the INDEPENDENT

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Current schedule intended as transition to eight-class rotation

Administration, union prepare to negotiate change

By Avery Shaw
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

With the current schedule underway, next year's schedule is in the process of being passed by the School Committee and the Manchester-Essex Teachers' Association before Oct. 31.

This year's schedule drops two blocks a day instead of one, removed the fixed third block, and implemented a daily U block, which functions as a mandatory break period for every student.

Senior Ainsley McLaughlin said the new schedule is less stressful because students have more down time.

"Even though we just have one less class a day than last year, it makes such a difference. Also, it is nice to be able to rely on a period every day to relax," she said.

Principal Patricia Puglisi said the current schedule is serving as a transition for next year. The administration will implement an eight-day rotating schedule. Each day will have four 75-minute blocks and U block.

According to math teacher David Alger, a member of the scheduling committee, class time has decreased from 150 to 131 hours this year, and after next year's schedule is implemented, it will decrease to 112 hours.

"I'm not afraid to lose class time. As the blocks get longer, it's more about quality time versus quantity of time. Some of the disciplines, like science, are clearly for the longer block because of labs, but I think all of the other disciplines can do a lot

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SPIRIT WEEK

COURTESY OF CAROLINE HUNT EPP

Each day of the week was given a theme such as superheroes and colors. After a tie between the junior and senior classes for winning Spirit Week, a tug-of-war game decided who would receive the trophy, resulting in a victory for the senior class. More Spirit Week photos can be found on page 4.

Principal establishes new goals, focuses on vulnerability, more innovation in classrooms

By Amber Paré
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Principal Patricia Puglisi established district, building, and personal goals for this year that focused on becoming more innovative by going deeper into content in order to benefit students.

While the district is focusing on offering more support systems for student social and emotional health, Puglisi said the larger theme for the high school is "vulnerability."

"It is in being not right that you learn and you grow. If we as the adults in the building model that for students, I think students will feel more comfortable taking academic risks in the classroom," she said.

A large part of this "vulnerability" comes with changes such as the implementation of U block and the new focus of going deeper into content with students.

AMBER PARE PHOTO

Principal Patricia Puglisi hopes to be successful with her goals by increasing her presence in classrooms on a weekly basis.

In an effort to become more innovative, Puglisi said the heads of each department worked with an organization called Teachers 21 over the summer and investigated how to go deeper into content.

According to history department chair Lauren DuBois, the program was especially beneficial because it helped teachers adapt to the new schedule by focusing on how students study content.

"We want to make

PUGLISI GOALS, page 3

New senior English electives aim to increase students' interest levels, prevent senior slide

By Fritz Spofford
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

By presenting the 12th-grade curriculum as a combination of electives, the English department seeks to maintain student engagement and spark interest in literature.

The idea came about as a method of keeping seniors engaged in their courses throughout the year, according to English department chair Debra Isensee.

"A big thing for seniors is senior slide, and we really wanted to find a way to keep seniors engaged in English classes by offering them choices in what they're actually studying," she said.

The idea came in the spring of 2015, after a professional development visit to Phillips Academy, who uses the same model for senior English, according to Isensee.

"We came back and talked about how excited we were about that and about what we could do to get seniors invested in their senior year of English," she said.

"Hopefully if we can give them five choices [per quarter], something in there would be more appealing than what they might be forced to read," Isensee said.

The ability for students to choose what they study is one of the major appeals of the curriculum, according to senior Zoe Brown, who is taking the American Western elective this quarter.

"It's more similar to a college class," Brown said. "The discussion is much better, and students are more interested."

The idea came about in 2015 after a visit to Phillips Academy, who uses the same model for senior English.

The specificity and variety of the courses, which include also plays into the appeal, Brown said. They include The American Western, This Is the Way the World Ends: Dystopian Literature, Satire: A Seriously Funny Art Form, The Art of Awareness: A Crash Course in Communication Skills for the "Real World," and Graphic Novels: Not Your Grandfather's Comic Books for quarter one.

"It's a more focused class that you take for a shorter amount of time, and it kind of introduces you to new stuff… I never thought I would have liked Western literature, but it's amazing," she said.

Increased interest in the classes has also decreased the stress of the courses, according to senior Liddy DeConto.

"I'm way more motivated to do my reading because the books are so interesting," DeConto said. "The homework is more appealing, which decreases my stress level."

Isensee took her American Western class to see the remake of the 1960 film "The Magnificent Seven," which itself is

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Featured artist: Annabelle Lord-Patey -page 12

Former California resident begins teaching French

By Sirine Benali
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Starting her first day two weeks into the school year, Meghan Barnes replaced Sibylle Pearson as the new French teacher.

Barnes said she graduated from San Francisco State with a bachelor's degree in French and received her master's degree in Linguistics from the University of Massachusetts in Boston. She also studied at Lycée St. Paul in Lille, France.

During her undergraduate studies, she discovered that she had a strong passion for learning and speaking French. "I lived with a host family when I was 17, and it kicked my desire to speak French and study it," Barnes said.

SIRINE BENALI PHOTO
Meghan Barnes, who replaced Sibylle Pearson as a part-time french teacher, started teaching two weeks into the school year.

Having taught a variety of students from adults to preschoolers, her 10-year experience will "bring many more resources and different ways to learn the language to share with us," said Michelle Magaña, foreign language department chair. Magaña also said Barnes has a positive energy a very good background in language, which will help keep students engaged..

Barnes said she hopes her students will support and communicate with each other so that conversations come more easily. Her goal is to have everybody enjoy speaking French and to improve their speaking skills by the end of the school year. She plans to achieve this through different class speaking activities and encouraging class participation.

Starting a week into the school year was "a little stressful the first couple of days but feels fine now after a month," Barnes said. However, she said she is a big supporter of high energy activities and quick transitions and enjoyed jumping into her classes right away.

Barnes' students have been very happy with her teaching so far.

"She is very nice and has a lot of energy. We usually do a lot of writing, but now we are doing a lot of speaking, which is very important to learning a new language," junior Ellie Taraska said.

California-raised, Barnes was born in New York but grew up on Huntington Beach, Calif.

She said she loved how pretty it was in her hometown with many cliffs and beaches.

She moved to Massachusetts with her high school band that she joined when she was 15 years old. She said she still enjoys playing the bass in the band and performing in Arlington.

FUN FACTS

- **Enjoys watching movies**
- **Favorite ice cream flavor is butter crunch**
- **Plays tennis with family and friends**
- **Loves Singing Beach**

Assistant football coach becomes new phys. ed. teacher

James Weed hopes to get students excited about sports and health

By Antonio Gillespie
INDEPENDENT STAFF

New high school health and physical education teacher James Weed is changing the structure of gym classes by incorporating formal lessons.

Weed comes with experience in the community from coaching the varsity baseball team for the past three seasons and starting as an assistant football coach this year.

Weed grew up in upstate New York and went to the Jacksonville University where he played baseball while also getting his Bachelor of Science in education and his master's degree in athletic administration.

After being a successful baseball player in college and playing into the minor leagues of the Los Angeles Angels organization, Weed decided to take the path in becoming a physical fitness teacher and coach.

"There is a relaxed feel to class, but he is also focused on the lesson"

-BEN LANTZ

According to Weed, teaching students how to be fit, to exercise properly, and to be nutritious are the three most important factors as to why he chose this career.

ANTONIO GILLESPIE PHOTO
James Weed wants gym classes to be fun but also structured.

His goal for is to "teach kids about the accountability of playing sports," he said.

FUN FACTS

- **Favorite food: Chicken Salad**
- **Favorite sports team: New York Yankees and New York Giants**
- **Fun place to visit: Quebec City**
- **Choose the Future or the Past: Past**
- **Spirit Animal: Lion or Tiger**

After spending seven years teaching at Danvers High School and another year at Ipswich Middle School, Weed appreciates the community feel that this school has to offer compared to larger schools.

"I can be on more of a name-basis with my students because there are less people to know," he said.

Sophomore Ben Lantz and senior Meehan Irose have both noted the improved structure to gym class. With lessons and workouts written on the whiteboard and handouts distributed to explain games, everybody is on the same page in gym class, according to Irose.

"There is a relaxed feel to class, but he is also focused on the lesson," Lantz said.

Lantz also said the incorporation of a lesson into each gym class is more helpful than just playing games.

Besides sports, which occupy much of his life, Weed enjoys relaxing with his wife and two kids.

Korean native joins student services department, teaches English

Relocated from Illinios, Michelle Chun helps non-native speakers adjust to language barrier

By Heather Holley
INDEPENDENT STAFF

A former ELL (English Language Learner) from South Korea, Michelle Chun, was recently hired to fill the ELL teaching position formerly held by Jennifer Fitzgerald.

Chun first came to America when she was 10 years old. She did not speak any English, including the A, B, C's, and it was very difficult for her to come to America in fifth grade, she said.

"My ELL teacher really helped me get through the hard times of my life… my experience really shaped who I am," Chun said.

"Michelle comes to us with a solid knowledge base, and she is so friendly and outgoing that students are drawn to her."

-PATRICIA PUGLISI

After attending the University of Illinois, earning an undergraduate degree in education, and taking a master's course on becoming an ELL teacher, Chun started her own program, called ESL (English as a Second Language), at a middle school in Champaign, Ill., for seven years.

Before coming to Massachusetts, Chun taught for a year in Barrington, Ill., as an ELL teacher. The following year, Chun and her husband moved to Mass.

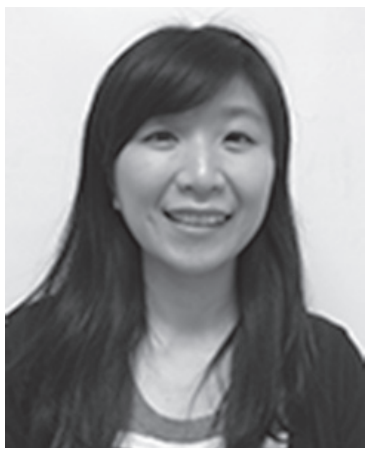
Chun had never been to New England, but after coming to the high school, she said she was impressed by how beautiful the town and school were.

"It was a much different feeling from the Boston schools because of how city-like Boston was in comparison to the natural setting of Manchester," Chun said.

Chun is currently teaching students from Brazil, Albania, Greece, and Russia.

Chun has taught students who speak a variety of different languages. She said it is sometimes difficult to teach languages that she doesn't know very well.

Principal Patricia Puglisi explained how smooth the transition between ELL teachers was and how pleased she was with how outgoing, friendly, and knowledgeable Chun is. "Michelle comes to us with a solid knowledge base, and she is so friendly and outgoing that the students are drawn to her," Puglisi said.



HEATHER HOLLEY PHOTO
Michelle Chun has had experience teaching English as a second language to middle school students for seven years.

Chun is hoping that this year she will be an advocate for her students and to work as a bridge for the students so they can learn what it means to be an ELL student.

Each student in ELL is on a different level with learning the language, but it is important to try to understand and aid the students with what they need to work on at the moment, Chun said.

Chun said her plan for the future is to travel the world with her husband and become a teacher in different countries so she can better the lives of others.

FUN FACTS

- **NHS member in high school**
- **Dream trip: Greece**
- **Took four years of high school French class**
- **Has travelled to Mongolia four times**

Marine-educated substitute hired for Green Team

Mass Audubon educator hopes to introduce more structured curriculum

By Holly Fossa
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Hoping to improve and expand current Green Team projects, long-term substitute Dana Nuenighoff was hired to instruct during Eric Magers' absence.

Nuenighoff said she has prior experience as a marine educator in Florida, and she also worked as a long-term substitute for a biology teacher who was on maternity leave at Newburyport High School.

Nuenighoff attended the University of Rhode Island and graduated with a Bachelor of Science. "I worked for Mass Audubon as an educator as well as a researcher," she said.

When comparing this teaching opportunity to past ones, Nuenighoff said, "Everyone is always so open and welcoming."

Nuenighoff grew up in Harvard Mass., and she attended a small school. Her class consisted of only 100 students. "This is a little bit more

HOLY FOSSA PHOTO

University of Rhode Island graduate Dana Nuenighoff joins the Green Team staff as a long-term substitute for Green Team Advisor Eric Magers.

what I am used to," she said.

According to Nuenighoff she chose the Green Team because "[it] is so much different from anything any other school has to offer."

Because of her background in marine sciences, Nuenighoff's knowledge "is very applicable and is going to help 'up' the environmental literacy that we have in Green Team," said junior Belle Allmendinger, Green Team president.

'She has some good assets and good resources that she can contribute to the program,'

- SENIOR BECKA HILLE

Students in the class said Nuenighoff is helpful with their current work. "She has some good assets and good resources that she can contribute to the program," senior co-vice president and events coordinator Becka Hille said.

According to Nuenighoff, her plans are to continue to teach in the science field. "This is where my roots are," she said about the Green Team.

Nuenighoff said out of all the sciences she would like to continue teaching biology specifically.

Nuenighoff is working with the students to create a curriculum with more structure. Her plan for the Green Team this year has "each month based over a different sustainable topic," and she hopes to "improve the hydroponics," she said.

In addition to her work as a marine educator, Nuenighoff has her diving masters, and she ran her scuba team while she was in college.

She spends much of her time, scuba diving on Cape Ann, and has also "dove everywhere from the Great Barrier Reef to the Caribbean," she said

Some of her other hobbies include writing and reading. "I want to be a published author; I can do it and teach at the same time," she said.

FUN FACTS

- **Played rugby in college**
- **Lived in Australia in 2012**
- **Fantasy is her favorite literature genre**
- **Favorite authors are Sarah J. Maas and Susan Dennard**
- **Favorite ice cream flavor: coffee heath bar**

Former East Boston High substitute joins English department

By Austin Pare
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Ryan Clayton, a former substitute for East Boston High, was hired to be a long-term English substitute for Gloria Tanner until January.

After graduating from Gloucester High School in 2003, Clayton joined the U.S. Navy. The Navy paid for his education at Salem State University. He received a bachelor's degree in fine arts in 2014 from Salem State. In addition to his fine arts degree, Clayton is also certified to teach English.

Clayton's first experience with teaching was as a teaching assistant for a freshman English composition class at Salem State University as a teaching assistant. While working as a teaching assistant, he would lead class lectures and grade essays on a weekly basis.

Following his college graduation, Clayton was a substitute teacher at East Boston High school. According to Clayton, he had a difficult time getting students to complete their work until he gained additional teaching experience.

"I got really good at getting the kids to do their substitute work. East Boston is not the kind of place where a lot of kids are doing much of anything," he said.

FUN FACTS

- **Favorite Song: "I Want More" by Ska Urban Legends**
- **Favorite Ice Cream flavor: Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough**
- **Favorite Place Visited: Hawaii**
- **Favorite Movie: Between "The Goonies" and "Stand By Me"**
- **Favorite Book: "It" by Stephen King**

Clayton then received more long-term substitute positions at East Boston as the year went on, but after coming from an urban school, Clayton said his new position here is "paradise."

Clayton said he looks forward to getting his students to enjoy reading and wants them to like getting through the material.

"A school like this with resources and with students that actively want to learn… is almost [totally] different [from] East Boston High," Clayton said.

'He is working really hard to take over, especially in...elective classes'

-DEBRA ISENSEE

Debra Isensee, head of the English department, said, "He is very interested in student engagement. He is working really hard to take over, especially in the case of the electiveclasses."

Sophomore Meredith Wolf said, "He really tries to engage students in the classroom so we can get through the material."

Clayton said he plans on finding another teaching job in a school very similar to this one in the future.

Other than working as a teacher, Clayton is an artist, a cartoonist, a musician, and he loves to carve sculptures into fruit in his free time. Additionally, he enjoys spending time golfing and paddle boarding.

AUSTIN PARE PHOTO

Navy veteran Ryan Clayton is teaching as a long-term substitute for English teacher Gloria Tanner until January.

CONTINUATIONS

SCHEDULE

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with it too. They just haven't had a chance to look at it," Alger said.

However, science teacher Joshua Wladkowski said the time decrease will be an issue when teaching, even for the science department.

"I have to fit in 16 labs for my AP Chemistry class. Each lab requires a day devoted to it, and with the new schedule, the limited meetings of class means that labs are going to take up a significant amount of my time set aside for teaching. I am avoiding doing take-home or virtual labs as much as possible," he said.

Math teacher Rick Brown also is concerned about the decreased class time affecting AP classes.

"The problem with AP courses is that there is a set curriculum... The overall philosophy of the longer block is to teach fewer topics in greater detail. In a perfect world, I would love to do that, but with a nationally mandated curriculum, I don't have that option," he said.

The union, which consists of all the teachers in the district, must pass the new schedule.

He said teachers are going to be given opportunities to voice their opinions on the schedule change in META meetings.

"We have been doing them informally all year, but we are also going to have specific meetings for META. That way any members can go to meetings so we can hear their input on how the schedules should work," he said.

According to Lundergan, the administration and META has been working cooperatively in order to agree on the best schedule.

"There was a scheduling committee of teachers who, with Mrs. Puglisi, came up with a schedule together. Now we have to figure out what is the best way to implement that. It is very cooperative. It's not an antagonistic sort of conflict. It is trying to work together to make the best agreement that we can that benefits students and doesn't put any new burdens on staff," he said.

'Our objective... was to reduce students' stress... and to become more innovative'

-PATRICIA PUGLISI

Puglisi said the administration is trying to get the new schedule passed by Oct. 31.

"We need to know where we are going in terms of scheduling, planning, and courses that need to be in line; and we need to have the schedule passed before we begin addressing that," she said.

Vice President of META John Mullady said META has the ability to keep the current schedule for next year instead of the planned schedule.

"It's an option. It could be proposed by the union, and it would just have to be negotiated with the district. We haven't decided what we are going to do. We still need to talk to our members," he said.

In order to prepare for next year's schedule, the administration and staff is spending all of their professional development time on learning how to teach for a longer class period, according to Puglisi.

While the current schedule is well liked by the faculty and students, Puglisi said she thinks next year's schedule will be liked even more.

"Our objective when creating next year's schedule was to reduce student stress, to create new opportunities for more student-centered learning, and to become more innovative. I'd be concerned that we would be losing what our focus was if we didn't continue to move forward," she said.

PUGLISI GOALS

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sure what we are doing is meaningful by focusing on…. the depth rather than the breadth of the materials," she said.

For example, members of the history department have been changing their curriculums to thematic focuses rather than chronological focus; this will allow classes to have more opportunities to go deeper into content by looking into more recent history, according to DuBois.

In order to support these changes to curriculums,

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Health Matters

Studies prove caffeine does not affect hydration

By Holly Fossa
INDEPENDENT STAFF

COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA.ORG
While occasional coffee consumption may cause one to urinate more, those drinking coffee regularly become tolerant to the diuretic effect.

Coffee is stereotyped as a beverage that causes dehydration; however, most ideas relating to coffee's effect on hydration are myths.

Researchers conducted a study at the University of Birmingham that directly compared the hydrating effects of water to the hydrating effects of coffee.

In an interview with npr.org Douglass Casa of the University of Connecticut concluded that the experiment proved "caffeine really had no influence on hydration statues."

According to NPR.org, though coffee has no effect on dehydration, it is not a sufficient replacement for water.

According to Katie Goldbaum, Staff writer of Live Science, coffee has no scientifically proven harmful effects, but there are rumors "that it may stunt people's growth or cause cancer."

Caffeine is only harmful in excess. "In order to overdose, you'd have to drink more than 100 cups of coffee in a day," Goldbaum wrote.

Coffee can protect against liver cancer, lower blood pressure, and combat dementia and depression.

Contrary to many popular beliefs, coffee has numerous benefits to one's health.

According to Live Science, "Coffee can protect against liver cancer, prevent the development of type 2 diabetes, lower blood pressure, and combat dementia and depression."

Caffeine does have a small diuretic effect; however, the effects are not large enough to label caffeine as dehydrating. Hammond said, "Caffeine is a mild diuretic at most."

According to Hammond, when caffeine is consumed more often, the "very large doses of caffeine are known to increase the blood flow to the kidneys and to inhibit the absorption of sodium." According to Ruben J. Nazario, from livestrong.com, blood flow with low sodium exhibits symptoms of dehydration. Sodium levels explain why caffeine are confused a as a diuretic, said Hammond.

The effects of caffeine on hydration are measured through urine volume of subjects being tested. Drinking one cup produces an increased volume of 50 percent; however, "When [the subjects] drank coffee regularly again, they became inured to its diuretic effects," said Claudia Hammond, BBC writer.

Caffeine can act as a diuretic is because it is dealing with the unabsorbed sodium.

The common belief that dehydration is derived from caffeine consumption is, potentially, an observational mistake. Though people report using the restroom more often when drinking caffeine, it does not affect the body's tendency to urinate because a person builds a tolerance to caffeine's potential dehydrating effect after some time.

CONTINUATIONS

PUGLISI GOALS
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Puglisi said her most important personal goal was to visit classrooms on a daily basis.

Puglisi hopes to walk through each classroom at least once a week and conduct at least two unannounced observations of teachers per week.

"As a school leader, I need to be more connected to what's happening in the classroom to be able to support teachers in everything we're going to be doing and changing this year," she said.

DuBois said she has noticed Puglisi's increased presence in classrooms so far this year and views it as a positive change.

Some students believe Puglisi's goals will be beneficial to the school community both academically and socially.

"It's nice to know that teachers care about becoming more innovative and are thoughtful about the stuff they teach us. I think the idea of being vulnerable will set a nice example," junior Sydney Ring said.

Puglisi said going deeper in curriculum and being vulnerable connect to last year's theme of being a "community that cares," a theme she hopes to continue into this year.

ELECTIVES
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an American remake of the 1954 Japanese film "Seven Samurai," to compare the films and demonstrate the prominence of the Western in contemporary popular culture, she said.

Getting feedback is a high priority for teachers going forward, according to Isensee.

"I think one thing that's going to be very important during the first year is to get a lot of student feedback about what we could do to be more engaging," she said.

YEARBOOK STAFF
Seniors help decorate hallway.

YEARBOOK STAFF
Hannah Burnett and Bridget Twombly dressed for twin day.

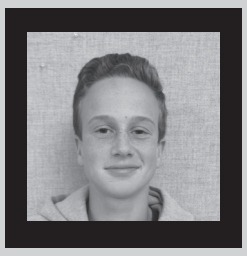
YEARBOOK STAFF
On superhero day, seniors pose together in their costumes at lunch on the outdoor seating to celebrate the start of Spirit Week.

YEARBOOK STAFF
History teacher John Mullady shaved his hair to show spirit.

Student Speak

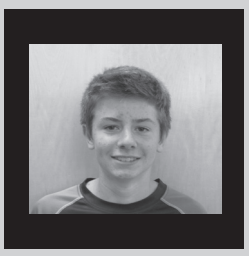
What is your favorite scary movie?

Freshman Rowan Schanley:
"Scream"



Freshman Alden Irose:
"Sinister"

Sophomore Annika Dahlen:
"Coraline"



Sophomore Zack McPherson:
"The Visit"

Junior Kristen Harding:
"Friday the 13th"

Junior Andrew Alibali:
"The Shining"

Senior Sasha Ball:
"The Others"

Senior James Reeve:
"Cabin in the Woods"

Sophomore history courses added to thematic curriculum

By Juliette Kelley
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Rather than using the chronological curriculum that has previously been taught in classes, sophomore history courses this year have been added to a thematic model of teaching.

According to Lauren DuBois, the head of the history department, the thematic curriculum started with the 11th-grade honors and college prep history courses last year. This year, the curriculum has been extended to sophomores.

"The sophomores are going to take four themes and trace them through all of U.S. History, [so] next year the AP class will do thematic as well," she said. According to history teacher Abigail Donnelly, the 10th-grade courses will be following the themes of American identity, economic and innovative expansion, politics and government, and cultural transition.

Donnelly said the goal of thematic curriculum is for students to understand effects of one event on another and on America today.

"You're looking to see how one event connects to another event through time," she said.

According to DuBois, the old 10th-grade history classes would examine major time periods of the United States and discuss events within that period. This year, the events that occur within in a time period will be connected to events in other eras using themes.

'You're looking to see how one event connects to another event through time.'

-ABIGAIL DONNELLY

"Now what we're trying to do is take a theme, something important in life today… and look back at events in U.S. history that led us to that point," she said.

Some students, such as sophomore Natalie Koopman, find the change to be both advantageous and disadvantageous.

"I think it would help me to have it in chronological order, [but] it's nice to have it where all that happened is a certain theme," she said.

This change has been challenging, according to DuBois. Because the textbook does not follow a thematic course, teachers must create all of their own resources and lesson plans, she said. According to Donnelly, it was also difficult to include everything in the junior classes last year.

"We walked away concerned that we could have included more rigor in our curriculum, so that's one of our big goals for this year," Donnelly said.

Sophomore Jia Mulvey also believes there may be drawbacks with the new thematic curriculum.

AUSTIN PARÉ PHOTO

Abigail Donnelly's 10th graders participate in a thematic-based curriculum to learn the relationships between events in history.

"The history department is doing a good job keeping everything at a steady pace, [but] chronological order makes our lives easier for memorizing," she said.

Although the switch to a thematic curriculum for sophomore history courses is uncharted territory for students and teachers, Donnelly said she is excited to improve on last year.

"[History] is not all about facts and figures," she said. "It's about understanding our past and the world in which we live."

Photography teacher flips classroom to differentiate learning

By Amber Paré
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

After taking a graduate course online that focused on "flipping art classrooms" over the summer, photography teacher Caroline Hunt Epp hopes to improve her classes by making them more student-centered.

Hunt Epp said she "flipped" her introductory-level photography classes by creating videos for students to watch about how to use Photoshop.

Screencastify, a Google Chrome app, allows Hunt Epp to record her computer screen and voice in a video that she can upload to her YouTube channel for students to watch.

According to Hunt Epp, having her own videos available for students helps students catch up when they are absent and allows students to learn information in a variety of ways.

"Having the videos makes class a lot more individualized for students. Kids who need to ask questions can have me explain things in person to them, and kids who need to go at a slower pace or relearn something can watch over the videos," she said.

AMBER PARÉ PHOTO

Photography videos made by Caroline Hunt Epp are now provided in her flipped class in order for the students to have a way to stay on track in the curriculum when they are absent.

Freshman Sarah Potter said that having a flipped photography classroom has helped her progress in the course so far.

"I found that my best learning happens when I can have Ms. Epp explain things quickly before I watch videos on my own…I like being able to take more notes on my own if I need to," she said.

The biggest impact the videos have made, according to Hunt Epp, is the fact that they allow absent students to not fall behind in class. Because the videos are all posted online, students can "easily familiarize themselves with whatever they missed or need help on."

Sophomore Judy Johnson said the videos provide a nice "change in pace" to classes, making photography more enjoyable for her.

"I like being able to work at my own speed. Ms. Epp's [lesson] is a one-time event, and I like being able to repeat things by watching the videos however many times I need," she said.

'Two art teachers have already contacted me asking if they could use my videos... I love that this is allowing me to meet other people in the art community.'

-CAROLINE HUNT EPP

Hunt Epp said the videos are beneficial because they allow her to go deeper into content with students in the extra class time they now have.

In addition to changing how photography is taught, Hunt Epp's use of the instructional videos has connected her to art teachers across the country.

"Two art teachers have already contacted me asking if they could use my videos…I love that this is allowing me to meet other people in the art community," she said.

In the future, Hunt Epp will create videos for her upper-level photo classes so she can teach multiple levels in one period.

Cafeteria hires new food distribution company to save district money

By Emily Clark
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

The school district hired Chartwells, a specialized food company, to help the budget and to add a management company to an area that needs one, according to director of finance and operations, Avi Urbas.

Urbas recognized the need for Chartwells. According to him, this necessity went past the financial deficit the school had been running these last few years, and he believed that there were too many complexities in running a food service without a specialized company for assistance.

"I think the transition has been going great so far. Bringing in new management is definitely not a two to three week process, but we are really looking to do this in the long term. It is a multi-year contract with the process of looking at every asset of the program and how we can improve it," he said.

Principal Patricia Puglisi agreed with Urbas in that the transition has been going very well with Chartwells.

'I think the transition has been going great so far. '

-AVI URBAS

"The transition so far has been going great. They are serving things like cookies and ice cream and are finding ways to bring back things that the kids really enjoy but also fit in the federal regulations for nutrition," she said.

Further, both cafeteria worker Elinore Repucci and Urbas see the company improving and helping the district much more in the future.

"The people have been much nicer to work for, and it has been a great transition. I also think that the food is going to get a lot better. For the first month the menu was created by the company, but I think now that they have our input, we can make better choices for the kids and serve more food for the same amount," Repucci said.

Urbas added that not only will the food get better after hearing the kids' input, but he and his coworkers are looking to now focus on the district as a whole.

"We have spent a lot of time in the middle and high school now, but we are looking to focus more on the elementary schools because it is a change across the district. We have very strong control over the quality of the company which is great as well," he said.

Freshman Grace Clark noticed this focus and commented on how over all the food tastes better so far, especially the deli meats.

Junior Lake Fleming and sophomore Harry Painter like the new snacks and main courses, like the pizza but saw a drop in the proportion size and choice of free water.

EMILY CLARK PHOTO

Junior Lake Fleming orders pizza from recently hired Chartwells food service.

According to Urbas, the program is very interested in hearing the students' opinions and what they think, so it can advance from here.

Why are there so many spiders in the school?

By Avery Shaw
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

If you have classes on the third floor, there is a chance you might have witnessed an eight-legged menace; there has been an influx of spider sightings, and it is causing anxiety and fear in the high school.

Normally, the season that spiders start to come indoors is in late October or early November. It is around the time that the temperature drops, so the spiders are looking for warm areas. However, this sudden surge of spiders is incredibly out of place in September.

It is around the time that the temperature drops, so the spiders are looking for warm areas. However, this sudden surge of spiders is incredibly out of place in September.

Senior Eden Stearns and senior Jazmine Appeltofft had encountered trauma with one spider.

"I was taking out my notebook and folder for my physics class when I saw a spider on the inside of my backpack. Of course I screamed, and then Jazmine screamed. Mrs. Nolan came over to help out. We ended up dumping everything out of my backpack and shaking it as hard as we could to finally get the spider out," Stearns said.

The infestation doesn't just inhabit classrooms. Senior Courtney Holley described her experience in the teacher workroom.

"Ms. Brown sent me to the teacher workroom to make her some copies. I was in the middle of making copies when I see a huge spider on the floor. I freaked out and ran away, but then it crawled under the copier. I was almost too scared that it would come out again to finish making the copies," she said.

Each story has one thing in common: they take place on the third floor. So where are the spiders coming from? And why are they only on the third floor?

Science teacher Keith Gray and nature-aficionado provided an answer. It is because of the plants.

According to Gray, the only logical cause for spiders to be in the building would be for them to have been brought in, and he suspects the plants that the Green Team brings in are the source. The Green Team did not wash off the plants before they were brought in, allowing the spiders living in the plants to be moved to a nice, warm home indoors. The third floor is the home for most of the potted plants, so it would make sense for most of the spider sightings to be there as well.

So the cause of the spiders has been determined, and to put your fears to rest, Mr. Gray said they won't be able to survive much longer. in the upcoming colder weather.

AVERY SHAW PHOTO

Spiders are multiplying in the school and have been a source of panic in the past few weeks.

GUESS WHO?

How long have you worked here?
13 years

What is your favorite coffee shop?
Atomic Café

How do you spend your time after school?
I run, and I watch TV.

What is your favorite Netflix show?
"Stranger Things"

What is your favorite breakfast place?
Bagel World

What is something that makes you smile?
"New Girl"

What is the most meaningful advice you have heard?
"Be grateful"

Who is your role model?
Tammy Taylor

What is your favorite genre of movie?
Comedy

Are you an introvert or an extrovert?
Mostly introverted but occasionally extroverted

What is something you think everyone needs to do at some point in their life?
Travel

What is the best dish you can cook?
Grilled cheese and tomato soup

What is one of you biggest pet peeves?
When Netflix asks me if I'm still watching

Viewing of presidential debate encourages students' political engagement

Students gather in history classroom to watch the first presidential debate on September 26

By Abigail Fitzgibbon
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

In an effort to better engage and inform students on politics, the history department hosted a viewing of the first presidential debate on Sept. 26.

According to the history teachers present, Jen Coleman, John Mullady, and Lauren Dubois, the debate viewing was a success due to the high student attendance and participation of 32 students.

"The students are the future voters of America so it's good to start the precedent now that this is something that's valued..."

-LAUREN DUBOIS

"The room was packed, so I was really excited about the student turnout," Coleman said.

Many of the students attended because they are taking AP U.S. Government, but the teachers were pleasantly surprised that other students from multiple grades came as well, Mullady said.

"I think it was great to see kids from different grades go and for us to have a shared, collective experience and become better informed," he said.

When student arrived, the teachers passed out bingo sheets about the debate. The students remained more engaged in the debates compared to last year because the bingo sheets helped keep them engaged, according to the teachers.

The bingo squares included terms like Trump tax returns, Vladimir Putin, and quotes like "Let me finish" or "rigged."

"The bingo really made it fun to watch. It also kept you engaged in the debate to understand what each candidate was talking about," senior Marco Kaper said.

This the second year the history department has hosted political debates. Last year they hosted viewings of some of the Democratic and Republican primary debates.

According to Coleman, watching the debate as a group at school encourages students' awareness of political issues because teachers are there to clarify any questions they may have.

MARY BUCKLEY-HARMON PHOTO

As students watched the first presidential debate between Hilary Clinton and Donald Trump, they played bingo based on terms often associated with the campaign to stay engaged and focused.

"The students the future voters of America so it's good to start the precedent now that this is something that's valued and this is something they should watch," she said.

Dubois pointed out that a few of the students who watched the debate will be voting in the presidential election this year, making it especially important to be aware of political issues.

"One of our biggest goals is to prepare our students to be citizens and to be knowledgeable citizens. A lot of the students who showed up were juniors and seniors who may be voting in this election…, and [getting] sense of what the important issues are… is really important to us and really important to [them] in the long run," Dubois said.

According to Coleman, the department plans on hosting two more debates: the vice presidential debate on Oct. 4 and the last presidential debate on Oct. 19.

Should quiet studying be mandatory in U Block?

Pro

Will Heslop

Implementing a U block offers students a unique opportunity to get a jump start on homework and studying, yet that opportunity can be easily squandered if students are not required to spend their time constructively.

In years past, the only real opportunity that students have had to get homework done during the day has been in the form of a study hall. With a few exceptions, these study halls eventually became nothing more than a social period that puts little emphasis on getting schoolwork done.

Doing away with conventional study halls and transitioning to a system of school-wide U blocks has the potential to reduce students' workloads considerably if utilized properly.

The current system of U block, however, fails to give all students an equal opportunity to be productive and cut down on their homework that night because teachers handle their power blocks differently. It is unfair that someone who actually wants to get work done can get stuck in a power block with kids who spend the whole time goofing off and creating an unproductive environment.

According to Principal Patricia Puglisi, the purpose of U block is to provide a way to reduce student stress. "As a faculty, we determined that kids should be able to have their phone out, have headphones in, or just be able to relax. It is the role of the teacher to strike a balance of appropriate conversation and study time." Puglisi said.

Giving students the freedom to do whatever they want in the name of "stress relief" prevents those who want to be productive from doing work. If given the choice, students will choose not to work and will make unnecessary noise that distracts others.

Even something like watching videos or listening to music, which does not interrupt others, is an unproductive use of time and should not be allowed.

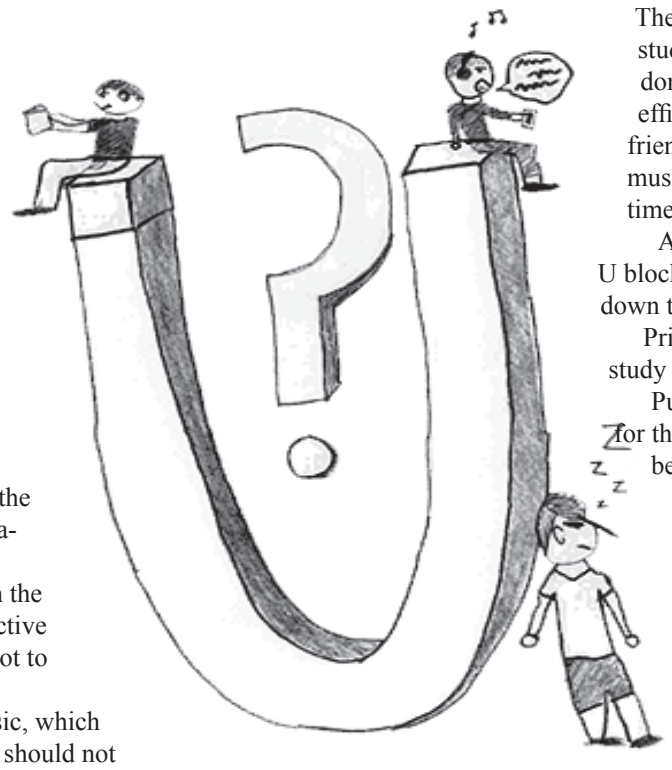
Unfortunately, not all teachers are able to strike the same balance between appropriate collaboration and excessive noise. In certain U blocks, for example, it can be louder than the cafeteria and nearly impossible to be productive.

This is not to say that nobody should be allowed to talk at all during U block. The establishment of the new collaboration room gives students the ability to talk with other students about school assignments in a constructive way, rather than in a way that detracts from the others' work.

Effective use of the U block can allow students to get almost an hour of work done before the school day is done. For students with busy schedules, this can mean the difference of going to bed at 11 p.m. and midnight.

In a school where students complain daily about the amount of homework they are given, it would be beneficial for everyone to get to bed almost an hour earlier through effective use of the U block.

Students should be using their time wisely and getting a head start on work they have.



WILLIAM HESLOP AND ANTONIO GILLESPIE ILLUSTRATION

Con

Antonio Gillespie

For the first few weeks of school, a centerpiece of school conversation has been U block. The everyday period was pushed to the top of the agenda by the faculty to help balance students' lives.

In order for students to get the most out of the period, with respect to the total balance of a student's life, students should be able to do whatever they feel is the best use of their time.

The hour-long block should be treated similarly to how study hall is treated, where it is advisable that work is done, but it is not enforced because there can be other efficient uses of time. Making plans for the weekend with friends, meditating in a quiet room, decompressing with music, and so much to help students can be done during this time that does not have to do with school.

As a time to decompress in the middle of a stressful day, U block can be the perfect ailment to a student looking for down time.

Principal Patricia Puglisi said, "The goal of the schedule study was to look at how we could reduce stress."

Puglisi said that the school faculty as a whole is looking for the best ways to manage the block by finding a balance between a chill down time to be with friends and to socialize while also getting work done.

This balance is something that will naturally occur since a portion of the students will want to take a break from school while others will have to do work or will want to get ahead on work, so enforcement of work is not needed.

The balance could be achieved through a mix of collaboration rooms for students to work together, study rooms for students to work in silence, and social rooms for students to talk.

In this way, U block is a perfect way to help students to transition into college life and being able to manage a balance between social life and school work.

It is better for students to learn to manage their entire life early in high school rather than have a harsh reality check in college.

When discussing the research that went into developing U block, Puglisi said that North Reading High School has a power block that has progressed over 10 years into this perfect balance, and she envisions a similar path for U block. Evolving from a quiet pure-study class, the North Reading period has become a complex system involving all types of work rooms.

As the class develops and grows in different directions, such as the new collaborative work space, it is important to not place restrictions on the developing period.

Puglisi's emphasis on the development of U block is to allow it to transform into a period for students to work on a variety of classes and activities.

School should consider reforming system of allotting parking spaces

System should be based on distance traveled each day, not seniority in school

By Abigail Fitzgibbon
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

Though getting to school on time can be a challenge for any student, it is particularly harder for students who live far away.

School administrators should consider making the use of parking spaces fairer based on how close students live.

Currently, seniors are offered parking spaces in early August and must bring their license, registration, and $75 to the school within five days. After this period, the juniors must come to school to claim a spot on a certain day, according to administrative assistant Mary Lumsden.

With this system, there is no consideration for students who live farther away and must wake up earlier on average than other students. They get no extra consideration despite how much harder it is for them to get to school.

Junior Luke Heffernan from Essex agreed that students from farther away should get priority for parking spots.

Heffernan points out that these students who do not get a parking spot must park on the street and leave even earlier just to be able to park there.

To solve this inequality, the school should offer parking spaces to students outside of a mile radius of school first so that students who have to travel farther get priority over others.

Offering priority to students who live farther away would stop students who live across the street from getting parking spots over other students and would encourage them to walk the short distance to school.

According to junior Randall Doane from Essex, another option for parking would be to give such students closer parking spaces so they do not have to run into the building if they are late after the long drive.

"If we have to commute a much longer drive every single morning coming here, we should at least have the front spots," Doane said.

Assistant Principal Paul Murphy, however, is opposed to the idea of giving preference to students who live farther away, believing that it would be discriminatory to students who live closer. He does, however, acknowledge that students who live in walking distance to the schools should ideally not get a parking spot.

ABIGAIL FITZGIBBON PHOTO

Spaces in the student parking lot are given to students who have a driver's license, vehicle registration, and the $75 fee, with preferential treatment given to seniors, rather than students who live farther away from the school and must get up earlier to drive.

Offering priority to students who live farther away would stop students who live across the street from getting parking spots over other students and would encourage them to walk the short distance to school.

Principal Patricia Puglisi agreed with Murphy, saying the school must offer students an equal opportunity for parking spots.

"When you look at any issue you have to look at equity across the board, and that's why it's open to everybody," she said.

Because of the driving distance, however, this system would actually be more fair.

When the world collapses around us, we reach out to others for solidity

By Maddie Conway
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

My mother remembers exactly where she was when American Airlines Flight 11 flew into the North Tower of New York's World Trade Center.

My father recalls a similar reaction, when he froze and took stock of where he was and whom he was with when the Challenger space shuttle exploded 1986.

Other family members, my cross-country coaches, and my friends all have shared stories of moments when an incomprehensible event elicits this response.

I never understood this until April 15, 2013, when I was standing on top of Heartbreak Hill along the Boston Marathon route screaming as loud as I could and waving my sign that read, "You've trained for this longer than Kim Kardashian was married!"

I felt my phone buzz in my pocket. "R u at the Marathon?" the front screen read; my best friend had just texted me.

"Yeah," I replied.

"WHERE?" came the answer.

"Heartbreak Hill," I texted back. "Why?"

"Bombs at finish. U close to that?"

I remember not answering until my friend, in desperation, nearly in tears, called me because she could not bear my silence. We were all fine, I told her.

Heartbreak Hill, the hardest part of the course, was more than six miles away from the finish line, and I remember not being able to comprehend that it was a normal day here while the world was changing for thousands only several miles away.

To this day and probably for the rest of my life, I will remember that when I got that text, two men from Boston University were standing on my left. My sister was right in front of me, fighting for control of the sign. The sky was a stark cerulean blue, with only a few clouds. A water station with two volunteers was directly across the road from where I stood.

I occurred to me then, when I recognized that I was doing exactly what many people had done before me, that when the world seems to be falling down around us, we reach out to what and whom we love, hoping that it will remain the same, refusing to succumb to what we fear most.

STAFF EDITORIAL

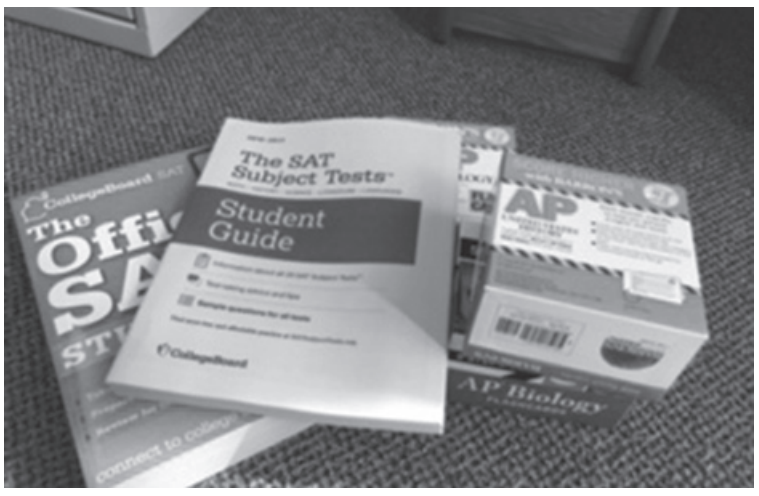
Requiring AP, subject tests for college is unnecessary

SAT subject tests and AP tests measure proficiency in many of the same subjects; however, most colleges require or strongly recommend SAT subject tests for admission but only use AP tests when determining class credits. As a result, students must take expensive and unnecessary tests. Instead, they should be able to send either SAT subject tests or AP test scores for admission.

Both SAT subject tests and AP tests are administered by the College Board, and they aim to allow students to show mastery of a certain subject to college admission officers.

Most of the subjects are the same between the two tests, but the SAT subject tests have more diverse language offerings while AP tests have more history classes.

Students will most likely take SAT subject tests on the same topic as the AP classes they took because the AP class has already prepared them to show mastery in that specific subject.



MADDIE CONWAY PHOTO

Requiring students to sit for multiple AP and SAT subject tests that measure proficiency in many of the same areas costs too much money, wastes time, and adds undue anxiety to high school students and does not add anything to their overall application.

The Huffington Post writes that, contrary to popular belief, while final grades in AP classes are used by college admission officers, scores on the AP tests only count when colleges are deciding from which introductory-level classes a freshman can be excused.

As a result, when students take AP tests and then must take SAT subject tests for college admission, they spend an unnecessary amount of time, stress and money on these tests. One AP test costs $89, and one SAT subject test costs $26. Most students, according to the College Board, take more than one of each.

Additionally, according to the College Board, students generally find that AP tests are more challenging than SAT subject tests, so using AP tests for admission instead of SAT subject tests would not harm admissions officers' view of a student's academic capabilities.

Although the scope of the two tests is redundant in the context of college admissions, SAT subject tests are important to offer so that students who are unable to take AP classes if their school does not offer the course or if they simply are unable to fit it in to their busy schedules are still able to show proficiency.

Volleyball team should move to separate from Hamilton Wenham

Merger generates controversy; team should graduate to becoming its own

By Heather Holley
INDEPENDENT STAFF

Volleyball was introduced last year as a club and this year is offered as a JV co-op team with Hamilton Wenham, but the success of the program since last year proves that it could thrive on its own here.

Although volleyball is offered as a sport this year in replace of a club, there are downsides to its partnership with Hamilton Wenham.

Last year was a success, as there were over 30 members during the fall season and over 20 during the winter season. Members of this club, though, including juniors Caroline Francoeur and Abigail Fitzgibbon, hoped that it would become an official sport the following year.

As a member of the high school volleyball club last winter, I completely believe the strength and dedication of the players and the experienced coaches, Kristen Francoeur and Josh Wladkowski, justifies the potential for volleyball to separate from Hamilton Wenham.

Other former players share a similar sentiment.

"I think that volleyball should be a sport due to the interest level as well as the popularity of the sport around the country," Francoeur, member of this year's Hamilton Wenham team, said.

Although volleyball did become an official sport, the school's partnership with Hamilton Wenham actually caused two former members to quit.

Restrictions were set by Hamilton Wenham that did not allow members of Manchester-Essex to be on the varsity team, which caused members here to not follow through with tryouts after hearing that rule. ME players are obligated to be on the JV team for a year before being on varsity, no matter the level of skill.

If volleyball became its own sport, players would receive an equal opportunity to be placed on the varsity team, instead of automatically being placed on JV. The coaches from last year's club would have the opportunity to be in a coaching position if volleyball became its own sport, since they did not have that opportunity this year.

If volleyball became its own sport, players would receive an equal opportunity to be placed on the varsity team, instead of automatically being placed on JV.

Finding space for the team wouldn't be a problem for the spring since the gym is open after school. Volleyball nets are already provided here, and the gym is an easily accessible place for practice.

Clearly, volleyball should become its own sport at the school because of the amount of players who are already participating, the downsides of the sport being in partnership with Hamilton Wenham, and the equal opportunities that the players will have when trying out for the varsity team.

the *INDEPENDENT*

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The Independent staff hopes that all Manchester and Essex citizens will take advantage of this forum. The paper is meant to serve the school community, and we are open to suggestions to help it better serve its purposes.

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BOYS' SOCCER

Coach: Robbie Bilsbury
Captains: Seniors Antonio Gillespie, Charlie Baker, Marco Kaper, and David LaForge
Record last year: 9-7-4
Record this year: 11-1-3
Rival: Rockport
Goals: To achieve individual improvement, grow as a team, win the CAL Small, and make a deep run in the state tournament
Impact players: Seniors Antonio Gillespie, Charlie Baker, Marco Kaper, and David LaForge, and juniors Cole Hay and Christian Hadaegh
Coach's quote: "Our basic goal is just to do our job as best we can for every single match and play hard together. If we stay in the process, all of the extra stuff-whether it be a league title or a state title-will take care of itself."
Captain's quotes: "We put a lot of emphasis on building team camaraderie on and off the field. We are at our best when we are playing together as a unit. This starts at practice where we work together as a team and extends off the field where we spend time together building chemistry." -Marco Kaper

Antonio Gillespie

Marco Kaper

Charlie Baker

David LaForge

GIRLS' SOCCER

Bridgett Kiernan

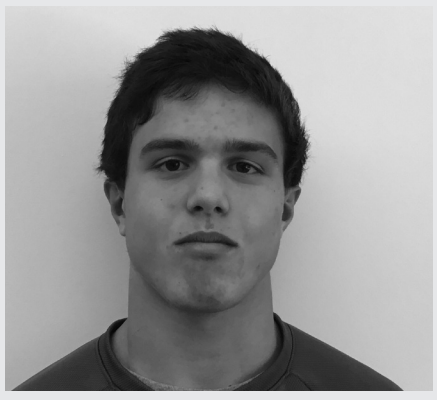
Tracy Blagden

Coaches: Luke Cosgrove (head coach) and Chris Murphy (assistant)
Captain: Seniors Bridgett Kiernan and Tracy Blagden
Record last year: 9-11-1
Record this year: 4-8-2
Rivals: Rockport
Goals: To reach the Division 4 North Final
Impact players: Seniors Bridgett Kiernan and Tracy Blagden, and freshmen Mia Cromwell and Grace Clark
Coach's quote: "We've got really good team camaraderie. All the players like each other. They're all like a big family together, so I think that gives us an edge against the teams we play against. I think our biggest strength is our togetherness and how much of a team we are. I just want everyone to feel like we can win any game and have a bit more pride about the school instead of thinking that, since we're such a small school, it's okay to lose to bigger schools." -Luke Cosgrove
Captain's quote: "We definitely have the skillset to beat teams that we couldn't in previous years. "It's good to have a coach that has a lot of knowledge about the game, not that we didn't last year, but he just has more of a fundamental understanding that I think we were lacking last year." -Tracy Blagden

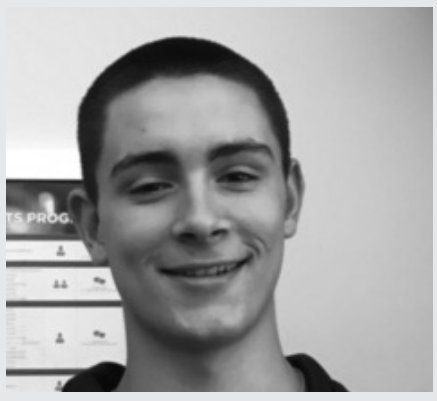
FOOTBALL

Coach: Jeff Hutton
Captains: Seniors Charlie Otterbein and Evan Pennoyer, and juniors Andrew Hantzopoulos and Robbie Sarmanian
Record last year: 6-5
Record this year: 2-4
Rivals: Ipswich and Northeast Vocational School traditionally but biggest rivals are now Lynnfield and Georgetown
Goals: To Win conference championship, playoffs, and Super Bowl
Impact players: All captains and senior Evan Williams, sophomores Dan Rodier and Noah Rawson (from Rockport co-op)
Coach's quote: "We graduated our whole secondary [line] last year, and now we have three new players, so we're just trying to figure it all out... The team would love to win a conference championship and make the playoffs, and everything [beyond] that, including a playoff victory and the Super Bowl, is just the cherry on top."
Captains' quote: "I want to get the team's [record] up, but ultimately, I want to win the [conference championship] and Thanksgiving game." -Charlie Otterbein
"Personally, I just want to lead the team, but I also want to win [the] Thanksgiving [game]." -Evan Pennoyer

Andrew Hantzopoulos


Robbie Sarmanian

Charlie Otterbein


Evan Pennoyer

FIELD HOCKEY

Coach: Kara Crovo
Captains: Seniors Jenny Beardsley, Liddy DeConto, and Cici Lyne
Record last year: 17-2-2
Record this year: 14-0-0
Rival: Watertown
Goals: Continue to win, practice and play hard
Impact players: Seniors Jenny Beardsley, Liddy DeConto, Cici Lyne, Melanie Carter, and Robert Carter and juniors Chanel Bullock and Samantha Booma
Coach's quote: "So the big thing I have been saying is 'get on the bus.' This basically is saying that you steer the bus in whichever way you choose. Pick your passengers wisely and drive to your success."
Captain's quote: "Since day one of preseason the team has been working hard and always putting in 100%. It seems like the hard work is paying off. Everyone is super close and is having fun on and off the field." - Liddy DeConto

Jenny Beardsley

Liddy DeConto

Cici Lyne

GOLF

Coach: Hollis French
Captains: Seniors Will Heslop and Tyler Malik and junior Mitch Paccone
Record last year: 5-8-0
Record this year: 2-9-0
Rival: Georgetown
Goals: Have fun, be good sportsmen, be competitive, improve each day
Impact players: Seniors Will Heslop and Tyler Malik, junior Mitch Paccone, and freshman Tim Reilly
Coach's quote: "We continue to improve, and our record doesn't reflect our competitiveness. We have played some teams that are very strong, and the team has improved its performance consistently."
Captains' quotes: "We have a lot of young talent and are going to be even better in the next couple years." - Mitch Paccone
"This could be considered a rebuilding year, but we have fun and are excited about the future of the program." - Will Heslop

Will Heslop

Tyler Malik

Mitch Paccone

CROSS-COUNTRY

Matt Kenney

Patrick Guinee

Julia Potter

Maura McCormick

Coaches: Mark Dawson and Steve Whittey
Captains: Seniors Julia Potter, Maura McCormick, and Matt Kenney, and junior Patrick Guinee
Boys' record last year: 8-2
Boys' record this year: 3-6
Girls' record last year: 9-1
Girls' record this year: 8-1
Rivals: Hamilton-Wenham and Newburyport
Goals: Do well in the division meet, qualify for the all-state meet, win Eastern Mass. Division VI
Impact players: Seniors Maura McCormick and Matt Kenney, juniors Holly Fossa and Patrick Guinee, and sophomore Eve Feuerbach
Coach's quote: "I'm proud that they work hard and that they're disciplined and focused. Those are the attributes I usually look for: that they're willing to put in the work and sacrifice it takes to be a good runner." - Mark Dawson
Captains' quotes: "We're a really close, tight-knit team, which helps us to compete and work to improve." - Maura McCormick
"This is definitely a rebuilding year for our side, but I think we have a good future." - Matt Kenney

‘Snowden’ portrays United States government as intrusive, powerful

By Maura McCormick
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

SNOWDENFILM.COM

Oliver Stone’s “Snowden” is a captivating film with Joseph Gordon-Levitt in the lead role.

Based on a true story, “Snowden” follows the thrilling experiences of CIA agent Edward Snowden as he reveals that the United States government is tracking citizens’ private online and cellular actions through the National Security Agency.

Snowden, played by Joseph Gordon-Levitt, is shocked to discover that the government is tracking Americans without their knowledge or consent. He feels it is his duty to inform Americans.

Director Oliver Stone takes on Snowden’s point of view, making the government the enemy and giving the movie a dystopian feel. The film is undoubtedly biased, portraying Snowden as a national hero.

The 138-minute movie is action-packed and complex. Although the film’s technological language and complicated subplots can be difficult to follow, the overall plot is easy to understand.

To offset the complex subject matter, Stone also diverges into the side plot of Snowden’s love life, which adds a nice contrast to the intense and multilayered governmental plot.

Stone also incorporates a graphic that draws lines expanding from a terrorist’s contact list and branches out three jumps to show how the government ultimately ends up tracking people who are leading completely lawful lives.

This graphic clarifies the basic function of the NSA for viewers.

The skillful acting in the movie also enhances its emotional impact on viewers.

Gordon-Levitt perfectly embodies Snowden’s composure under stress, as well as his quirky, computer-obsessed personality.

Shailene Woodley stars as Snowden’s girlfriend Lindsay Mills. She excels in this highly emotional role, making viewers sympathize with her difficult situation.

Stone also mixes real news footage and audio into the movie to make the movie seem more realistic.

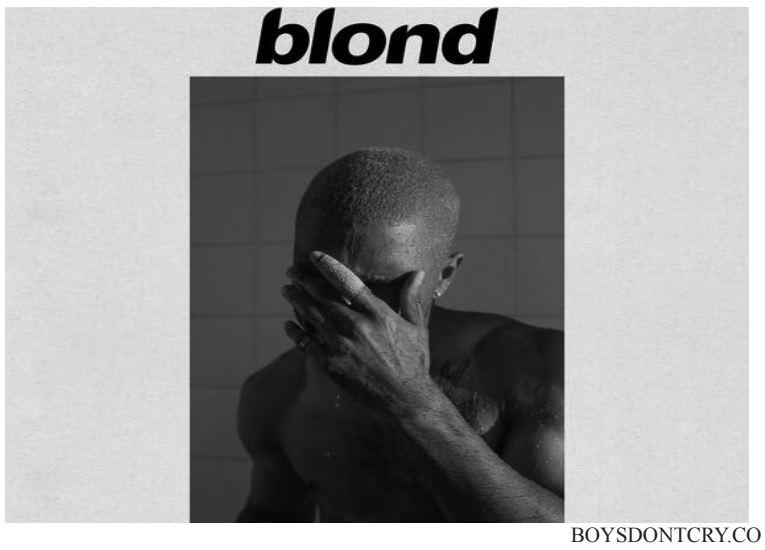
Snowden himself is included in the final scene of the movie, briefly explaining his motive for leaking the information and how he hopes the United States government will change.

This scene in particular leaves a lasting impression on viewers and gives the movie a significant meaning, showing viewers why they should be critical of the United States government.

The movie is rated R by the Motion Picture Industry Association of America for language and some sexuality and nudity.

Frank Ocean’s self-published ‘Blond’ captivates listeners through storytelling

By Will Heslop
INDEPENDENT EDITOR



BOYSDONTCRY.CO

Frank Ocean’s new album “Blond” connects with the listener by telling enthralling and meaningful stories, reflecting on his past.

Released four years after his debut studio album “channel ORANGE,” Frank Ocean’s latest creation “Blond” solidifies Ocean as one of the most compelling storytellers of his generation.

“Blond,” which is only Ocean’s second studio album, is a mesmerizing collection of songs that spans just over an hour. It was released exclusively to Apple Music on Aug. 20 and then came to Spotify in early September. Currently, the album is only accessible through these two streaming services.

The nature of the release only adds to the meaning of the work. Releasing the album without the help of a label ensures that the entirety of the work consists of Ocean’s own words and insights. He did not have to yield to the demands of a publisher, which is the only way an artist can be truly independent in his work.

The beauty of “Blond” is that it connects with the listener on two distinct levels. On the surface, Ocean’s 17 track album can be enjoyed strictly as ambient music and pleasurable background music.

Additionally, for committed listeners who choose to delve deeper into each line of the album, “Blond” tells incredibly captivating stories from Ocean’s past that reflect on his past mistakes and triumphs.

“Transparency” comes to mind when listening to Ocean’s stories. He holds nothing back from his listeners, and the album serves as a powerful retrospective look at some of the most trying times in Ocean’s life.

A few tracks stand out as being more reflective than the rest. “Ivy” and “White Ferrari” detail failed relationships in his youth and speak to his uniqueness as a bisexual male artist in today’s society, which rewards powerful masculine musical figures.

The short skits that Ocean places in between songs are stark reflections of modern society and issues that plague it.

Ocean reflects on his past relationships: “I’m sure we’re taller in another dimension/ You say we’re smaller and not worth the mention/ You’re tired of movin’, your body’s achin’,” he said.

The short skits that Ocean places in between songs are stark reflections of modern society and the issues that plague it.

“Facebook Story” is a short skit narrated by French producer SebastiAn that highlights society’s obsession with technology, social media, and the need for people to “stay connected.”

Aside from containing breathtaking storytelling in its lyrics, “Blond” conveys meaning through the production of the music itself. By switching between more aggressive rap verses and free-flowing R&B sections, Ocean adds degree of uncertainty to the album that reflects changes in life and the situations that can rise unexpectedly.

Ocean’s ability to both tell a story and keep an audience captivated is present throughout his latest album, and “Blond” has lived up to the hype that was expected of it since being first teased by Ocean in 2013.

New psychological horror movie ‘Blair Witch’ starts off slow, ends unfufilling

By Karlie Angelis
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

BLAIRWITCH.COM

“Blair Witch” mimics its prequel by adopting its jump scares and unfufilling ending but still manages to keep viewers on their toes.

“Blair Witch,” the new psychological horror film, begins slow and uneventful like its prequel “The Blair Witch Project” but eventually picks up its speed and terror halfway through the movie.

The film introduces the plot right away through its documentary style, explaining that the story’s protagonist, James (James Allen McCune), is looking for his sister who went missing in the Black Hills Forest 17 years earlier.

His sister Heather, who is the protagonist of the previous film, is the subject of the crew’s documentary, connecting both movies.

Other characters are cliché; there is the one who doesn’t believe in the legend, the distinguished male leader of the pack, and the couple who seems crazy but are the only ones who really understand the danger they are in.

The acting overall is subpar, but Callie Hernandez, who plays documentary student Lisa, delivers the best performance through her chilling screams and realistic reactions.

The rest of the actors provide the audience with over the top, exaggerated personalities, such as Peter (Brandon Scott), who annoyingly taunts characters Talia (Valorie Curry) and Lane (Wes Robinson) constantly for no reason.

The up-close, shaky camera shots are familiar to those who watched the previous movie, but the sequel fails to make the shots look like realistic found footage due to the quick changing of different characters’ perspectives.

The film took on more of a Hollywood feel due to the good camera quality that the prequel lacks.

With different points of view, however, it makes for more unnerving and nail-biting scenes. The audience watches Ashley (Corbin Reid) dangerously wander the forest alone. Then, the camera changes perspective to James and Lisa, who are frightfully calling out her name.

Although 50 minutes into the movie there was a lack of truly frightening scenes with only a few strange events having occurred, the film takes a plunge into the dark side, heavily building action.

Cheap jump scares are present throughout, but graphic scenes and unsettling events makes the audience hold their breath once the pace picks up.

The ending is unfulfilling, similar to “The Blair Witch Project,” or like many other horror movies in general.

‘Roanoke’ subverts structure of ‘American Horror Story’ with new, mysterious format

Season six reinvents Ryan Murphy’s horror anthology series more than ever before as faux-reality horror program “My Roanoke Nightmare.”

By Fritz Spofford
INDEPENDENT EDITOR

FX.COM

“American Horror Story: Roanoke” introduces an untrustworthy plotline and potentially unreliable narrators, leaving viewers unsure of the season’s direction.

Shrouded in mystery until the premiere’s airdate, season six of “American Horror Story,” subtitled “Roanoke,” takes a revolutionary approach to Ryan Murphy’s glamorous and gory anthology series.

The season is depicted as a show-within-the-show, a reality horror program called “My Roanoke Nightmare.” Lily Rabe and André Holland play Shelby and Matt Miller, respectively, who narrate, through interviews, their terrifying experiences in an old mansion in North Carolina. Sarah Paulson and Cuba Gooding Jr. play them in the “dramatic reenactments” of their stories.

When Shelby and Matt first move into their new home, they begin to notice oddities occurring around the house. Knives are misplaced, mysterious noises heard in the night. Does this sound familiar? That’s because it is.

The story... is relatively spare compared to the elaborate worlds created in seasons past.

The story, though not exactly bland, is relatively spare compared to the elaborate worlds created in seasons past. Its genetic makeup is a combination of jump scares, spooky sounds, and anticlimactic signs of paranormal activity.

The first season already played on the normal-people-terrorized-by-ghosts trope, and this version has no rapist rubber men, no demonic babies, and no temptress-maids, all of which were revealed right off the bat in “Murder House.” “Roanoke” feels like a reduction of the original season.

However, the sparseness of the plot hints at something happening below the surface. The potential unreliability of the narrators and the interviews’ lack of context point to something not shown to the viewer, something with the potential to be much darker. The storyline is too quiet to be trusted.

The plot begins to thicken in the third episode, when more of the rather layered history of the house is revealed.

Murphy has said that “Roanoke” will be the season that ties closer bonds to all of the others, and he has alluded many times to an upending twist that will occur midway through the season. The only thing to expect, therefore, is change.

“American Horror Story: Roanoke” airs Wednesdays at 10 p.m. on FX and is rated TV-MA LSV for language, sexual situations, disturbing images and violent content.

Featured Artist

Senior releases folk album, tours the West Coast

By Austin Pare
INDEPENDENT STAFF

PHOTO COURTESY OF A. LORD-PATEY/LUCAS O’NEILL

Following the release of her debut album, “Polaris,” senior Annabelle Lord-Patey toured the West Coast.

After touring the West Coast this summer with her alternative album “Polaris,” senior Annabelle Lord-Patey is planning on returning there again this upcoming summer.

Lord-Patey was born into a family of musicians. Her father sang “rockabilly ‘50s rock” while her mother was “pretty in with the scene of the ‘90s and performed more indie songs,” she said.

Both of Lord-Patey’s parents influenced her decision to write and sing a ‘90s, indie, folk, alternative type of music, she said.

“[Indie music] has always been around [me],” she said.

Her album, which came out in July of 2016, is based off of one of the songs that she wrote about the Northern Star, Polaris. The album’s cover is a picture of a star that the school’s chorus director Donna O’Neill took.

After her album’s release, Lord-Patey went on tour with friend Matt Minigell, who also acts as her mentor.

Both of Lord-Patey’s parents influenced her decision to write and sing.

“We flew to Seattle, rented a car, drove down the coast, and then flew out of LA a week later. We did a bunch of shows [at venues such as the Columbia City Theatre],” she said. Lord-Patey said she sold merchandise everywhere that they went, but only some venues guaranteed them money for playing.

The songs on her album are about events in her life, emotions, or anything that she can think of.

Senior Lily Schrafft said it is exciting to see Lord-Patey succeed in her singing and songwriting career.

“She has put a lot of work into her album and has really wanted this. It is so cool to know someone that is able to live that life and have so many opportunities,” Schrafft said.

Senior Laney Franklin, like Schrafft, said that she is a fan of Lord-Patey’s music.

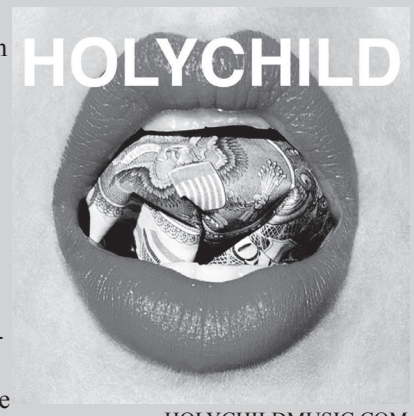
“She knows what she is doing. [Musicians] know something that the rest of the world just cannot comprehend, and she has that,” Franklin said.

Lord-Patey hopes to continue her career as a singer and songwriter.

What to...

Listen To:
Artist
HOLYCHILD

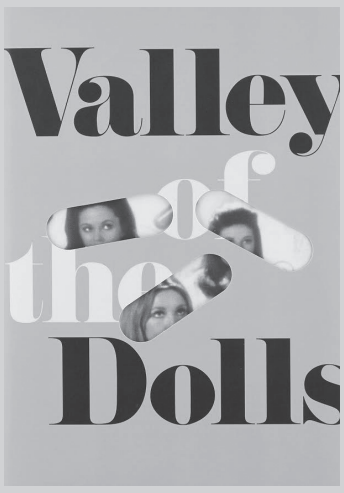
The Los Angeles-based indie pop duo released their debut LP “The Shape of Brat Pop to Come” (the title an allusion to H. G. Wells’ cynical sci-fi novel “The Shape of Things to Come”) last year, and its stadium-sized synths and marching-band beats live up to the title with caustically saccharine glee. The two find no shortage of societal aspects to criticize and satirize, from fame culture (“Monumental Glow”) to cash culture (“Money All Around”) to the plastic world of queen bees and Barbie dolls, summed up perfectly in the cheerleader-chant/schoolyard-jeer interlude of “Nasty Girls,” one of the album’s more venomous cuts: “Dye your hair, tan your skin, / Liposuction’s really in! / Adderall, join the fall, / Do it to be beautiful!” Some commentaries are more original than others, but all are well-crafted with a healthy dose of snark.



HOLYCHILDMUSIC.COM

Read:
“Valley of the Dolls”
Jacqueline Susann

Jacqueline Susann’s 1966 exploration of the lifestyles of the rich and famous may not offer much substance, but it’s got style and melodrama to boot. The novel makes martyrs out of train-wreck film stars, charting the rise and fall of three young starlets who gradually work their way up in the entertainment industry at the decline of Hollywood’s Golden Age. It’s the American Dream in its own twisted, opulent form, and the decadence leads to a glamorous, operatic downfall. Getting there is only half the fun.



COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA.ORG

Watch:
Movie
“Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?”

A 1962 campfest starring feuding silver screen legends Bette Davis and Joan Crawford, “Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?” centers around a crippled, aging silent film star (Crawford) locked in her Los Angeles mansion and cared for by her has-been child star sister (Davis). Histrionic and hilarious, the film cemented the grande dame presence in the horror genre and gave new life to the careers of aging icons, setting a precedent carried on to this day, most notably in Ryan Murphy’s “American Horror Story.” In fact, Murphy is developing a new series, titled “Feud,” in which Susan Sarandon and frequent muse Jessica Lange play Davis and Crawford, respectively, during the making of this very film. By Fritz Spofford, Independent Editor

COMMONS.WIKIMEDIA.ORG

Guess Who? Answer: Lauren Dubois