You) Definitely need to work just as hard," says Ethan Wasem, when asked if work ethic is just as important to someone his height.

"Being taller obviously helps but it doesn't mean you're immediately more skilled," he added. "Your odds of making it to the collegiate or even professional level are much higher, but at the end of the day hard

work beats talent." Wasem is a 6'5 forward for the Lion's varsity team. His height and length give him a clear advantage on the court, however he also admits that it has its drawbacks.

"The taller you are, the more injury prone you can be. You also tend to be slower and skills you see in your conventional guard aren't as easy to pick up. That's why you have to work just as hard as guards to make it to the next level."



Despite their vast height difference, Wasem (left) and Bundage (right) are both successful players on Liberty's Varsity team. Photo by Elijah Sandoval

January 20, 2023

“Boys don’t cry”: Stereotypes that affect men’s mental health

By Mia Torres
Staff Writer

“Stop crying!” “Toughen up.” “Suck it up.” These are only some of the phrases young boys hear that stay with them up until they are adults. This affects men’s mental health since it is often overlooked and sometimes deemed as not important.

There are many toxic stereotypes that harm young boys and it really affects them as they grow up. There are many stereotypes such as the “boys don’t cry.” Stereotypes like these are thrown onto young boys to “toughen” them up. They are taught to hold back their emotions, but this leads to them not knowing how to process them or handle them properly.

Upon asking Liberty sophomore Micah Mercado about her thoughts on this stereotype, she said, “...Holding in emotions and not talking about mental health can make someone really unhappy, but with men, when they do want to share out how they feel, they get shamed by society, and it creates the cycle where they won’t want to express their emotions...”

Unfortunately, when men ask for help or want to talk about how they are feeling, this sense of vulnerability that envelops them is discouraged. Due to this, they do not receive the attention needed to help them.

Additionally, the “real men don’t ask for help” stereotype is also toxic.



According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC), studies in 2019 proved that, “Women were more likely than men to have received any mental health treatment.” Photo by Mia Torres

Young boys are taught to “toughen it out” when they get hurt, whether it is physically, mentally, or emotionally. They are also taught to “fight back” or “man up” to protect themselves from people bothering them. Overall, boys grow up registering in their heads that they will not ask for help in order to be seen as manly, even if they genuinely need the help.

“...They’re taught to provide and be the ruler of the house. This system goes hand in hand with how men are constantly told that crying or showing any emotion will suggest they’re weak when in actuality they are not,” Liberty sophomore Sofia Henderson explained.

Harmful coping mechanisms are constantly used by men to run away from

problems they’re struggling with, and it can lead to them hurting themselves severely.

However, stereotypes are not the only thing that affects men’s mental health. Masculinity and gender norms also play a big part in all of this. Traditional gender norms have commonly portrayed boys as “strong, competitive, in control, and unburdened by vulnerability.” Young boys

grow up thinking that they always must be the strong ones and show no signs of weaknesses because it deems them in a bad light. Emotions such as anger, hostility, and even emotional control are often congratulated by society because it shows that they are “real men.”

On the other hand, emotions that show vulnerability such as sadness, fear, and more trigger young boys to be ashamed or embarrassed and live with them for the rest of their lives. The reality of it is that they do not look for help because of these ideas and beliefs that society has dumped onto them from such an early age. So, a question lingers. Can it be undone? Yes, it can be undone.

Liberty sophomore David Arnone stated, “They can be undone by eliminating things that cause the stereotypes such as the nominalization of men seeking help when they are in distress...”

Currently, men’s mental health has become more important and eventually, it can help a new generation of young boys to be open with their emotions and to talk and reach out for help when needed.

“Men’s mental health isn’t talked about in the topics of mental health in general, since there is social stigmas about masculinity...It’s definitely a problem in society but I’m sure it is being looked at in our modern age.” Angel Silva, a Liberty sophomore, concluded.



Just because you’re competitors doesn’t mean you can’t get along: Hunter Rodger and Spencer Fabionar are proof of this. Photo by Tapanga Lewis

We were corn for this

Liberty High School has two nationally-ranked cornhole players

By Tapanga Lewis
Staff Writer

Everyone has their secrets; until recently, it was unknown to most that Liberty High School is home to two nationally ranked cornhole players. As Hunter Rodger, 10th grade cornhole player, explains that cornhole is a game played with two boards placed 27 inches apart you throw a bag under hand to try and get it through the hole or on the board, one would receive 3 points for getting a corn bag in the hole, 1 point for getting it on the board and no points for missing completely. The total number of points earned each round is represented by the difference in the total points between the players.

Rodger started cornhole because of a fundraiser for his friend’s sister who was injured at the time.

Spencer Fabionar, a 12th grade cornhole player, says “Right when quarantine was hitting”, he started playing cornhole. Rodger states that the community is his favorite part of cornhole; he loves the people, while Fabionar disagrees. He likes the competition of it. “You wouldn’t think it was competitive, but it is,” he states.

Both nationally ranked players play as a hobby or an activity to pass the time, like any other sport. They balance the game with their school and home lives nicely, as most other students did not even know what they did in their spare time.

Rodger and Fabionar both agree that the game takes a lot of practice; Rodger even practices almost every day.

Even though Fabionar plays every day, he says, “Weekly tournaments are my practice.”

Both Rodger and Fabionar say that entering a competition can cost from 10 to 20 dollars if the competition is local, or 40-60 dollars at larger tournaments, apparently because there is an entrance fee for competitions with a cash prize and sometimes even a plaque.

Fabionar travels all over for competitions, while Rodger prefers to play closer to home. Fabionar says, “I’ve been to lots of cool places, but South Carolina is my favorite.” Both students aspire to become professional cornhole players in the future. Fabionar even says that he might go to the professional level as soon as next year.

Liberty’s Varsity basketball team wins Stonebarger Tournament

Last month, Head Coach Jon Heinz led the boy’s varsity basketball team to a tournament victory, beating out eight varsity teams from all over Northern California, as well as Nevada. Liberty has hosted the Stonebarger Tournament for the past 16 years.



Photo courtesy of Brentwood Press

DID YOU KNOW?

According to cornhole-worldwide.com, legend has it that a fourteenth-century cabinet maker by the name of Mr. Matthias Kuepermann created the game after watching children toss rocks into a nearby groundhog’s hole. Kuepermann was said to have been so concerned for the safety of the children that he utilized his carpentry skills and designed a safer game for them to play.

January 20, 2023

The sophomore experience in AP World History: Modern *A class that's really worth it*

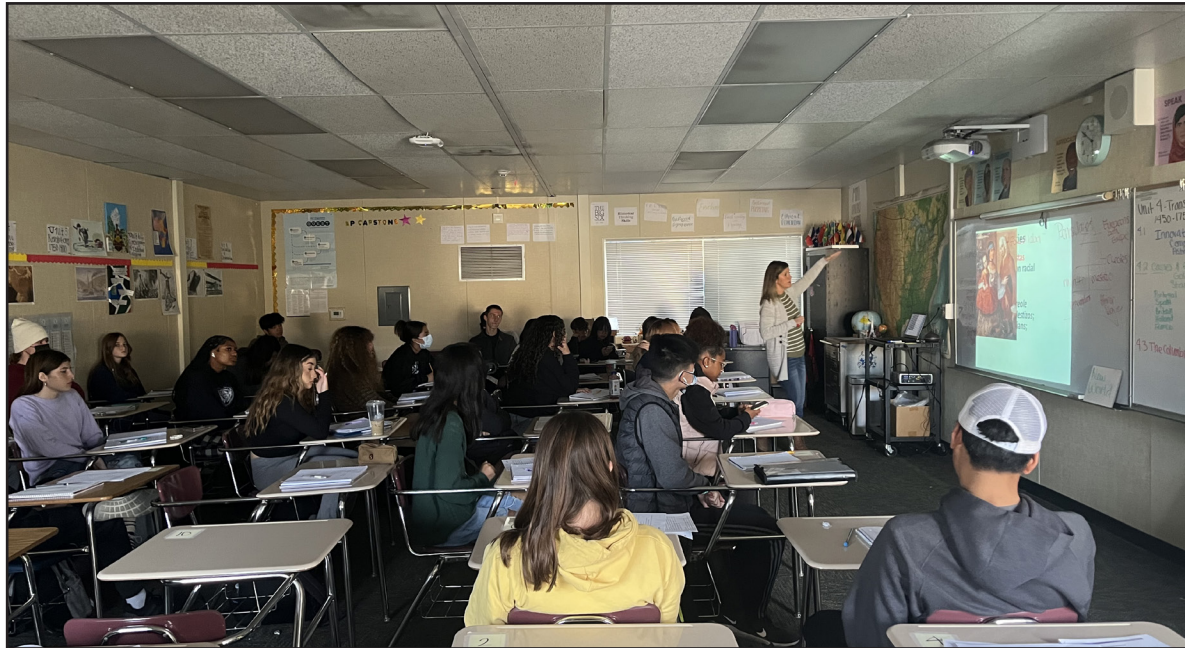
By David Armone
Staff Writer

Signing up and taking an Advanced Placement class is a big first step for many high school students. One of the most common AP classes is AP World History: Modern. Most of the students who take this course are in the sophomore class, as it's the first AP class that appears on the course sign-up sheet. Sophomores take a big leap into an advanced history class after not having a history class the year before. Many of these students have contemplated whether or not they should take that leap.

For starters, some people may argue that sophomores aren't responsible or dedicated enough to have the option to take an AP class. Roliana Borlongan, a sophomore currently taking AP World History was asked, "Do you believe this class should be for 10th graders or do you believe it should be for another grade and why?"

Borlongan replied, "Yes, I do believe this class should be for 10th graders since it is a manageable level of difficulty and it gets them ready for harder classes in the future".

Taking challenging classes is crucial in building sophomore work tolerance for



38.9% of high schoolers take an AP class in their high school career.

Photo by David Armone

future advanced courses. Borlongan explains that AP World History does just this, by easing students into more challenging courses. When students successfully complete this class at the end of the year, they are ready for more rigorous classes in the upcoming school year.

Alyvia Aiello, another sophomore currently taking AP World was asked, "How has your experience in AP World inspired or discouraged you from taking AP classes in the future?" Responding, Aiello shared that as she takes AP World History, she feels encouraged to push herself further with

AP classes in the future. She states that she enjoys challenging herself in different ways, one of which being education. Aiello has taken one other AP class, AP Human Geography, which prepared her to excel in her current AP. However, students who have not taken previous accelerated classes fear

that the pressure will be too much to handle.

"I do feel pressure taking AP classes..." Borlongan explained, "... because of the expensive AP test at the end of the year."

Moreover, the AP test is a worrying factor that many students are afraid of taking. Aiello feels similarly, stating that she feels pressured due to her longing to pass the AP test for the college credit it provides. Although the AP test is optional, it can provide students with significant benefits in college including price reductions and less classes needed to take in college, if passed it with a score of 3/5 or higher. When hard work and diligence is maintained, many students usually achieve a 3 or higher on that exam.

Overall, AP World History: Modern is proven to be a very helpful and manageable course for sophomores to take if they want to begin their journey of harder classes while also earning college credit. One of the teachers of AP World, Mrs. Hatlen, is an amazing teacher and she strives to bring each of her students to success. Contemplating freshmen, wondering if they should take AP World should be encouraged in doing so, for students share positive experiences with the class.

The epidemic of school shootings in America

What can be done?

By Jasmine Harrison
Staff Writer

Imagine: it's a casual day at school and all of a sudden shots are being fired, and everything breaks into chaos. Everyone's running or trying to find a place to hide. Anxiety is rising and nothing feels safe anymore. This is the feeling of a school shooting, which has become much more common in America.

There have been 44 school shootings in the US in 2022 that have resulted in injuries or death. The shooting in Oakland being the closest one to Liberty occurred in 2018. There were twenty-four shootings that year.

As sandyhookpromise.org states, "An estimated 4.6 million American children live in a home where at least one gun is kept loaded and unlocked. These improperly stored weapons have con-

tributed to school shootings, suicides, and the deaths of family members, including infants and toddlers."

This means that nearly half of all parents with a weapon in the home wrongly believe their children don't know where a gun is stored. This also means that guns that were used in about 68% of gun related incidents at school were taken from the home, a friend, or a relative, and this is likely contributing to the rise in school shootings.

"We need meaningful actions to keep our schools and surrounding communities safe, actions that address what we know about gun violence in America's schools" (Everytownresearch.org)

As most of these acts of violence are perpetrated by mentally ill or troubled teens and adults, treating those around you with kindness could go a long way to prevent shootings. Active shooter drills can also prevent deaths at school



Every day, twelve children die from gun violence in America. The shooting in Uvalde, Texas is just one of the incidents of 2022.

Photo courtesy of the Uvalde Police Department

Rainy days: Should they be days off from school?



In California, it rains an average of thirty-four days a year.

Photo courtesy of Shutterstock

By Kaelyn Finnigan
Staff Writer

Imagine walking to school in the pouring rain. You forgot an umbrella, and your freshly straightened hair is now frizzy and wet. Your makeup's streaky, and your clothes are no longer freshly ironed.

Now you're in a terrible mood, cold, wet, and you need to stay in classrooms for the next eight hours.

Many students have been complaining about Liberty's outdoor campus, and that walking to each class in the rain is miserable. No-one wants to feel sticky, gross, and wet for 90 minutes while trying to get an education- teenagers would rather be in a nice, dry

classroom or better yet, at home in bed. Rainy days ruin a lot of students' moods and aren't very good for the staff, either. Having an outdoor school like our school is very inconvenient, even on a hot day. Sunny days can be tolerable, but most of the time rainy days aren't tolerable to anyone. Waiting for the bell to ring, walking to four classes, and being forced to eat lunch in the rain are just some of the annoyances students have to deal with.

Students' clothes, hair, shoes, and backpacks get soaked in the rain, and umbrellas aren't convenient to carry around. Sometimes, students don't realize it's going to rain until they're already on the way to school and aren't able to go back for an umbrella.

Although many students think that we should have a day off, other people may argue that we shouldn't. They claim that if we took off a full day of school every time it rained, we would have to stay in school an extra two weeks to make up the days. People also believe we should have school on a rainy day because we could simply make small

adjustments in our school day because of the rain. Some schools let their students out early, have shorter passing periods, and put tarps up around popular areas for students to eat lunch. School should really only be canceled if it's raining hard, for thunder and lightning storms, or if it's very windy while pouring rain. If none of these apply, school should still be continuing and students' education shouldn't be affected just because of a light drizzle. Although these people have valid opinions, school should be canceled on a rainy day because as teach-nology.com states, "Dismal weather makes you feel less motivated and focussed in general. When the weather system is prolonged the effect is more pronounced."

Many students get moody in the rain, which isn't a good mood to be in at school while trying to get an education. Furthermore, kids can get seriously sick from being in the rain for prolonged periods of time.

According to Shreya Thiagarajan in the article, *Catching a Cold From the Rain*, "A cold is caused by a virus,

which is not influenced by rain. However, certain cold viruses (e.g. Rhinovirus) spread more easily in the winter because they function better at low temperatures. Cold weather correlates with colds but rain cannot cause you to catch a cold."

Although sickness isn't caused by rain, it spreads more in the cold. If allowing students to go to school while it is cold and rainy may cause them to take days off because of sickness, this could be avoided by staying home when it is cold and raining outside.

Yes, teens still need their education, which is why letting them take a school day off to stay warm and healthy will keep the students motivated and in a good mood to learn. School wouldn't be canceled entirely for the day, students could make up assignments on Canvas, as they would with a substitute teacher. Students should get the day off on a rainy day because the cold, wet weather could ruin their clothes, bring down their mood, cause them to be less productive, and even cause them to get sick.

Let's clean up our act: Custodians deserve better

By Majid Chaudry
Staff Writer

At our school, we pride ourselves on respecting and treating others kindly, but our custodians do not get that kind of treatment. In my opinion, custodians at our school work their hardest to make sure the school looks spotless and immaculate, but students attending do not feel the need to keep it that way. To quote *TeenInk's* article, "The Daily Life of A Custodian," "School custodians, in modern times, do so much more than just clean and maintain. They work long hours setting up for various school events, whether they be concerts or lunchtime, the school's custodians put in their all."

Adding on to this point, our school must be cleaned every weekday because of how the students treat it. From bathrooms to cafeterias, it seems like

students don't know what a trashcan is sometimes. One may think it wouldn't matter because it's cleaned up anyways, but most forget that someone must clean said mess up. Cue custodians going through tooth and nail to make our school clean and presentable. Richard Dziuk from *The Southerner* states, "When they leave tables dirty in the lunchroom or when they throw food on the floor. They think that a human being doesn't clean up after them."

This further proves our mistreatment of said custodians. From what I've seen, comparing before and after lunch, the two gymnasiums become trash havens. Litter, spilt drinks, food waste, etc. fill the school up and who cleans it? Our hardworking custodians.

On the flip side citing the *NationalToday* holiday database, National Custodian Day falls on October 2nd, every



Would you want to use this bathroom? With toilet paper strewn on the floor and urine in the toilet, custodians are the people cleaning up this mess.

year.

In reality, how many students or staff celebrate National Custodian Day? After reading, some may have realized

that there is a National Custodian Day in the first place. In all honesty, even I didn't know it was a thing and that's an issue with how we treat custodians.

Even a holiday made for them is not celebrated or advertised as much as say National Teacher Appreciation Day. It's an issue in many aspects, from the school, news outlets, and even most peoples' view on custodians.

What us students can do is celebrate our custodians on National Custodian Day. A card or even a thank you could give some appreciation to our custodians. We also can try and lighten the load of work our custodians do. Cleaning up after yourselves, trying not to litter, keeping what's already clean, clean. Those are just some examples us students can do to show our appreciation for our custodians.

"Praise does not flow freely to those who deserve it," stated *TeenInk*.

Praise isn't given to those who need it, for all the hard work and effort they put in to keep our school nice, custodians need more appreciation.

Clearing the air

Students should use Liberty bathrooms for appropriate reasons

By Keisy Reyes
Staff Writer

The school bathrooms are not what most people would think of as a typical hangout spot, however, some LHS students have turned them into the smoking section of a restaurant.

The school bathrooms are being used for new reasons, with some students going to the bathrooms to smoke, vape, and hangout.

"It feels like every time I go to the bathroom, I have to wait, because people are using them just to hang out and do other stuff; there's always lines for them," LHS sophomore, Yahaira Moscoso stated.

Additionally, some students at Liberty use the bathrooms as their main smoking spot at school. Since they could get fined and be assigned a compulsory court appearance if they get caught smoking during school hours, they use going to the bathroom as a cover-up. Smokers getting caught has become more frequent, due to the diligence on the part of administration and campus monitors; however, this sometimes leads to the custodians temporarily locking up some of the bathrooms to clean or air them out. However, this affects other students as well, since the bathrooms are for everyone and not meant for this reason.



If students were using the bathroom for its intended purpose, there probably would not be this many people in a stall at one time.

10th grader Mia Castillo expressed, "It's annoying because they lock the bathrooms up and I have to walk across campus to use the bathrooms that

aren't. It takes a while to walk across school and sometimes my teachers get mad because I was out for too long, but that's because some of them were

locked."

On the contrary, other students and teachers may argue that it is better to use the bathrooms during lunch rather

than class because you have more time. But lunch is the time where people hang out in the bathroom the most. A few of the bathrooms around campus are filled with students during lunch time. Since the bathrooms are full, the people who need to use them must wait in line. There are occasions where lunch could end and they would still be waiting. This has caused people avoid using the bathrooms since there are many people in it all at once.

LHS student Ismeal Nuno says, "There's so many people in there and they look at me when I enter the bathroom which makes me feel uneasy".

In other words, the school bathrooms have a new function now. Students use the bathrooms to do things they aren't supposed to do at school. Though it may not seem like a problem to them, it's become one for teachers, custodians, and other students. A possible solution that is already in progress is how California has banned flavored vape products. This might lead to decreased purchasing of vapes, especially by teenagers. To control the situation at school, custodians supervise the bathrooms during lunch. Another possible solution that could be done is limiting how many people go into the bathroom at once. Overall, the school bathrooms should only be used for their original purpose, and students need to show respect for each other and the school.

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