

# THE SPRESS

October 10, 2025

\* **ACTIVITY FAIR**

\* **SEE YOU AT THE POLE**

\* **INFLATION**

## RISE up

Cassie Oxford



**Amelia Yasher (sophomore) and Keira Mitchell (senior) scrapbooking during a RISE session**

Students at South Park High School are rising to the occasion of RISE. What was originally thought to be a confusing addition to the schedule is now seen as a creative outlet for students to have more freedom and enjoyment during the school day.

RISE stands for Reach, Inspire, Support, and Engage, and within these three 30-minute periods in the middle of the school day, students can choose two of many activities and a lunch. Mr. Dellarose, Principal at South Park High School, feels strongly about the addition of the RISE periods and believes that they will make a difference for students. He's hoping students grow both academically and personally.

With the addition of academic support, fun activities like card games or coloring, and simply a break from doing school work, students are more likely to be engaged and alert during academic periods. Some students felt that RISE would not be beneficial to them, but others seemed to appreciate the RISE periods and found themselves trying and learning new things.

However, some students have had trouble getting into the activities they want. All activities max out at a certain number of students, causing it to be no longer available. The most popular activities are the

ones that max out the soonest, which makes it hard for other students to have a chance to join them.

Even though there are several activities to choose from, students seem to have their eyes on certain activities, which are usually the hands-on ones. For example, activities like coloring or board games seem to always be full, which doesn't give other students the chance to try that activity. But why are these activities so popular?

Keira Mitchell, senior, stated that coffee and coloring is one of the most popular activities because "it's very relaxing and gives kids a nice break from core classes." The sweet richness of coffee and the vibrant colors of crayons are a perfect pair that help students settle down after four periods of academic classes. Jeremy Oxford, sophomore, feels that the most popular activities are "all the classes with Mr. Rieck because he's the best teacher." It isn't abnormal for students to be drawn to certain teachers, and someone like Mr. Rieck, who is a history teacher at South Park High School, seems to be loved by many students. Therefore, it is no wonder that the activities he hosts are the most popular.

*Continued on page 2*

## RISE up (con't)

Cassie Oxford

Because certain activities are very popular, though, they are difficult to get into because so many students sign up for them. Although there are several activities to choose from, certain activities tend to fill up the fastest. Lillian Pritts, senior, stated that the activities which tend to be the hardest to get into are the ones with games and playing cards. Hands-on activities such as these that get students engaged makes sense if they are filled up quickly. However, Oxford stated that the activities with Mr. Rieck, such as Uno, world guesser, and paper football, are hardest to get into; many people sign up for them simply because they love the teacher.

Even though there are many activities to choose from, sometimes those activities can be cancelled. For example, both Mitchell and Pritts were signed up for an activity with Mr. Baker, the theater director at South Park High School, but it had to get cancelled because he wasn't at school. Pritts stated that Mr. Baker warned the students ahead of time, so she was able to pick a new activity, however, "some people were forced into catch-all." Catch-all serves as a purpose for students who do not sign up for activities before 9:30, which forces them into a classroom with no cell phones and no talking. Luckily, Mitchell was able to avoid the catch-all and "signed up for a study hall" instead.

It is unknown the number of activities students get to choose from, but because they fill up fast, are there not enough options? Oxford stated that there are a decent amount of activities, but not in his interests. He said that "there could be a more variety of options" that way everyone could have the chance to choose an activity that best fits their interests. Additionally, Mitchell stated "everything fun fills up fast and leaves only study halls open," which doesn't allow some students to participate in the fun activities.

Although there are many activities to choose from, there are still activities that aren't available that students would love to see added. For example, Bailey Vietmeier, senior, feels that "a dance club could be really fun." A club dedicated to fun and movement would give students a chance to incorporate physical activity into their day, since sitting at a desk for several hours in a day makes it hard for students to be engaged. Pritts, on the

other hand, would like to have "more study halls with the intention of working on college applications." Senior year is the time of decision-making, so being able to have an activity dedicated to applying for colleges would be beneficial for students who have a hard time doing it on their own.

Being able to have more of a variety of options will allow students to choose activities that best suit their interests. There are already many activities to choose from, but being able to narrow them down to what interests them would help students get into the activities they want, rather than having to pick last resort ones because the other activities are already full. While it is better to be in an activity that a student isn't quite interested in rather than being put into the catch-all, it is important that students get the opportunity to join activities that they want, that way they can meet the goal of RISE and truly be engaged in their school day.

Before school started, not all students were on board with the idea of RISE. Oxford stated he thought the RISE periods would "be disorganized and not going to work out." Kolby Kostelnik, freshman, agreed with Oxford and stated that he "felt confused and had no idea how they were going to go."

Although there was some uncertainty regarding the RISE periods at the beginning of the school year, students seem to be enjoying the addition of them and choosing fun activities that best



**Kolby Kostelnik (freshman) and Jeremy Oxford (sophomore) putting together a puzzle**

## RISE up (con't)

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suit their interests. Addie McDonald, senior, said that she has done photography, percussion, coffee with the counselors, and drama club. Devin Kelly, sophomore, has also done some fun activities, such as Uno, silent reading, nitro ball, and puzzles.

Despite their original thoughts and feelings about RISE, students feel that it is a beneficial addition to the school. Kennedy Salvino, senior, stated that RISE is beneficial because “it gets people to do stuff that they weren’t able to get classes for.” Oxford agreed with Salvino and stated that “it helps students ease their minds and do things they want to do.”

RISE is a positive addition to the schedule at South Park High School with the amount of opportunities, freedoms, and flexibilities students have as a result of it. While it may have seemed overwhelming at first, it is a great outlet to try new things and make new connections. After all, it is important to “RISE” up and be reached, inspired, supported, and engaged – not only within academics, but within fun activities too.

## IMPORTANT DATES

- October 13: No school**
- October 15: Senior pictures due**
- October 17: Homecoming game**
- October 18: Homecoming dance**
- October 21 & 22: PSAT**
- October 24: Interact Pink the Park**
- October 29: End first nine weeks**
- October 31: Halloween**
- October 31 - November 4: No school**

## EDITORIAL

### Problems a-RISE

Adriana McDonald

RISE: Is it really doing us good? Let’s ask the purpose of RISE and whether that objective is being met. While in many cases the answer is yes, other times it is more questionable.

In many instances, individuals are getting forced into required labs, clubs, or study sessions. Yes, these may seem helpful for students who were not able to stay after school for these activities before, but these students are getting pushed out of lunch for a simple club meeting. Furthermore, because of these required RISE periods, students are also not able to choose an activity that they are truly interested in. In my personal experience, I have been forced into required meetings for Student Council and harshly recommended band sectionals when I genuinely wanted to go to Fancy Friday with Ms. Rech or Crafting Kindness with Mr. Tobias. Even when activities in RISE are technically considered optional, some teachers criticize or punish their students for not attending.

Should students really be facing these types of repercussions when activities are optional? No. There is no reason whatsoever to punish a student for signing up for an activity they are interested in. Administrators have said that RISE should be used to broaden individuals’ horizons to form more well rounded students. With these restrictions, students are unable to branch out and try new things at all when they are placed into required clubs and practices every week. At least make these required tasks once a month or even every other week to help out students.

Rise is supposed to be helpful, and yes, practice and labs are helpful for learning, but in moderation. Students should not be in required activities everyday. They need space to grow and expand their mindsets instead of being forced to stick to the same things every week. RISE is supposed to be a fun, new way of learning, not a tiring one.

## Activity Fair

Devin Kelly



**Seth Evans (sophomore), excited for Mini-THON**

Are you involved in any clubs? If not, why are you not involved in any clubs? Is it because nothing interests you or did you not know what clubs existed? If it's because you didn't know what existed, the activity fair was for you.

The activity fair occurred September 22 and 23 in the Aux Gym. Every club in South Park High School had set up a booth for the club. The club members running the tables answered students' questions about the club, and each table had flyers and posters explaining what the club was about and why other people should sign up. It was during RISE A, B, C and mandatory for grades 9 and 10 but optional for upper classmen. There were 26 clubs total that had booths set up.

Aiden Clark, sophomore, said the activity fair was fine. He signed up for Academic Games because the ladies were persuasive but he said he said he would never sign up for marching band. He did enjoy the benefit of hanging out with his friends during RISE. Leilani Harris, sophomore, said the club fair was alright, but she didn't sign up for any clubs. While Harris didn't sign up for any clubs, many of the clubs reported that a number of students showed interest and found it beneficial overall.

Skylar Johnson, a senior who helped run the NHS and Spanish Club tables, said she thinks "the activity fair was great and a perfect opportunity for other students to get involved". She said "although some clubs don't fit my hobbies or lifestyle,

there's a club for anyone and you might not like one but fit right into another". Everyone was respectful from what she saw and approached kids kindly even if they shut her down quickly. The most beneficial aspect was being able to see and talk to other students in the club. Talking to teachers about them may not be super appealing to others, so the student to student ratio was amazing.

South Park has a lot of clubs to offer students which helps build a school community. Now that newer students have a better idea of club offerings, hopefully they will join the community too.

## Impacts of inflation

Kolby Kostelnik

Inflation has had a huge impact on us recently. Every year, the price of living gets higher and higher. The Pepsi that you drink is \$2.61, but it was just \$1.29 a couple of years ago. Is there any way we can fix this?

Inflation has had a noticeable impact on many things. These things include childcare, homes, and college tuition. These things do not impact every American though. America's most noticeable change is gas prices. There's also two more categories that have been sneakily going up in price. Those include food and energy prices.

So what is inflation? Inflation correlates to supply and demand. Supply and demand is when something has low supply, meaning there's little to none left, making the demand for the item high and increasing the price. When the supply is high, meaning there is a lot of stock left, making the demand for the item low, decreasing the price. All this brings us to inflation, inflation is a general increase in prices and fall in the purchasing value of money.

While there are no ways to fix inflation, there are ways to help it. Mr. LaBarbera, South Park Economics teacher, says "helping inflation is both an easy and very complicated thing" to address. Mr. LaBarbera also talks about how supply and demand is a key factor in helping

## Impacts of inflation (con't)

inflation. Because prices are determined by the supply and demand of the product, he states “if you reduce the demand for products this can slow the rate of inflation.” On the other hand, you can also increase the supply. Mr. LaBarbera adds, “If a product is in great abundance, people won’t usually pay lots of money for it” so companies may need to lower their prices.

The supply and demand concerns can also be seen in the stock market. Everybody knows the stock market dictates how the economy functions. The companies that have products that are necessary for daily life aren’t impacted as much as others. Mr. LaBarbera states “if a company is able to raise the price of their products without causing their customers to not buy anymore, this can be very good for the company’s profits.” An example of this would be gas and oil companies. Over the years, the gas and oil prices have been increasing, but we still buy from the companies. The companies have no fear in raising prices because they know their products are needed by many people all over the world. On the other hand, people can put off buying products like clothes, cars, and other luxuries, so their stock prices will fall. Mr. LaBarbera says “the price of beef and therefore steaks, has gone up so much I have stopped buying steaks altogether.”

Some people think that raising the minimum wage will fix inflation, but this is not true. Right now, there are not many people earning the minimum wage of \$7.25. Even most high school students are earning \$9.00-\$12.00 an hour right now. Most people do think that if you increase the minimum wage the companies will have to raise their prices to cover employee labor costs. Mr. LaBarbera says “if we do have lots of people earning the minimum wage of \$7.25, this can become a much bigger issue.” Fortunately for us, many do not earn the minimum wage salary, so we don’t have to worry about that too much.

Inflation can also be slowed down by interest rates or taxes. Interest rates and taxes are used to reduce the demand of a product. These stop you from using as much money as

before, so businesses see that no one is buying their products so they lower their prices.

Inflation will always be around in some sort of way, but is there really any true way to stop it?



## See You at the Pole

Jeremy Oxford

Wednesday, September 24, 2025 was a drizzly morning as students ran from their cars and buses into the school, but about 15 students took their time in the dreary weather at the flag pole in front of the building. Why would these students stand outside in the rain longer than the other students?

These students were partaking in See You at the Pole to pray over the school and their nation, taking their time before heading to class. God gave these students an opportunity to gather around and pray for what they deemed as important and special to each of them.

See You at the Pole is a student-led worldwide annual event where students pray around a flag pole for their friends, family, teachers, school, and nation. It all started with a small group of teenagers in Burleson, Texas who came together on a weekend retreat in early 1990. The vision, See You at the Pole, was shared with 20,000 students in June of 1990. More than 45,000 teenagers met at school flagpoles in four different states to pray before school started, at 7:00 a.m. on September 12, 1990. On September 11, 1991, about one million

*Continued on page 6*

## See You at the Pole

Jeremy Oxford



**Students and staff praying around the flagpole in front of South Park High School**

students gathered at their school flagpoles all over the country. In 2025, students in more than 64 countries have participated in See You at the Pole.

The few students at South Park High School that attended See You at the Pole had very positive feedback about it. Bailey Vietmeier, senior, says See You at the Pole is “a representation of freedom of religion,” as well as “being blessed enough to express beliefs.” Being able to pray outwardly is a testimony for other students who didn’t attend.

Students who participated had different reasons for attending See You at the Pole. Jonathan Breneman, sophomore, said his main reason for attending was because he’s “in the Outreach Club.” Many of the students who participated were in the Outreach Club, but all were welcomed and several outside of the club attended.

Expectations from each student differed whether they were a leader, club member, or just a student who decided to participate in the event. Cassie Oxford, senior, says “the turn out was amazing,” in addition to the amount of students who participated and how “it was such a blessing to have them there.” The goal for the Outreach leaders was to have more students attend than last year, which was met.

Mark your calendars for next year as See You at the Pole will be September 23, 2026. Don’t be shy to attend next year with new Outreach leaders who are hoping to achieve the goal of more students than this year.

## Addi’s music catalog: Third time’s the charm

Addi Yochum

Welcome to my music catalog, where I’ll share my monthly album recommendations. Lately, I’ve had “Charm” by Clairo on repeat. My favorite songs from this album are “Juna” and “Pier 4.”

Claire Cottrill debuted her first album “Immunity” in 2019. This album has a slow, sentimental feel to it, compared to her original bedroompop genre, which she displayed in her singles, like “Flaming hot cheetos.” Since “Charm”, Clairo has had somewhat of a rebrand, considering the new music style and concert style. Her new style has a jazzy and feminine sound, rather than bedroom pop.

Her lyrics in this album resemble self-discovery and the intricacies of relationships. In her song, “Thank You” she says, “I really hate to admit it, I put my pride on the line. ‘Cause when I met you, I knew it, I’d thank you for your time.” Although she knew this person was not suitable for her, she still put effort into having a relationship with him, thus, thanking them for their time. In “Pier 4” she dives into the feeling of loneliness, and the struggles in finding herself. She represents these themes in this song with her strong lyrics, “And if you’re walking home alone, you’ll find a reason, you’ll just chalk it up. To be different, being young, and wonder why no one knew you at all.”

Next time you’re looking for something new to listen to, give “Charm” a chance, whether you’re feeling particularly gloomy or just want to experience someone else’s journey to self discovery.



## Release radar

Addi Yochum



### **Vie - Doja Cat** **September 26, 2025**

Doja Cat is known for her hip-hop and R & B sound, including popular songs “Wine Pon You” and “Agora Hills.” She has many collaborations, such as SZA, Tyga, and The Weeknd. After her last album in 2023, “Scarlet,” Doja brings us a new album, Vie. This album will have 15 tracks, one of them, “Jealous Type,” which was already released in August. She describes this album as rich with 70’s and 80’s influences, which you can hear in “Jealous Type.”



### **Ya’ll - Glaive** **September 26, 2025**

Glaive, referred to as “the king of hyperpop,” has collaborated with artists like mgk and ericdoa. In 2023, he debuted his first album, “I care so much that I don’t care at all.” This album symbolizes changes in Glaive’s life, which was mentioned in an interview with Vulture. Since then he’s gained popularity and released multiple EP’s and singles, such as “Astrid,” his most popular song with 56 million listens, and also moving in and out of the hyperpop genre with songs like “all dogs go to heaven.” Two songs in this album were already released during the summer, which contain the classic hyperpop sound Glaive is known for.



### **Strung out Symphony - Aldn** **October 3, 2025**

After Aldn discovered the hyperpop genre, he added his vocals to his beats on soundcloud and collaborated with other artists. Aldn then released his first hyperpop album in July of 2021, with songs like “What was the last thing you said?” featuring Glaive, and “Glitr.” This new album will be his sixth album, composed of his past singles, like “icantbelieveyougetaway,” a song about his old friend who passed away; his most recent singles, such as “Crocodile Eyes” featuring Wisp, and five new songs. Telling by the “strung out” and unique sound of these singles, we can expect the new album to be similar.



### **TYCOON - Ty Dolla \$ign** **October 17, 2025**

Ty Dolla \$ign has collaborated with multiple other rap artists, such as Tyler, The Creator, Kanye West, Mac Miller, and Playboi Carti. He was featured on all of “VULTURES 1” and “VULTURES 2” along with ¥\$ (Kanye West) in 2024, both of which are his last albums since his new-coming album, “Tycoon.” Ty has only released one song from “TYCOON” in June, called “ALL IN,” leaving 14 other tracks.



### **Oblivion - Alice Phoebe Lou** **October 24, 2025**

Alice Phoebe Lou’s music is known for its bluesy, dreamy sound. Known best for her songs “Witches” and “Lover // Over the Moon,” she captivates her listeners with her lyrics. In the midst of EP’s, Alice released her first album, “Orbit,” almost ten years ago in 2016. Alice released five songs for this album earlier in September, leaving six unknown tracks. Aside from this, Alice also takes part as the vocalist in a band with her best friend, called “Strongboi.” This band recently gained more popularity as they opened for Men I Trust on their tour this summer.