

THE **HOOFPRI**NT

Buffalo High School Buffalo, MN

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RIGHT

WRONG

Justice in schools: how it is dealt
with and where it is found

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LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Buffalo High School,

Since a very young age, we have been told what is right and what is wrong. We are led to believe that things are easily categorized as good or bad. Through our experiences, we know that life is not black and white. There exists a gray area where one has to ask themselves, what is just?

Liberation from the constraints of this binary system leaves us to address the question on a daily basis. Every act we do, everything we say, every choice we make can be judged by our own concept of justice. On the front cover you would have noticed the purple gavel. This is a symbol of justice; an instrument we use to declare our verdicts of guilt or innocent. We all have a gavel that decides the justness of things, people, ideas, and events. We are the ones responsible for deciding our own morals or beliefs that align with our own perceptions of justice.

That is what we want you to decide when you flip through the stories in this issue of The Hoofprint. You will read some content up to debate, where we don't provide the morals for you to think a certain way.

You must be the one that comes to your own conclusion and voice your own opinions. For example, in this issue you will find a story about the 18 year old students at Buffalo High School. In the eyes of the law, they are adults and should receive the full rights and responsibilities that come with it. But in many ways they are still treated as kids in the confine of high school. Is it just that we treat students who are legally adults this way? Or take for example the story regarding homework. Is it just that students are assigned hours of homework for the outcome it has on their grade? We will remind you, the reader, again that it is not us that will tell you what to think. It is your judgment that will lead you to your own conclusion. With that being said, use your gavel and weigh the facts on your own scales. Go into the gray area on your own pursuit of justice.

"One of the great things about young people is that they do question, that they do care deeply about justice, and they they have open minds."
Zack de la Rocha

Ella Shuherk

James Oistad

BHS teachers share their reasoning
behind how much homework they assign

HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

Meagan Henry &
Madelyn Hackett
Staff Writers

Students love
to complain about
homework. It's
something we
may not want to

do, but we have to. Students usually don't want to dedicate an hour of their night to my coursework. In a 2016 student survey, teachers in the US assign an average of 3.5 hours of homework a week. With BHS, that would mean 14 hours of homework a week for all four classes. That is of course added onto the 32 hours of the school week. So that raises the question, is homework just?

Finland is a well known country for providing quality education for students with little school hours. Students don't start school until 7 years old, have long vacations, and no homework. Finland manage to rank 12th in the world education system compared to the US's rank of 36th according to a US News survey in late 2016. However, the top country for education, Singapore, is known to swamp their students in homework. They have nearly triple the amount of assigned compared to the US. So country that has no homework, and one that has triples the US homework load for high school students, still rank higher in education than the US. Is it helping or hurting students?

"Instead of homework being this helpful thing, it was a time when my daughter had a breakdown... she just wanted to get it right," said Amy Sparks, an english teacher at BHS.

Sparks doesn't assign homework to any of her students in either stage acting or english.

"I want to give everyone opportunities to

do their best work. Sometimes when I ask a student to do something outside of school, a lot of other things can get in the way," said Sparks.

Over half of students in Minnesota participate in school sports. Buffalo also has a lot of after school activities students get involved in.

On the other side, homework has proven to allow students to work at their own pace and figure out how to do certain things from the class. Homework also helps people develop self management skills and learn how better organize themselves.

"I try and give homework that helps the student," said Tracy Johnson, a BHS science teacher. "To prepare for an upcoming test or to better understand what they learned

With consistent homework, like in most Math classes, you are able to set aside a specific amount of time to get the homework done. You can plan for it, which makes it less stressful.

"Consistent homework can be pesky, but when a teacher assigns inconsistent homework it can be a lot," said Levi Preugschas.

When you have three tests on one day or multiple projects due within the same week, it can get stressful. Homework cannot not only take a toll on the students, but also the teachers and the parents. It's important to find a balance in life, and if homework is overwhelming, then students start to question whether if my homework is the answer to better performance.

"I want to give everyone
opportunities to do their best
work"

- Amy Sparks



HOW MANY LAPS?

Discovering the reasoning behind Phy. Ed standards



Jack Leipholtz & Lilly Ragab
Staff Writers

Gym class isn't everyone's favorite class. Lots of the

requirements to pass are disputed over, but there's a method to the perceived madness.

Nationally, physical education credits required for high school graduation can range from 0-3. At Buffalo High School, a minimum of one and a half physical education credits are required for graduation.

"We go by the National Physical Education Standards, so every lesson we teach is tied to one of our standards that we have," said Josh Ortmann, a physical education teacher at BHS. "Everything we do in Phy. Ed. is tied to reaching those national standards. When we run the PACER, when we run the mile, we get the grading scales from the national standards."

The mile run can be a controversial topic among students at BHS. An argument brought up by many BHS students is the difference in mile time grading scales for boys and girls.

"I think [the grading scale difference] is stupid. Sure, there may be some physical differences, but a two and a half minute difference is ridiculous," junior Brian Miller said.

Although the students don't know the reasoning behind the variation in grading scales, there may be more evidence behind it.

"One of the biggest things [for different running grades] is guys and girls develop differently. Based on how girls develop, they might be in the peak of what they're capable of running when they're a ninth or tenth grader, whereas guys start hitting

their peak the older they get, towards graduation. Guys and girls develop differently, which is why there's a difference in the grading scales," said Ortmann.

Another disputed topic is why students have to do heart rate monitors. Some students don't understand the purpose or how they work for everyone.

"One of the things I as a teacher appreciate about heart rate monitors is it's one of the ways we can really assess 'how hard are you working?'" said Ortmann. "Where students get caught up is the perception of what it looks like a student may be working on with a heart rate monitor. You might have a student on a light jog with their heart rate at 150 beats per minute. You could also have a student on a heavier run and their heart rate is at 150 beats per minute as well. At the end of the day, their hearts are working the same."

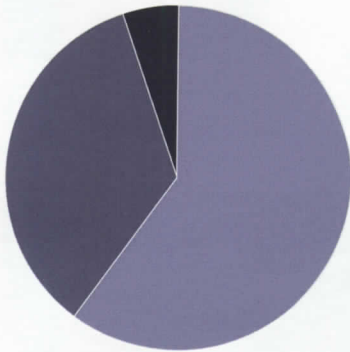
Although scales of measurement like the gender difference with the mile and the use of a heart rate monitors seem controversial to students, phy ed instructors have reasons to back up the way they grade. However that shouldn't stop students from continuing to be critical of how gym, and other classes, operate and grade.

"How hard are you working?"

- Josh Ortmann

WEIGHTED GPA VS UNWEIGHTED

With students in mind, BHS staff discusses the pros and cons of unweighted GPA's



60 % of students would prefer a weighted GPA

30 % of students did not have a preference

5 % of students prefer an unweighted GPA



Katelyn Walz
Staff Writer

Weighted GPA is a topic not many students tend to think about in their school lives. What students don't realize is that it could affect things, such as what colleges you can go to.

Weighted GPA is defined by more difficult classes being given more points. So, instead of an A being a 4.0, it could be weighted as a 5.0 or higher. Some schools take on weighted GPAs in a way that makes it so an A+ is a 4.5 instead of a 4.0. This all can be done for many reasons. One of the big ones is for college. If you did poorly in one class, but got an A+ in another, with that A+ being a 4.5, it could bump your GPA up from a 3.2 to 3.5. In some cases, this can be the case of getting into certain classes or colleges.

With certain classes being weighed more than others, this could drive kids to try harder. If your class on a topic such as quantum physics was weighed the same as a yoga class, at first glance it would make sense to weigh that physics class more than a yoga class. However, this may affect student choice.

"Make the students feel forced to take those harder classes to get a better grade," said by head principal Mark Mischke. He also said that using these weighted grades would not fit the school ideals of choice. It would cause students to think of classes more as a grade, and not a learning experience. It would also give students more competition among each other, which would change atmosphere in the school.

Students may decide to look at classes as a grade and not as a learning experience.

"You never know when you need skills that are not directly related to your degree. In my class of 280 kids in high school, only 14 had a 4.0 which was already hard enough to get," science teacher Rachel Busch said.

Our school district puts emphasis on giving the students a choice on what they want to learn. Administration believes weighted GPAs would limit that choice as students would focus on the grading scale value. Whether the students believe this is up to us to discuss and decide.



Students at BHS defend their reasoning for taking or not taking enriched classes

TO DROP OR NOT TO DROP AP CLASSES

Jordan Eby
Staff Writer

For years the enriched program has offered accelerated learning for students with different educational needs. Earlier this year, the Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose school board discussed the possibility of removing the program all together.

To many students, this news came as a surprise.

"I do not like the thought at all. If they are cut our academic and brighter horizons will be lost," said Freshman Bryanna Kinn. "Enriched classes have helped me by getting me to push myself, feel challenged, and be able to have fun at school".

Enriched classes move at a faster pace than other classes and generally include a heavier and more rigorous workload.

"When they [students] are given the opportunity to be in an enriched class, the teachers can move at a faster pace and assign them the work that is closer to their ability," said senior Peyton Retterath. "These classes helped me learn at a pace that was more suitable for my learning".

The possible removal of the program has left a few questions. What will happen to the students? Will they be joining the Quest program? If the removal takes place, the teachers will become responsible for giving harder or extra work to the students who need it in the regular classes. The work will not just be given to past enriched students. Anyone who wants or needs the work may receive it.

"I understand that the schools want all kids to learn the same topics at the same time," said Retterath, "but not all students are motivated enough to do work outside of what is required".

Enriched programs and classes do a lot to help students further understand certain topics. They move faster than regular classes, therefore there is more time to go more in depth on certain topics.

"The enriched classes helped give me a deeper understanding of science and english" said freshman Emily Pacel.

The National Association for Gifted Learning says only about 10% of students will participate in enriched learning programs and classes in their school career. Of this 10%, even less will continue these courses throughout their high school years. It is unsure what will happen to these classes, but we will find out later next year when the school board makes their final decision

"These classes helped me learn at a pace that was more suitable for my learning"

- Peyton Retterath

Local judges discuss their experience with teenagers and the law and the factors that lead up to this problem.

WE DON'T SEE SUCCESS STORIES

Sydney Mischke
Managing Editor

We as a society today love “instant fixes”. Quick weight loss plans rule infomercials, plastic surgery being an eight billion dollar industry, and fast fixes for curing mental health problems are more prevalent than ever. The honest truth, however, is that those big problems need time and effort to be fixed.

Teens that come into court are more often than not subjects of their environment at home. Some of these kids environment has cause a wall to be built around them for 17 years, causing them to make decisions that are not always the best. This wall doesn't simply fall over night. Through conversation, the idea came to light that this wall made from that bad home lives and bad choices might take twice as long to fall as it did to be made. Judges recognize that yes, every young adult has a free will- that they do have the power to fight against this major obstacle in their way. However judges are also aware hat sometimes these choices, this way of life, is all these young adults have grown up knowing. That more often than not, a young adult finds this wall to hard to scale alone. This is where they turn to judges for assurance that they are on the right path, looking for their approval. When interviewing Judge McPherson and Judge Tenney of Wright County, I asked the question

“What has been your favorite success story you have seen?”

After much pondering they turned and both stated...

“We don't get to see the success stories, the ones that this process works for. We make connections with the ones who come in again and again.” - Judge Tenney

My perception of success was altered after this, I realized that many of us too had the blinders of looking for instant gratification on as well. But, with young adults, you could make plans for years on end and many children will prove to you that no one formula works. Sometimes it takes many plans, many years, and many encounters.

“There was this young man who was in and out of custody every three to four weeks, but there was this time when he went 6 months without being in custody. And, yes he was in custody again, but every time I saw him I was reminded of how long its been since I saw him.” - Judge McPherson

Judge McPherson shared this recent of a young man, who proved to have many plans, and the



hope to get things right

"I saw this young man many times, and I loved him as a kid, but he just kept making not great choices," said Judge McPherson. "The thing was, though, that he had a terrible home life, and so many other obstacles to overcome in his life. But he always tried. He always had a plan. I saw him recently, he has been in custody now on the adult side, and it was a bittersweet meeting because he came to me with a whole new plan. To see him in the prison jumpsuit broke my heart, to know what we tried to do wasn't successful."

Sometimes, the plan made doesn't see success stories.

So fast fixes prove once again to be a faulty idea in Juvenile court. Just as those quick weight loss plans end in failure, plastic surgery doesn't mend the hurt inside, and fast fixes for mental illness fail to work. Ironically this "fast fix" idea is so deep rooted that it often takes along time to change our perception. To many, the road to success

seems long and hard, but if we continue to look at the bigger picture and see the small steps towards improvement, the road doesn't have to seem so long. The fact that a child goes to juvenile detention for six months instead of three years can be perceived as a milestone.

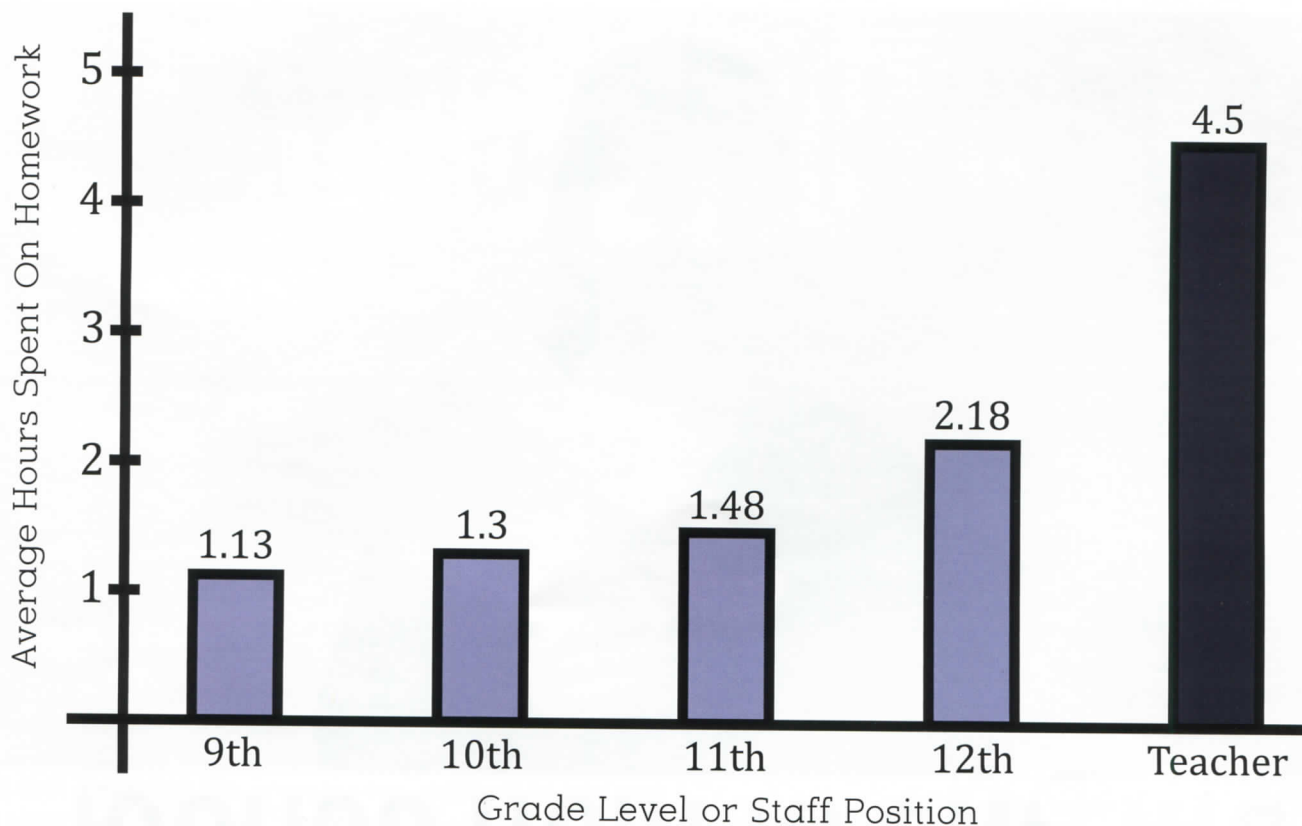
"We don't get to see success stories, but we do get to see milestones" - Judge McPherson

THE UNSPOKEN CHALLENGE

The obstacles teachers face on a daily basis

Kinzie McDowell
Staff Writer





It's not a secret that most students hate doing homework. Students complain about the extra time spent on coursework every night, but most students don't think about what the time teachers sacrifice in order to grade this homework.

Students often complain about the purpose homework, not understanding the reason behind it.

"We need ways in which we can show our change and those assignments are a way to do that. In a perfect world where mostly everything could be discussion based in the 80 minutes, there are parts of me that would support that," said Jason Swanson, a BHS French teacher. "But then when the state or federal law comes and says 'Where's your proof? Where's your documentation that learning has been taking place and that growth has been occurring?' There needs to be something there as evidence."

Teachers have to find the balance of having to do additional work outside a scheduled school day in addition to raising their own families and fulfilling their responsibilities.

"So I've really struggled with that [balancing my schedule] after having my first kid and it's only one kid," said Megan Ussett, a BHS English teacher. "I can't imagine what it's like for other people. It has been a big struggle for me over the past two years, finding that balance. Before I could dedicate all my time to it. Now I just physically do not have enough time."

With all this commitment, teachers need to become strategic

in finding ways to balance their schedule.

"I really try and separate the two," said Tracy Lorenz, a BHS Science teacher. "When I'm home, I really make that family time a priority, and I'm in kind of mom mood until the kids go to bed. It ends up being late nights, but I try not to compromise family time, or at least kid time. My husband probably feels the brunt of it because I'm not really around when he's up. Probably once a month I'll come in on a weekend, but I try not to spend more than an hour here on a weekend. It just depends, I try and separate them out."

Finding a balance is even more challenging with the commitment an administrator has to take.

"That's probably the biggest challenge of the position of principal, that balance between personal and professional life," said Head Principal Mark Mischke. "It'll never be where you want it to be, but you also have to be comfortable where it is. If I'm always mad at myself for that balance, then I'll never be able to be present in either position; a parent and spouse, or a principal."

The teachers and staff at BHS somehow balanced the difficulties of their teaching careers, and well as the intense job of raising a family and fulfilling responsibilities, all at the same time. They went above and beyond the call of duty on a daily basis, all without getting the recognition that they truly deserved.

"It'll never be where you want it to be, but you also have to be comfortable where it is."

- Principal Mischke -

Students
share their
experience
as adults
in high
school



ADULTING IN HIGH SCHOOL

Gretta Heinecke
Staff Writer

What happens when you become a legal adult, but are still in high school? Your eighteenth birthday changes your status from a minor to an adult, and with that change you are supposed to receive a lot more responsibilities. But many students question if anything changes at all.

Hunter Sabby and Grace Happe are two of the many seniors who have turned eighteen this year. There are a lot of responsibilities taken on when you turn 18. Not all of them are necessarily brand new, but the received status is something unfamiliar.

"There's not a lot of difference, it's just that you're looked at as sort of a higher person," said Sabby. "I have to do different things at home, like pay taxes."

Teacher-student relationships are also drastically affected

"They respect you more, to be honest. They don't treat you like a little kid anymore."

- Hunter Sabby

when a student turns eighteen. Teachers need to keep the balance between respecting students as legal adults while still demonstrating discipline over their students.

"They respect you more, to be honest. They don't treat you like a little kid anymore," said Sabby.

However age may not be the first thing that comes into play. Simple grade level may have more of an effect on the way teachers treat students.

"I don't think that they really care or notice [age]. Not in a bad way, but we're seniors. There's the seniors and the juniors. It's not really age, it's more grade," said Happe.

Many people would assume that more freedom comes with being an 18-year-old, but until you are out of high school, you aren't granted the freedom that usually comes with being an adult.

"It's really interesting because even though I'm legally an adult and my medical records are all private and all of my financial stuff is private, I still have to get a parent permission to go on a field trip. I also have to get my parents to sign for little stuff like looking at my grades," said Happe.

The law makes you a legal adult when you turn eighteen, but whether that follows into high school is up to debate. Is it just to treat legally adult students like every student or is it just to treat them like adults? It comes down to individual opinion.

LAYING DOWN THE LAW

Officer Erickson, school resource officer at BHS, discusses his responsibilities and experiences in his position.

Jack Oistad
Editor-in-Chief

Students of Buffalo High School see administration, teachers, counselors, and custodial crew contribute to the school environment everyday. However, students often overlook the School Resource Officer, or SRO.

The SRO plays an important role in the safety and enforcement of law in the school. The SRO is also responsible to educate students on the law. Officer Erickson, the current BHS officer, often goes into classrooms to fulfill both roles.

"I can relate law enforcement to almost every class in the school," said Officer Erickson. "I've been to Ms. Bergquist's CIS econ class. People are like 'how can you possibly go to econ and talk about law?' It's the cost benefit analysis of law enforcement and the cost benefit analysis of a school resource officer. [I have also helped with] Physical Science in Miss Busch's class. We do speed versus velocity [exercises and] I bring my speed guns and stuff. That's my favorite part about being an SRO. Getting into the classroom and giving student the opportunities to ask me any questions, and I answer 99.8% of questions they asked."

A SRO is technically a normal cop. However, as Officer Erickson discusses, successful resource officers have to share a different mindset.

"They just go through the regular requirements to be a police officer, but it takes a different attitude to be in the school," said Officer Erickson. "When you are a police officer, you have a different attitude on things. There are a lot more unknowns when you are out on patrol. Going into someone's home that you don't know with a domestic assault situation at their house, you have to wear all different certain hats. In the school I know what's expected of me; which is getting to know kids, getting in the classroom, and to teach."

School resource officers and administration have to define boundaries in the school. Law enforcement and the school have to share the power over certain issues, while one may take over in regards to other issues.

"Law enforcement and school are really different," said Principal Mark Mischke. "We [administration and school staff] are always the first responders and we bring him [Officer Erickson] on to help support what we were working on. We use him as a support system for problems that are arising that do involve the legal system. He is able to help work through these legal situation and deal with any legal charge. Working together with school administrators, the school resource officer determines if student behavior rises to the level of illegal behavior. When

it does, the responsibility of charging the student falls on the SRO [Officer Erickson] is the person. We can't [charge]," said Mischke. "[Although] we may decide that there is still a school consequence even if the [behavior] is not illegal."

Even as a traditional cop, Officer Erickson experiences a different environment doing his job at BHS than out in the real world. The School and the officer take certain steps to bridge the gap that exist between law enforcement and teenagers.

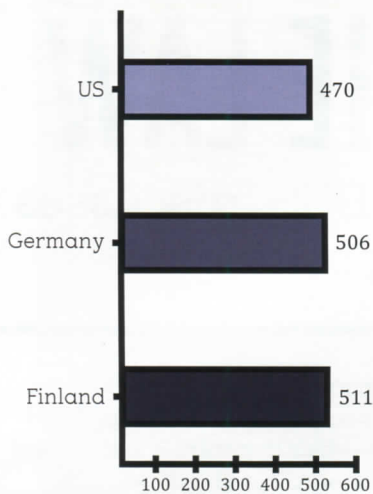
"I don't think anyone is here to harm law enforcement and that's why I'm not in full uniform. It's kind of dressed down a bit to kind of take that imitation factor out of it. To say 'hey, I'm just a normal person!' My favorite thing to do is play video games, drink mountain dew, eat jerky, and take my kid to hockey. That's what my life revolves around," said Officer Erickson.

A school resource provides more to the school than patrolling the student body for any wrongdoings. Erickson and other resource officers are representatives and educators of the law. They play a vital role by trying to establish a positive relationship with law enforcement in the student body.

"I want people to understand what their rights are, what the law means, how you can interpret the law and being able to get that information out. I want people to overcome saying 'hey that is a cop and he wants to get me in trouble.'"

- Officer Erickson

Average Math Score

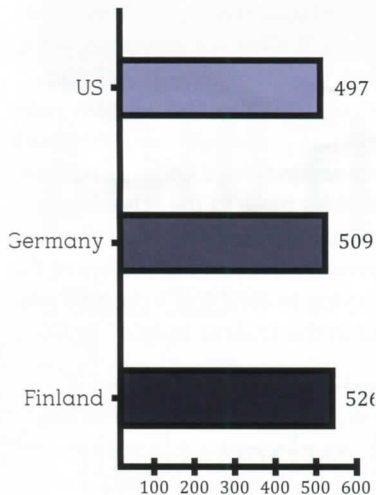


EDUCATION AROUND THE WORLD

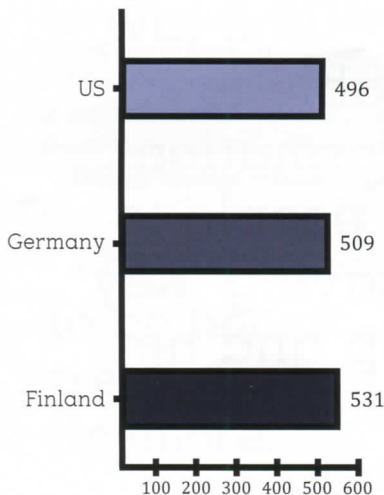
BHS foriegn exchange students compare their home town education to Buffalo

Elle Kaiser & Clare VanderKooi
Staff Writers

Average Reading Score



Average Science Score



"You guys don't even realize how easy school is" said Erno Juote.

Every year, Buffalo High School welcomes multiple exchange students. When they come, they arrive in a new culture and a very different school system. Many of the students are from some of the highest performing education systems in the world.

In Germany, after 4th grade, your performance in school decides which high school you go to. There are three different levels, two of which you can be done with at the age of fifteen with basic job training. The third you go until you are eighteen and then to college. College is paid for by the government in Germany, however the catch is you are not guaranteed a spot.

"At home [Germany] everybody is just studying, like studying studying studying, every single day," said Anna Ginsberg. "In their free time and all the time because they're in their last few years and it's just so hard."

In Finland, you go through basic school until you are fifteen. After that you can be finished with school or you can continue with your education. Similar to the German model, Finland has a lot to do with final tests.

"Here you get an A if you know the basic stuff," said Juote. "In Finland, you have to know all the details and master the subject."

School systems around the world use the PISA test to see how they are doing compared against other nations. Many use it as a way to find the most effective teaching methods. The United States is ranked just above average for reading and science. But the US scores quite low in the math category. Countries like Finland and Germany are consistently ranked high in all three categories.

Studies have been shown connecting these higher ranked education systems to higher stress levels among students.

"I don't want to go back to finland anymore," said Juote. "It's so easy here!"

"The whole atmosphere is like a little bit more relaxed," said Ginsberg. "Everybody is a little nicer probably because at home everybody is stressed."

Although America doesn't have the highest PISA test scores, it also does not put students through half the stress that higher ranking systems do. In the same regard these students are getting a higher education than the average American high schooler.



SNOW DAYS, NO DAYS

The factors and conditions that lead the district to decide when to have a snow day or not

Meagan Henry & Madelyn Hackett
Staff Writers

Snow days; students rejoice whenever one is called. It's like an unplanned holiday for the students, which excites many in the community at BHS.

"It's like I have a day off to breathe. I get to catch up on sleep and have some rare me-time," said Jillian Elton.

In recent years, there seems to be a lack of these snow days.

"I have not experienced a Minnesota snow day yet," said Julia Carter, who transferred to the BHM school district in 2014.

Students are planned to attend 174 required school days. Any days missed due to weather doesn't get added on at the end of the year. In the 2013-2014 school year there was six days cancelled due to weather. But there was no cancellations or delays in the 2016-2017 school year and none so far in the 2017-2018 school year. This leaves a question; how does the school district determine when to have a snow day. That decision is left to one man, Superintendent Scott Thielman.

"Weather conditions change by the hour and a decision to alter the school day is determined by weather forecast and current conditions. Each morning, when excessive snow is forecasted, I use a protocol that entails driving throughout the District to check road conditions, consulting with staff, county and city officials, as well as other area school districts. I then make a determination to delay the start of school by two hours, cancel school, or keep the regular start time," said Thielman.

With the pressure of not making up missed days of school due to weather, some question if that affects the decision to have a snow day or not.

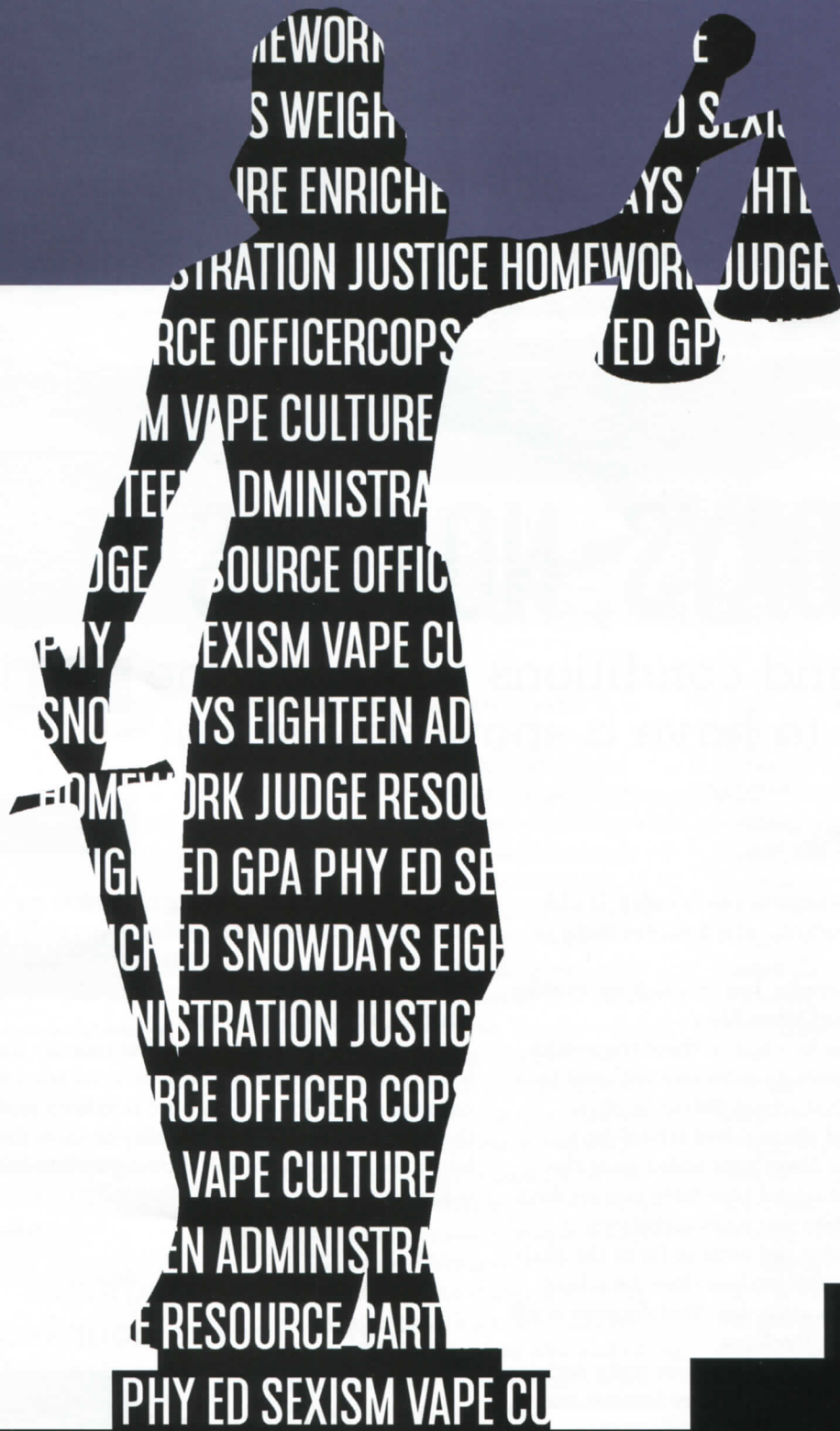
"It's all based on the conditions of the road at that

time," said Thielman. "Nothing comes into my mind whether we cancel or not based on our policy of not making up snow days. We consult with other districts to see what their road conditions are and what they are experiencing, but that does not play into whether we have a snow day."

Buffalo still gets snow, but recently snow days have been sparse. However having a mini vacation is not what snow days are about. The real purpose is to keep students safe. But that raises the question; if no delay or snow day is called and buses and students are still showing up late due to the weather, is that safe?

"Weather conditions change by the hour and a decision to alter the school day is determined by weather forecast and current conditions.

-Scott Thielman



NEWOR
S WEIGH
RE ENRICHE
AYS HTL
STRATION JUSTICE HOMEWORK JUDGE
RCE OFFICER COPS ED GPA
M VAPE CULTURE
TEEN ADMINISTRATION
DGE SOURCE OFFIC
PHY ED SEXISM VAPE CU
SNOW DAYS EIGHTEEN AD
HOMEWORK JUDGE RESOU
IGNED GPA PHY ED SE
CHED SNOWDAYS EIGH
NISTRATION JUSTICE
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