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TALISMAN

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Mission Statement

The Ballard Talisman is an open public forum for student expression, and exists to give a student perspective on issues relating to the Ballard student body and community. Please send signed letters with author's name, class or position (e.g. parent, student, teacher, etc.) to the editor.

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Cover photo courtesy of Fiona Carroll

Smokey skies and fall heat will be the new normal if we don't act



The Space Needle engulfed in smoke on Oct. 20 (bogdan_okro via Flickr licensed under CC by 2.0)

It's fall. Soggy brown leaves litter the sidewalks, squelching under sneakers. The remnants of thin white spiderwebs drape across branches and doorways, while their dark plasticky counterparts cling to houses around the city. Pumpkin carving kits, large bags of fun size candy and brightly colored Halloween costumes have crowded supermarket aisles for weeks. Children grab at the shelves, begging their parents for more apple cider, pumpkin pie and candy corn. Students whoop and cheer under stadium lights, screaming about football, homecoming and Halloween parties. Chunky sweaters, pumpkin spice lattes, flannels and autumn leaves populate everyone and their mother's Instagram feed. So it's official: Fall is in the air. Unfortunately, that's not the only thing in the air this year.

Until recently, the typically cloudy skies of Seattle were replaced by smoke and a blazing orange sun. Ash particles and soot dusted window sills, and we were greeted with the unmistakable scent of wildfires each time we stepped outside. The AirNow website became a frequently visited page as students checked the air quality index daily to see if their sports events had been canceled. Often, the AQI rested above 150 for days at a time, a range which indicates "unhealthy" air quality and corresponds with safety recommendations to avoid outdoor or strenuous activities. Our eyes stung, our throats burned and the horizon was blurry. Frankly, it felt a little apocalyptic.

While these pockets of smoky air were limited to the Pacific Northwest, smoky skies plagued other regions throughout the summer. These Washington wildfires were unprecedented in their late season

timing, but were not isolated events. Since the 1980's, the amount of land impacted by wildfires has grown nationally, as the EPA reports.

Additionally, wildfire smoke is more hazardous than other types of air pollution. According to the CDC, it is particularly damaging because it contains microscopic particles which can penetrate deeply into the lungs, causing a range of health problems from a runny nose to chronic heart issues.

Based on Stanford University research, 27 times as many people in the US have experienced one or more days of smoke levels that were categorized as "unhealthy for all age groups" over the past decade. This change in air quality had disrupted previous progress made after policies like the Clean Air Act were enacted decades ago.

It's wasn't sweater weather either. Temperatures reached 88 degrees in Seattle on Oct. 16, which was 16 degrees higher than previous temperature records for that date. On the days that weren't record breaking, temperatures often remained in the high 70s.

Early fall rains were also absent, adding to an especially dry summer. This pattern, as everyone is well aware of, is nothing new. Last June, temperatures reached an all-time high of 108 degrees in Seattle, and Portland experienced

even more extreme heat. Unsurprisingly, these hot, dry conditions fueled wildfires, and smoky air continued to blow towards Seattle.

While it was nice to have a break from the gloomy Seattle fog and quickly dropping temperatures of previous Octobers, the weather quickly took a chilly turn. The rain, which arrived in excess after Oct. 21, felt like a relief from the period of smoke, and yet we know that these months of heat signal a greater climate issue.

Unhealthy air will be a regular feature of Seattle falls in the upcoming decades if significant policy changes are not made to mitigate the impacts of climate change. Our experiences with smoky skies are also insignificant in comparison to the experiences of those who have been forced to evacuate as they flee storms, heat waves and the wildfires themselves.

As students without significant political power, it's difficult to combat this fear of inevitable climate change. That said, we are not completely helpless. With the upcoming midterm elections, students with the ability to vote can support legislators who will prioritize the environment in their political agendas.

Those who cannot vote can participate on a smaller scale, by buying locally grown and seasonal produce, carpooling, unplugging electronics and more. Though it's difficult to buy into these small habits, sticking to these actions is valuable even if it feels inconsequential.

Smoky skies acted as a reminder that the dangers of climate change feel more present when we directly experience the effects. During the cooler, wetter months ahead of us, it's critical that we remember the pressing nature of climate change and act to prevent it, even if we're no longer inhaling smoke.

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Demonstrators protest in solidarity with Iranian Women (Photo by Matt Hrkac via Flickr licensed under CC by 2.0)

What is happening in Iran?

Iranian immigration lawyer Tanya Fekri explains the protests taking place in Iran and their political and historical connotations

Hazel Engstrom Staff Reporter

On Sept. 16, Mahsa Zhina Amini, a 22-year-old Iranian woman was killed at the hands of Iran's morality police for not wearing her hijab to the standard of the Islamic republic's dress code. Since then, across Iran, thousands have taken to the streets calling for justice for Amini.

According to the United Nations, over 90 members of civil society have been arrested by the government for their involvement in these protests. An estimated 233 have been killed since Sept. 17 when the demonstrations first began.

Tanya Fekri was interviewed over email for her thoughts on the issue.

How would you introduce your work? What is your connection to Iran?

I am a licensed attorney in the State of Washington and my area of expertise is in immigration law. I was born in Tehran, Iran and emigrated to the United States with my family towards the end of the Iran-Iraq war. My family and I personally experienced the immigration process first-hand, and that is why I became interested in immigration law. More importantly, my immigration law practice has helped me to work directly with the Iranian community in the U.S. and those in Iran to seek lawful pathways to live and work in the United States...

My source of inspiration and hope stems from my grandmother who will always remain my guardian angel. She was a pious woman who chose to wear the headscarf but was vehemently against government actors regulating women's bodies and mandating the wearing of the hijab. Her spirit and strength instilled in me and the rest of the women in our family the importance of choice.

I have family members who have risked their lives to free Iran and have faced beatings and imprisonment by the Islamic regime for their courageous actions. I come from that line of blood and I feel an obligation and strong desire to keep the political legacy alive. To that end, it has truly been

such an honor to protest alongside my parents and my family members in hopes that our country will one day attain the freedom that our people so rightfully deserve and have been waiting for far too long.

How do you think the protests occurring in Iran today compare to those that have occurred in the country historically?

Historically, the Iranian people have always protested for the same reasons – human rights for all, democracy for Iran and freedom. We have now unified as a collective force to fight for the same causes as we have done previously, but what makes these protests even more special is that we are shouting chants such as “zan, zendigi, azadi” (woman, life, freedom) and by doing so we are linking the protest to the broader issues of women's rights – specifically, a woman's right to make choices without fear of violence – and targeting the very foundations of the Islamic regime and its ideological taboos.

How would you define the role of morality police to someone unfamiliar with their presence in Iran?

The ideological taboos of this regime are rooted in how women's bodies should be viewed and controlled under strict religious interpretations. Therefore, the female body has always been at the forefront of the regime's political agenda. Much of the role of the morality police is to enforce the mandatory dress codes and the state's gender and sexual proscriptions. Members of the morality police often harass, attack and imprison women in public for not wearing the hijab correctly. In this particular case, Amini died as a result of not wearing her veil correctly which puts the morality police under

What does the reaction of Iran's government, specifically Ali Khamenei, tell you about the effect these protests are having nationally? Internationally?

Despite the branding of these protests as “riots” and a U.S. backed conspiracy, Iran's supreme leader, Ali Khamenei, is recognizing that these current uprisings are threatening the regime's legitimacy. Many of the religious regulations that are supposedly rooted in Islamic theology are being questioned by all sectors of society, including those who have more religious leanings. The misusing of religion to promote a political agenda that is rooted in abuse, corruption and lies can no longer be tolerated by Iranian citizens and those living abroad. The outpouring of support, protests and activism all around the world are getting us closer to our fight for human rights and an end to the Islamic regime – a dictatorship that has censored and committed heinous crimes against humanity for the last four decades.

How would you define Iran's government? How has it changed since 1935?

The most drastic change that has taken place since 1935 was the shift from monarch (Shah) rule to the formation of the Islamic Republic. This revolutionary shift replaced the previous criminal code with the now codified Islamic Penal Code which criminalizes many basic human rights and liberties including the right to freedom of speech and assembly. Before the 1979 revolution, politics and religion remained separated, however, there were some religious scholars and clergymen who held political seats and exerted some political power.

“The female body has always been at the forefront of the regime's political agenda.”

-Tanya Fekri

After the 1979 revolution, the religious political groups drew out the Shah and implemented a regime change that fought to intertwine religion and politics and control the way society would function and behave. Throughout these last 40 plus years, there have been far too many political prisoners and innocent civilians that have been beaten, tortured and killed by the hands of the Islamic regime.

How is this issue larger than simply wearing a hijab or not?

It is about the freedom of choice – [the] right to choose to wear the headscarf or not to wear the headscarf. It is about living in a country where you have the freedom and liberty to exercise your basic human rights without the fear of violence, torture and/or death.

Breaking down the SATs

Students respond to new testing policies

Olivia Schaer and Alina Zahn Staff Reporters

One of the most common burdens associated with high school students is standardized testing. These tests have long been used to measure student intellect, and they've represented a key method for how students present themselves to prospective colleges.

This long standing system has persisted, despite many considering it an inaccurate representation of a student's high school career.

Because of COVID-19, many students were unable to take the SAT during the 2020-2021 school year. This resulted in most colleges removing SAT and ACT requirements on college applications.

This test "blindness" has lifted a weight off of many students, allowing them to see the test as merely a way to boost their applications if they receive good scores. Senior Asher Seibel, ASB vice president, felt strongly that the SATs are an inferior test to the ACT. He has his sights set high and plans to attend Cornell University to study cognitive science.

"I am ready to leave high school. It will be hard to leave my friends and family, but I am excited for college; it's a new chapter." -Helen Richardson

Seibel preferred the ACT largely because it includes a science section in addition to math and reading sections. It also takes place during a shorter time block, a shorter three hours to the SAT's overwhelming four.

Seibel also believes the SAT is not a useful measure of intellectual ability.

"The test measures 70% testing skills and 30% real intellect," Seibel said.

Seibel claims that his parents were supportive but not too persistent about the value of standardized tests which has given him space to learn his own persistence. The tests are often inconveniently far away, another barrier. Seibel feels that if his parents had not been willing to drive him to every test, he may not have been able to take the tests.

Senior Leah Robinson feels quite differently about the burden of SATs and the hold they will have on her future.

She is eager to leave high school behind and attend a college of her choice in a much warmer climate like Arizona or Southern California, due to her discontent with Washington's less "friendly" weather.

Because her preferred schools are test optional or blind, she feels no need to exert herself with worry over her score. Like Seibel, she has been studying using the free resources provided by Khan Academy

and anticipates doing well, as she sees herself as a strong test taker.

"If I do good, I do good. If I do bad, I do bad," Robinson said.

"My parents always told me, 'you have your own opinion, and we are not going to force you to take this test, just encourage you.'" -Helen Richardson

Senior Helen Richardson took her SATs this October 2022. Richardson will submit her college applications this November in order to be considered for early admission to her top schools: Arizona University, Western Washington University, University of Washington, and her top choice, California Polytechnic State University. Her main motivation for taking the SATs was the requirement of her top school, Cal Poly.

"Cal Poly has a great architectural program, which I am extremely interested in," Richardson said.

Richardson was incredibly nervous about her SATs and felt that admission into her top school is highly dependent on getting a good score.

She also felt that with many of her friends taking the SATs, they all were able to share the burden of this stress-inducing test. Despite this, Richardson does feel that the SAT is just a test and does not accurately represent her last four years of demanding work. She felt that her family was very supportive and encouraging regarding the SATs.

"My parents always told me, 'you have your own opinion, and we are not going to force you to take this test, just encourage you,'" Richardson said.

"It's not a measure of you or how smart you are." -Fin Kusik

Richardson knows the test is important for her application but will not let it define her academic achievements. She is excited about applying to colleges and seeing what the future has in store for her.

"I am ready to leave high school. It will be hard to leave my friends and family, but I am excited for college; it's a new chapter," Richardson said.

Senior Fin Kusik shared some more thoughts on the SATs. Kusik, who has already taken the SATs twice, will be applying to New York University, Boston University, University of California Santa Cruz, and University of California Berkeley.

All the universities that Kusik is applying to are test optional, but he feels that through the use of Khan academy, SAT study booklets and being a confident test taker, the SATs could potentially be a good addition to his college applications.

Kusik shared his best test taking tips, which include self-confidence and following your instincts. He does feel however that the SATs aren't extremely accurate.

"It's not a measure of you or how smart you are," Kusik said.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE SAT

- 1905**

The SAT is created

The College Entrance Examination Board develops the SAT from Army recruiters' IQ tests
- 1926**

The test is issued

The first group of students takes the SAT
- 2009**

Score choice policy begins

College Board allows students to choose which scores to send in college applications
- 2010**

Colleges become test optional

Some colleges no longer require SAT scores in applications
- 2016**

SAT format changes

The most recent change to the SAT format shifts the test's length, scoring system and section types

Federal government cuts free meal funding

The first “normal” year since COVID marks the return of breakfast and lunch fees

Penelope Neireiter and Semai Hagos Staff Reporter and Features Editor



Lunch Manager Lan Dang rings up students during lunch. (Arden Rathkopf)

For the past two years during the global pandemic, school lunches were free for all K-12 students in the Seattle Public Schools district.

However, this school year federal lawmakers are no longer funding free school lunches and breakfasts unless a school or family qualifies for free or reduced lunch.

For many this is a big adjustment, as families are now charged \$2.25 for breakfast and \$3.25 for lunch.

“I got lunch last year and I am upset this year, because I feel like it is not worth the money,” sophomore Piper Crotty said.

Lunchroom staff have also noticed big differences under this new policy. Lunch Manager Lan Dang says that there’s a decline in work in the cafeteria when students go out, and she gets bored during the extended period.

She goes on to explain how last year there were many students that came in and out of the cafeteria. She would just stand there and consistently pass out one meal after the other. She didn’t have to ring every student up and get them to enter their pin.

“[Last year] there were over 400 students eating lunch [daily], now there’s just over 100,” Dang said.

However, some students feel that the new fee is worth the meals they are now receiving.

“I got lunch last year and [in] middle school, and I don’t think paying for lunch [makes] much of a difference,” sophomore De-Shiang Ford said. “There are add-ons, so I’d say the quality has increased, and there are a new variety of options.”

“The quality has gone up just a little bit. For example, last year we did not have chicken or dumplings and noodles as good as this year,” Crotty said.

This year, there are a variety of different options for lunch. Some include teriyaki chicken with veggie yakisoba, BLT sandwiches, orange chicken and much more. These are quite the change from the normal school lunch of pizza, burgers and fries. This gives students the opportunity to have more nutritional meals.

Last year there were two breakfast periods for students, and across both time slots, 600 students would grab breakfast. However, these sessions have been reduced to just one, at 8:30 a.m., and the number of students eating diminished to just 40.

“Most students aren’t hungry at 8:30 a.m. since they recently ate breakfast at home,” Dang said. “I wish we could make breakfast available at 10:30 a.m. again, when students start to get hungry.”

This is a significant drop in the number of students and reflects a distinct impact of this adjustment. The free lunch policy was originally created at the start of the pandemic to help students and families during hard times, both financially and logistically.

Research shows that free lunch programs narrowed the hunger gap for kids in the U.S. Now that society is returning to normal post COVID-19, the federal government has stopped funding free and reduced lunches for everyone.

Principal Abby Hunt goes into further detail about the change.

“During the quarantine, and during the time in which we returned to school, [it was] through federal government funding that schools were able to provide food to everybody,” Hunt said.

Hunt explains that students whose families cannot take on the fees can apply to get lunches for free or at a lower price.

“It would just be a lot simpler and just take away barriers to make sure that everyone has access to nutrition,” Hunt said. “We know that there are flaws within the free and reduced meal program, as people have to go through an application process and submit that paperwork, and we know that that’s not connecting with all families who have that need.”



Security Specialist JJ converses with Tucker Anderson-Sanford (12) (left), Abdelfatah Ibrahim (11) (middle) and Sam Airhart (12) (right) on his last day in the commons. (Semai Hagos)

Long-time security specialist moves to south Seattle school

JJ shares his love for working with students

Semai Hagos Features Editor

After his second year back, security specialist Jacques (JJ) Johnson made the final decision to leave Ballard to work in south Seattle, closer to his home.

Throughout his life, Johnson has worked several different professions, such as being a school bus driver and teaching students martial arts.

“I’m a performer of music and dance, [and] I used to teach dance classes,” Johnson said. “I have a love for the arts [and] for the entertainment field.”

Working at Ballard proved to be a challenge in multiple ways. From 2008-2012, Johnson had a hard time balancing work life with obstacles in his personal life.

“I was a caregiver for my grandmother [who passed in 2018],” Johnson said. “It’s hard when you’re caregiving for an older family member and you live on the opposite side of town. [There could be] some type of emergency call that comes in, so you’ll have to try to rush from [one] side of town to get back to the other.”

Johnson is now the primary caretaker of his mother and can be more attentive to her needs working at a school closer to his home.

Johnson’s work helping students runs deeper than being security.

“My work with youth outreach and gang intervention was [at] a time when the gangs were really prevalent here in Seattle, and there were a lot of drive-by shootings and violence going on,” Johnson said. “My jobs were to try to provide mentoring and youth outreach to try to get [troubled students] to turn their life around.”

He mentioned the difficulty of getting kids to change their unsafe lifestyles when family members they look up to are involved in gangs.

“There’s some students who have a strong enough will that will sometimes say, ‘this is not what I want to be involved with ... I don’t want to do that,’” Johnson said. “They’re crying out for help. That’s when we try to help them out.”

While he’s had a positive experience working at BHS, Johnson explained a tough part of his job.

“It’s a hard balance to do this job and also try to be liked and build a relationship with students,” Johnson said. “Students want to do things but then as soon as they get in trouble, they get mad at us because they got caught.”

In the end, however, Johnson shares a meaningful interaction he’s had with a graduate.

“They say ‘we understand why, and we appreciate you because that just shows that you really cared about us,’” Johnson said. “And that’s like the greatest gift right there, when they come back and say that and don’t hold a grudge.”

ASB's newest freshman ambassadors

Three students run unopposed with different goals for the school

Xander Howarth Staff Reporter



Sabi Yoon (9) gives her speech about why freshman students should vote for her, hoping to improve school diversity. (Emma Steinburg)

Three freshman students become ambassadors, filling what were empty positions, and speak on what they'd like to do to help change BHS.

On Oct. 28, three new freshmen were elected to be the freshman class ambassadors. Each grade level has three ambassadors who bring spirit and pep to their grade level, and the freshmen are no different.

This year, only three people are running for a position that allots three spots. This raises interesting questions about the new candidates.

Enter Freshmen Ruby James Madden, Sabi Yoon and Mae Piercy, 2022-2023 freshman ambassadors: all competent students who spoke on Oct. 27, a day before they were elected. Each candidate had different thoughts on how they felt about running unopposed.

"I was actually kind of nervous. Even though I

know I'm going to become a freshman ambassador, I still have a little bit of anxiety in front of people," Yoon said.

On the other hand, the lack of competition made some students more comfortable.

"I say it's pretty nice because I don't have to stress about it as much, and it wasn't as bad doing my speech knowing that I will get a spot no matter what," Piercy said.

Madden agreed with Piercy, emphasizing how running uncontested was a less nerve-wracking process.

"It definitely takes a lot of the pressure off while keeping the good parts. I love public speaking," Madden said.

While it may be nice running without opposition, that is not why these three students ran; they all want to contribute to the school.



Ruby James Madden (9) hopes students will get involved in school spirit and activities. (Emma Steinburg)

In their speeches, each highlighted why and how they would help the school.

"I would like to help get everyone involved in the school in ways they've enjoyed, ... through sports, clubs, the library, performing arts projects and even community service projects," Madden said.

Piercy also agreed; school spirit and performance are her main priority.

"We need to get people to come to sports events because, no matter what, you should come to support the school and just participate in school spirit," Piercy said.

Yoon's main goal is less about school spirit and more focused on diversification.

"I want to improve the school's diversity," Yoon said. "Hamilton [International Middle School] had a really big diversity campaign, and I don't really see a lot of that at Ballard."

There are great goals from all of the candidates, goals students at BHS hope these Ambassadors will capitalize on. The freshman ambassadors will have a chance to fulfill their promises at the next Student Senate meeting.



Mae Piercy (9) also encourages school spirit among the freshmen class. (Emma Steinburg)

SEA strike postpones the start of school

Staff push for multilingual and special education resources in new contract

Annie Welman and Zoe Isett *Editors in Chief*



David Furman, a union representative and special education teacher, pickets alongside Multilingual Department Head Christina Russell in recent SEA strike. (Emma Steinburg)

As students across the United States returned to the classroom, SPS students waited to begin their school year. Rather than starting as planned, the first day of school was delayed by five days as district staff went on strike.

The Seattle Education Association, or SEA, organized the strike. Across the city, educators picketed outside of their school buildings after SPS and SEA failed to come to an agreement on the contract for the upcoming school year.

Though SEA focused on a variety of topics during contract negotiations, there were a handful of prominent issues that motivated the strike. David Furman, a Ballard union representative and special education teacher, described these concerns.

“SPS is proposing to cut the number of special education teachers and increase the workload on the teachers we currently have,” Furman said.

More specifically, the SEA demands dealt with student-teacher ratios in classrooms. As the SPS and SEA communities push to include special education students more in general education classrooms, the two groups had different approaches for doing so.

Originally, SPS was proposing to abandon previously set ratios. SEA educators pushed back against this change, pointing out that this would force general education teachers to take on the roles of special education teachers and lead to special education staffing cuts.

Other key issues were pay for educators, multilingual education resources, and mental health support for students. Senior Lina McRoberts, a member of the Student Advisory Board who regularly works with the superintendent and other district employees, added on.

“It comes down to establishing a contract that puts more resources [towards] special education and multilingual education,” McRoberts said.

Supporting multilingual education became a central issue in the debate. Christina Russell, the Multilingual Department Head and SEA member, explained how the proposed contract would have impacted students who are learning English.

“The Multilingual Department, formerly called the English Language Department, exists to support students who are in the process of acquiring English,” Russell said. “The district [threatened] to cut this program in half.”

Furman also highlighted how multilingual program cuts impact entire families, not just students.

“We have students and parents who have never been able to read their ... IEPs,” Furman said. “They don’t understand what’s going on at school because the district won’t pay for written interpretation.”

As SEA began striking, many educators emphasized that this was a last resort.

“We want to be back in the classroom as soon as possible,” Russell said. “We just hope that students and families know that we’re doing this for you.”

Though families were eager for students to return to class, Ballard staff expressed that many families showed support for SEA during this time. Whether it was through social media messages, honking cars that passed by the picket lines, or elsewhere, teachers were encouraged by the community response.

“Parents understand,” Furman said. “They want more support for their students.”

Despite the positive reactions, staff and students expected that community opinions could be swayed depending on their sources of information.

“We were nervous because the district has access to direct messaging, so often families are receiving a one-sided story,” Russell said.

In the early phases of the strike, SPS messaged all families saying, “At this time, SEA has rejected the proposed [memorandum of understanding]. Starting school on Wednesday is what is best for our students ... We hope that SEA will reconsider this MOU and sign it before Tuesday.”

This “memorandum of understanding” refers to a proposed agreement by SPS, that would have entailed continued contract negotiations into the beginning of the school year, rather than a strike as the negotiations took place. Though this would have

allowed SEA to continue negotiating as students returned to school on time, Russell described that taking this step would have eliminated SEA’s bargaining power.

“If we’re not able to have our demands met in any other way, our last resort is to leverage our labor in order to be listened to,” Russell said.

McRoberts encouraged families to seek additional information after reading SPS emails.

“If students and families looked at the SEA website and SEA social media, and even just looked around Seattle and saw the plethora of teachers picketing, they would likely come to the realization that SPS is not doing their duty to support teachers and students alike,” McRoberts said.

One aspect of negotiations that Russell and Furman felt was misrepresented was the emphasis on pay rather than other demands. While educator pay was one component of negotiations, as many staff believed that paraprofessional staff wages were inadequate, Russell believes the focus of negotiations was to meet student needs.

“Sometimes when people strike, there’s an assumption that it is all about money, but there’s so much more on the line right now,” Russell said.

During the strike, educators participated in a variety of activities along with picketing in front of the school building, such as picking up trash along 15th Avenue and other community service projects.

“Our goal is that we are doing this for our community, so ... Ballard [collected] donations of non-perishable food and hygiene products for Ballard Food Bank and for New Horizons, which is a domestic violence shelter,” Furman said.

After several days of picketing, SEA and SPS reached a tentative agreement, and students returned to school on Sept. 14. SPS emailed families thanking both SPS and SEA negotiators, giving a “special thank you to our educators who are the backbone of our school district.”

The following week, on Sept. 19, the union voted to confirm the tentative agreement, suspending fears of returning to a strike. During the vote, 82% of educational office professionals, 66% of paraprofessionals, and 71% of certificated SPS staff voted in favor of the agreement.

Overall, SEA reported their satisfaction with the agreement, describing through their website that they, “... achieved a contract that does more for educators, students, and families.”



Ballard staff participate in recent SEA strike in hopes of improved multilingual and special education resources and improved staff wages. (Emma Steinburg)

New principal enters school with a community focus

Abby Hunt uses her past experiences to promote a school environment of inclusivity

Hazel Engstrom and Marley Helfer Staff Reporters

Last year was filled with important conversations around sexual assault, race, identity and the transition back from remote learning. Integrating her past experiences from high school, college and teaching both in and out of the country, Principal Abby Hunt is ready to address important topics while also involving herself with the traditions of the school.

Her plans for this year ultimately stem from something she discovered when she was growing up.

“Growing up, my life revolved around soccer,” Hunt said. “I was raised in the mountains, backpacking, scrambling, just always out hiking.”

It was there that she discovered the importance of community.

“I began to appreciate the classroom environment of learning and realized that my love of literature and writing thrived most in the classroom setting,” Hunt said.

However, it wasn’t until college that she realized her love for literature and connecting with others would lead to a path in teaching.

“[I realized that] I don’t want to just work in a room alone with books, I want to be engaging with people and I love the learning process,” Hunt said.

This community aspect would travel with her as she took up a position as an English language arts teacher in Belize.

“Having my first real job in Central America was an important start to my career because it really helped me recognize that it wasn’t about me,” Hunt said. “I was an outsider in a new country [and] a new community, and it was not about pushing or centering myself.”

It was both the joys and challenges of this unfamiliar position that would teach Hunt not just about her role as an educator, but also her never ending role as a student.

“Even when there’s an age difference and a knowledge difference ... there’s still so much that we can learn from each other, which I think is really important as an educator to understand,” Hunt said.

Hunt then went on to teach English language arts in Chicago before eventually moving to Seattle.



Principal Abby Hunt starts the school year with the goal of increasing the student voice. (Emma Steinburg)

“I’m entering this year with a learning stance and a listening stance,” Hunt said. “I’m definitely not wanting to come in and make radical change.”

Instead, she has become involved in topics of interest to the school, the first of which was changing the bell schedule.

This change follows a larger goal Hunt has for the year: increasing student advocacy.

“I have made it possible [for members of the community] to go and advocate and lobby for [issues],” Hunt said.

For Hunt, the importance of safe spaces and resources for all students has ties to her own experiences in high school.

“When I was in high school, the school system and society were very anti LGBTQIA+ ... and that had an impact on me as a person,” Hunt said. “We recognize that our society has some serious issues that need to be addressed.”

As she begins this school year, Hunt is ready to take on her new position and create a culture that is welcoming to all.

“I want Ballard students to know that every single student here matters ... So I, and the administrative team, are committed to making those changes.” -Abby Hunt

From sketchy to delicious

Two students concoct a business venture

Xander Howarth Staff Reporter

Would you eat pasta from a van? Many students have been newly adamant in saying yes, all because of two students. Dexter Czark and David Palmieri are co-conspirators in the “Pasta Van,” a van that serves, you guessed it, pasta every first Monday at the tennis courts outside the school.

While this may seem like a suspicious enterprise run by two teenage boys, it actually is quite wholesome. Two months ago, juniors Czark and Palmieri first took inspiration from “Breaking Bad,” a popular show watched by most students.

“We just started watching ‘Breaking Bad,’ and they make meth out of their van. So, we thought, why not make something ourselves? And, of course, pasta came up,” Czark said.

While their inspiration may not be from the most reputable source, they have run with the idea in a more floury way, getting a food handlers’ license so they could legally sell the pasta. From selling spaghetti and bow tie pasta, Pasta Van’s \$5 bowls can be topped with pesto, cheese and marinara sauce.

The most common question asked is, “Why pasta?” Well, to Czark and Palmieri, the answer was obvious.

“Pasta was on my mind. It was an easy thing we could do to bring to school,” Czark said.

On the other hand, his partner had a more pragmatic answer.

“We could just boil water and sell it,” Palmieri said. “Actually, last year, we sold popsicles and ice cream at the end of the year, but there was not as much buzz as pasta.”

That is what draws people in, the question of “what is a pasta van?” As students flock towards the van, they are greeted with a multitude of pasta options, cookies and even merchandise.

This merchandise is a concept crafted by the two for one cause.

“We thought it would be incredibly goofy to see people walking around school with a weird pasta shirt,” Czark said.

To add to the excitement, Czark and Palmieri have a proposition to share with the school.

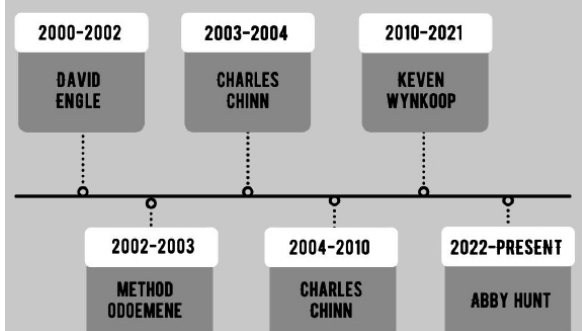
“We’re looking for a third [partner],” Palmieri said.

You read that right. The pasta duo could morph into a pasta trio. If you are interested, message @pasta_van on Instagram for more information.



Dexter Czark (11) passing out pasta to Marley Williams (11). (Courtesy of Isabel Baraff)

PRINCIPALS: 2000-PRESENT



(Zoe Isett)

“As an educator, especially an educator in Seattle Public Schools, race and equity are fundamental to my job and my values,” Hunt said.

She is hoping to immerse herself in the community while also making some changes moving forward.

Conversations without contact: COVID-19's disruption on education

Students and teachers reflect on their experiences of taking and teaching language classes remotely

Marley Helfer Staff Reporter

It's common to find articles in the newspaper about how socially arduous COVID-19 was or how draining it was to stay focused in remote learning.

However, there's one topic that isn't talked about as often, but that many students and teachers had to deal with during the pandemic; remotely learning a language.

Now, nearly two years after Seattle Public Schools initially shut down because of COVID, students at Ballard are back to learning in immersive Spanish, French and Japanese classrooms. However, COVID has had a lasting effect on language classes.

"Last year for so many students was extraordinarily stressful," Eileen Yardley, Spanish teacher and world language department head, said. "Students were feeling a little behind, and they didn't speak a lot and they didn't write a lot. The learning curve changed during the pandemic."

Yardley had to make changes last year to keep students on track with the class's curriculum.

*"For teachers it was stressful, because we had to figure out where the kids were and meet them where they were."
-Eileen Yardley*

"For teachers, too, it was stressful because we had to figure out where the kids were and meet them where they were," Yardley said.

Yardley shares that the lively, engaging aspects of a language class were difficult to retain online.

"To make an exciting world language class, it should be loud and full of different activities," Yardley said. "And we [typically] move a lot, we read and draw and speak and listen ... That did not work as well in the remote setting."

Currently a student in Spanish 4, junior Danny Pottharst faced similar challenges during remote learning.

"When you're in-person, it's a lot easier to practice speaking, and speaking was often the hardest thing for a lot of people," Pottharst said. "But when we were online, it was just not the same."

Now a sophomore, Lillian Hethcote has only dealt with an online language class in middle school. But she, like many other students, had a strenuous experience.

"It was very detached," Hethcote said. "It was hard to understand the material well."

The school's new Japanese teacher, Tommy Ager, had a unique experience with COVID: He has been both a student and a teacher during the pandemic. He received his Masters of Education online, then completed a year of student teaching at Chief Sealth High School before becoming a teacher at Ballard in 2021.



Tommy Ager earned his Master's degree during the pandemic before teaching Japanese. (Arden Rathkopf)

"I had no frame of reference for teaching before COVID," Ager said. "Doing my student teaching with all of us wearing masks, having to be six feet apart at all times – it was definitely kind of limiting in what we could do."

Ager found remote learning lacking some of the important aspects of teaching.

*"Learning and teaching is supposed to be a social thing."
-Tommy Ager*

"Learning and teaching is supposed to be kind of a social thing," Ager said.

His unique experience gave him a fresh perspective and understanding on teaching youth.

"I feel very lucky to have been in the program I was in at the [University of Washington], and remembering what it's like to be a student on the receiving side of things," Ager said. "I feel like I have more sympathy for students that are maybe checked out or not totally present on a given day."

Now that students and teachers have gone back to the building, the vibrant energy of world language classes is beginning to return.

"Language learning, in my opinion, should be fun. It's communicative, and who doesn't like to communicate?" Yardley said.

Being back in the classroom has allowed Yardley to develop her own class's culture.

"We relax and we try to create a place where mistakes are so appreciated, where you're pushing

yourself," Yardley said. "In order to do that, you have to create a very welcoming and nice [environment], and it has to be centered on justice and equity."

Moving out of the isolation of the pandemic has been relieving for students and teachers alike.

"There's more flexibility in what we can do in the classroom," Ager said. "Being able to have masks down and still feel safe and being able to play games and have the desks in clusters – it helps a lot."

And students feel this way, too.

"It has been nice, even if it's kind of socially awkward speaking in another language," Pottharst said. "It's been nice to have more opportunities to speak to people [in class]."

Heading into this year, the strains of COVID will not be forgotten.

"There are still repercussions from the pandemic," Yardley said. "That will go on for a couple of years."

But the larger importance of language in society overrides its setbacks from COVID.

*"Everyone should take a world language. I think the world is global, and we need to be global citizens."
-Eileen Yardley*

"I think everyone should take a world language," Yardley said. "I think the world is global, and we need to be global citizens."

Marching band celebrates rock of Seattle in the Homecoming halftime show

Nirvana, Pearl Jam and the Foo Fighters showcased in this year's field show

Hugo Heim Romero Staff Reporter

Every October, the school's most anticipated football game takes place: Homecoming. Some attendees are drawn in by the intense matchup or the showcase of school spirit, but for others, the marching band's halftime show is the highlight of the night.

The band's performance has a different theme every year. In the past, the themes have been Aretha Franklin and "Guardians of the Galaxy," but this year, the show was aptly titled "Rock of Seattle": an homage to iconic music that has emerged from the local rock scene.

"We've had a lot of really famous bands come out of the area: Pearl Jam, Foo Fighters, Nirvana. So I [thought] it'd be cool to celebrate them and Seattle heritage," Gillespie said.

Gillespie's goal was to honor Seattle's long music history, evident in the choreography of the show. The band formed a multitude of complex shapes, like the Space Needle, a guitar and the Foo Fighter's logo.

"We've had a lot of really famous bands come out of the area: Pearl Jam, Foo Fighters, Nirvana. So I [thought] it'd be cool to celebrate them and Seattle heritage," - Jay Gillespie

They also performed three rock songs: "The Pretender" by the Foo Fighters, "Smells Like Teen Spirit" by Nirvana and "Even Flow" by Pearl Jam. Gillespie started planning the performance over

the summer, choosing a theme, picking and teaching music and designing shape spreadsheets for students. Overall, he spent upwards of 30 to 40 hours on it.

Senior Robert Starnes, marching band sousaphone player, talked about the effort he and the rest of the band put in. The band members spent around three weeks practicing, and on the day of the game, they were excused from their classes to spend the whole school day rehearsing, around six hours.

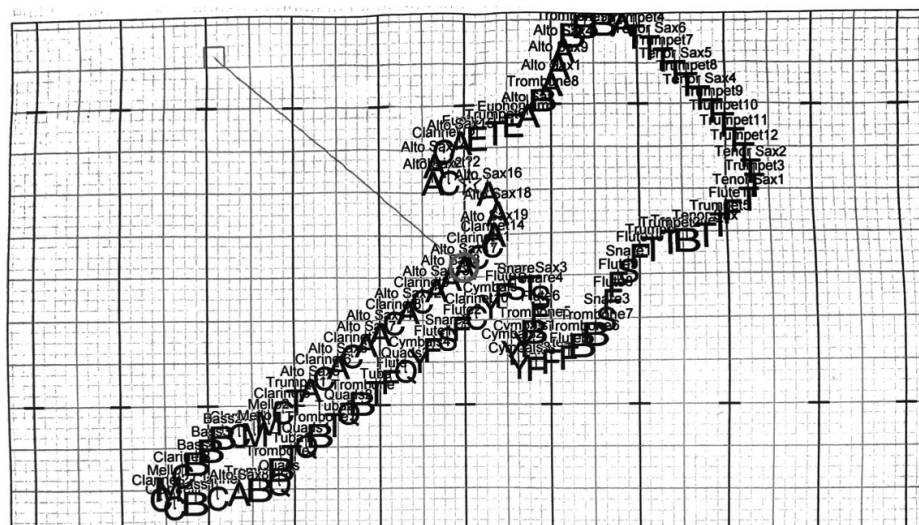
Despite the many hours of practice, members still felt anxious.

"Lots of people were nervous," Starnes said. "[But] I think a lot of the band members were very happy with it. A lot of people were saying that it's one of our better performances in the last few years."

Starnes attributed this success to the work put into the performance this year.

"I think that this one had a lot more time and effort put behind it ... I think it was much more planned out, as opposed to the previous years," Starnes said.

After months of planning and preparation, band members were proud of the way the show came together and ran smoothly.



Set	Meas	Move	Left-Right	Visitor-Home
9	0	Right: 0.75 steps	Inside 35 yd In	5.0 steps In Front Of Home Hash (HS)
10	66	Right: On 50 yd In		13.0 steps In Front Of Visitor Hash (HS)
11	56	Right: On 50 yd In		13.0 steps In Front Of Visitor Hash (HS)

To prepare for the field show, band students use spreadsheets that mark each student's spot in the shapes. (Annie Welman)



During a phase of the halftime show called the "scatter drill," the saxophone section takes a selfie. (Arden Rathkopf)

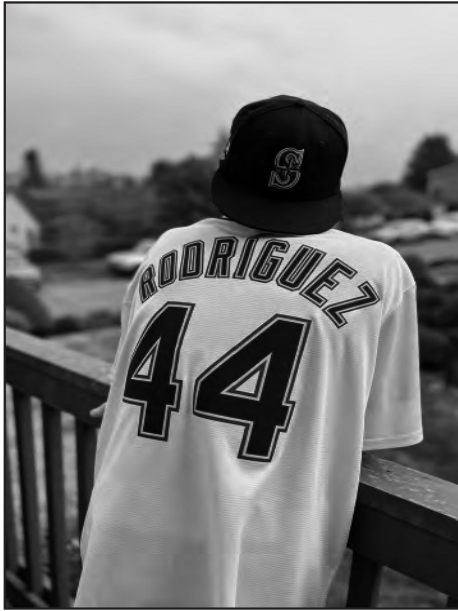


The marching band plays pep music in the stands, as the football team faces off against Bishop Blanchet High School. (Quinton Brewster)

Mariners drought finally over

Although the Mariners couldn't make it past the division series, the squad finally gave fans the excitement they'd been waiting for

Amare Srinivasan and Evan Sadler Staff Reporters



Tate Livingston (10) wearing his favorite player's jersey. (Courtesy of Tate Livingston)

After 21 years of excruciating losses and the inability for fans to watch the Seattle Mariners in the postseason, supporters of the Emerald City finally got to see their team compete in the MLB's Red October.

In 2001, the Seattle Mariners finished the regular season with a record of 116 wins and 46 losses, which tied the record for the most wins in a Major League Baseball season of all time. However, they were not able to capitalize off this historic season. In a nail biting series for fans in the Pacific Northwest, the Mariners lost to the World Series's runner-ups, the New York Yankees, after five games.

After countless roster moves, changes in the coaching staff, and an extremely rough past two decades of rebuilding, the Mariners finally had a shot at making the playoffs in 2021. However, even after a late rally to close in on the final wildcard spot, the Mariners narrowly missed the playoffs by just two games. Going into the off-season, fans and players were itching to make the playoffs, and needed to end the drought. In a way, last season was when the momentum was finally starting to shift on the path to the Mariners' redemption.

The 2022 MLB season started as an exciting one for Mariners fans, as standout rookie outfielder Julio Rodríguez was brought up to the big leagues before debuting on opening day, April 8, 2022. After terrorizing opposing pitchers in the first half of the season, Rodríguez received both an All-Star selection as well as getting the chance to compete in the league's home run derby. Rodríguez went on to hit 81 home-runs during the All-Star Home Run Derby, but fell short in the championship round to Juan Soto of the Washington Nationals. Despite coming second in the homerun derby, Rodríguez hit the second most total home runs of all time in the derby, cementing himself as one of the most exciting young players in the game.

With Rodríguez leading the squad, the Mariners went on their longest winning streak since 2001, winning 14 games in a row and moving up into the MLB wildcard spot. Rodríguez wasn't the only new acquisition for the Mariners; they were also able to

sign American League Cy Young winning pitcher Robbie Ray, draft budding pitcher George Kirby, and trade for elite workhorse starter Luis Castillo.

This season, they developed a strong but inconsistent offense to combine with their well-rounded defense. With these new weapons in their arsenal, the Mariners would close out the season 90-72, scraping past the Tampa Bay Rays on the back of catcher Cal "Big Dumper" Raleigh. In the bottom of the ninth against the Oakland Athletics, Raleigh pushed the team into the playoffs with a walk-off home run, clinching the wild card berth ending the 21 year playoff drought for the Rainy City.

The experience of finally getting to see the Mariners in the playoffs was shared by both diehard fans who had been waiting all 21 years of the drought, as well as fans who had never seen the squad play ball in October.

One fan who hadn't seen them in the playoffs before, sophomore Tate Livingston, was relieved by the Mariners finally making it. The strike from Cal Raleigh's bat not only brought the Mariners to the playoffs, but also warranted a special reaction from Mariners fans everywhere.

"I was screaming and going crazy. I was in my family room with my mom and dad, we were all just going crazy," Livingston said.

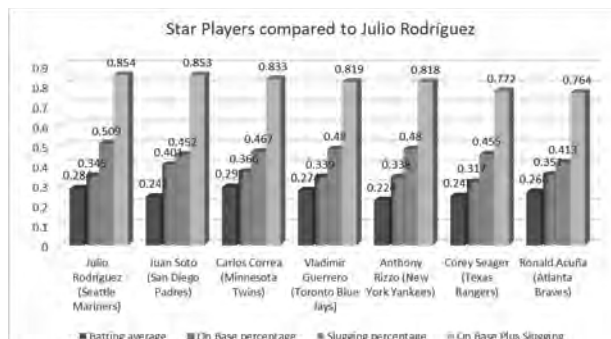
He had grown up a huge fan of both playing, as well as watching baseball.

"I started playing little league when I was really young and became a fan around 10 years ago, it's been a while since they made it to the playoffs," Livingston said.

Fellow sophomore, Henry Kelly shared a similar feeling of excitement when the Mariners clinched.

"I was at the Ballard game and I got the notification on my phone. A group of my friends were all crowded and we all just started screaming," Kelly said.

In the wildcard series versus the Toronto Blue Jays, the Mariners dominated with a 2-0 series win. The first game was headlined by outstanding performances from pitcher Luis Castillo, who became the first pitcher in Mariners postseason history to throw 7+ scoreless innings and star Julio Rodríguez, who had an early run to take the lead. However, it wasn't until Cal Raleigh was able to hit a two-run homer which culminated in a quick 3-0 lead within the first inning and allowed Mariners fans to have a sigh of relief.



Comparison displaying the skill and power Julio Rodríguez has brought to the Seattle Mariners, racking up numerous hits and boasting a 0.284 batting average. (Evan Sadler)

The Mariners would then return to Toronto the following night and try to put an end to the series. Game two started as a nightmare for the Mariners, as they fell to a relatively early 1-8 deficit by the bottom of the 5th inning. Although it wasn't looking pretty, not all hope was lost. Within the 6th inning, the Mariners went on to score four runs and reduce the deficit to just a three run gap. In the 8th inning, they managed to tie the game with a 9-9 scoreline. To finish off the comeback, second baseman Adam Frazier hit a game-winning double, bringing home the man who ended the drought, Cal Raleigh.

Fans from around the world were stunned by the series, and Livingston once again expressed his excitement among other fans with the Mariners returning to their vicennial playoff glory.



"I was at T-Mobile park and when we were down 8-1. Fans were putting shoes on their heads and doing random stuff. So when we came back to win, everyone was just going bonkers," Livingston said. (Courtesy of Tate Livingston)

While Kelly wasn't watching at the park, he shared a similar form of joy. "That game two was the greatest baseball game I've ever seen. I was jumping up and down," Kelly said.

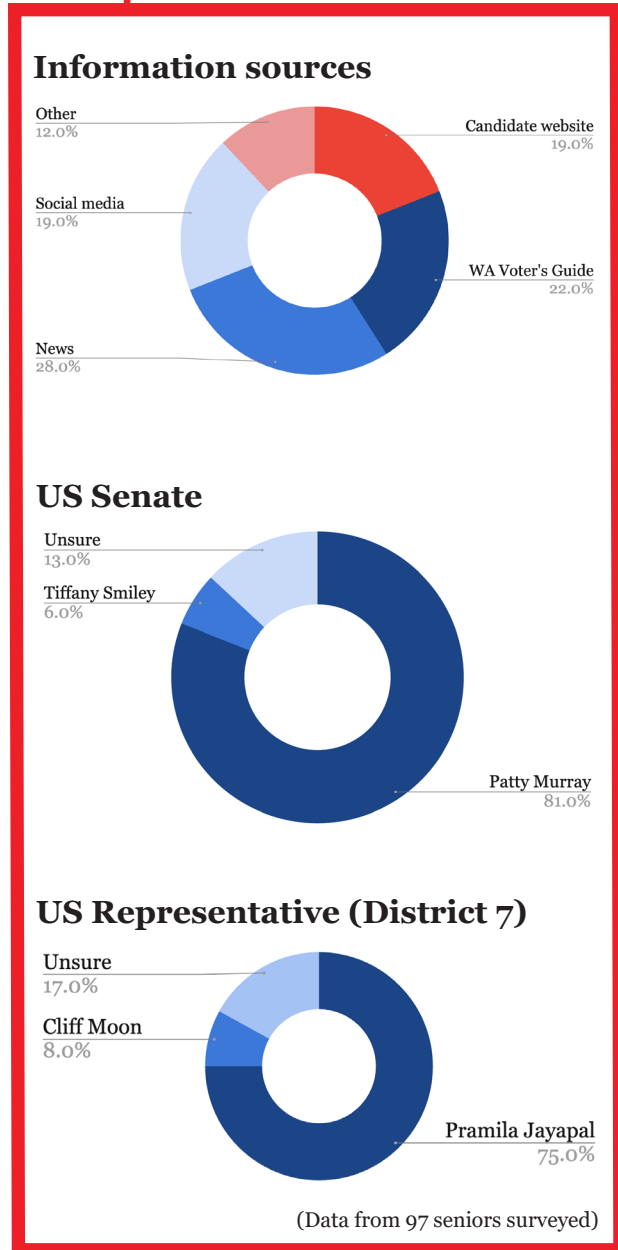
Unfortunately, this buzz only lasted until the ALDS series, where the Mariners faced off against the Houston Astros. In a gut-wrenching game one, Astros designated hitter Yordan Álvarez hit a three run home run in the bottom of the ninth to give them a 1-0 series lead. In game two, Mariners fans were hopeful that the squad would come in feeling some sort of redemption. However, after a slow start, Álvarez once again hit the tying and leading runs for the Astros in the 6th inning, making the series 2-0.

Neither of those games produced the same build-up and hype for fans as game three did, where the Mariners played playoff baseball in Seattle for the first time in 21 years. Facing elimination, fans were expecting to see the Mariners put up all that they had in them. But to their surprise, game three started off with an extremely slow start with no one scoring within the first nine innings. Fans were starting to get restless as it turned out to be the longest game without a run in postseason history. It wasn't until the 18th inning when Astros shortstop Jeremy Peña hit the go-ahead home run and sent the Mariners packing.

Despite fans not receiving the outcome in the playoffs that they had hoped for, the Mariners were able to exceed expectations for the season and finally put an end to the drought.

Midterm elections 2022: Stu

Senior positions on midterms



Annie Welman and Zoe Isett *Editors-in-Chief*

Government teacher perspectives

All students in the state of Washington are required to take a civics class in order to graduate. At Ballard, seniors are offered either United States Government or AP United States Government and Politics to fulfill this requisite.

Social Studies Teacher Gregory Feise explained why the U.S. Government class is necessary to prepare students for responsible citizenry and political engagement.

"It's important to be in our [government] classes because we go into depth about voting, how the voting system works and what happens in the state of Washington," Feise said.

The standard government classes have been focusing on the current elections, with students learning where and how to find reliable information. Social Studies Teacher Shawn Lee recommended several sources for students to research candidates and policy.

"The King County elections [website] and the voter's guide are good places to start," Lee said. "Reputable news sources also – it's good to look at sources with both a left wing and a right wing bias."

Social Studies Teacher Kelly Locklin added on, saying that endorsements are a good place to look when making decisions about candidates. Additionally, Locklin looks at qualifications from the King County Bar Association.

Feise emphasized the significance of the midterms elections, not just locally, but nationally.

"Think about them on a national level," Feise said. "The Senate is tied 50-50, so [the election] will determine which party [has] majority."

The Washington senate race is between Democratic candidate Patty Murray and Republican candidate Tiffany Smiley, who hold opposing

views on various issues. Many voters are especially concerned about abortion rights.

"I think people are a little more animated about [the Senate race]," Lee said. "Maybe its because of the abortion issue and that there are two women running for office."

Locklin has also noticed high student investment in abortion policies, along with issues like student debt.

This election will also decide which party holds the majority in the House of Representatives, which is currently split between 212 Republicans and 220 Democrats.

"The House is very close as well with a democratic majority, so there's a possibility that the Republicans could win the House," Feise said.

As Lee notes, on the local level, the King County prosecutor election is an important race because the county prosecutors are responsible for handling all felony crimes that occur within the county.

"[The King County Prosecutor] decides ... what kinds of crimes they are going to target and how they're going to address law and order issues," Lee said.

Considering the weight of these upcoming elections, government teachers encourage all students who can to vote.



Ranked Choice

In Proposition 1b and 1a on the midterm ballot, Seattle voters are given the chance to opt for a new primary voting system. Both options would act as an alternative for the previous "choose one" system.

As the name implies, ranked choice voting (RCV) allows each voter to rank their favorite mayor, city attorney and city council candidates.

Once the votes have been counted, the candidate with the fewest votes would be eliminated. Then, those votes would be transferred to the second choice candidates of those who voted for the eliminated candidate. This process would continue until final candidates are selected.

Student voters, like senior John Gibson, have shared support for this proposed system.

"I like ranked choice voting," Gibson said. "It

gives more progressive candidates the opportunity to [receive votes] without sacrificing the electability of moderates."

RCV has been implemented across the US, both in statewide and city elections. In many cases, RCV has allowed more people of color and women to be elected. This has often been attributed to the fact that RCV limits people's focus on the "electability" of the candidate they choose because they are not limited to choosing one candidate. Supporters of RCV also believe it could prevent candidates from negatively campaigning against others, hopefully lowering the polarization of elections.

Concerns about RCV are mainly focused on its novelty or complexity, as some worry the new system will be confusing to voters.

- 1 Candidate A
- 2 Candidate B
- 3 Candidate C
- Candidate D

Students vote for the first time

Student perspectives

This year, many seniors will be voting for the first time in the midterm elections, choosing between senate candidates, secretary of state candidates, and a variety of others.

For some, this is both an exciting and stressful process. Senior Aria Seavecki shared her enthusiasm for this opportunity, and hopes that all students will vote if they have the opportunity to do so.

“I think it’s important to put [voting] in front of a lot of other things,” Seavecki said. “A lot of the privileges that ... people in your community have are dependent on the way you vote.”

Seavecki shared several political issues she is especially concerned about in the upcoming elections, such as funding for education. Senior John Gibson added on, describing abortion, policing and homelessness as other key current political issues.

While students are excited to finally have this opportunity, voting for the first time can feel like a significant adjustment after years of simply watching parents and older relatives turn in ballots.

“The [voter’s pamphlet] you get is really overwhelming,” Seavecki said. “As a fresh 18 year old ... most of the focus is on college applications, so that workload has really affected the time and energy I can put towards voting.”

Senior Caroline Efrogmson also described that adults are often eager to sway new voters.

“I am seeing a lot of interesting things in the way that people, especially older adults, respond [to me being able to vote],” Efrogmson said. “They want me to think the way they think.”

In addition to the elections on Nov. 8, students had the opportunity to vote in the primary elections, as long as they turned 18 before the general elections. Though this was an option, some students didn’t vote in the primaries, either because they were unaware of the opportunity, were not pre-registered to vote or simply forgot. Before they turn 18, students could pre-register to vote in school, when they got their license, etc. As students entered the world of voting, Seavecki and others believe that having the opportunity to vote isn’t valuable unless you think carefully and vote strategically.

“Treating it as a joke is obviously not going to benefit anybody,” Seavecki said. “Make an informed decision.”



Quinn Grove (12) submits his ballot. (Annie Welman)



Approval Voting



Candidate A



Candidate B



Candidate C



Candidate D

Proposition 1a would implement approval voting, which allows voters to choose as many candidates as they would like.

Rather than ranking candidates or simply selecting their top choice, Seattle voters can select multiple candidates during primary elections. Then, the candidates with the most votes in total would move on to the general election.

Proposition 1a was added to the ballot because of a petition with signatures from almost 27,000 voters, whereas RCV was added by the Seattle City Council.

Seattle Approves, an organization pushing for proposition 1a, argues that approval voting would lead to “representative elections, accountable leaders and a thriving Seattle.” Their website lists

approval voting, such as an end to vote-splitting and a more complete representation of voters’ choices.

Though approval voting has been implemented in far fewer elections than ranked choice voting, both Frago, N.D. and St Louis, Mo. have adopted it recently. Approval voting has received more criticism in Seattle than RCV, as many question the legality and effectiveness of this new voting method.

For instance, there is concern among voters that people would simply vote for any candidate they could tolerate. With no distinction between favorite candidates and those who voters simply approve of, some worry that this system would not be an improvement from the current “choose one” method.

Fall sports in review

Reflecting on team progress over the fall 2022 season

James Liska Sports Editor

Girls Soccer

Working through the adversity of the cancellation of practices and games due to poor air quality, the girls soccer team finished their regular season with eight wins, four losses and a draw.

The team started the season with a 2-0 victory against local rival Seattle Preparatory School and ended the season on a high note, with a 2-0 win over Lincoln.

Senior Captain Katherine Mullins said the team's success has partially been derived from strong team chemistry.

"I think we've worked really well together and found a good community, and that has overall improved our performance because we trust each other, and we know how to play with each other," Mullins said. "All of us are in the same mindset of wanting to continue to get better, and that's something that's super important because you can't really change the mindset of a team through coaching."



Defender Jordan Standley (12) takes the ball up the field against Nathan Hale. The Beavers won 2-0 in a shutout game. (Courtesy of Stuart Isett)

Golf

This golf season could only be characterized as a tale of two seasons, one being a winning streak to begin the year, and the other a string of consecutive losses to end the season.

Despite the competitiveness of the team faltering in the latter half of the season, Senior Captain Julius King expects the team to develop well in the coming years.

"We have a rising, talented young core," King said.

Senior Captain Jorryn Taitch agrees with King, saying that the team will be competitive in the coming seasons.



Libero Josie Adamson (12) delivers a serve against Franklin. The Beavers won this match in three sets. (Tom Fathi)

Volleyball

The volleyball team had an exceptional season, finishing with a record of 15-2.

Their consistent play has been the leading factor in their success.

"I think we're pretty good at not playing down to easier teams' levels, we just play our game," Senior Captain Josie Adamson said. "We live in a good, competitive mentality."

The team operated with a new coaching staff this year. The new coaches brought a new energy to all levels of the volleyball program, and the players succeeded within the new style of coaching.

"[Coach Zach Wurtz] totally involved in all of our academics, and he's super positive, so that definitely helped," Adamson said.



The cross country team in the midst of a race (Courtesy of Yuriko Brunelle)

Slowpitch Softball

In just the second season of the Ballard slow pitch softball team, the team ended the year with a 14-4 record, and took down a strong Chief Sealth team in the Metro Championship to claim the title of 2022-23 Metro League Champions.

From a coach's perspective, seeing the team improve throughout the regular season to the point of winning a championship was unforgettable.

"We were a pretty young ballclub, but myself and the coaching staff were ecstatic to work with this group," said Head Coach Dale Griffith. "We focused on fine tuning the fundamentals of the game, and we saw great improvement on offense and defense."

Senior Monse Eckert-Mariscal attributes the team's success to a strong rapport within the team.

"We're really good friends, so we always want to help one another with different things like staying on top of homework so we're able to focus more on the playing," Eckert said. "We also saw a lot of improvement from players who haven't played before."

With this outstanding result in only the second year of the program, the team set the precedent for years to come.

Cross Country

This season, the cross country team was able to return to their home course at Lower Woodland Park.

Their season was a successful one, with the girls team qualifying for state, and some individual runners from the boys team also qualifying for state.

Senior Garrett Knight upends the common perception that cross country is a purely physical sport by explaining that there is a lot of strategy and mental fortitude involved, an aspect of the sport where Ballard excelled.

"Our team had a pretty unique approach to running this season," Knight said. "We race all our meets all out, whereas most other teams will race regular season meets at half effort just to train."

The future looks bright for Ballard cross country. "We have a lot of underclassmen who show a lot of promise, and they can definitely drop a lot of times throughout their high school career," Knight said.

"We race all our meets all out, whereas most other teams will race regular season meets at half effort just to train."

-Garrett Knight

Football

This year, the football team worked hard to adapt to many unforeseen and out of their control obstacles, particularly COVID cases, injuries and canceled practices due to poor air quality.

Despite this, the team has maintained an unwavering sense of camaraderie.

“The brotherhood that’s been created throughout football is definitely something that is always really important to the team,” junior Ryan Bohanan said. “It brings us together no matter how the team does record wise.”

Head Coach Ross Humphries agrees, saying that for both players and coaches, the lasting memories of Ballard football are typically not of the outcomes of the games, but of the relationships formed between everyone involved.

“I expect the team to develop very well,” Humphries said. “I mean, we’re a pretty young team. We have nearly 75 players on the team, and I believe we have only 14 of them being seniors.”

This season has also allowed for more team bonding with fewer COVID restrictions.

“I think the most important thing is for us to spend time together in the offseason through weight rooms and study hall ... and that has an impact on team chemistry and development,” Humphries said.



Quarterback Joe Farley (11) scans the field for open receivers during the annual Anchor Bowl. The Beavers beat Roosevelt 41-34. (Tom Fathi)



Lucy Ahrens (12) swimming the butterfly stroke, one of the most physically taxing strokes. (TheFinnyK)

Girls Swim

The girls swim season has been characterized by the development of every swimmer on the team, and many personal bests.

The team saw many qualifications for postseason meets.

“A lot of people have gotten metro and district cuts, so that has been a highlight,” Junior Claudia Yovanovich said.

Subsequently, the team has had great success in the postseason, and made history, breaking the school record for the 200 free relay. Set by senior Lucy Ahrens, sophomore Mia Onkels, sophomore Alyson Chew and junior Claudia Yovanovich, the new record is a testament to the hard work the team has invested into their training this year.

Heading into the postseason meets, the team hopes to break an additional school record, the 200 medley relay, an event that requires a versatile team and strength in all four strokes.



Left and above: The Beaver Brigade supporting the football team (Courtesy of Quinton Brewster)

New girls sports added to the winter season

Two teachers are ready to coach the first flag football and bowling teams

Piper Sorensen Staff Reporter

When ELA Teacher Laura Lehni attended a Seattle Schools flag football jamboree, she knew the school needed a team of its own. “Every time I went, I [wondered] why isn’t Ballard there?” Lehni said. “Why isn’t Ballard involved?”

After taking her questions to the district level, Lehni found out that every high school throughout Seattle Public Schools could have a flag football team that would be both supported and paid for by the district. Despite her enthusiasm to coach, Lehni has minimal experience in team sports. Regardless, she is passionate about providing that experience for students even if she didn’t quite get it herself.

“I was the kind of kid who didn’t play team sports growing up,” Lehni said. “I really wish that I had some of those relationships.”

Her goal? Encouraging a space for growth for students, especially those who may feel neglected.

“Thinking about the folks in this community who are looking for connections, I want to offer [a space] for them as well,” Lehni said. “I feel like flag football is low stakes enough that people can do this and try this. I’ve had multiple girls come and see me and gotten to meet all these people that I never would have met.”

The upcoming season isn’t a source of stress for Lehni, but rather excitement for all the interest

shown in the new sport.

“We’re just going to try it and see what it looks like,” Lehni said. “I’m super excited about the possibility, but I don’t know exactly what it looks like. And I’m okay with that.”

Ceramics teacher Scott Cachopo will be the coach of the new girls’ bowling team. He ended up coaching out of pure coincidence, never thinking so many people would be interested.

“I didn’t actually decide to start [the bowling team],” Cachopo said. “We’re the only school in the Metro League that doesn’t have a bowling team, so they asked if I wouldn’t mind starting it up. And I said sure.”

Cachopo had an overwhelming response to his new team, though there are no exact numbers yet. He thinks there’ll be at least 20 players, more than enough to form a team. There are still some things to figure out, as Cachopo has little experience in bowling, but he always makes up for it with enthusiasm.

“I played in a league once when I was twelve,” Cachopo said. “My goal is to get it off the ground, raise a little money and hire a professional coach to help them become better bowlers. I can’t make them better bowlers.”

Both the flag football and bowling team will commence their first season this November.



Scott Cachopo, Josie Fitzpatrick (12), and Jill Sousley (12) met in Cachopo’s room to plan for the girls bowling season. Fitzpatrick and Sousley are members of the Talisman staff. (Emma Steinburg)

Seniors take the win in this year’s Buff Puff

After two years of COVID, Buff Puff is back in person and better than ever

Matea Hart Staff Reporter

During homecoming week on Tuesday, Oct. 18, the juniors and seniors faced off at Buff Puff, a men’s game of volleyball, hosted in the gym with a live audience. This was the first time the game was held with a live audience since COVID started in 2020.

Rivalries were magnified after not having an audience for two years, but the seniors took the win with two sets out of three. Both coaches and players from the seniors team agreed that the energy in the gym that night was infectious and assisted them in their win.

Senior Josie Adamson, coach of the senior boys and captain of the varsity volleyball team, stressed that the audience provided a key component in winning the game: Energy.

“When we had a really awesome play, and everyone was up on their feet yelling and cheering, that really motivated my players to make more of those plays. That was a crucial part this year to win,” Adamson said.

Senior Asher Seibel, the manager of the seniors team, confirmed what Adamson stated, emphasizing the importance of having a live audience.

“I just loved having the fans. It felt kind of off last year because it was just us and the live stream. It was an empty gym, completely quiet,” Seibel said. “This felt like an actual game.”

Seniors also agreed that this tradition is a great

event hosted at Ballard. Senior Ike McMillen, the setter for the senior team, confirmed this.

“Definitely, it’s good for school spirit. It’s one of the first events that the freshman get to attend at the gym,” McMillen said.

Buff Puff’s full return represents this school year’s transition back into normalcy after the pandemic, and the seniors remain on top.

“I just loved having the fans. It felt kind of off last year because it was just us and the live stream.”

-Asher Seibel



The seniors pose for a team photo after a resounding three set sweep over the juniors. (Maria Fonvielle)

New Japanese restaurant opens across from the school *Umami Ballard brings students an easily accessible, but not easily affordable lunch option*

Penelope Neireiter Staff Reporter

Recognized for its Japanese-fusion cuisine, Umami Ballard is a new restaurant on the corner of 15th Avenue. Looking at the menu, there is an array of options. Some examples include making your own poke bowl, boba and ramen.

The poke bowl is \$14.95, teas range from \$5-\$9 and sides come in around \$6.95. With these prices, the restaurant scares away most high school students who are looking for a good affordable lunch. Nonetheless, you are getting what you pay for, leaving students happy and full.

The place is a little corner shop with limited room inside making it a subpar spot to come for a large gathering or sit-down meal. Instead, it is an easy grab-and-go option for lunch or dinner.

As you walk in, there is little décor or personal touches to make it unique from competition just down the street. The smell of frying oil and rice fills the air, accompanied by the sounds of sizzling and side chatter.

As you order, there are many different options to choose from. I recommend the option of building your own poke bowl. This allows you to get two sources of protein, three toppings and a sauce.



Umami provides a tasty yet expensive lunch option for hungry students. With a variety of options, the restaurant still fails to attract as many lunchgoers as its competitors. (Josie Fitzpatrick)

There is a variety of seafood on the menu. However, if the fishy flavor is not for you, there are many other choices, including chicken, pork or tofu.

Apart from the person working the cash register, there is only one person working in the kitchen. This seems like it would take the entirety of our extended lunch period but it is a surprisingly quick process, with the time between ordering and getting your food taking about five minutes.

At lunch, students that go off campus tend to go to the businesses that are close and efficient. Some

include MOD Pizza, Taco Del Mar and Ballard Pho & Teriyaki. Umami is the closest of them all, but the least full at lunch time. Seeing how empty it is inside the restaurant at lunch has me wondering if a restaurant more aimed towards high school students should occupy the space.

Even still, the restaurant is a great option for hungry students. Just a short walk from school, the good quality food will surely leave you satisfied. With a variety of different options to eat, this new restaurant is an exciting asset for our community.

We're glad her mom died

From child star to No. 1 New York Times bestselling author, Jennette McCurdy deserves all the hype she gets

Xander Howarth Staff Reporter

Bound in a lemon yellow and a hot pink cover is Jeanette McCurdy's harrowing memoir, "I'm Glad My Mom Died." As someone almost all high school students have grown up with, McCurdy has become a near forgotten memory of Nickelodeon and Disney Channel shows blaring on our televisions. One of those shows, "iCarly," may take up the largest space in our generation's collective memory. We remember Sam Puckett, a witty and food-obsessed delinquent, but none of McCurdy.

However, by the end of "I'm Glad my Mom Died," you will remember McCurdy. With a title both shocking and enthralling for readers, the memoir details her experiences from childhood traumas, like the child acting career forced upon her to the control her mother kept over, to her more recent experiences.

Reading this memoir was a painful experience I continued to endure only because of McCurdy's writing. While most actors-turned-writers have lackluster prose and sloppily constructed plots, McCurdy writes like she has this story engraved in her soul. Every thought, piece of dialogue and description feels like a piece of McCurdy's life she has regurgitated onto paper. It's all so real and unflinching, to the point where tears were spotted on my eyes on more than one occasion.

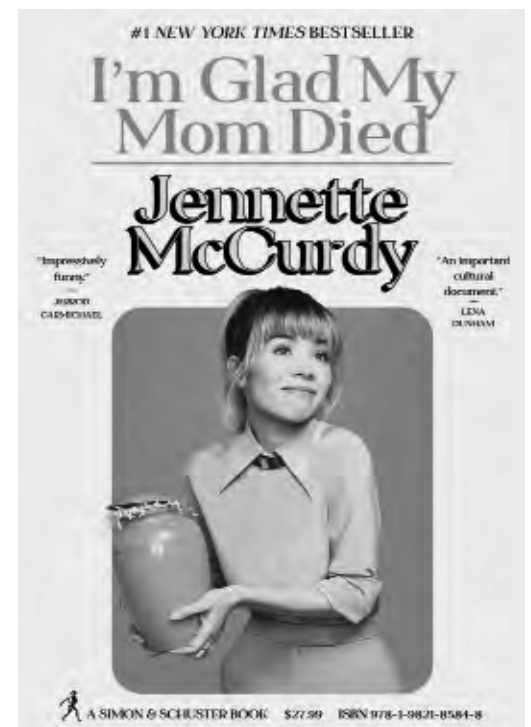
The most powerful part of the story is McCurdy's detailed explanation of her childhood. The amount of times that I flinched or winced at the detailed things her mother said, did, or even things McCurdy thought, was painful. From Sundays spent trying to get to church as fast as possible to

not being at her house, to her mother showering with her until she was 16, McCurdy's memories are jarring. Additionally, the memoir includes stories of McCurdy's experience with anorexia, binge eating and bulimia, which were left unchecked and supported.

Once her mother dies, you slowly understand the title of the memoir. No, it's not because McCurdy hates her mother and is glad she's dead. It's because the reader and McCurdy realize that she was made by her mother. An amalgamation of all her mother's body insecurities, judgements and behaviors, McCurdy could never truly heal with her alive. She has tried to heal by going to therapy to discuss her traumatizing childhood and frightening eating disorders. In reality, McCurdy loved her mother. She was her best friend for almost twenty years before she realized that best friends don't put each other on calorie restriction, best friends don't force each other to live under the other's thumb, that best friends aren't mother and daughter. It's then that I am glad that McCurdy has solace from the person that has plagued and manipulated her life from day one.

While this may not be for the faint of heart, I would recommend this for anyone who grew up with "iCarly" and "Sam & Cat." Seeing someone I've grown up with portrayed in such a real and organic light made me feel more emotions than I thought I would over someone I've never met. But, I did meet Jennette. In her memoir, readers really get to know her on what feels like a deeply personal level. Overall, "I'm Glad My Mom Died" is brutal, funny, heartbreaking, and is a ride that you can't get off

of. It's easy to understand why it is a No. 1 New York Times Bestseller. It may be the most deep and truthful memoir I've ever read, and I feel anyone who wants a truthful depiction of what it feels like to lose an abusive parent and the conflicting emotions contrived from that experience would appreciate it. But more importantly, read it if you have spent your childhood Saturdays watching who you thought was the happiest and funniest person in the world, but want to know her as the raw and human person she is.



(Amazon)

Your favorite fall flicks, ranked & reviewed

A curated list of must-watch films to get in the autumn spirit

Maria Fonvielle Staff Reporter

Regardless of record-breaking temperature highs and smoky conditions, there's no denying it, Seattle is in the midst of fall. The eager anticipation of Halloween, all things pumpkin flavored and colored leaves lining sidewalks have all marked the seasonal transition we have all been waiting on. Though the season got a slow start due to the early fall heat and smoke, cozing up under a blanket with a hot drink is still mandatory to celebrate the season. Searching for a movie to truly embody the fall spirit? Look no further. Here's a list of classic fall movies, ranked and reviewed.

Number 10. "The Nightmare Before Christmas"

Yet another Tim Burton masterpiece, "The Nightmare Before Christmas" is only placed at the bottom of this list for its direct mentions of Christmastime – Halloween needs its own time of year to be celebrated and shouldn't be rushed in anticipation for Christmas. However, this musical still includes the dark gothic aesthetics that viewers know and love, along with catchy musical numbers that viewers of all ages can enjoy. This entertaining plot follows the pumpkin king, Jack Skellington, and his plot to take over Christmastown.

Number 9. "The Corpse Bride"

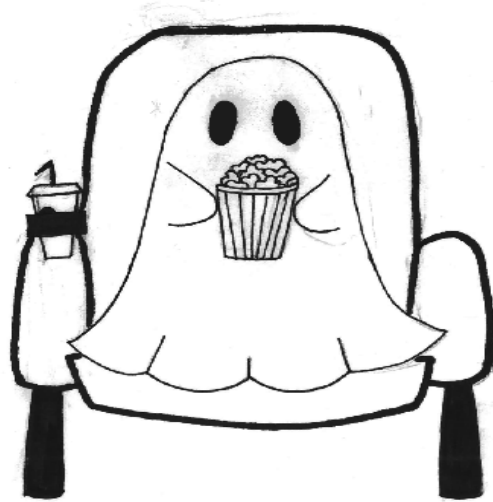
Another Tim Burton film, "The Corpse Bride" embodies all of the themes Burton is known for: Gothic style, musical sequences and a dark color palette. Though not directly affiliated with Halloween or even set in fall (placing it lower on the list), the atmosphere of this movie makes it impossible not to crave a cozy space to curl up and watch. One of those films that will leave the viewer analyzing the film well after it ends, the Corpse Bride is about a man who accidentally enters the land of the dead and meets a woman who was killed after her elopement.

Number 8. "Beetlejuice"

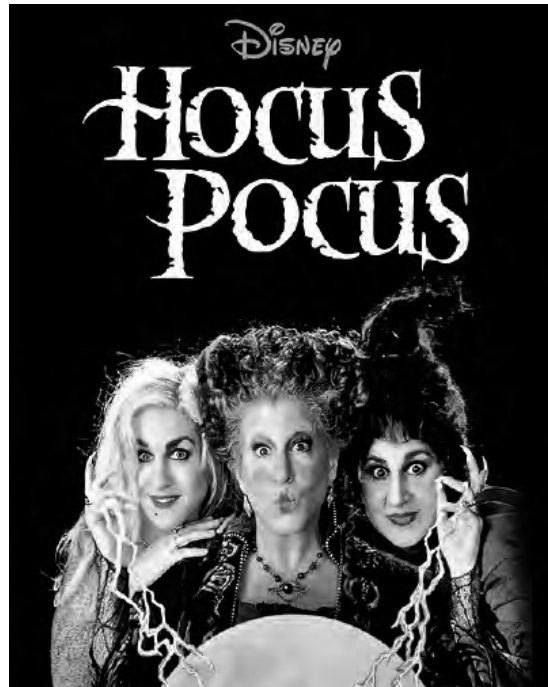
This zany and whimsical film directed by Tim Burton places the concept of death in a new light as it follows the spirits of a couple who died and are trapped in the house they lived in. The story's plot stems from the fact that they can still interact with the living. When an unbearable family moves into the seemingly vacant house, they must call Beetlejuice, a slightly unhinged spirit, to help them scare the family away. This top-notch film is placed lower on the list only because it can be confusing at times, but I would still recommend it to anyone looking for many unexpected twists and turns.

Number 7. "Halloweentown"

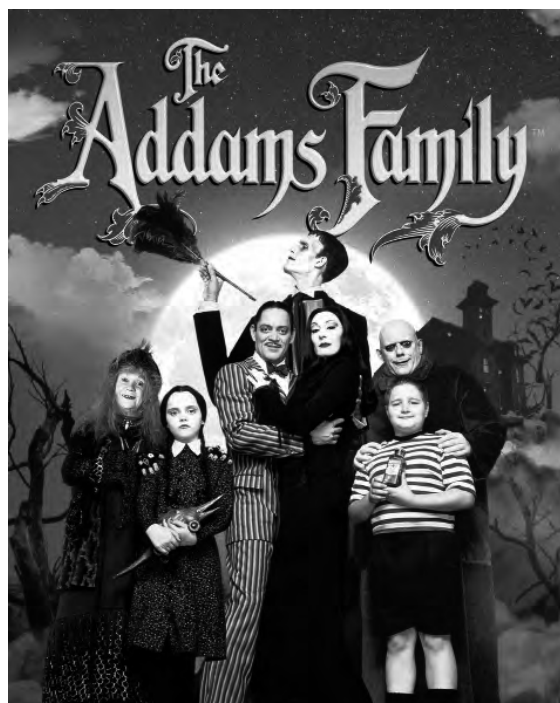
Suitable for younger viewers, this Disney movie is a lighthearted and easy watch. The story follows a woman and her children who find out they come from a family of witches that live in "Halloweentown." For a family-friendly watch, this movie is a top pick for its inclusion of various classic Halloween creatures and characters minus the scares.



(Matea Hart)



(Disney)



(Rotten Tomatoes)

Number 6. "The Witches" (1990)

Based on the children's novel from the creative mind of Roald Dahl, this movie depicts a witch living in a mundane world, reinventing the classic halloween figure of witches being seen as outcasts. In the movie, these witches despise children, to the point they want to eliminate them globally. When a young boy stumbles across a witch convention, he must remain undercover to save his life. This conceptually creative film reinvents classic Halloween themes making it a must-watch.

Number 5. "Coraline"

An eerie stop-motion movie about a girl who finds a doorway to a parallel universe can be interpreted in many ways, this movie is a staple film for its distinct visuals of an animated fall. It will leave viewers discussing different theories afterwards and offers a plot that is hair-raising in a psychological way rather than being a slasher-esque horror film.

Number 4. "Halloween" (1978)

This iconic movie is for those looking for a scare to get into the spooky Halloween spirit. The aptly named thriller is liked by so many that at least ten spin-off movies with the same antagonist have been made. If that isn't a clear indicator of a good horror movie, then what is? In it, an escaped killer targets babysitters on Halloween night, making for a bloody good scare.

Number 3. "The Addams Family"

The first movie in the Addams Family series, this film is based off of the sitcom with the same title from 1966, and older viewers can get a reimagined blast from their past. This aesthetically pleasing movie is perfect for viewers with a darker and more mature sense of humor. It follows the wealthy and sophisticated Addams family welcoming a long lost family member – or so they think.

Number 2. "It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown"

This nostalgic holiday special features the Peanuts crew. In the 25 minute episode, Linus is waiting for the elusive "Great Pumpkin" to appear on Halloween night to the dismay of his friends. The 1966 animation is a quick and easy watch in the iconic style of director Charles M. Schultz. Including a comforting and distinct jazz soundtrack, this special is truly timeless, as it's been around for over 50 years and is still widely enjoyed in 2022 by all ages.

Number 1. "Hocus Pocus"

The top spot has to go to this 1993 Halloween film. So beloved that a second movie was released this year, this chaotic comedy follows a teen who accidentally summons a trio of eccentric witches from 17th century Salem on Halloween night. Wild and entertaining, it has a little bit of everything: A musical number, talking animals and lovably quirky characters that can be enjoyed alone, with family or with friends.

Taylor Swift makes her pop comeback with 'Midnights'

With every album Taylor Swift writes, a new emotion is discovered and explored by her listeners

Josie Fitzpatrick Staff Photographer

The expectation for "Midnights" was high from the get-go, especially considering that it was Taylor Swift's tenth album. Although she's re-recorded two of her original albums, theoretically making this one her twelfth project, "Midnights" is 20 brand new, never heard before songs, along with 13 music videos released on Oct. 21.

Swift is known by her fans to leave easter eggs, generally about future events and releases, all over social media, in interviews and even in the lyrics of her songs. She posted a video a couple of days before the release of her new album showing a planner of that week with writing all over the pages. People noticed that the bottom of the page said "manifest" and it mentioned the release of "Midnights" twice, sparking some curiosity among her fandom.

As it turns out, Swift was releasing more than just 13 songs and music videos. Only three short hours after the official album release, she announced seven more songs that were added to the deluxe album, adding to the excitement.

My initial reaction when first hearing the album was that it was different from what I had imagined. I got very used to Swift repeatedly reinventing herself



(Amazon)

in the music industry through her unique styles. To my surprise, the consensus from social media essentially said that this album feels like a mix between two of her previous albums, "Reputation" and "1989."

I left the first full listen through feeling underwhelmed. It seemed like all the songs were

blurred together and it was hard to decipher what each one was about. Even still, the album had its gems; I knew immediately that "Karma" was going to be one of the most popular songs on the album, little did I know it would grow on me immensely. An interesting addition was the collaboration with indie-rock singer Lana Del Rey, who is featured in "Snow on the Beach." The song combines Swift's vocals with Del Rey's mellow sound.

However, this album does not compare to her eighth studio album "Folklore." It doesn't flow with the falling autumn leaves and it doesn't want to make me roll up in a blanket in front of the fireplace. Instead, it brings out a new character with every song. "Vigilante Shit" gives the feeling of power and strength while "Sweet Nothing" sparks tears in my eyes. From first glance, it's nothing special but with every listen comes a deeper understanding of each and every lyric.

After the initial shock and slight disappointment of the 24 hours following "Midnights," I started to notice the story behind each track and appreciate the lyrics that told it. Although the album doesn't match the dreary fall weather outside, it's definitely worth a listen.

The unexpected angle of Netflix's 'Dahmer'

The ridiculously popular new docuseries has raised some interesting points around race and sexuality

Olivia Schaer Staff Reporter

The series works to unearth questions around the American police system, the relevance of consent when sharing stories like this, and the importance of psychological examinations in the investigations of serial killer cases.

Audiences simply expected a more detailed continuation of the 2017 Hulu film, "My Friend Dahmer," and stories like it, but were surprised when the show did not glamorize or exclusively focus on the killer himself.

Although the show works backwards from Dahmer's third and final arrest and attempts to walk the audience through his thoughts and life transitions, the overarching themes are racial bias and homophobia, and how they played a primary role in the case.

This is what I found most compelling about the show once I had completed the 10th episode. Along with the incredible performance by Evan Peters, known for his continuous work in the hit series "American Horror Story," the show does a fantastic job connecting every horrific scenario to the victims and their families rather than coming back to Dahmer.

However, mistakes were still made in the production and writing, begging the question, did the series have the desired outcome?

When discussing the show with fellow viewers, many had the same thoughts. "It's far less scary than I thought it would be!" and "It's horrific but it didn't scare me, it just makes me sad."

Although the lack of overtly graphic scenes and gratuitous violence was intentional as to "not rehash

trauma" for the victims' families, the overall feeling of sympathy and sadness for Dahmer as a result is not necessarily positive.

Of course, as discussed in the show, there are always going to be individuals who fetishize the killer or respect them and their flawed minds. The takeaway from this series was not the troubles of a killer, but the trauma of the victims, their families, and the clear judicial inequity when it came to people of color reporting signs of danger and crime.

While acknowledging that most of the victims'

families inevitably had no interest in participating in the series, Director Joe Berlinger felt the story was worth sharing without full consent. Berlinger believed they had to share, to represent the racial injustice of the Dahmer cases.

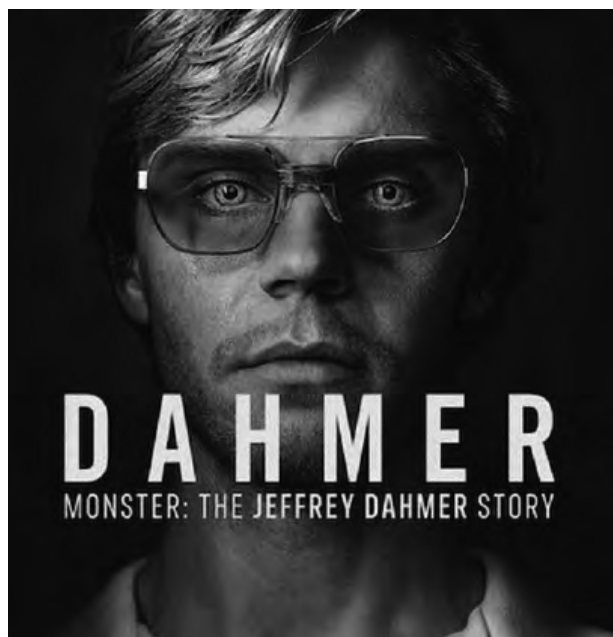
The show works hard to include narratives different from Dahmer's, despite limited access to evidence other than the Dahmer tapes and the records from Wendy Patrickus, the attorney tasked with dissecting Dahmer's confessions. Episode six, entitled "Silence", focuses on one of Dahmer's later victims, Anthony Sears.

The episode works to follow him through his life in the late 80s as a gay, deaf, Black man, and slowly shows his relationship with Dahmer.

The episode begins without sound, but sound becomes incorporated as Dahmer starts to appear in Sears' life. The series does this again in episode 7, with a woman who had one of the largest contributions to the case, Glenda Cleveland.

Towards the end of the series the concepts of God and saving one's soul become a recurring concept. Dahmer speaks with a pastor and decides to get baptized several weeks before his death.

Ultimately the series ends on a low note, discussing Glenda Cleveland's efforts to turn the site of many of Dahmer's killings into a memorial park for the victims and their families. The park was overlooked and never constructed. This ending represented the theme of neglect towards the victims, their families, and people of color who were impacted by the Dahmer case.



Promotional photo used for the Netflix documentary series "Dahmer." (Netflix)

The fall play reimagines a Greek tragedy through the lens of current events

Ballard Theater creates a modernized version of 'Burial at Thebes' to kick off the year of performances

Alexa Terry A&E Editor

On Thursday, Oct. 20, a group of dedicated performers opened our school's rendition of "Burial at Thebes," kicking off the fall season of performances. However, the show was presented with a compelling twist: A focus on current political issues within our country. Seamus Heaney's original rendition of "Burial at Thebes" could not seem further from a story of current politics, yet Director Shawn Riley manages to seamlessly merge the two storylines. This is done through creative set and costume design along with the animated acting of the play's cast.

"Burial at Thebes" follows the lead, Antigone, played by Miriam Mathan (10). Antigone buries her brother Polyneices, even though the act goes against the explicit orders of her uncle King Creon (representing the president in this adaptation), played by Roan Tierney (11), and the advice of her sister, Ismene, played by Lizzy Waller (12).

Antigone's logic behind the burial stems from a desire to bring justice to her brother by allowing him to rest peacefully after suffering a tragic death. Antigone knows going in, the act of rebellion will likely result in her demise, but she persists. When caught, she is sentenced to death by being buried alive in a cave.

In our school's rendition, the play leans into the allegorical meaning behind the story, with Antigone

representing those who have had the courage to dissent under an oppressive government, and Creon representing the government itself as the president.

The cast also includes a protester chorus, depicted as pro-choice activists who defend Antigone's right to demand justice for her brother, and police officers, to represent the mindless followers of Creon's oppressive regime. The two groups help illustrate the broader meaning of the plot's conflict.

The cast of talented actors helped to blur the line between Greek tragedy and governmental corruption. Matham uses her background in vocal performance to project her lines with confidence, making her act compelling. Intense emotions such as despair and anger were commonly felt among the characters, allowing the cast to showcase their acting chops. This can be seen when watching Eurydice, played by Elke Martin (10), fall to the floor in despair after learning about the death of Antigone. The display of emotion resonated as a viewer, eliciting an empathetic silence from the audience.

The parallel made watching the play a compelling experience. Seeing so much death and violence depicted as a modern event, forced the viewer to recognize the violent injustice that takes place in our everyday lives. Though difficult to watch at times, the depiction was a necessarily bold choice.

With the recent overturning of the supreme court case Roe v. Wade, deeming it unconstitutional for the federal government to make abortion legal nationwide, women's rights to their own bodies have been left to the hands of mainly male politicians. The decision has sparked fear and anger among millions nationwide.

From the perspective of someone living under the often corrupt American government, watching this play and seeing the heightened emotion, mainly anger, depicted by the characters in response to injustice seemed not only justified, but cathartic. When Antigone was yelling at Creon while he intentionally ignored the valid concerns she was proposing, I saw Creon as any person in power who refuses to see the perspectives of those they are supposedly protecting.

The play couldn't have come at a better time. With midterm elections rapidly approaching, being below the legal voting age can feel frustrating. With our school containing a politically minded student body, as shown through the numerous forms of activism students have engaged in in recent years, not being able to exercise our voices through voting forces us to engage in politics in a different way.

The production of "Burial at Thebes" is a prime example of our students spreading their voice through another avenue, when voting isn't an option.



Audrey Rasmuss (10), Miriam Mathan (10) and Corinne Iacobucci (10), characters from the fall play, "Burial at Thebes," depict the emotional turmoil that results when elected officials fail to protect their constituents. The play provides an avenue for high schoolers to make their voice heard when voting isn't an option. (Tom Fathi)

The complex appeal of Christian Girl Autumn

It's a lifestyle for everyone, even those who hate pumpkin spice lattes

Maisy Clunies-Ross *Opinions Editor*

As the leaves turn from green to gold, as floral dresses are replaced by cozy knitwear and icy glasses of lemonade are traded for steaming pumpkin spice lattes, it's clear the tide has turned. Hot Girl Summer is over. It's Christian Girl Autumn now.

For those unfamiliar, Christian Girl Autumn has nothing to do with Christianity, although some revere the pumpkin spice latte with near religious devotion. The term simply describes the aesthetic of a particular kind of white woman. This woman, the so-called 'Christian Girl' posts photos of her and her gal pals every year, colorful leaves falling in the background, chunky sweaters and faux leather boots in the foreground. She loves going to pumpkin patches and drinking pumpkin spice lattes. She's basic.

The Origin of Christian Girl Autumn

Christian Girl Autumn was coined three years ago, by twitter user Blizzy McQuire. They tweeted "Hot Girl Summer is coming to an end, get ready for Christian Girl Autumn," over a now infamous picture of two identically dressed brunettes with loose white tops, skinny jeans, massive scarves and perfectly curled hair. The tweet immediately blew up, other twitter users making fun of the women, sharing their perceptions of them and imagining how the women act in their daily lives. Amidst the jokes and comments remarking on the women's 'basicness,' a more sinister theme arose. Most people agreed, despite their put together and friendly exterior, these women were likely hateful. They were conservative, they looked down on anyone who didn't look like them.

After a couple days of jokes and comments, Caitlin Covington, one of the women pictured in the original post responded. "If all of Twitter is gonna make fun of my fall photos, at least pick some good ones! Super proud of these. For the record, I do like pumpkin spice lattes. Cheers!" Covington tweeted. Her tweet contained emojis and a lighthearted tone, paired with more photos of Covington in cozy clothes doing classic autumn activities. Covington was responding to being memed, playing into what people thought of her, but showing self-awareness.

Since the meme was first created, both women, Covington and her friend Emily Gemma, have responded. They don't mind people using their fall photos for memes, but they want people to know, they no longer dress like it's 2016, and most importantly, they're not the narrow minded people most of the memes made them out to be. "I'm white

and Christian but none of the tweets were accurate," Gemma said. "I laughed at all of it but...none of it's true. We don't ever want to speak to the manager!"



Despite the false dichotomy often drawn between Hot Girl Summer and Christian Girl Autumn, both exude the same ethos: embracing yourself and your joy. (Daphne Knox)

Covington shared similar sentiments. "That's not me at all," said Covington. "I'm a nice person and I love everyone and I'm accepting of everyone."

Now, instead of facing ridicule, the two, especially Covington, are beloved. Online, Covington jokes with fans, many of whom are gay men. She reposts memes that use her image. And every year, more and more people look forward to her annual fall photoshoot.

The Defense of Christian Girl Autumn

Personally, I'm impressed with both Gemma and Covington's good natured responses to the mockery. Many people, particularly celebrities, could benefit from emulating some of that grace online, instead of responding to any joke or critique by posting long and poorly worded diatribes on cancel culture. Those women, Autumn's original 'Christian girls', were put in a challenging situation, they responded well, and they have been rewarded for it.

However, I still caution people to be conscious of the way we exalt and defend the 'Christian Girls.' For instance, BuzzFeed ran an article titled "Christian Girl Autumn Meme: The Influencers Speak Out!" The article itself is well written and contains many of the quotes I've used, but the title and some of the language used makes it sound like they're breaking their silence after some terrible hardship.

While many of the critiques lobbed at them are rooted in misogyny and the desire to demean women and their interests, these women don't really need to be defended or rallied around. At the end of the day, they're well-to-do white women, the group most protected by liberals and conservatives alike. BAnd being made fun of for being basic isn't the same as facing discrimination. At least to my knowledge, no one has ever been deprived of a job because they enjoy pumpkin spice lattes.

Why We Should All Embrace Christian Girl Autumn

In spite of my misgivings around some of the defense of Christian Girl Autumn, and the limited appeal of the aesthetic, I would still recommend the Christian Girl Autumn lifestyle to anyone. To me, Christian Girl Autumn and those who partake in it represent a level of freedom and joy that cannot be achieved by the cynics and edgelords of the world. In this culture of cringe and critique, it's easy to make fun of everything. It's easy to look down on 'normies,' those who are too dumb to be bitter, who have the audacity to enjoy things in spite of how clearly embarrassing in they are. It feels safer to bundle yourself up in big words and self righteousness, to hide your embarrassing taste and guilty pleasures, to make fun of others before they could ever make fun of you.

Christian Girl Autumn feels like a rejection of this. Caitlin Covington, the most famous Christian Girl Autumn influencer knows she's a punchline. She's responded, taking it in stride, continuing to post her perfectly posed fall photos, and she's become more famous and beloved because of it. To me, that's what Christian Girl Autumn is all about. It's not about chunky sweaters, skinny jeans, pumpkin spice lattes and posing by trees. To embrace Christian Girl Autumn is simply to embrace who you are and what brings you joy, no matter how ridiculed or cringeworthy it may be.

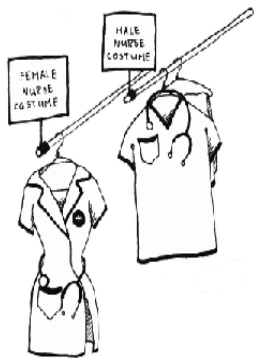


The x-axis of the graph represents the last five years, while the y-axis represents searches for the term "Christian Girl Autumn." The largest peaks are in fall 2019, when the meme originated and in fall of 2022. Despite being coined a few years ago, the term has yet to become passé or irrelevant, as it continues to be reclaimed. (Maisy Clunies-Ross)

The persistent link between sexism and Halloween costumes

The stark double standards in outfits marketed towards men and women are seriously spooky

Piper Sorensen Staff Reporter



(Daphne Knox)

In search of costume inspiration, I assume most students have walked into a Spirit Halloween at some point during this spooky season. Fluffy angel wings, red devil horns and black witch hats are just a few of the items that adorn their racks and add to every outfit. But don't worry - if you have no costume at all, there are many bundle sets you can purchase for quite a bargain. If you're looking for a complete costume, there are many career options like firefighters and soldiers, and for a more rogue option, pirates and cowboys. It all sounds great so far, so what's the problem?

The issue is the painfully obvious divide between male and female costumes. Male-advertised



costumes include a male model wearing an accurate depiction of a job uniform with an accurate name. Female-advertised costumes aren't so lucky. Each one of them is oversexualized in comparison, with names that all have to do with being pretty or sexy.

Some real examples are as follows: "Adult Army Costume" (modeled by man) becomes "Cadet Cutie" (modeled by woman), "Adult Pirate Costume" becomes "Buccaneer Beauty," and perhaps worst of all, a "Flamin' Hot Cheetos" costume that features an oversized bag on the male model, but a skintight dress on the female model. I know. It's literally Cheetos. I don't understand it either.

Of course, it's not bad to want to wear a short skirt or a tight shirt. Anything that makes someone feel confident and happy is a good costume to choose. The problem lies in the disparity between gendered costumes.

Oversexualized female costumes have real-world

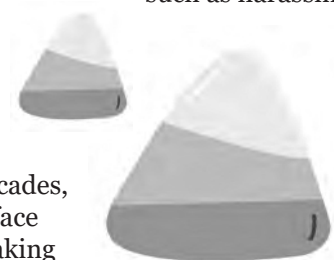
Why do men get costumes that accurately demonstrate a career, but that's not even an option for women?

effects. Some still think women aren't cut out for work like firefighting or being a soldier, and will staunchly believe women in those careers are weaker and unsuited for the job. Even the word "fireman" has to be consciously changed to "firefighter," and saying "fire woman" would be ridiculed for being too woke or feminist.

Though no longer relevant, even female pirates had to dress up as men, and if anyone remembers "Mulan," female soldiers haven't had it easy either. Although women are now allowed to serve, they still face many issues such as harassment and sexist

comments on their capabilities. Many careers weren't available to women until the last few decades, and even now they face many obstacles breaking the glass ceiling.

If we're going to go down the oversexualized costume route, I believe they should at least be equal. Until I see male costumes marketed as "Sailor Sweetie" or "Flaming Hot Fireman," the differences between these outfits will continue to be deliberate and nothing short of sexist.



ELA teacher Kristina Kattel gives the slip to game day slips

Kristina Kattel Guest Contributor

It seems a small thing to some - a quick signature, a one-minute interruption. I have been quiet quitting game day slips for six years, and I've reached my limit. Here are three reasons why I am refusing to sign the slip:

1. We have computers.

I take attendance on my computer every day. And what's great about a computer is that it can be programmed. Type in the athletes, make a cute list, pull the data, and email the list to a coach. Which is exactly what they do across the lake in Bellevue, and up the road in Edmonds. The attendance office makes group settings for each athletic group, the attendance is pulled, and the list is sent to the coach via email. The coach simply opens the email on their phone to check the list.

Students should not be put into the position of awkwardly asking teachers for their initials on a tiny slip of paper upwards of 50 times a day while teachers are trying to pee or have a snack.

We have the systems in place to make this process much easier for all. Inertia is not an excuse.

2. I can read.

The game day slip clearly states: "If you do not feel comfortable signing this, please don't." Great! Thank you for asking. I do actually feel uncomfortable trying to locate a pen and dash off my initials after 50 minutes of teaching. Nothing annoys a Language Arts teacher more than obfuscation. If I don't need to sign it, then ... what are we all doing? Either it's required or it's not. (Also, has anyone else noticed that they still say Principal Wynkoop?)

3. It exposes what schools value.

Last I checked, students who are performing in the school play, or who are singing for the school choir, do not need a game day slip. So why must a student attend school for a sports match but not for an artistic performance?

It is a common misconception that our state makes such rules, however, according to the WIAA 2022-2023 handbook, "The WIAA does not have a rule on attendance the day of a contest." So why does our district care so much about attendance for sports, and yet, students can miss a month of school and still pass a class?

Game day slips speak to our priorities - and every time I sign them, I am complicit.

Like many issues within SPS, students and

teachers are the victims of a Titanic-sized district, which is chronically sideswiping icebergs. Hyperbole? Possibly. Death by a thousand cuts for teachers? Literally and metaphorically, yep.

This is one issue that is easily resolved. Anyone got a giant pair of scissors to cut through this red tape?



(Daphne Knox)



(Daphne Knox)

College Board: our newest capitalist political institution

Why erasing history doesn't actually make it go away

Sadie Clark News Editor

I've taken many an AP in my day. I've paid for SATs, score reports and tutoring services. I've invested hundreds of hours into studying and taking their little tests. I've fully subscribed since the moment it was made available to me.

So as their biggest, least critical, most naïve groupie, I was genuinely surprised by the latest move the College Board has attempted to quietly make. On this year's AP U.S. Government and Politics exam, we can expect zero questions on *Roe v. Wade* (1973).

Allow me to recap *Roe*, the most defining Supreme Court case of the feminist movement. Jane Roe (a pseudonym to protect her identity) sued Henry Wade, district attorney of Dallas County, Texas, challenging the illegality of abortion. *Roe* won based on her constitutional right to privacy, defended by the First, Fourth, Fifth, Ninth and 14th Amendments.

The *Roe* decision was revolutionary, iconic and a symbol of hope. Not only was it a major step towards equality, but it also brought to light the resounding support for abortion rights. *Roe* won 7-2 on a court of nine men.

Since that wonderful year for women (albeit of the white, upper/middle class variety), our progressively polarized government has slowly, almost imperceptibly turned their backs on women.

This came to a head with *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* (2022). Just this past June, the Supreme Court overturned *Roe* using *Dobbs*. It was heartbreaking for women around the country, and it was terrifying for those who lived in anti-choice states. States immediately moved to make laws either in favor of or against abortion rights. For many of my peers, the *Dobbs* decision geographically narrowed their college lists to places where they knew their rights would be defended.

In September, I learned that *Roe v. Wade* will no longer be in the required materials for the AP U.S. Government and Politics exam. Because it was a precedent-setting case, meaning it set guidelines for courts of all levels, it was previously valued heavily on the exam. This year, the College Board has responded to the confusion and controversy around *Roe* by simply sticking its head into the sand.

This is the beginning of the erasure of *Roe* and of abortion rights in America. What was previously held as one of the 15 foundational Supreme Court cases in American Government is no longer required material.

The College Board is (ironically) a non-profit. This is a massive joke. The college board has a net worth of over a billion dollars. They make a point to force fees upon students at every turn; an SAT costs \$55, an AP test costs \$107 at Ballard High School and it costs \$12 to send SAT scores and \$15 to send AP scores (per college). In 2019, CEO David Coleman made 1.67 million dollars. There's some serious money circulating within the corporation, all under the guise of altruistic, educational do-gooding.

The College Board has monopolized the fate of young people across the country, placing their metrics (standardized tests and AP courses) above all else on a student's application. It's THE system set up to profit off of our future. What they choose affects the education and lives of millions.

So, yet again, capitalism has reared its ugly head against human rights, this time in what we teach our youth. Yet again, corporations are left to dictate the rules of our society. And yet again, I will learn to be wary of the systems we unconsciously give our trust.

Should you take the SAT?

Schools go test optional; students wonder if it's worth it

Evan Sadler Staff Reporter

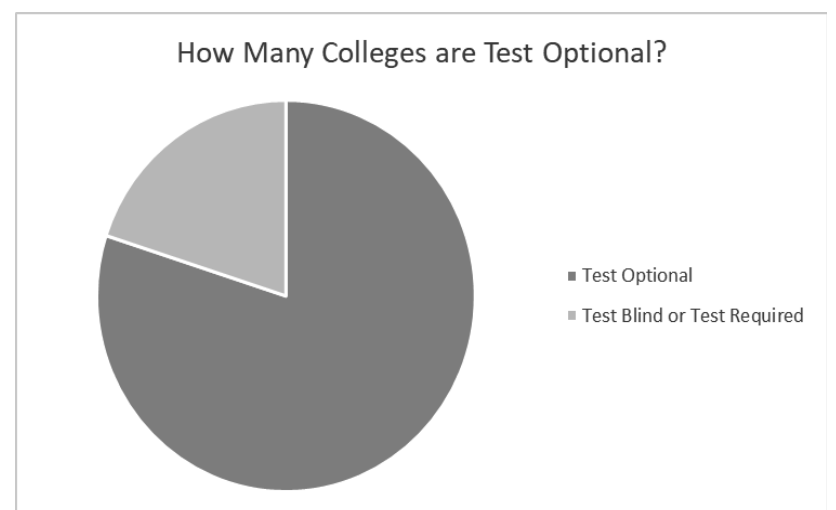
More than two-thirds of colleges in the U.S., including highly selective institutions like the Ivy League, Stanford, Northwestern, Johns Hopkins, University of California Berkeley and Boston University, have announced that they will remain test optional through the high school class of 2024. Does this mean that the need for a 1500 is eradicated? Not exactly.

While the tests have become optional, a strong test score would do nothing but benefit yourself. As a student, you're called upon to perform strongly in your academics at school, get involved in extracurricular activities, volunteer in local communities, display yourself within your college essay, build a resume with accolades and have solid relationships with teachers who can write recommendations, all within four years of high school.

Coupling these stressors with a now optional three hour long test, which requires a multitude of weeks to prepare for, seems like a completely useless prospect. However, when you take into consideration what you are potentially giving up in terms of competing with your peers, taking the SAT or ACT seems like the obvious choice. When it comes to testing, colleges fall into one of three categories. They either require an exam in order to apply, are test optional, which means test scores will be considered if submitted, or are test blind which means tests aren't reviewed.

If you choose to add schools you're excited about to your college list which require testing late in your highschool career, for example, in the first semester of your senior year, the chances of you acquiring a quality score will have obviously fallen. Having to tackle an unforeseen SAT in a shortened time frame can significantly increase one's stress and make the college admissions process significantly more overwhelming than it needs to be.

To reduce stress in senior year, college-bound students should have test scores they're proud of by the end of their junior year. This helps set a college list with realistic expectations and minimize stress and uncertainty during the college admissions process to come. Overall, one should take a standardized test dependent on where and what they want to do in college. If you intend to compete for admission in a highly competitive institution, you should most definitely consider taking a standardized test. The score you get will not have to be submitted, but it can always improve your chances of admission.



About 80% of colleges in America have gone test optional through 2023, with an estimated 75% becoming test optional for graduates of 2024. Top schools which are requiring standardized tests include Georgetown, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and Colgate, contrary to highly praised programs like that of the Ivy League, Stanford or Northwestern. (Evan Sadler)

BEAVESDROPPING

HEARD IN THE HALLWAYS: WANT IT TO BE FUNNIER? SAY FUNNIER THINGS

“The Jonas Brothers invented virginity”

“That is not Santa. That is a furry.”

“I would literally sit and listen to him indoctrinate me just so I could get a piece of cheese pizza”

“Little ladies everywhere are frothing at the mouth for tote bags”

“Stay outta your mom’s room tonight. I’ll be in there.”

“Even Taylor Swift is funnier than the beavesdroppings”

“Are you ready to start gleeking out?”

“My Grandma loves to vape and air out family drama”

Satire: Queen Elizabeth’s death spurs ‘woke’ decision in selection of new monarch

In the wake of Queen Elizabeth’s death, the new-wave revolution of pronouns and cancel culture has swept over the British Isles. Confronted with an ever changing world, the British government has chosen a man to be the new queen!

Arden Rathkopf Staff Photographer

For decades, the good people of the United Kingdom have pondered at the thought of who would replace the late Elizabeth, who ruled over the Commonwealth from the time of her coronation at the age of 25 until her death in 2022, reigning as queen for a record breaking four centuries.

Now commemorated as the longest ruling monarch, Elizabeth outlived the Ming Dynasty, Moghul Empire and the Renaissance, as well as figures such as Confucius, Leonardo da Vinci and William Shakespeare.

Elizabeth’s rule was not easy, as she was burdened to rule through the American Revolution, a moderate shortcoming in her divine power, both world wars and several golden carriage rides through the bumpy cobbles of London’s streets.

In her free time, Elizabeth enjoyed such pastimes as drinking tea, avoiding interaction with people and watching servants raise her weird dogs.

Now, after the Queen’s death on Sept. 8, the people of the Commonwealth either rejoice or, in the case of many, repulse at the news of their new queen, which – according to our reports – was decided in an emergency meeting of the House of

Lords called shortly after Her Majesty’s passing.

After a private meeting that lasted until the early hours of Sept. 10, men in funny looking, tall hats emerged from that building attached to Big Ben to announce that, in the spirit of inclusion and gender neutrality, a man would be crowned Queen of England!

Charles, who is expected to reign for at least 256 years, has apparently no connection to the late Queen Elizabeth, and was seemingly the best choice to rise to the duties of a monarch. A surprising decision given that, if Parliament had done any kind of background check whatsoever, they would have found a very troubling relationship history that ended in disaster.

The announcement of Charles as the new queen raises many questions. Has wokeness gone too far? Should England keep the tradition of crowning a female queen? Plus, why would they choose Charles to be queen, when they could have easily selected someone like Elton John! I mean the man is already a queen in his own right! Or even Harry Styles! Or Matt Smith! The list goes on and on. Even that redhead British guy who did an interview with Oprah Winfrey on how he moved to California to

escape his racist family back in the UK? Even he would make a better queen than Charles and his short, stubby little sausage fingers.

Despite criticism, Queen Charles is here to stay for the next few hundred years, as is commemorated in the new British currency, doing away with the French inscription “Dieu et mon droit,” or “God and my Right,” and opting for a more topical, “Slay queen!” The currency will portray Queen Charles in drag, as it is how he usually makes public appearances.

In any case, Queen Charles is here, he’s not queer, he’s got big ears and he’s making his premiere as England’s first male queen. A monument to a changing world.



(Daphne Knox)