

# the courier

the appleton east student newspaper

# east



# 2025

# All Good Things...

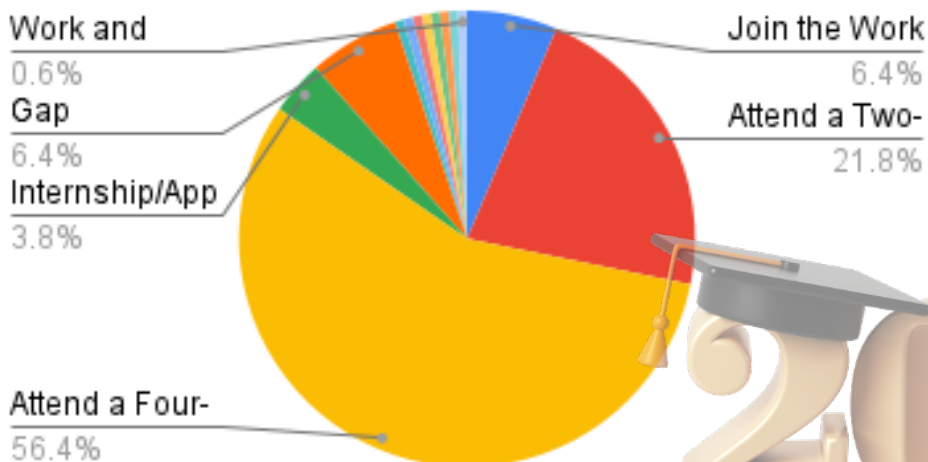
As the school year comes to a close, the Class of 2025 is preparing to say their final goodbyes. The result of twelve years of hard work, graduation symbolizes an important transition from child to adulthood. For current seniors, this transition will happen on May 28 when they walk across the stage and receive their diplomas.

For the Class of 2025, high school has served as a vital chapter for growth and self-improvement. With the majority of their middle school experience overshadowed by the pandemic, freshman year provided a much-needed opportunity for the now-seniors to reconnect with their peers. Many invaluable friendships have been formed here at Appleton East, so even though graduation marks the end of the four years they have spent together, it is hopefully just the beginning for many key connections between peers.

Appleton East has provided an array of opportunities for the senior class to pursue their interests throughout high school, from classes to clubs to extracurriculars, which has contributed to the immense diversity present within the graduating class. With students from so many different backgrounds who are all passionate about unique topics, Appleton East is proud to present the Class of 2025 to the world. No matter what path is taken by each senior after graduation, they can rest assured knowing their time at Appleton East has provided them with a strong foundation to pursue their dreams.

- Lila Bornemann

## Plans for After High School



2025

**Ask for help.** If you have an IEP you might be signed up for an academic lab, use that time productively. Don't be afraid to speak your mind. For those who are introverted: Get out of your comfort zone and **MAKE FRIENDS.** **LOCK IN.** *Do the work,* Always turn work in on time. **Just do it, don't hesitate.** Freshman year matters. **THINK ABOUT IT NOW! THINK ABOUT IT EARLY! TAKE WELDING. REIS IS THE MAN.** Become friends with your teacher. *Make memories and try to be involved in at least one thing at school.* Be yourself. **TAKE GRADES SERIOUS FRESHMAN YEAR THROUGH SENIOR YEAR.** *Really take your time to enjoy the little things before you can't.* **TIME REALLY DOES FLY.** Join Youth Apprenticeship or CTE. *Put effort in.* It goes by fast so make the most of your high school career! Every year matters. Every class matters. Make good choices and do what makes you happy. **Experience high school socially, not just academically.** Stop procrastinating. It doesn't get better if you put it off, only worse. Start applying to and finding colleges early. **(High School) Drama is unnecessary and a waste of time and energy, know who you are and don't let others affect you.** *It's okay to fall behind but don't forget to catch up.* These four years will go faster than you think! Attend everything you are able to, make the most of every event! Pay attention to your grades. *Show up and do the work! You will regret it if you don't.* Hang out with your friend group a lot. **Let go of petty drama and just enjoy senior year!** *Try finding a good balance between school, fun, and work because it can be overwhelming with too much of one.* Load up on APs. **Leave your mark by lifting others up, kindness and effort will always outlast popularity.** Don't vape and make sure to have discipline. *Take culinary because it's fire.* Also do your homework, it's important. Live, laugh, love life. Don't stress about schoolwork. You'll be done soon and pursuing your future. **DON'T GIVE UP!!!! BELIEVE IN YOURSELF!!!!** Make sure you take the classes you want to take. Connect with people around you! **JUST SHOW UP AND DO YOUR WORK IN CLASS.** Pass all your classes as best you can and save yourself the heartache. **TRY MORE, DO MORE, REGRET LESS. TRY TO BE A BETTER YOU EVERYDAY AND ENJOY IT AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE.** If you are struggling, reach out for help. Find a trusted adult and support yourself with people who truly care. **Mistakes are how you learn for the future! High school is the best place to make mistakes before taking on a bigger world.** Take all of the chances you can to get out and do things with your friends, but don't forget about assignments and procrastinate. Sometimes adversity is what we need to face in order to become successful. *Follow your dreams and work hard for what you want.* Follow your dreams and work hard for what you want. *Do enough hard classes and extracurricular activities that you feel busy, but not so many that you're constantly stressed.* **DON'T DO ANYTHING STUPID THAT WILL FOLLOW YOU AFTER HIGH SCHOOL.** Take notes, especially in science. **TAKE CLASSES THAT INTEREST YOU.** *Go into everything with a positive attitude.* Be respectful, not just to others but also yourself. Go to class, I know it might be boring at times, but it's better to pass and be able to enjoy your senior year than be forced to take all the classes you failed. Discipline and knowing your self-identity will make you stand out and be successful in anything in life, not just school. **Get involved, you meet so many new people and make new friends.** Try new things and don't be afraid to explore different career choices. **Put yourself and your grades before everything and anyone else.** Cherish those around you and don't take things for granted. Avoid procrastinating and do your homework as you're getting it from teachers. **Dream big. IT GETS STRESSFUL TOWARDS THE END, BUT TRY NOT TO FALL BEHIND AND YOU SHOULD BE GOOD.** STAY LOCKED IN AND GET YOUR WORK DONE. **Don't give up.**

- Advice from the Class of 2025

# SENIORITIS: CURABLE DISEASE?

For a while, there has been debate over the existence of a phenomenon that causes twelfth-graders to lack motivation: Senioritis. Some individuals have pointed out that it could simply be a cover-up for being lazy; however, a majority of public sources have decided that it does indeed exist.

The term was coined to represent a lack of motivation as the soon-to-be graduates near graduation day. Abby Tincer, a Faculty Training and Development Facilitator at Southern New Hampshire University, offers an exemplary analogy: "I would describe it as seeing the finish line and realizing you don't necessarily have to work as hard anymore to reach it." This lack of drive can have many negative impacts on students, primarily on their academic lives. Grades may slip, assignments get turned in late with less effort, procrastination takes over, and attendance rates decrease. All these effects can create a downward spiral in which a student may now struggle to graduate or, as CollegeBoard states, students can even have "colleges rescind offers of admission, put students on academic probation, or alter financial aid packages." This "disease" can have quite a rampant effect if left unchecked, leading one to worry if it has taken hold of students at East and how future students can "break free." To determine the answer, this year's graduating class was surveyed to find out if this "plague" exists at East and if there are any possible cures.

Of the one hundred and fifty-six responses that were received, one hundred and thirty-one students confirmed that senioritis is real, while twenty admitted that it could be a possibility. With only five of the respondents denying the existence of senioritis, the non-transmissible "disease" clearly affects a large majority of the graduating class, a concerning revelation for the future Patriot seniors. Therefore, with such a largely affected population, a "cure" would be extremely helpful in offsetting the negative impacts of the lack of motivation. So what did East seniors come up with?

Several students noted that they do not believe there is a cure for senioritis: for example, Mya Enright said, "That's why I graduated early." Some, like Harper Rinehart-Cobbs, advised, "Just do your best to get through it." However, other students offered ideas that they believed helped permanently and temporarily cure senioritis.

A handful of seniors suggested that graduating was the only cure for senioritis. Aidan Haylett stated, "There is no cure except for that, sadly." It seems a logical conclusion that curing the lack of motivation comes from ending the cause of it to begin with, however, it seems a sad resolution that only pushing through to the end would be the only cure. It is here that we turn to the more temporary cures provided by other seniors.

Food and caffeine, or as Sayash Lamichhan put it, "ungodly doses of caffeine," were commonly recommended cures. Specifically, Alivia Brick suggested "Starbucks and Big Apple Bagels" to get through senior year. Others suggested getting a good night's sleep as a way to combat senioritis. Owen Lysne reminded students to "go to bed at a decent time."

Besides sleep and caffeine, some respondents recommended making the most of the opportunities and time you have, at least keeping busy enough to distract yourself from senioritis's clutches. Kailey Strauch said, "Make sure you do everything the school offers to make it go by faster." Olivia George singled out "doing fun things outside of high school." Other seniors remind future graduates to spend time with friends and take the time to "make those memories now and make them last," as Anthony Lindenstruth put it. Therefore, a great way to combat senioritis is, as Ayden Ross said, "Get busy. Work, hang out with friends, and go to any school events."

Many other Patriot seniors provided great tips for getting through senioritis.

"Setting small goals and events to look forward to so you can get your mind off the fact that senior year is almost coming to an end." Layla Schiesl

"Just get things done, then do what you want." Aiden McClure

"Embrace the last moments of high school." Lily Meulemans

"Find something you love, and enjoy it." Cienna Flemal

"Remember you still have to have a good GPA." Liliana Monson

"Talk to teachers to make plans to help." Regina Candlere

"Please consider your grades and education!! It's never worth it to skip." Simone Thao

"Take classes you like; remember, it's the last time you'll be in high school." Orlando Orozco

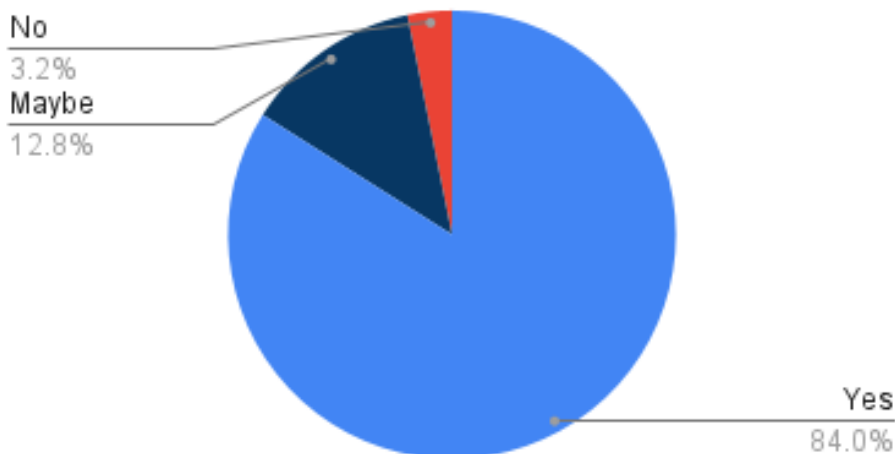
"Keep showing up, you'll get through it." Olivia Bartel

"Don't focus on how long you have until graduation. Stay locked in." Andrew Shellabarger

"Find one thing that makes you want to go to school, a certain class or friends, any little thing." Gabrielle Mueske

Hence, this year's senior class largely recognized senioritis at East, offering remedies from sleep and caffeine, to graduation, to a busy schedule to make the final push through. Hopefully, their words of advice will serve to cure future Patriots with senioritis and many others too.

## Count of Is Senioritis a Real Thing?



# CROSSROADS

## Reflection on Junior Year

Often described as the most challenging and transformative year in a high school student's journey, junior year isn't just another grade; it's the year where everything begins to shift. It's filled with moments of routine and preparing for what may come next. With pressure from grades, tests, and plans, students find themselves at a crossroad. Full of excitement. Full of stress. It's the point of life where students figure out not only what they're capable of, but also who they're becoming.

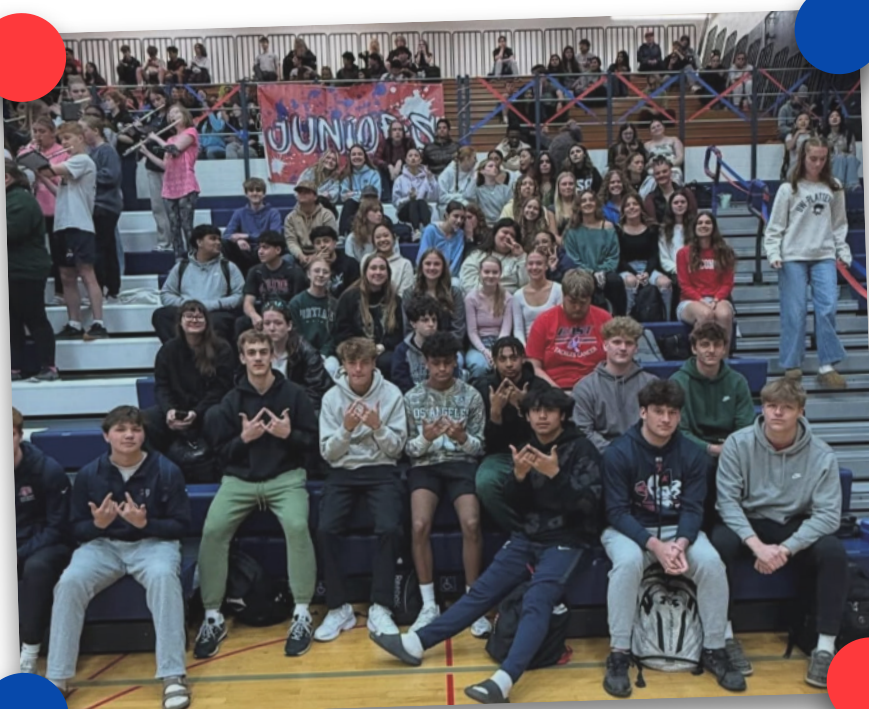
The workload intensifies as many students are taking on AP classes, honors, or dual-enrollment courses. These classes challenge students not just academically, but mentally and emotionally. Junior year is also known as "testing season." The ACT is the biggest test all juniors take, and it dominates the academic calendar when it rolls around. To be fair, I remember buying the ACT book and working on it for weeks on end. It became the number one thing I did when I got home. I would spend an hour or two on that book, and when I look back, it was so draining. I also remember students asking teachers, "What's considered a good ACT score?" as if the answer was always going to be the same; in fact, it never was.

However, junior year isn't only about academics. It's also a time for self-discovery. It's the time when students ask, "What comes next?" They begin to think about what may come after high school. College visits, career fairs, and some time spent researching majors or universities begin to take up time. College applications, resumes, and the importance of extracurricular involvement are introduced. It takes a bit of time, and I know many of us are still considering specific colleges, universities, or careers. The paths are endless when questioning what we want to do in the future, that's not so far around the corner. Sometimes, being asked about what we want to be or what we plan to do after graduation will always be something most of us are tired of hearing.



Junior year is also full of opportunities. Many students take leadership roles in clubs or sports. These roles come with responsibility, but it helps with confidence and teamwork, providing one with a sense of purpose. Others find a new passion or reconnect with old ones. Some students take on jobs or internships, gaining real-world experience and learning how to manage time outside of the classroom. I know that being part of clubs and activities, such as participating in theater or student council, taught me much more than a simple class can, things like self-management and organization. There's a sense of independence and maturity as students begin to realize they're capable of more than they once thought. It provides a period of personal growth and new beginnings. Ultimately, this helps shape who we become. It's also probably one of the most important things that matter about high school life, as the pressure and focus on academics are only a few chapters that fill up our lives. Truly, it's the things we learn from growth that will stick with us, and when most of us are older, there will be more important things to worry about.

But by the end of the year, students have a clearer vision of what their future may be like. Juniors learn from mistakes, discover strengths, and lay out the work for senior year. A test of endurance, maturity, and self-awareness. A year that pushes students to grow and challenges them to think ahead, hoping it helps shape the path they may take.



- Cynthia Vang



# EAST



# What's up, Frosh & Sophomores!

## Reflections and Projections

Here are some questions to think about before/after this year ends!

### Academics:

1. What were your biggest academic successes this year, and what did you learn about them?
2. What was the most challenging academic subject for you, and how did you overcome it?
3. How do you feel about your grades and academic performance this year?
4. What would you recommend to your fellow freshmen about academics?

### Personal:

1. What is one way you surprised yourself this year?
2. Are there any new passions and hobbies that you picked up along the way this year?
3. What is one thing you are proud of accomplishing this year?
4. What is the nicest thing someone has done for you this year?

### Future:

1. What do you wish to accomplish in your junior or senior year?
2. What are some key things that you've learned this year that will shape your future decisions?
3. What are things you can do to reach your future job?

- Yuna Lee

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# No More Encores

And cut! This concludes this school year's drama club season, which included productions of *Les Misérables (School Edition)* in the fall and *Sense and Sensibility* in the spring. These shows brought a great amount of hard work and dedication from the cast, crew, pit orchestra students, and the directors.

*Les Misérables*, an all-singing musical, was an awesome challenge for our actors as there was music to learn and choreography to nail down, so they could perform it all to an amazing audience, which the Patriot Players are very grateful for. This musical gave not just a great opportunity for the actors, but also the crew as the set was built for not just looks but also sturdiness as some certain characters had to meet their end on the barricade. Additionally, this year the Drama Club opened up the opportunity for students to join the pit orchestra and play during the show, which was a great learning experience for students. Patriot Players' spring play was *Sense and Sensibility*, a Jane Austen play that follows the story of the Dashwood sisters, Elinor and Marianne, who represent sense and sensibility. This play taught the actors the style and language of eighteenth-century England and worked through new acting techniques as the process continued.

Of course, all good things must come to an end. The Patriot Players had to say farewell to the senior members as they took the final bow of their high school drama club careers. The seniors, Hannah DeCleene, Anthony Lindenstruth, Ransom Webster, Ace Wells, and Brynn Wilson made memories that'll last a lifetime whether they dedicated themselves to theater since freshman year or only senior year.



Patriot Players Class of 2025: David Brewer, Hannah DeCleene, Luci Huebner, Sadie Kraft, Anthony Lindenstruth, Parker Schefe, Kalayna Small, Ransom Webster, Ace Wells, Hannah Williamson & Brynn Wilson.

*Hannah DeCleene* - "I joined theater to get involved in something. I kept coming back because I genuinely enjoy performing and found something I can see myself continuing throughout my life. I would say just try it out for theater, if you have the drive for it, but don't go into it with the mindset of just being there. You will have to give energy individually in order to not bring down the whole group."

*Anthony Lindenstruth* - "Theater has taught me to be confident in my choices. Sometimes you try something silly and it doesn't work out, but those mistakes are not something to be ashamed of. You don't learn unless you try, and it's never as embarrassing as you convince yourself it is. Drama Club opens a space for you to make those mistakes in a safe place without judgment. There is a space for every person in theater, and the community is a great one to be a part of. From building, costuming, sound, and lights, to acting, there are many opportunities to take advantage of and friends to make along the way."

*Ransom Webster* - "This year I really grew closer with the directors and was able to see them as people. My favorite memory is probably having fun conversations with Katana, one of the costumers, while she was doing my hair. Every conversation I've had with the cast and crew has been something that has shaped me into the person I am, and put a smile on my face. Sadly, theater isn't for everyone. But if you enjoy acting like someone else or doing impressions- even making up little characters that you do with your friends, I would highly recommend it. It's a ton of fun and you get to meet some of the kindest and most encouraging people at East."

*Ace Wells* - "When I saw other people having fun on stage at the PAC, it made me want to join in. I then learned that this school has a theater program, and I've never joined something so fast. The community is so loving and caring. If you are even considering it, please audition! The group is so welcoming and fun. No matter who you are, we would love to have you join us."

*Brynn Wilson* - "I've learned how to keep my composure under highly stressful situations such as dramatic scene changes, intense building schedules, or overwhelming questions constantly being asked. Theater has helped me remain strong in the toughest situations! Think about that amount of time you can give up as it is a big commitment, and carefully review every aspect before your decision. What skills do you excel in and what do you enjoy? This might help you decide which part of theater you wish to be in!"

As the school year comes to a close, the members of the Patriot Players prepare for next year's productions! The 2025 fall musical is *Footloose*! We can't wait to see the progress and the outcome next year, but let's give one last farewell to the seniors!



Footloose

By Cynthia Vano & Jo Buck

# IT'S A THREEPEAT!

## Appleton East Forensics State Champions AGAIN!

This is the third year in a ROW that the Forensics team has won state in their division, giving East a "THREEPEAT"! Shout out to Isaac Moscinski and the duo of Aaron Wulf and Cole Navis on their incredible state champion win in their categories. The entire team this year has put incredible effort and hard work into their pieces, and that is how the team earns its success.

Mr. Paul Miller, Forensics head coach, described what this third win means to him and his plans going forward to next year. "I couldn't be more proud of our team. We worked hard, met all of our goals, and had a ton of fun along the way." Miller explained, "The coaches who ran this team before me were world-class. It is tough to do something that they didn't already do... and we still haven't. They won three championships from 1992-1994. But they never won four in a row." Mr. Miller has big plans for next year. "I want to complete the sweep for the class of 2026. But we'll never pull it off unless we get some new people on the team. We need some charismatic freshmen and sophomores who are unafraid to share their voices and be a part of our winning tradition. If you want to be a state champ, we would love to have you join us."

As the 2024-2025 school year concludes, the East Forensics Team will say farewell to the seniors: David Brewer, Nolan Ciske, Hannah DeCleene, Cole Navis, Kalayna Small, Ransom Webster, Ace Wells, and Aaron Wulf.

"I have had the glorious opportunity to depart from a great team who has taken state champs ELEVEN times," shared Kalayna Small. "I have done forensics for six years. . It is so great to see all these students who come into the activity, maybe not knowing what they want to do, or maybe what clubs they want to join in school, and then they join forensics and find out it's for them! Forensics is a wonderful opportunity to be part of, and I am so glad I got the opportunity to do such a thing for so many years. I love talking to the people from different schools and to people on my team, growing and learning, and meeting new people along the way."

"You might be thinking to yourself, well, all you do is talk to walls. Well, it's more than talking to walls, yeah you want to practice your piece, but the reason your piece is because you care and you want to be good," Small explains. It is amazing to see so many people care so deeply about an activity that means so much to everyone, and I just want to thank the Appleton East Forensics team for all they've done for me over the years, and I could not be more grateful to be part of such an amazing activity."

Throughout the season, the forensics team has grown stronger and preparation for next year has just gotten started. The team puts their heart and soul into this activity and it is incredibly rewarding and motivating to see a group of students and coaches so dedicated to their passion. We can't wait to see what next year brings!

**- JO BUCK**

# PATRIOT PASTA PARTY

As the year came to a close, East celebrated one final "adieu" to the students and staff who help East - the 6th Annual Patriot Pasta Party! The event on May 7, sponsored by Patriot alumni, brought better connections and community awareness with the people who make East great. Families and friends were invited to this 5:00-7:00 p.m. celebration in the commons, where all-you-can-eat spaghetti with meat or mushroom sauce, chicken cacciatore, Italian sausage, salad, garlic bread, and dessert were served. This was only \$14 (ages 11 and up) or \$5 (ages 4-10) - and a huge hit with Appleton East's food lovers.

Chef Dave Erickson, beloved retired Appleton East Social Studies teacher, created an "amazing dining experience" from his prior experience of owning a restaurant, directing the preparation and cuisine for this event. All proceeds -- \$1,600! -- went to the Patriots Pay It Forward Program. During the Patriot Pasta Party, this year's grant recipients were announced: Mr. VanSickle and Ms. Rice. Staff, students, and families are already looking forward to next year's Patriot Pasta Party.

- Ella Ranes



Thanks for 4 years of comics!

# PATRIOTS PAY IT FORWARD PRESENTS FRANK ALMOND

Best known as the longtime concertmaster of the Milwaukee Symphony Orchestra, Frank Almond has impressed audiences around the world with his passionate performances. However, what truly sets him apart is his connection to one of the most well-known instruments in classical music: the Lipiński Stradivarius.

Crafted in 1715 by Antonio Stradivari, the Lipiński violin has passed through the hands of famous musicians, becoming an icon in its own right. Mr. Almond played this legendary instrument for many years, treating it not just as a tool but as a piece of living history. In 2014, the violin was stolen in a dramatic armed robbery that shocked the classical music world. Fortunately, it was recovered soon after, and Mr. Almond continued to share its voice with the world.

Thanks to a grant from the Patriots Pay It Forward Program, an initiative that supports unique and non-standard classroom experiences, the Appleton East Orchestra had the incredible opportunity to spend a day learning from Mr. Almond. His visit helped students prepare for their May concert and left a lasting impact on many of them.

"It was such a cool experience," said Katie Doell. "I learned so much that day and would love to do something like this again."



Many students appreciated how approachable and down to earth Mr. Almond was. "Very personable," one student said.

Others praised his sense of humor and ability to connect with students. "Very kind and great at selfies," another added. "Such a fun and talented guy. He was very helpful teaching us new playing skills and also told us the best stories!!" said Jo Buck.



Evan Marks remarked, "Incredibly fun guy. I could feel my skills improving while working with Frank." Another student summed it up simply: "Great experience! Super cool stories—nice to hear about his experience and how he got started."

Mr. Almond's impact extended beyond music technique. Mr. Heckner, the orchestra teacher at Appleton East, noted that one of the most meaningful parts of the day was hearing Mr. Almond speak about his personal journey with music. He shared how he once took a break from playing the violin before rediscovering his love for it and returning to the instrument. "It was nice to hear that you can put a pause on something you enjoy and come back to it later," Mr. Heckner said. "It speaks to the fact that no one's journey through life is a straight line—even a high-level professional."

Mr. Heckner's biggest takeaway was the importance of keeping music as a lifelong joy. "That sounds really basic, but Mr. Almond talked about how he stopped playing for a while, then realized it was what he enjoyed doing, and was able to come back and have music in his life again. Students hopefully can appreciate that they are building a lifelong skill—something they can enjoy even after they are done with music as a school activity."

Frank Almond's visit was more than just a workshop, and it was a reminder of the power of music, the value of persistence, and the importance of staying connected to what we love. His presence at Appleton East left students not only more skilled, but more inspired.



- Cynthia Vang

# the courier

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*The Courier, Appleton East's student newspaper, is written, edited, and distributed by Patriot students and staff. \*Good luck, seniors!*

## Editors

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Jo Buck

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## Contributors

Grace Boe: Senior Advice and Senioritis: Fact or Fiction

Lila Bornemann: Senior Reflection

Jo Buck: Forensics Threepart

Jo Buck & Cynthia Vang: Drama Farewell

Yuna Lee: Freshmen & Sophomores Reflective Questions

Liliana Monson: Comic

Ella Ranes: Pasta Party

Cynthia Vang: Frank Almond

**WEDNESDAY, MAY 28**

**GRADUATION REHEARSAL & SENIOR/STAFF BREAKFAST**

**8:45AM, MEET IN PATRIOT GYM**

**"SENIOR SEND-OFF"**

**2:00PM, EAST CLUSTER ELEM. SCHOOLS  
- WEAR YOUR CAP & GOWN!**

**SENIORS REPORT FOR PREP**

**5:30PM, MEET WITH ADVISORY**

**GRADUATION CEREMONY**

**6:30PM, PATRIOT GYM**

**POST-GRAD PARTY**

**CHECK-IN BY 10:00PM, ENDS MIDNIGHT**