

THEHOOFPRINT

BUFFALO HIGH SCHOOL BUFFALO, MN ISSUE 3 APRIL 2016



FROM THE EDITORS

In the wake of recent events, it is important to remember how fragile we are as both individuals and communities. Sadly, we take our lives and free time for granted far too often. We squander our time and possessions instead of using them wisely. Imagine -- if your life was made into a book or a movie, would your story be one you would want to view?

Everyday we make life-impacting decisions on how we use our time. These deposits are investments in our own personal nonrenewable energy: time. Time is precious; we cannot relive it or replay it. As high school students, we are expected to create a life full of activities, social experiences, and a well-rounded education. In a school that provides so many different creative outlets, athletic events, and extracurriculars, it's easy to become overwhelmed by the large array of options.

Challenge yourself to use time wisely. As you continue to devour the experiences at our high school, recognize where you want to be, who you want to be, and how you want to live. Investing in happiness is never a poor decision.

Leighton McAlpin
Managing Editor

Clarifications

Drumline

In February, The Herd Winter Drumline successfully hosted one of the largest indoor drumline festivals in the Midwest. The Drumline story featured in the March issue of *The Hoofprint* mischaracterized the amount of practice time required of the participants. Our story referenced a practice schedule that wasn't actually implemented as quoted by a student who was no longer in Drumline. The story referenced dates that facilities were booked, not dates the group actually practiced. The staff of The Hoofprint regrets this error.

FFA

In the March issue of The Hoofprint, we incorrectly referred to FFA as "Future Farmers Association". FFA stopped being an acronym for Future Farmers of America in 1988 and is now shorthand for the National FFA Organization.

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THE HOOFPRINT

Buffalo High School
Buffalo, MN
Volume 44 — Issue 2
February 2016

Online at Hoofprint.net

Editor-in-Chief
Emily Vogt
Managing Editors
Meghan Cahill,
Leighton McAlpin
Local
Andrew Scherber,
Jayde Hoppe,
Sabrina
Munstersteiger
Culture
Emma Henne,
Maddy Personius
Activities
Taylor McNitt,

Allie Palmer
Sports
Nels Raisanen
Issues
Karin Beck,
Kylee Kaminski,
Kylee Nyholm
Voices
Carson Reichardt,
Emily Linderholm
Spotlight
Kenna Kunesh,
Jilli Hovland
Photography

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Eric Braun,
Ashley Laroque
Graphic Artists
Kathleen
Tierney,
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Staff Writers
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Featured Writers
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Logan Parlow
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Josie Peterson
Ben Zitur
Copy Editor
Cole Schurek
Advisor
Ryan McCallum

WEIGHING RISK AND REWARD

Should BHS weigh grades?

Naomi Curran
COLUMNIST



Students are often told that hard work is the path to success, but it's much more complicated than that. The goal of many high school students is working their way into a good college. It would make sense that the highest-achieving students would have the easiest time getting into colleges, but this isn't always the case.

If a student is at a higher level of learning, they may participate in advanced classes. These classes definitely have benefits, such as challenging students more than a regular class and potentially offering college credit. Because of the challenge, it's common for these students to receive lower grades than their peers in normal classes do, and that's a definite disadvantage.

When hard work in an advanced class

leads to a comparably worse grade, **the work involved with taking advanced classes is not rewarded; it's actually punished.** Why would schools stand for something so contradictory to what they tell their students?

If a student could be taking a regular class and get a perfect grade, why would they want to take an advanced class, earn a worse grade, and bring their GPA down? When students decide against taking these classes because of the potential lower grade, **the lack of weighted grades are not only hurting the student; it's also hurting the school.**

As much as some students would prefer to ignore the fact, GPA's do matter, especially when it comes to college. *The Review of Literature Related to Weighted Grade Point Average and Rank in Class* stated that, "The majority of college admissions staff at highly selective schools concluded that weighing GPA does give high-achieving applicants an advantage in the college admission process."

According to a study by Daniel Nett

at Northern Michigan University, there is still no standard weighting system. This is where the gap between weighted and unweighted grades really makes a difference. When there is no standard, **an unweighted 3.5 is going to look pretty bad next to someone else's weighted 3.9**, and colleges don't have the time to consider individual high school grading systems. That can really set you back.

Schools want students to challenge themselves and get as much as they can out of their education, but by taking advanced classes, students could be losing points from their GPA. Advanced classes are doing more harm than good. **If taking a high level class does nothing but lower your GPA and chances of college acceptance, what's the point?**

We should never have to choose between progressing our learning in an advanced class or getting an acceptable grade in a normal class. Schools need to adjust to a weighted grading system and recognize that this change could be pivotal in determining their students' futures.

How do weighted grades work?

With a weighted grade system, harder classes receive more credit than easier classes. This means that classes that would normally receive a 3.0 would still receive a 3.0 unless the class was an Honors Course like Enriched English. Classes that have college credit attached would be weighted even heavier than any other class. This would benefit students with rigorous course loads.

Sample GPA	Weighted Grade: Regular Course	Weighted Grade: Honors Course	Weighted Grade: AP Course
3.0 (B)	3.0 (+0)	3.5 (+0.5)	4.0 (+1)

WIN THE DAY

BHS mourns the loss of Spanish Teacher Durand Onell

Jack Oistad
Staff Writer

Durand Onell was a Spanish teacher who not only cared about his students' grades but also about their well-being. He knew kids on a personal level. Many students were truly inspired and touched by Onell and all that he did for our school in the short time he was here.

When the news of his passing reached the students and staff on March 18, people were in shock. The community had lost a figure that many had trusted and looked up to.

"It was very hard. I learned about it when my dad called me," said Senior **Josh Munoz**. "I was about to leave the school. I'd heard rumors around the school that there had been ambulances outside of his house, and then they called the emergency staff meeting. I was sitting in my car worried, and then my dad called me and told me the news. Then I went back inside and found [Activities Director Nick] Guida and I talked to him about it. Then I found my football O-line buddies, because we were all really close with him. We spent the rest of the day together, which was hard but we were all there for each other."

Onell's teaching style was, like the man himself, exuberant and unique and made so many students passionate about what he was teaching.

"He was a really great teacher, he cared a lot about his students," said Sophomore **Ashley Walz**. "When you were in his classroom, you weren't just filling a chair — you mattered and he made sure that you knew that. If you were falling behind in Spanish, he always made sure you understood, and that you were getting the materials. He was always there if you needed to talk. He always listened, he always gave advice. He always was joking around and he never complained about his job. Some teachers will complain that they have to go home and correct papers, but he never

once complained about anything."

Students and staff members alike shared stories about Onell shaping and changing lives. In his eight months at BHS, his roles ranged from assistant coaching for Knowledge Bowl, working with the drama program, coaching football, golf, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and supervising the weight room after school.

"Personally, for me he was a mentor, he was a big mentor in my faith walk and he taught me a lot about football," Munoz said. "We had many conversations after school about my journey and what is next for me and we also love talking about music with each other because we both love music and both love playing music. I'm happy I got to spend the time I got with him talking about life."

Students are planning to carry out Onell's legacy of making everybody comfortable and making the world a more familiar and welcoming place.

"I just want to live my life with the encouragement that Onell gave everywhere," Munoz said. "He always had a smile on his face, and he was literally the most encouraging man I have ever met and I'm just happy that I got to know him the year that he was here."

Onell's mark will not only be etched onto school grounds but will also be etched into the hearts and memories of students at BHS.

"Everyone knows his 'Win the Day' quote," Walz said. "Make the most out of everyday and don't let little things mess you up. Really just live life to the fullest because you really don't know how short your life is."

Through his words and actions, Onell was a man of integrity, honesty, kindness — and most importantly — a man that many students and staff trusted.



“He was always so positive and inspired me to try my hardest. in his class everyday. He also understood me in a way few teachers have.”
-Senior Delaney Nord

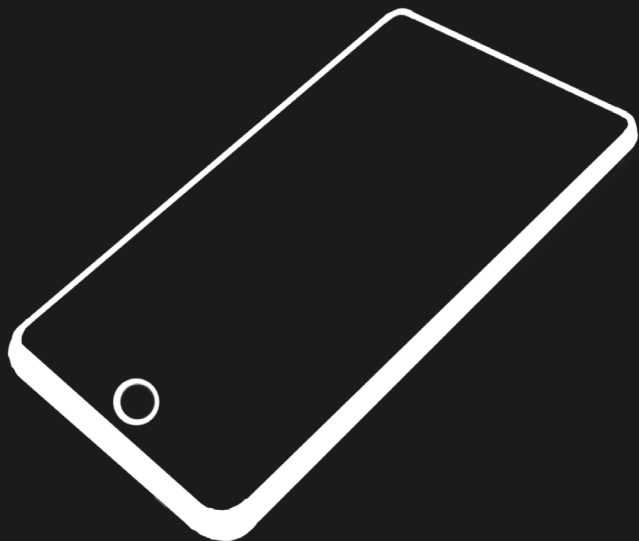
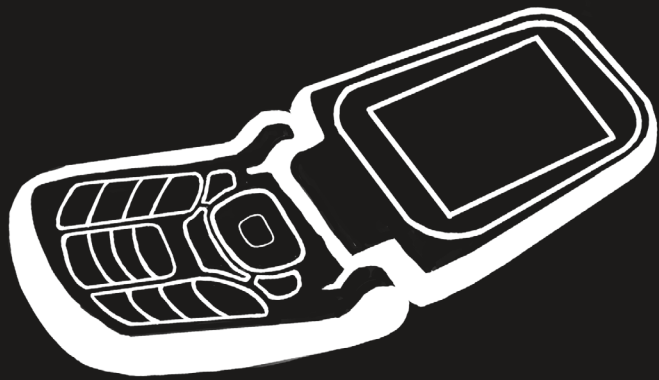
“I just wanna live my life with the encouragement that Onell gave everywhere. He always had a smile on his face and he was literally the most encouraging man I have ever met and I’m just happy that I got to know him the year that he was year.”
-Senior Josh Munoz



“Onell means a lot to me. He was a friend and a mentor to me. He was someone I could look up to and a man I could always trust. He showed me how to live life everyday with no regrets.”
-Junior Dave Hanson



“He taught me about college and how to save money, but he also taught me how to treat people nicely and with respect. He was a really kind person and I’m so glad I had the chance to meet him when he moved by me and having him as a teacher.”
-Junior Autumn Senger



A DECADE OF CHANGES

How ten years and telephones have affected our school

Adam Treptau
J2 Writer

School is always changing. As the years go by, students graduate, teachers retire, and they are replaced by new generations of teachers and students. Over time, other changes occur as well, such as curriculum, student behavior, rules, clubs, organizations, and technology.

“I believe technology has a connection to all of these other areas,” said Principal **Mark Mischke**. “As far as behavior, curriculum, rules, or clubs, the ability for people to communicate is quicker, and easier to do.”

Rules and Behavior

In the last ten years, phones have become a common item, that nearly all students bring to class. Rules have been forced to evolve as new technology has become a larger part of classwork. Rules still mainly come down to the most elementary of all virtues: Respect. Phones restrictions are mainly to respect the teacher by not using your phone while they are talking.

A piece of technology that was recently introduced to adults and teenagers is the electronic cigarette. Just like any other tobacco product, it is not allowed in school.

In all, over the past decade, rules have not changed. One thing that has changed is how students are punished for their behavior.

Ten years ago, it wouldn't be a surprise to see a few students sitting in school serving in-school suspensions. Today it seems punishment is taken more seriously in the sense that when students get into trouble they usually end up going down to the office to talk to the administration and analyze the cause of their behaviors. Instead of outside of school suspensions, students now find themselves at wRight Choice, working with professionals to complete service projects and transform their behaviors.

Clubs and Organizations

“Clubs and organizations are much more abundant in my mind than ten years ago,” said Mischke. “When I think about the kinds of clubs we have in our building, I would've never even thought we'd have what we have.”

In Buffalo, a number of new clubs and organizations have emerged in recent years. One new club is the Robotics team. In Robotics, high school students receive a “kickoff kit” made up of donated items and components. They are

then given a number of weeks to create a robot to meet the season's engineering challenge. Once the team creates a robot they will then participate in regional and district events that measure the effectiveness of each robot, the power of collaboration, and the determination of the students.

As far as new sports, there is now lacrosse and trap shooting. Two clubs that have disappeared from Buffalo are Downhill Skiing and Cross Country Skiing. Another change at Buffalo High School would be the new Bison Times. Instead of having 20 minutes of SSR (Silent Sustained Reading) we now have a number of choices to spend the last 20 minutes of our day. These choices include, chess club, quiet study/reading time, academic writing help, card games, math help, team sports, recreational games, chemistry help, and much more.

Math, reading, writing, and science help offer students a chance to improve academics, and as the curriculum in school gets more and more challenging, this extra help will be all the more necessary.

“The type of curriculum now is definitely harder than it was when I was in school,” said Mischke.

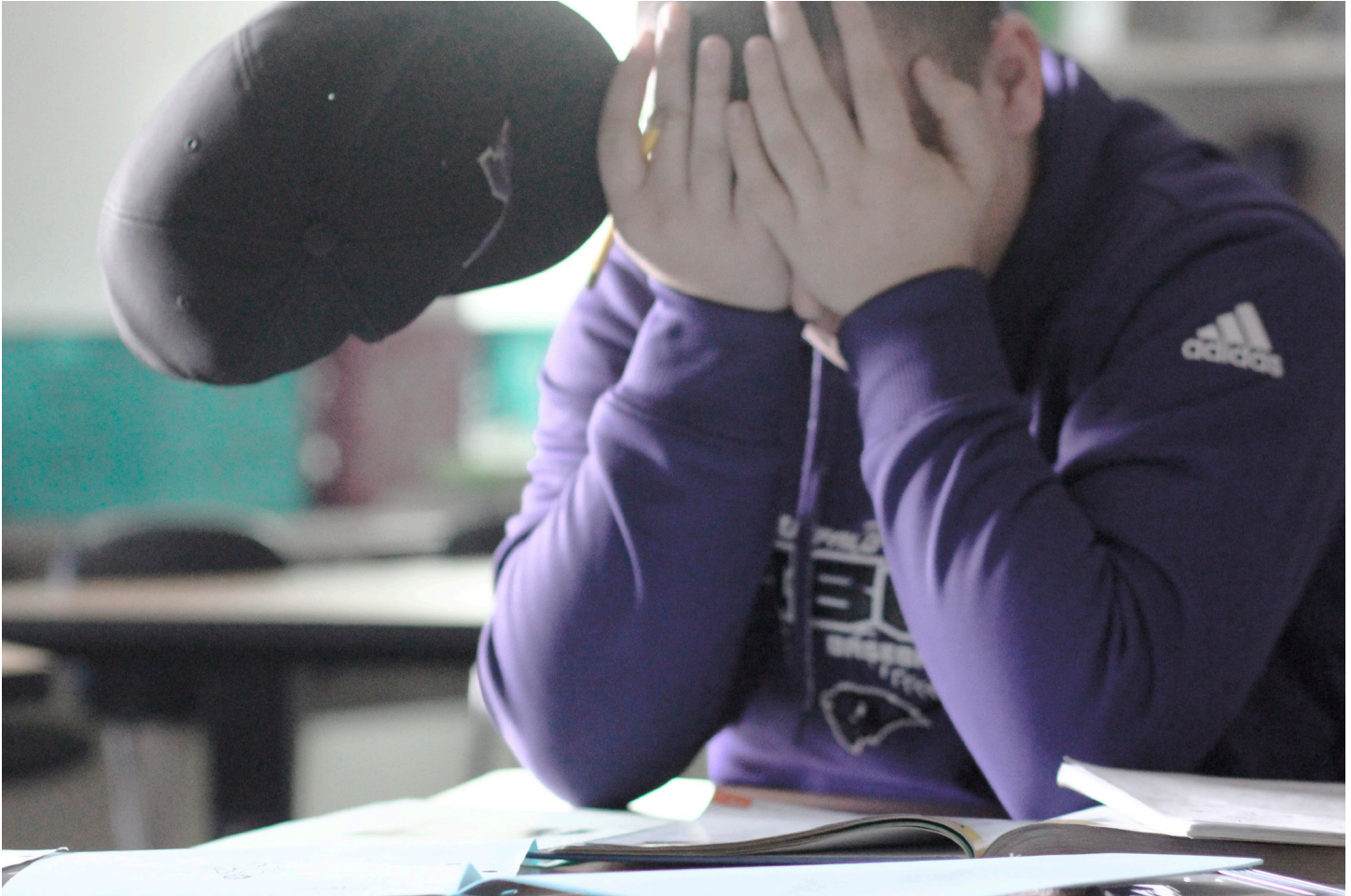
Curriculum

As teachers learn new, easier, and more effective ways of teaching the curriculum will always be challenging students to reach new heights in their academics. The main focus of the curriculum today is shifting more toward real-world readiness. Modern curriculum focuses more on things like collaboration, innovation, critical thinking, and communication. Also, now there are opportunities to go beyond high school curriculum, and go onto college classes. Next year, students will have the opportunity to earn credits through North Hennepin Community College.

Other changes in curriculum have to do with the new technology that is becoming more and more apart of our daily lives. Buffalo High School offers a number of different computer classes such as Computer-Aided Design (CAD), architectural house drawing, computer graphics, and computer applications, so students know how to easily use these tools that can make doing a task so much simpler.

Over the years school has changed in many ways, and will continue to change as new technology emerges. Almost all of the changes in school over the past ten years have somehow been connected to the evolution of technology.

■Graphic by Kathleen Tierney



■Photo by Sydney Mischke

A student stresses over Spanish homework. A common source of stress is often worries about grade point average and how it could affect future opportunities.

BUSTING THE 5 MOST COMMON GPA MYTHS

With college acceptance letters being released, many seniors are left wondering if their application measured up. A big part of college admissions is GPA, something many students worry about without really knowing why. But with so much confusion surrounding GPA, how do you know what colleges are really looking for?

|Sydney Mischke
|Journalism 2

1. GPA is something that usually takes the number one spot for being the thing all colleges look for. Students often avoid taking CIS or AP courses because they're afraid of hurting their GPA. Colleges don't just look at your GPA, and decide whether you get accepted or not. They take your accomplishments, extracurriculars, and academic rigor into consideration. For example, if you choose an easier class and end up with a 4.0 instead of taking an AP or CIS class and get a 3.5, the college will still be impressed. But the more likely candidate is the person who pulls a 3.5 while taking college level classes. Colleges don't want to see you play it safe; taking higher-level courses shows colleges you are ready for a challenge.

2. Many students load up on extracurriculars in order to impress colleges, but more often than not they just wear themselves out and their grades end up suffering a little bit (or a lot). Students end up not fretting it, thinking colleges will be blown away by their long list of extracurriculars. This is not the case, colleges believe that your GPA is a reflection of how hard you work, not how many things you can juggle. Colleges would much rather you have one or two things you do that you are very passionate about, then see a long list of things. This myth is something that has evolved to be a false one. There used to be a time when colleges were impressed by a long list of extracurriculars, but this is no longer the case.

“It has a lot to do with leadership positions. The ideal student may president, captain, or on the board of one or two activities and maintain a moderate to high GPA.”

-Counselor Christina Cox

3. Often Freshman still haven't realized that their grades in high school count, something that comes back to haunt them later. Students are scared that their carefree fourteen year old self will ruin their future. According to Indiana University Bloomington, colleges look for an upward or stable trend when it comes to grades. If your high school career gets off to a rough start, chances are you still have a good chance of getting accepted into the college of your dreams, but once Junior year rolls around you can't slack anymore.

4. Getting a bad grade can be gut wrenching. Many students fret about how this will affect their GPA, and wonder if this will ruin their chances of getting into their dream college. Guidance Counselor Christina Cox said, “When a student knows that a grade in one of their classes might be poor, we have them come into to see how this grade will affect things. More often than not one poor grade won't have a tremendous impact on a student's GPA. Colleges often overlook one poor grade if all of your other grades are high.”

5. Standardized test scores are the primary determining factor for college admissions officers. After that the student thinks their future is out the window. To that Mrs. Cox says, “Some colleges don't even look at tests, they don't believe that one test is a reflection of who you are. But once again if you want to get into a very prestigious college, those tests scores matter a whole lot more. Don't think though that you can blow the tests and get into anywhere, these tests are still very important.” Many otherwise successful students do poorly on standardized tests like the ACT or SAT and still get into good colleges.

GPA and its importance is murky at best. There are many common misperceptions, and their answers lie in the admissions office of each college. Each myth and whether it's false or not will vary, but these 5 busted myths are more often than not false.

TOP 5 GPA MYTHS

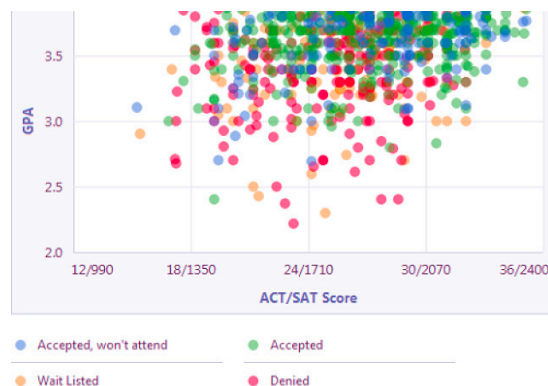
1. Easier classes with better GPA is the way to go.
2. If 9th grade goes poorly, you've lost your chance of getting into a top college.
3. If you load up on extracurriculars your grades will suffer.
4. One bad grade can ruin your chance on getting into the college of your dreams.
5. Even if you have a high GPA, if you don't do well on a standardized test your chances of getting accepted are shot.

78%
of colleges evaluate test scores after GPA.

67%
of colleges rank curriculum rigor as “very important.”

85%
of US students are academically qualified for college.

3.08
is the average senior's GPA at BHS.
National data from collegedata.com



Graph shows relationship between test scores, GPA, and acceptance for University of Minnesota.

photo from collegeapps.com

GET INSPIRED

The story behind the inspirational suns



Freshman Taylor Ross, Senior Kirsten Deladi, and Freshman Payton Johnson show off their work.

■Photo by Lucie Goede

|Lucie Goede & Logan Parlow
Journalism II

Many people have noticed the inspirational quotes written on yellow suns that are appearing around BHS. They were created by counselor **Christina Cox's** stress relief bison time in an effort to cheer up the school after a long winter. "It's all about cheering up the mood at the end of winter coming into spring and getting us to spring break," said Cox.

As the seniors are saying goodbye and we are welcoming the new freshman, Cox's bison time thought inspirational quotes were the best way to go.

"I think the idea is really great and in the future they should continue to keep making them," said Senior

Kirsten Deladi.

Any student at BHS can join this group and help other students stay positive.

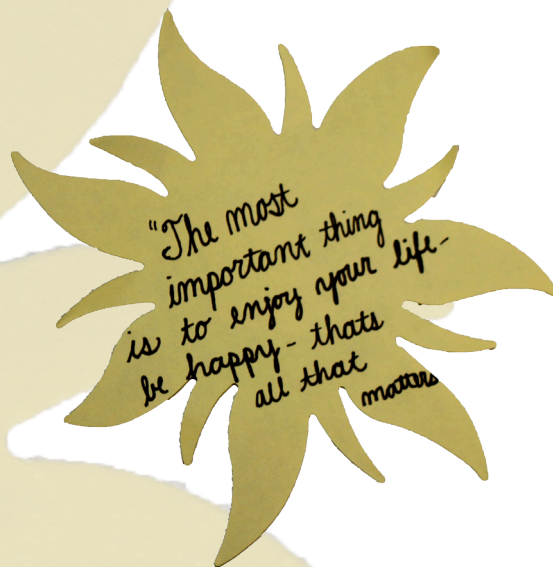
"These suns can keep encouraging people to be happy," says Freshman **Payton Johnson**. "And they are so cute."

Cox talks to her students about Seasonal Affective Disorder and how nicer weather brings up the positivity. "I sure hope it helps people stay positive because I know it helps me!" Senior **Mattie Lubben** said.

Although the sun's may seem tiny, they are large in number. And every person who made them thought about the wellbeing of the kids at BHS. Although this idea may fade and something will take its place, positivity will always live on at BHS.

"I sure hope it helps people stay positive because I know it helps me!"

-Senior Mattie Lubben





Senior Brady Hartman's phone after he smashed it in his car door

Senior **Brady Hartman** told me the story of how he broke his phone.

“I got out of my car, my phone in my front sweatshirt pocket, I opened my car’s back door, reached in, and grabbed my hockey bag. I kind of leaned over and that’s when it fell out of my pocket and at first I didn’t notice it. [The phone] landed exactly where the door latches, so when I closed the door it just smashed my phone,” said Hartman.

“The phone was black and it was dark out and I couldn’t see it. Then it cracked. I saw it when my car door didn’t close. It still turned on but you just couldn’t see anything.”

The reasons why people had cracked screens ranged from “I got angry so I broke it” to “[I] ran it over with my minivan.”

For senior **Sabrina Munsterteiger**, her phone didn’t only crack, but it also stopped working. “I cracked my phone screen on my bathroom tiles. I was fine with it, considering it was my third cracked phone, until it went psycho.” Munsterteiger said. “A couple months later, my phone wouldn’t let me send a text message, make a phone call, or go on social media for more than a couple of minutes without freezing or turning different colors.”

“I was so upset with it when it had an especially bad outburst that I beat it with my brother’s metal baseball bat on the concrete sidewalk. It was exhilarating.”

Although many students have cracked their phones, some have damaged them worse than others.

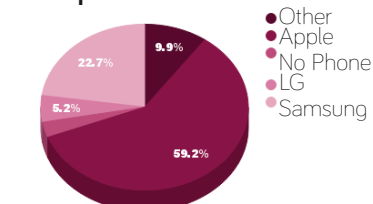
“I had to tape it together.” The same person who said they ran their phone over with their minivan had continued with, “I had a lifeproof case on so it’s cracked pretty bad but not as bad as you’d think after that incident.” For some the screen was so badly broken that they cut their fingers on it and for others it was barely noticeable.

72% of students who answered the survey said they have not broken multiple phones but over 50% have broken at least one phone.

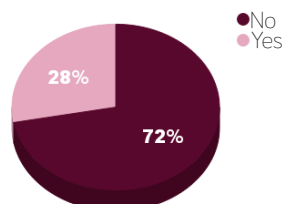
As for makers of phones, nearly 60% of students own an Apple iPhone and 3% of students don’t have a phone.

CRACKED

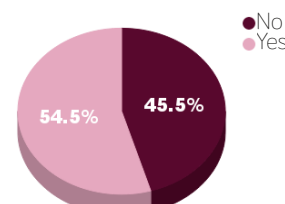
Broken phone screens are common in BHS; Over half of the student body has broken at least one phone.



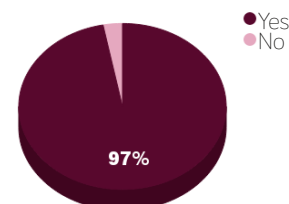
Top makers of students' phones in BHS



Students who have cracked multiple screens



Students who have broken multiple phone screens



Students who own phones

BHS Prom

A Garden of Lights

|Samantha Westrum and Cecelia Miller
|J2 Writers

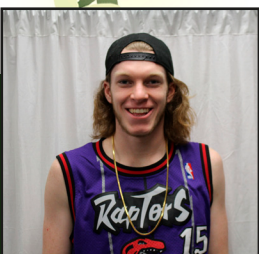
Starting at the end of last school year, the Junior Class Cabinet — made up of **Katie Swartzter, Lauren Farniok, Mika Colson, Kayla Owens, Lauren McHenry, and Kylee Vik** — have been planning the 2016 Prom. They wanted to make sure that this year's prom will be enjoyable for both guys and girls, so they went with the theme "A Garden of Lights".

"At the beginning of deciding on the prom theme we were going to do another theme with it like, 'Paris', but we ended up deciding on the garden of lights theme", said Colson.

Prom will be held at the Marriott in Brooklyn Park. For Grand March, the doors to the high school will open at 3:30 pm and all participants need to be in the PAC for a brief meeting by 4:15 pm. Zahler's will be available in the PAC between 3:30 and 5:00 pm to take pictures. Grand march will commence at 4:30 and end around 5:30 pm. Doors will open at the Northland Ballroom at the Marriott at 7 pm. You can expect to be welcomed with a cookie table, hot wings, cream cheese wontons, mini quesadillas, and more. The dancing will begin at 8 pm and ends at 11 pm, everyone must get there before 9 pm.

■Graphics by Kathleen Tierney

■Photos by Samantha Westrum and Cecelia Miller



Senior Trevor Bengtson
"[Prom is] just preppy kids having a lame-ass time. I'm a bit upset I have to go again this year, but I have a girlfriend, so there's no chance I get out of it."



Senior Livia Koehler
"I am excited for prom, I hope it will be better than last year, and I think change in scenery is good. I'm excited to go with Trevor again, he was a good date last year."



Anonymous
"I was going to bring a girl to prom but something went down at a party and now we are not going. So I'm gonna fly solo Bumping my '85 mustang. It's gonna be lit, fam!"



Junior Lauren Farniok
"I'm going with Hunter Johnson. We got coffee and he had the person write [his promposal] on the bottom of the cup. It took me like 20 minutes to find it."



Senior Alex Rasset
"My parents are letting me drive our Mazda Miata convertible to prom. Afterwards, I am planning on hanging out as like a guys night somewhere."

Promposals



"Hoping Prom can be our finest hours"

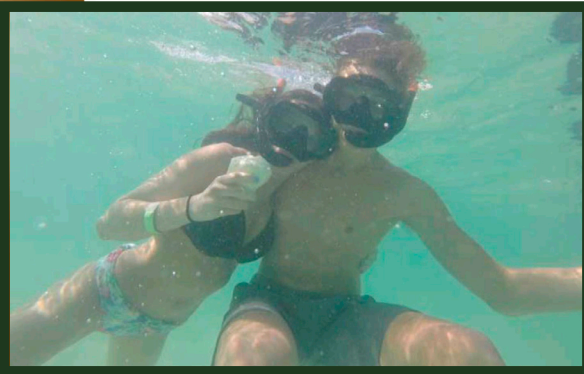
Christian Johnson asked me if I wanted to go to a movie with him, so we went on a date to Culvers and then went to see the movie *The Finest Hours*. We were the only people in the theater because it was a really late showing and I never expected anything, even though I kept getting up throughout the movie. He had his friends from work put up the sign, and I was super happy with it. I've already bought my dress and I'm excited for prom.

-Junior Mika Colson



"What are the 'Auds'?"

Josh Fussy came over to my house and texted me to come outside. On the windshield of his car, there was a sign that said, "What are the Auds you look in my baseball bag and read what's on the baseball?". He's on the varsity baseball team this year, and in the bag it had a baseball that said "Prom?" on it. I said "Yes" right away. I was really excited. I haven't gotten a dress yet, but I do have a style in mind. I think prom's going to be fun this year.



"Prom?"

Connor Kuhlman and I were in Punta Cana over Spring Break and we went on a catamaran ride with a lot of families from Buffalo, and everyone was in on his plan except me. We stopped at this island full of star fish and he threw in a shell when I wasn't looking and we went snorkeling. It took me awhile but I saw this big shell so I swam closer to it and it said "Prom?". I thought it was for someone else but then I came up and he did too, and I said "Yes".

-Sophomore Alex Zeiss



Senior Carly Zumach
"I got my dress at Rubi Jubi's. I wanted something unique because that's who I am. I feel everyone should experience prom at least once."



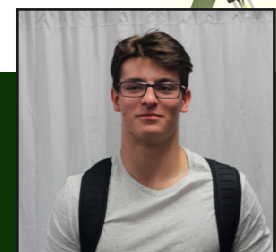
Junior Mitch Bunting
"I think it'll be super fun. I'm just looking forward to dancing with as many people as possible. I'm excited. Afterwards, I'm sure I'll just party like an animal."



Anonymous
"My boyfriend is going to pick me up. Nothing fancy. No partying for us. As long as I get to spend my night with him, I almost don't care what we do."



Senior Ezmae Stevens
"Prom isn't that big of a deal for me. I'm using my dress from coronation that was like 40 bucks and I'm just gonna go with some friends."



Senior Max Hershley
"I'm excited for prom because I am going with my friend Mike and we are wearing matching tuxedos from Dumb and Dumber and taking my mom's Expedition."

eSPORTS

FORGING AHEAD

|Carter Barton
|Journalism 2 Writer

4 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT eSPORTS

1. People who play eSports do not have to conform to the stereotype of nerds living in their parents' basements.

2. eSports includes all competitively played video games. Games included can be for teams or individual play.

3. Other than the actual players, many other jobs are created and included by the growing industry as it has begun to grow into a gigantic business.

4. eSports pros do not necessarily need to spend all of their time playing. Many pro players have full time jobs, are in college, or have families along with their eSports career.



FRESHMEN CRAFT eSPORTS TEAMS

Freshmen **Caleb McCormick** and **Khalil Yncierto** are forging ahead into the unknown and uncommon world of eSports. Each student has created their own team, but have different ideas for the future. They have unique opinions about the competitiveness and professionalism of their teams as well as their personal goals.

THE MESSUPS: LOOKING FOR GOOD TIMES

Yncierto and friends created The Messups so a group of friends could play together as a team rather than being seen as just a random group thrown into a lobby together.

“We wanted a group where we could have a symbol as a team, so that we weren’t just a bunch of random guys playing together,” said Yncierto. “If anything, it was so we could have a team tag when playing together.”

Despite their casual attitude, The Messups still have aspirations. When asked whether the team was just a hobby, Yncierto said “I’ve never really thought about that, but right now I would consider it a hobby. However, I wouldn’t take it as becoming more than just a hobby off the table.”

MULTIPLEX eSPORTS: PREPPING FOR COMPETITION

McCormick created Team Superior in May of 2015, but with multiple changes to the team name, it is now known as Multiplex eSports. Originally, McCormick created Multiplex for the exact same reason as Yncierto.

“I was sick of solo queuing! I wanted to play with people I knew,” said McCormick.

Since the creation of Multiplex eSports, McCormick and his friends have set sights on more than just friendly play. They’ve turned their focuses to becoming a pro team at the international level. Despite bumps in the road, including packed schedules and bad WiFi, Multiplex has held together through thick and thin, only bonded stronger through these hardships.

McCormick’s advice to anyone else starting a team is that they need, “A leader. ‘Cause if you don’t have some... leadership from someone, then it’s all gonna fall apart.”

Members of both The Messups and Multiplex eSports said that, not only does eSports bring teams closer together as players and team-mates, but it maximizes an individual’s enjoyment of gaming. It teaches traits such as loyalty, dedication, determination, and courage, all in the face of long and arduous paths. These teams have their differences, but, regardless, both have started on one such pathway.

“OBVIOUSLY, WE WANT TO MAKE IT TO THE PROS, BUT THAT CAN’T BE DONE UNLESS WE HAVE OUR TEAM WORK HARD AND PLAY HARDER.”

-CALEB MCCORMICK





Photo by Becky Watermiller



David Watermiller, age 5 Junior Bison Tee-ball

■Courtesy Of Luke Merz



Lucas Merz, age 6 Junior Bison Tee-ball

■Courtesy Of Luke Merz

BETHEL'S BEST DUO

Ben Zitur, Josie Peterson, & James Braatz
Journalism 2 Writers

For Seniors **David Watermiller** and **Luke Merz** it all started when they first played tee ball together. Their friendship continued to grow as they continued playing baseball together for the past 14 years. This is the last year in a bison uniform for Watermiller and Merz, but not the last time on the diamond together.

Watermiller and Merz are attending Bethel University next fall to continue academic and baseball careers.

"I really liked the campus and the entire university," said Watermiller, "It's a good bonus that I can also play baseball."

For Merz, he was more focused on the baseball aspect of Bethel.

"I liked how the coach was pursuing me almost every week," said Merz.

Watermiller decided to go to Bethel two weeks prior to Merz's decision.

"I think it's just a bonus to have one of my best friends on the same campus as me," said Watermiller.

They hope to room together and continue to grow their friendship. "I think that hearing Dave was going [Bethel] made my decision that much easier," said Merz.

The coaches saw that they had different talents and roles that could contribute to the team. Watermiller is a pitcher for the Bison, who tends to favor his fastball.

"It's always been helpful having him behind the plate," said Watermiller, "He knows how I like to pitch and calls

the game accordingly."

Watermiller firmly believes he was a big help in getting him to the next level. Watermiller ended the past year with a 2.10 era and over 30 innings pitched.

"I'm excited to go to Bethel to be apart of a collegiate team, one of my dreams since I was a kid," said Watermiller.

Merz is the catcher for the Bison and has the best batting average for returning players, but his bat isn't the only thing that caught Bethel coach's eye.

"The coach liked how I had a strong arm, but also how I was able to call the game," said Merz.

Merz threw out an impressive 75% of the runners who tried to steal on him.

"It's nice being so close with Dave," said Merz, "when I want to practice him and I will go to the cages, or go to the mound to be able to get some extra pitching and catching in."

Both seniors are looking forward to their final season in a Bison uniform.

"I think we both have our individual goals, but the main goal of the team is to make some noise in the section playoffs," said Watermiller.

The Bison have had a tough section in the past years with the State Champions Chanhassen, but the Bison look to make a run in their new 8AAAA section.