

THE JAMS JOURNAL

JOHN ADAMS MIDDLE SCHOOL

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Pg. 5: Oh, The Shows You'll See: JAMS brings Seussical the Musical to Life

Pg. 8: Caught Outside the Classroom: Students see staff beyond school walls

Pg. 16: Locked Up Debate: Students challenge decision on Yondr Pouches

Pg. 20: Kindness Goes Viral: A smile a day keeps negativity away



CHASING GLORY AT THE DANA CUP
Four JAMS students compete in global tournament (pg. 2)



STUDENTS TAKE A STAND
Voices rise against ICE (pg. 4)



TREE TROUBLE AHEAD
Invasive bug spreads statewide (pg. 6)



SAFETY HEROES
How did the students cross the road? (pg. 13)

JAMS Athletes Shine at the Dana Cup

From intense summer training to a championship win in Denmark, four JAMS students proved their hard work can travel across the world

By KAHLAN ROBERTS & MARY PHAM

While most spent last summer relaxing at home or out with friends, a few spent their summer competing on an international stage in Denmark. Among those few, were four students from JAMS, **Angelica Huang, Scarlett Mann, Josephine Browning, and Isabella Lopez.** The games played in Denmark, were part of the Dana Cup, which is a soccer tournament that brings youth soccer teams around the world to compete against one another. This opportunity however, took the four girls and their teammates through scrimmages and a selection process that chose the four girls and a few other teammates to represent their school and team at the Dana Cup.

As the selections were made on who would play in the Cup, the girls had to go through months of training in the summer. The training involved playing with different teams and even boys from other local teams since the boys were very physical and helped them learn the skills they would need when playing in Denmark. Their coach was also giving the girls constant feedback, while also pushing them to play their hardest in either the scrimmages or games that they played. Seventh grader Josephine B. said, "I felt nervous whenever we practiced, but it eventually got easier since me and my team were all doing it together." All this training proved to be helpful, since 8th grader Scarlett M. said, "Our coaches were really hard on us, but they believed in us and they knew we were capable of winning, since the work showed when we were playing in Denmark."

While waiting for their games to start, all four girls said that they felt proud of themselves for getting this far

into the tournaments and its games. Scarlett M. said, "It felt nerve wracking since we had to walk out like a professional team into the big stadium, and I didn't want to disappoint my team and myself for playing poorly." Meanwhile, Isabella L. said that she felt, "energetic, knowing that there was a bigger game that they had to win afterwards." Winning the trophy, however, was unexpected for the girls and their teammates. This was because even before they stepped onto the field, they all believed that they could win and come back home with a big trophy and their medals.

Other than playing their games in Denmark, the girls also visited the different places and ate the local Danish food. Angelica H. said, "We visited a museum that was shaped like a castle." The museum she said was about vikings and their history in Denmark. Exploring around Denmark was just one thing the girls did. According to Isabella L. they also visited Tivoli Gardens, which is an amusement park in Denmark. While at the park, she said, "The food court was really big, and it had a lot of options."

JAMS gives these girls a huge congratulations for winning the cup, and representing our school globally. Not only did these girls go through intense training, but they also proved themselves fully capable of their abilities on the field. "It was a very memorable experience for me," Josephine B. said. From every moment of training to the final whistle of the game's ending, the emotion and love that these girls have for the game is truly unmatched. There is a great lesson to be taken away for all of the students at JAMS; to work hard at the things you love and to follow your dreams.

Isabella L. prepares to kick the winning goal.



Scan the QR code to watch the players in action.





Josephine B. blocks an opponent from the other team while Angelica H. gets ready to shoot a goal.



As her team walks off the field, soccer star Angelica H. proudly holds her team's winning trophy.



After the girls age division ended, the soccer stars and their coach gathered for a photo and interview with their medals and trophy.



While in Denmark, the JAMS athletes explored famous Danish landmarks and soaked in the culture alongside their teammates, turning the trip into more than just a tournament.



JAMS Students Earn Climate Essay Honors

By JAMS JOURNAL STAFF



Hailey Noshko
8th grade

WINNER

Two students from JAMS are getting major recognition for their climate writing. Hailey Noshko (8th grade) and Harrison McGee (6th grade) were honored in the Students Speak Out for Climate Action contest. Their essays were selected for presentation at the Green Schools Conference on February 17. Hailey was named a winner, and Harrison earned an honorable mention. Both wrote about why young people want leaders to act now on climate issues.

Hailey's essay delivers a direct message to adults in charge. "We are running out of time, and my generation knows it," Hailey wrote. She explained that students are not ignoring the problem and want real change, not small gestures. She added, "Treat our input like it



Hailey N. delivers her speech at the Green Schools Conference in San Diego on February 17th. Photo: Ms. Rattan

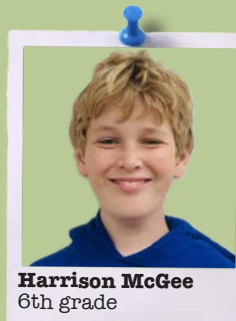
matters, for it does." Her piece calls for schools to teach climate science in active ways, invite experts, and give student groups real decision power and real budgets for projects.

We are running out of time, and my generation knows it.

Hailey Noshko
8th grade

Harrison shared a personal story about evacuating during the Palisades Fire. "In January of 2025, I watched flames flicker just a few miles from my family's house in Santa Monica," Harrison wrote. He described

packing up, breathing smoky air, and thinking about his pet snake left behind. He explained that disasters are becoming more frequent and intense. "Even one person, however small they may be, can make a huge difference," he wrote



Harrison McGee
6th grade

HONORABLE MENTION

Achievements like these show how JAMS students turn concern into action and ideas.

Students Speak Up: January 30th Walkout at JAMS

By JAMS JOURNAL STAFF

Students at JAMS participated in a student walkout to protest against ICE and the current administration in the United States. Earlier that day, students created their posters during lunchtime, carefully writing messages that shared their thoughts and concerns. During 5th period, a group of students walked out to the field to peacefully express their opinions. The atmosphere felt serious but calm. Students sat together, held their signs high, and used their voices in a respectful way.

According to JAMS Principal Dr. Chacon, the school did not organize the protest, but students do have the right to express themselves peacefully. In a message to staff, she explained,



During the statewide ICE protests, JAMS students participated by making signs and walking out on to the field to raise their voices. Photos: Teddy Pesapane and Francesca Nitti



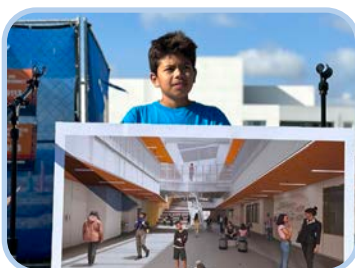
"While we are not organizing a protest, we also cannot prevent students from peacefully exercising their rights within school expectations." She also made it clear that students needed to remain on the field, be supervised, and stay non-disruptive. Administration worked to make sure students were safe while instruction continued.

After the walkout, Dr. Chacon thanked teachers for their flexibility and professionalism. She shared, "Our priority in that moment was balancing student safety, student voice, and instructional continuity." Even though it was a last minute situation, the event showed that students can stand up for what they believe in while keeping things peaceful and respectful at school.

JAMS Breaks Ground on New STEM Building

By JAMS JOURNAL STAFF

On January 23rd, JAMS officially broke ground on its brand new STEM building, and it was a huge moment for the entire campus. A small group of students, including ASB co-presidents, put on hard hats and grabbed real shovels to scoop up the first piles of dirt. When the dirt flew into the air, it felt like the future of JAMS was lifting off right there in the quad. Classes were invited to come by to witness the milestone and be part of the celebration. The ceremony was even more special because SM-MUSD Superintendent Dr. Shelton was there, along



JAMS students and staff participate in the groundbreaking of the new STEM building. Photos: Elden Fur



with other important leaders from the school district, showing their support for JAMS and its students.

Dr. Chacon shared that the new STEM building will include six classrooms, a makerspace, and an engineering lab with a robotics field. She explained that this building is an exciting investment in students, sustainability, and the development of a strong STEM identity at JAMS. With district leaders present and the community cheering it on, it was clear this was more than just construction. One thing is certain, JAMS is growing and the future looks brighter than ever.

Andrew Lee's Inspiring Achievement



By MARY PHAM

Andrew Lee, an 8th grader at JAMS, was recently honored with the ACSA Region 14 Every Student Succeeding Award, and it is easy to see why. This award recognizes students who face serious challenges and keep pushing forward. Andrew was born with CHARGE Syndrome, a rare genetic condition that affects different parts of the body. He had open heart surgery when he was six days old and spent much of his early childhood in hospitals, working closely with doctors and therapists to reach important milestones.

Andrew did not let those challenges stop him. Instead, he became a leader and an advocate for others. In first grade, he gave presentations to his classmates about his cochlear implants and hearing loss. He has also spoken to older students and even the school district board about accessibility and inclusion. With his service dog, Jango, he helps others understand why service animals are important. Andrew was also selected to represent Region 14 at the ACSA Leadership Summit in November, where one outstanding student from each of the 19 regions is chosen to attend.

At JAMS, Andrew takes general education classes and stays active on campus. He has written for the JAMS Journal, volunteered with animal organizations, and joined jogathons and therapy programs. His teachers describe him as positive, hardworking, and inspiring. Andrew says this award proves that persistence can turn challenges into achievements.



Andrew Lee proudly receives his ACSA Every Student Succeeding award.

Ellie Pash as a Wickersham Brother

Isabel King as Mrs. Mayor

Eloise Alexopoulos as the Grinch

“Oh the thinks you can think, oh the thinks you can think, if you’re willing to try...”

As you jump into the world of Dr. Seuss, expect sharp dance moves, harmonious songs, and a peek behind the curtain of a magical theatre production. Most people have read a Dr. Seuss book at least once, but have you heard of the musical Seussical Jr. and the story it tells?

This show follows Horton the Elephant, who puts his heart into protecting the tiny families of WhoVille. When he discovers a speck of dust and hears a small voice, he believes people are living there and refuses to let anyone harm it. Along the way, Horton faces challenges from Mayzie, the Wickersham brothers, and the Sour Kangaroo, while forming meaningful friendships with Gertrude and Jojo. Through every obstacle, Horton proves that kindness and compassion are always the right choice.

Many people worked hard to choose this musical and bring it to life. Chad Scheppner, director of Theatre 31 and every production since 2013, helped select Seussical Jr. Ms. Beeman, the other producer, also plays a huge role. Chad shared that the show “is ultimately uplifting and fun, with great positive messages and teaching points throughout.”

Playing these colorful characters is not easy, especially when they are animals. Actors must move and sound like their roles while singing, dancing, and remembering cues. Cece Hurwitz explained, “Acting as an animal is a hard task, because when you are already thinking of your acting, dancing, cues, and singing, truly embodying an animal is tough. For acting as an animal you have to think of the pitch of your voice, accent, body movements, and thoughts.” Her experience shows how much effort goes into every

performance.

The cast is not alone. Tech and design students are working hard to build sets, create costumes, and prepare lighting and sound. Some even give up part of their spring break to help. Alex Choi says, “I think the hardest part for sure is the two week tech and dress rehearsal, where you have to stay at school until 8:00 PM Monday through Friday. Even though it feels

long, it’s definitely worth it in the end.”

With support from choreographers Katey Mushlin, Hydeia Muhammad, Lexi Pearl, and Jordan Omeish, along with vocal directors Ms. Blanchard, Jesse Spike, and Rachel Lamell, this production truly comes together as one big team effort.



By OLIVIA PRATHER & MAKENA HORWITZ



Eighth grader Saskia H. practices her lines as the Cat in the Hat in the performing arts theatre.

Photo: Olivia Prather

Meet the Cast



Saskia Heller



Cat in the Hat



Soleil McGene-Mitchell



Charley McCain



Horton the Elephant



Sophie Coil



Alice Roberts



Jojo



Noor Kavar



Cece Hurwitz



Gertrude



Elodie Barker



Dakota Graves



Mayzie



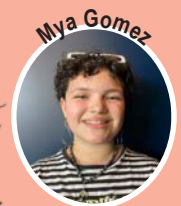
Mira Shah



Rosie Mollo



Sour Kangaroo



Mya Gomez

Tiny Beetle, Big Trouble



Student research helps scientists with monitoring the invasive Shot Hole Borer

By ELDEN FUR

The invasive shot hole borer beetle is a tiny insect causing major damage to trees across California. These beetles drill small, round holes into trees to lay their eggs and introduce a harmful fungus that causes a disease called Fusarium dieback. The disease blocks the flow of water and nutrients inside the tree, weakening branches and sometimes killing the entire tree which makes the threat serious for neighborhoods, parks, and natural forests.

If infected trees are not treated early, they can become what experts call amplifiers. That means thousands of beetles reproduce inside one dying tree, then spread outward and attack nearby trees. This creates safety risks such as falling limbs, higher fire danger, and habitat loss for wildlife. At Tapia Park within Malibu Creek State Park, about 70 trees have already been removed to slow the spread.

One major challenge is limited staffing. JAMS science teacher Ms. Rattan explained, "The state park only has 3 scientists across all 22 of their parks, so they are not staffed to be able to survey trees to look for early signs of beetle infestation." Because experts cannot inspect every tree, scientists launched a community science effort where students help gather field data and report warning signs. Students survey trees and send their findings to park scientists, who then investigate further. JAMS science teachers Ms. Rattan and Ms. Jurewicz are helping lead this effort with their students.

Students are trained to exam-

ine overall tree health first. Ms. Rattan said they assess "height, percentage of green vs. brown leaves, presence of branch dieback, condition of the soil and canopy." They are also taught to watch for specific infestation clues. She noted that students look for

"holes in trees, different beetle species drill different size and shaped holes, bleeding or staining, foam, frass, missing bark, hollows and cavities." Students use a survey sheet with pictures so their observations line up with real research standards.

During a campus survey, students found real signs of possible infestation. Ms. Rattan reported that seventh graders **Sam Waterstone** and **Emmett Gibbons** identified a tree that might be infected. She said, "One tree has an area of pretty severe bleeding and staining." Other student observations included

fungus on leaves, missing bark, and many holes of different sizes. One discovery found a tree that had active, live larva inside its bark. An arborist is now being consulted to confirm the infection and plan next steps.

Early detection is critical. Ms. Rattan warned, "If this particular beetle is not treated early, it spreads very quickly. If the tree dies as a result of the infection, it becomes an amplifier. This means that thousands of beetles leave the tree to infect nearby trees." With careful student surveys and fast reporting, students are helping spot trouble early and give local trees a better chance to survive.



What To Look For
Signs that a tree may be infected

- TINY ENTRY HOLES**
 - Perfectly round holes - Less than 1 millimeter wide
 - About the size of the tip of a ballpoint pen
- STRANGE TREE SYMPTOMS**
 - Look for unusual signs on the bark: Dark, wet staining
 - Thick, sticky gumming - White, powdery substance - Fine sawdust material called frass
- DIEBACK**
 - Dead branches - Wilting leaves - Sections of the tree that look dry or lifeless



Sam W. helped identify a tree on the JAMS campus that showed signs of the Invasive Shot Hole Borer. Photo: Elden Fur



Two trees on the JAMS campus show clear signs of infestation, including, larvae, tiny round entry holes in the bark, and staining caused by the fungus. Photos: Ms. Rattan

BY THE NUMBERS

Sources: University of California Agriculture & Natural Resources, UC David, OC Parks

2012

The beetle was first discovered in Los Angeles that year, then spread to multiple nearby counties.

1mm

The one millimeter holes they drill into trees are smaller than the tip of a ballpoint pen.

Dozens

of tree species are attacked: Sycamore, Cottonwood, Willow, Valley Oak, Engelmann Oak, Box Elder, Avocado, White Alder trees.

MEDICINE

Dr. David Satcher is a medical doctor who earned both an MD and a PhD in cell biology at Case Western University. During his career, he worked to improve oral health, mental health, and issues related to obesity. His accomplishments led him to become the first Black Surgeon General of the United States. His leadership and research made a lasting impact on public health.



Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett-Helaire is one of the most important medical scientists working today. She was one of the lead researchers who helped develop the Moderna Covid 19 vaccine. She has received major awards, including Time Hero of the Year in 2021 and the Golden Goose Award in 2020. After studying at the University of Maryland Baltimore County and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, she earned a PhD in microbiology and immunology and later became a professor at Harvard Medical School.



ARCHITECTURE

Sir David Adjaye is known for major community focused projects across the United Kingdom and beyond. In 2000, he founded Adjaye Associates. His designs reflect culture and identity through modern style. His best known buildings include the National Museum of African American History and Culture, the Abraham Lincoln Family House, and the Museum of Contemporary Art Denver. His work has inspired many young architects.



Diébédo Francis Kéré is a German architect known for sustainable design. He uses local materials and creative building methods to make structures that work well with the environment. In 2022, he became the first Black architect to win the Pritzker Architecture Prize, the highest honor in architecture. One of his key ideas is double roof ventilation, which cools buildings without electricity. He often works with local communities to make his projects more meaningful and useful.



ART

Kara Walker is known for large silhouette artworks that explore racial tension and history. She was born in California and moved to Georgia at age 13, where she first experienced the themes that later inspired her art. Her well known works include *Gone: An Historical Romance, A Subtlety*, and *Fons Americanus*.



Kehinde Wiley is famous for large, realistic portraits of Black subjects placed against bold, colorful backgrounds. His subjects often wear modern street clothing, which contrasts with traditional portrait styles. His portrait of Barack Obama was the first presidential portrait painted by an African American artist for the National Portrait Gallery.



MODERN BLACK EXCELLENCE

A look into modern black influential figures for **Black History Month** and their significance in today's world.

By ELDEN FUR

Throughout the years, Black figures have greatly contributed to the modern world. Without them, many things we see as normal today would not exist. History textbooks often focus on people from the past, but many important Black leaders are making an impact right now. Modern Black influencers in medicine, science, music, literature, art, and architecture continue to shape our world in powerful ways.

LITERATURE

Colson Whitehead is a major author who has won the Pulitzer Prize twice, one of the highest honors in American literature. Only four writers have ever won this award for fiction more than once, and he is one of them. He writes in several genres, including historical fiction and crime novels. His wide range of styles and topics helped earn his recognition.



Jesmyn Ward is a two time National Book Award winner known for writing about the lives of Black families in the American South. She is the only woman and the first Black author to win the National Book Award for Fiction twice, for *Salvage the Bones* and *Sing, Unburied, Sing*. Personal loss in her life helped inspire the emotional depth found in her books.



SCIENCE

Mae Jemison became the first Black woman to go to space. When she was younger, some teachers discouraged her interest in science, but she used that as motivation. She entered Stanford at age 16 and later earned her medical degree from Cornell University. She also worked on vaccine research at the CDC. Her education and experience helped her earn a place at NASA, where she made history by traveling into space.



Neil deGrasse Tyson is a well known astrophysicist who helps people understand science and space. Through his show *StarTalk*, he mixes science, pop culture, and humor to make complex ideas easier to understand. A Harvard graduate, he has written best-selling books and won many awards. He also helped explain Pluto's reclassification to the public through science communication.



MUSIC

Sheku Kanneh Mason is a rising cello star who has received international praise. In 2016, he won BBC Young Musician of the Year and became the first Black winner of the competition. He later performed at the wedding of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle in 2018. Music runs in his family, since all seven of his siblings are also professional musicians.



Jessie Montgomery is a Grammy Award winning violinist and composer. In 2025, she was named Classical Woman of the Year by NPR's Performance Today. Her piece *Rounds*, written for pianist Awadagin Pratt, won a Grammy for Best Classical Contemporary Composition. She also supports nonprofit groups and education programs for Black string players and helps teach young musicians.



Seeing Teachers Out in the Wild

The awkward and surprising moments that change how students see teachers outside of the classroom

By IRIS GRUNCA & DANIELA KADISH

Whether you are walking home after a long day or grabbing snacks at the grocery store, there is always a chance you will run into someone you recognize. For many kids, the one person they secretly hope not to see is a teacher. Many students said they usually say hello and hope it does not feel awkward. Still, moments like these remind us that teachers have lives outside of school, including families, friends, hobbies, and favorite movies.

Running into a teacher in public can feel shocking, funny, or awkward. Some students described it as seeing a movie character step off the screen and into real life. For some, it feels like a nightmare. For others, it feels like a rare opportunity.

One reason students do not always love these encounters is because it is their free time. The last thing they expect while buying chips is the person who assigns homework. But sometimes it turns out better than expected. **Amilia Casillas**, 7th grader, explained, "The benefits of seeing a teacher in public are that you can ask questions that are embarrassing to ask in class, and the drawbacks are they start talking and you have no idea what to say to them, so it gets awkward."

Seeing a teacher outside of school can change how you view them. Maybe you think a teacher is strict and serious all the time. Then you spot them at the park giving their nephew a piggyback ride, laughing. Suddenly, they seem different.

Elizabeth Pash, another 7th grader, shared a moment she will never forget. "One time, I saw the strictest teacher from my elementary school at the movies. The movie was 'The Wild Robot,' and this teacher was

known to be emotionless and cold. Well I guess not, because she was sobbing, and tears streaming out of her eyes. I looked away immediately."

Her story proves something important. Teachers have real emotions and interests like everyone else. They don't spend their entire lives planning lessons or grading papers. They might love animated movies, traveling, or going to the gym.

Teachers see these moments differently. Many said spotting students in public usually makes them smile. Teachers reported seeing students at grocery stores, airports, gyms, and while traveling.

Mr. Miranda remembered lifting weights next to a student at 24 Hour Fitness. **Ms. Levin** once ran into a student in another

country, which made the world feel small. **Dr. Chacon** explained that student reactions vary. Some feel excited, others nervous, depending on who they are with.

Teachers also notice the shy waves and quick eye contact before a student suddenly becomes very interested in a cereal box. **Ms. Gutierrez** said teachers often wait for students to say hello first. One message came through clearly. Teachers are happy to be recognized. **Ms. Buccioni** said she enjoys living in the same community as her students, and **Mr. Saling** added that these quick interactions help teachers feel more connected.

So what goes through your mind when you see a teacher outside of school? Is it too awkward to say hi, or is it worth the risk? Maybe you just notice they are ordering another iced coffee. Or maybe you realize something bigger.

Teachers have lives beyond the classroom. Sometimes one unexpected sighting at the movies or the grocery store is enough to remind us that they are human too.

What is something that you personally experienced while seeing a teacher / student outside of school?

"I see students with their friends going to get ice cream or riding bikes around town, and it's fun to see kids in their element. It's so fun to see where their lives have taken them!"

-Ms. Duff, Humanities teacher

"It was a teacher from my old school and I tripped and the teacher saw it and it was really embarrassing!"

-Kaeden M., 7th grade

"I was at a movie theater with my daughters and I saw students. They yelled 'Ms. Aguilar!' across the theater and waved at me. They were on their phones during the movie and I really wanted to go over and tell to pay attention, but I didn't."

-Ms. Aguilar, assistant principal

"They dress different, and some teachers are way nicer outside of school, and sometimes they have their children with them."

-Jalynn C., 7th grade

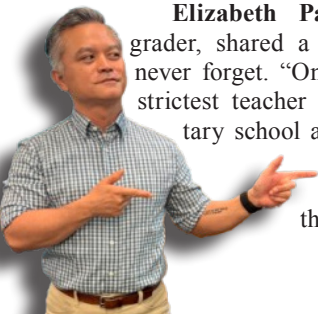
"I have a former student who works at a restaurant and gives me free cookies."

-Mr. Saling, English teacher

"I haven't seen any teachers in public from this school, but from my old school I saw my old principal from my elementary school at a store."

-Amilia C., 7th grade

Many teachers said seeing students outside of school made them feel more connected, even if it did not change how they teach



MALIBU STATE PARK

CAUGHT ON & OFF CAMPUS

JAMS students have been busy both on and off campus. At Malibu Creek State Park, they hiked scenic trails and learned in the fresh air. At The Broad, they explored bold contemporary art and new ideas. Back at school, the Adventure Zone fundraiser brought high energy challenges for a great cause. During Black History Month activities, Krump Kidz hit JAMS, owning the auditorium with high energy and sharp moves. The celebration continued with Lunar New Year, welcoming the Year of the Horse, a symbol of strength and determination, as students learned about traditions, shared stories, and kicked off the new year with pride.



ADVENTURE ZONE



Photos: Ms. Beeman, Dr. Eure, Ms. Rattan, Ms. Jurewicz, Ms. Joyce, Mr. Miranda, Ms. Check

BROAD MUSEUM

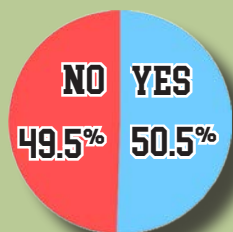
LUNAR NEW YEAR



KRUMP KIDZ



Results from the survey show that students are divided on classroom AI use, with roughly 50% in favor and 50% against.



AI PERSPECTIVES

Across all grade levels, students were most concerned about cheating and losing real learning.

Many students who supported AI still wanted clear limits and rules. Seventh and eighth graders were more likely to talk about independence, creativity, and long term effects, including the environment and future jobs.

A common theme was that AI works best as a helper or tutor, not a replacement for student thinking.

BY THE NUMBERS

Source: JAMS Journal Student Survey

7th graders showed the strongest opposition. About two-thirds said NO.

1 out of 4 students mention AI being wrong or unreliable

Two-thirds of the YES responses say AI should be used like a tutor

All grades mentioned grammar or math help as the most acceptable uses

Should schools allow AI tools like ChatGPT for class assignments?

Some people say these AI tools can help students learn faster, improve writing, and save time. Others believe they make students too dependent on technology or make it hard for teachers to know what's real work.



"No. One of the main reasons students are assigned assignments is to show that they are capable of completing things on their own and are able to be independent. Generative AI is a lazy tool for impatient people who are incapable of doing things on their own."

Nova Morgan, 8th grade

"Yes. I sometimes use AI tools to explain math problems that my teacher did not have time to explain properly and it helps a lot. But AI uses a lot of drinkable water to answer a prompt and if it's used across the world in schools we could run out of water quickly."

Mustafa Barakzai, 8th grade



"No. AI tools such as Chat GPT will do entire assignments for students and when the students turn it in they will get a good grade, but they will not learn anything from it."

Felix Newman, 7th grade

"Yes. Students should be able to use it to help study or to use it to find information but students should not be using it to do their work."

Charlotte Lamb, 8th grade



"No. Kids today depend on AI or ChatGPT to do their work for them. This can cause them to not learn, and will eventually cause them to not try anymore, knowing AI can do it for them."

Angelique Alarcon, 7th grade

"Yes. I feel like in engineering and art, we should be able to use ChatGPT for quick questions and instructions. But other classes like science, and math, we should learn on our own."

Charles Garvin, 7th grade



"No. Schools should not allow AI tools like ChatGPT because students could easily cheat and ask for it to do their work for them."

Ruth Tariku, 6th grade

"Yes. AI can help us understand difficult topics in simpler ways and make learning feel less overwhelming. It doesn't replace effort, but it can guide us"

Lucy Sandgren, 7th grade



"No. One kid in my class used AI to write a summary and received positive praise from our teacher. The rest of us, who had used our minds, did not like how he was treated for writing a paragraph which he could not even pronounce."

Thomas Howard, 6th grade

"Yes. Not to ask for the answer, but to ask to explain; and only if a teacher says it is okay to use it."

Georgie Dixon-Harvey, 6th grade



A Voice From The Future: AI Chatting

Fast, smart, and kind of addictive, but is talking to AI actually a good thing?

By VINCE YU & EVIE GIORDANO

The distinct sound of clicking on a keyboard fills an empty room. Seconds later, a polished response appears on the screen. It feels productive and impressive. But after that first moment, a bigger question comes up. Is chatting with AI actually the best way to get answers?

There are clear benefits to using AI. It gives quick, reliable responses and helpful insights with barely any effort. All you have to do is pull out your phone and type. It speeds up research and writing, delivering detailed answers in seconds. For students, that convenience is hard to ignore.

Another advantage is that AI does not make common human mistakes like forgetting details or getting distracted. It organizes answers clearly, using bullet points, pros and cons lists, and step by step explanations. It can take complicated topics and make them easier to understand. AI also pulls information from dependable sources, including medical and college research articles, which makes it feel trustworthy.

However, there are serious concerns about AI chatting. Researchers at Brown University found that AI chatbots routinely violate mental health standards. Educator Michael Frank, a cognitive psychological sciences professor, explained, "Our results hold reliably across multiple tasks and bring together disparate aspects of human learning that neuroscientists hadn't grouped until now."

A recent survey showed that

59.2% of students are not comfortable sharing personal questions with AI. Some find the idea of talking to a robot unsettling. As JAMS student **Julian Gould-Dagan** put it, "It sounds too much like a real person." AI is also cheaper and more efficient than humans, which raises questions about whether it could replace certain roles.

“

I worry that because JAMS students are still moderately young, and AI is relatively new, there might be major issues or malfunctions with misleading users.

Ms. Check
8th Grade Counselor

Another issue is that AI chatting can be habit forming. Because it gives agreeable responses and constant positive feedback, conversations can feel easy and validating. Sometimes it might even seem more satisfying than talking

to another person. Sixth grader **Hazel Carpenter** avoids using AI for that reason. She worries that becoming too dependent on it could replace real human interaction.

The survey also showed that comfort levels vary by grade. Some students said they feel fine asking personal questions, while many others do not. Students mentioned a wide range of apps. ChatGPT was the most common, but others listed Gemini, Copilot, Sora, Claude, Perplexity, and Grok.

Overall, AI chatting has clear pros and cons. It is useful for quick, detailed answers and organized explanations. However, relying on it too much, especially for personal issues, could have social downsides. In the end, AI is probably best used for fast information, while deeper questions are better handled through real conversations and independent thinking.

The most common worries about AI are wrong information, privacy, and becoming too dependent, with some students also mentioning the affects on the environment.

BY THE NUMBERS

Sources: Pew Research Center, American Psychological Association

70%

of teens have used generative AI tools

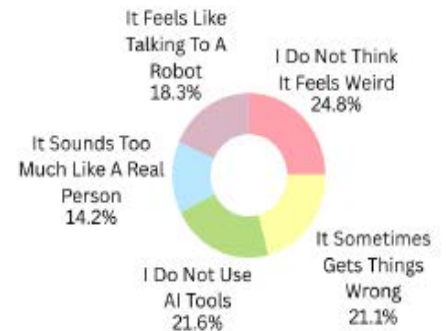
64%

of teens say they use AI chatbots

16%

of teens chat with AI every single day

What feels most weird when chatting with AI?



STUDENT OPINIONS



"I don't use AI tools because I fear I may become too dependent on it. I'm afraid it might replace human interaction."

Hazel Carpenter,
6th grade

"AI is strange because it sounds too much like a real person."

Julian Gould-Dagan,
7th grade



andia.bacaj



601 likes

@andia.bacaj The horse is literally me when the lunch bell rings #fiona.facchini #alma.badelt #yearofthehorse
 @fiona this is not a good environment for horses
 @horse neigh

mary.pham



593 likes

@mary.pham Name a more iconic duo than DiGiorno & Toll House, I'll wait. #aurora.gonzalez #perla.chavez
 @aurora.gonzalez dinner of champions
 @DiGiorno frozen aisle is the only aisle that matters

ms.joyce



436 likes

@ms.joyce Honey, I shrunk the art students #advance-dart #broadmuseum #ikea #funsize
 @leo.garcia being this tiny sucks
 @ikea assembly required, tiny students sold separately

mr.miranda



167 likes

@mr.miranda G-Money is on the other side of that rope #ross.sullivan #hugo.cruz #elihiu.castro-mendoza

Instajams

Instajams captures JAMS life the way you've never seen it: snapshots straight from campus, not the Internet.



All the comments and likes are just for laughs. (No WiFi required)

finn.callen



282 likes

@finn.callen I can hear Ms. Doloso yelling "come on kiddos!" #charlotte.lamb #adella.jimenez #PE #fitness

josie.mankiewicz



399 likes

@josie.mankiewicz Stay gold, Ponyboy! #ms.beeman #elias.oberman #theoutsiders #greasersVsocs
 @elias.oberman bro's name is really Ponyboy?
 @Sodapop.Curtis yo, that's my little brother, pal

chandler.schwartz



850 likes

@chandler.schwartz Bend it like Beckham, JAMS style #jackson.chavez #footballNOTsoccer
 @davidbeckham bruv, that's mad wicked, innit!
 @world.cup Is this JAMS or the Premier League?

olivia.prather



743 likes

@olivia.prather Is this for a grade or just for the aesthetic? A+ #eliotte.drozdz #lily.styles #science
 @ms.guirguis Measuring my patience for the weekend to finally get here

STOP

to thank your crossing guards

By ELIZABETH MELBOURNE & NOVA MORGAN

Crossing guards are a constant in most students' lives. Even if you don't walk to school, you will see them helping students from both JAMS and Will Rogers cross the street. In a recent survey, 81.2% of students said they always or often see their crossing guards when going to school, and 92.3% of people said that crossing guards were helpful to them. So, a question is raised. Why do crossing guards help kids specifically?

Crossing guards are often associated with helping kids getting across the street, but why is that? It's because crossing guards are almost always stationed at and around schools. This is due to their undeveloped depth perception skills and inexperience with traffic, which puts them at greater risk of getting injured. While rarely fatal, injuries can be very expensive and painful. To combat this, many cities implement a crossing guard system near school zones. This severely decreases civilian and driver collisions and leads to safer and easier walkways.

Crossing guards are not only there to help you cross a street but to

serve as a role model. When a crossing guard is present, it helps both pedestrians and drivers to look up and pay a bit more attention. To achieve this they have bright yellow vests and hold their iconic red stop signs, reminding people to stay vigilant and attentive. According to a 2015 study conducted by Dr. Tracy Larson at Pittsburgh University, 50% of crossing guards interviewed said communication and education would be the best way to help people understand the dangers of driving. Understanding and learning from people like crossing guards can help prevent you from getting into accidents in the future.

Crossing guards help make the community safer and more accessible. Often they can be some of the first friendly faces of the day and the last ones as you leave to go home. They help students, staff, teachers, and parents of both schools with a smile. Spreading a little kindness and joy each morning while keeping people protected. Being the little reminder to stay vigilant while walking across the street. They promote safety, education and kindness (mostly safety). Stay safe children.

Say "Hello!" to your local Crossing Guards!



Ms. Cecilia
Ocean Park & 16th St.



Mr. Rick
Pearl & 17th St.



Mr. Fozi
Pearl & 16th St.



Ms. Sylvia
Pine & 14th St.



Ms. Toni
Pearl & 14th St.



Ms. Irma
Euclid & 14th St.

If you've ever used the cross walk along Pearl and 16th Street, you've probably met the crossing guard Bernabe Cano. He managed the roads near the Performing Arts Center (PAC). Sadly, he passed away on November 2nd, 2025 due to complications with cancer.

Mr. Bernabe lived a long life of 81 years. Growing up in Morelia, Michoacán, Mexico with seven siblings, he developed a strong sense of self, which helped him serve in the Mexican military. He met his wife in 1969, and immigrated to Amer-

ica in 1978. There, he worked numerous jobs, what of which included being the lead maintenance worker at the Shangri-La hotel, for 25 years. After the hotel closed for remodeling, he lived a happy life as a crossing guard for the city of Santa Monica.

Mr. Bernabe had one daughter, three granddaughters, one great-grandson, and two dogs, all of which provided him with endless love and happiness. Bernabe will be missed deeply by all of them, as well as the community.



Bernabe G. Cano

How everyday items come in and out of the Lost & Found on a daily basis

Have you ever lost something at school? Well chances are it's been in the Lost & Found. Just take a look between classes or even after school. In fact, only 62.5% of JAMS students have checked the Lost & Found this year. And I hate to say but that's not enough. Almost every student at JAMS has at least one story about losing something at school and the Lost & Found is much more important than you think. So let me show you what the Lost & Found has to offer.

The Lost & Found is a magical place where things that were lost are found like hoodies, water bottles and maybe even AirPods. Sixth Grader **Ray Hohmeier** says, "It takes me around a day or two until I realize I've lost something." In some ways the Lost & Found could even be called a black hole. It just collects items and rarely releases them for quite a while. The person who runs the Lost & Found is Ms. Maria. She is one of the reasons why the Lost & Found is so magical. She works very hard to make sure all the belongings in the Lost & Found get to their owner. If she sees a name on an item she makes sure that it gets to its owner and if she cannot find a student who claims the item she oversees it going to a new home.

Here are some ways to keep track of your belongings so they don't end up in the black hole that is the Lost & Found. Airtags and other tracking devices are great for finding your items in case they are lost or stolen. Labels are another great way to make sure you never permanently lose an item.



By MYLES SHAW
& FINN CALLEN

Most lost items at JAMS

1. Water bottles
2. Hoodies
3. Lunch bags

Twenty-seven percent of JAMS students think that having weekly photos of the Lost & Found posted in grade level Google Classroom is another great way to prevent the Lost & Found from overflowing. "Just make sure to double check you have all your belongings every once and a while, you can also put your name on your things so that I can go though the Lost & Found and deliver them to you," said Ms. Maria, manager of the Lost & Found.

The most common things found in the Lost & Found are hoodies and water bottles but why? Most people seem to think that the reason that those two things are the most commonly lost is because of carelessness. That seems to be right. We have found that most of the reasons that people lose their hoodies and water bottles is because of the lack of caring for such belongings. We think that the reason that people don't think they need to pay much attention or take care of objects like hoodies and water bottles is because of how easy it is to get them. They are seen as "expendable" or not important unlike a phone or headphones. But you should remember to always treat your things with respect and take care of them no matter what they are.

In conclusion, you should definitely check the Lost & Found once in a while. It really is a black hole for all kinds of things. Even if you have never lost something at school, it's still cool to take a look. There are so many items in the Lost & Found that they even have to

put out coat hangers and extra bins. And remember losing things is a part of life and it is frustrating so try using methods we gave you in this article. So go take a look and you may be surprised by what you find.

The most popular solutions were name labels on items.

DRAGON DOODLES

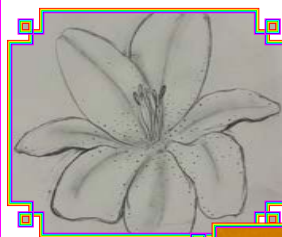


Angelica Huang
7th grade

This is a sculpture of my old family cat back in the Czech Republic, who sadly passed away a few years ago.

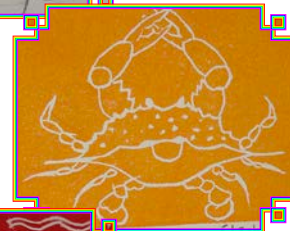
This piece was an assignment in my art class for a Dia de los

Muertos themed clay bobble head. That is why I used clay and why I chose the cat. I would like people to remember those who passed and how they will always be in our memories.



Kinsley Spencer
7th grade

Elizabeth Melbourne
8th grade



Aurora Gonzalez
8th grade



Dylan Sanchez, 8th grade



Summer Robertson, 7th grade

The small green guy that protects the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow shows up one day a year, like Santa Claus and nobody even bats an eye. Most just accept that the leprechaun is a crucial part of Saint Patrick's day, like pinching and wearing green without wondering why. Luckily, it isn't difficult to find out the truth behind all of these festive traditions.

People who don't wear green on St. Patrick's Day usually get targeted by flocks of celebrators who are more than ready to pinch them in honor of the holiday. In fact, 31% of students shared that they get pinched if they forget to wear green. "Once on St. Patrick's Day I went over to my friend's house after school and got pinched by him and all his siblings because I wasn't wearing green, it was pretty annoying," said 6th grader **Olin Carroll**. "Green became a way for the Irish officers to distinguish themselves from the British military, who are well known for their bright red uniforms."- Culture on the Edge Article. Clearly students know about the pinching tradition, but do they know the reason behind it?

Originally, in the 18th and 19th centuries, many Irish Americans believed in folklore about leprechauns, which were little trickster fairies said to guard pots of gold at the end of rainbows. People also believed leprechauns earned a living by making shoes for other fairies, and sometimes for humans too. Leprechauns would come to pinch and play tricks on the townsfolk. The people in Ireland would wear green so that they would blend into

Pinch or Get Pinched

The story behind the two most popular St. Patrick's Day traditions

By **KALIANNE LAMBERT & DELFINA CORDERO**



"I like St. Patrick's Day because I get to pinch people, like my friends and family."

-Ethan M.
7th grade



"I think pinching is a harmless joke, but you should get consent."

- Kalia B.
7th grade

their hills and fields, almost acting like a sort of "camouflage" to hide from these little tricksters. When Irish immigrants brought this story to America, they turned it into a playful tradition. They shared how every March 17th, these mischievous leprechauns are on the loose, but if one wears green, they turn "invisible" to the creatures, and this keeps one safe from pinches for another year.

This pinching tradition to some JAMS students is normal, and others are exhausted by it. Seventh grader **Elizabeth Ferrera** explained, "All of my friends come for me to pinch me and vise versa." On the other hand, eighth grader **Andrew Lee** warned, "It can hurt." Sixth grader **Ayza Sogut** had a totally different reaction and said, "It hurts my eyes and I get second-hand embarrassment," showing that even the green theme can feel like too much for some people. Students also shared what they actually wear to avoid

getting pinched, and most choices were small and easy. Socks, shoes, and accessories showed up over and over, while some students went big with head to toe green or even green underwear.

Traditions like these can become a fun way for people to express their creativity. For example, some students wear green specifically because they remember the folklore about leprechauns and want to stay safe from pinches. Getting pinched can be annoying, but pinching others can seem fun and in a way, liberating. Hopefully students will know the lore behind St Patrick's Day next time they celebrate it!

What are some ways JAMS can celebrate St. Patrick's day?

1. A pot of gold scavenger hunt

2. Green treats during lunch
3. Trading small pieces of candy

Hoop Bus Visits JAMS Campus

Photos: Elden Fur

Students at JAMS got an unexpected basketball surprise last month. During 5th period, Hoop Bus vehicles rolled onto campus as part of NBA All-Star Weekend. These were real school buses with basketball hoops attached to the front and back, turning the courts into a pop up arena. PE teachers selected about 60 students from each grade to join the interactive assembly. Participating students reported that it was energetic, loud, and inspiring.



Opinion

The Pouch Problem

Yondr Pouches: a waste of time, money, and energy?

By KAHLAN ROBERTS

Yondr Pouches are getting integrated into our school's policy system, and it seems like an unnecessary solution to a problem that does not require much attention. At JAMS, very few students are actually caught on their phones in class, and when they are, they face the consequences. There are lots of different voices about the addition of these pouches, and students at JAMS are very upset. Yondr Pouches are a waste of money and time, and our school should not have bought them.

“

I think it's important for kids to understand that we are not doing this to them, we are doing this for them.

Dr. Chacon
JAMS Principal

The current school policy for phones in place is “off and away for the day”, which almost every student has memorized by now. This rule is clear to most students, and prevents the majority from going on their phones during the school day. The few who do get caught using or distracting others with their phones during class time, are punished accordingly. Every student understands the policy, and most respect it. They shouldn't be “punished” with these pouches because of the unfortunate decisions some students make.

Our school has spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on Yondr Pouches. This is money that some students believe could have been used for better supplies, activities, or student programs instead. An article from EdSource.org states, “Students have hacked the pouches, purchased their own magnets, banged them against tables, used fake phones or have simply avoided using them altogether. Not only does this undermine the policy's effectiveness, but it also highlights a glaring oversight in anticipating student ingenuity.” There is almost a guarantee that JAMS students will break these pouches, leading the school to spend

even more money for replacements. The prices are not the only problem with these phone-locking pouches. The unlocking stations required to open the pouches at the end of the day are also very inconvenient. For the students at JAMS who have

sports, or are simply busy after school, these stations take up our precious after school time.

Other than the obvious issues that have arisen about the Yondr Pouches, students and others have much more to say. According to an article on Time.com, it states, “Many students have decried Yondr

Pouches as invasive and paternalistic, and some parents argue that phones are a safety tool, especially given the proliferation of school shootings. Some experts also worry that the money spent on Yondr could be better spent on other resources.” In many cases, guardians let their child bring their devices to school with the expectation of being able to reach them during emergency situations, or even notifying them of schedule changes. With these pouches, it would be extremely difficult for adults to be able to reach their children at JAMS.

Whether students choose to believe it or not, Yondr Pouches are going to be incorporated into school policy. Though there could've been other possible solutions, like incorporating a phone wall, or having a stricter enforcement of the current policy. Both of these options are cheaper, which save money for other things that our school may need to fund for. Nevertheless, these pouches have already been purchased, and are yet to affect all of the students on the JAMS campus.



Chat with Dr. Chacon

Dr. Chacon, JAMS Principal



When will the pouches be fully implemented at JAMS?

“We are hoping to have them in the next couple weeks. We still need to put ID cards in the pouches, just in case students misplace them. This is just so we know who the pouch belongs to and so we can return it to the student. As soon as we have the pouches ready to go, we will hold separate assemblies for each grade level. Then, the following Monday we hope that the pouches will be implemented.”

Do you believe that the pouches will fix the phone problem at JAMS?

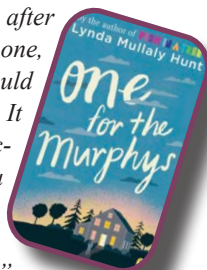
“We are trying to make as much of a distraction-free environment at JAMS as possible. When students hear the ding of their phones, they feel that pressure of needing to check the notification. It sits in students' brains and prevents them from being fully present and engaging. With the pouches, they won't feel the need to check their phones during school hours.”

How do you think students will react to the pouches?

“I think that since we've been talking about these pouches for so long, many students will just comply and live with them. I do think that there will be students who are noncompliant, but then it will have to come down to asking them why they feel it is necessary to have their phone on them.”

One for the Murphy's by Lynda Mullaly Hunt

"I love the depth of the characters and how tough Carley, the main character, is after horrid experiences no one, especially a kid, should have to go through. It gives a great perspective on life and you feel like you're going on a journey with the characters."



Sylvie Levitt
7th grade



Ms. McLaughlin
Librarian

True or False: A CIA Analyst's Guide to Spotting Fake News

by Cindy L. Otis

Although I don't like the inaccurate term "fake news," this book tells the fascinating and long history of misinformation and the impact of lies on a society. However, we also learn how to fight back and find the truth.



THE BOOKMARK

What JAMS is Reading

Source: JAMS Journal Survey 2026

Most popular genre
Students love romance and mystery books, especially series like *To All the Boys I've Loved Before*, *The Summer I Turned Pretty*, and *A Good Girl's Guide to Murder*.

Most popular series
Keeper of the Lost Cities by Shannon Messenger is a popular fantasy pick among both 6th and 7th graders.

Most popular story elements

Students enjoy books with strong emotions, twists, and relatable characters that keep them hooked.

One School, Many Ways to Learn

Why Neurodiversity Month reminds us that every brain works differently

By ELIZABETH MELBOURNE

April, known as the Mental Health Awareness month, is a time to slow down, take a breath and even educate yourself on mental health and neurodiversity. Neurodiversity means that people's brains work in different ways, and these differences are a normal part of being human. In a recent

JAMS survey teachers report learning differences in the classroom every day.



Ms. Lopez
School psychologist

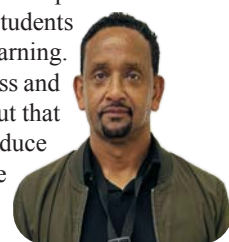
The survey asked the school psychologist and teachers how they explain neurodiversity and what students notice most. Neurodiversity means that everyone's brain works in its own style. Ms. Lopez, the school psychol-

ogist, explained it this way. "School is built one way, but brains don't all work one way," she said. Teachers compared this idea to how students organize their backpacks. Some are neat, some are crowded, and some are messy, but all of them still get students through the day. In class, learning differences often show up through reactions to noise, how students communicate ideas, and how much time or support they need. Mr.

Fizz, a special education teacher, explained that brains are as unique as personalities. "The way people receive, process, and reason is different," he said.

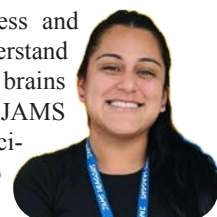
Teachers also shared what support looks like at JAMS. Many said flexible ways to complete assignments make the biggest differ-

ence. Others mentioned visual models, clear routines, and strong relationships with adults. Ms. Nario, a special education teacher, said, "Neurodiversity means that our brains work differently. Some people learn and communicate differently and that's okay." Ms. Clarke, another special education teacher, explained that students may take different paths to learning. "Their route on how they process and do things may look different, but that doesn't mean they can't produce the same product," Ms. Clarke said. Together, these responses show that support is about giving students what they need, not changing expectations.



Mr. Fizz
SAI teacher

The JAMS survey also asked how students can help make school more welcoming. Teachers agreed that patience, listening, and giving space are important. Standing up for others was also mentioned as a key behavior. Ms. Lopez said April helps students learn that differences are normal and can reduce teasing. Mr. Fizz added that listening helps students feel respected. Ms. Clarke said learning about different brains encourages kindness and empathy and helps students better understand themselves. Neurodiversity means our brains are all unique. As April continues, JAMS students can stay curious and appreciate the many different thinkers who make the school stronger.



Ms. Nario
SAI teacher



*SAI stands for Specialized Academic Instruction



Ms. Clarke
SAI teacher

Do you ever feel sluggish or lazy during the day? You might be experiencing sleep deprivation. Sleep deprivation happens when a person does not get enough sleep, which can affect mood, focus, and overall health. While this issue affects teenagers across the country, recent survey results show that many students at JAMS are dealing with it too.

According to national health data from the CDC, about six out of ten middle school students do not get enough sleep on school nights. Teens are recommended to get eight to ten hours of sleep each night, but many fall short. Not getting enough sleep has been linked to trouble concentrating, higher stress levels, and lower academic performance, making it a serious issue for students.

The results of the JAMS sleep survey reflect these national trends. Around 90 percent of JAMS students reported getting fewer than nine hours of sleep on school nights, which is below the recommended amount. A smaller group of students reported getting more sleep than suggested, showing a noticeable gap between students who are well rested and those who are not. This difference highlights how lifestyle

Not Enough Z z z 's

JAMS Students Share How Lack of Sleep Impacts Their School Day

By ALEX BENDER
& DARIEN MAHIR

choices, workload, and time management can strongly influence sleep habits. Students who get enough rest often feel more alert and motivated during the school day.

Across all grades, homework and stress were the most common reasons students stayed up late. Seventh grader **Angelique Alarcon** shared that she usually gets five to six hours of sleep and said that staying up late studying made her “tired in all classes before fourth period” and hurt her school performance. Sports and after school activities were another major reason students lost sleep. Seventh grader **Cataleya Hernandez** explained that af-

ter swim practice and working on a group project, she stayed up until midnight and felt exhausted the next day. Her experience shows how balancing schoolwork and activities can make it difficult to get enough rest.

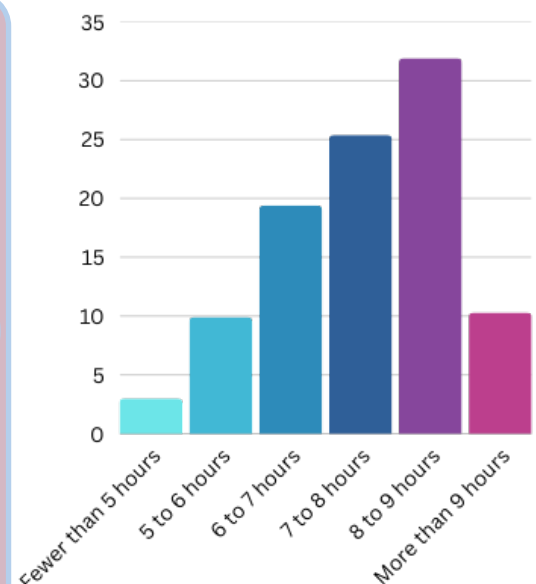
Sleep deprivation does not only affect grades but also impacts daily well being. Students who do not get enough sleep often feel tired in class and struggle to stay focused. Eighth grader **Maelle Daniels** shared, “In sixth grade, I studied for a test by going to bed earlier and waking up earlier so I wouldn’t lose sleep. The strategy worked, I felt well rested and earned a 100 on the test.” Her experience shows how getting enough sleep can improve both academic performance and overall mood.

Sleep deprivation is a serious issue affecting students nationwide and at JAMS. While health organizations warn about the dangers of not getting enough sleep, the JAMS survey shows this problem is happening in our own school community. By improving time management, limiting screen time before bed, and prioritizing rest, students can work toward healthier sleep habits and better overall well being.

1 in 10 JAMS students
get the recommended amount of sleep



Hours of sleep JAMS
students get on a school night



Tales of Sleepy Students



“I had to do a group project but no one did anything so I had to do all the work. The night before it was due, my group had done anything, and after swim practice I had to finish up the slides. I stayed up until 12:00 am.”

“In sixth grade, I studied for a test by going to bed earlier and waking up earlier so I wouldn’t lose sleep. The strategy worked, I felt well rested and earned a 100 on the test.”



“One time I stayed up late studying and doing work, until around 1am. I was tired in all classes before 4th, and it affected my school performance.”

On Board With Boredom

Exploring both the negative and positive effects of boredom on students

By ANDREW LEE & JULIA CADENA

Boredom in teens is on the rise. In a recent study by the National Institute of Health, scientists found that an increase in boredom among adolescents might be linked to social media usage. These results are closely aligned with the results of a JAMS survey. In fact, 47% of JAMS students

say they feel bored a few times a week, and another 31.8% said they feel bored almost every day. While boredom is often seen as negative, it can actually inspire creativity and help students discover new passions. An article regarding a study at Texas University puts it this way. "Boredom actively shapes human behavior, suggesting that embracing it can inspire innovation, motivation, and creativity."

Every student has a different tolerance for boredom. Some students thrive on a busy routine, while others can't stand being over-scheduled. One thing most students can agree on, however, is feeling bored at school. Sixty-one percent of students say that they feel most bored during school/class. Students also tend to feel bored when they are waiting for something. Forty-nine percent of students said they felt bored during long waits. However, boredom doesn't have to be a bad thing. When the mind has nothing to do, students can come up with things they nev-

er considered before. "When you're bored, for better or for worse, you think a lot," said eighth-grader, **Jackson Rowe**.

In a survey, 17.6% of JAMS students said that when they are bored they tend to scroll on social media, or think of random ideas. Another 14.4% of students

try to find things to do on their devices. One way students react to boredom is doom-scrolling, which means scrolling on social media excessively. While it is a common reaction to boredom, this habit is negative and does not actually help very much.

While many reactions to boredom are negative, some students have found ways to embrace boredom and turn it into creativity. In fact, boredom can be the best way to discover something new. In a recent survey, 24.8% of students said that they have gotten creative project ideas from boredom, while 23% of students said they got ideas for fun activities. Sixteen percent

of students got story or art ideas. Eleven percent of students also got ideas for personal goals.

There are many causes and cures for boredom. Students can decide to let their mind stay blank, or to turn their boredom into creative energy. However, focusing on positive cures for boredom can help students stay relaxed and have fun in day to day life.

BOREDOM BUSTERS

- Drawing or doodling
- Music
- Daydreaming
- Being active
- Being with friends
- Reading
- Audiobooks

How can boredom help you?



"When I was bored and had nothing to do, I was thinking about my favorite singer Gracie Abrams, and how she plays the guitar. I thought it would be

fun to learn how to play the guitar and play her songs."

-Audrey Carlson
8th Grade

"During COVID, I was so bored that I created a bracelet making business. I sold 100 bracelets and made 200 dollars for charity."



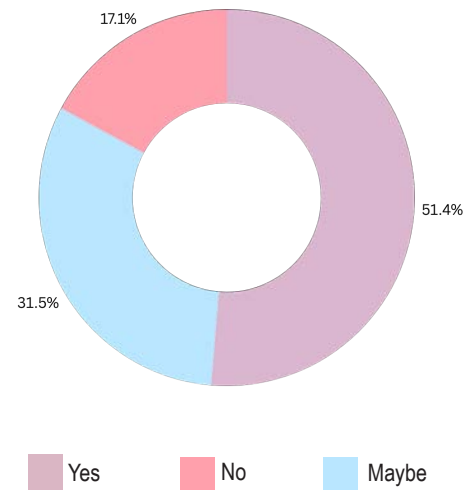
-Emilia Lippman
6th Grade



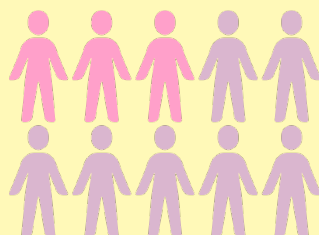
"If [students] are self-disciplined enough to seek a solution to their boredom they will discover their creativity."

-Ms. Mathews
English Teacher

Has boredom ever surprised you with a brilliant idea?



3 in 10 students said they felt bored every day



GIVE PRAISE, BRIGHTEN DAYS

How small words make big moments

By CHANDLER SCHWARTZ & JOSIE MANKIEWICZ

In the tree filled, crowded halls of John Adams Middle School, it is easy to fall into a funk. Maybe you got a bad grade or got into a fight with a friend. Whatever it is, your mood feels completely ruined. It can feel like a rain cloud is following you around campus.

Then someone says something simple like, "I like your shirt," or "Nice shoes." Suddenly, that cloud starts to lift. That is the power of a compliment.

Research shows compliments can have a real effect on your brain. In one study, researchers used MRI scans to look at brain activity while people received compliments. They found that compliments activated reward areas of the brain, like the striatum, which is also linked to rewards such as money, according to Leiden Psychology. This reaction releases dopamine, a chemical connected to happiness and motivation.

At the same time, negative feedback hits harder. Psychologist John Gottman found that people remember negative comments more strongly than positive ones. His research suggests it can take five positive comments to balance out one negative comment. That means a single rude remark can outweigh several kind ones.

Still, accepting compliments is not always easy. CNBC writer Jessica Chen explains that many people, even adults, feel uncomfortable accepting compliments because they do not want to seem rude or arrogant. But brushing off kindness can make things awkward.

Eighth grader **Julia Cadena** said, "The worst feeling is when you give somebody a compliment and they scan your whole body trying to think of something

nice to say back to you." Sometimes a simple thank you is enough.

We decided to test this ourselves. In one week, we complimented 100 students. Most reacted positively. Sixty four percent said "thank you," while 36 percent responded differently. Some gave a compliment back, some said nothing, and some said "I know" or "ok."

Our group included 48 girls, 49 boys, and three staff members. Boys and girls were equally likely to say "thank you," with 31 students from each group and two teachers responding that way. Ten girls and twelve boys returned the kindness with a compliment of their own or another positive comment. Overall, the majority reacted well, even if a few seemed unsure what to say.

While receiving a compliment feels great in the moment, giving one might feel even better. This connects to a theory called psychological egoism. It suggests that even kind actions are not completely selfless because they also make the giver feel good. When you compliment someone and see them smile, you feel proud that you made their day better.

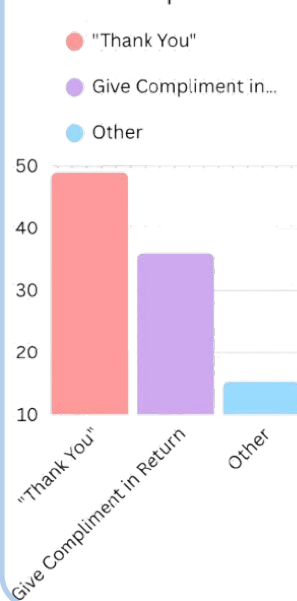
Seventh grader **Nolan Mauck** said, "I like receiving compliments because I like to feel good about myself on the inside." Seventh grader **Zayd Sharif** said, "I would rather give a compliment because I like making other people feel better."

In a world where negativity can be loud, choosing to give a compliment is a small but powerful choice.

If it really takes five positive comments to balance out one negative one, then every kind word matters.

Sometimes the simplest words can have the strongest impact.

Students Respond to Compliments



This graph shows a total of 100 students and how they respond to compliments. The responses are across the bottom and the number of students is along the sides.

How do you feel when somebody gives you a compliment?

"I feel proud because not everybody gets a compliment but I got one!"

-Elin Herrman
6th grade



"When I get complimented I feel good because it feels like the person cares about me"

-Kennedy Leguizamon
6th grade



"I feel good about myself and feel accomplished because when you get a compliment it means somebody recognizes you and your good traits."

-Soren Marcuson
7th Grade



"When I am complimented i feel happy and say 'aww thank you!'"

-Lorelai Jones
8th grade



"It is very rare for me to get a compliment like this. It was just 5 minutes ago but I spent the whole time walking across campus reflecting the about the compliment. Unlike usual this was one about my character and it really made me feel good."

- Dr. Eure
Assistant Principal



Inside AVID Habits That Help JAMS Students Succeed

Everyday tools helping JAMS students stay organized and ahead of the game

By KAHLAN ROBERTS

The AVID program at JAMS has taught students skills and techniques to make school easier and more manageable. From planners to flashcards, these small habits help students stay calm and ready for schoolwork and tests. The best part is that these tips are not just for AVID students. Many of them are simple habits that anyone at JAMS can try and use every day.

One helpful trend from the survey conducted was how many students rely on small organizational tricks. Color-coded folders, planners, and binders with dividers were mentioned

again and again. Seventh grader **Maya Zaldivar** explained that be-

fore AVID, her papers were loose and messy, but now she uses different colored folders for each class and stays organized. Eighth grader **Steven Hernandez** added that writing reminders on sticky notes helps him remember what needs to get done.

These tricks save time because students do not have to search for papers or panic at the start of class. Students feel more prepared and focused when materials are ready.

AVID students also shared study shortcuts that help them learn faster without feeling overwhelmed. Flashcards, studying with a partner, and

breaking studying into short chunks were the most common strategies. Seventh grader **Yanet Yo-**

nas explained that using flashcards helped her understand math problems better and led to a 90 percent on a test. "When I check my AVID planner, it helps me remember all the homework I have to do and turn it in on time,"

seventh grader **Alessandra Meza** said. These strategies work because they keep studying simple. Students review a little at a time and actually understand the material instead of cramming.

Helpful routines were another big pattern in the survey. Many students said checking Google Classroom daily or writing homework down right after school keeps them on track. Seventh grader **Lucy Diaz** shared that checking her planner stopped her from forgetting an after-school assignment and turning it in late.

80%

of students said they use a planner or agenda as one of their main organization tools

Eighth grader **Daniel Mier** explained that checking Google Classroom every day helps him keep track of what he needs to do. These routines reduce stress because students know what is coming up. The school week runs much more smoothly when homework and tests are planned early,

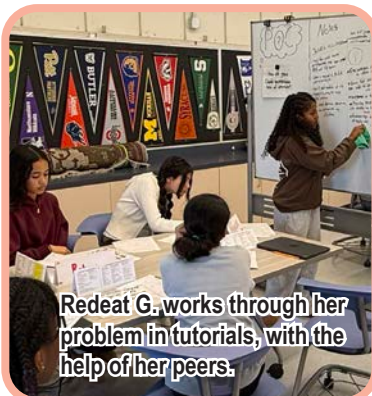
Staying organized does not require big changes. Even one small habit can make a difference. Whether it is using a planner, making flashcards, or checking Google Classroom, any JAMS student can try these hacks. By experimenting with new tips, students may notice that school feels more manageable and a lot less stressful.

65%

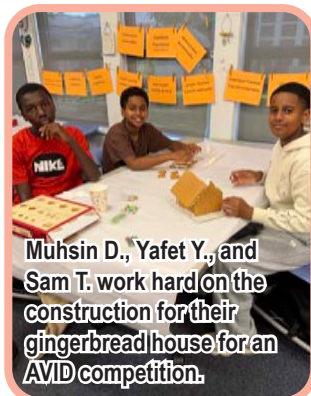
of students said they would definitely recommend AVID style strategies to students who are not in AVID

72%

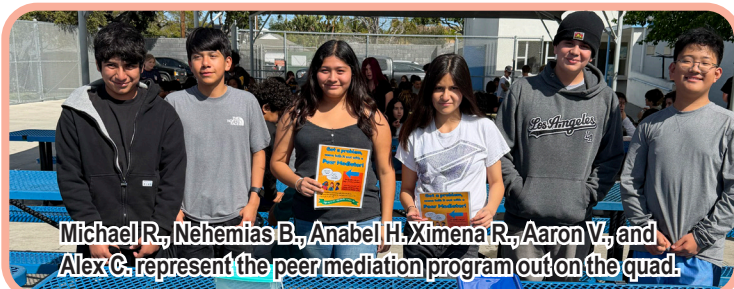
of students said AVID strategies are extremely helpful for staying organized



Redeat G. works through her problem in tutorials, with the help of her peers.



Muhsin D., Yafet Y., and Sam T. work hard on the construction for their gingerbread house for an AVID competition.



Michael R., Nehemias B., Anabel H., Ximena R., Aaron V., and Alex C. represent the peer mediation program out on the quad.

Peer Mediation Is Back

The Peer Mediation program is officially back at JAMS, led by trained 7th grade AVID students. These mediators completed 9 hours of training through the Whitaker Peace & Development Initiative Domestic Harmonizers Program. They help 6th graders solve conflicts in a calm, respectful, and private setting. Mediators do not take sides, and the goal is a win win solution where both students feel heard.

What Students Need to Know

- * **Who is it for?** 6th graders who are having a conflict
- * **When does it happen?** During 1st and 2nd period
- * **Where do students sign up?** Room 33
- * **Where are mediations held?** Room 97
- * **Is it private?** Yes, everything shared stays confidential.
- * **Can students sign up alone?** Yes, or they can bring the person they need to work things out with



Students and staff are encouraged to refer 6th graders who may benefit. Peer Mediation is a positive way to solve problems and protect friendships at JAMS.

Jittery students, hushed voices, and an overall unease ripples throughout the group. Students take their last sips of water and line up, preparing for the great stampede. Well, the mile run isn't quite a stampede, but it sure can feel like one as the whistle blows and students race past the starting line.

Most JAMS students agree that they don't feel calm before the mile. Many students said they feel stressed and nervous before they start the test, especially knowing that they have to get a good grade without much preparation.

Anyone who's done the mile run knows the stress and anxiety that comes with it. The pressure to race the clock and the feeling of being compared to peers can be overwhelming. Twenty-five percent of JAMS students agreed that the most stressful aspect of the mile run is feeling pressured to get a good time. At a close second, 24% find breathing the most difficult. Seventh grader **Saron Ferew** said, "I wish the P.E. teachers knew how much stress it is to get a better time each mile".

Some students chat with their friends prior to the mile to ease their nerves and help feel a little calmer. Others take deep breaths, warm up, stretch, and give themselves a pep-talk before starting their run. As for what helps students during the mile, **Elizabeth Pash** said, "I pace myself by following the light poles on the field. Another thing that I do is I look down be-

Your Race, Your Pace

Student Outlooks on the Mile Run and Pacer Test

By AMELIA TROUTMAN
& TEDDY PESAPANE



THE GOLD MEDAL FOR THE CURRENT FASTEST MILE JAMS GOES TO...



cause I find not knowing how much longer you have to run for helps to keep you going." Other students shared tips about having a "just do it" mindset and reminding themselves that giving their best effort is what matters most.

Throughout the years, students have come and gone, but our amazing P.E. teachers have stuck to it, teaching P.E. for over 20 years each. **Ms. Asher**, the sixth grade P.E. teacher, shared a tip on the mile: "Students should first establish a realistic overall goaltime. Setting a specific time for each lap will help meet that goal time." **Mr. Stauffer** – our P.E. teacher for seventh graders – said, "The mile is a delicate balance of speed and pace." Meanwhile, **Ms. Dolloso**, who teaches eighth grade P.E., said, "Just breathe. They tend to hold their breath like 'Oh my god I have three more laps to go' and then they get nervous. Kid-dos, just breathe."

From the students who can reach a sub-6 minute mile time to the ones at the back of the pack, everyone faces similar challenges. For some it's stamina, for others it's the pressure to get a good time or the mental aspect of a fitness test. It can be stressful being compared to others, especially knowing you have to go in unprepared and still get a good grade. Remember, at the end of the day, it's your race, your pace, no matter what anyone else says.

Which fitness tests make students feel the most stressed?

Mile 57%

Nothing 17%

Pacer 34%



Seventh grader **Moises M.** crosses the finish line of a sprint in P.E. Photo: Amelia Troutman



Eighth graders **John M.** and **Leo G.** line up to run a sprint in P.E. Photo: Amelia Troutman

Nifty Thrifting

By FRANCESCA NITTI
& ANDIA BACAJ

Thriftling is or can be a student's favorite way to buy clothes. New, old, or expensive; anyone can find anything in thrift stores. These three students, Elizabeth Melbourne, Reese Hoban and Geetika Palipaka, with their outstanding outfits might tell us why and where they got these clothes.

A closer look at students, their thrifting adventures, and the treasures they discovered along the way

Photos: Francesca Nitti



Elizabeth Melbourne

Photos: Andia Bacaj



Geetika Palipaka

Photos: Andia Bacaj



Reese Hoban

Eighth grader Elizabeth Melbourne thrifts frequently. She enjoys it so much that she told us about her past thrifting experiences. When asked why she thrifts, Elizabeth said, "I thrift because the clothes are really cheap." This argument makes sense, since when it comes to thrifting, clothes are cheaper. Does she like that thrifting is so popular now? Elizabeth has her own opinion to answer the question. She answered, "I don't mind it, but it's harder to find good clothes." But let's switch gears to what her best item so far is. She said, "My best purchase is these baggy gray cargo jeans." Now that we know what her most beloved belonging is, where did she get it? She then stated, "I found them at Salvation, and I go there quite often."

Geetika Palipaka is a 7th grader who thrifts for the excitement of finding very cute and unique pieces. Her favorite places to go are local thrift stores that

are near her house. Geetika said, "There are very amazing and unique pieces out there in local thrift stores, pieces that you can't get anywhere else." Thrifting is like gambling, and the clothes and their conditions are the slot machines. She said that you can obtain cute clothes in excellent condition, but other times they can be in bad condition. Her most treasured item that she bought was a black V-neck with ruffle sleeves. For Geetika, thrifting is about finding unique clothes that no one else will have. In her mind, every piece is its own unique story, and no two stories are ever the same.

Another example would be Reese Hoban, who has a colorful style. Her ideal thrifting store is Goodwill. She

shops at Goodwill because they have good clothes that are cheap. Reese said, "I thrift because other clothes are too expensive and thrift stores have anything." Her preferred things to thrift are oversized tees and button-ups. Her favorite thing that she bought was a white short-sleeve button-up that she got for three dollars. At thrift stores, you can purchase clothes that are cheaper, but the same clothes can be more pricey at other retail stores.

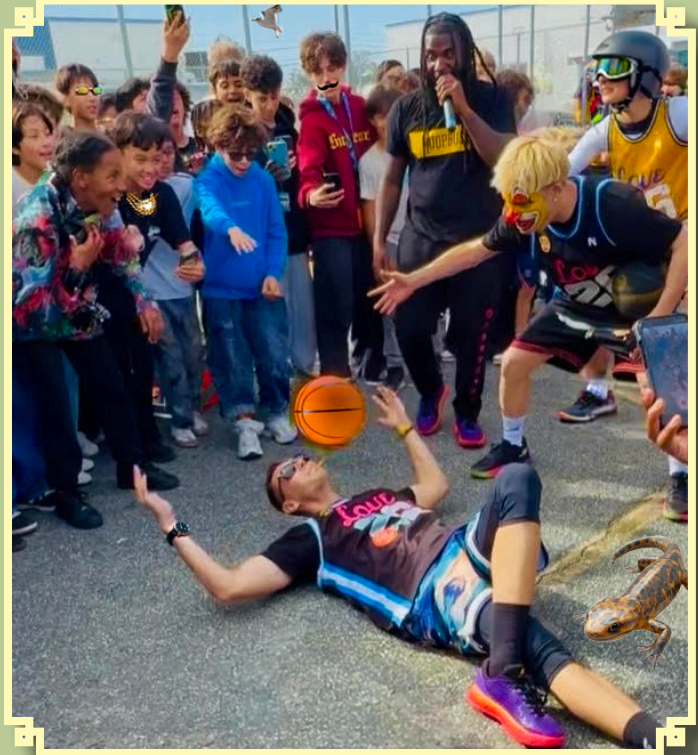
Thriftling might not be only about finding cheaper clothes, but these three students express themselves through it. The new trend isn't to be all the same.

It's to be different. It's to have something no one else does, and students find that through thrifting. Maybe that's why thrifting is so popular right now. It's to be yourself, to be different. That's what's trendy, so wear that shirt, buy those shoes, be different, and embrace it.

13%
of students
like to shop at
Salvation Army

24%
of students
like to shop at
local thrift stores

SPOT THE DIFFERENCE!



JAMS students went crazy as the Hoop Bus crew turned the blacktop into a full-on highlight reel. Photo: Vince Yu

ANSWER KEY

Look closely and see if you can find all **15 changes** between the two pictures. Can you find them all? Look carefully; some are sneaky!

1. Tattoo removed from the clown / 2. Salamander added on the ground / 3. People removed from the top right corner / 4. Basketball color changed / 5. Goggles added to the boy in the top left / 6. Pattern changed on the left boy's hoodie / 7. Gold chain added to the boy in the crowd / 8. Yellow line removed from the ground / 9. Seagull added in the sky / 10. Right shoe changed / 11. Baggy jeans added to the boy in the blue hoodie / 12. Logo removed from the black sock / 13. Watch added to a wrist / 14. Helmet added to the man in the top right / 15. Mustache added to young man in red hoodie.

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