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VERY FIRST OPEN HOUSE

STUDENT WALKOUT TO PROTEST IN FAVOR OF DEIA

PHONE-FREE SCHOOL ACT IMPLEMENTED ACROSS CAMPUSES

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TERMS OF PUBLICATION

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Students, faculty and community members with a strong opinion are encouraged to write a guest commentary or a letter to the editor which may be published. Letters must be signed; anonymity, if requested, will be granted if deemed necessary. We also reserve the right to edit for libelous content. Bring your letters to room S208, email it to: tiana.spain@student.rjuhsd.us or mail to: Letters to the Editor, 7801 Titan Drive, Antelope, CA, 95843.

The Opinions Section is designed to provide a responsible forum for the opinion of Titan Times the Magazine, its staff members and Antelope High School students. However, editorials by individuals represent the opinion of that person and not necessarily the viewpoints of Titan Times the Magazine, Antelope High School or the Roseville Joint Union High School District.

POLITICS



EVERYTHING FROM COVERING THE DEI STUDENT ORGANIZED WALKOUT AND BSU'S PRESIDENCY, TO EVALUATING TRUMP'S MOST RECENT EXECUTIVE ORDERS

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LEADING BY EXAMPLE



WORDS BY TIANA SPAIN ■ PHOTO BY DEVIN MOSS

Seniors Leuel Teferra and Hosanna Teketel collaborate not only as co-presidents but also as cousins to affectively lead Black Student Union in amplifying minority voices

Q: How do you two collaborate as co-presidents to lead the organization effectively?

LT: "We lean on each other. Whatever one person doesn't excel in, the other usually does. So both of us got pros and cons I guess, or our flaws and the other one just fills in. Some days one of us can't be there for some of the events because we're both heavily involved, so the other one will step up and take leadership. We grew up together our whole lives, so it didn't feel that much different to do a co-presidency."

HT: "Instead of having a vice president where it would be like a hierarchical thing, us being able to be co-presidents allowed us to make it fully collaborative, and with him being someone that was previously involved in the basketball program and being able to have those connections from that, and me being more versed in graphic design we were able to use both of our skills to amplify the club and make it a lot better."

Q: How do you ensure every voice in BSU is heard and valued?

LT: "For me, it's really just getting to know people during meetings, like whenever they break off into small group talks I would try to go over to different tables, and I hear their different ideas, hear what they're thinking. Or whenever we put on different events I would always go up to people and ask, "What'd you think of this" and see what they think or listen to what they would have liked to be better. It's really just being open to constructive criticism."

HT: "In every single one of our meetings in BSU we emphasize the fact that even though it's Black Student Union obviously that's not a deciding factor on whether you can participate in the club or not. We have people of all races, ethnicities and backgrounds in the club, and that I think makes people feel very open and comfortable to share their ideas. And then on top of that with every meeting we've had while we were debriefing we would have an opportunity for them to say anything that they thought could be improved, any ideas they had that they think would better the club."

Q: What does the BSU mean to you personally?

LT: "It means a lot. My parents are both immigrants from Ethiopia and them coming up here for a better life just inspired me. I'm black, so being able to be comfortable in my melanin and creating a comfortable environment for everyone, it was really meaningful to me."

HT: "Me and Leuel come from the same culture so we have that in common but I think for me also it was the internal struggle of being an immigrant like a nationally African person that knows exactly what country she's from and her parents were from verses someone that would just identify as African American like generally, and not knowing which one to identify as. Me taking over something that's called Black Student Union and being able to unify all of those types of people, so people like me and people that aren't sure which country they came from, it doesn't matter because all of them can find a safe space at BSU"

Q: How do you balance celebration of culture with addressing difficult systemic issues?

LT: "I try not to let issues that are currently happening affect celebrations too often, because there's always going to be different types of problems in the world. But that should never stop you from the different successes that we've had in the past decade, centuries that our descendants have paved the way for us"

HT: "Instead of looking at it as balancing celebrations and issues, I think it should be looked at as more of celebrating culture in spite of the issues, because there is always going to be a certain issue or something that is upsetting or disadvantageous to a certain group of people in society. So I think it's the fact that we find a time to celebrate in spite of everything that is currently going on or might be going on."



Q: What goals do you have for BSU beyond this year?

LT: "I hope they continue to bring their creative ideas. I hope it doesn't stop with us, and that next year the Ruby Bridges Walk gets put on again but bigger and better. I hope that the president is as passionate about it as we were. To always strive to do better and to put on bigger and better and more collaborative events, because the goal should always be to reach a broader group of people, and as long as we're always trying to think of different things and trying to innovate more that could be accomplished."

HT: "I love all the events and things we did this year, but I would never limit whoever is president or in office next year to just those events. I really want to see them branch out, and even though me and Leuel maybe open the doors for some of the events, we threw to be a little bit easier to plan for next year, I want them to be comfortable enough, even if it's just a slight possibility that something could happen, it would still be able to benefit not only the black population but just the students of color and any other minority based students at the school that they would be able to find a safe space and just be able to express themselves however they wanted to."

Q: What legacy do you hope to leave behind after your term as president?

LT: "Just implanting that Wednesday after school mindset, that BSU is always going to be there, so I feel like that's a very good legacy to leave behind. And the events that we did. I wouldn't limit them to say they were big, but I'd say it was a pretty good start."

HT: "As i'm graduating this year I would just hope that people look back and just actually know the effect that having somewhere that you can just go to on Wednesdays after school. There's a lot of people that maybe are even coming into the school, newly like freshman, that don't really know what they can do to be more involved, and in BSU you can be involved and also find a space to meet people that maybe just come from the same background as you. I just hope that when people think of me and my association with BSU they think of somewhere that provided that space for them."

Q: What advice would you give to future BSU leaders?

LT: "One thing I'd say is to communicate. Communicate with your peers, communicate with your other officers, communicate with your teachers that are there to help you, whoever you can in every instance just try to communicate as best as possible the more you communicate the more you learn and the better you can help the club grow."

HT: "I would say don't be afraid to ask for help. I think for me if I'm afraid that somethings not going to get done or I'm scared to ask for help I'd rather just take it all on my own which is not very healthy, especially with the fact that whoever this president is probably going to be very busy as well with other stuff outside of BSU. So don't be afraid to ask for help. The club is there for a reason, the other officers are there for a reason and Mrs. Hubbard and Mr. Miller are there to help you and support you however you need so make sure to really use that resource."

TARGETING TRANSGENDER TRUTH

OP/ED

Transgender people are constantly being attacked for being themselves in a world where inclusitivity and unity is preached, and Trump's new executive order puts an even bigger target on their backs

WORDS BY TIANA SPAIN
IMAGES FROM GOOGLE CREATIVE COMMONS

On Jan. 20 President Trump signed several executive orders on his first day of office. One of these orders allows the government to discriminate against transgender people by stating that there are only two sexes, male and female. This executive order denies transgender people the freedom to be themselves and the right to do what they please with their own body in their own lives. The order is titled "defending women from gender ideology extremism and restoring biological truth to the federal government."

WHAT'S THE PURPOSE?

The purpose of this new order is to stop men from identifying as women, and vice versa, so that they cannot engage in activities associated with their assigned gender at birth. However, the guidelines of this order are specifically targeted towards people who were assigned the male gender at birth and are transitioning or have already transitioned to female.

According to thewhitehouse.gov, the order then states that "this is wrong" and "efforts to eradicate the biological reality of sex fundamentally attack women by depriving them of their dignity, safety, and well-being." Our president claims to be concerned about the well-being of women, but if he genuinely cared about women's "dignity, safety, and well-being" then why does he have multiple sexual misconduct allegations against him? He should be more focused on treating women correctly and changing his faults rather than blaming others and forcing them to change who they are.



POLICIES

Although policies aren't being changed immediately due to the fact that no one, including Trump, is above the constitution, which guarantees protections and rights; this order leaves transgender people afraid for what the future has in store for them. One thing that is expected to be seen is changes to identification on federal documents, such as passports, drivers licenses, social security cards and more. Forcing transgender people to have the gender they were assigned at birth on these documents publicly outs them and exposes them to harassment. This can lead to a decrease in one's mental health and significantly affect their happiness. Not only are these changes expected, but they are happening sooner rather than later. On May 6, the supreme court ruled in allowing the Trump administration to enforce the ban on transgender troops.



THERE'S MORE

There is another order that he has also signed which is specific towards transgender athletes. "Keeping Men Out of Women's Sports" is the order's title and just the title alone can have a significant impact on athletes, especially transgender teens in high school. Trump's new order not only claims that being transgender is wrong, but it bans transgender participation in women's sports. That means that if we were to have a transgender student that was hoping to participate in any of the sports here at Antelope, they wouldn't be allowed to participate. And if the school allowed them to, the government would cut our federal funding.

Whether someone is transgender or not, these orders and others that Trump has signed instills fear for what the near future may look like. Trump is creating policies for generations he is not a part of, for a future he won't be around for. The focus continues to be on gay marriage, abortion, or transgender rights, but never on the bigger things in our society that actually leave a negative impact and need to be changed. Many teens today have strong beliefs and opinions, but when it comes to things like this, teens often simply don't care. And it's not that they don't care about the impact of these situations, but it's that a good amount of teens aren't bothered by what others choose to do with their body, identity, gender, etc, because it is not their body or their life to make decisions about.

THE PROBLEM

Trump is continuously going after marginalized groups. Whether it's race, gender, or gender identity, he is often targeting these groups in hopes of diminishing their character. These actions have a significant impact on people, and it is especially present in young adults and teens. According to USA Today, "State laws targeting transgender people made trans and nonbinary people aged 13 to 24 more likely to attempt suicide in the past year." People are hurting from the laws our president is making, because it is an attack on who they are as a person and to their overall character. There are laws that literally prohibit them from being their true selves, and some might not see a point in anything if they can't even live their life as who they genuinely are.

A GREATER DIVIDE

As a society, we need to stop shaming people and making them feel bad just because they are unique. No one should be making decisions about what to do with other people's bodies or identity. If you couldn't be the person you aspire to be, the person you were meant to be in this life all because of one man who claims that what you are is wrong, how would you feel? This is more than just another law people have to follow; these are people's lives. Our country is already divided enough as it is, and these kinds of policies and laws only make it worse. It is critical that we see one another as human beings, and not as monsters just because we are not the same.

1. DEIA /// **SENIORS ISABELLA TAYLOR AND MEREDITH GORE, FRESHMAN ARINA BUGERA, AND BOYS BASKETBALL COACH LAMILLS GARRETT** /// Amphitheater /// April 23 /// Taylor (far left), Gore (left), Bugera (right), and Coach Garrett (far right) take a picture for DEIA /// "I was very glad that so many people cam" Bugera said "because it shows that our generation is not lost to technology and that we are still practive enough to send out to causes that we sincerly believe in the importance of." ///

WORDS BY EKATERINA GRYMAYLO ■ PHOTOS BY TIANA SPAIN



1.

WALKING FOR DEIA

Students Isabella Taylor, Arina Bugera, and Meredith Gore lead a walk out on Wednesday, April 23 in protest of DEIA restrictions

As many students continue to pile in, the crowd becomes much larger than what seniors Isabella Taylor, Meredith Gore, and freshman Arina Bugera thought. With the help from a couple of teachers and a guest speaker, Taylor, Gore, and Bugera were able to organize a student-led walkout that took place during second period titan time on April 23. While hundreds of students and even teachers show up, each student takes turns sharing their thoughts, and some information about DEIA. DEIA stands for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Accessibility and they led this walkout to make sure their peers understand why it's so important to know what's going on in the world today, because it doesn't only affect these three students, it affects nearly everyone.

Q: WHAT MADE YOU PROTEST ABOUT DEIA?

SENIOR ISABELLA TAYLOR: "I am a duly employed student, I work two jobs but that's why it's so important to me and I am a woman of color and I know a lot of students employed here as well. So I want them to know what's going on because it's really impactful especially when it comes to jobs because the actions that can be taken are so drastic"

Q: HOW DO YOU THINK IT'LL IMPACT OUR EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM?

FRESHMAN ARINA BUGERA: "A school is all about making the students feel valued so they can start learning and if the equality is taken away at places then motivation is also taken and then I think that this walk out was very beneficial to everybody who participated because it gave them the sense of importance and charge them with new energy to not only finish your day but look into the future on where they will be judged on their skills and not their appearance and beliefs."

Q: PERSONALLY, HOW DOES DEIA APPLY TO YOU?

SENIOR MEREDITH GORE: "I am black and bisexual and an atheist so there are lots of places for me to be discriminated against in the workplace. For me personally that's one thing. Another part is my mom is an EO officer, an equal opportunity employment officer so she's just stepping in to make sure there's no discrimination in her own workplace and she works to keep the workplace healthy, make sure that all criticism is instructed and serves a purpose. There was an incident with that, there's an incident with someone who's hard of hearing, people who can't see very well and making sure everything in the workplace is accessible to all members equality and equity."

TRUMP'S ATTEMPT TO REMOVE DEI PROGRAMS

Trump signs Executive Order 14151 which focuses on removing diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) programs throughout corporations and education

Words By **Isabella Leal-Sierra**

Images From **Google Creative Commons**

The first 100 days of a president's term are seen as the most crucial period, as they show how the president plans to execute the next four years in office. During this time, the president has the power to issue executive orders that significantly change the lives of each and every individual. President Trump wasted no time in using this authority, signing over 40 executive orders within the first two weeks of his presidency, with even more expected to follow. With Trump already having signed more than any other president in the past 80 years, he is likely to sign more than his first term back in 2017.



EXECUTIVE ORDER 14151

Among these orders is Executive Order 14151, signed on Jan. 20, which targets what the president refers to as "radical indoctrination " in K-12 schools. The order claims that schools have become environments where ideologies are forced onto students, and it aims to put an end to programs focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). According to the official White House website, Trump argues that these DEI programs "promote divisive political agendas and undermine educational fairness".

DEI PROGRAMS

However, DEI programs are designed to ensure that every student, regardless of their background, has access to equal opportunities and a learning environment that respects and embraces diversity. These initiatives help to foster a welcoming environment and provide students with what they need to thrive in an increasingly diverse world. By signing Executive Order 14151, President Trump dismantles these efforts, removing vital resources that support a more inclusive and supportive educational system.

NOTHING NEW

Diversity, equity, and inclusion is nothing new; it has been around since Lyndon B. Johnson's presidency in 1965. After President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act in 1964, employees started filing discrimination lawsuits, which eventually led to companies creating strategies to include diversity, such as diversity training. Although many companies eventually followed, it was George Floyd's death in May of 2020 that truly sparked the nation to publicly build in more DEI programs in education and corporations. The way they have been embedded in our lives has changed the workplace, classrooms, and society.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Firstly, finding success in the journey to a higher education is extremely important. It can often make the difference in whether a student is able to thrive in an environment where they feel accepted. For example, if campuses choose to take into account DEI when hiring faculty members they are contributing to the effort in creating a diverse administration that helps students. The American Psychological Association, an educational environment promoting DEI, "has shown that students gain increased critical thinking opportunities, higher overall achievement levels, and an increased interest in improving people's lives." Overall, by continuing to use DEI in higher education, institutions are taking a step forward to a progressive environment for all students alike.



CONSEQUENCES

As of now, the U.S. Department of Education has told schools to impose restrictions or cut DEI programs entirely or they will be losing funding. In an article emphasizing the sense of urgency that schools and colleges were given regarding DEI, the National Public Radio Organization states, "the funding at risk includes Title IV, student loans, state funding for curriculum development, free or reduced lunch programs, and support for students with special needs, among others." Every one of these initiatives play a vital role in the well-being and success of students. By threatening to remove funding if DEI programs are not removed, President Trump is threatening the well-being and success of students as well.

MOST RECENTLY

As of most recently, the removal of DEI programs have reshaped major companies, schools, and much needed financial aid. On Feb. 19, the U.S. Department of Education "has cancelled 18 grants totaling $226 million that were awarded under the Comprehensive Centers Program." To all its intent, the executive order has caused hundreds of millions of dollars to be taken away from colleges and universities.

Additionally, Trump is threatening in the form of grants and scholarships to insure schools comply. One notorious school, Harvard University faced $2.2 billion cuts in government funding for refusing to remove DEI programs.

Most importantly, on April 24, three U.S. judges from the Supreme Court (two of which were appointed by Trump), ruled a temporary block on Trump's DEI ban. Even the judges appointed by Trump himself believed that the Executive Order was limiting the U.S. Department of Education and posed a risk of being unconstitutional.

SO?

Essentially, by signing Executive Order 14151, Trump risks undoing decades of progress toward a more diverse society, particularly in education. The decision to limit DEI programs threatens to prevent the success of students from diverse backgrounds in schools, which threatens their ability to thrive in this modern world.

STUDENT SUPPORT

Students share why they feel supported by teachers, whether it be academically or personally

SENIOR
FRANCHESCA MOFAZELI



"I feel like a lot of the teachers that I have had are really supportive. They are willing to go out of their way to make sure that students get all the resources they need."

SENIOR
MARICELA RIVERA



"I do feel supported by my teachers because they always have slides where you could go back to refer to or they go up to you and ask about missing assignments or if I had trouble with it."

SENIOR
DANIEL MARTELL



"I feel supported both academically and in my personal life. They always give me direct and helpful questions, especially Ms. Duncan and Ms. Hubbard."



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ON CAMPUS

FROM BOYS VOLLEYBALL TO HONORING OUR VALEDICTORIAN, TO OUR VERY FIRST EVER OPEN HOUSE WE SHOW YOU WHAT ITS LIKE TO BE A TRUE TITAN, ON CAMPUS





A FLAWLESS VICTORY

Words and Photo by Ndubunma Eke

After a 4-year long journey senior Lilian Tran climbs to the summit of Valedictorian, fulfilling her heart's desire despite the stereotypical ideologies of being Asian American

Senior Lilian Tran sits waiting along her peers during the Academic Merit Awards on April 7, as Principal Lindsey Cutts calls up the two students both winning Salutatorian. Anticipation builds as the graduating class waits for their Valedictorian to be announced. A wave of accomplishment and recognition embraces Tran. With a bright warm smile, Tran makes her way onto the front of the stage. Wearing a simple blue dress she accepts the trophy of Valedictorian with a 4.5 grade point average. Standing next to the Salutatorians, Tran faces the crowd with surprise as everyone cheers for her and her new title.

"I remember feeling very bright, and it really hit me. Maybe I'm not as unknown and alone as I thought," Tran said. "Maybe there's something beyond my academics that makes me recognizable to all these people. It put things into perspective because I didn't know this many people supported me."

MOTIVATION AND ACADEMIC DRIVE

Aiming to become Valedictorian wasn't Tran's initial goal. She had perfected the ability to maintain perfect standing in every class despite its rigorous difficulty. But, for Tran, being Asian American enforces a stereotype that she's supposed to do good in school, and academically. Despite the cultural expectation of academic success as an Asian American, Tran transformed it as a driving force.

"For me I think I grew out of that, and I grew more into doing it for myself. And realizing that academics is something that I do strive in, so I'm gonna play it to my fullest," Tran said. "And I'm gonna do all I can to get all I can. For me it's the self fulfillment of getting good grades. It was something I could reach in, unlike sports or social aspects."

The moment Tran realized she had a shot of becoming Valedictorian was during UC applications. Aftering completing the personal questions of the application, Tran entered the academic section and realized she needed her transcript. This realization prompted a conversation solidifying the possibility of being number one.

"I emailed Mrs. Miller, and then she sent me my transcript, and then I saw that I was number one. I was like, 'Oh wait. That's kind of interesting,'" Tran said. "And then I went to go talk to my counselor, and that was the moment that I realized that I might've had a chance, because before that I was a little bit lower, so I didn't really think about it."

SUPPORT SYSTEM

Striving to receive the highest academic title isn't easy. Having a support system can perpetuate a balance between academics and self. However, Tran would say her biggest support system is herself. Tran became self-reliant due to her busy family and limited social interaction at school. Academics were seen as an internal challenge, with self-motivation as the primary support.

"The way my family works, we're kind of always busy, so we don't have as much time to catch up with each other. I don't really like to talk about academics at school because I'm already learning constantly. I don't want to talk to my friends about more school," Tran said. "I think academics for me is more of an internal thing. I'd say the biggest support I have is myself and just learning to push myself to that point."

BALANCING ACADEMICS AND EXTRACURRICULARS

Tran would say that one of her biggest challenges is balancing academics with other aspects of her life. As she finds faults in other aspects of her social life.

"While it is my strongest suit, I still have to learn to not neglect other parts of my life just because I'm not good at them socially or sports wise. I still have to persist in those categories to be well-rounded overall," she said.

Even so, to Tran, academics always come first; with volleyball being the first extracurricular balance. Over time Tran learned to balance other activities naturally without strict scheduling. The ability to enjoy leisure time without guilt was crucial for maintaining balance.

"One of my first academic extracurricular activities was volleyball. So I feel like that kind of introduced me to ways I could balance my life. A lot throughout junior and senior year, I learned to realize that academics isn't all that," Tran said. "I still need to balance my other things, so it kind of came more naturally. But it was just like, 'Oh, if I want to do this and go have fun, I'm not gonna stop myself, because it's part of the balance."

SETTING THE STAGE

WORDS BY TIANA SPAIN ■ PHOTO BY ISABELLA LEAL-SIERRA

Junior Alex Sweetman expresses his love for volleyball, and how he hopes to continue playing in his future as he has devoted a ton of his time improving his skill

The gym was deafening. It's the fifth set and tensions are high against Cordova High School. The constant rattle of people stomping on bleachers, both teams chants and cheers echoing off the walls. A huge feeling of uncertainty arises between the players and the crowd, not knowing who is going to come out on top, except for junior Alex Sweetman, who has full faith in his team to finish what they started. Sweetman drowns out the noise as he focuses on doing what he can to help his team win. As he lets the game come to him naturally, Sweetman helps lead his team to victory, beating Cordova 15-12 in the fifth set.

HOW IT ALL STARTED

Sweetman began to explore volleyball just a few years ago, as soccer was his main sport. Volleyball started off as something to do just for fun, but Sweetman soon realized that he began to enjoy it much more than any of the other sports he had played. And because of that, the competitiveness within the sport only added more fuel to his desire to play.

"I started playing volleyball in the eighth grade and up until the point I only played soccer," Sweetman said. "I was kind of bored of playing the same sport for years and years, so I found a sport that seemed kind of fun, and I just fell in love with it and kept playing."

As this new sport suddenly grabbed Sweetman's attention, he slowly began to devote more and more of his time into volleyball. During his freshman year he made new friends, improved his work ethic and really began to practice. He developed a love for volleyball and since then he has never turned back.

"I really fell in love and wanted to pursue this sport my freshman year during playoffs," Sweetman said. "I had gotten pulled up to varsity and the environment and how everyone treated each other was so welcoming. Everyone was friends with each other and the chemistry was great. I just fell in love with the people."

MULTI-SPORT ATHLETE

Not only does he play volleyball, but Sweetman also plays football during the fall season. Now playing multiple sports isn't easy, but Sweetman makes it possible. Although his two sport schedule doesn't overlap, playing more than one sport isn't something that anyone can just do. It takes a lot of passion, commitment and keeping up with academics to stay on top of it all. Sweetman emphasizes how football actually helps him stay fit and conditioned for volleyball, so it's the perfect routine for him. Through it all he still finds time to balance homework and school, while giving his all to volleyball during the season.

"It all kind of fits in place because right after school I have about two hours to do whatever I need to do like hang out with my friends or do some homework," Sweetman said. "And then by the time practice ends I still have a couple hours left in the day to eat or go get dinner."

TEAM CULTURE

As a freshman entering high school and joining a team, you have no idea what to expect. These people can either be some of your best friends or the people you just have to learn to tolerate over the next few years. Sweetman was lucky enough to have built new friendships because of volleyball, which allowed him and his teammates to play more together and be cohesive as one when on the court. And now as a junior, Sweetman continues to build this welcoming environment for freshmen and others around volleyball.

"I'm really proud of the culture that we're able to create as a team and just how we are as a team. I'm really proud of what we're able to accomplish and how we've grown this season," Sweetman said. "No one person is gonna change an entire team. Everyone on the team put in an effort, so it wasn't just me that made the team better, it's everyone working hard at practice; it's all a team effort."

LEADERSHIP

Sweetman has become a captain of this team and has had to prove he's worthy of doing so. He wanted his teammates to know that he actually possesses the traits of being a true captain, and doesn't have the title for nothing. Sweetman displays his leadership through his actions, communication, and his ability to lift up his teammates in times of defeat. Through these qualities he shows that he can, will, and is a true captain of this team and will not let them down.

"Since I was a freshman I was kind of observing everybody trying to see how the captains treated the team, how they kind of controlled the team," Sweetman said. "Me being the position that I am and I also ironically have a very loud voice so people can hear me more. I show them through my actions that I'm not just a paper captain, that I can actually be a captain for this team."

THE BIGGEST OBSTACLE

Volleyball requires lots of skill, fast reflexes and being tall is a key advantage. And that is Sweetman's biggest challenge: his height. In volleyball, being tall and being able to jump high gives you a huge advantage in the game. Sweetman, standing at 5-foot-9, doesn't let this discourage him and how he plays. Sweetman continues to give his all in volleyball, and is always looking to improve in areas he isn't always the strongest in.



"Definitely being able to jump higher because as a volleyball player if you're not tall you always have to be consistently jumping higher and higher and if not you're always just gonna be outplayed by someone who's taller than you," Sweetman said. "So when I think of a challenge in volleyball I just think of me needing to jump higher to play just as good as someone who's taller than me."

THE FUTURE

Although Sweetman plays volleyball for fun, he would really like to play volleyball at the collegiate level. He knows the challenges and difficulty he has to face in order to get there, but he refuses to shy away from it. Aside from his height, he's hoping that all of his other assets, like consistency and skills, leads to him having volleyball in his future.

"I do play it for fun, but it would be really nice to be able to play volleyball in college at a D2, D3, or NAIA school. If you're not tall enough it's really hard to get into college playing volleyball," Sweetman said. "But when you start to go to D3 and NAIA you start to get to where it's more skill than height, where they just need consistency and at that point that's kind of where I come in."

ONE LAST TIME

Sweetman has one more high school season left before he finishes high school and decides if volleyball is truly in his future or not. No matter what happens, Sweetman can confidently say that he has had an unforgettable time playing volleyball, making new connections and improving his skills. As he prepares for his last year, he leaves some advice for anybody who wants to take a chance on volleyball.

"Get as many reps as you can because, yeah, jumping higher is something you can do in the gym, but getting better it's all just playing," Sweetman said. "Volleyball is a very fun sport, so if you just keep playing and playing you'll get better."



1. GALLERY /// **JUNIOR BRIZIA GONZALES DELGADO** /// Library /// April 10 /// Gonzales Delgado looks at art in the Open House art exhibition. /// "I was looking at the ceramic artwork," Gonzales Delgado said. "The floral one was really pretty, I was admiring it all." /// Photo by Isabella Leal-Sierra /// **2. BREAK A LEG** /// **JUNIOR JADA ROBINSON** /// Amphitheater /// April 10 /// Robinson performs a scene from the Musical Theater show Hadestown. /// "It was my first time performing Way Down Hadestown publicly," Robinson said. "It was really good and I really wanted people to see it." /// Photo by Isabella Leal-Sierra /// **3. STRIKE A POSE** /// **FRESHMAN LOUIS KEMP** /// Amphitheater /// April 10 /// Kemp, president of Comics and Animation Club, advertises his club during Open House. /// "We were trying to sell stickers to promote my club," Kemp said. "We are trying to sell our stickers to the community." /// Photo by Isabella Leal-Sierra /// **4. STARSTRUCK** /// **SOPHOMORE ANUSHKA SHARMA** /// Library /// April 10 /// Sharma views the different art on display at the art show. /// "I was thinking about all of the different types of art," Sharma said. "The art show was pretty nice!" /// Photo by Isabella Leal-Sierra







5. SPREAD THE WORD /// **SENIOR GABRIELA LUNA** /// Amphitheater /// April 10 /// Luna talks to another student about BSU. /// "We were just explaining what BSU is, and promoting our club," Luna said. "We were trying to invite people to join BSU and I was excited to have new members to talk about it with." /// Photo by Isabella Leal-Sierra /// **6. SHOW AND TELL** /// **SENIOR RYAN DAVIS**/// Amphitheater /// April 10 /// Davis performs a scene from the Musical Theater show, Hadestown. /// "I was performing Way Down from our show Hadestown," Davis said. "I was thinking to project really loud and get the audience." /// Photo by Isabella Leal-Sierra ///



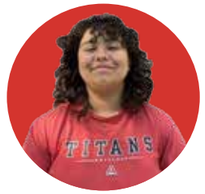
WELCOME HOME

The Antelope community enjoys Open House for the very first time with different performances, club displays, and an art show on April 10



MUFFIN MANIA

Students share how they feel about the muffins and how they'd feel if the school got rid of them



JUNIOR
SOPHIA AGUAYO

"I'd be so sad. I'm just glad I could get them easily from the vending machines, but we lowkey need more flavors."



SOPHOMORE
EDUARDO PACHECO

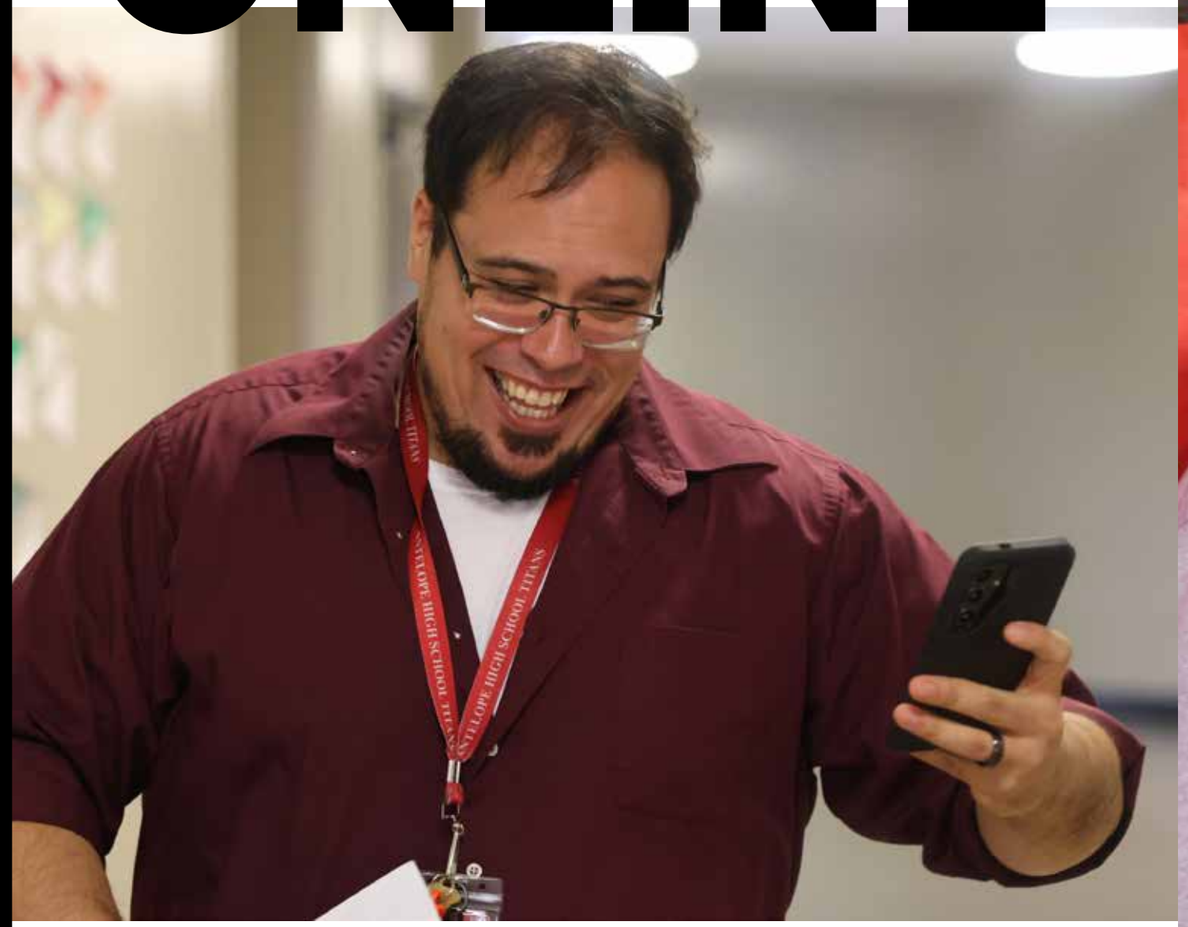
"I don't even know. That's like my only breakfast right there. I think the food we got right now is good."



SOPHOMORE
HALLELI RIVERA

"I would be fine with it. I like the chocolate muffin, not the chocolate chip, the chocolate with the chocolate chips."

ONLINE





WE COMPARE THE SOCIAL MEDIA USE BETWEEN TEACHERS AND STUDENTS, WHILE ALSO BREAKING DOWN TIK-TOK'S BAN AND OUR NEW PHONE FREE SCHOOL ACT

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TEACHERS VS. STUDENTS

SOCIAL MEDIA USE

Students across campus share their opinions on the growing influence of social media use in classrooms on both students and teachers

WORDS BY **ISABELLA LEAL-SIERRA**
PHOTOS BY **SAUDE DUNKINSELL**



SOPHOMORE
KANANI WHITE

Q: How do you feel about social media usage for students?
A: “It’s really entertaining and I can catch myself on there for hours at a time, I think it’s really a new affective way to connect with other people our age and be able to see family far away.”
Q: How do you feel about social media usage for students?
A: “I don’t think anyone would react well at all we’ve become so addicted to it, it would feel like losing a part of ourselves if we for real lost social media.”



JUNIOR
ADRIAN MERCADO-RAMIREZ

Q: How do you feel about social media usage for students?
A: “It’s a good way for students to express themselves in ways they wouldn’t be able to.”
Q: How do you people would react if it was taken away?
A: “Us as humans would change our ways and learn new things because we’re such a smart species and learn how to adapt without having social media.”



SOPHOMORE
JOHNNY YOUNG

Q: How do you feel about social media usage for students?
A: “It affects us sometimes and their personality and their way of thinking, but I think also it’s advanced because you can use it for a lot of things.”
Q: How do you think everyone would react if it was taken away?
A: “Everyone would shut down due to how addicted they are, like when Tiktok shut down everyone was basically crying because of it being taken away.”

ENGLISH INSTRUCTOR
JOHN COMEAU

Q: How do you feel about social media usage for students?
A: “I think it’s a good way to connect with people but it’s a double edge sword you have the connection with people but now it’s turned into this thing where you can be manipulated through ads, etc.”
Q: How do you think people would react if it was taken away?
A:“I think if humans had social media taken away humans would go through this huge withdrawal due to how it’s so engraved into our culture but I’m sure we’ll find another way to bring it back or something similar.”





JUNIOR
SOPHIA JUAREZ

Q: How do you feel about social media usage for students?
A: “I think social media poses both pros and cons, it allows students to connect with each other but it also can be a toxic environment causing lot of toxicity and negativity.”
Q: How do you think people would react if it was taken away?
A: “I think a lot of people would be upset because they’re so attached to social media and I think they’d want it back right away just like when Tiktok was taken away.”

TIKTOK BAN

THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION SEEKS TO BAN TIKTOK, A WIDELY-USED SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM, BUT THE EFFORT IS DELAYED DUE TO DONALD TRUMP'S INTERVENTION

WORDS BY **PENNY GUTIERREZ**

IMAGE BY **GOOGLE CREATIVE COMMONS**

On April 24, 2024, a bill for TikTok to be banned was signed into law by the Biden administration. TikTok, owned by ByteDance, which is based in Beijing, created some concerns for former president Joe Biden and his office. At the time, Biden believed that it was possible Americans were being influenced by the content, and data from TikTok was being shared with their government, posing a national security threat. Therefore, if ByteDance failed to sell the app by then, the bill would go into effect on Jan.19. However, recently, the Biden administration has claimed they were going to leave it up to President Trump to decide the fate of TikTok.

TRUMP'S REACTION



President Trump has a different stance on the matter. Despite attempting to ban the app back [redacted] in 2020, he might actually have a soft spot, or maybe an [redacted] ulterior motive, for TikTok. While addressing the TikTok ban, [redacted] he [redacted] claims that he "won [redacted] young people up by 36%" [redacted] after using TikTok himself (Associated Press [redacted] 0:37). Due to his appeal to the app, Trump has decided to put a halt on the ban for 75 days with one of his first executive orders during his inauguration on Jan. 20. Although this allowed users with the app installed to continue using it as normal, it vanished from the App Store for Apple users and the Google Play Store for Android users.

WHY SHOULD TIKTOK STAY?

Nevertheless, the ban on TikTok in the U.S. that was supposed to go into effect pointless and would negatively impact many people. There is little reason for it; it is based mainly on speculation. Also many people rely on TikTok for their career.

BASED ON SPECULATION

Firstly, the decision to ban the widely used social media app does not have sufficient reasoning to support it. The only reason any concerns were raised about TikTok is because it is Chinese-owned, rather than U.S. owned, such as other popular social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Snapchat. The Biden administration and Trump administration from his first term thought that this posed a national security threat, simply because the owners of TikTok could potentially take sensitive data and essentially share it with the government of China. They would also be able to influence and manipulate Americans through the app. It is possible that these things may happen in the future, but there is no current evidence that shows ByteDance doing any of them. A search for 'Xinjiang' showed results of "Muslims in China's detention camps" along with "crackdowns on civilian protests against covid lockdowns in Xinjiang" (TikTok and US National Security). TikTok openly shows detention camps in China and "crackdowns" on protests in Xinjiang. This suggests that it does not censor content to conceal Chinese activities. Without clear evidence of manipulation by ByteDance, the issue seems to be motivated by assumptions rather than actual national security threats.

MORE THAN ENTERTAINMENT

Furthermore, TikTok has paved the way for career growth and opportunities and provides people with career advice. An article by Indrabati Lahiri, "CareerTok: Why are young people turning to TikTok for career tips?", discusses a recent study done by EduBirdie in 2023 about how young people are increasingly turning to TikTok for professional advice. In fact, the study showed that "70% of GenZers surveyed turned to TikTok for career advice, with 19% revealing that it was their primary source of career advice" (Lahiri). This shows the crucial role that TikTok plays in guiding youth in their occupations. TikTok's algorithm offers a personalized experience, exposing its users to content that aligns with their interests, allowing users to find career tips and even job openings. Due to its engaging content and strong sense of community, it appeals to the younger generation. In addition, for many people, TikTok is their entire career. Several users sell their products, promote their business, earn money off the people who watch their content, etc. on the app. Therefore, banning TikTok would limit access to a resource that millions rely on for career growth.



OTHERS SAY

Some people may say that the Chinese are stealing data from the US because TikTok collects excessive amounts of data. While TikTok does collect lots of data, the kinds and amounts of data are not much different than those of other social media platforms. Baptiste Robert, a researcher in France, studied TikTok and deduced that its data collection "about the user device is quite common in the mobile world and we would obtain similar results with Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram and others" (Robert). If the data that TikTok collects is similar to most other platforms, why should TikTok alone be banished? Nothing about the app's collection of data should be seen as a threat, unless that of other social media apps are too. Data collection is simply a vital component to the algorithms of all the different platforms. The owners of other popular social media apps can accomplish the same things with the data and content as ByteDance can, including the sharing of data with the government. However, it has already been concluded that Tiktok isn't suspicious in their data collection.

FINAL THOUGHTS

Overall, there is no evidence to support claims that TikTok's owners share data with the government or influence Americans through content. It remains that the national security risk posed by TikTok is purely hypothetical. The ban of TikTok will also result in many youth losing a valuable source for career advice.

Phone-Free School Act

Governor Newsom signs AB 3216 requiring schools to implement regulations to limit phone use across campuses by July 1, 2026

Words By **Isabella Leal-Sierra**
Image From **Google Creative Commons**

On September 23, 2024, Governor Gavin Newsom signed Assembly Bill 3216, also known as the Phone-Free Schools Act. This new law mandates that, by July 1, 2026, all school districts, county offices of education and charter schools must create and regularly update policies that limit or prohibit the use of smartphones on school campuses. The law aims to put an end to the growing reliance on phones during school hours.



THE IMPACT

Ultimately, the Phone-Free Schools Act aims to create an environment where students can reconnect with their education, free from the distractions of cell phones. The impact of cell phones on teenagers has become undeniable, especially in terms of the growing addiction to smartphones and the apps they hold. Social media, in particular, has contributed to a dramatic shift in teens' mental health, with mounting evidence showing that smartphones negatively affect their academic performance and focus. Scientific American, found that "banning mobile phones in schools increases student performance, especially for low-achieving students."

This policy shift will have a significant impact on students, especially considering the severe attachment many teens have to their phones. The growing dependence on smartphones and their apps has raised concerns about their effect on mental health and academic focus.

ADDICTION

Some argue that banning phones entirely doesn't give students the opportunity to develop self-discipline. However, if previous efforts to regulate phone use in schools have failed, why would students be able to self-manage their phone use without stronger intervention? Generation Z, or iGen, has become known for the constant cycle of scrolling, liking, and commenting on social media, at all hours of the day. The behavior has been linked to a decline in academic focus and deteriorating mental health. Studies show that when phone use is restricted, students not only report better focus but also perform better academically, with test scores improving in the absence of distractions.

In 2018, Pew Research Center published an article titled "A Majority of Teens Have Experienced Some Form of Cyberbullying" stating that "59% of U.S. teens have been bullied or harassed online, and a similar share says it's a major problem for people their age. At the same time, teens mostly think teachers, social media companies and politicians are failing at addressing this issue." After much delay, politicians have addressed this issue by tackling the root of the problem.

ROSEVILLE DISTRICT

Roseville City School Districts, which includes 21 different elementary and middle schools, has already implemented a new phone policy across its campuses. It outlines "students are not allowed to use their personal mobile devices (including phones, personal tablets, bluetooth headphones (such as AirPods), and smartwatches) once they have entered campus for the instructional day and cannot resume their use until after the last period of the day. Devices must be turned off and stored away for the duration of the school day." So, unlike the schools in RCSD, Roseville Joint Union High School District has a much more flexible phone policy for their students.

In an interview with ABC10, the spokesperson for RJUHSD, Rob Hasty, says that the phone policy is very flexible. Depending on the teacher and the lesson they have planned, phone use may be used for instruction. So, the procedure that students must follow would vary from teacher to teacher.

OUR POLICIES

For the most part, classrooms on campus have stayed true to this. Restrictions on cell phone use is changed to accommodate a students' needs. Depending on whether a student must access their cell phone to use for classwork, contact someone at home, or for another reason, teachers don't force students to place their phones in designated spaces such as phone caddies. Some teachers have not implemented any new phone policies inside their classrooms at all.

By removing the temptation of constant digital interruptions, the Phone-Free School Act seeks to foster a more focused and productive learning atmosphere. Students will have the opportunity to engage more deeply with their lessons, and develop better time-management skills which are vital for students' personal growth and academic success.

Digital Detox

Does being on social media take away from real connections?



Senior
Faith Reed

01

"Yeah, I feel like it does, especially as everybody just becomes more online. I feel like it takes away from genuine relationships and people forget how to actually socialize with one another and they're like oh you gotta act like this, act like that, instead of being someone's genuine self."



Senior
Malia Calderon

02

"I think it can sometimes take away from real life connections because some people spend so much time on it that it takes away from the time that they spend talking to other people."



Senior
Dominick Gonzalez

03

"Yes, because I feel like online it only shows us what we want to see or it makes us think the real world is better. But when we disconnect, we realize it's not a good place because it distracts us. Because we're so distracted, it takes our time away from trying to make the world a better place. So it makes us really just see what we want to see, not what really is here to see."