

School Anxiety & Academic Stress

Get the Solutions, and Fix the Problem

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Senior Abigail Brewer, Cavalette, dances the “Bob and Sue” at a recent football game. The Cavalettes had the opportunity to dance with their dads or a relative.

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Shriya Rajagopalan
Social Media manager

New Changes, New School Year



Senior Anay Pramoedh scans his ID on the new eHall pass system. IDs were to be worn visibly in the front at all times.
Photo by: Mridhini Koppiseti

Coming into the new school year, students have started to notice the new changes and a shift from the previous norm. For example, the dress code has been more tightly monitored throughout the school. Students have to wear shirts that cover their midriff. 12th grade assistant principal Andrew Rizzo is aware of some discontent but hopes these adjustments will move OTHS to a more positive future.

“We are definitely enforcing and emphasizing safety measures,” said Rizzo. “Most kids have noticed IDs and e-hall passes. Those are probably the biggest changes as far as the day-to-day policies go that are affecting students every period of every day.”

Rizzo said it would help build accountability in the students for where they are going. Take IDs for example, students are required to constantly wear their IDs visibly in front. It helps faculty members identify them by their name and grade level when necessary, and also to verify they belong on campus. Students riding buses are now required to have their IDs scanned before getting on. This helps in ensuring safety and precaution for

students.

“I hope the seniors see this as a measure when you have any large organization with a lot of moving parts such as a school and I think most of those kids are going to other organizations or businesses as they move on from here. When there are these big organizations with a lot of moving parts, there are other types of protocols that are as important to running the organization as the actual learning in a classroom.

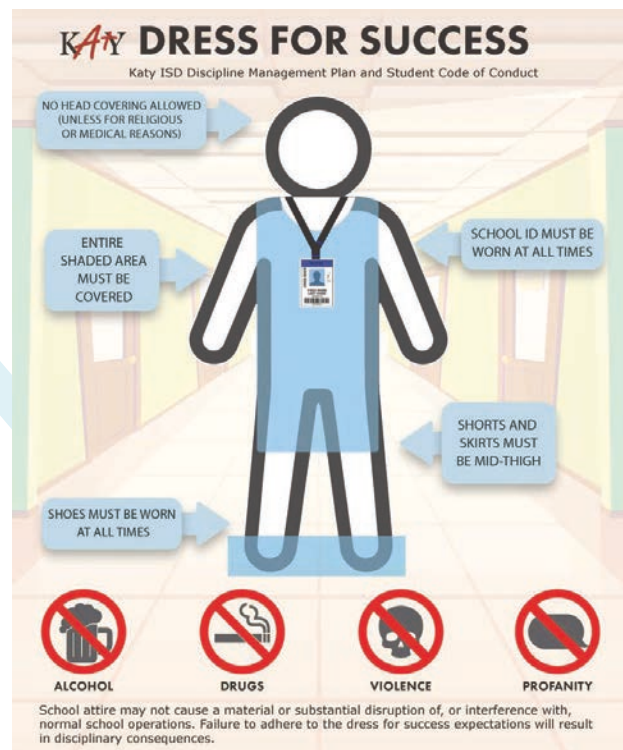
One of the main new changes this year is the e-hall pass. Before going to the bathroom, students now have to scan their IDs under a scanner which allows or denies them access. Students must also scan themselves back in to end the pass. This precaution is taken for safety measures to make sure students can responsibly go to the bathroom. Dennis O’Callaghan, counselor for last names MOS - RAU, hopes it will help them get used to changes in order to minimize the shock when students get a job that requires ID and dress code.

“I think the changes will have a positive impact in the sense that it’s a safety issue,” said O’Callaghan. “The dress code is

a good idea for when students become adults because there will be dress codes in the workplace as well.”

With the recent e-hall pass change, there has also been a new adjustment to the dress code. Students are required to follow the dress code that is being enforced.

This includes rules such as wearing clothing that covers shoulders to mid thigh. Additional information can be found on flyers posted around campus.





With looks of determination, juniors Neha Gadde and Hridha Mathuria carry the donations they have collected to the food bank truck. Volunteering has always been a passion for the pair.

The sun glares down brightly as the scorching heat leaves bystanders sweating profusely. The school parking lot is vacant, except for the two girls standing by the curb, a table piled with bags upon bags of clothes. Although it may seem daunting standing in the torturous heat, co-founders of the 12K Project and juniors, **Hridha Mathuria** and **Neha Gadde** are grinning widely as they sort through the mounds of fabrics, counting the donations they have collected today. All these donations go towards their charity project known as the 12K project in order to reach their annual goal of 12,000 donations of clothes, canned goods and hygiene products that are delivered to families and people in systemic poverty.

“With this project, we want to make a positive difference and inspire other high schoolers to take charge and work towards a cause that they believe in,” said Mathuria. “We want to be able to put food on the table for families that are suffering with financial instability.”

Originally a project created for the Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA) competition during their freshman year, Gadde and Mathuria soon realized they wanted to transform their idea into something greater. They wanted to make a difference outside of school, and give back to a broader community, primarily in the Houston area.

Since then, they have reached over 6,000 families in two years, spread their project to India and have achieved their goal twice, but the road to achieving these milestones was one of adversity.

“One of the biggest challenges has definitely been getting donations,” said Mathuria. “12,000 donations is extremely hard and trying to help big corporations believe in your project and donate is a struggle. There have been so many months where we received absolutely nothing and we had to go above and beyond to reach our goal at the end of the year.”

Despite the success the pair have amassed the past 2 years, reaching their objective and growing past that was grueling at the beginning. Appealing potential sponsors and trying to get them to pitch in on their cause felt arduous, since almost everyone was hesitant to support a developing nonprofit. Eventually, with the launch of their first canned goods drive, they began to make large strides in their progress and gained the support of businesses in the community such as Costco and Kroger. Now, the duo has branched out from local drives, and have spread their organization globally.

“The most memorable experience was being able to expand this project and take it to India,” said Mathuria. “It was one of the most surreal experiences to be able to impact the lives of people in a different country. That was one of the few moments when I

lending a **HELPING HAND**



Baneen Rizvi
Editor-in-Chief

MATHURIA AND GADDE START CHARITY PROJECT



Photos contributed by Mathuria

realized the magnitude of the 12K Project.”

For Mathuria, seeing the simple project her and Gadde came up with as freshmen, turn into a blooming nonprofit was life-changing. The motivation to reach such levels of growth came from the results of each step they took to achieve their goals. Seeing the difference they had made to one family's life led Mathuria to wonder how much more impact they could bring to all the other people struggling in poverty around their world, especially after the impact from Mathuria's first nonprofit, Tennis for Texas, a tennis tournament she started with a group of friends to raise money for children at Texas Children's Hospital. With successful turnout that resulted in over \$2,000 in donations, Mathuria wanted to bring this same progress to the 12K Project as well.

“For me personally, bringing 12K to the position that Tennis For Texas is currently at was the driving force behind growing the project because it was the first time I truly saw the difference that projects like this could make,” Mathuria said. “Seeing

how Tennis for Texas changed patients' lives at Texas Children's, I wanted to see that same change with the 12K Project.”

With the project expanding rapidly, Mathuria hopes to continue to grow the 12K Project with Gadde after seeing the results of their actions in various communities. Mathuria hopes that her and Gadde's journey as leaders of the 12K Project will inspire other students to pursue opportunities in starting their own passion projects.

She advises other students interested in starting businesses and nonprofits to stay persistent in their goals, and not be hindered by any adversities that come in the way. For her, success comes from hard work and she hopes other students will keep that in mind with their own passion project journeys.

“My biggest advice would be to never forget the reason you started, I know it sounds cliché but there are so many things that can set you back and it is super discouraging to continue but reminding yourself of the difference you can make is essential,” Mathuria said.

Every 4 years

Leap year birthdays at Tompkins



Elia Naz
Staff Writer

February 29th: She is a little shy and appears every four years. Others might not acknowledge her presence as necessary. Some might think it is another random day; others use her as a reminder that this year is the presidential election. To most, the day might not matter. Some might start thinking how useless the day is. But for the few people on this earth, it is a day of pride and a day to finally recognize their uniqueness because, after four years, they can celebrate their birthdays on the proper day instead of changing the day.

Santiago Diaz, a sophomore at Tompkins high school is one of the three people at Tompkins High School who has a rare birthday on Feb. 29th.

"I have my birthday sometimes on the 28th because it's the same month and then another one March 1st most of the time. I just celebrate it regularly," said Diaz

Diaz takes full advantage of his leap-year birthday. He set two different days to satisfy both his friends and family. Diaz celebrates two birthdays, one on the 28th with his

family because family comes first, and then he celebrates one with his friends on March 1. And when his birthday falls on the 29th, he reunites his family and friends for one special gathering to celebrate and maybe even brag a little about his uncommon birthday because when life gives you a leap-year birthday, you get four years' worth of cake to celebrate it with.

Kyle Humphreys, baseball coach and geometry teacher, motto is family first. Humphreys, puts his two little twin boys and beautiful wife first over anything, including his special birthday.

"Well, my two boys' birthdays are on March 3, so I celebrate it with them or on the weekend closest to the 28th of February," said Humphreys.

When Humphrey was little, his parents threw him a birthday on the 28th. He celebrated like a typical birthday with family, friends, and, most importantly, cake. But when he was little, he never understood the rarity and speciality of his birthday. In elementary school, the teacher would give him a sticker to place on the calendar to

mark their birthdays. It always confused him how when he saw the February calendar, there was never Feb. 29. He was a confused little kid, not realizing he was one of the 205,000 people in the United States who had a leap-year birthday. But as he grew older, he realized the uniqueness of his birthday and how he loved to share his birthday with the most essential part of his life: his two twin boys. Both boys were born during a leap year, but not on the 29th. They were born on March 3. It disappointed him a little because celebrating his birthday with his sons was exciting. So Humphreys just celebrates his birthday with his two boys on the closest weekend to Feb. 29 or March 3, because having a rare birthday means celebrating with the people who are unique to you.

Most families take big, long, memorable summer or winter break vacations. Students usually hear their friends discussing going out of state to see old relatives. Some friends might even fly to a different continent to enjoy scenic views. But some, like freshman Tristan Aiello's fami-

lies, take advantage of a leap year to vacation and celebrate a special birthday.

"Usually, when it's a leap year birthday, my family goes to Miami," said Aiello.

There is always that one birthday that is so big, festive and unforgettable. But because Aiello's birthday rolls around every four years, it is a sin not to celebrate to its fullest. Aiello's family celebrates his birthday loudly and proudly by taking a family vacation to enjoy the roaring sea and soft sand in Miami. When it is not a leap year, Aiello celebrates his birthday with his amazing friends and family on the 28th of February.

Three in 3074 people in the school have a leap year birthday at Tompkins High School. It does not take a mathematician to figure out that considerable difference. Sometimes, it can be challenging for these people to feel special on their birthday, but it is essential to make them feel special when and when it is not a leap year.

Photos by
Alex Haseltine



Tristan Aiello



Santiago Diaz



Kyle Humphrey



Sydney Jackson
Nestline Editor

Senior year comes with a plethora of new experiences and hardships that makes it both a fun and scary roller coaster of unexpectancy. With college application season creeping up around the corner for high school seniors, they have taken focus to prepare for the next season of their lives.

Planning to attend HCC, Houston Community College, and not a four-year university for her first two years of college has taken some stress from senior Victoria Rudie's plate, although, her schedule is still jam-packed. At home, she works a part-time job for her mom, deep cleaning and organizing their entire house, which takes up the majority of her free time. Balancing both her school work and her at-home job has been an adjustment for her.

"And so, my day is fully packed, I really do not have like too much free time," said Rudie. "So I try to go to bed early, I try to go to bed by 9:30, but usually it's more like 11:30."

Rudie is using her last year in high school to prepare for her future ambitions, which for her is to become a teacher. Each of her classes this year aligns with her passion, teaching. Her passion to become a teacher started from when she herself was in elementary school. Throughout her life, Rudie has had an unexplainable pull towards helping her fellow students become better students. In addition, the teachers in her life have had a positive effect on how she views education, with many of them being encouraging to her life.

"The teachers just really inspired me because they were so passionate about what they were teaching, and I loved how caring they were, and how smart they all seemed. And I don't know, I just feel like I would really enjoy it," said Rudie.

Wanting to become either an art teacher or an elementary school teacher, taking Painting 1 is important to her, as it helps further her future career.

Currently she is working on her art portfolio that shows off her unique creativity that she hopes to continue to pursue in teaching.

"I was trying hard to make the outside look good, because that is what people see, they don't see what's inside of it," said Rudie.

Along with her Painting 1 classes, Rudie has a two period class called Practicum Education, which doubles as both a class and an internship. Working with elementary schools nearby, she is able to practice her teaching skills, being the teacher's aid for two days out of the week, planning lessons and providing help for students.

"And that is my main thing, I'm trying to become a teacher, so that is what I prioritize," said Rudie. "I make sure I have my lessons prepared and everything and my grades are written down."

Similarly, to Rudie, senior Patricio Perezpueblo, is planning for his future. Coming from Mexico his sophomore year, Perezpueblo has had some difficulty with adjusting to his life in the United States, with many cultural conflicts and at first, academic setbacks.

"At first, I did not adjust really quickly," said Perezpueblo. "I still have some trouble with my English, but I am better than how I was before."

Swimming has helped him to adjust to American culture more efficiently and smoother, with many of his teammates helping him out, not only with just simple swimming strokes, but also helping him integrate into the school environment.

"When I started with swimming, it helped me get some friends," said Perezpueblo. "From that I was able to get along with everyone, and then I started making friends in more classes."

Because of this help, Perezpueblo has been able to focus on his hopeful pursuits to become a mechanical engineer. Applying to both in-state and out-of-state schools, Perezpueblo hopes that regardless of the outcome he enjoys his major.

"I've always connected with engineering, so I thought about pursuing it in college," said Perezpueblo.

Senior Victoria Rudie works on her class notes for her teaching internship. This is Rudie's favorite class this year.

Photo by: Kyndahl Wiseman



Rudie studies her class notes intently. Rudie made sure to stay focused with her schoolwork this year.

Photo by: Kyndahl Wiseman



Julia Busby
Co-Managing Editor

Stun the Crowd with *Dancing*



Right in step with each other, the Cavalettes are excelling at the halftime performance. They always manage to stay in sync during their routines.

Photo by Siena Gelotti

The football stadium is lit up with floodlights as cheers are heard from the crowd. It is now half-time, and the Crimson Cavalettes strut out in their gorgeous red costumes as they prepare to dazzle the crowd with their dancing skills. Now in their 11th year, the Cavalettes have had multitudes of training from their two coaches: director Rosey Fortenberry and assistant director Shaena Rinehart. They have trained the girls hard in order to do their best at places ranging from pep rallies to community events. The other dance team, Crimson Pride, which is the junior team that is the stepping stones to get into varsity, have also been working hard to leave watchers amazed. One Crimson Pride member, freshman Brooke Busby, is pleased with her hard work in Crimson Pride.

"We work really hard," said Busby. "It makes me so proud to be a dancer to where I would consider doing it as a career in the future."

The tremendous diligence that these dancers have showcased

certainly paid off, for this year, the Cavalettes are heading out to UDA nationals, a national dance team championship. The competition will be held in Florida on Feb. 2-4, and it will be centered in Walt Disney World. Because of their competitive nature, these girls will certainly make every effort to get to the top and win the competition. Not only that, but due to their impeccable synchronization, charisma and peppy attitude, they are sure to blow the judges' minds away. The Cavalettes managed to qualify for nationals by training at a summer dance camp at Tompkins. They had to do well enough in their routines in order to claim a bid, specifically two blue ribbons, that would allow them to go to nationals.

"The Cavalettes learned two dances in two days during the camp, which was essentially a 48 hour tournament," said Rinehart. "They had to perform it on the final day, and they did it wonderfully. They were able to receive the bid and qualify for nationals."

Since the Cavalettes now

have the opportunity to go to such a prestigious competition, they have to prepare as soon as possible. They have to master their performance in every shape and form, and also have to be as eye-catching as possible for the judges. Not only will this competition put pressure on the girls, but also on the directors, who have to choreograph and coach the dancers to do their best. During preparations, the girls will also have to work on their regularly scheduled dancers as well, which highlights why in order to be a Cavallette, one has to have good time managing skills and extreme dedication.

"They will not start learning choreography until late October," said Fortenberry. "But once they do, they will then begin to start preparing. They will only be taking two dances to UDA, which consist of a jazz routine and a game-day routine. While preparing, the girls also have to work on other dances, so they certainly have their hands full."

The Crimson Pride team may not go to any competitions this

year, but that does not mean they shine any less bright. During football games, they dance with unique props, such as flags or red skirts, to enhance their performances. They also dance along with the marching band's loud drums and trumpets, and are able to almost represent what each piece the band is playing. As the sister team to the Cavalettes, it is safe to say that the Crimson Pride members are immensely proud of their varsity teams, and look forward to auditioning to be a part of the varsity team themselves sometime in the future.

"My dream is definitely to be a Cavallette," said Busby. "It is so cool that they are going to Disney World to participate in a tournament, and I hope that someday I will get to do the same thing."

Coming into dance class every day, working in the scorching heat outside, all while managing to wear a smile and look good for anyone to see, is not an easy feat. Dance may not be considered a sport to some, but the amount of athleticism and strain on the body that the dancers go through could certainly be compared to someone in football, soccer or basketball. But while athleticism may be one requirement that the directors look for in future dancers, there are also other qualities that they are looking out for. They are even hoping for something else that they are sure will make their dancers become even better to where they could make it to finals in the competition.

"The biggest focus we have for this year would be building confidence," said Rinehart. "Knowing that they are talented and capable enough in their abilities to be able to achieve their goals is something that will hopefully lead them to semi-finals, and hopefully even finals."

Through difficult practices, intimidating competitions, and maintaining synchronization with teammates, being on the Tompkins High School dance team can be considered quite the challenge. But these dancers are not like any other, for their passion, strength and motivation is what keeps them going and pushes them to remain spectacular.

Causes and Awareness Among High School Students



Baneen Rizvi
Editor in Chief

In recent years, many teenagers have raised concern about the growing issue of school-related anxiety that is emerging among their peers. Unease about mental health has cut across gender, racial and socioeconomic lines with teens from across all demographic groups, saying it has been a significant issue among their communities. As schools reopen around the nation, many students find themselves slowly sinking back into a whirlpool of anxiety and depression. It is crucial to know and understand the role and extent that mental health has on students in order to prevent worst case scenarios.

“Unfortunately, I think the community is very aware of the current rising anxiety and stress issue, as so many students are affected,” said counselor Rebecca Naseman. “One issue I see often is not lack of awareness per se, but lack of acceptance. Especially in our Tompkins community, there is such a big push to achieve big and reach high that many students and parents try to look around the stress and anxiety rather than address it. I believe helping our community understand the importance of coping with school related stress and anxiety, as well as helping understand potential risks associated with looking past anxiety and school related stress, will help raise awareness and recognition. Katy ISD is actually pretty good about offering parent courses and informational sessions.”

According to the Pew Research Center, a multitude of factors play a role in the mental health struggles students face. These include pressures to get good grades, pressures to look good, pressures to fit in socially, fear of ostracization from peers and pressures to be involved in extracurricular activities and school sports. These factors seemed to correlate with post-grad goals students have. For example, those interested in attending a 4-year college tend to be more likely to struggle with the burden of doing well academically in school.

“Some common issues we see are students trying to push through their stress rather than address it,” said Naseman. “It can be a scary occurrence for students and parents when bottled up stress and anxiety bubble to the surface. We also see students who are constantly anxious and stressed with no idea how to calm themselves and move forward. At Tompkins especially, we see students taking extremely heavy course loads due to the level of academic competition that can cause stress.”

As Tompkins students slowly progress their way back into a learning mindset and a set routine, many students have already found themselves being tangled into a complicated web of pressure to do above and beyond in every aspect of life; from academics to extracurriculars, to making time for a social life and taking care of oneself. For

many students, attending school is horribly daunting for primarily this reason: the incessant pressure to keep working and working with no foreseeable end. Junior Aliza Rizvi feels that this system of working things is unfair, and a direct contributor to her anxiety in school.

“The biggest cause of my school-related anxiety is probably the fact that I either did not study enough or that I am not pushing myself in the ways I should be to reach my future goal,” said Rizvi. “The truth is, it is impossible to do awesome on every task you are handed to in school and for me I immediately panic when I cannot seem to remember one topic I covered a few hours ago. On the weekends, I often find myself stuck in positions I never knew I would be in. On one hand it is preparing for the SAT, learning how to drive and studying, but then it is also spending time with your family. It is so hard to balance everything without letting yourself down.”

Rizvi finds it harder to adjust into a routine with a heavy course load, and also having to make time for other commitments in her life. She believes having such little time to effectively divide it between all her classes as well as out-of-school activities has been challenging to do. In addition to this, being a junior has made it even more grueling than before now that she also has to take the SAT this year for college applications as well as focus on taking

more advanced classes.

“I definitely feel that junior year is the most stressful out of all of high school,” said Rizvi. “For once in your life, you cannot give up so easily, you must make multiple attempts to access your true potential. With 11th grade comes its many expectations, such as becoming an academically oriented student with an excellent transcript. I feel that such expectations seem easy but really are nearly unachievable as it is all still new to you. The certain goals set by our curriculum, teachers, parents and even peers feel as if you could never accomplish all of them in time.”

Rizvi believes that the standards students are held at are unacceptable, especially those that students hold for themselves. Rizvi advises underclassmen to put themselves first rather than focusing on constantly trying to change socially or academically. Instead of trying to fit in the mold of standards and normalities others have shaped, students should focus on keeping a balance between self-love and maintaining hardwork and dedication where it is necessary. She hopes to see the education system change by school boards reviewing their academic policies and relaxing their constraints on students when it comes to work and stress.

“I feel like we do not have enough awareness for anxiety and stress sourcing directly from schools. I can speak on behalf of many students when I say that school has excessively burdened us with the amount of workload we get even on our days off,” Rizvi said. “What happened to creating memories with friends or experiencing life before age got the best of us? I feel that school boards all across America should reverse their agenda to pressurize students and instead work on decreasing the amount of mentally and physically destroyed students caving into a life full of regrets. We as students need to speak up in the best manner possible and address the issues we constantly face due to papers that will never be seen again in two years.”

Causes of School Anxiety

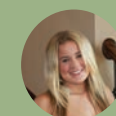
Peer Pressure
The process by which members of the same social group influence members to do something they are resistant to do. Students give in, in hopes of not being ostracized by others.

Academic Stress
Students typically face academic stress from class coursework, time management for each subject and post graduation plans, most commonly, college.

Modern Day Issues
Modern day issues such as gun violence in schools have increased anxiety in students. Students have struggled to develop mentally post-quarantine, and many feel pressure to fit in on platforms like Tiktok and Instagram.

Sources: Verywell Mind, Pew Research Center and TIME Magazine

Management and Coping Processes From School Stress



Hannah Antonini
Staff Writer



Source: Georgetown Behavioral Health Institute

Anxiety and stress are factors that play on the tendrils of many young teen minds, factors that affect many students daily. With academic stress flowing from the many pressures of parents, sports, clubs, commitments, or simply the desire for perfection, academic pressure continues to climb. Add to these internally driven stressors the fact that colleges are getting more selective and the “dream school” is getting ever more difficult to get into and academic pressure is rising. Finally, in the life of a high school student, perhaps the most omnipresent source of stress is that coming from peers, whether through social media, hallway conversations, or the need to fit in. Many feel lost or confused, but this is very normal; in fact, 80 percent of US students report feeling stressed and so overwhelmed they do not know how to cope.

“This can interrupt their functioning by interrupting sleep, appetite, and social interactions, and they may find themselves avoiding life experiences because of it,” Dr. Doreen Marshall said.

To start to deal with stress and anxiety, the first step is to acknowledge it, then look for ways that work to limit stress in everyday life. Is getting to school on time stressful? Maybe lay out clothes the night before. Is overeating a problem that concerns you? Try pre-portioning snack baggies. It’s important to process and deal with stress and anxiety in a healthy manner. Some people might experience excessive worrying, sweating, nausea, heart racing, etc. No matter what the source of anxiety, there are ways to help and deal with stress to

manage and lessen the negative symptoms.

Research has shown that using a meditation app can aid in reducing anxiety and stress. Some great apps to download are: Calm, Insight Timer, Headspace, and The Mindfulness app. Another thing to try is breathing exercises. While simply breathing may sound too simple to work, it is in fact very effective to slow down your heart rate and calm yourself down. This could aid you when feeling overwhelmed and/or stressing about school and focusing on breathing is something that can be done anywhere, at any time. Focusing on breathing allows the mind to focus elsewhere, reducing focus on the source of stress, while also ensuring the brain has plenty of oxygen to function well.

Exercising is another way to limit stress and anxiety. This focuses on not just emotional health, but also physical. Activities such as: running, yoga, walking, and pilates are all proven to boost our mood and help to relieve stress and anxiety from other factors playing a role in driving that stress.

“Working out helps me to manage and cope with the external stress that school provides,” said senior Austin Mannery.

Another positive anti-stress behavior is eating healthy, which has proven to make people feel better about themselves and more prone to having less anxiety or stress. Body image can be a significant form of stress, which healthy eating helps address. But more importantly, a healthy diet prepares the body to work its best

and helps remove chemicals and foods that might cause drowsiness and malaise.

While these activities may not work for everyone, they are great places to start that are easy to implement and have numerous positive benefits. Most important is finding something that can be an outlet for stress. If working out is a no go, try writing and journaling to aid in helping reduce stress. Get creative - try expressing that stressor through painting or drawing. Maybe bake a treat, like cookies, which refocuses the mind and gives a positive reward. The ability to find an outlet for stress can help prevent the build of unnecessary and unwanted anxiety.

“For me, listening to music and being able to concentrate on something else helps lessen the stress from school,” said junior Hope Kungo.

Music helps many students relieve stress, it can aid in lowering heart rate and cortisol levels, reduce physical and emotional stress, and release endorphins that improve well being. Music is easily accessible through apps, the radio, YouTube, and more. Familiar songs can help relieve stress. Mellow music can help you relax, or upbeat music can help one jam out and forget one’s cares. Finding the right music for certain moods might take some experimentation, but music can lessen stress efficiently and has the benefit of being something individuals can use on their own or with a group.

“I would say it’s definitely important to keep a calendar handy in order for me to be prepared for what’s coming and giving myself time to grow but not overwhelm myself,” said senior Jennifer Villarreal.

Being able to focus on time management is also a factor that plays a huge role in stress and anxiety, especially for high school students. School courses all have different level of demands required for the class, and every student must juggle numerous classes and competing schedules daily, not to mention work, sports,

and other activities. To help take the stress out of course management, focusing on more difficult classes earlier can help knock out the more time-consuming classes leaving the easier classes to be more manageable later. Helping the brain to focus better on more challenging coursework is better when an individual is fresh and not too sleepy, hungry, or distracted. Focusing on time management also provides time for self-care, breaks, exercise, and sleep.

“I usually give myself time to grab breaks. I also walk my dog and go outside, which helps me manage and cope with stressors from class work,” said senior Trisha Mukherji.

Isolation and shutting down can hurt individuals’ mental health. It’s also important to avoid unhealthy coping mechanisms like drinking or drugs that start unhealthy habits and could even run against the law.

It is important in managing stress to remember that no one is ever alone. What you are going through someone else has too. In fact, if we just look around our class there are likely others dealing with some of the exact same stressors. We do not have to, and shouldn’t, go it alone. When stress gets to be unbearable, reach out for help. There is nothing wrong with getting help from a professional therapist. In some cases, doctor-provided medicine may be needed to help manage stress that is driven by physical problems such as hormones or a chemical imbalance. If stress levels ever get to the point where it feels like you want to hurt yourself or someone else, seek help right away from a teacher, parent, adult friend, or counselor.

Anxiety and stress derived from school, society, and other factors can cause a lot of damage to a person’s mental state. These techniques and ideas can aid in providing healthy coping mechanisms and management to get through your day.

If you are feeling alone or need help, dial 988 for help right away.

10 October 2023
The Nest

Photo contributed by Tang



Class of 2024 officers and seniors Allyson Tang, Sanah Alex, Meghana Kunapareddy, Camila Febres and Jeniffer Villarreal



Class of 2024 President and senior Allyson Tang

CLASSES PRESIDENT ALLYSON TANG PREPARES FOR SENIOR YEAR



Baneen Rizvi
Editor-in-Chief

As Tompkins students return back to school this fall, the graduating class of 2024 gears up for their final year of high school. To commemorate this life changing milestone, senior and class president Allyson Tang along with her fellow class officers begin to prepare for the activities they have in store for this year's seniors. Tang hopes to create memorable experiences for her fellow classmates with prom and a multitude of other senior activities. With this being her final year as a class officer, Tang also aims to leave a long lasting legacy at Tompkins with the changes she plans to impose as president this school year.

"One struggle I have experienced is the pressure of trying something that's never been done," said Tang. "Aside from our goals for prom, we also wanted to use our platform to bring OTHS and the community together, give back to those in need, and invent new traditions for the school. Because of these goals, there is always the fear that events or ideas will fail to meet our expectations. Even more, as president, sometimes other people have

opinions on whether I am good or bad, doing too much or not enough, or if they agree with me or not. It would be much easier if we played it safe this year, but our team is determined to take risks, even if it means making mistakes or dealing with criticisms."

Tang's journey to class president began in sophomore year, when she ran for class secretary in the school elections. After getting the position, she decided she wanted to challenge herself and run again in junior year for class president and to her surprise, she got the spot. Although class officers do not have many duties before senior year, Tang thought the platform of a public role was too important to be wasted. She wanted to disprove the idea that class officer elections were simply popularity contests, so she decided to use this opportunity and provoke some positive change in the community.

"For me, I am motivated by my own hopes of what I could do as President," said Tang. "At our meetings, we all get really excited talking about potential fundraisers, prom details, or class events.

So even when one event does finish, there is always more on our list to look forward to."

Tang's motivation to be class president comes from her love of leadership and the idea that she can always do more for the community and her fellow classmates with such an important role at her disposal. She utilizes this motivation as inspiration for her and the other class officers' brainstorming sessions, where they come up with ideas for events and plans to host. For example, just last year, Tang and the officer team held a spring fair as an opportunity to not only raise money for the graduating class's prom, but also as a form of entertainment and Easter celebration for children from local schools and daycares. For Tang, this experience was one of the highlights of her ongoing class president career.

"My favorite memory as class president was watching the little kids at our egg hunt a few months ago," said Tang. "We had been working on the Spring Fair since the fall semester, and in the final few weeks, I remember Jennifer, Sanah and I were running to

stores, checking in with sponsors, and calling daycares to publicize."

As Tang prepares this year for her biggest challenge yet (prom) as class president, she hopes she can successfully fulfill her goal of bringing the community together and giving back to others. With plans such as an upcoming fall fundraiser and collaborating events with the junior and underclassmen officers, Tang is determined to create a year of memories and excitement for Tompkins seniors. She hopes that her ongoing work as class president will inspire other students with leadership roles to get creative and make change. She advises younger class officers to take advantage of the position they have earned.

"If I were to give advice to younger class officers, it would be to take advantage of the platform you have," said Tang. "Not everyone is a class officer, and while some people may say that class officers do not really do much, that part is up to you. You can do more as a class officer, if you are willing to work hard and put yourself out of your comfort zone."

ALL AROUND THE WORLD

LIFE OF STUDENTS FROM TAIWAN AND INDIA



Elia Naz
Staff Writer



Sophomore Carla Wu
was raised in Taiwan.

Photo by Ben Sanchez

The alarm rings, and a shock fills the body, realizing we must go to school. Millions of students across the globe walk themselves outside the house and into a classroom. Even though millions of students follow the same routine, students only get the insight of what the American school system looks like.

Born and raised in Taiwan, Wu lived there for 12 years and moved to the United States five years ago. And considering her Taiwanese education, she noticed multiple differences in the education system between the United States and Taiwan.

"Elementary school goes up to sixth grade, so middle and high school are three years," said Wu.

In America, students move from class to class for each subject, sitting in a room for about 45-50 minutes. While in Taiwan, the students stay in one classroom, and the teachers move around the school. The student's daily schedule here consists of four core classes and then three elective courses, including lunch, but in Taiwan, they only have core classes and lunch.

"Cram school is an after-school program where you get tutored for exams in and outside of school," said Wu.

Most kids in the United States

go to SAT and ACT tutoring classes. Usually, to better their chances of getting into a good college. Their options are enhanced depending on their scores on the SAT and ACT. There is a very similar situation in Taiwan. Students go to this cram school hosted by the schools to help them get extra practice. After school, kids prepare for board exams, allowing students to graduate from middle school to high school. In Taiwan, the broad exam grades choose the type of high school they will attend. Students who achieve higher numbers get into more prestigious high schools. Education systems in the United States and Taiwan emphasize the importance of achieving higher scores to get into better colleges or schools.

"After school, no one goes out because there is a bunch of homework, but everyone goes out on the weekends and breaks," said Wu.

Homework is the one thing all students wish they could abolish. The thought of doing homework creates a sinking feeling in the stomach. Sometimes, students having fun with their friends, completing homework, and getting good grades gets hard. But, in Taiwan, it is worse than here. The school system keeps students busy. They assign tons of homework, and right after school, students go to cram schools to get tutored or prepare for exams. Having such a busy schedule all day leads to kids spending little time with their friends. But when summer and winter break roll along, school becomes a memory.



The flag of Taiwan
Source : Britannica

The sound of laughing teenagers fills the air. Shops, malls, playgrounds, and all the streets are filled with students recapping what they did all school year with their friends.

Hersheel Desai is a sophomore at Tompkins High School. He grew up in Mumbai, India, and moved to the United States when he was 6. He notices multiple differences between the education here and in India.

"The Indian education system is much more rigorous. They give you a lot of homework every day, so it sets you up for college well," said Desai.

Desai believes that elementary school in America is extremely easy. Kids barely get any homework. Then, in middle school, it gets slightly more challenging but still not that bad, but then high school comes around, and schools start dumping a lot of work and higher expectations on students. In India, it is rigorous from day one. In the first grade, students do a lot of homework, learning many basics. This causes students to be used to the amount of work. In the United States, it gets more challenging during high school.

"In India, instead of terminal exams every week, we have broad exams which happen at the end of the month or sometimes the end of the semester," said Desai.

In the United States, students must take multiple tests and quizzes per class. While in India, students are taught the entire semester or month and then take a board exam that decides if they pass the course or must retake it. Desai prefers the Indian way



Sophomore Hersheel Desai
was raised in India.

Photo by Siena Gelotti



The flag of India
Source : Britannica

of testing because it allows one to fully understand the topic instead of cramming multiple bits and pieces of information the night before.

Many students after school participate in sports or, on the weekends, play a fun basketball game. In India, many kids like to run around big grass fields while running, batting, and balling. After school or on the weekends, many kids and parents play cricket in the streets until they sit down and it is time to do homework.

"After school, we usually went and played cricket in the field of the school," said Desai

It does not matter where students are in the world, having a good education is the most crucial thing a person can have. In Taiwan, India, and the United States, the education system pushes students to do their best to help them in the present and create a better future for an individual. However, having time with friends and time for an individual is vital for a student's mental and physical well-being. It can be challenging to have a fulfilling social life as well as be good in academics because of the rigorous system all over the world, but that does not mean it is okay to fail because no matter what continent a student is on, doing well in your education and being successful is extremely important.



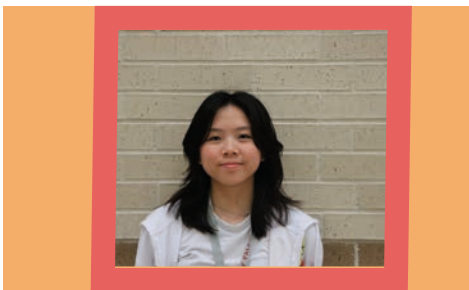
Elia Naz
Staff Writer

ON-THE-GO BREAKFAST IDEAS FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

Buzz buzz, the alarm rings; you hurry out and rush to the bathroom to brush your teeth, wash your face, and shower. The mornings can be hectic for everyone: students, teachers, parents, and maybe even your pet. With all these responsibilities, eating breakfast might not even cross someone's mind. But breakfast is essential. Some even consider it the most crucial meal. Tackling that extensive list of tasks can be times easier with a healthy, nutritious breakfast.



Sophomore Shirali Patel



Sophomore Truc Nguyen

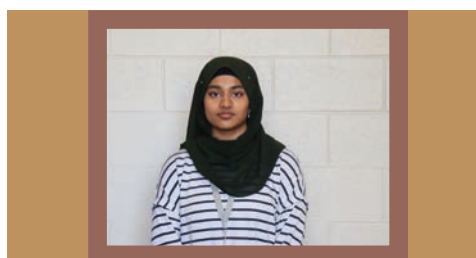
GRANDMA'S COOKIES

The aroma of sweet, fresh chocolate fills Sushila Patel's house. She rolls and kneads the cookie dough. Then, she forms them into the most perfect ball. She places them on a baking sheet as she thinks and waits for her loving granddaughter sophomere Shirali Patel, and her friend sophomere Truc Nguyen to pick up the most mouth-watering cookies. Every Monday, Patel collects her loving grandmother's classic chocolate chip cookies. Patel and Nguyen start their busy morning with a chocolatey soft goodie. The classic chocolate chip cookie paired with a cold glass of milk is a duo that is always good.



CINNAMON TOAST CRUNCH

The very controversial questions that can spark a fight in the US parliament: does the milk go first, or does the cereal go first? Junior Ayesha Mohammad starts her morning with a sugary cinnamon breakfast, a classic cereal brand Cinnamon Toast Crunch. Mohammad personally puts the grain first, then the milk. After that, she places the cereal bowl in the microwave for

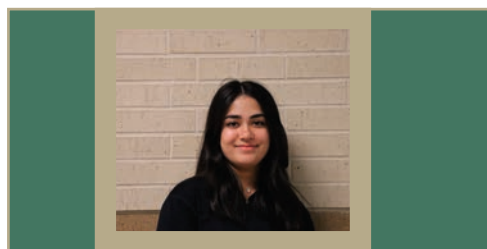


Junior Ayesha Mohammad

Photos by Alex Haseltine

BREAKFAST BURRITO

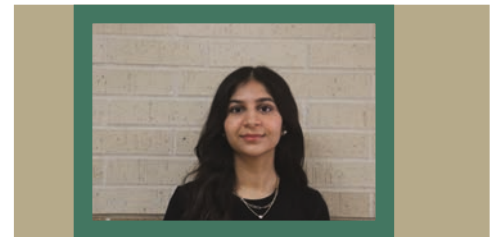
Sometimes, old is gold. When rushing in the morning, it is rarely your first thought to create the most aesthetically pleasing, Instagram-worth-looking breakfast. You're probably thinking about a meal that can fill you up for a few hours. That is why sophomere Emma Hussain sticks with an original breakfast burrito. The pan lit up, ready for a piece of tortilla to be warmed. While the tortilla is being prepared, we start cracking our eggs to scramble them on the pan. When both the tortilla and eggs were ready, we are ready to assemble the burrito. Starting with freshly cooked eggs on top of the warm tortilla, then slightly garnish some cheese, and last but not least, for some extra protein and taste, cut-up pieces of bacon. BOOM! In just a few minutes, you have a filling and healthy breakfast; it is a two-in-one delicious combo.



Sophomore Emman Hussain

PB&J TOAST

Everybody has a different idea of breakfast; some think breakfast is a pain to eat, others love having a hearty breakfast, while others seize this opportunity to make a colorful-looking breakfast, sophomere Manaal Ahsan starts her day with a pretty-looking and sounding breakfast. Two warm pieces of toast, one layered with raspberry jam while the other is smothered in a smooth layer of butter, and to digest her toast, she pairs it with a cold glass of milk. Her elegant breakfast fit for a queen fills her for the day, and a healthy breakfast is essential for her to succeed.



Sophomore Manaal Ahsan

PROTEIN PANCAKES

Some people may enjoy making protein shakes or smoothies, but senior Akshitha Rajendran wants her protein in pancake form. The morning starts with deliciously healthy pancakes. Every twice a week, she takes her MRTX protein pancake mix. She added a spoonful of water to her pancake mix and then added her mixture into a pan. She then lets it heat up for 5 minutes until she gets a perfect pancake. She enjoys treating her to something to eat every morning.



Senior Akshitha Rajendran

SENIORS' ADVICE TO INCOMING FRESHMEN

Ian Torres



"Prioritize maintaining balance in your life. In general, prioritize correctly to see what is best for you."



Julia Busby
Co-Managing Editor

Mary Adebimpe



"I would recommend not slacking during your freshman year. It matters more than people say."

Destiny Tom-James

"Get more involved in things at your school. By that, I mean to go to more games, clubs, participating in sports, or anything else you may be interested in."

Nyla Asante-Ansong

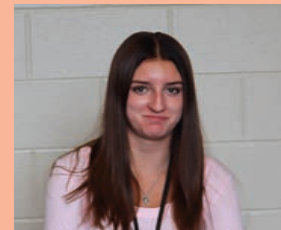


"Focus on friends, because at the end of the day, grades do not really define you, and you want to spend your high school years being happy and doing activities with friends. These are the friends that may go to your college with you and may be a part of your future."

Mckenzie McDowell

"I recommend focusing on grades the most. It is what most affects your high school year and your ability to get into college or not."

Elyse Elliot



"For high school, you need to put in all your effort and study for important tests and exams."

Mujitaba Ahmed

"A good trick is to study what you learned daily. That way, you do not have to cram everything last minute."

Kristine Samuel



"Try to stay as organized as possible. For example, keep a planner or some kind of tool to keep yourself more aware of incoming deadlines or test days."

Faryal Asim

"As a freshman, I think you should focus on maintaining your GPA and having good grades in the beginning, but I also think making new friends is important too."

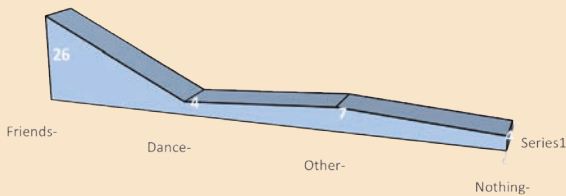
FRESHMAN SURVEY: WHAT ARE FRESHMEN THINKING ABOUT?



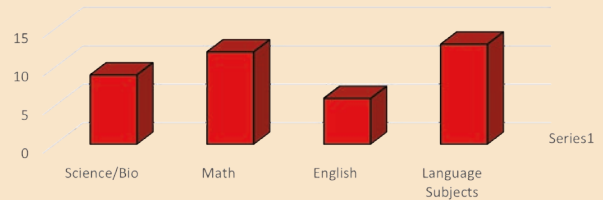
Zainob Azeez
Staff writer

Many freshmen have their own opinions on the things that they like and don't like, the things that they do and don't do, and also about the different tasks that come with coming to school everyday.

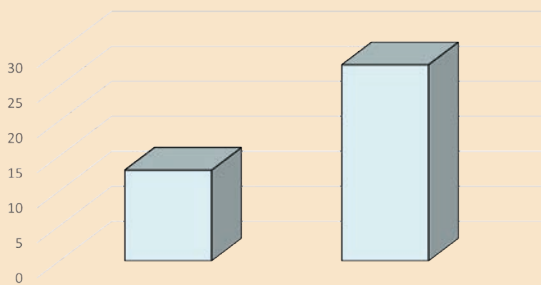
BEST PART OF HIGH SCHOOL



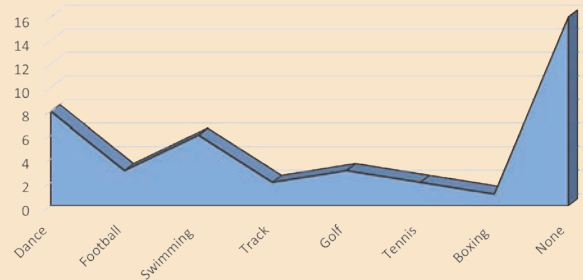
FAVORITE SUBJECT?



HIGH SCHOOL VS. MIDDLE SCHOOL



WHAT SPORTS ARE FRESHMEN PARTICIPATING IN?



What is something that makes you feel at home?

Falcon
Crier



Amira Azeez. 10

One thing that makes me feel at home is when I am sitting in my bed watching old movies, it makes me feel very nostalgic.

Photos by: Jackson Reuter

Juan Iugo. 11

Something that makes me feel at home are my friends because whenever I'm with them I always feel safe and comfortable, and I can be whoever I want to be.

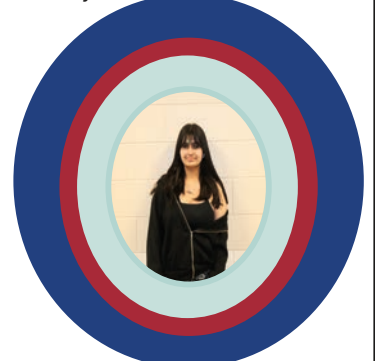


Ashton Funk. 12

Being on the field no distractions, just 11 guys against 11 guys. There is no media, there's no extra stuff, there are no crowds, it's just football, that makes me feel at home.

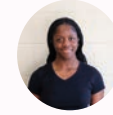
Manha Irfan. 9

My cat and my friends make me feel at home. I just love my cat and I feel very comfortable around her, and my friends also because they're super fun and I can be myself around them.



Which Club Best Suits You?

Answer 5 Quick Questions to Find Out



Sydney Jackosn
Nestline Editor

1. How do you like to spend your free time?

- a. Visiting a museum or an exhibit.
- b. Going shopping.
- c. Spending a day in.

2. What is the first thing people notice about you?

- a. Vast Knowledge.
- b. Fashion sense.
- c. Kind Personality.

3. What is your favorite scent?

- a. Strawberries
- b. Rose
- c. Musk

4. What is your favorite movie genre?

- a. Science Fiction.
- b. Documentary.
- c. Romantic Comedy.

5. Lastly, pick a tasty treat.

- a. Ice Cream.
- b. Popsicle.
- c. Chips.

If you got mostly A's...

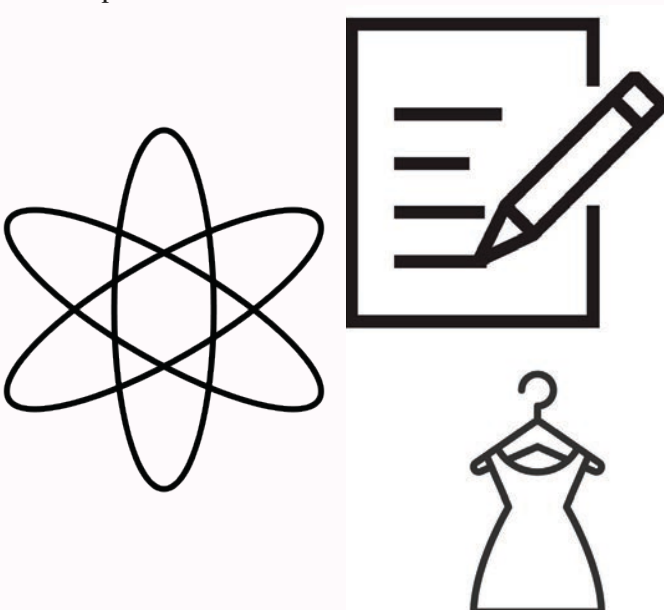
You should join the Astronomy Club or the Science Olympiad. The Astronomy Club is perfect for those who value the night sky. You are someone who is ethereal and appreciates the beauty of the night sky. The Astronomy Club is a perfect fit. With a focus on our solar system, how it functions, and the science of it all, the Astronomy Club incorporates learning about space along with creative activities like building rocket ships and solar systems. So put on your space helmet and join! The club meets biweekly on Wednesdays in room 2324. Contact them on their Instagram @othsastro. The Science Olympiad is perfect for inquisitive and curious students about science and its future. The Science Olympiad meets bi-weekly for both in-state and out-of-state science competitions practices that include a variety of sciences, from astronomy to chemistry. So put on your best goggles and join! The club meets in room 1335. Contact them on their Instagram @tompkinssci-oly.

If you got mostly B's...

You should join the Fashion Club or the OTHS Design Club. You are someone who treats the school hallways like a runway, and has a fabulous fashion sense. Whether you want to model or design, the Fashion Club hosts a variety of sections, it is impossible to not find the perfect spot for you in the club. The club meets after school in room 2313. Contact them on their Instagram @othsfc. The OTHS Design Club hosts a variety of opportunities for students to grow their skills in graphic design, using a multitude of softwares. The team meets in room 2241 on the first Thursday of each month. Contact them on their Instagram @othsdesignclub.

If you got most C's...

You should join the Crochet Club or the Creative Writing Club. You are someone who values your peace and relaxation, and what better way to relax than to crochet? This club hosts crochet meetings for various levels of expertise. For beginners, you can learn how to crochet from the beginning, and for decently skilled crocheters, you can grow in your skills. So grab your hooks and yarn, the club meets after school every other Thursday in room 1021. Contact them on their Instagram @othscrochet. You should join the Creative Writing Club. You are someone who cherishes the art of writing. On a Saturday you could be seen typing away a budding story on your computer. The club hosts a variety of writing challenges and competitions for students to grow in their writing pursuits. The Creative Writing Club meets in room 2657, every other Wednesday. They do not have an Instagram, however you can reach them by their sponsor Dr. Gresham.





The band at the pep rally



Cheer squad performs while showcasing school pride



Football team at pep rally



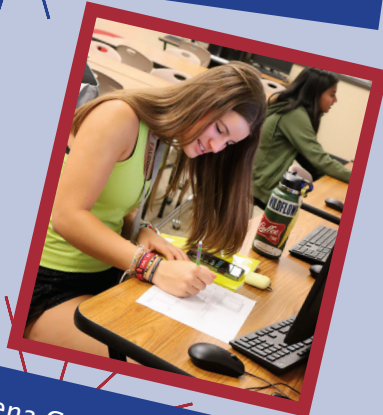
Crimson Pride showcases school spirit



Students in war-paint cheer at football game



Senior goal board at Senior Sunrise



Siena Gelotti enjoying class



Celebrating senior year after school



Decorating cars after school

EXCITEMENT

at the Beginning of the School Year

2023