

THE
HOOFPRINT

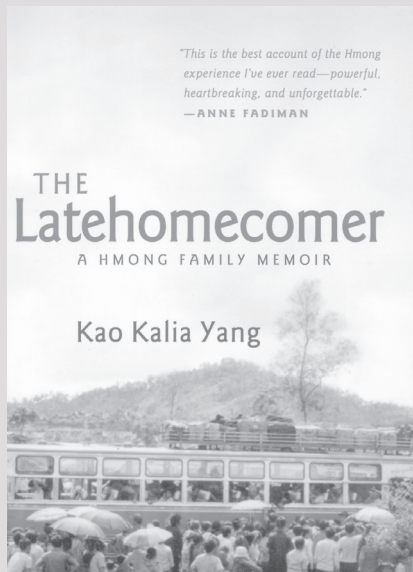
22 APR 2010

BUFFALO HIGH SCHOOL

THE IDEAL SCHOOL

Breaking Barriers

FRANCIE VARNER
STAFF WRITER



It's been two years since author **Kao Kalia Yang** wrote her first book. Her memoir begins in the 1970's during the aftermath of America's Secret War in Laos. Yang recounts her family's narrow escape into Thailand, where she was born in the Ban Vinai Refugee Camp. Six years later the family immigrated to America, where they faced challenges of adapting to a new place, home, and language.

Yang presented her book, *The Latehomecomer*, to students, staff, and other community members on Monday, April 5, in the Performing Arts Center. Her story teaches the reader that "life will teach you the strength of the human heart," and that "the flesh can take blows, while the heart suffers them." She also focused on the importance of education, and how learning is "when curiosity connects with care."

The Community Book Read went from 4-7pm. Participants engaged in small group discussions, listened to Yang present *The Latehomecomer*, and watched The Cultures United group give a Hmong fashion show and arts entertainment. This was the fifth-annual Community Book Read. Kao Kalia Yang is the first female and first Hmong author to present.

"Writing involves playing with the past, piecing together the future," Yang writes in *The Latehomecomer*, "— striving in the present to understand and realize the pieces that make us who we are."

Upcoming Events

Today

Earth Day. The Green Team will be hosting events that spread awareness about being eco-friendly.

April 30

Senior Appreciation Day and the Impact Retreat. Seniors are able to spend a day away from the school while the rest of students welcome the incoming ninth grade class.

May 1

Prom. Grand March will be held at 4:00pm in the Main Gym and is expected to end around 5:30pm.

May 3

The National Honor Society Induction will be held in the PAC at 7:30pm.

For daily news updates from around the school and to read a digital copy of the latest paper, check out hoofprint.net



Shoeless, Not Soulless

EMILY ANDERSON
NEWS EDITOR

On April 8, TOMS Shoes sponsored the event One Day Without Shoes and asked the nation to "imagine a life without shoes; constantly aware of the ground in front of you, suffering regular cuts and scrapes, tending to infection after each walk, and enduring not only terrain, but heat and cold." Heeding this message, students banded together to raise awareness of these conditions by doing away with their shoes.

"I thought it was a great way to make a difference by raising awareness since I don't have much money to donate to the cause," said Junior **Grace Ricker**, "And perhaps by my going without shoes, I brought the cause to the attention of those who could make a difference. I was always told the small things make a difference."

Students knew that going barefoot was against school policy, but chose to do it anyway, bringing shoes to wear during lunch and in the bathrooms to be hygienic.

Editors-in-Chief:

Graham Wyatt & Caitlin Theisen

News Editors:

Delaney Freer & Emily Anderson

Opinion Editors:

Colm Macnab & Cora Fox

Sports Editors:

Beth Leipholtz, Nick Goedel
& Nick Weeks

Activities Editors:

Chelsey Peterson
& Michelle Hansmann

Arts & Entertainment Editors:

Madalyn Nones
& Rebekah Jacobson

Features Editors:

Minnie Ostvig & Valerie Ostvig

Spotlight Editors:

Ali Kiernan & Sadie Holland

Copy Editors:

Mitch Budde & Caroline Persons

Photography Editors:

Nina Downer & Rachael Etter

Staff Writers:

Francie Varner, Kaelie Lund,
Olivia Wyatt, & Prentice Basten

Graphics/Front Page:

Joel Morehouse & Dan Hanson

Adviser:

Ryan McCallum

The Hoofprint is the official student-produced newspaper of Buffalo High School. It is published monthly during the school year.

Letters to the editors and guest columns are welcome. Letters must be typed and signed with the author's name, year in school, and contact information for verification. *The Hoofprint* reserves the right to edit obscene and potentially libelous material. All letters become property of *The Hoofprint* and will not be returned.

Opinions contained within this issue reflect the viewpoint of the author only and do not represent the opinions of *The Hoofprint* staff or the staff and administration of Buffalo High School.

The Hoofprint is printed at the Wright Country Journal Press. Our production office is located in Room A-209. The editorial office phone number is (763)682-8162. Our mailing address is Buffalo High School, 877 Bison Blvd, Buffalo, Minn., 55313. Emails should be sent to mail@hoofprint.net.

More news and information about Buffalo High School can be found online at hoofprint.net.



RACHAELETTNER

Above: Superintendent James Bauck (right) listens with Directors Rolf Mohwinkel and Jeff Mattson to a speaker during a School Board meeting. Bauck sits alongside the other seven members of the board and helps govern the school district.

Bauck leaves for Chaska

MITCHBUDDER & KAEJELUND
COPY EDITOR & STAFF WRITER

School District 877 Superintendent **James Bauck** will be transferring to District 112 (Chaska) on June 1. The school board announced that they will soon begin the process of selecting a new superintendent and are currently developing a leadership profile that will guide the process.

Chaska's current Superintendent David Jennings released an e-mail in October 2 announcing his retirement at the end of the 09-10 school year. Jennings, who had held the position since being hired in March of 2005, had previously announced his retirement in 2008, but stayed due to the schools financial situation, and to ensure that certain policies were passed. Chaska went through a long list of candidates, and with the help of School Exec Connect, a superintendent search firm, was able to narrow the search down. In the end Bauck won out, and will be bringing nearly two decades of experience as a Superintendent, plus years spent as a biology, gym, and health teacher.

"We went through a very exhaustive search process," said Chaska school board Chairman **Rod Frank**, "Parents, businessmen and women, community leaders, teachers, and administration were all taken into consideration. We hired a search firm to create an in-depth profile, and to help pick the right candidate. He [Bauck] has a passion for education that clearly comes across. He expressed a deep caring for students, and learners, and a lot of respect for educators."

The job of a superintendent is much more than picking days to cancel school due to weather. A superintendent is the only person hired directly by a school board to serve as the chief executive of the said school board. Superintendents are not directly a part of the board, but instead serve mostly in the adviser role. They prepare the agenda for what's going to happen, and also create policy to be voted on by the board.

They prepare the annual budget, submit state and federal reports, recommend staff appointments and dismissals, studies district problems and solutions, and acts as the go between for the school board and the people of a community. All districts have fallen into some financial trouble during this recession, and even though Bauck is leaving behind 877's problems, district 112 has issues of their own that will need his attention.

"District 112 is right in the middle of a secondary education redesign," said Franks, "This project has been in the making for over a year now. This cannot be tabled, he [Bauck] will have to get this underway immediately. It will not be easy with the funds we have."

On April 12, 2010 Buffalo has hired a search firm of its own. The Buffalo school board is looking to get 6-7 qualified candidates in a few weeks. A new superintendent will be picked before summer vacation gets out.

"Our new superintendent will be coming into a pretty good position," said Buffalo school board chairman **Dave Wilson**, "No real hot spots that will need his or her attention. 877 is an ideal district for a new superintendent. There are some financial issues, but every district is experiencing these problems. One of the first things to be taken care of would be a levy renewal which will be coming up in the next year."

"We're looking for a strong leader with a good understanding of students and staff, someone who has a 'presence' in the building," said Chairperson **Sue Lee**. "We're looking for someone who wants to be really student-focused."

Buffalo is losing an experienced person, but this will also give the Buffalo school district a chance to a new start with new ideas.

"The whole board is sad to see Bauck leave," said Wilson, "He's done a very good job, and left us in a good position. We are optimistic to see what happens."

Describe how you got the job.

I will be resigning from my post as BHM superintendent to accept a contract with the Eastern Carver County Schools also referred to as Chaska. I actually was not looking for a new job, very content working for the BHM District. The firm hired to conduct the search for the Chaska superintendent vacancy contacted me. After several conversations I decided to apply. The search firm consultants felt my leadership skills would be a good match for the Chaska district. Chaska has a number of similarities to the BHM District, but also some very unique challenges and opportunities that made the vacancy an appealing opportunity.

You've done a lot for the BHM district. How does it feel to be leaving it?

It is with mixed emotions. I am excited about the leadership opportunity in Chaska, yet know I will shed a few tears about leaving. There are so many quality people who work in this district, it makes it difficult to depart to a new district. The community people, parents, and students I have been able to meet in this school community have been wonderful. I guess what I am trying to say is it will be the people I miss the most.

Looking back, would you have done anything different in the way that you ran the BHM district?

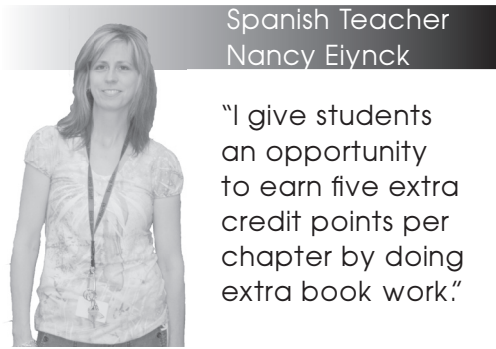
That is an interesting question. I wish I could have changed a couple twists in the 2007 levy referendum which may, and I can only speculate "may," have changed the voting outcome. When in a leadership position, one constantly reflects on "what if's," but hindsight is always 20/20 and can only be helpful in making future decisions. I actually feel very good about the way the district has been "run" the last six years. There may be a few minor deals here and there I would change, but nothing major.

In your eyes, what is the future of the BHM district?

So much of the future will be determined by state funding levels. This will be true for all school districts over the next three to four years. Legislative funding decisions this spring will impact next school year and there is a very large state budget deficit looming for the following two years [...] The recent budget reductions will allow the district to take a reduction in state aid for one school year, but not multiple years. Setting aside the money woes which will impact all school districts in the state, the district is postured well for the future. The school board is solid and functions very well. The administrative team is youthful, full of energy, and willing to press forward to make this district better. The staff at all levels and in all jobs are hard working people dedicated to providing the best opportunities for students. The learning climate in our schools is very positive. Students who take advantage of what is offered will do very well in life after leaving this school district.

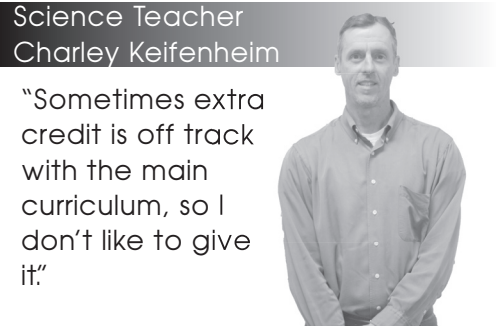
What advice would you give the new superintendent?

This is a wonderful place to work, work hard and in return the people who work with you will give you their all.



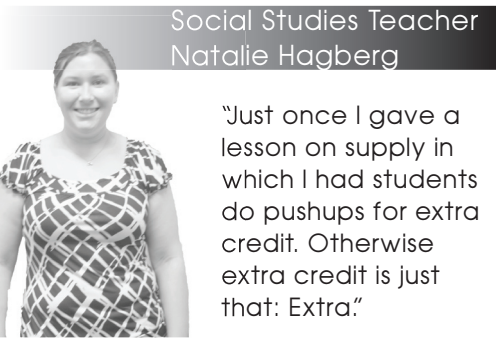
Spanish Teacher
Nancy Eynck

"I give students an opportunity to earn five extra credit points per chapter by doing extra book work."



Science Teacher
Charley Keifenheim

"Sometimes extra credit is off track with the main curriculum, so I don't like to give it."



Social Studies Teacher
Natalie Hagberg

"Just once I gave a lesson on supply in which I had students do pushups for extra credit. Otherwise extra credit is just that: Extra."



Giving 110 percent

RACHAELETTNER

OLIVIA WYATT
STAFF WRITER

Ten minutes left in class and you have to go to the bathroom. You still have all of your extra credit passports, and if you don't leave, you'll receive a better grade in the class. Would you go?

"When push comes to shove, I don't mind if kids wait to go to the bathroom," said Spanish Teacher **Daryl Boeckers**, "Passports are worth nine points in order to keep kids in class."

Passports are used for going to the bathroom, getting a drink of water, forgetting something in your locker, etc. If passports are left at the end of the term, extra credit points are given for each that you have.

"A passport is a reward for being here; it's like a free pass. The reward can make students get their act together," said Math Teacher **Peggy Pasche**, "With eight minute passing time, students have long enough to do whatever they need to do. If they spend their time wisely, they won't need to leave class."

"I don't like having passports because I'd rather be able to leave without worrying about them," said Junior **Nicki Kurash**, "I would like to do worthwhile assignments to get the extra credit."

Passports aren't the only form of extra credit that teachers offer. Some offer credit that makes students go above and beyond. English Teacher **Judy Jacobson** has students go out of a typical comfort zone by going to school events and writing

reviews on them. Boeckers lets students do an extra worksheet in their packets to get an occasional extra point or two. Other teachers offer very few or don't offer any opportunities for extra credit.

"If I gave extra credit, students would just do the assignments they wanted and expect that they could make up the points at the end of the term with mindless extra credit worksheets," said Social Studies Teacher **Devin Davidson**, "There are enough points in my class that if you were to do poorly on an assignment there would be plenty of time to make it up."

"I give very few opportunities because it's too much busy work. Students need to focus more on what's going on in class, rather than doing a lot of extra credit," said Jacobson, "However, I do like to offer opportunities such as drama reviews or going to the community book read. It's an enhancing way to benefit from what we've done in class."

Numerous students enjoy it in order to help them in class if they were absent and need help catching up, or even just to get ahead in a particular class.

"It helps if you're behind, and can help pickup your grade," said Senior **Rachel Theisen**, "Having extra credit is an easy way to get ahead."

According to a majority of students, going above and beyond or giving passports wouldn't be part of an ideal schooling system. If you had ten minutes left in class and needed to go to the bathroom, would you?

From homework to homelearning

MINNIE OSTVIG & SAMMAILHOT
FEATURES EDITOR & STAFF WRITER

"This is so stupid," a frustrated sophomore complains, crumpling up her paper copy of her online homework. "He told me that I did everything right and that he doesn't know why I didn't get points for the problem, but he's still not giving me full credit."

Homework is claimed to expound understanding, but after spending late nights finishing assignments, the effectiveness of current homework practices are being questioned and deemed monotonous, rather than enlightening.

"Does the homework bulging from kids' backpacks truly help them learn? Or does it simply steal their free time in the service of a false sense of rigor?" **Daniel H. Pink**, Author of *Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us*, published in 2010, asked. "Let's not waste our kids' time on meaningless exercises. With a little thought and effort, we can turn homework into homelearning."

According to Pink, there are three questions teachers need to ask in order to determine how successful the assignment will be: first, am I offering students any autonomy over how and when to do this work?, Second, does this assignment promote mastery by offering a novel, engaging task (as opposed to rote reformulation of something already covered in class)?, and third, do my students understand the purpose of this assignment? That is, can they see how doing this additional activity at home contributes to the larger enterprise in which the class is engaged?

By asking these questions, teachers can assign homework that engages the students and gives them more independence. Math

Teacher **Carlton Urdahl** gives his students homework assignments everyday, but does not grade them. This gives students the ability to practice responsibility and learn better time management.

"At first I slacked off and didn't do anything," said Senior **Drew Maas**, "but then I realized that in order to learn I had to do something."

The authors of *The End of Homework: How Homework Disrupts Families, Overburdens Children, and Limits Learning*, published in 2000, state: "If students were permitted more freedom to structure their own time and explore their own interests, they would find it much easier to develop both an authentic self and meaningful social life."

The failure of Homework isn't placed solely on the shoulders of the teachers. Very few students are willing to spend hours in search of the understanding supposedly found in the 8.5" by 11" paper given to them and not enough administrators take interest in homework practices.

"[Students] need principals," said Author **Alfie Kohn**, "who question the slogans that pass for arguments: that homework creates a link between school and family (as if there weren't more constructive ways to make that connection!), or that it 'reinforces' what students were taught in class (a word that denotes the repetition of rote behaviors, not the development of understanding), or that it teaches children self-discipline and responsibility (a claim for which absolutely no evidence exists). The best teachers know that children learn how to make good decisions by making decisions, not by following directions."



Top: Sophomore Valerie Ostvig pulls out her Biology textbook to begin work on an assignment. Bottom: Senior Lauren Johnson works on her homework during AAA.

Ideal School

The *Hoofprint* staff discusses how knowing the positive and negative aspects of education can help school move forward

Everyone criticizes. Whether a person finds faults in another individual, a class, or life in general, everyone can find something wrong in most situations. The staff of *The Hoofprint* includes itself in this behavior, so when we chose to make this issue define an “ideal school” in the eyes of students, we wanted to make sure we focused less on critiques and more on helpful suggestions for what we believe a school can and should amount to.

The goal of this issue is not only to evaluate what aspects of education could be improved, but also to restate what factors we think work well and how grateful we are to have them. Not only does our school promote positive attitude, cleanliness, and exemplary teaching, but it also gives a safe environment for students to learn, as well as a wide variety of sports and activities. We see involvement as key to any good school system. Over 97 percent of students are satisfied with their experience here and 99 percent feel safe learning here.

More importantly, as we address the coming change in superintendency we believe it will be important to make known what things we would like to stay the same, and what things could use polishing. New leadership means a new opportunity to fulfill the tremendous potential our school has. We also hope to get students thinking about what they can do to ensure a great future under new leadership. We believe that if students give real thought to what an ideal school means for them, year after year each unique student body could be better educated in the ways that work for them.

Though the subject of improvement could be a heavy target for harsh criticism, we encourage healthy debate and constructive suggestions. We bring select areas to light in this issue, but we know there are more, and hope that the others are also discussed in a positive way.

When we are about to experience a change, especially in leadership, it’s important to re-evaluate how effectively we operate--this is our opportunity to do so. This issue along with the conversations of students and staff may help your serve as a guide for the new superintendent when he or she becomes part of Buffalo, as well as in years to come.

WHAT IS ONE THING AN IDEAL SCHOOL SHOULD HAVE AND WHY?

FEATURES



“An ideal school will have time to think. We have so much pressure to do something, but not enough to just stop and think.”
- Senior Minnie Ostvig

NEWS



“In an ideal school, there would be a good student-staff connect. Lines of communication would be more open and more mutual respect be present.”
- Senior Emily Anderson

OPINIONS



“It needs an art program. Students need a creative outlet and a way to express themselves outside of schoolwork.”
- Senior Cora Fox

ACTIVITIES



“An ideal school should stress learning. It should inspire students, not just motivate them to get an A.”
- Senior Chelsey Peterson

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



“It needs a lot of options for different classes. Kids will focus more when they are doing something that they like.”
- Junior Madalyn Nones

SPORTS



“It should have sports. It gives kids a break from everyday school life and homework.”
- Senior Nick Goedel

SPOTLIGHT



“An ideal school would not only teach you what you need for college, but how to be adults as well.”
- Junior Ali Kiernan

COPY



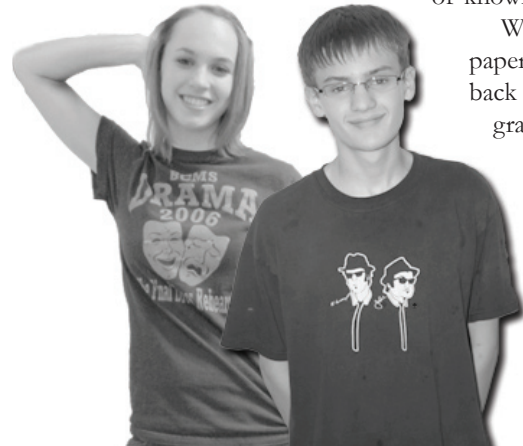
“Students would get more feedback from teachers on what they do right and wrong, so they are learning and not just seeing an X.”
- Sophomore Mitch Budde

Working at perfect

Why the traditional grading system hampers student learning

MITCHBUDDÉ & KAELIELUND
STAFF WRITERS

Grades are a big deal for students. Our culture constantly reminds us to be successful in life, we must do well in school. And by doing well in school they mean get A's and B's in class. How do you get into a good college? By getting good grades! A successful job? Good grades of course. Those who can play the grade game, are pretty well off. Consider though, that playing this game actually hampers the success it's supposedly trying to create. The pursuit of grades is a far cry from the pursuit of knowledge.



When a paper is handed back with a grade what do you know

about how you did? Absolutely nothing. It may show which answers were right, and which were wrong, but that doesn't explain what went wrong. Grades are not a replacement for thorough feedback. If our school adopted a feedback system we could accomplish two major things: Students would be able to be walked through their successes and failures, which can be used to improve future work, and work would take longer to correct, so less homework would be assigned, but it would be bigger more in depth work. The Journal of Educational Research backs this with an experiment in which a group of students were told they would not be graded on unit in social studies. All of students had a better understanding of the material, then those who were graded.

When students learn for grades questions, like "Do I need to know this?", "Is this on the test?", and "Does this count?" arise. When the attitude for school is "I only want to learn for the points," there is no drive to learn more, to pursue an interest, or to even retain what is taught. In a study by the Journal of Educational Psychology, students who passed a test, and then were asked to redo it one week later had trouble remembering major details, and were much more likely to fail. If what we learn is forgotten as soon we are tested on it, then there is no reason for us to go to school.

It could be argued that colleges would ignore students who no longer get graded for their work. But, as of 2005, over 700 colleges don't require SAT/ACT scores, and all of those will also accept transcripts from teachers that contain your work, and teacher comments. Classroom competition, also arguable as being a good thing, would be removed. But, according to the Journal of Adolescent Research, grade competition only exists in those who are already doing well in school. The competition isn't there for those who struggle with school.

"Wise educators realize that it doesn't matter how motivated students are; what matters is how students are motivated," said Researcher Alfie Kohn, "It is the type of motivation that counts, not the amount"

The grade system is not perfect. We need to be open to trying new ideas, because schools need to be providing the best education possible. If it can be done without grades, than so be it. Teachers should take the time to try this in their class and compare it to the norm. Even using tools like Google docs, where feedback can be shown immediately would improve class understanding. It is up to the teacher to provide the best method to teach, but now the student is responsible to use this new system by doing extra research, finding academic interests and pursuing them, and using the critique to improve their work.

Building a foundation for success

Principal Mark Mischke talks about what makes a school an ideal place for students and staff

MARKMISCHKE
SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

As Buffalo High School Principal, I have been asked to give my opinion on the question, "What makes a school a good place for students, staff and our community?" A school needs to first have a safe and healthy learning environment. Before successful learning opportunities are created, we need to develop a strong and supportive climate where students and staff feel comfortable reaching outside their comfort zone to grow and achieve. Although this is sometimes difficult to measure, the use of surveys allows BHS to gather consistent data. Three questions we ask, that I feel are reflective of a safe and healthy learning environment are, "Do students respect staff at BHS?"; "Do students respect each other at BHS?"; and "Do you enjoy being at BHS?"

In looking at data gathered so far from

this spring's survey, results show: 94% of students say they respect staff at BHS, 86% of students say they respect each other at BHS, and 97% of students say they enjoy

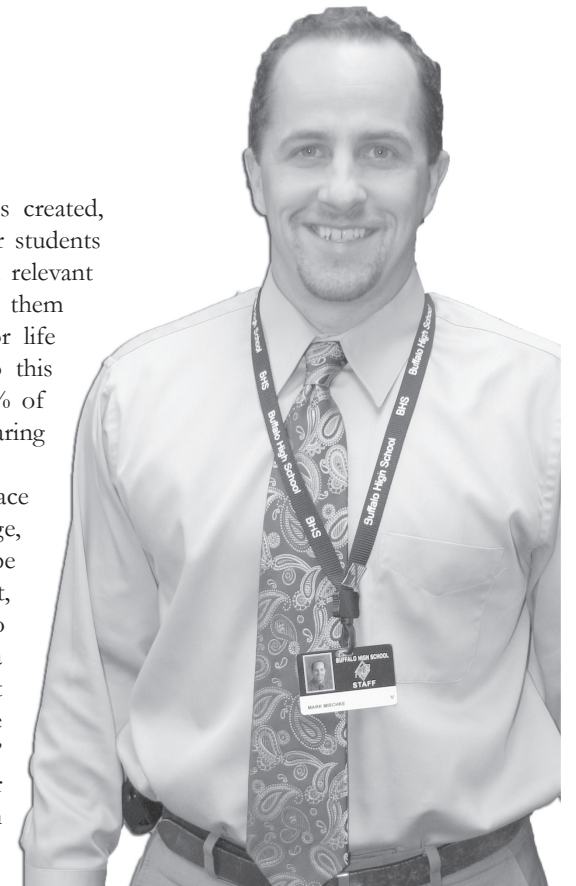
"A school needs to first have a safe and healthy learning environment."

being at BHS.

The My Voice Student Survey that has asked almost 500,000 9-12th grade students nation-wide the questions above. Results show 39% of students say they respect staff at their high schools, 30% of students say they respect each other at their high schools, and 49% of students say they enjoy being at their high school.

If a positive environment is created, the next key is to make sure our students are challenged with rigorous and relevant opportunities that will prepare them not only for school but also for life outside of BHS. According to this spring's student survey data, 95% of our students feel that BHS is preparing them well for their future.

Making a school a good place for all, is an ongoing challenge, and requires each member to be purposeful in their efforts. Yet, if we are accomplishing the two objectives stated above, "Building a safe, healthy learning environment and preparing students to be successful when they leave BHS," I feel the students, staff and our community will be rewarded with a great school.



Student Opinions change over time

Five years ago, the former Hoofprint staff passed out surveys to 262 students at random. With new students roaming the hallways, the same survey brings various views about BHS into a new light.

THEN		Disagree					Agree				
May 2005		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
I feel safe in this school district.		.7%	3%	23%	54%	22%					
Teachers care about their students.		3%	4%	26%	45%	19%					
Teachers are qualified enough to work here.		.7%	6%	23%	44%	24%					
Teachers have concern for a student's progress.		3%	9%	39%	39%	17%					
Teachers show an in-depth knowledge of teaching.		7%	9%	33%	43%	10%					
School begins too early.		8%	24%	15%	16%	42%					
Classes are too difficult.		13%	40%	35%	8%	2%					
Classes do not challenge me.		11%	11%	34%	11%	6%					
I'd rather attend school here than somewhere else.		9%	11%	19%	30%	26%					
I think we have enough homework.		1%	3%	15%	35%	42%					
Our school supports the arts.		1%	2%	21%	39%	29%					
Our library is adequate.		4%	8%	24%	42%	17%					
SSR is a good change in the school.		49%	22%	16%	8%	5%					
Lunchtime is long enough.		22%	30%	23%	14%	7%					
Our school is usually a comfortable temperature.		30%	32%	19%	11%	4%					
The student body supports the school & activities.		2%	2%	35%	46%	10%					
The cleanliness of the school is superior.		1%	4%	29%	48%	15%					
Our school has a drug problem.		6%	14%	27%	28%	20%					
Our school has a drinking problem.		5%	14%	26%	23%	24%					
I am satisfied with my overall experience at BHS.		4%	5%	20%	46%	21%					

NOW		Disagree				Agree			
April 2010		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
I feel safe in this school district.		1%	2%	46%	51%				
Teachers care about their students.		1%	6%	65%	29%				
Teachers are qualified enough to work here.		2%	9%	70%	19%				
The administration listens to the students.		12%	25%	56%	7%				
Teachers show an in-depth knowledge of teaching.		3%	11%	68%	19%				
School begins too early.		9%	49%	19%	22%				
Classes are too difficult.		22%	66%	9%	2%				
Classes do not challenge me.		12%	56%	26%	6%				
I'd rather attend school here than somewhere else.		6%	14%	31%	49%				
I think we have enough homework.		3%	3%	44%	50%				
Our school supports the arts.		3%	7%	46%	44%				
Our school cares more about sports than it should.		10%	54%	25%	11%				
SSR is a good thing.		28%	34%	29%	9%				
Lunchtime is long enough.		10%	32%	51%	6%				
I am happy with the choices we have at lunch.		12%	18%	51%	19%				
The student body is supportive of sports and activities.		1%	7%	57%	34%				
The cleanliness of the school is superior.		1%	1%	54%	44%				
Our school has a drug problem.		7%	50%	31%	13%				
Our school has a drinking problem.		7%	40%	39%	14%				
I am satisfied with my overall experience at BHS.		3%	2%	62%	33%				
The four-block schedule is the best option.		1%	4%	20%	75%				

BONUS!

	Mostly Negative	Neither nor Positive	Mostly Positive
The direction the school is heading is ...	32%	10%	57%

97% of students feel SAFE at school

90% of students believe that our school supports the ARTS

53% of students think our school has a Drinking Problem

80% of students would rather attend BHS than anywhere else

95% of students are satisfied with their experience at BHS.

62% of students do not like SSR

2010 Survey HIGHLIGHTS



Students in English Teacher Denise Wahlin-Fiskum's College in Schools Literature class read through an introduction to their new book, *Beloved*.

On the Chopping Block

Without the challenge of a gifted program, students could succumb to boredom in required classes

RACHEL MUSSELL
STAFF WRITER

Sitting in the back of a classroom, a student plays games on his iPod and texts. As the teacher comes around to collect homework, he offers yet another excuse for why the homework is unfinished. The teacher passes back the tests from the day before the student sees that he got another A+. He then returns to the game he was playing, while the rest of the class goes on with the lesson. According to the Davidson Institute for Talent Development, 88 percent of High School dropouts had passing grades, but dropped out due to boredom. Now the question to be asked is: why were they bored? Gifted and talented students spend time in classrooms filled with a variety of talents and abilities, and because of this, they aren't receiving much of a challenge when it comes to school, as shown in *The Handbook of Gifted Education*. About 20 percent of school dropouts tested into the gifted range of students.

Gifted and Talented Education programs should be instituted in our schools today because bright students need to receiving more of a challenge. One way that this could be done would be to institute a system called "tracking" or "grouping". This is where the school places students in classes based on their abilities in certain subject areas. Through this system, students will be taking classes with peers of equal abilities, which will increase the challenge of the class, leading to a decrease in the boredom level for students.

"When you surround highly intelligent students with other highly intelligent students, they tend to get competitive with each other and they challenge each other," said Math Teacher **Emily Greeley**. "On the lower end, it's good to be able to have more control of the pace, but I think students would miss out on the opportunity to learn from higher achieving students in that subject area."

Critics of gifted and talented education say that calling students "gifted" and "talented" or placing students in higher tracks than other students might have the kids in lower tracks feeling bad, or losing self-esteem; however, advocates for tracking and gifted/talented education say that gifted students are not going to learn to their fullest potential if they are in a regular classroom.

"There are positive and negative sides to it [tracking/grouping]

If your goal is to get the students to read at a faster pace or to write higher quality essays, it would be great for students of equal abilities to be in the same classroom," said Social Studies Teacher **Evan Ronken**. "For students to learn the most about the social part of life, however, it would be better to be in a mixed classroom where the students would hear the opinions and views of other students from all different categories.

When looking at Gifted and Talented Education from a teacher's perspective, it would be much easier to teach a class that has students of equal ability versus teaching a class with a wide range of abilities. Teachers would be able to generate a lesson plan that is to the level of the students, instead of attempting to teach something that they know some students will understand, while others wouldn't.

"When you surround highly intelligent students with other highly intelligent students, they tend to get competitive with each other and they challenge each other. On the lower end, it's good to be able to have more control of the pace, but I think students would miss out on an opportunity to learn from higher-achieving students in that subject area."

-Math Teacher Emily Greeley

Another option that could be offered would be to test out of classes that are requirements to graduate, in order to move on to tougher, more challenging classes. For example, if a student comes into high school already able to do Algebra and Geometry, they should be able to test out of these classes, instead of having to take a semester of each of them. This would open up their schedule to be able to take the more of the higher level and tougher math classes.

"It would be nice if you could test out of things, instead of having to take prerequisites for all of the upper level classes," said Junior **Olivia Haggerty**. "They could also offer more ninth grade

level classes to eighth graders."

CIS (College In Schools) and AP (Advanced Placement) are offered to juniors and seniors, but students may find that it is hard to work these classes into their schedule because they are stuck taking the required classes. This can be solved if you are able to test out of certain required subjects, such as the beginning math classes, or test out of required science classes in order to take the offered CIS class. A driven student would also be able to fill the amount of the electives they are given each year with required classes that they would usually take the next year.

In recent years, gifted and talented education programs have been cut in most schools due to lack of funding. These cuts have also occurred because of the "No-Child-Left-Behind" Act, which works to bring all students up to a certain level of education. What happens to the students who are miles ahead of other students? Eight billion dollars a year is spent on education for the special education departments, while only 800 million dollars are spent on gifted children.

"Unfortunately, when it comes down to budget cuts, Gifted Education programs are normally the ones cut. It's easy to put it on the chopping block because the students in this program can be put into other classes," said Science Teacher **Sarah Rodenwald**. "It may not benefit these students, but it is something that will still work."

Currently, our school district is developing a gifted program entitled "Quest." The program is for fourth, fifth, and sixth graders and will begin in the upcoming school year. Through this program, students will learn at a faster pace than they would in a regular class, along with being in classes surrounded by peers that will challenge them. In the future, the district is looking into including seventh and eighth graders also. Once the district is able to witness the effect of this program on the younger gifted students, the district may look into the expansion of the program into high school. Adding ninth and tenth graders to this program would be beneficial because it would give the students more of a challenge to prepare for CIS/AP classes. But for now, our gifted students will remain in the back of classrooms playing games on their iPods.

SEXED

“On one hand it’s good, but it’s an awkward topic, so is it ideal? I can’t tell.”

-Sophomore Katherine Camboll

“It’s good because when people are more aware of their body they are less likely to make mistakes and more likely to take care of it ”

-Sophomore Tiffany Pulvermacher

“It’s pointless. Most people already know about what we are being taught ”

-Sophomore James O’Neill

82% of teen pregnancies unintended

The sexual education program teaches students how to make safe decisions about sexual activity, rather than just discouraging it

ANNAMASON
STAFF WRITER

I heard the phone ringing as I ran into my house after school on a spring day in third grade. I picked it to hear a cheery, “Hi, Honey!” from my mom. She had called to tell me she had gotten me a gift of sorts. When she got home later that evening I was eager to see what was in store. This may seem strange to any “normal” family, but as she sat down she handed me *The Body Book*, I knew exactly what to expect: the full ins-and-outs of both the male and female bodies.

My early learning and open-minded family definitely contributes to why sex education is so important to me. I’ve always been informed about what I’m curious about. This knowledge is the largest contributor to my open, easy going approach to sex education. It has opened my eyes to the under-education of sexuality and the consequences of it.

Our school recognizes the importance of educating teens about sex, and it needs to stay that way. Parents and others with opposing views may think that if you expose kids to sex, they will want to have sex; those people need a reality check. Even without sexual education in the schools, students will be exposed to sex in their social circles and by the media. Education doesn’t encourage sex; it informs teens about sex.

“My mom sat me down and asked me if I knew what sex was one day,” Said Junior Abby Bollum, “She explained it to me and I ran out of the room screaming because I thought it was so gross. I am glad she told me, though, because I’m not grossed out by sex anymore.”

If teens want to have sex, they will have sex. For those teens, education is most important in preventing STDs and teen pregnancies.

“Kids whose parents don’t talk to them [about sex] are at higher risk for pregnancies and STDs,” said Health Teacher Mary Bremmer, “One of the biggest issues [sexuality educators] face is convincing those who think that if you tell [students] about it, they’ll want to do it that’s not the case.”

According to the 2007 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, which moni-

tors priority health risk behaviors, a nationwide 89.5% of students had never been taught in school about AIDS or HIV. The Guttmacher Institute, a collaborating center for reproductive health, states that of about 750,000 teen pregnancies that occur each year, 82% are unintended. This shows us how greatly we need to educate all teens about both abstinence and contraception to reduce the amount of teen pregnancies and STIs.

Although many parents want their teens to fall in love and get married before sexual intercourse, many of those teens do not share the same belief. For those whom sex is “inevitable,” the means to do it safely is a must. Currently, 35 states mandate either sexual education or education about HIV/AIDS and other STIs. This number seems much too small to those of us in favor of sex education. All teens have the right to know about the protection they need when they find it’s the right time for them to have sex.

“Our district’s goal is to give [students] the health facts to help them make responsible decisions,” said Bremmer. “We teach the factual parts, actual morals will come from outside sources such as friends, family, and religion.”

In 2002, only 62% of sexually experienced female teens had received instruction about contraception before they first had sex. This is an immense decrease from the 72% in 1995, according to the Guttmacher Institute. This goes to show how “modern” our education system really is. Starting sex education younger would help teens get to the point of knowledge that is optimal as soon as possible. We must not let our schools and societies get to the point where teen sex is completely ignored.

If that were to happen, teen pregnancies, STDs, and abortion rates would sky-rocket. Our past, such as the statistic from 1995, should be used in determining our future. The sexuality education BHS students are receiving is factual and a necessity for the high-school aged kids. We should consider our school exemplary in sexuality education and encourage other schools to follow suit.

2%
STUDENTS
have **OPTED** out
OF **SEX ED**

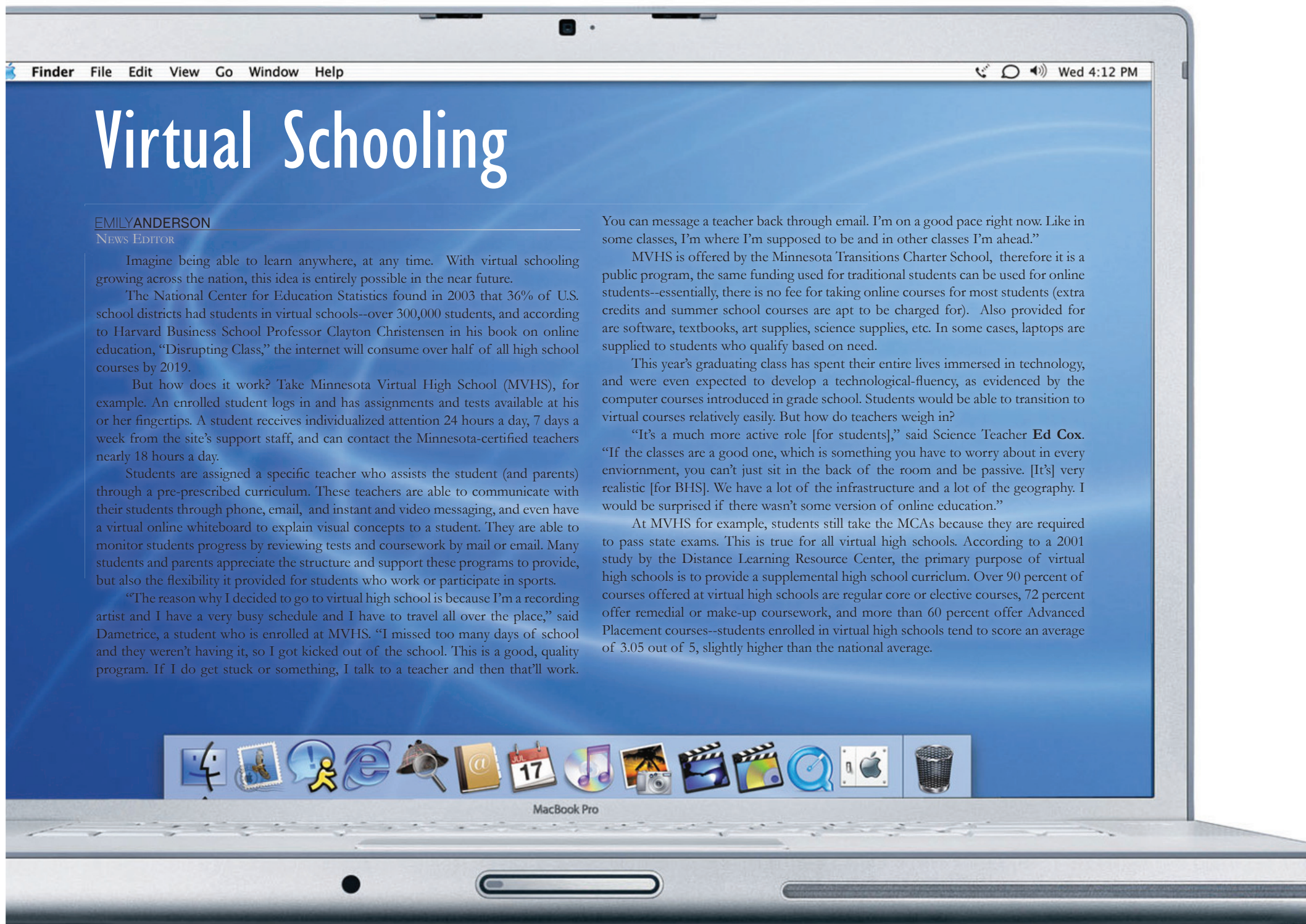
51
PERCENT of BHS
STUDENTS said they
BENEFITED
From **SEX ED**

3 out of
2 **STUDENTS’**
PARENTS HAVE
given them
THE SEX TALK

71
PERCENT BHS
STUDENTS
BELIEVE the
IDEAL SCHOOL
would have sex ed

Alternative ALearning

Exploring options outside
of the traditional classroom
experience



EMILY ANDERSON
NEWS EDITOR

Imagine being able to learn anywhere, at any time. With virtual schooling growing across the nation, this idea is entirely possible in the near future.

The National Center for Education Statistics found in 2003 that 36% of U.S. school districts had students in virtual schools--over 300,000 students, and according to Harvard Business School Professor Clayton Christensen in his book on online education, "Disrupting Class," the internet will consume over half of all high school courses by 2019.

But how does it work? Take Minnesota Virtual High School (MVHS), for example. An enrolled student logs in and has assignments and tests available at his or her fingertips. A student receives individualized attention 24 hours a day, 7 days a week from the site's support staff, and can contact the Minnesota-certified teachers nearly 18 hours a day.

Students are assigned a specific teacher who assists the student (and parents) through a pre-prescribed curriculum. These teachers are able to communicate with their students through phone, email, and instant and video messaging, and even have a virtual online whiteboard to explain visual concepts to a student. They are able to monitor students progress by reviewing tests and coursework by mail or email. Many students and parents appreciate the structure and support these programs to provide, but also the flexibility it provided for students who work or participate in sports.

"The reason why I decided to go to virtual high school is because I'm a recording artist and I have a very busy schedule and I have to travel all over the place," said Dametrice, a student who is enrolled at MVHS. "I missed too many days of school and they weren't having it, so I got kicked out of the school. This is a good, quality program. If I do get stuck or something, I talk to a teacher and then that'll work.

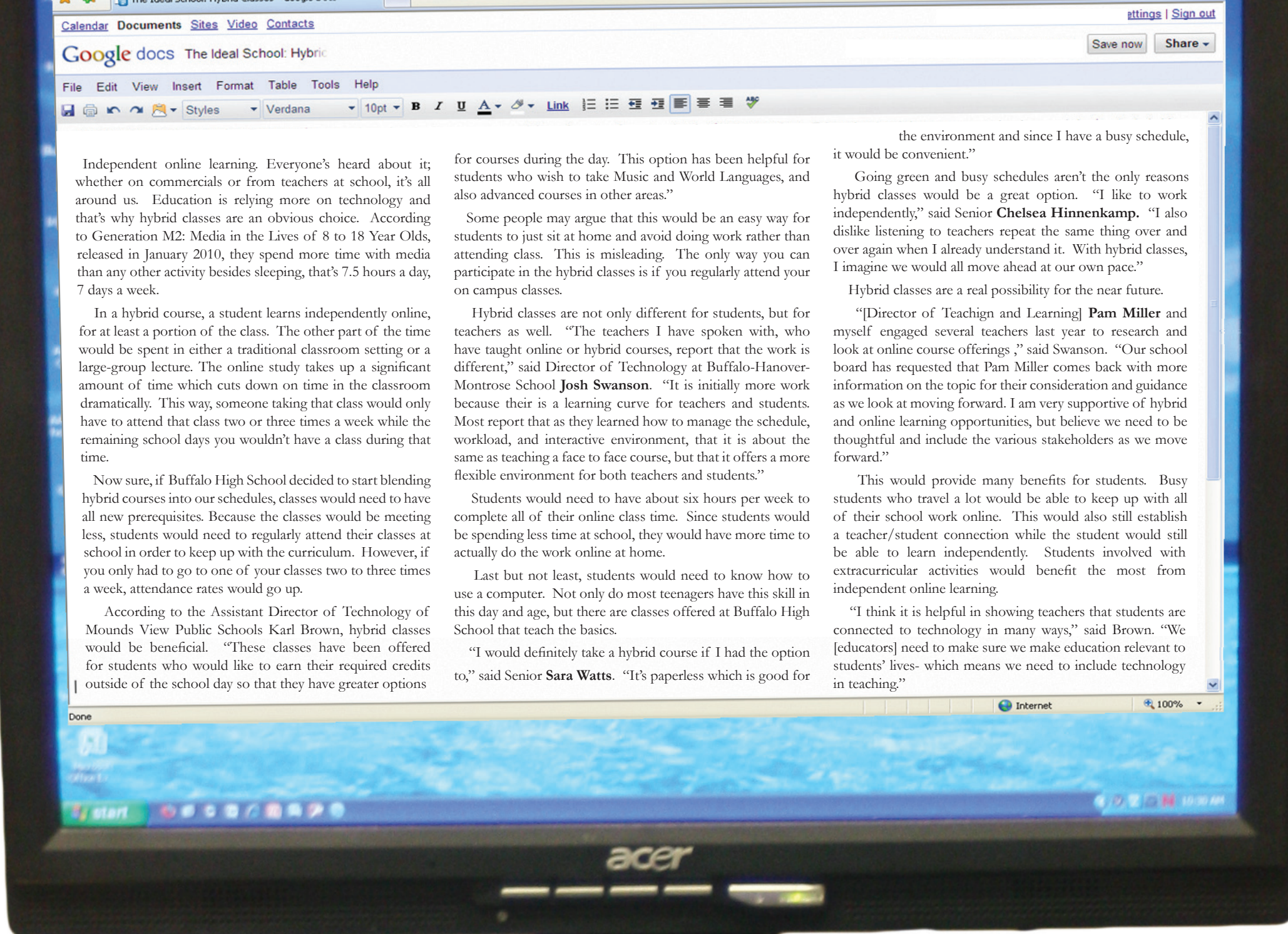
You can message a teacher back through email. I'm on a good pace right now. Like in some classes, I'm where I'm supposed to be and in other classes I'm ahead."

MVHS is offered by the Minnesota Transitions Charter School, therefore it is a public program, the same funding used for traditional students can be used for online students--essentially, there is no fee for taking online courses for most students (extra credits and summer school courses are apt to be charged for). Also provided for are software, textbooks, art supplies, science supplies, etc. In some cases, laptops are supplied to students who qualify based on need.

This year's graduating class has spent their entire lives immersed in technology, and were even expected to develop a technological-fluency, as evidenced by the computer courses introduced in grade school. Students would be able to transition to virtual courses relatively easily. But how do teachers weigh in?

"It's a much more active role [for students]," said Science Teacher **Ed Cox**. "If the classes are a good one, which is something you have to worry about in every environment, you can't just sit in the back of the room and be passive. [It's] very realistic [for BHS]. We have a lot of the infrastructure and a lot of the geography. I would be surprised if there wasn't some version of online education."

At MVHS for example, students still take the MCAs because they are required to pass state exams. This is true for all virtual high schools. According to a 2001 study by the Distance Learning Resource Center, the primary purpose of virtual high schools is to provide a supplemental high school curriculum. Over 90 percent of courses offered at virtual high schools are regular core or elective courses, 72 percent offer remedial or make-up coursework, and more than 60 percent offer Advanced Placement courses--students enrolled in virtual high schools tend to score an average of 3.05 out of 5, slightly higher than the national average.



Independent online learning. Everyone's heard about it; whether on commercials or from teachers at school, it's all around us. Education is relying more on technology and that's why hybrid classes are an obvious choice. According to Generation M2: Media in the Lives of 8 to 18 Year Olds, released in January 2010, they spend more time with media than any other activity besides sleeping, that's 7.5 hours a day, 7 days a week.

In a hybrid course, a student learns independently online, for at least a portion of the class. The other part of the time would be spent in either a traditional classroom setting or a large-group lecture. The online study takes up a significant amount of time which cuts down on time in the classroom dramatically. This way, someone taking that class would only have to attend that class two or three times a week while the remaining school days you wouldn't have a class during that time.

Now sure, if Buffalo High School decided to start blending hybrid courses into our schedules, classes would need to have all new prerequisites. Because the classes would be meeting less, students would need to regularly attend their classes at school in order to keep up with the curriculum. However, if you only had to go to one of your classes two to three times a week, attendance rates would go up.

According to the Assistant Director of Technology of Mounds View Public Schools Karl Brown, hybrid classes would be beneficial. "These classes have been offered for students who would like to earn their required credits outside of the school day so that they have greater options

for courses during the day. This option has been helpful for students who wish to take Music and World Languages, and also advanced courses in other areas."

Some people may argue that this would be an easy way for students to just sit at home and avoid doing work rather than attending class. This is misleading. The only way you can participate in the hybrid classes is if you regularly attend your on campus classes.

Hybrid classes are not only different for students, but for teachers as well. "The teachers I have spoken with, who have taught online or hybrid courses, report that the work is different," said Director of Technology at Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose School Josh Swanson. "It is initially more work because their is a learning curve for teachers and students. Most report that as they learned how to manage the schedule, workload, and interactive environment, that it is about the same as teaching a face to face course, but that it offers a more flexible environment for both teachers and students."

Students would need to have about six hours per week to complete all of their online class time. Since students would be spending less time at school, they would have more time to actually do the work online at home.

Last but not least, students would need to know how to use a computer. Not only do most teenagers have this skill in this day and age, but there are classes offered at Buffalo High School that teach the basics.

"I would definitely take a hybrid course if I had the option to," said Senior Sara Watts. "It's paperless which is good for

the environment and since I have a busy schedule, it would be convenient."

Going green and busy schedules aren't the only reasons hybrid classes would be a great option. "I like to work independently," said Senior Chelsea Hinnenkamp. "I also dislike listening to teachers repeat the same thing over and over again when I already understand it. With hybrid classes, I imagine we would all move ahead at our own pace."

Hybrid classes are a real possibility for the near future.

"[Director of Teachign and Learning] Pam Miller and myself engaged several teachers last year to research and look at online course offerings," said Swanson. "Our school board has requested that Pam Miller comes back with more information on the topic for their consideration and guidance as we look at moving forward. I am very supportive of hybrid and online learning opportunities, but believe we need to be thoughtful and include the various stakeholders as we move forward."

This would provide many benefits for students. Busy students who travel a lot would be able to keep up with all of their school work online. This would also still establish a teacher/student connection while the student would still be able to learn independently. Students involved with extracurricular activities would benefit the most from independent online learning.

"I think it is helpful in showing teachers that students are connected to technology in many ways," said Brown. "We [educators] need to make sure we make education relevant to students' lives- which means we need to include technology in teaching."

Hybrid Classes

By Sam Nyberg

Life Lessons Through Athletics

Do sports play a larger role in schools than simply competition and representation?

PRENTICE BASTEN
STAFF WRITER

The role of sports in society, particularly in schools, is far more important than a few people playing a game that results in winning or losing. A sports team has the power to dictate the whole atmosphere of a particular place at various times, inspire athletes and fans, and bring a sense of fellowship to a group of people. Sports are not only a form of physical and social development, but a universal language that is a powerful medium throughout our society.

In a high school environment you can find every kind of personality, background, and social standing. But somehow, all of those differences are completely irrelevant when a sports team is formed.

"I think that the role of sports is to build character," said Sophomore **Emily Bengston**. "It gives students a chance to learn how to function in a team dynamic. Ideally, every student should gain positive characteristics from being a sports member while still remembering the other important aspects of high school."

In the perfect high school sports program all students would work their hardest to represent their school while gaining the benefits that come along with their participation. Sports have been proven to not only help students stay physically fit, but help enhance their respect for rules and regulations, while teaching them self discipline. A program is truly successful once it has produced not only good athletes, but good people as well.

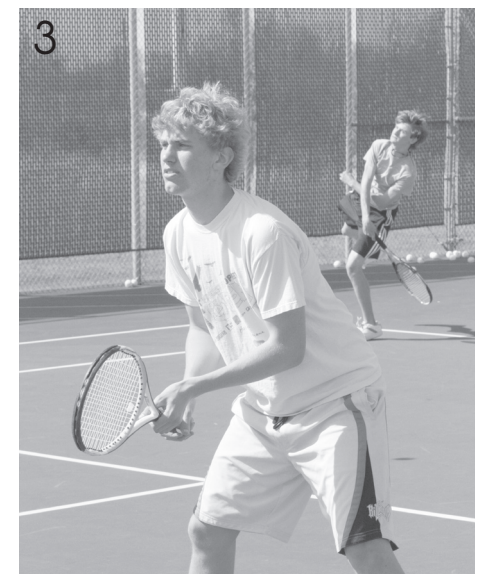
"I think you can really respect a team once you've seen how they perform and how they act as people," said Sophomore **Adam Doboszanski**. "Sometimes athletes don't realize the impact they really have."

Whether it is an awe struck sibling or a local fan watching the competition, sports should be able to give spectators a positive form of entertainment. However, it should also exist as a positive experience for student athletes as well.

"High School athletics is all about development," said Senior **Jacob Letsinger**. "Sometimes in high school sports there aren't equal opportunities for participation or playing time. I think a big improvement would be if coaches made sure all athletes were able to participate as much as they needed to reach their maximum potential."

Student athletes play a big role in the sports program of a school, however the coaches and administrators do as well. An athletic program cannot prosper and provide the benefits students need without proper leaders. A coach cannot only be a supervisor, they must create the right atmosphere for learning to happen while also being a reliable source of encouragement for athletes.

With the correct participation from students and coaches, sports programs can play a huge role in the unification of a school. Not only a benefit for the athletes, their peers get the chance to join together for the common goal of success. Ideally, sports would serve as a tool to prepare students for all forms of skills that they will need in their everyday lives.



1. The boys' lacrosse team ends practice as a whole. 2. Junior Sophie Stangl competes in hurdles at the track meet in Big Lake. 3. Senior Joe Swanson anticipates a pass from a team mate during an after school practice. Photos by Nick Weeks

POSITIVE ACTS OF SPORTSMANSHIP



"Last year we tied a team who we really outplayed. Afterwards their whole team congratulated us and said we deserved to win because we were simply better, which is something no team will ever really admit."
-Sophomore **Adam Doboszanski**



"The end is all about sportsmanship. Going through the line to shake hands and congratulating the other team for a great game and patting the back of a buddy or competitor."
-Junior **Courtney Daniels**



"When we played Tech their best player wasn't having his best game, but he still complimented me and the other players on passes and shots. He would be the first person to help people up."
-Junior **Andrew Ortmann**



"During a traveling basketball tournament there was a girl I really didn't like and she knew it. I took a charge from her and it knocked the wind out of me. I was shocked because she came and helped me up."
-Junior **Calli Durst**

Lack of sleep hurts academic performance

MATTBLIZEL
SPOTLIGHT EDITOR

For a healthy routine, your body needs at least 8 hours of sleep. Students on average get 5-6 hours of sleep per night. Getting less than 6 hours of sleep affects coordination, reaction time, and judgment. Couple that with the misperception that people have about their own level of sleepiness following a night of sleep loss and it can put other people at risk.

Age also accounts for the significant drop in performance during a period of sleep loss. In a recent study, younger students showed a greater decline in Psychomotor Vigilance Test performance (PVT, a test to analyze attentiveness and motor skills) during sleep loss, but had greater improvement in the PVT performance while regaining lost sleep as compared to older individuals. In looking at subjective sleepiness, it was also found that younger adults were not aware of their sleepiness levels and performance impairment caused by it.

"I barely get 6 hours of sleep," said Sophomore **Krissy Saylor**, "On the weekends I try to make the lost sleep."

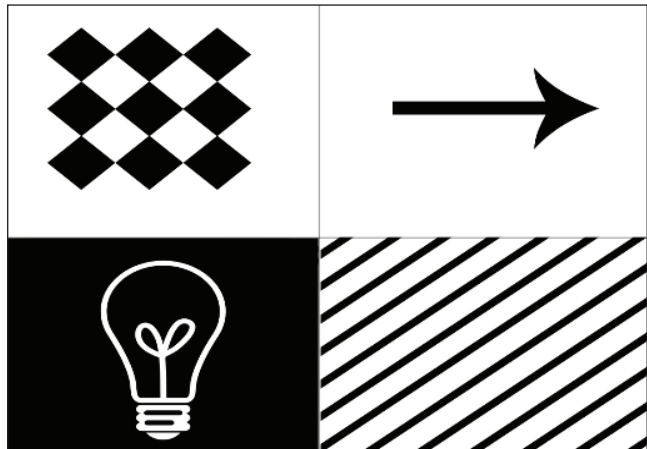
Studies have shown that the most important part of sleep which handles our emotional and mental health and well-being is REM sleep (aka "dream sleep"). REM sleep enhances our memory and learning abilities, along with improving our emotional health. REM stands for Rapid Eye Movement, and occurs in the sleep cycle every 90 minutes. This is the most intense period of sleep where your body becomes paralyzed and dreams occur.

"I usually get about 7 to 8 hours of sleep every night," said Freshman **Joe Neumann**.

"I am a Registered Polysomnographer (RPSGT) and Certified Respiratory Therapist (CRT) with 14 years of experience in Sleep Medicine," said **Eric Johnson**, Coordinator of the Buffalo Hospital Sleep Center. "Studies have shown that a good night's sleep helps develop emotional and mental health resilience, while chronic sleep disruptions set the stage for negative emotions and thinking."

According to The National Sleep Foundation, lack of sleep leads to Short Term Effects of sleep deprivation (prolonged period of no sleep) can lead to reduced alertness, reduced quality of life, attention and concentration difficulties, memory impairment, slowed reaction time, baggy eyes and dull skin, Poor diet, emotional imbalance, irritability, and injury from accidents. Long-term effects of sleep deprivation (prolonged period of no sleep) can additionally lead to obesity, psychiatric issues like depression, hypertension, and impaired relationships.

Are you affected by sleep deprivation? Look at the four images below (Squares, Arrow, Light bulb, Stripes). Memorize the pattern and try to remember them in the correct layout after a night of sleep. If you have trouble remembering the order, you may want to consider adjusting your sleeping habits.



facebook Friend or Foe?

Networking keeps people closely connected, but far from school work

KELSEY HANE
STAFF WRITER

Nearly everyone has one, often using it to update their statuses, check their walls, and talk to friends. According to **Julia Angwin** of Randomhouse Magazine, Facebook has 350 million users worldwide, and that number is growing daily.

It was all started back in February of 2004 by **Mark Zuckerberg**, **Chris Hughes**, and **Dustin Moskovitz** as a way to stay in touch with college classmates, now it has reached out to businesses, high schools, colleges, and even middle schools. Americans spend a total of 13.9 billion minutes on Facebook every year alone. The average user spends 55 minutes a day on it, but is this becoming a problem?

The average person surveyed has had an account for about two years and they spend an average of one hour and nineteen minutes on it daily. The overuse may be becoming a problem with people of all ages and each age group seems to have a variety of different problems, because of this overuse.

50% of college students surveyed go on their Facebook during class. On average they log on during class twice a week. 100% of those who use it in class say it is a major distraction from what their professor's lecture.

"It helps pass the time. A majority of the kids go on their Facebook [during classes]," explained BHS graduate of 2009 and freshman at St. Cloud State University, **Brad Johnson**, "When we're only half paying attention our professor will jokingly ask, 'So what's the latest Facebook status?'"

High school students seem to have a similar problem with Facebook. 50% of BHS students surveyed have Facebook Mobile for their phones and 80% of those students use it during class. Texting has been a problem in class, but they may be updating their status rather than texting. 75% of the students who use it in class say it has distracted them from what they are supposed to be doing, and has even made them fall behind in the class.

Even adults may be having problems at work because of Facebook. 75% of adults surveyed who had Facebook accounts say they use it during work and 66% of those use it daily. Facebook may now have sites for business, but it also may be causing some major problems with getting work done.

The main Facebook problem for all ages has been the same; it can be a major procrastination tool. 60% of college students surveyed say Facebook causes them to become distracted from doing their homework or studying.

"So much of my homework is on the computer now," said BHS graduate of 2009 and freshman at Iowa State University, **Kevin Mazurowski**, "Facebook is always just a click away, and that

has become kind of a problem."

70% of BHS students surveyed say that Facebook has also caused them to put off studying and getting their homework done.

"Facebook can be such a distraction," explained Junior Devon Miller, "I can't tell you how many times I've scrambled to do my homework last minute, because I got so distracted talking to people over chat."

Even BCMS students are starting to feel the effects of Facebook procrastination.

"Facebook is hard to do homework with," said BCMS eighth grader, **Sandra Lao**, "I get distracted easily sometimes. On chat people respond fast and it's so open, so people are easier to talk to."

Another concern for middle school students is about their developing communication rules. It could be the cause poor communication for some students, but at the same time, good for others.

"[Communication] depends on the person," said Lao, "If the person is really shy, then they're more fun and open on Facebook. It might help them a bit."

With all these problems, should Facebook even be kept in schools and at the workplace? 100% of college students surveyed think Facebook should be kept in schools.

"We should keep Facebook on campus," said Mazurowski, "It's a great way to keep in touch with people back home, and we're paying for school, so why can't we use Facebook as we please?"

70% of BHS students do not think it should be allowed to be used in the high school.

"It's definitely a distraction," said Miller, "I think it could really affect kid's learning if they're allowed to go on whenever they want."

75% of adults say it should not be allowed to be used at work.

"Using Facebook at work depends on how [employees] handle it," said BHS graduate of 2005 and Chicago State University athletic trainer **Stacey Nauman**, "If it's getting out of control, they probably shouldn't use it, but I think if they really want to waste their time, they'll find another way to do it."

A concern for middle school students is about their developing communication rules. Is Facebook helping cause poor communication with their peers?

Overall Facebook definitely has some good and bad points. If it is affecting people of all ages, maybe we should consider changing up some Facebook rules.

News Feed

Attach:    

70 percent of students say that Facebook has caused them to put off studying or homework

13 minutes ago · Comment · Like

75 percent of students who have used Facebook during class say it has caused them to fall behind or miss information presented by a teacher

29 minutes ago · Comment · Like

Become a Friend of *The Hoofprint* on Facebook or Twitter for daily updates on BHS: <http://facebook.com/thehoofprint> & <http://twitter.com/thehoofprint>

4 Four ESSENTIAL

Student explores the effectiveness of the block schedule

HOPEMUELLER
STAFF WRITER

Day-by-day students walk in the front doors and head to their first block class. We have the privilege of having a block schedule and I want to have the block schedule during my next three years here at BHS. After our school district lost its referendum, continuing the block schedule was put into question. Is it too expensive? Can we afford this many teachers? Well, I'm here to say that we should keep our schedule.

We should keep block scheduling, because it opens many doors for the students and it has many positive attributes that help build a stronger student body. Since we have the block schedule, it might be too big of a change to switch to a different kind of schedule, such as A/B days, eight period days, or six period days. Of 100 students surveys 90% of students agree that it would be too much of a change and take too much time to switch from the block schedule. Changing to a different schedule would be so weird from what were use to. The transition seems like it would take a long time and it could distract us from other things like school work and sports.

"I love the block schedule, it would be way to big of a change to totally switch from everything that were use to!" says Freshman Anne Kaminski.

Some parents think that the block schedule does not improve standardized test scores,

however there are facts showing standardized test scores come out higher with this kind of schedule along with higher SAT scores and more students being on the the honor roll. But one of the main reasons some people want to do away with the block schedule is the cost. It is the one of the most expensive types of schedules for a high school to offer. Even though block scheduling is expensive, it offers a better education to the students because students can take more classes, there are fewer disciplinary issues, and lower

Of 100 students surveyed, 90% of students agree that it would be too much of a change and take too much time to switch from the block schedule.

stress levels.

Having a block schedule makes it possible to take an assortment of classes. Taking more electives, Advanced Placement courses (AP), and College In School classes, and opens many doors for student futures. Taking more classes helps build student knowledge, and with the block schedule we have the opportunity to excel. Since we can take AP classes it saves us an extra month compared to other schools which have an extra month of AP work left after the test in a "regular" schedule.

There are many things that are positive about having a block schedule, students are better settled in class and there are fewer behavioral issues. According to an article from eLibrary titled "Block Scheduling: An evaluation of outcomes and impact," the number of students getting sent to the office has been reduced by 25-35%. Studies also show that the number of detentions has gone down by nearly 50%.

With the block schedule, there are fewer classes in one quarter. With only four classes it is easier to concentrate on homework. Teenhelp.com states that "school work" is the third highest stress causer for teenagers. But with only four classes per quarter, it makes the amount of stress go down. With fewer classes and longer periods it allows teachers to do more activities and interact with the kids. Although we don't have a long study hall it gives the teachers time to teach us with time to work in class.

Changing the course of something that is so familiar to so many students could lead to chaos. We are lucky to have so many exceptional characteristics that other schools often lack, including the block schedule. Block scheduling is something many students might not take for granted, but one day we might be told that we won't be having this luxury anymore. If that day came it would change things for students here, and they may not be changes that we want to face.

you
GET
what you
GIVE

What does it mean to recycle?

A tin can that is recycled can save enough energy to run a TV for three hours and the amount of wood and paper thrown away every year is enough to heat 50 million homes for 20 years

Every year, Americans use about 10 Million paper bags equaling about 14 Million trees

"We want a clean habitat and natural resources for all living creatures. We need to keep our Earth healthy.

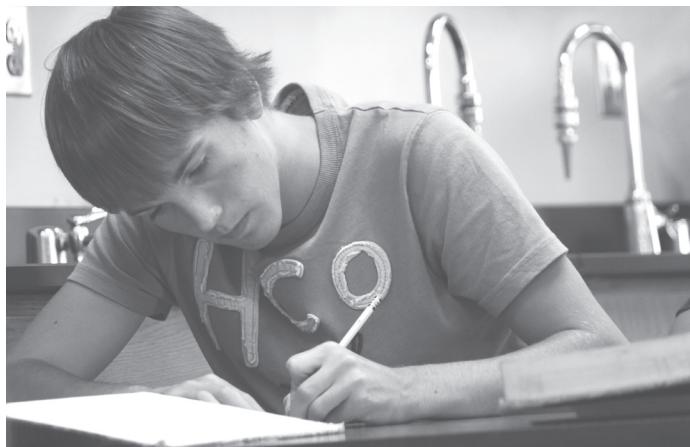
-Green Team Leader Katherine

The United States reached a landmark in its paper recycling efforts in 2006 with

53.4%

of the paper consumed being recovered for recycling.

*Reporting by Rachel Thaumert



Above: Sophomore Blake Schmidt works on a biology worksheet. Right: Junior Cody Pederson and Senior Andrew Geyen, listen to Spanish Teacher Nancy Eiyneck introduce herself on the first day of school. Photos by Joel Morehouse

Evolving Extracurriculars

Are budget restrictions affecting extracurricular performance and involvement?

ELISABETHLEIPHOLTZ
SPORTS EDITOR

From country to country, state to state, and city to city, funding for high school athletics and activities differs depending on specific factors. Some high schools tend to treat them with the same mentality as far as pricing and minimum grade point average (GPA) requirements, but others go about things differently. A large difference among high school sports in particular seems to be budget allowance and the ever-changing costs of athletics.

In the last three years, due to widespread budget cuts, BHS has cut Boys' Swim and Dive, Nordic Ski, Alpine Ski, Drumline, Speech, and Dance Team, although some of the aforementioned athletics are now self-funded. Athletic fees have risen from about \$95 in 2006 to an average of \$175 per sport. The activity buses have also been cut. This raises the questions of whether Buffalo's athletics are up to par with other schools in Minnesota and whether budget restrictions will continue to affect athletics.

"Athletics are one of the toughest things to fund," said Activity Director **Thomas Bauman**. "Buffalo is in the same position as many other schools."

Monticello High School, being in the same situation as BHS, also made cuts in the past three years, including Marching Band and Speech (which was brought back this year). However, they do not have a cap on athletics. This means that a family has to pay the set fee per sport for each member no matter how expensive it may become, instead of reaching a maximum amount of money per family. However, Monticello does charge less than Buffalo with a maximum activity fee of \$145, so it is possible that overall activity fees of both schools end up even since Buffalo does have a cap.

While BHS and MHS tend to be similar as far as financing athletics, Elk River High School takes a different approach. They charge a maximum athletic fee of \$250 and have not had to make any cuts to their 26 athletic options in the last three years. Does this mean that their approach of charging almost \$100 more than BHS and MHS is proving to be more effective in their performance? Not necessarily. While Elk River athletics do perform well, they don't perform any better than BHS or MHS athletics as far as obtaining Conference titles or attending state tournaments. In fact, St.

Michael-Albertville (STMA) High School, who charges a maximum activity fee of only \$120, seems to consistently make trips to the State tournament. This being said, is it possible that budget plays a role in the performance of an athletic team?

"If it was based on budget we would not be successful," said STMA High School Activity Director **Mike Beck**. "We have the second smallest budget of the nine conference schools."

Although they may not make or break a team, budgets do affect athletics to a certain point.

"Budget plays a role in how teams perform to a small extent," said Bauman. "It's the mentality that if you feel like you should be successful, then you are. A budget that allows you to provide the resources teams need will improve programs. Funding athletics brings about one of the biggest challenges in education."

An additional question this raises is do more students participate in athletics when fees are lower and more affordable? If so, because of the minimum GPA requirement for athletics, do more students attempt to maintain a higher GPA in order to stay involved?

Associated Content states that the GPA of student athletes is found to be higher than that of non-athletes, so it is possible that the minimum GPA required to participate in sports encourages students who wish to remain involved to strive for a higher GPA.

"I have done the research a few different times for our school and my experience is that athletes tend to have much higher GPAs and fail far fewer classes than the average student," said Rockford High School Activities Director **Michael Tauber**. "There are also many state and national studies that back up this information that I see on a regular basis."

This theory has proved to be true in numerous high schools, including BHS.

"I think kids are more accountable to grades when they are involved and know they are required to keep academics a priority," said Bauman.

In an economy like today's, change seems to be inevitable. It is certain that athletics and activities in Minnesota schools will continue to change and evolve over time.

What do you think the minimum GPA requirement for athletes should be and why?

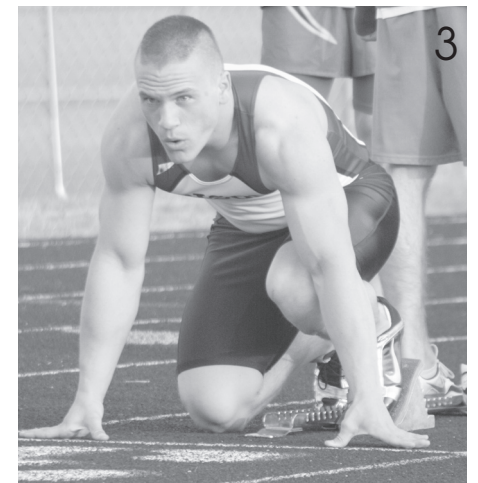


"It should be a 9.0 because if athletes are allowed to be examples of younger kids, I think they should be required to be a good leader in the classroom."
-Junior **Rachel Mussell**

"Sometimes athletics are the only thing keeping kids in school. If they care enough about their sport to keep passing classes, I think that should be the requirement."
-Junior **D.J. McMoil**



1. Freshman Ashlee Benson throws to a teammate during a game against Princeton.
2. During a game against St. Michael Albertville, Sophomore Abigail Larson attempts to score a goal.
3. Senior Rex Schneider takes his position to begin a race at the track meet in Big Lake. Buffalo won the meet. "Despite the windy weather conditions, our first outside meet went really well," said Junior Olivia Haggerty. Photos by Nick Weeks



of students are involved in extracurricular activities



of students are involved in extracurricular activities



of students are involved in extracurricular activities



of students are involved in extracurricular activities

GENDER IN THE CLASSROOM

Would single gendered classes violate rights or benefit students?

SARAH FROST
STAFF WRITER

Sometimes being around all of my girlfriends can get hectic. It's always fun, but after a few "Oh my God!" and "She said what about her?" moments, the relief of male company is more than welcomed. In a school environment, the mixture of males and females gives a certain balance, making the day full of drama and work a little easier. We are all given an equal opportunity, learning together.

Public schools like Buffalo High School should stay co-educational so that students of every race, religion, and gender are allowed equal opportunities to succeed. **Jill Galager**, an author on a feminist website blog states, "If it's wrong for public schools to be segregated by race, why is it justifiable to segregate them by sex?" The divide in single-sex schools can be beneficial for the student, such as offering specialized courses being gender-specific, that are not always taught at a co-educational school. Also, test scores show that students attending single-sex schools have fewer distractions in the classroom and perform better on standardized tests. The percentage of students scoring proficient on the FCAT show that girls in single-sex classes scored 75% which is 16% more than girls in co-educational classes did. The percentage for boys has an even greater increase in proficiency. However, these are only statistics and separating classes and schools by gender violates the Constitution and federal and state laws which guarantee that all public school students are offered equal opportunities, according to **Kim**

Gandy president of the National Organization for Women.

In 1954, the supreme court ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education* that separate can never truly be equal in public education. Different classes by gender cause different resources, courses, teaching methods, and other factors in schools. Picture a boy who wants to take creative foods but is not offered as well of a class as the all-girls school because it is stereotyped that girls want to cook more than boys. A girl might want to work in construction or in automotive but is not given the resources or even the class at the single-sex school she attends. This is a clear way to see how these

“ If it's wrong for public schools to to segregated by race, why is it justifiable to separate them by sex? - Blogger Jill Galager

schools may function. They "specialize" by stereotypes of the sex instead of the individual interests in my opinion. A national survey by The Strategic Counsel, a leading Canadian research firm, conducted in 2005-2006 reveals that 79% of parents with students in co-ed public schools agreed that these schools prepare students to eventually enter the workforce. It better prepares all students for their future careers which would more than likely involve working with or conversing with the opposite sex for real-world experiences and situations.

"We need to work with the opposite gender to be well rounded and not socially awkward," said Junior **Anna Mason**. "A student

brought up in an environment of solely their gender can expect a difficult transition into the real world."

In a co-ed environment, 83% of schools say the interaction between opposite-sex students introduces a great diversity of views and opinions. These views show the individuals in the school and show that students have a higher self-esteem when they share what they think. Girls as well as boys like the attention they get and feel confident when the other gender likes their ideas. They are motivated to go to school because they know they will receive this satisfaction.

Academically, students seem to strive when able to learn with the opposite sex. Students are able to excel with help and skills learned from another male or female friend. "There are some things that boys just get more than girls and vice versa. Not just in school but anywhere.

"I would never ask a boy where the best sale is or how to do my hair a certain way," stated **Mason**.

BHS is an example of a thriving co-ed school. It creates the balance between friends, whether boy or girl, and being treated as equals has truly been a huge part of what this school stands for. Single-sex schools can never give the same or equal opportunities to both genders. All schools should have diversity as BHS has been lucky enough to have. Chief Justice **Earl Warren**, Majority Opinion in *Brown vs. Board* stated, "We conclude that, in the field of public education, the doctrine of 'separate but equal' has no place. Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal."

Ears are ringing, brains are singing

KAILEY JOHNSON
STAFF WRITER

According to the U.S. Department of Education, music shows improved test scores in science and math and improved critical thinking skills. A survey conducted by the Center of Education Policy shows that out of 15,000 school districts, 71% of the nation's school districts have reduced time spent on history and music education for more time on reading and math. At a Jr. High school in Sacramento, California, 125 of the school's lowest performing student are only able to take reading and math. Then there is only a 55 minute time period for other subjects such as music and history. Students should not have to stop playing their musical instruments in school because of their lower reading skills. They should be able to take classes they want to take and are passionate about.

Tax Payers in Minnesota and other states around the nation don't seem to understand the importance of musical education. Schools could find a way to keep music in schools without it being overly expensive. Students could get involved in music clubs or different organizations. Different studies have shown Music is found to improve your memory it has showed a change in test scores in schools. According to "Music and Achievement" at Mission Viejo high school in California the overall grade point average of students involved in music was 3.59 and for students that are not involved in music the overall grade point average was 2.91. Studies have also shown music education improves writing and communication skills. AMC (American Music Conference) has also shown that music majors have the highest SAT scores in all the areas.

Bringing back music in elementary and Jr. high schools is a good thing to think about. If there isn't any music programs for younger students there won't be improved test scores. Kids will

not be able to express themselves through music if there isn't any in school which isn't fair to those musical student's because yet there are all kinds of sports and activities for students, other than music. Having Music education in school helps those music students develop and improve brain efficiency. Studies show that it has a positive effect on the brain. According to AMC (American Music Conference) 66 percent of music majors who applied to med school were admitted which was the highest of any group. If research and studies are showing improved test scores in math and science for music students, why are schools all over the nation cutting music education for elementary and Jr. High schools? Also if it is only because of budget cuts and the cost of instruments why can't there be fundraisers and music clubs? There should be an opportunity for everyone. Music promotes self-expression and provides self-gratification.

People, including taxpayers, might disagree with the opinion on this subject because they may think that it is just costing them more and there isn't much of a value. Yet research is showing more values in music education every day. For example, better test scores equal's happier parents, teacher and students. Music studies have shown that it also improves your memory. Duncan, the secretary of the Department of Education talked about the power of music to inspire and engage young students.

Let's do something about this. Bringing back music in schools may be one of the important ways to improve test scores. It will also give students a chance to express themselves through music. Having music education in schools shows all progress so why is it always one of the first classes to go? Hopefully administrators all around the state and nation will realize the problem with cutting back music education.

Music education has far-reaching benefits



JOELMOREHOUSE

Freshman Cody Theien works on his drumming ability during Band in preparation for an upcoming performance.

Music in the halls

KAYLASCHIMMELE
STAFF WRITER

Strolling through a single hallway, heading to first block, students can look around and spot a handful of their peers with headphones or ear buds snug against their ears. Since this occurs, why not just have music schoolwide?

With music being loved by everyone, creating a more optimistic mood, and having work ethics increased in students, music in the halls would be a superb asset to the school.

There could be discussions of disagreement on the genre being played; however, each day could be a different style of music to make it fair for everyone. For teachers, ninety-five percent of them said they wouldn't mind a variety of genres played, and most of them agreed with this as long as the songs are school appropriate.

"I listen to music during my prep time usually, and I like to play it during class time and after school," said Social Studies Teacher **Brigetta Bergquist**. "For me personally, music helps keep me focused and improves my energy. It can pick me up when I'm in a bad mood. When I listen to it in the mornings, I think, 'today is going to be a good day.'"

With music being a part of everyday life, whether it's waking up each morning to the radio or hearing laughter while ambling through the park on a beautiful, sunny day, it's important to realize that everyone loves music.

"I think music in itself is healing," said world-renowned Rock Musician Billy Joel. "It's an explosive expression of humanity. It's something we are all touched by. No matter what culture we're from, everyone loves music."

Loving music simply isn't enough reason to have music during passing time, though. Music has a healing power that brings relaxation and creates a more optimistic mood. According to researchers in California at Stanford University's School of Medicine, whether it's listening to Bach or Beyonce, music can increase a person's mood. They also noted that classical music reduced depression by up to 25 percent, but any type of music can help as long as it is something one adores.

"Listening to music in the halls provides a stress-reliever," said Junior **Grace Ricker**. "I equate it to a fifteen minute power nap because it lets your mind get away from the topics and refreshes you for the next class."

With roughly one in twelve teenagers having suffered significant depression in 2005--making suicide the third leading cause of death for teens (find.galegroup.com)--wouldn't bringing up the moods of students with music be a good thing?

The joyful mood music builds for people just adds to why BHS should have it played. Ninety-nine percent of students said music generally makes them happier and that music in the halls would augment their attitudes in school. Of that 99 percent, 93 percent mentioned that with a more positive attitude, their work ethic would also improve.

Would the relaxing atmosphere of music in the halls be a positive addition to our school?

"When people have breaks between classes, like adding music in the hallways during passing time, it would make the atmosphere less stressful," said Ricker. "And it would remind the students that they are still kids, and should enjoy high school instead of constantly worrying about homework, the ACT, and their GPA."

I'm not saying we have to have music on everyday, like 70 percent of surveyed students wanted, but even once a week --which 41 percent of staff members for music in the halls chose-- or a few times a month would be a wise decision since music is a phenomenal stress-reliever.

Although having music between classes for a stress-relieving tactic was a toss up for teachers and faculty members, 86 percent of students said the music would help them relieve their daily stress. Sure, 50 percent of teachers mentioned that the music can be distracting at times and could cause rowdy teens, but wouldn't we all rather have that once in a while than constantly having a school full of stressed out teenagers that could become very moody?

With the music causing distractions and rowdiness every now and then, it would still be important to be on top of things during passing time. For announcements that are needed, they could be said right away after the block has finished just like normal, and once they are over, the music could be turned on. As for the warning bell, we could make it so the end of the music would be the warning bell to let kids know it's time to get focused again and head to class.

Maybe we could even have music as a reward to the school for doing good deeds of some sort. A few examples of earning the reward of music could be through recycling in school, having a certain amount of students on the A or B honor roll in each grade, doing community service, or even having a specific attendance rate each week throughout the school.

Whether it's one day per week or once a month, I believe that with all the positive aspects for music in the halls, it would create a better environment at BHS. Like the famous Chinese philosopher, **Confucius** said, "Music produces a kind of pleasure which human nature cannot do without."

"Music within the school is, to me, an inexorable constant that a student should have. Music makes you think more about yourself and the world as it affects us. It expands your capacity for thought, not only making you a better student, but a more well-rounded person. The experiences that you encounter in the music department end as the most influential."

Junior Margaret Polzine

"Not a lot of people know this, but our band is one of the top five bands in the state. We have so many talented students and a very talented conductor. That's the recipe for a good band."

Senior Beauregard Gagnon



Juniors Matt Kelly and Mary Zelko stroll through the halls between classes listening to music on their iPods. Throughout the day, several students used passing time to listen to their favorite new tunes. Photo by Nick Weeks

A look into the future...

A timeline of musical events

April 21, 2010

Concert Choir, Concert Band, and Concert Orchestra depart for New Orleans. They return on April 26.

May 11, 2010 @ 8:00

"Orchestra Extravaganza" concert opened by the 7th and 8th grade orchestras, and followed by the Concert Orchestra.

June 3, 2010 @ 7:30

"Arts Finale" concert which features the Freshmen, Varsity and Concert choir as well as student's artwork beforehand.

Premier of the "Spring Band Concert", performed by the Freshman and Varsity bands.

May 6, 2010 @ 7:30

"Showcase Concert" put on by Concert Choir, Concert Band, Concert Orchestra, BHS Singers, and Jazz I

May 21, 2010 @ 7:30

Searching for a Place

Students find a place beyond sports through activities

GRAHAM WYATT
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

When the bell rings students make their way to the fields, buses, and —occasionally— classrooms. Activities are an often over-looked opportunity for students to become involved in their school and meet new people with shared interests.

“It’s important for an individual’s learning opportunities,” said Guidance Counselor **Gloria Rose**. “You learn a lot about yourself and other people by volunteering. And in terms of applications you’ll fill out in your life, there probably isn’t one that won’t ask what you’ve been involved in.”

The student handbook explains the purpose of the Activities Program as, “to provide additional educational opportunities for Buffalo High School students. Beneficial attributes of participation are fun, commitment, affiliation, and reaching

common goals.” There are a variety of different opportunities for students to become involved, including: Knowledge Bowl, Globally Minded Student Activists, Newspaper, Mock Trial, Future Farmers of America, One Act Play, and Business Professionals of America.

“I meet with all ninth graders and ask them what they’re interested in,” said Rose. “Once we know that, we can explain the different opportunities available for them to become involved outside of the classroom.”

Activities are optional at Buffalo High School, but unlike private schools, which mandate a minimum number of extracurriculars. Most students who become involved in activities characterize their high school years by their activity.

“Not only did I become stronger in my singing and acting abilities throughout the theater program,” said Senior **Wesley Miller**,

“I became more of a people person. The activity opened me up, and I started to make friends in other schools.”

Miller’s experience with his activity is one that’s common among other participants. They help keep students busy, out of trouble, and mentally stimulated aside from homework.

“You don’t know until you try. If you’re worried about doing something, just go for it,” said Miller. “When I look back at high school 30 years from now I’ll think about the activities I was involved in, not the schoolwork. It’s been one of the most rewarding experiences that I’ve had in school.”

Buffalo High School offers a wide variety of activities that are optional for students to become involved in with the hope that they will take advantage of them.

“The students who are willing to participate tend to be the same ones who put forth their full effort at school,” said Rose.

Under-recognized Success

Students excel outside of the classroom in their activities

FRANCIE VARNER
STAFF WRITER

The success of the school’s activities is evident. This year alone it has sent-off three groups to participate in state tournaments: Mock Trial, Music Listening and Knowledge Bowl. These three programs are returning state participants. These thriving activities are attributed to the students’ hard work and dedication.

“We have devoted students who are actively participating in the wide variety of extracurriculars Buffalo High School has to offer,” said Counselor **Gloria Rose**.

From October through March, the Mock Trial team prepared in hopes of returning to the State Tournament. Held in Minneapolis, the tournament consisted of 12 teams. They competed in four rounds of competition, placing second overall. They finished with a record of 20-3 and placed five spots higher than

last season. Four years ago the team was State Champions, and has made two state appearances since then.

The theater program has been producing award-winning plays for a number of years. Most recently, In 2007 the One-Act play received a star performance for “The Elephant Man”. In the most recent theater production “The Diviners”, over 100 students went out for the play. It was one of the largest turnouts for a spring play. The school currently funds 43 activities, and 67% of students participate in one or more of them.

“The school has been willing to invest in activities,” said English Teacher **Tracy Hagstrom-Durant**. “They have made them a priority in this school and encourage students to participate.”

Other academic programs like Music Listening, Knowledge Bowl and Speech have also

won state honors. The Music Listening team has participated in the State Tournament 13 times. This season the team of Seniors **Abby Huff**, **Abby Smith**, and **Jenna Ernst** took second place. In 2005, the team was State Champions and has made an appearance at the tournament in every year since.

Knowledge Bowl has made nine state appearances. Last weekend Team 1 traveled to Bemidji to compete in the State Tournament. They competed in five rounds spread out over two days. Of the 24 teams participating in large school, Buffalo took eighth place.

The draw to participate in one of the school’s many prosperous activities is at an all-time high. For some of these programs, staff advisors have to turn away students. Students are embracing the opportunity to get involved and encouraging younger students to follow in their footsteps.

Students Believe that the Role of Activities in an Ideal School are...



“We have a wide variety of activities allowing everyone to find something that will interest them. I think Buffalo is the ideal school for activities.”
-Senior **Erik Starr**



“I think the role of activities in a school is to get people involved and meet new people.”
-Junior **Lindsay Jacobs**



“Activities allow kids to find a group of people with similar interests and they are also good for the community.”
-Junior **Michael Deisting**



“I think activities allow kids to branch out and kind of go out of their comfort zones sometimes. Buffalo does a great job of offering different kinds for different people.”
-Junior **Elisabeth Leipholtz**

THE IDEAL STUDENT

HARD WORKING

"The best students tend to be students who realize that perfection isn't possible, but still strive for it. They know their own limitations but still set goals that are higher than it, and continue to edge up each chance they get."

-French Teacher Jason Swanson

POSITIVE

"The ideal student would approach learning with a positive attitude and actually want to learn."

-Social Studies Teacher Brigitta Bergquist

WELL-ROUNDED

"The ideal student is involved in a variety of sports and activities. I like to see my students shine in different areas."

-Spanish Teacher Nancy Einyck

ON TIME

Last quarter there were 43 tardies in the First Block Wood Tech class. This is not an uncommon number.

LEADER

"I like students that take initiative to learn and inspire others to do the same."

-Science Teacher Daniel Schneider

PREPARED

"Preparation allows students to make the most of natural talent and effort."

-English Teacher Joel Squadroni

