



Disciplinary Committee: Heroes not Villians

Nate Madden
Videographer



Most have heard of the Disciplinary Committee (DC). When the words “Disciplinary Committee” are mentioned, one might conjure a mental image of eight hooded figures wearing cloaks in a dimly lit room or ruthless figures yelling at a timid, regretful student who just learned they have been expelled. Perhaps newer students don’t even know that the DC exists.

At Nobles, the DC is commonly linked with controversy. There is a distinct stigma around its proceedings, and with stigma comes misconception. So naturally, the question arises: What truly takes place inside the Library Study when Head of School Cathy Hall summons the Disciplinary Committee?

Four of the eight of the DC members were interviewed and asked the following question: Does Nobles accurately understand what happens on the Disciplinary Committee?

All four responded with the same answer: “No.” DC Faculty Member Oris Bryant said, “A lot of the time, the student body doesn’t have complete informa-



(Photo & Photoshop Credit: Avery Winder)

tion on what it is that we do.” Bryant shared a similar sentiment with all interviewees. The DC is conscious that students don’t properly understand its purpose.

So, what is the purpose of the DC? The first step to understanding the answer to this question is knowing who the DC meets with. Your friend who received detention for missing assembly and an expelled student have something in common: neither of them went to the DC. DC Student Member Owen Fitzsimmons (Class I) said, “We are called to meet whenever an issue goes beyond the scope of detention, but we don’t deal with anything that requires a super substantial punishment...

We deal with the middle ground in between.” Because of this, the DC only finds themselves meeting a handful of times each year. Fitzsimmons said, “Frequency of meetings varies a lot, but I can say that we don’t meet as much as people think we do.”

When the DC does meet, they convene in the Castle Study starting at 7:30 a.m. All students and teachers involved are dismissed from their academic programming, and most cases are concluded within a few hours.

Before hearing from the student, an administrator will explain a general overview of the

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Nobles’ Holiday Lineup

Kate McLaughlin
Staff Writer



This December, the holiday season will be in full swing as Nobles students gather to celebrate a variety of winter holidays. According to a non-scientific, anonymous student survey, 85.8% reported observing Christmas, while 12.7% and 1.5% celebrate Hanukkah and Kwanzaa, respectively. Many celebrations take place throughout the season, each holding its own significance.

Christmas remains the most observed holiday among Nobles students. The holiday tends to transcend religious affiliation as it becomes more about embracing festivity and spending time with family and friends. Caroline Plotner (Class I) celebrates Christmas through winter activities. She said, “[My friends] do Secret Santa, go shopping at Legacy, listen to Christmas music, and make Christmas cookies.” Many also use the holiday to reunite with distant relatives or host family gatherings.

A key tradition to embrace winter spirit involves decorating the house. Families adorn the outside and interior of their homes with lights, ornaments, and various decorations.

The Christmas tree is an essential decoration for the holiday, as well. These decorations symbolize the essence of modern Christmas: warmth and family.

The fantastical figure of Santa Claus, known for delivering gifts to children underneath their Christmas tree, sparks controversy in many communities. Although many argue against his existence, some students stand with the father of Christmas. Plotner said, “I still believe in Santa. Where else are these gifts coming from? It makes no sense. My parents do not care about me that much.” Until sufficient evidence of his factuality emerges, the debate will continue.



Hanukkah also creates community through winter spirit and lasting memories. It blends religious observance with family traditions by focusing on togetherness, delicious foods, and loved ones. Lasting eight days, the holiday commemorates the rededication of the Temple of Israel through the lighting of the Hanukiah, which holds historic and religious significance. However, Hanukkah doesn’t hold

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New Schedule Kills Exam Days

Eva Yu
Staff Writer

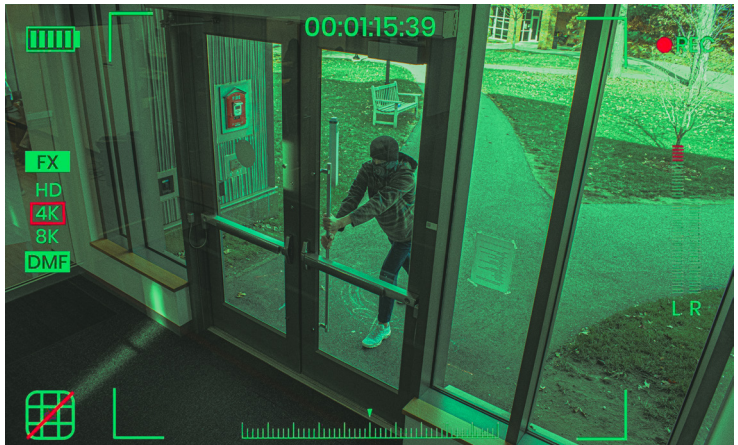


Picture this: you’re standing in the halls of Shattuck, there is no dress code in effect, and everyone around you is abuzz with nervousness. You only have to be at school for two hours today, but that time seems to drag on forever. Your friend asks you if you need to know a certain formula for the test that you don’t even remember learning. Anxiously, you drag your heavy heart to the exam room ten minutes early to maximize your testing time. This is what a typical exam week looked like at Nobles in the past. However, with the new schedule comes a new exam schedule. As administrators examined the pros and cons of having these special days, they decided to get rid of this week altogether in fa-

vor of a more efficient tactic. Upper School Director of Studies Shannon Clark said, “Years ago, we used to have cumulative exams both at the end of the first and second semester. The reason we built in an exam week was that it just felt like too much of a burden for students to attend classes and fit in adequate time to prepare for and take 1½ to 2-hour exams.” The old schedule, with shorter class periods, did not allow for longer tests, making exam weeks crucial for giving teachers flexibility with their assessments. However, even with the old schedule, midterm exams were not really exams, but more like longer unit tests. “In our Nobles academic calendar, the first semester is shorter than the second, so students felt significant stress after Thanksgiving break because

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New Security Keeps Nobles Safe



(Photo & Photoshop Credit: Avery Winder)

Clare Struzziery
Staff Writer



Security at Nobles is ramping up. This fall, some may have noticed that a new safety system is in place on campus. Buildings and Grounds and Information Systems and Support (ISS) have collaborated to install a remote door-locking system that encompasses all buildings. In the past, Buildings and Grounds staff would manually lock doors at night, before the weekend, and in the event of any emergency. Now, Buildings and Grounds Director Mike McHugh is able to remotely lock any door on campus with the click of a button. The doors operate on an electronic schedule that he can edit at any time, and McHugh receives an alert when a door is propped open. Key cards, integrated into the IDs of every faculty member, can unlock doors.

This new system is an important move in a growing effort to ensure the security of Nobles’ campus.

Nobles has always had a Safety Committee, but according to McHugh, its activity has increased in recent years. Now, the group meets every other week to discuss various potential safety initiatives and how they could be implemented. The committee is led by Director of Campus Safety Danny Morris, a Wrentham police officer who specializes in emergency response. The group consists of Chief Financial and Operating Officer Steve Ginsberg and General Counsel Beth Reilly, along with McHugh and Chief Technology Officer Devereaux Brown. Last fall, the group organized a campus safety audit. “We had an outside company come, interview members of the school, and take a look at the

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(Photo Credit: Zack Mittelstadt)

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EDITORIAL

Dear Nobles,

Happy Holidays!

As the days grow shorter and fireplaces begin to crackle with merry cheer, we at *The Nobleman* have been reflecting on the best moments of the first semester. Here are some highlights from this year that we wanted to share with you.

First among these cherished memories is when Chuck the Chicken surprised Max Daniello with song and dance on his 18th birthday (see featured image below). Nothing tops a hired actor sporting a full poultry suit waltzing into class on a Tuesday morning to embarrass our beloved multimedia editor. This im-peck-able serenade blessed all of our eyes and ears, bringing a bouquet of balloons and hesitant laughter to AC 101. The gas stored within the balloons entertained staff members for weeks to come; feel free to stop by our classroom if you want a huff of helium!

Second, let's take a moment to appreciate our lively long assemblies and their famous hosts, curated by our very own faculty advisor Michael Polebaum. To breathe the same air as former Polish president and leader of the Solidarity movement Lech Wałęsa; to behold Joe Kennedy's characteristic charisma; to give standing ovations to the wealth of wonderful musical talent showcased by so many in our community—we are truly lucky.

Third, Halloween. One of the most ebullient days on campus, it is always special to watch our students and faculty alike embrace the spooky spirit of this celebration. From Sam Li's pawn to Head of Upper School Alison Easterling's Portuguese man o' war, we were blown away by the level of effort and creativity demonstrated by community members in crafting their costumes.

Finally, we couldn't write this editorial without acknowledging our amazing fall afternoon programs. This fall, students displayed incredible grit, hard work, and excellence on the athletic fields and the Vinik stage. We would like to give a special shoutout to Boys Cross Country for winning ISLs for the second year in a row, and Boys Varsity Soccer for making it to the NEPSAC Class B Championship game. We are proud of all of you!

We wanted to take this last opportunity before the holiday season to express how thankful we are for all of you as our readers. We truly love sharing this paper with the community, and we are so grateful to have such a receptive and attentive audience. In this spirit, we hope you are all gearing up for an incredibly excellent winter break, and we wish you the best in all of your festive endeavors.

Gratefully,
The Editors

FEATURED PHOTO



An embarrassed Max Daniello (Class I) with Chuck the Chicken on his 18th birthday last month.

(Photo Credit: Alycia Scott-Hiser)

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The Nobleman is the official student-run paper of the Noble & Greenough School. The paper recruits a diverse, dedicated, and intellectually engaged staff that creates stimulating, relevant, and exciting written and digital content. This content, while sometimes covering national and world news, will always strive to be both representative of and primarily for the Nobles community. The entire staff is cognizant of the power that The Nobleman holds, and thus each member seeks to use that power responsibly. The core editors and faculty advisors promote, foster, and enforce the following: anti-racist and anti-hate rhetoric; just, factual, honest, and respectful work that seeks to give voice to as many community members as possible; and a safe, creative, respectful class culture that enables and inspires staff to produce content they love.

Student Life

Tuition Remission: Supporting Nobles Employees

Kate McLaughlin
Staff Writer



For over 25 years, Nobles has upheld its enduring commitment to faculty support through a tuition remission initiative. The benefit provides financial assistance to all employees with children, covering 93% of their child’s tuition to attend Nobles or up to 75% for alternative independent schools through grades 7-12, standing as a testament to institutional values.

Central to this initiative is the unwavering support for employees from all departments of the school. As faculty dedicate their lives to promoting education and well-being at Nobles, the school aims to reciprocate this generosity by supporting their personal lives through financial assistance. Chief Financial and Operating Officer Steve Ginsberg said, “At a place relying on its teachers and employees as the backbone of the institution, supporting them in their personal lives is a source of real pride.”

In addition to financial relief for employees, the initiative significantly impacts their children’s educational choices. Nobles’ generous approach allows faculty families to explore various education paths for their children

while mitigating the factor of cost. Having experienced the benefit of tuition remission through his two children, English Faculty Alden Mauck said, “It allows kids and their parents to figure out if [Nobles] is the right place.” Children feel financially supported, regardless of the school they attend.

Another essential advantage of tuition remission lies in attracting and retaining employees. For

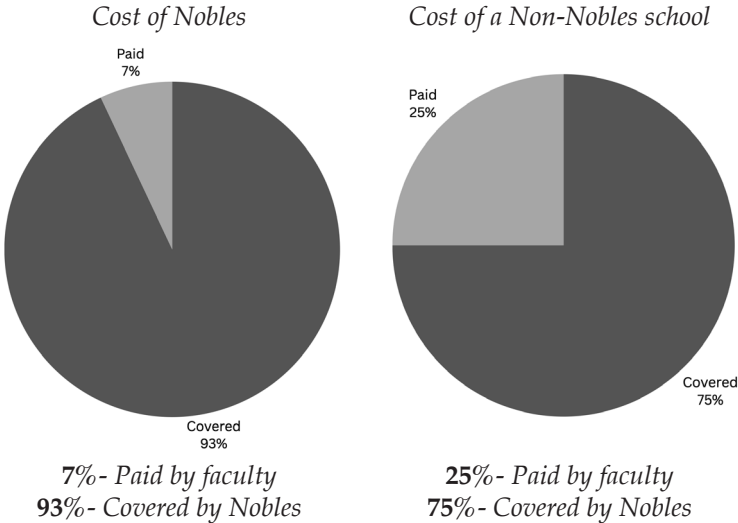
“Teachers will refer to [tuition remission] as the golden handcuffs because it’s such a good deal. How can you say no?”

many faculty, joining Nobles is linked to receiving this initiative; some even come for its sole purpose. Mauck said, “Teachers will refer to [tuition remission] as the golden handcuffs because it’s such a good deal. How can you say no?” Beyond financial support, the exhibition of generosity and reciprocal appreciation also attracts employees. The school’s interest in supporting the employees’ lives outside the classroom resonates with its core values, creating an impactful experience for employees and their families.

The profound impact of tu-

ition remission is no better exemplified than through Mauck. Previously teaching at St. Sebastian’s, an all-boys school where the faculty remission policy isn’t extended to children who attend other independent schools, Mauck’s young daughter lacked financial support. He prioritized the benefit when searching for an alternative job, leading him to Nobles, where his noteworthy career has positively impacted the school community. He said, “I was not going to accept a job that didn’t offer tuition remission...I feel lucky to have wound up here, but I was going to get it one way or another.” Mauck’s unwillingness to compromise tuition remission reflects the initiative’s importance to attracting and retaining faculty.

This scenario is among numerous cases demonstrating the magnetic quality of tuition remission. Nobles attracts a broader and more competitive pool of employees by offering the benefit, improving the quality of school employees and the overall quality of education. General Counsel and History and Social Science Faculty Beth Reilly (N ’87) said, “Without this benefit, we may risk losing excellent educators to other schools who offer that kind of support.” In this way, Nobles secures better teachers, faculty, and staff for the community. Tuition



(Graphic Credit: Hyewon Suh)

remission also elevates education by promoting engagement from teachers. When educators feel supported in their personal lives and through their children, they are more inclined to better the Nobles experience for other children. Mauck said, “I feel an added responsibility to teach well at a place where my kids went to school.”

It’s important to note that Nobles allocates a designated budget for the remission benefit. The budget is derived from the school fund, which also contributes towards need-based financial aid. A delicate equilibrium exists between these two causes, and the admissions office does its best to prevent cost from being a deterrent to any prospective families,

faculty or not. Balancing these interests—supporting employees while catering to all students—remains a topic of consideration, but is likely to stay. Any change to tuition remission would spark conflict and controversy, so it is unlikely that the school will withdraw or modify the initiative anytime soon. Ginsberg said, “We’ve talked about getting rid of it or changing the dollar amount, but the Board has been consistently in support of [the benefit] because of what it does for employees. Although the elevated experience resulting from tuition remission remains unrecognized by most, it continues to better the Nobles community for employees and students alike.

Bullish Dawgs Guest Writer: Jonas ZW

Jonas Zatlyn-Weiner
Guest Writer

“I started investing when I was 12,” said Chuck Myers, addressing the group of Nobles students in attendance for Bullish Dawgs’ inaugural speaker of the year event. Myers had made a sweet deal with his father. They would invest money together, with the young Myers keeping any profits while his father covered any losses. Myers was, as he put it, a “financially ambitious kid,” and his pastime with his father would soon become a strong passion. At the age of 15, Myers invested his college funds, a decision that even Myers admitted was risky. This upfront risk produced a major reward, as Myers paid his college tuition and kickstarted a highly successful investment career.

“I started investing when I was 12.”

After graduating from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, Myers began his professional career at Morgan Stanley. From there, he landed a job at Fidelity Investments, where he started as an analyst for a small-cap fund that invested in companies worth \$3 billion or less. After a successful stint as an analyst, Myers became the portfolio manager of Fidelity’s Small-Cap Growth Fund. During his 11-year tenure as the manager of the Growth

Fund, Myers outperformed 99% of his competitors, and the value of the fund grew from \$200 million to \$13 billion. Today, Myers invests independently.

One of the highlights of Myers’ visit to Nobles was a story he shared highlighting the diligence it takes to be an investor. When he was 18, Steve Madden shoes were popular. Myers, an investor in the stock, called the company to inquire about its growth prospects. He asked to speak to none

“Is this a company that I can understand what it does?”

other than CEO and namesake Steve Madden himself and ended up having a fruitful discussion with Madden. What began as one phone call turned into a regular correspondence where Myers and Madden would confer over the direction and business model of the company. The next year, Myers was in New York, the location of the Steve Madden headquarters. He called Madden and arranged a meeting and tour of the headquarters. Upon seeing Myers, Steve Madden exclaimed, “You’re just a kid!” Myers coolly responded, saying, “That’s unimportant. Ask me how many shares I own.” Myers admits, “That’s the sort of precociousness you need to succeed in a job like this.”

Not only did Myers talk about his career, but he shared some concrete lessons for stu-

dents interested in investing. For most, Myers believes broad market exchange-traded funds (ETFs) are a good starting point for investing as they give people access to a broad part of the market. If you invest in an ETF, you are essentially investing in a group of stocks and receive the benefit of diversification. This adds a level of security for investors and has historically yielded a sizable annual return of 6-8%.

For those brave enough to engage in individual stock picking, Myers laid out some key questions to consider when analyzing a stock.

“Is this a company that I can understand what it does?” Myers admits that he himself doesn’t understand the business models of 20-30% of the stocks he analyzes, and therefore doesn’t invest in them. Truly understanding how a company runs and how the business model works is imperative before you invest. “Is there a reasonable sense

“Push to be an investor not a gambler.”

that I can predict 3-5 years out for the company and industry?” Myers warned against investing in “hot” stocks and recommended focusing on stocks that will give longer term returns. Having a strong idea of the future of the company you want to invest in is crucial.



(Photo Credit: Ben Myers)

“What is the history of the company?” Myers believes that a company’s history needs to give one a reason to believe the future is bright. “What does the balance sheet look like?” A company’s balance sheet shows three critical pieces of information: its assets, liabilities, and equity. Myers stressed the importance of avoiding heavily indebted companies and considering a company’s balance sheet, in relation to the industry.

Myers ended with some general advice for the Nobles community. He implored all Nobles students to read any work by Warren Buffett. “Warren Buffett can give you a free MBA,” Myers said cheerfully. Finally, in an investing landscape where short-term trading appears glamorous and fun, Myers believes that students need to keep a long term investment strategy. He said, “Push to be an investor not a gambler.”

News

Contagion Alert: School Edition

Nathan Nozea
Staff Writer

It's 8:35 in the morning. You just start walking to class, when, out of nowhere, an earth-shattering sneeze rips through your body. Embarrassed, you immediately run to the bathroom, excusing the moment as just another fleeting symptom of a "cold." Flash forward a couple of days later, and the horrors have only just begun. Your head feels as though you've been pummeled to the ground repeatedly, and it's a struggle to comprehend even the most basic information throughout the school day. Even when your brain isn't vibrating like a ping-pong ball, you still continue to suffer, as your sinuses are so filled with mucus that it seems as though you can't even breathe. While these symptoms may seem like a gross exaggeration of a common cold, it is a tragedy that many Nobles students unfortunately undergo as the winter sea-

son progresses. In fact, hundreds of students and faculty members have likely found themselves falling victim to a virus now dubbed as the "Nobles Plague." This phenomenon begs the question: how did this "plague" arise on campus? Many students believe that the plague actually stems from Nobles overworking its student body. Christian Hess (Class II) said, "[Because of the overwhelming amount of work at Nobles], my body is now breaking down...it starts to have a severe reaction whenever it hears the words essay or test." At the same time, Hess also acknowledges the possibility plague might have started from mundane reasons, such as the change in temperature. He said, "I'm just so cold all the time...I feel my body shriveling up." While the origins of the cold

remain unknown, its presence can be felt everywhere on campus. Whenever a cough or a sneeze is heard on campus, there will no doubt be a stampede, as students try to escape the person they refer to as "patient zero." Some students have even risked trying out new medicine in an attempt to stop the spread. One of these students is Irini Kolovos (Class I), who said, "[Because of the plague], I took a lot of Dayquil and Nyquil." Hess has also started a new procedure

to combat the sickness. He said, "[I] started to put on more layers." The rise of illnesses at Nobles brings up an interesting topic: should Nobles enforce a mask mandate for those who are sick? Ever since COVID-19, many schools have seen an increase in mask usage, especially when a student is sick and doesn't want to spread their disease to others. This action is something a vast majority of students would like to bring to Nobles as well. Hess said, "When you're sick, either cover your face or run to the other side of the room" Catie McLane (Class I) also agrees with Hess' point of view, saying, "If it was mandatory for [students] to wear masks if they were sick, I would be fine with [that]." However, some students also worry about the negative ramifications a mask mandate could have on the stu-

dent body. Kolovos said "[When wearing a mask], you're singled out...students will judge you, and ask, 'What is wrong with you?'" Until the question of a mask mandate is resolved, the nurses have several suggestions on how to avoid getting sick this winter season. One of their main pieces of advice is to eat 'superfoods,' or any fruit or vegetable that will help combat the viruses in your system. They specifically recommend eating any meal rich in antioxidants, such as blueberries, raspberries, and avocado. You can also try eating more iron, which is found in ginger, nuts, and seeds. Further, the nurses highlighted the importance of sleep in order to remain healthy. In fact, to ensure that your body has the energy to fight all these diseases, you must get at least eight hours of sleep every night. Whichever methods you take to stay sick-free this holiday season, just remember that if you do get sick, staying home is always an option. Stay healthy, Nobles!



(Graphic Credit: Wudiana Fevrier)

Security Keeps Nobles Safe (continued.)

(continued from page 1) physical campus," Brown said. One of the outcomes of this audit was the suggestion to implement a remote door-locking system. There are two main reasons that Nobles decided to execute this recommendation. First, safety was a key factor. "One of the easiest selling points was the security aspect of it. Before, if we had an incident on campus or around campus, I had to send my guys out to lock every door," McHugh said. This could take around fifteen minutes, whereas now McHugh can lock all doors instantaneously with a simple press of a button. The second factor driving this decision was the convenience offered

by this technology. In the past, when teams got back to campus late after away games, Buildings and Grounds staff had to meet buses at the Morrison Athletic Center (MAC) to unlock it for them. Now, if coaches notify McHugh, he can schedule MAC access for them ahead of time. The Safety Committee and its initiatives have the goal of keeping Nobles secure. So what kind of security threats is this technology designed to combat? The answer is complicated. Nobles does not have an issue with unknown people trespassing on campus. Once, according to McHugh, campus was locked down for a few hours during pre-season after a police chase in a

nearby neighborhood. He had to send out Buildings and Grounds staff to run around campus locking doors as students were shepherded into the MAC. However, he says, "I just started my 14th year, and that's the one and only time that we had to do it." Instead, Nobles faces different challenges, such as the arrival of parents and other visitors on campus without checking in. In an emergency, these people need to be accounted for. The new door-locking technology will help funnel people in through the main entrance where they can check in. The current schedule has the doors around the Henderson Arts Center open right before assembly and then locked

a few minutes after, to discourage visitors from entering those ways. As for drawbacks to this new technology, McHugh says there are few. A couple of mishaps have occurred already with adjusting the schedule. He says, "There's a learning curve for us that are operating the system because it has a lot of nuances that you're trying to figure out." He further emphasized that it is important for faculty members to notify him ahead of time when they need access to a building outside of typical hours, so he can ensure that it will be unlocked. With this construction system, Nobles now has the infrastructure in place to make every building accessible by key card

only. However, McHugh says, "We don't feel like we need to do that and don't want to do that just yet." Other ISL schools lock all of their buildings all day long, as their campuses are in more urban, exposed areas. "We're in a little bit more remote location, we're not a city school, and it is not necessary to go from building to building with doors locked," Brown said. "Essentially, you're forced through the main entrance," McHugh said. Now, the lives of Nobles students will remain safe, as the Safety Committee works behind the scenes to constantly reassess campus security.

From Strongman to Strength Director: Kevin O'Neill

Gavin Lin
Layout Staff

Just by looking at him, one can tell that Kevin O'Neill has unparalleled strength. His impressive size and stature scream 'strength' and make him stand out as a dominant figure whenever he enters a room. Arriving at Nobles 10 years ago, Coach O'Neill currently serves as the Director of Strength and Conditioning for all community members on campus. Of his role, he said "[I] oversee the afternoon program for Strength and Conditioning... and will write [lifting] programs for students that want to work out for general fitness goals. [I] can [also] work with faculty and staff if they need any type of workout programs [for general health]." In addition, O'Neill works with sports teams on campus for strength training. Throughout the seasons, he runs strength circuits as part of practices and also helps

with varsity tryouts for sports that require weight room benchmarks. Aside from serving as Nobles' Director of Strength and Conditioning, O'Neill also has a strong history of weight training with some impressive personal records (PRs). Whether you are a seasoned lifter or not, the terms "bench press," "squat," and "deadlift" will probably ring a bell. These three exercises are among the most commonly used words in lifting. For O'Neill, these exercises and their associated maximums represent years of training, discipline, and consistency. O'Neill's maximum bench press is an astonishing, "four and quarter [425 pounds]...about four years ago." His maximum squat is an impressive, "530 [pounds], and that was probably 10 years ago," and he managed to deadlift "525 [pounds], and that was about 15 years ago," O'Neill said. Whether you are a trained or untrained lifter, there is no denying that these numbers are more than im-

pressive. O'Neill's high PRs make you wonder how the bar is capable of holding so much weight. Such incredible PRs take years to achieve and often require hours of training per day. Additionally, careful meal choice is essential to ensure optimal muscle growth, usually leading to boring meals such as the world-renowned chicken and rice, which is often eaten plain without any sauces or additional flavors. If you're wondering what type of training plan O'Neill follows, you'd find it to be a bit different than a traditional approach. Everybody trains and lifts differently, and O'Neill recognizes that incorporating heavy strength sessions is the most enjoyable for him. "I kind of write my own personal workouts in two weeks chunks... I've always been a fairly big, strong guy so I like to lift heavy...I don't really need to

put on size...so I will do a couple heavy workouts a week and incorporate some type of conditioning," he said. Overall, O'Neill's

astonishing PRs are a tribute to the accomplishments hard work can achieve and the incredible strength of the human body.



(Photo & Photoshop Credit: Zack Mittelstadt)

Opinion

The Unfair Death of Senior Projects

Eli Schotland
Staff Writer

For many years, Nobles seniors were able to drop a class of their choice, so long as the class was not a graduation requirement, and complete a senior project instead. Students were allowed a tremendous amount of autonomy in the selection and scope of their senior project, and those who chose to do a senior project were assigned an advisor, who would work to ensure the senior made a plan to complete their project in a timely manner. As the years went on, the senior project transformed from a respected elective to an excuse to drop a class. The number of seniors who chose to do a senior project skyrocketed, and it was difficult to find advisors for all of them. As a result, the quality and legitimacy of many senior projects declined, and most students paid only lip service to the process. Many seniors used the free time allotted to them from dropping a class to play spikeball or hacky sack out on the Beach, rather than committing themselves to the development of their project. The administration, refusing to allow this to continue, eliminated senior projects, effective this year. But was that the right decision?

A blanket ban on senior projects was perhaps a hasty move. While many seniors simply frittered their time away and made a mockery of the system, other

Class I students were extremely devoted to their projects, and physical representations of their hard work are scattered around the school. From race cars to art projects, from handwritten plays to hand-carved furniture, these testaments to the positives of the senior project cannot and should not be ignored. Now, the administration does have a point. Too many students abused the senior project, and Nobles must maintain its reputation as a school with rigorous academics. Allowing seniors to drop a class, and then not provide similarly challenging compensation, would not be in line with this mission. Seniors do spend a great deal of time relaxing, perhaps too much in the

eyes of some. Giving Class I more free time might exacerbate this issue. Then what is the solution?

A selective application process may provide a middle ground between disallowing senior projects entirely and permitting anyone who wants to drop a class to do so without an increase in workload. There was once a simple Google form to fill out for application, but it was not very rigorous or selective. Here is how a better application process could look: a rising senior wishing to pursue a senior project would first need approval from their advisor and college counselor. Then, they would fill out the application itself. The application could ask questions about the senior's

motivation, their project's goal, and how they plan to accomplish this goal over time. This challenging application should serve to weed out some of the less serious applicants. Furthermore, setting a maximum number of slots will hopefully limit the demand for advisors, and make sure that each advisor can provide as much help as possible to a more limited pool of people. Of course, if the senior project is made more exclusive, some deserving students may not be able to take part. However, the alternative is that no deserving students get to participate at all. In my opinion, that is a preferable trade. Right now, some Class I students are still taking part in their own

senior projects, just without the same guidance or the free period that comes with the school-approved version. These seniors are facing increased workload, especially as they apply to college. For the wider student body, it is important to understand why this is an important issue. Many Nobles students have talents they deserve to express and for which they deserve public recognition. For some students, assembly is the place where they can show everyone what they can do. That is a very special opportunity, and the school's understanding of that opportunity is reflected in how strongly the administration values assembly. But for students whose talents do not lie on the field, in the theatre, or on the assembly stage, they have little other recourse. Many former students found their refuge in the senior project and the consequent satisfaction of knowing that they had accomplished something of value. If you are a student with an esoteric skill or eccentric ability, participation in a senior project should be something you aspire to. It can be fun, it can be challenging, and it can be a great learning experience. Moving forward, I advise the administration to revise their decision and consider the merits of my argument. One day, either by my senior year or far in the future, I would love to see the senior project re-implemented into the curriculum.



(Photo Credit: Avery Winder)

Does Closing Assembly Doors Undermine School Values?

Emilie Andrews
Staff Writer

If you happen to arrive at Nobles between the witching hours of 7:55 and 8:00 am, you will often notice swarms of students sprinting through all entrances of the school, trying to find their assembly seats in time for the ringing of the bell. While nearly all students have encountered this stressful situation, it may be unfair to call this a rite of passage. As we all know, assembly is a vital part of the Nobles community; it is a space of togetherness, wel-

coming us to school each morning. However, the increasingly tight "cut off" period to enter Lawrence Auditorium evokes the question: do the harsh regulations of assembly attendance truly uphold our school values?

Each morning before assembly, faculty members are stationed outside of the auditorium doors, monitoring the time, and herding students toward the space. More recently, faculty have begun to rope off the doors as early as 7:55 am. While the difference between 7:55 and 8:00 may seem minuscule, those five minutes can be the deciding factor between an

eventful assembly viewing and detention. When commuting to school in the morning, students, like myself, more often than not rely on those precious five minutes to squeeze into our seats. Additionally, in being less gracious with student attendance time in the morning, faculty members neglect the reality that for a variety of inexplicable reasons, mornings just don't always go your way. So many mornings I have left my house on time or even a little early and still end up sitting in long waves of traffic that cause me to arrive at school just one minute late, therefore missing assembly entirely. If students fail to arrive at school within five minutes of assembly starting, it is understandable to withhold them from attending and mark them late. However, the harsh 8:00 am cutoff should not be as strict as it is. If students were given the chance to quietly, and politely, make their way to their

seats between announcements and performances at the start of assemblies, the number of assembly misses would begin to drop. While impossible to determine how many tardy students would arrive within this window, it is likely that many would feel less pressure to speed on the highway or sprint into school with the fear of being shut out 30 seconds before the assembly begins. Nobles prides itself on being an open and welcoming space to all students, faculty, and staff. One of Nobles' essential principles is to "be a community where the sanctity of each individual is respected, where differences are embraced, and where no member of the Nobles community demeans, belittles or harms another." This statement rings true, yet mornings at Nobles have begun to feel like a mad rush to arrive on time, rather than a polite gesture to honor each individual's respect for others. In this way, no announcements or performances should ever be interrupted to bring attendance, but there has to be some balance between closing the doors

and allowing students to breathe as make their way into school. With the new addition of "soft start, hard stop" class periods, it is impossible not to question whether or not assembly should be treated similarly. If students



(Photo Credit: Zack Mittelstadt)



(Photo Credit: Zack Mittelstadt)

News

Mean Girls: From Screen to Stage

Eva Yu
Staff Writer



Every February, students, parents, and faculty flood the seats of Vinik Theatre to watch the Nobles Theatre Collective’s (NTC) winter musical. From Broadway shows such as *Something Rotten* to Shakespeare adaptations like *Twelfth Night*, the NTC musical always draws in a multitude of talented students. With a huge title like *Mean Girls* on the docket, the Performing Arts Department faculty have their hands full preparing for another amazing winter season.

Oftentimes, the musical is decided in the preceding spring, long before the winter season actually begins. When asked about the choice to do *Mean Girls*, Director of Theatre Dan Halperin said, “Positives to this musical include the ages of most of the characters relative to the age of our actors and performers, the popularity of the title in a year where we thought it was important to do a big well-known show, the number of opportunities for ensemble members and leads, and the contrast with what we did last winter is really strong.”

The winter musical process begins as soon as the school year starts. Theatre faculty get together

to plan out every detail in preparation for the winter production. Performing Arts Faculty Anna Parker, who works in tech theatre alongside Performing Arts Technical Director Erik Diaz, said, “[The process] starts as soon as we pick the show, in part because we want to pick shows we know we have the ability to do. Erik will start thinking about ideas and feasibility as soon as possible.” Halperin also starts the process early by breaking down the entire musical scene by scene and blocking them all out using notes.

After the musical is decided and the faculty completes all the necessary preparations, the season starts. This usually begins with a week of auditions right before Thanksgiving break to decide the main cast and ensemble for the production. Halperin said, “[For] most of the leading roles you’re looking for the strongest actors and singers that you can find, and you’re looking for who has prepared the most thoroughly as an indication of how hungry they are for it, and how hard they’re likely to work throughout the whole process. And you’re looking for how different people are able to act and sing specific moments in the script and score.” Halperin also has to consider how logical it is for an actor to play a certain role, including

their age and vocal range. This process is grueling and has a tight turnaround, but each year, Halperin releases a cast list before Thanksgiving to kick off the season.

In another crucial part of the musical process, Director of Instrumental Music Antonio Berdugo, must finalize the roster for the instrumentalists that will accompany the singers. When asked what type of musicians he looks for, Berdugo said, “I am looking for instrumentalists who are comfortable playing with a different style. Pit band isn’t a concert, we are accompanying a whole cast, so the process is not only learning the piece but it’s also learning how to play with the cast.” This includes inviting musicians he believes will contribute to the band as a whole and auditioning instrumentalists who are interested.

Halperin said, “Once we’re on the other side of the audition process, generally the initial thing is learning the music and doing some staging and choreography. As we go from first rehearsal to tech, it goes from mostly music to mostly staging and choreography.” On the afternoon program roster, the musical is split into three parts: ensemble, technical theatre, and pit band. As the cast



(Photo Credit: Ben Heider)

and crew approach their performances, these three groups become increasingly integrated, until they can showcase a finalized show for the entire community.

Although faculty do a lot of the preparatory work, students are still at the core of the musical. Parker said, “The design process is entirely done by faculty and professionals, simply because we don’t have a design program here. But the build of the set, the lighting installation, some of the sound installation, and then nearly all of the technical duties during the show will have been done by students.”

Stage Manager Karina Cruz

(Class I) has a long list of responsibilities. Cruz states, “I take blocking notes, keep track of props and anything and everything on stage and backstage.” Cruz also handles communications between lighting, sound, scenic, props, projections, and costume designers.

Although the musical is only performed for a week or so each year, the amount of work and time that goes into preparing for the season often goes unseen. The cast and crew work hard to produce the best show possible. I know I will be waiting with bated breath to see what amazing surprise the cast and crew of *Mean Girls* will bring us this season.

New Schedule Kills Exam Days (continued)

(continued from page 1)

of how little time there was before exams. In response, we moved away from longer cumulative exams in December and shifted to hour-long unit tests, although we kept the ‘assessment week,’ after classes had ended,” Clark said. Time constraints for exams are less of an issue with the new schedule, allowing teachers to plan for a longer test without exam days.

“In response, we moved away from longer cumulative exams in December and shifted to hour-long unit tests, although we kept the ‘assessment week’ after classes had ended,”

Another reason Clark and others did not see a need for the exam week anymore was because fewer departments were utilizing the periods provided. Clark said, “A few departments opted out of giving traditional assessments in December [in favor of essays or projects], at which point we began to question the necessity of setting aside multiple days for only two or three departments to give tests during that final week before break.” With English, History, and Modern Language teachers opting out of exams in favor of papers or orals, the only

departments who still used exam weeks were Math, Science, and Classics. This often meant most students were swamped with work the week before, so the exam week wasn’t relieving stress. This year, instead of exam days, a new assessment calendar has been implemented. This calendar schedules the days teachers from certain departments can give tests. Starting after Thanksgiving break, each department has certain days set out for them when they are able to assess their students. This way, even the most unlucky students can only have two major assessments on a certain day. With this change, students will be done on Wednesday, December 13, and break will start two days earlier than it did with the old schedule. This new change also gives teachers more time to complete grades and comments. With the old schedule, Monday and Tuesday were exclusive test taking days, which gave teachers those days to start their comment writing process. To account for teachers now having to teach classes on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, Dean of Faculty and Mathematics Faculty Maura Sullivan said, “We won’t actually have grades and comments due until later in the day on Friday. So we’re giving teachers all of Thursday and most of the day Friday which is why we’re not going to meet with advisees that morning.” When asked about how the assessment calendar affects the Math Department, Sullivan said, “[It]

changes very little [...] most math teachers will still give a math test on one of those days, the difference is it’s not the only thing that’s happening that day for students.” While the new calendar can seem daunting, the changes are beneficial for students and teachers alike.

This calendar schedules the days teachers from certain departments can give tests. Starting after Thanksgiving break, each department has certain days set out for them when they are able to assess their students.

As a community, a lot of the stress surrounding the end of the semester will likely be relieved because of better spacing. With the new assessment calendar, every week is blocked out, so students shouldn’t have to worry about having more than two assessments on one day. While the new change in exam days can seem like it’s adding more to an already stressful week, the hope is that it will actually help relieve the midterm stress and allow students to have more time.




(Image Credit: AI Generated)

Athletics

NBXC Back-to-Back ISL Champs: Staying Hungry

Clare Struzziery
Staff Writer

 “We just stayed gritty,” Captain Matthew Loose (Class I) said regarding the Nobles Boys Cross Country team’s back-to-back ISL Championship Race win. On November 3, the boys’ cross country team descended on the Wrentham Developmental Center for the culminating race of their season. This meet consisted of all sixteen ISL schools in the boys’ race, and the course navigated 5 kilometers of grass. The Nobles boys ran fast, tough races, and walked away with their second ISL title in two years. Of the achievement, Head Coach David Ulrich said, “It requires years of preparation and a lot of things need to come into place at the right time.” Indeed, everything seemed to come into place for the team that day: months of training, strong packs, and inspiring finishes. Coming into the season, the legacy of the 2022 ISL win was on the minds of both runners and coaches. On motivating underclassmen during grueling practices, Captain Charlie Hall (Class I) said, “It was made easier by the fact that we won the ISL last year.” However, having a standard to uphold can also prove challenging. Coach George Blake said, “I



(Photo Credit: Karl Cheng)

think that there was a little feeling of some pressure to try to repeat and do it again.” The team had also changed with the graduation of seniors and the arrival of a new class of Class IV runners. Luckily, many of last year’s top finishers remained, and underclassmen stepped up. Henry McLane (Class IV), brother of Will McLane (N’ 23)—a captain of the 2022 team—was a strong varsity performer all season. “I think he was just determined to stay with the pack. So he was able to step in and fill up a really big position,” Blake said. At the beginning of the season, Nobles lost a tough race to Tabor Academy on the day of the MAC flood. “It definitely prevented us from getting in over our heads. I think that humbled us

a little bit,” Hall said of the loss.

“I think he was just determined to stay with the pack. So he was able to step in and fill up a really big position.”

After this obstacle, the team won the rest of their regular season races. Going into ISLs, the team had their eye on Tabor, and Belmont Hill and Roxbury Latin, Nobles’ traditional rivals in boys’ cross country. Throughout the season, captains Patrick Albers, Timothy Churchill, Charlie Hall, and Mat-

thew Loose (all Class I) worked to cultivate a culture of discipline among team members. Although team culture has always been positive and strong, Loose said, “Last year, we shifted a lot more to just putting that work in.” Leading by example was important to these captains. “You can’t just be yelling at guys to put in the work,” Loose said. In addition, the coaches emphasized pack running. “Having little groups in practice to push you is huge,” Hall said. Balancing fun and work was tough for these team leaders, but having eager and hardworking underclassmen made it easier. “We have some underclassmen...who I think are just very competitive people. They were going to try their best to push themselves,” Blake said.

Pack running carried over onto ISL race day. Throughout the varsity and junior varsity races, strong Nobles packs were everywhere. In cross country, the top seven runners from each team compete in the varsity race, but only the top five are scored. Each runner’s place adds a number of points to their team’s tally, and the team with the lowest number of points wins. In the varsity race, Churchill came in 6th overall, followed closely by Noah Douglas (Class II) in 9th place. Ben Guenther (Class I) took 18th, and McLane and Alex


Cheng (Class III) finished 22nd and 24th, respectively. “They made a really nice push to shave off a lot of points at the end,” Hall said. All top five Nobles runners finished in under 17 minutes.

“The team stayed hungry, both personally and as a team. They pushed themselves for more.”

The dedication and spirit of these runners played a large role in the team’s hard-fought victory. “The team stayed hungry, both personally and as a team. They pushed themselves for more,” Blake said. The determination and grit on display throughout both races were incredible. Having so many team members buy in to push themselves is a feat, and as more races are won, the team’s legacy of success becomes stronger. Loose said, “I think we’ve cultivated somewhat of a culture of excellence with everyone really pushing to be their best because of the talent we have on the team and the work ethic we’ve developed.” This culture has been built to endure to future generations of the team, hopefully leading to more accomplishments like this one.

The Final Whistle: A Successful Season of Fall Sports

Kate McLaughlin
Staff Writer

 As the leaves change from green to brown, the varsity sports teams have seen their fall seasons come to a close. From field hockey to football, the teams showcased their talents and character through exceptional performances and inevitable challenges. Girls Varsity Field Hockey proved themselves a leading team in New England, finishing second in the ISL behind Middlesex with a record of 9-3-0. Led by Coaches Maura Sullivan, Brooke Asnis, and Laine Garber, the team utilized the athleticism of their many lacrosse and ice hockey players. Captain Emma McNealy (Class I) said, “Even when we played teams loaded with field hockey players, we found success by out-competing them.” This advantage led to the team’s competing in the NEPSAC Playoffs, where they lost 2-1 in the semi-finals to Taft Academy. They aim to continue this success next season with strong sophomore and junior classes. The Varsity Football team, led by Head Coach Rob Murray, finished their season with a record of 3-5. An early 3-game losing streak forced the team to reevaluate their season goals, thus coining the motto “bowl or bust.” They quickly rebounded into a winning team, starting with a crucial 42-12 win against Middlesex and later crushing rival Brooks. Captain Peter Nizolek (Class I) said, “The last three weeks of

the season was when we turned it on, and that’s when we’re the most proud of ourselves.” Building off these wins with a terrific class of rising juniors, the team hopes to fulfill its motto next fall.

“The last three weeks of the season was when we turned it on, and that’s when we’re the most proud of ourselves.”

The Girls’ Varsity Soccer team finished an impressive season with a record of 8-2-2, just missing playoffs. Led by Head Coach Beth Reilly, the team focused early efforts on replacing a crucial group of graduating seniors and quickly distinguished themselves as a top competitor in the ISL. Despite a 1-0 loss against BB&N in their highly anticipated rivalry game, failure to produce results against leading Class A teams, and their resulting playoff absence, the team consistently fielded outstanding performances in every position. Keeping unresolved aspirations for playoffs, they will seek revenge next fall. Captain Catie McLane (Class I) said, “I have so much faith in the beginning of next year’s team...I hope I can see them make another NEPSAC tournament appearance.” The Boys’ Varsity Soccer team led by Head Coach Steve Ginsberg had a very successful



(Photo Credit: GV Soccer)

season. With a strong senior class and an improved group of underclassmen, the team went 12-2-2 for their best record since 2019 and a third-place finish in the ISL. Aside from losses to Belmont Hill and Milton, they exhibited dominant performances, beating teams like Governor’s Academy by as many as seven goals. In the NEPSAC Playoffs, Boys’ Soccer performed exceptionally well to finish second in a 3-2 loss to Kimball Union Academy. Rising underclassmen will work to replace the senior class next fall. The Girls’ Cross Country team had a successful season, as

well. Head Coach Blake stepped in to replace former Head Coach Mark Sheeran, who retired last season after multiple decades of leading the team. She stepped successfully into her new position, furthering the program’s commitment to camaraderie and positive team culture. Although the first few races were canceled due to weather conditions, the team exhibited strong performances to finish sixth for Varsity and second for Junior Varsity at ISLs. Captain Charlotte Hayward (Class I) said, “[The season] didn’t start how we wanted or how we were expecting, but it unfolded beautifully. We showed up to each race giving our all and improved so much this season.” With a promising group of underclassmen, the team hopes to continue their upward trajectory. The Boys’ Cross Country team had arguably the most successful season this fall, led by Coach Ulrich and an exceptional group of senior runners. Despite an early loss to Tabor, they fulfilled aspirations to protect their ISL title, winning the ISL Championship and finishing second in the NEPSAC

Championship. Captain Matthew Loose (Class I) said, “Since we lost early in the season, we were always battling to climb back and get redemption at ISLs.” Another goal of the team was balancing their athletic ambitions with a fun team culture, which contributed to their many achievements. They hope to replace a talented senior class and repeat this season’s successes next fall. Led by Head Coach Kimya Charles, the Volleyball team finished middle of the ISL, despite injuries early in the season. After losing their head coach last season, the team struggled to connect with the new coaching staff and a large group of incoming players, causing early dysfunction that physical injuries only worsened. Despite these struggles, Volleyball rebuilt their team culture and finished the season strongly. Captain Brooke Lukasevich (Class I) said, “Once we built close relationships with everybody, practice became more fun, games became more fun, and we started winning.” The team’s camaraderie contributed to strong performances later in the season. They will continue improving next fall despite losses to their starting lineup. Through hardship and triumph, Nobles concluded the 2023 varsity fall sports season with perseverance and excellence.

Student Life

Behind the Scenes: How Assembly is Booked

Alan Cai
Business Manager

Assembly is an integral part of Nobles' traditions, school culture, and morning routine. While the majority of assembly performances are hosted by members of the community, every few weeks, the assembly stage is graced by an outside speaker, someone who imparts some new wisdom, unique experience, or insightful understanding onto the student body. But, where does the school find these impressive speakers? From Joe Kennedy III to Lech Wałęsa, the school and its "Emperor" of assembly, Director of Assembly Programming, Michael Polebaum (N' 08), have gone to great lengths to secure speakers that contribute to a vital characteristic of the Nobles education: applied learning.

While it may seem difficult to book world leaders, leading academics, and other impressive figures who have given

(Photo Credit: Avery Winder)



talks at Nobles, booking agents help provide a degree of accessibility and ease to the process. According to Polebaum, booking agents play a crucial role in get-

"Various donors have given a significant amount of money that allows us to operate off of interest earned on those funds."

ting important speakers onto the morning assembly stage. "I'm in pretty close contact with a number of different speakers agencies. So the way that we got Lech Wałęsa was, I was in touch with his agent, who's an agent for a lot of people and I always say to him, 'Who's available around these dates that you think that might be interesting?' And also, 'Who's already gonna be in Boston around this day?' Someone who might otherwise

be outside of my price range, because they're already [in the area], are way cheaper. That was the case with Lech Wałęsa, so he was 25% of his normal price," Polebaum said. Moreover, in terms of curating the speaker's list for each year, Polebaum has significant leeway in deciding who gets invited, while budgetary concerns play an important role in making these decisions. Polebaum said, "At the end of the day, it comes down to who I think might be interesting, and I will talk to various departments to get input." Polebaum works with the scheduling committee and a group of school administrators when inviting assembly speakers. Polebaum said, "I talk with Ms. Easterling, Mr. Gifford, Ms. Genecco, Ms. Finley...that's the core crew if I have specific questions, or if we need to find additional time." Overall, Polebaum tries to stick within certain themes for speakers each year. For example, this year, assembly speaker slots have primarily been allocated to speakers with relevance to topics covered in the History Department. Polebaum said, "So this year is fairly history-heavy. Next year, I'm going to try to talk to my Science department colleagues to see who's interesting in their field. I try to think about a theme at the beginning of the year to try to create a more cohesive speaker series

that's going to occur throughout the year, since we're limited to around four outside speakers." So how does the school afford all these important speakers? Each year, the assembly speaker program is funded by the revenue generated from two large endowments, solely created for covering

fund that Ms. Hamilton oversees as Director of Counseling, so we often will work in tandem... there's two extra assemblies that are all coming from a wellness perspective," Polebaum said. The service that assembly speakers provide to the school is an essential one. This tradition



(Photo Credit: Ben Heider)

the costs associated with inviting assembly speakers. Polebaum said, "Various donors have given a significant amount of money that allows us to operate off of interest earned on those funds. And so that produces generally somewhere around \$50,000 a year for me to bring in outside speakers. That can also include travel and housing or travel lodging." That said, Polebaum's two endowments aren't the only ones that foot the bill for our assembly speakers. "Any of the wellness speakers are usually paid for by an endowed

echoes the school's lasting commitment to leadership for the public good, experiential learning, and more. Recently, with assembly featuring famous world leaders and important politicians, the assembly speaker program has only gained greater acclaim and support from the community. After Lech Wałęsa and Joe Kennedy III, it remains to see what other interesting guests Polebaum has up his sleeve. Who will be next to take the stage?

Best Nobles Side-Hustles to Save Up for Christmas

Owen Harrington
Staff Writer

With the holiday season quickly approaching, the Nobles community is busy purchasing and packing their thoughtful gifts for friends and family. You have waited all year for this, planning each present meticulously, waiting for the right Black Friday sale to finally pull the trigger. Ready to hit purchase, you reach into your pockets only to make a shocking discovery. Suddenly the careless Cafe 2000 purchases and unfortunate library poker losses have caught up to you, and the disappointing reality that there is no money left for presents sets in. You quickly find yourself falling into a downward spiral as you

contemplate whether re-gifting that untouched itchy sweater your aunt gave you last year is a viable option. But do not despair, the Nobles campus is ripe with

"After following this guide, you should be kicking back on your throne of perfectly selected presents, hot cocoa in hand, and swimming in green. That is, of course, assuming you don't get caught."

opportunities to make a little extra cash on the side and fund



(Photo Credit: Zack Mittelstadt)

your wildest holiday dreams. First, head to the center of commerce on campus, the snack bar where, each day, hundreds of students make their stop to pick up treats to get them through the day. Here, the plan is very simple: arrive early and purchase every chocolate croissant in the store. Then just set up shop in the center of Gleason and flip the baked goods for a few dollars more than you purchased them for. The demand is already strong, so you just need to control the supply. If you play your cards right you'll be seeing steady returns in no time, loading the tree with PS5s and Xboxes. Next, head on over to one of the December music concerts and dress nicely. Set up a little table outside of Lawrence and display a sign with your very official looking ticket price. Collect the money as people flow in to find their seats, but be prepared to take the money and run if

someone tries to shut you down. The same can be done for parking during the winter open house. Just substitute the formal outfit

accident or hit a stray reindeer. If you're still strapped for cash, this final job will not only cover you for the holidays, but possibly for the rest of your life. All you need to do is find your way into the Tower Collection late one evening and fill up your bags with rare books, maps, and paintings. Then make a swift exit into the night and prepare yourself for a chase, because the librarians will, without a doubt, come looking, and they will not stop until they find you. After following this guide, you should be kicking back on your throne of perfectly selected presents, hot cocoa in hand, and swimming in green. That is, of course, assuming you don't get caught. If you do though, remember a mischievous little elf gave you these ideas, and you definitely didn't hear them from me.



(Photo Credit: Max Daniello)

for a high visibility yellow vest and wait at McLeod to collect parking fees. If you're feeling extra bold, offer to valet the car, but be prepared to lose the vest and disappear if you cause an

DC (Continued)

situation to the committee. "We will hear from whichever administrator has taken the lead on the situation, whether that be a class dean, [the] Head of Upper School, or someone else," DC Chair Louis Barassi said. The student then enters the room with their advisor, is granted confidentiality by Barassi, and explains the situation from their perspective. "I make a point of not taking in any outside information or rumors that I might've heard about the situation. I want to hear from the students themselves first," Brennan said. After the student leaves the room, the DC discusses possible next steps. In the hours that they meet, the

DC is dedicated to two critical goals: listen and educate. Barassi said, "We view the process as an opportunity for personal growth, not for embarrassing or shaming students." He continued, saying, "We may recommend a consequence to Dr. Hall, but in the end, all decisions about discipline are made by Dr. Hall." In summary, the Disciplinary Committee is not a group of cloaked villains, but instead an open-minded and earnest committee of teachers and students. The next time that you hear of a peer being sent to the Castle Study, know that they are not a part of a trial, but a genuine conversation.

Satire

Nobleman Baking Recipe

Eli Schotland
Staff Writer

There I was... lost in the snow-covered mountains of northern Italy. It had been six days since I had seen another human being, and my only company was my mule, Il Testardo. I had lost my way along a rocky mountain pass three hours ago, and the snow was so thick I could barely see my hand in front of my face. I staggered forward, one foot in front of the other, again and again. I had no way of knowing if my next step would land on solid ground, or if I would plunge through the snow into some crevice to disappear forever. One thing kept me going: hidden in those precipitous peaks ahead of me lay La Ricetta, the lost Italian recipe of legend. Allow me to bring you back to the beginning of my treacherous trek, some months ago. I had just taken leave of my last job, searching for gold among the wrecks of Ottoman warships in shark-infested waters off the coast of Tunisia. I was lounging around in the baths and bazaars of Tripoli, wasting money and time, waiting for opportunity to rear its head. One day, I received a letter from a contact of mine in Italy with nothing but a plane ticket and a map of Mount Garibaldi, upon which was scrawled the words "Find La Ricetta." After a harrow-



(Photo Credit: Avery Winder)

He objected vehemently to being awoken at such an untimely hour. The rising sun warmed me, the trails were clear and flat, and everything was clearly marked on my map. I made good time that day and rested that same night in

an abandoned shepherd's shed. It was two days later when the trouble started. That morning, a cold wind swept down from the north, bringing with it ice and snow. Visibility was nil, and I must have taken a wrong turn at one point, for soon I had no idea where I was. Il Testardo brayed fearfully behind me as I trudged onward. The map said that La Ricetta was at the top of the mountain, and by Jove, I was going to find it. I decided that so long as I kept going up, I was bound to get my prize. Visions of savory stews and perfectly cooked pasta danced through my head. What delicious delicacies awaited me at the top of the mountain? So I kept on. And then, at long last, I saw it, rising up out of the mist. There, at the very peak of Mount Garibaldi, was a pedestal upon which lay my treasure. Steam rose from the pedestal, as if it had been just removed from some heavenly oven. Angelic choirs swelled about me as I raised the most beautiful loaf of banana bread I had ever seen. Stuck through its golden crust with a glistening cedarwood toothpick was La Ricetta, my recipe, scrawled by an ancient hand upon a piece of crumbling holy parchment. And now, for your own consumption and reading pleasure, I show to the world for the first time La Ricetta DeAngelis, the Angelic Recipe:

Ingredients

- 1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 ½ teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 egg
- 1 cup mashed bananas (about 3 overripe bananas)
- ¾ cup sugar
- ¼ cup cooking oil
- 1 teaspoon finely shredded lemon peel (optional)
- ½ cup chopped walnuts or pecans (replace with chocolate chips for fun, tastes great!)

Instructions


Grease the bottom and sides of an 8x4x2-in loaf pan; set aside. In a medium mixing bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, and ½ teaspoon salt. Make a well in the center of the dry mixture; set aside.

In another bowl, combine the egg, bananas, sugar, cooking oil, and, if desired, lemon peel. Add egg mixture all at once to dry mixture. Stir just until moistened (batter should be lumpy). Add chocolate chips.

Spoon batter into the prepared pan. Bake in a 350 degree Fahrenheit oven for 50 to 55 minutes or until a wooden toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool in pan for 10 minutes. Serve hot immediately, or refrigerate overnight and serve cold the next day.

Student Reported Dress Code

Eli Schotland
Staff Writer



Lately, I've been noticing that there's been a real downtick in people being dress coded at Nobles. How can we persist in creating leadership for the public good in sweatpants? Anyone who sports a logo bigger than a fist is clearly devoid of respect for themselves and others. The large logo is a



free thinker, a strong independent person who doesn't need a ghastly logo. Granted, some of you may not agree. 'I'm a free thinker, I just like my Patagonia!' Poppycock. Rubbish. A most oxymoronic and indefensible postulation. Now, the real disappointment is the behavior exhibited by faculty in regard to the dress code. You see, they just don't enforce the dress code like they used to. Even Mr. Polebaum, for so many years a bulwark, a valiant defender of

summon some fact from the cobweb-ridden recesses of my brain, and instead I am met with one of those perfidious plastic slippers! The noble close-toed shoe, long a symbol of prudence and practicality among the student body, has veritably disappeared from the downtrodden carpets and mice-infested floors of Shattuck Schoolhouse. The teachers have surrendered to the onslaught of such footborne menaces, and I can hardly blame them.

quickly turn into a retaliatory nightmare. How can we make sure students feel empowered to enforce the dress code without fear of backlash? An app! Give me a hundred dollars and Noah Brauner's phone number, and I will give the school our new app. Each student will be assigned a random identification number, through which their number of reports and violations will be recorded. But I know Nobles students are clever. If we put the power of dress code enforcement in our own hands—hands that willingly choose to violate the dress code on a regular basis—nothing will happen. Thus, I propose a quota system. You must report five violations per month, or you will receive a detention. There will be no more turning a blind eye! No mercy for your friends, either. If you see a groggy buddy wandering into assembly in sweatpants with their hood up, that's good for two points right there. If you make the unforgivable, inexcusable mistake of forgetting to remove your hat once you step in the door, it's curtains for you. I don't care if it's cold! Your frostbitten ears will serve as a testament to your respect for yourself and others.

No more will the dress code be hampered by the spectrum of teacher enforcement! Everyone will be judged, anonymously and easily. Overnight, I expect to see Vineyard Vines clothing—with its garish pink whale that haunts my dreams—disappear from our respectable campus. Indeed, call me

Captain Ahab, because I hunt that whale. Neither shall Lululemon aficionados be safe. Everyone will wear khakis, and everyone will be happy about it. Of course, I know this is an unpopular opinion. I know you all like strutting around

“Too many teachers turn a blind eye to that fiendish piece of footwear, that lousy loafer, the contemptible CROC!”

campus in brazen defiance for the core principles of our community. That's why I'm including a competitive element to the system. The student who makes the most reports per month will be rewarded with a considerable reward. Your anonymity will be preserved, but you'll receive a nice fat check in the mail, courtesy of the school. Finally, we must institute stricter punishments for those incorrigible students for whom detention isn't enough. My AP Euro class is studying the Spanish Inquisition, and I have learned that public humiliation is an effective tool. Each student with more than five violations per month will be brought up on the assembly stage at the beginning of each week, and their names will be read aloud to the audience. Harsh, I know! But the punishment fits the crime. Shelve your slippers, lose those leggings, hide your hats. You're next.

disgusting symbol of corporatism. Parading that hideous, gigantic, obscene Vineyard Vines whale around campus makes you no better than a billboard. I ask you, are we billboards? Are you a walking, talking advertisement for something other than a Nobles Theater Collective production? No! You're an individual, a

(Photo Credit: Avery Winder)

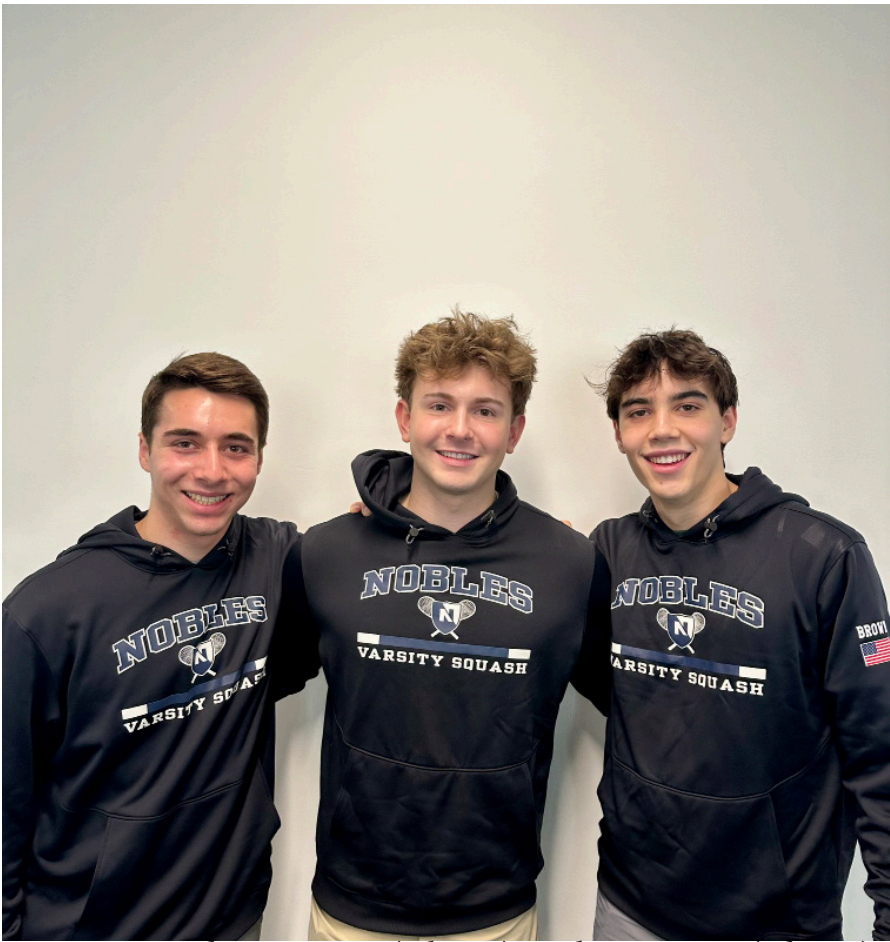
The Guide, has thrown in the towel. His reasoning? No one else was doing it, and he felt lonely. Too many teachers turn a blind eye to that fiendish piece of footwear, that lousy loafer, the contemptible CROC! Oh, how I weep with sorrow when I gaze down at the floor during an exam, hoping to

GIRLS VARSITY BASKETBALL



Captains: Tori Balser (Class I), Grace Oliver (Class I), Nasi Simmons (Class I), Tahira Muhammad (Class I), Christina Pham (Class II)
Coaches: Alex Gallagher, Carly O’Hern, Vinny Bui, Cece Reyes, Charmaine Jordyn
One word to describe the team: Ambitious
Team motto: Ohene
Season goals: To go undefeated and win ISLs and NEPSACs
Favorite team dress: Sweatsuits
Hype/warmup songs: “We Ready” by Archi Eversole
Games to look forward to: Tabor, Tilton, Dexter (in TD garden), Rivers doubleheader with the boys
What did you wish the school knew about your team: We wish the school knew how much work we put in.

BOYS VARSITY SQUASH



Captains: Hudson Poirier (Class I), Joshua Levine (Class I), Nico Brown (Class II)
Coaches: Mike Tootill, Thoboki Mohohlo
One word to describe the team: United
Team rituals: Bandanas, Corner snacks
Team motto: Drive Deep
Season goals: Win NEPSACs and Nationals
Hype/warmup songs: “Eye of the Tiger” by Survivor
Games to look forward to: Tabor, Belmont Hill, Milton, Nationals
What did you wish the school knew about your team: We’re fun to watch.

Varsity Winter GIRLS VARSITY HOCKEY



GIRLS VARSITY HOCKEY
Captains: Sophia Levering (Class I), Olivia Maffeo (Class I), Jaime Griswold (Class I), Ainsley Gray (Class I)
Coaches: Thomas Resor, Steve Cedorchuk (Ceda), Stephanie Boulay, Kaitlin Spurling, Amanda Boulrier
One word to describe the team: Spirited
Team rituals: Same cheers before each period, Fancy dress
Season goals: Win ISLs, Win NEPSACs
Favorite team dinner: Steak tips, Chicken parm
Hype/warmup songs: “Don’t Leave (Throttle Remix)” by Snakehips & MØ, “Pon de Replay” by Rihanna
Games to look forward to: Williston, Andover, Milton
What did you wish the school knew about your team: It’s Mr. Resor and Ceda’s last season as our coach. They have dedicated so much of their lives to this team, and this program would not be what it is today without them.

Varsity Wrestling



Captains: Alastair Rose (Class I), Charlie Hall (Class I), Matthew Loose (Class I), Aidin Bina (Class I)
Coaches: Charles Danhof, Steve Jordan, Coach Yeh, Coach Bearse, Coach Fabrizio, Ryan Hargraves
One word to describe the team: Dangerous
Team motto: Smile through the pain
Season goals: Top 5 at New Englands and ISL Championship
Favorite team dinner: Chicken Parm
Hype/warmup songs: Russian Rap, “Party in the USA” by Miley Cyrus
Games to look forward to: Roxbury Latin
What did you wish the school knew about your team: Wrestling’s actually fun to watch.

Captain
Coach
Team
Team
Season
Favor
Favor
Game
What

Sports Spread

BOYS VARSITY HOCKEY



Captains: Tyler Bloomfield (Class I), Teddy MacAusland (Class II), Dennis Davidson (Class II), Kyle O’Leary (Class II)
Coaches: Brian Day, Mark Spence, Dan McGoff, Colin Stevens
Team rituals: Team hymn before walkout
Team motto: Playing for each other
Season goals: Win Flood Marr, ISLs, NEPSACs
Favorite team dress: Pea coats
Hype/warmup songs: “Welcome to The Black Parade” by My Chemical Romance
Games to look forward to: St. Sebastians
What did you wish the school knew about your team: Support from fellow students can sway the outcome of a game!

BOYS VARSITY BASKETBALL



Captains: Riggs Catlin (Class I), Raul Cruz (Class IV)
Coaches: Oris Bryant, Jaime Gallagher, Edgar De Leon, Joseph Day, Mike Perry
Team rituals: Coach De Leon’s moment of silence before every game
Team motto: All in
Season goals: Playoffs, improve more than last year
Favorite team dress: Sweatsuits
Hype/warmup songs: “Dreams and Nightmares” by Meek Mill
Games to look forward to: Roxbury Latin, BB&N, Tabor
What did you wish the school knew about your team: We have 17 home games, come show support.

Varsity Skiing



Captains: Hunter Patterson (Class I) Ellie Batchelder (Class I)
Coaches: Fredrick Hollister, Mary Kelley, Aaron Duphily, Ellie Scott
Team rituals: Annual Nashoba Park Run, Pre-Race Glitter, Ski Camp
Team motto: Send it.
Season goals: Win ISLs and be top 5 at NEPSACs
Favorite team dinner: Shake Shack
Favorite team dress: Ski Team Valentine’s Twin Day
Games to look forward to: NEPSACs, JETPACs
What did you wish the school knew about your team: We are always cold.

GIRLS VARSITY SQUASH



Captains: Mia Kim (Class I), Shivani Gulati (Class I)
Coaches: Andrea Gardos
One word to describe the team: Supportive
Team rituals: End-of-season costume practice, tennis game
Team motto: Defend the Legacy
Season goals: win NEPSACs, beat Winsor, have a good time
Favorite team dress: Twin Day
Hype/warmup songs: “Crazy in Love” by Beyoncé
Games to look forward to: Milton, Winsor, Middlesex
What did you wish the school knew about your team: We wish more people knew how fun squash is to watch even if you don’t play or know the rules.

Feature

Coding for a Cause: Simon Juknelis’ Tech Ventures at Nobles

Nathan Nozea
Staff Writer



The clubs directory. The assembly sign-up page. The websites for various Nobles magazines. All of these projects stemmed from the ideas of Simon Juknelis (Class I), a coding aficionado. But who is he really? Although Juknelis has created technology that forms the backbone of the Nobles community, few students know the sheer amount of effort he has put into improving the quality of life on campus. Even outside of school, Juknelis utilizes his unique skill-set to innovate and find new ways to aid his community. But how?

Currently, Juknelis runs the website for a newspaper known as Laikai Vaikams, or in Lithuanian, The Times for Kids. Used by teachers across the globe, Juknelis hopes the website will aid Lithuanian children in their quest for knowledge. He said, “[The main goal of the newspaper] is to help [Lithuanian kids] connect to their culture...it also tells them what’s going on in Lithuania and [helps] them practice reading skills [in Lithuanian].” Although Juknelis has now taken full rein in the project, it all began due to a request from one of his teachers from Lithuania. He said, “A teacher in charge of [the program] pulled

me into the project...[at first] I did [the project] because I had to, but then I realized I liked to create things for my community.”

“[The main goal of the newspaper] is to help [Lithuanian kids] connect to their culture...it also tells them what’s going on in Lithuania and [helps] them practice reading skills [in Lithuanian].”

In addition to the Laikai Vaikams, Juknelis has created several programs in his free time. For example, in one of his independent study classes, he built an operating system entirely from scratch. In the same class, he also built a poker bot with complicated data programs. While these projects were mostly recreational, Simon used these projects as a basis for his more complicated projects.

As for what to expect in the future, Juknelis has a whole list of plans on the back burner. For one thing, he hopes to create an app that aids students preparing to take the SAT. This app would primarily rely on the usage of artificial intelligence (AI), as it would



(Photo Credit: Avery Winder)

generate questions specifically tailored to a student’s strengths and weaknesses. Juknelis is also planning to roll out a new website for the Peer Tutoring Program. He expects the website to function similarly to the website students use to sign up for assembly, where students would be able to check to see when tutors are available and what subjects they specialize in. Simon hopes that this new website will simplify the process for those looking for tutors and encourage more students to take advantage of their peers for extra help.

For those who are interest-

ed in getting into the coding field, Juknelis has several suggestions for classes they can take. He strongly recommends taking AP Java and Web Development, both of which he believes allow students to gain experience in coding while still being in a fun, welcoming environment. Juknelis also advocates for coding students to utilize AI as a tool in their coding process. He said, “AI can really help with [coding]...it can look at your code and give you a general idea of what you may want to [input].” As seen through his projects, Juknelis has left a tremendous

impact on the communities surrounding him. Though Juknelis achieved this change specifically through his coding skills, Juknelis’ path in using his talents for the public good serves as a lesson to us all. Rather than hide our skills out of fear or embarrassment, find a way to apply these unique skill sets to aid those around us. “Try to do a [project] based on something you’re interested in, and make sure this project is easy to do in stages...[this step] is a really good way to improve your coding [skills],” Juknelis said.

The Best Christmas Trees at Nobles

Owen Harrington
Staff Writer



The halls of Shattuck are filled with holiday cheer as students and teachers alike are eagerly awaiting the rapidly approaching winter break. While this excitement is palpable, the decorations are heavily lacking. We may find the occasional string of lights or discarded candy cane, but what we really need is a towering centerpiece to sit in the middle of Gleason Hall. So, I have set off scouring campus to find the perfect Christmas tree to increase holiday spirit at school. There is an art to picking the perfect tree. It must have strong branches to hold a vast collection of ornaments and an eye-catching shape that will complement the space that it fills. That being said, on a campus with such diversity in foliage, it would be a shame to restrict ourselves to the classic frasier firs and white pines that normally grace living rooms across the world. As a result, some of the trees on this list may seem slightly non-traditional at first, but I assure you that they will be perfect to complete the school.



(Photo Credit: Zack Mittelstadt)

Tree 1: A birch from the beach. The stand of white birches are a wonderful source of shade and style which perfectly compliment the fun environment of the beach, but I don’t think Buildings and Grounds would mind if we moved just one inside. They are a bit tall, but if we trim a little off the bottom, one should fit perfectly. A few white twinkling lights and some fake dusted snow scattered on and around the tree would go far in transforming Gleason into a cheerful winter wonderland.



(Photo Credit: Zack Mittelstadt)

Tree 2: Charlie Brown tree near library. While this tree is small and perhaps sickly, it has an undeniable charm. It would certainly have no trouble fitting in the space, and the tree would be beautiful with colorful lights and ornaments draped on its small yet sturdy branches. It would serve as a wonderful reminder that looks can be deceiving and even the smallest of trees can bring the greatest holiday charm to see us through the dark and challenging winter months.



(Photo Credit: Zack Mittelstadt)

Tree 3: Already cut down tree in front of the MAC. I would imagine that members of EAC would not be happy reading through this list of charming trees that I am eager to chop down. To limit backlash, I propose that we use one that has already been cut down. While we would need to track it down, the great oak which once welcomed us to the MAC would be a perfect addition to Gleason hall. Some giant ornaments would perfectly adorn its huge branches and be exceptional for completing the space.

While I may be partial to the birches, any of these trees, decorated with plenty of lights and ornaments, would make an excellent addition to the holiday atmosphere of the school, and as long as Mr. McHugh doesn’t find out, it’s time to get chopping.

Opinion

Gibson/Nozea Holiday Hot Takes

Morgan Gibson and
Nathan Nozea
Staff Writers



The holiday season is upon us! For many students, these weeks feel most like a countdown to winter, so hopefully these Holiday Hot Takes will entertain you between the grind, and remind you that sometimes it's okay to be right. Note that these are both Morgan's and Nathan's genuine opinions on these topics: square up about them if you want to accept the challenge. So grab yourself a cup of cocoa because these takes are pipin' hot.

THIS HOLIDAY, DISCOVER YOUR INNER ELF.



Elf

To start off our list of hot takes, we'll first take a look at Elf, a movie that is dubbed by many as the "best holiday film of all time."

Nathan:
Ignoring the sheer absurdity of this statement, Elf is—without a doubt—a trainwreck of a story. The movie revolves around a character named Buddy, who attempts to reconnect with his family after he was accidentally brought to the North Pole. Though Will Ferrell tries to bring a certain charm to the movie's comedy, most of the jokes end up falling flat. Cringy, dragged-out scenes meant to elicit only a cheap laugh from the audience left me with a strong feeling of second-hand embarrassment, as I silently counted the minutes until the end of this travesty. Not only is the comedy horrendous, but the message of the movie itself is superficial and surface-level. Through Buddy's conflict with his dad, the film tries to embrace the idea that the Christmas spirit is for everyone, regardless of your age. This "message" is unbelievably unfathomable. As an adult, why do you feel the need to act like a child? Maybe instead focus on tax season, or try growing your LinkedIn profile.

Morgan:
Elf is a holiday classic for good reason. I know that, personally, I have not gone one year without laying my eyes on this magnificent work of film. Will Ferrell's comedic timing and true embodiment of Buddy the Elf make

Elf a film for the whole family. Elf's lighthearted plot appeals to younger audiences, while its setting in present day New York and ability to address many aspects of Christmas specific to adults make it relatable to even those old and gray. Furthermore, Elf perfectly encapsulates the importance of family, especially during the Holidays. Buddy's biological father Walter's ability to recognize that family is far more important than a job (a reality that may be shocking to some) reminds adults to put down their computers once in a while and spend time with the ones that they love. Finally, Elf touches on the importance of individuality. While I will admit that Buddy makes some questionable choices throughout the film, his insistence on staying true to himself serves as an inspiration to all.

Marshmallows



Nathan:
While some might argue that they are revolting, none can deny that they are a staple on any sort of holiday-themed drink. Whether on eggnog or hot chocolate, marshmallows add a perfect sense of sweetness and creaminess to whatever drink they're added to. Not to mention, marshmallows bring a sense of nostalgia to the holiday season. Every bite sends you back to your younger ages, when you sat around the campfire telling stories, or built a snowman with your own two hands. You would be remiss not to include marshmallows in your holiday season festivities.

Morgan:
Marshmallows are terrible. Yes. I said it. Sorry, not sorry. Someone had to say it. I don't make the rules; I just follow them. Not only are do they lack any nutritional value, but they really are not that good. While some might argue that they are perfect for treats such as hot chocolate, hot chocolate is already sweet. Why in the world do you need to further sweetness to your beverage? Not only that, but when the marshmallows get soaked in hot chocolate, they become so slimy—why would you want to ingest that? Your body should be a temple. The only acceptable setting for marshmallows is s'mores. Point. Blank. Period.

The Polar Express

Nathan:
When you think of The Polar Express, what do you visualize? An animated Christmas classic that is still watched years after its release date? A heartwarming story that highlights the magic of the Christmas season? If you believe in any of these statements, you are simply wrong for one reason: the



fact that all of the characters look like they were animated by somebody who forgot what humans look like. Every time I tune in to watch this movie with my family, I have to mentally prepare myself for the horrors that lie within. Just looking at the facial expressions of each character is a challenge for me, and I have to hold back tears of joy when the movie screen finally fades to black. It is for this reason alone that this movie is not even a top 10 Christmas movie.

Morgan:
While I admit the animation for The Polar Express could be better, nothing can match the nostalgia and joy I feel when viewing the film. From the magical world of the North Pole to which the movie transports us, to the message of always believing, The Polar Express is the true embodiment of what it means to care more about the journey than the destination. I know for me, personally, my Granddaddy read The Polar Express book to my sister and me when we were young, and the film reminds me and countless others of simpler times. Last but certainly not least, the soundtrack for the film is a cinematic and musical magnum opus. If your ears have not been blessed with the sweet sounds of a conductor raving about the existence of hot chocolate, go to Spotify right now and take a gander. You will not regret it. "You can do miracles when you believe" - Polar Express Soundtrack. I mean, come on.

Santa



Nathan:
To end this list off with a bang, we'll now discuss the man, the myth, the legend: Saint Nicholas, better known to many as Santa Claus. Praised for his supposedly "good deeds," children around the world act on their best behavior during the Christmas season, hoping it will lead to them receiving a gift. But is the so-called jolly old Saint Nick truly a good person? Think about it. Rather than do all the work himself, Santa Claus instead forces a species of small people to

package all the gifts. While the elves labor intensely, Santa Claus sits in his office all day, snacking on the cookies he steals from the tables of people's homes. Even when Santa Claus goes out to give gifts to the children, he still relies on the help of his reindeer to deliver the presents. With millions upon millions of presents on their backs, these poor reindeers are forced to carry a burdensome load through a cold, dark night, unable to stop or take any breaks. At the same time, Santa Claus ignores their suffering, instead choosing to simply shout, "Ho ho ho," in order to maintain his facade of benevolent gift-giver. Clearly, Santa Claus is a tyrannical employer, who should never be respected by the general public.

Morgan:
An age-old question, the answer to this debate is clear. Santa is a great person, who is an integral aspect of Christmas and a role model for children around the world. Santa sparks magic in the world like none other and gives young children and adults a reason to keep going, even when the weight of the world seems to crush your spirit. Do you know how much work it is to provide toys and presents for every single child on earth? No, you don't. The only one who truly does is Santa because that is exactly what he does. Year after year without fail. Just because Santa knows the true meaning of teamwork, he is not any worse of a person. Santa relies on his elves and reindeer because he knows that they will get the job done. Finally, his catch phrase of "Ho, ho, ho" reminds all of his presence and how—even when it is not Christmas—doing good is not a difficult ask.

Hopefully, these Hot Takes brought you some cheer! In the words of NSYNC, Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays from The Nobleman!



(All images on this page were found online or generated with AI)

Feature

Q&A: Nobleman Alumni Spotlight

Sienna Robertson
Staff Writer



Has your time on The Nobleman influenced your career path/education? If so, how?

Anushka Harve (AH): I joined [my school's] newspaper when I got to college, and I've been a news editor [for The Chicago Maroon] now for a couple of years.



(Photo Credit: Anushka Harve)

Ryan Sanghavi (RS): Not in the slightest. Journalism is a great way to get involved with a school community, but I haven't considered it as a career path. Not to mention that The Chicago Maroon at my current school is child's play compared to The Nobleman. **Chris Tillen (CT):** The Nobleman has certainly influenced my educational experience! While I'm unsure if I want to pursue journalism as a career path, The Nobleman taught me a lot about myself as a writer and a person. The Nobleman was an amazing introduction to journalism and helped me grow while encouraging me to involve myself more deeply with the Nobles com-

munity. I've continued to pursue journalism in college and am working towards becoming a beat reporter for our official newspaper by second semester! **What was The Nobleman like when you were on its staff? What kinds of articles did you write? How did The Nobleman approach current events?** **AH:** The 2019-2020 year was fun but difficult. Starting off, we were an entirely new team—that is, with new advisors—and of course, the hardest part was adjusting when the pandemic started. Personally, I learned so much about leadership and working in a team. I still share stories from that year in interviews, and I know I'll use the learnings when I start working next year. **RS:** My time on The Nobleman can be characterized in part by the troubled communications between staff and administrators, and, regrettably, the mistrust that allegedly arose between faculty and Nobleman contributors...It would be dishonest to say that a great many of our articles did not involve critiques of the administration and faculty. One of these would be when, after Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, I wrote a news piece titled, "Admin Shut Down Ukraine National Anthem Performance, Urge Other Ways to Support Cause" (vol. 111, no. 8) after the Chamber Singers' plan to perform at assembly was voided. A trouble with our paper is that the editors, myself included, at times actively sought out controversy. This does not necessarily

represent the journalistic integrity that we strove for... I'm sure that the Head of School and the Head of the Upper School compromised with us where they could, and I appreciate that looking back. **CT:** I really enjoyed my two years spent on The Nobleman! It was amazing to see the paper through two different perspectives, and I'm glad I had the chance to work with so many incredible people. I was able to write a wide range of articles, from satire to feature. I am specifically grateful for the chance I had to bring awareness to community-wide issues. Some of those articles include my writing on accessibility at Nobles, student complaints on faculty behavior, and the ramifications of Nobles' predominantly white history.



(Photo Credit: Ryan Sanghavi)

What was your favorite part about being on The Nobleman? **AH:** A moment I'll never forget is getting a handwritten letter from an alum, who had read an article I had written about how difficult it was to adjust to the Nobles community when I moved in 10th grade, particularly how I

felt such a loss of my own sense of identity and culture. She related to the feelings I expressed and shared her story with me. We corresponded over email for a while, and I even met her in person when she visited campus! It's moments of connection like that, even ones you don't know about, that draw me to journalism. **RS:** Layout weekend. Our editorial board was perhaps the most bipolar coherent group on campus. The terrible disagreements over what ought to be published, how articles should be titled, and who should get to make the decisions contrasted incredibly with the games of Pictionary that we played on the AC walls while we put the paper together. Sometimes you'll learn more about a group of complete strangers after spending ten straight hours with them than you'll know about your own friends. **CT:** My favorite part of The Nobleman was interviewing members of our community! I also loved the opportunity I had to share people's stories and then see change occur within Nobles. **What advice would you give to current and prospective The Nobleman staff?** **AH:** Think about what you really want to get out of the experience – honestly, this applies to anything you do in high school. What skills, soft or hard, do you want to develop? What do you want to communicate to the community? Who do you want to learn from? Brainstorming about these questions will help orient

you as you figure out who you are and what you want to do in life. **RS:** Controversy in articles needs to come naturally. Look for it and you'll find it, but you will also upset a great deal of community members. And, should I add, always find an ally in every activity you do. People naturally arrange themselves into blocs, and if you're in a bloc by yourself, you will never have the leverage to have a say in any matter. People who walk through the world alone tend not to have any effect on it. **CT:** Journalism is about lis-



(Photo Credit: Chris Tillen)

tening, and the strength of The Nobleman lies in the community it represents. The Nobleman, and Nobles in general, are very supportive and close environments. I encourage people to push beyond their comfort zone and interview people from every part of campus and even beyond. I think that we are at our best when we lead with our ears and listen to all perspectives.

Faces of Nobles: Kris Ahl, the Heart and Smile at the Front Desk

Emilie Andrews
Staff Writer



If you ever walk through Nobles' main entrance, you can count on a friendly face waiting to greet you and welcome you to campus. Perhaps you better know her from regular "lost and found" emails or the candy that sits on her desk. The wonderful Receptionist Kris Ahl truly is the face of Nobles. Ahl began her time at Nobles in 2017, after previously taking a break from work, and looking for something flexible. "I had been at home for 9 years and was looking for something to do.

"The good thing about this job is that I probably get to work with almost everybody. I work with the Academic Office, Admissions Office, Business Office, and of course, all the students and teachers."

The hours and location were perfect and everyone seemed super nice," Ahl said. As a local Ded-

ham resident, Ahl knew some parents and a previous faculty member before joining the Nobles community. After working at Nobles for the last six years, Ahl has her daily schedule down to a tee. She arrives at school around 7:30 a.m. and spends the morning helping out the class deans with assembly attendance, checking in late arrivals, and any other attendance concerns parents or guardians may have. She greets each student, faculty member, and visitor with a warm smile. As her job requires maintaining a strong presence at the front desk, Ahl has the opportunity to interact with a large majority of the community. "The good thing about this job is that I probably get to work with almost everybody. I work with the Academic Office, Admissions Office, Business Office, and of course, all the students and teachers," she said. Ahl spends the majority of her days working to communicate parent concerns, process packages that arrive, and greet campus visitors and prospective students. She does her best to answer parents' questions and direct nervous applicants to their next destination. Ahl departs from the front desk at 3:00 p.m. each day, just as the academic day comes to a close. In addition to compiling parent emails and directing cam-

pus visitors, Ahl is in charge of lost items at Nobles. On Fridays, you likely see a lost and found email in your inbox listing the items turned in to the front desk throughout the week. "The dreaded lost and found emails...I try to just send out one email on Friday unless it is something more urgent like a computer, phone, or keys" Ahl said. Previously, Ahl sent out an email anytime something was turned in, but she has begun to streamline the system this year in an effort to decrease the number of emails sent. Additionally, Ahl described how surprising it was that often people don't turn in a lost phone or item if they see it in shared spaces on campus. "What may be surprising to everybody

"You definitely have to be able to be personable and capable of starting any kind of conversation."

is that nobody picks up anybody else's stuff," Ahl said. She also noted that most often, nobody claims loose bills that get turned in unless they have just recently lost them. In addition to being known for her weekly lost and found emails, students often stop by Ahl's desk while passing through the corridor. On the side of the



(Photo Credit: Coffee pond)

front desk is a small bowl of candy, usually holding a variety of lollipops or hard candy. Ahl has started this small tradition in an effort to brighten up the school day with a little sweetness. Ahl feels very connected to the community, despite her often brief interactions with students. Ahl said "I feel like I am connected to a lot of people on campus; some I see every day, others I don't see as much. But I'm lucky in the way that I get to connect with more people than if I was in an office or a classroom." Being the face of the school and sitting at the front desk requires certain characteristics in a person. When discussing what one needs to exhibit in her position, Ahl said, "You definitely

have to be able to be personable and capable of starting any kind of conversation." Ahl does just this. She is easy to talk to and a wonderful presence on campus.

"I feel like I am connected to a lot of people on campus; some I see every day, others I don't see as much. But I'm lucky in the way that I get to connect with more people than if I was in an office or a classroom."

Regardless of whether she is doing work behind the scenes or saying hello in the morning, you can count on Ahl to be there if you need someone to talk to or are just having trouble operating the attendance system. When discussing the lost and found emails, Ahl notes that some students have thought that the emails are merely automated and that she is not, in fact, a real faculty member here, but just an email server. Hopefully, it is now clear that Kris Ahl is so much more than just a name behind the emails. Her positivity and work ethic is part of what makes this community so strong.

Satire

Gift Giving 101: Teacher Edition

Sienna Robertson
Staff Writer

Are you dreading the cold, gray finale of the first semester? Have you been pulling all-nighters in hopes that sleep deprivation will somehow fix your final semester grade? The Nobleman has a solution for those of you who answered “yes” to these questions. With the holidays approaching soon, gift-giving has been rated as the second most successful activity in improving one’s grade (second to studying). We created this hefty guide, which features five gift ideas certified by scientists, who have been dedicated to improving high school students’ grades since the early 20th century. These gifts have been proven to increase your grade instantaneously*.

Disclaimer: Not every gift has a successful outcome (1 of every 600 Nobles students receives positive feedback). *Time is relative.

Gift #1: A pillow (Optional: Wet it with your tears!) According to past gift-givers, this gift can significantly boost your grade. The teacher receiving the pillow will not be able to even tell that it was in your possession originally, since it has likely never

been used. Who has time to sleep with weekly AP Euro tests? Insomnia is a serious medical problem, and we are 97% sure that no teacher wants to be the cause of it. So, this gift to your teacher is, in actuality, an extra throw pillow and a reminder of their offenses.

Gift #2: A weighted blanket The weighted blanket is a gift that has been carefully curated to be a game changer for the gift receiver, regarding the hours of sleep that they get at night. For Nobles students, we would suggest that you withstand any urges to keep the blanket for yourself. The weighted blanket will be greatly appreciated by your teachers. We suggest gifting your first-period teachers this blanket, considering they’ll be pinned down by comfort and may simply forget about teaching for a bit.

Gift #3: Gallon of Sprite paired with a Home Depot bucket filled with gummy bears We do not suggest gifting this to any other teacher besides Oris Bryant, primarily because you will get a very weird look from any other teacher. Definitely gift these items to Bryant, though! Whether your goal is as impossible as making the Boys’ Varsity Basketball team or getting your HHC essay back within 3



(Photo Credit: Chris Tillen)

months, this double-decker gift will make any impossibility for Bryant possible. If you’re concerned about providing a gallon of soda to an adult, do not fret! Bryant’s body is said to be roughly 70% Sprite instead of water.

Gift #4: An apple An oldie, but goodie. Teachers love apples! Scientists have not come to a conclusion as to why teachers enjoy them so much. One can infer that it is because one of

these scarlet fruits a day “keeps the doctor away,” and teachers appreciate that their students care about their health so much that they would offer them the remedy of all remedies—a passing grade.

Gift #5: A cozy cardigan This final gift works primarily on the English Department. Some students can recall seeing their English teachers shivering in the Academic Center classrooms and possibly developing hypothermia

from the cold. Unbeknownst to the teachers, this chill that they’re feeling is not even remotely real and the students in the classroom are actually burning from the heating system. This is why we recommend a cozy cardigan to give to your English teachers, mainly for a placebo effect. They’ll be extremely thankful for your thoughtfulness and throw in an A or two on your essays.

A Winter DITL of a Student Driver

Emma Sawatzky
Staff Writer

Your breath is visible in the air once again, and frost has begun to glaze over the chilled mornings. With down jackets and wool sweaters back in style, all signs point to one annual epiphany: winter is upon us. In some ways, the transition to colder temperatures merely marks the passage of time. The first semester is coming to a close, summer tans have faded, and the Beach longs for the return of Spikeball matches. However, student drivers know that taking the wheel during this season presents

its own novel sense of opportunity. Imagine this: you’ve woken up to your car blanketed in white, snow coating the windshield like wrapping paper covering your gift from Santa. In a moment of frailty, you consider doing what a weak and timid driver would do. You might elect to root through the trunk to find the ice scraper that may or may not exist, or even start the engine to allow the car to thaw and retreat back to the warmth of your home in the meantime. However, you have three missed assemblies and are knocking on detention’s door if you don’t hustle to Lawrence this morning. The parking situation at the MAC has been anything but jolly, and you’ll

do whatever it takes to avoid the walk of shame to North in the 4 p.m. darkness. Therefore, the only logical way to proceed is to do absolutely nothing out of the ordinary. Confidence is key as you take the wheel and floor the gas pedal, despite your glacial blindfold. You know the route to school like the back of your hand—and don’t they say that a loss of one sense heightens the others? Winter is the perfect time to crank the volume up for holiday chart-toppers, an escape from reality and aural delight. Bestow the gift of your vocal capabilities on those in your carpool, or FaceTime a friend if you get lonely (after all, the snow on your window conveniently shields you from the invasive eyes of policemen). Winter can bring out the worst in less resilient drivers, so the best thing to do is drown out their pesky complaints with carols and serenades—if you can’t hear a thing, they probably aren’t honking! After your long school day, the time between last class and Afternoon Program carries great promise in terms of winter cheer. For many, childhood memories of snow are punctuated by sledding with friends and family. Except now you’re at least 16 and a half, and this fan-favorite activity is in need of a serious makeover. Why use a sled when you can soar through the air in your motor vehicle? It’s best to start off small with jumps, in order to test the waters of your car’s capabilities. With fall teams no longer monopolizing the



(Photo Credit: Zack Mittelstadt)

athletic fields, Mason and Almy will soon resemble a mountain terrain park. Although rails and boxes may not be compatible with your Jeep Wrangler, the ramps built on Nobles fields offer great promise to thrill-seeking drivers. After getting the warmup jumps out of the way, the sky will quite literally be the limit when students begin constructing a half-pipe, made entirely of snow, for the first annual Nobles Big Air contest. The X-Games will find a rival in such vehicular prowess,

as we have all witnessed that students’ faith in their cars knows no bounds. Shouts of pure joy will ring out across campus, reminding community members that this engineering feat will become a sacred winter constant. Though seemingly eternal for Nobles students, this winter season only sticks around for a few months of the year. Cherish these unique conditions, and revel in the opportunity to prove your recently licensed selves.



(Photo Credit: DALL-E)

Student Life

Nobles’ Holiday Lineup (continued)

(continued from page 1)

the same weight of religious importance as some other Jewish holidays. Sara Shaff (Class II) said, “It’s not an extremely meaningful holiday to the [Jewish] religion. It doesn’t have the significance that Passover and Rosh Hashanah do.” Still, its emphasis on family, love, and charity resonates deeply within the Nobles community.

Charity is an essential element of celebrating Hanukkah. Building in significance each night, gifts are often given to children by their parents after lighting the menorah and engaging in certain religious practices. Charity to underprivileged families is also invoked through donation gifts, aligning the holiday with warmth and connection. “It’s a good way to give back in a time where a lot of people aren’t fortunate enough to receive gifts,” Shaff said.



However, Hanukkah falls before winter break this year, forcing Jewish students to navigate their celebrations during school nights. The condensed timeline of the holiday will likely amplify students’ workload and create mounting stress with tests approaching. Shaff said, “With a regular night’s full workload, it’s often hard to find time to pause and celebrate [Hanukkah] with my family. We sometimes have to celebrate in just five minutes, which detracts from the meaning of the holiday.” Although Jewish students will combine celebrations with school work, the essence of Hanukkah—love for family and friends, Jewish tradition, and winter spirit—remains throughout the week. “The holiday is about fun times with family, everyone coming together to celebrate, and spread-



ing winter spirit,” Shaff said. Additionally, Kwanzaa is celebrated by many African Americans from December 25 to January 1 to commemorate the history, heritage, and principles of pan-African culture. Each day is dedicated to important cultural values—unity, self-determination, collective responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith—acknowledged through a daily candle-lighting ceremony. Reflective of Hanukkah in some ways, this ceremony is often preceded by gifts for children. These celebrations build family connections, join communities together, and amplify the festivity of the winter season. Culminating in a grand feast, known as the karamu, on the fi-



nal day, Kwanzaa fosters reflection on pan-African heritage and tradition. Mahali Cook-Wright (Class III) said, “It’s about culture and returning to roots.” Kwanzaa is celebrated through Jamaican culture for Cook-Wright, as she enjoys the karamu with traditional Jamaican cuisine shared among her family. Although rooted in Kwanzaa, such celebrations appear diversely throughout different countries and cultures. Some, like Cook-Wright, engage in customary feasts, while others partake in the song, dance, or music of their heritage. For many, including Cook-Wright, these traditions cultivate connection, honor heritage, and reconnect with African roots, epitomiz-



ing the true essence of Kwanzaa. Despite the underrepresentation of holidays like Hanukkah and Kwanzaa, the winter season overflows with festive spirit at Nobles through these celebrations. They serve as opportunities to further connections with loved ones, reconnect with distant relatives, and enjoy time away from the strenuous school year. Happy holidays!



The Impact of Commuting on Student Life

Owen Harrington
Staff Writer



Every morning, Nobles community members roll out of bed and set off to campus in hopes of arriving before 8:00 a.m. While the mad dash to assembly is an experience shared by all, the commute to and from school looks drastically different for each person and can have significant, often unnoticed, impacts on their ability to finish work, get adequate sleep, or participate in extracurricular activities.

In a poll conducted across the student body, it was found that a large majority of students spend less than 30 minutes traveling to school each morning, with over 45% of students spending less than 20 minutes driving. Meanwhile, about 10% of students reported spending 45 minutes in their commute each morning with many students needing over an hour. On average, students reported even longer trips home in the evenings, with over 15% of students spending over 45 minutes in the car. While these longer commute times only affect a relatively small portion of the larger community, they have a significant impact on those students which can influence the school as a whole.

One of the primary difficulties students who live far away face is the lack of sleep caused by longer drives. A lengthy commute in the morning often requires an earlier alarm, and a prolonged drive after school delays homework later into the evening, eating up sleeping time on both ends. Henry McLane (Class IV), whose drive can easily be over an hour each way, said, “It can become really challenging to get home, finish your work, and then get up

again in the morning having gotten enough sleep.” Sleep deprivation has repeatedly been proven to worsen academic and athletic performance which aligns with sentiments felt by students. In addition, sleep deprivation significantly impacts one’s ability to drive safely. This is especially relevant as about 22% of all students drive themselves to school. Sleep-deprived young drivers spending extended periods of time each day on busy roads creates the possibility for unsafe situations which could result in potentially fatal accidents. Therefore, it is important that student drivers are cognizant of their limits and strive to get enough sleep in order to be as safe as they possibly can. However, this can be difficult given the challenges that come with having a long commute to school.

The morning commute specifically can be a significant driver of stress for students given the importance placed on arriving at assembly by 8:00 a.m. This anxiety

is only exacerbated by the variability in drive times due to traffic or possible accidents. Yiling Ding (Class IV) said, “The amount of time it takes to get to school each morning is entirely reliant on the amount of traffic that day. Mid-week is often the worst and can easily be half an hour longer than Friday or the weekend. Accidents are entirely unpredictable and can interfere with any day of the week.” As a result, students with longer commutes have to build significant buffer time in their mornings

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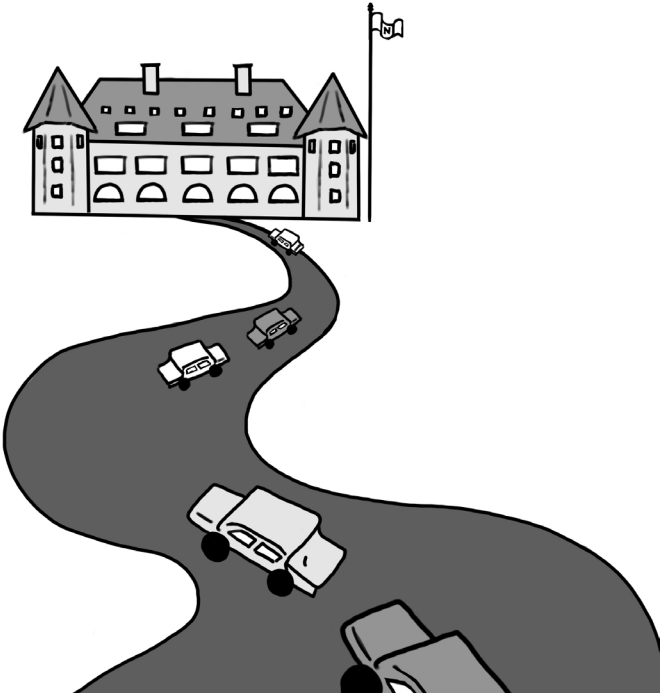
(Photo Credit: Zack Mittelstadt)

is only exacerbated by the variability in drive times due to traffic or possible accidents. Yiling Ding (Class IV) said, “The amount of time it takes to get to school each morning is entirely reliant on the amount of traffic that day. Mid-week is often the worst and can easily be half an hour longer than Friday or the weekend. Accidents are entirely unpredictable and can interfere with any day of the week.” As a result, students with longer commutes have to build significant buffer time in their mornings

should issues arise on the roads. Emilio Manz (Class II), who often spends over 45 minutes driving to school each day, said, “I get here early most mornings just in case of unexpected traffic. I can never count on the drive staying the same from one day to the next.”

The lasting impact of COVID-19 also continues to have a significant effect on the traffic patterns that students have to deal with. The number of people on the road significantly decreased for a few years due to remote work opportunities, but now workers are returning to the office and creating more traffic. “My commute has been much longer this year primarily because of people returning to the office. My drive was far shorter when people were working from home,” Harper Tyng (Class III) said. This led to a shock for many drivers who had to adjust to these changes at the beginning of the school year, which highlights the variability that traffic causes for commutes to school.

Because of the challenges that long commutes can pose, it is important that we continue to remain aware of these difficulties and be patient with affected students as they strive to do their best work while simultaneously getting enough sleep and staying safe on the roads.



(Graphic Credit: Wudiana Fevrier)

Student Life

Nobles Hockey Returns: a Flood-Marr and Harrington Preview

Clare Struzziery
Staff Writer

 For hockey players, the start of winter break means the Flood-Marr and Harrington Tournaments. These three days of hockey encapsulate a rich tradition and intense rivalry, featuring some of the best teams in independent school hockey. Hosted jointly by Nobles and Milton Academy, each tournament contains eight schools. Flood-Marr began in 1965 and Harrington in 1972, so generations of hockey players have engaged in spirited competition against four different teams in a four-game format. These tournaments serve as important venues for teams to come together at the beginning of the season and provide a lot of exciting competition. These tournaments have long served to kick-start the seasons of Nobles hockey teams, though the early timing of these events presents a unique challenge for both teams. “We only have a couple of games before to prepare,” Tyler Bloomfield (Class I) said. However, this challenge can make teams stronger. “It’s about coming together. Flood-Marr is usually where you find out your team’s identity, and it sets the tone for the rest of the season,”

Teddy MacAusland (Class II) said.

“It’s about coming together. Flood-Marr is usually where you find out your team’s identity, and it sets the tone for the rest of the season.”

This sentiment was echoed among the girls’ captains. “It’s something we really look forward to, and it’s a big test for us early on in the season,” Captain Sophia Levering (Class I) said. The four-game format is unique and serves as a bonding point for teams both on and off the ice. It is the one day of the year when hockey teams have doubleheaders, and that day, in particular, is “one of the days that turns our team into a team,” Captain Ainsley Gray (Class I) said.

Last year, Nobles Boys Varsity Hockey placed fifth in the Flood-Marr Tournament. Despite a setback in the first game against Hotchkiss, they bounced back with victories against Kimball Union and Westminster, finishing 2-1. However, after a three-way tie, they were seeded third in their division. The team clinched their final game with a 6-3 win over Deerfield. In 2021, the boys

won Flood-Marr after defeating Salisbury, who were that year’s NEPSAC champions, and concluded with an exciting final win against rival Milton Academy. Regarding the final game, Ethan Cox (Class II) said, “It was just a gritty game that we were able to win by working a little bit harder.”

In last year’s Harrington Tournament, Nobles Girls Varsity Hockey secured a third-place finish. They beat Westminster and BB&N before losing a



tough game against Williston Northampton, a team rival. They went on to defeat St. Paul’s in their final game, ultimately taking third place in the tournament.

In 2021, the girls won the Harrington Tournament after victories over Lawrence Academy, Westminster, St. Mark’s, and finally, Williston. For this year’s captains, the environments of these games are still memorable. “Playing back-to-back with everyone, and the Omni being so packed

with teams and coaches, I think it makes a great environment,” Captain Olivia Maffeo (Class I) said.

This year, Nobles Boys Varsity Hockey is setting its sights on a Flood-Marr victory. “We know what it takes to go far in that tournament,” Bloomfield said. Their biggest competition for this year’s title? Kimball Union, Salisbury, and of course, Milton. Nobles-Milton matchups have been frequent and fierce in the history of this tournament. “It’s always a good game when we play them,” MacAusland said.

“We know what it takes to go far in that tournament.”

According to Bloomfield, the boys have a younger team this year. “[Last year’s] seniors graduating just creates an opportunity for the team. It’s just another role for the juniors and seniors to step into to fill those shoes,” Bloomfield said. Cox mirrored his sentiments, saying, “We’re gonna play a fast, physical game, and be able to score a lot of goals.”


The girls’ captains’ goals for the season include a victory in the Harrington Tournament. This year, the tradition is extra special for the team, as it will be Coaches Tom Resor and Steve Cedorchuk’s

final Harrington Tournament. “I think our season will embody playing for something bigger than yourself because Mr. Resor has been here longer than any of us, and he’s one of the most important people in our lives,” Captain Jaime Griswold (Class I) said.

Their main rivals for the girls’ tournament include Williston, Andover, and Milton. Playing Williston in the Harrington is important, as Nobles doesn’t have a regular season game against them. It is Nobles’ chance to play them before potentially meeting in the NEPSAC tournament. The captains have outlined how their team can achieve success in the tournament and beyond. “We need to focus more on not the past, but every single game working to prove ourselves and playing with an underdog mentality,” Griswold said. The girls’ team is younger this year, too. Although this can be challenging, it presents a chance to create a new legacy. “We want to be able to leave this team in the best state possible,” Gray said. The tournaments represent important goals for both teams and all members of the Nobles community can support the players by making it out to these exciting games.

Do Middle School Students Like Recess?

Emma Sawatzky
Staff Writer

 Every day at 10:45 am, the doors of Pratt Middle School are thrown open, releasing Class V and VI students for recess. For the next thirty minutes, shrieks of joy ring out from McLeod field to the jealous ears of Upper School students. The ‘recess shed’ is a cache of Spikeball nets and frisbees just waiting to be used by young students. Currently, recess is undoubtedly a pillar of the Middle School experience—but was it always this way?

While the pandemic brought immense disruption to the school, it also opened up space for a reassessment of student wellness at Nobles. “There’s really not a clear North Star in terms of what are best practices,” Assistant Head of Middle School Colette Finley said.

“There’s really not a clear North Star in terms of what are best practices.”

After spending months on Zoom, the administration opened up conversations about a break from technology and academic work, along with the chance for physical movement in a packed school day.

When first implemented in the old schedule, recess was inconsistent and favored the schedules of certain students

over others. However, when the new schedule was launched, health and wellness were among the bedrock principles, designating recess as a priority.

The consistency of recess was also regarded as a community-building tool. “If you don’t see your friends in English class, at least you’re seeing them at recess,” Finley said. Middle School administrators liken the principles behind recess to those of Afternoon Program.

“As an institution, we don’t just value a report card. We value how we get along as a community.”

Especially in the Middle School, there is a certain commitment to developing the whole person, not just the academic side. Although Nobles is a proud academic institution, an emphasis on connection remains a top priority. “As an institution, we don’t just value a report card. We value how we get along as a community,” Finley said.

Providing this social, screen-free environment, for even thirty minutes a day, remains crucial to mental health. With the rise of technology, especially in the educational sphere, the inclusion of midday exercise is a logical step toward happier and healthier students.

“There’s a lot of research around the brain [emphasizing that] if you take breaks, you’ll ac-



(Photo Credit: Zack Mittelstadt)

tually be more efficient,” Finley said. “And I would say the majority of kids, I think, really do like it,” she added. “They’re just so excited.” By late morning, it seems middle schoolers are itching to stretch their legs with friends. “I’m for recess because I like having the break between classes,” Tenley Ponikiewicz (Class VI) said.

Although Ponikiewicz appreciates the break, it’s evident that the structured nature of recess still leaves something to be desired. “I do like recess, but I want the Upper School schedule,” Ponikiewicz added. “I’d rather have a free like high schoolers do.” Class VI and V students appreciate the pause in their academic day, but from time to time would prefer a more open-ended format.

Certain middle schoolers noted they would prefer to use recess time for homework, raising questions about their work-

load. Although administrators are constantly reevaluating middle schoolers’ amounts of work, it’s a fine line to walk, and there is no clear path to what is best for students. “I think it’s really hard to collect that data, and I think that certain kids work at different paces,” Finley said.

In general, middle schoolers have around an hour and a half to two hours of homework per night. “That feels right,” Finley said. However, it can feel overwhelming for students when it is their first semester at Nobles. “When kids are used to maybe having no homework, we have a lot of homework,” Finley said. The administration is constantly reevaluating, but students and teachers alike are still working to settle into the new schedule. “I know the teachers try to not make

it too much,” Ponikiewicz said.

Furthermore, kids aren’t bound absolutely to this thirty-minute block. Though most will find themselves on McLeod field, teachers are accommodating to more pressing matters that may arise. If middle schoolers need to meet with an advisor or cram for a next-period test, they may elect to do so with permission from an administrator. “It’s not all or nothing,” Finley said. Even still, students are encouraged to use recess time as it is intended.

Although opinions on this topic vary, the Middle School core remains confident in the benefits of this idea. “We have principles behind it, reasons behind it, and we know that not everyone will love it. But we feel strongly that it should exist and that we want to make sure all kids take advantage of it,” Finley said.

Holiday

Matt Anderson
Layout Staff

12 Days of Nobles Christmas



[Verse 1]
On the first day of Christmas,
the Bulldawg sent to me
One month of no assembly.

[Verse 2]
On the second day of Christmas,
the Bulldawg sent to me
Two Sweeny sisters and
One month of no assembly.

[Verse 3]
On the third day of Christmas,
the Bulldawg sent to me
Three football wins
Two Sweeny sisters and
One month of no assembly.

[Verse 4]
On the fourth day of Christmas,
the Bulldawg sent to me
Four quarter tests
Three football wins
Two Sweeny sisters and
One month of no assembly.

[Verse 5]
On the fifth day of Christmas,
the Bulldawg sent to me
Five winter sports
Four quarter tests
Three football wins
Two Sweeny sisters and
One month of no assembly

[Verse 6]
On the sixth day of Christmas,
the Bulldawg sent to me
Six Marchant dress codes
Five winter sports
Four quarter tests
Three football wins
Two Sweeny sisters and
One month of no assembly

[Verse 7]
On the seventh day of Christmas,
the Bulldawg sent to me
Seven days a-cycle
Six Marchant dress codes
Five winter sports
Four quarter tests
Three football wins
Two Sweeny sisters and
One month of no assembly.

[Verse 8]
On the eighth day of Christmas,
the Bulldawg sent to me
Eight Shrisays sneezing
Seven days a-cycle
Six Marchant dress codes
Five winter sports
Four quarter tests
Three football wins
Two Sweeny sisters and
One month of no assembly.

[Verse 9]
On the ninth day of Christmas,
the Bulldawg sent to me
Nine Wills a-strumming
Eight Shrisays sneezing
Seven days a-cycle
Six Marchant dress codes
Five winter sports
Four quarter tests
Three football wins
Two Sweeny sisters and
One month of no assembly.

[Verse 10]
On the tenth day of Christmas,
the Bulldawg sent to me
Ten ovations standing
Nine Shrisay's sneezing
Eight Will's a-strumming
Seven days a-cycle
Six Marchant dress codes
Five winter sports
Four quarter tests
Three football wins
Two Sweeny sisters and
One month of no assembly.

[Verse 11]
On the eleventh day of Christmas,
the Bulldawg sent to me
Eleven dancers dancing
Ten ovations standing
Nine Shrisay's sneezing
Eight Will's a-strumming
Seven days a-cycle
Six Marchant dress codes
Five winter sports
Four quarter tests
Three football wins
Two Sweeny sisters and
One month of no assembly.

[Verse 12]
On the twelfth day of Christmas,
the Bulldawg sent to me
Twelve snowball launchers
Eleven dancers dancing
Ten ovations standing
Nine Shrisay's sneezing
Eight Will's a-strumming
Seven days a-cycle
Six Marchant dress codes
Five winter sports
Four quarter tests
Three football wins
Two Sweeny sisters and
One month of no assembly.



Holiday

A Cozy Winter: TV Shows, Albums, and Books to Dive Into

Emilie Andrews
Staff Writer



If you're like me and struggling to find ways to spend your newfound free time this winter break, I've compiled a short list of books, TV shows, and albums for you to read, watch, and listen to this winter. To start, if you are traveling during break and need a way to spend long periods of time, I suggest downloading *The Queen's Gambit* on Netflix. This one-off drama, though only seven episodes long, is a gripping narrative of a young chess prodigy who comes into her own as she moves up the ladder of the chess-playing world. It doesn't matter how much you know about chess because *The Queen's Gambit* will educate you and take you through the thrills of becoming the best of the best.

If you are trying to get into the holiday spirit, go through the classic TV show *New Girl*, and find the four iconic Christmas episodes. Whether or not you've seen the entire series, check out Season 1 Episode 9, Season 2 Episode 11, Season 4 Episode 11, and Season 6 Episode 10. This feel-good and funny show is sure to get you through the cold weather, and excited for the holidays.

Lastly, in case you've some-

how forgotten about this classic, I am here to remind you to watch *Antiques Roadshow*. You might think you've had enough after viewing numerous clips during assembly, but no! The show has so much more to offer, and you never know what kinds of rarities might be found. Each episode is unique and chock-full of "real or fake" moments, with various treasures. The series never gets old and is perfect to fill extra time this winter break.

If you need some new music to try out over break, I have three different suggestions for you. The first, *So Tonight That I Might See*, by Mazzy Star, is a classic winter mix of songs that are beautifully melancholic and romantic. At just under an hour long, this album is perfect if you have just baked some cookies and need a way to pass the time while they cool. Or perhaps, the cold hasn't gotten to you and you need something to score a walk outside.

If Mazzy Star isn't your style, Noah Kahan is always a winter classic. All of his albums are perfect for the season, however, this winter I would recommend his 2021 album, *I Was / I Am*. Though brief—nearly half the length of the Mazzy Star album—*I Was / I Am* is perfect for part of a long drive or a quick trip to the grocery store. There is noth-

ing better than listening to this album all the way through while appreciating the winter scenery from the comfort of your car.

Finally, if you are in need of something to bring the Christmas cheer, bring back the classic *Charlie Brown Christmas* album, *A Charlie Brown Christmas*. This album can be background music for nearly any occasion: hosting a holiday party, completing your last college applications, or decorating your home with holiday decorations. *A Charlie Brown Christmas* is a lovely soundtrack to revisit this holiday season. Its peaceful piano melodies are sure to bring back old memories from Christmas past.

If you have additional time and want to enrich your break with a book, pick up the quick read *Anxious People*, by Fredrik Backman. *Anxious People* takes you through an apartment showing and explores the mix of characters inside. While containing a seemingly short plot, the book is full of witty details that allow you to get to know each character in depth. It's around 350 pages but will fly by in a free afternoon. If you are struggling with the shorter days, and encroaching darkness this break, *Anxious People* is a gripping narrative that will keep you awake through the darkness of the winter afternoons

If classics are more your style, I suggest you read *Just Kids*, by Patti Smith. While it's not your normal "classic" read, Patti Smith is a renowned artist who describes her life in partnership with Robert Maplethorpe and her time in New York City. It is a light read to help you relax this break. While it doesn't have many classic winter elements, *Just Kids* is a raw look into both Smith's life as a musician and her era in the music industry. *Just Kids* is a love letter to

rock music in the 70s, and I highly recommend you give it a try.

Last but certainly not least, for those cold evenings when you feel like reminiscing, go back through your old children's books and reread *A Pocket for Corduroy*, by Don Freeman. The beautiful graphics combined with the sweet story of a teddy bear that gets lost in the laundromat is sure to keep you warm and stress-free this winter. It's easy to read and worth the revisit.



(Graphic Credit: Wudiana Fevrier)

Independent Projects vs. Studies: What are They?

Morgan Gibson
Staff Writer



Despite the disappearance of senior projects, do not fret if you have an interest that you are passionate about pursuing. An Independent Project or Study might just be the very thing for you! Despite their similarities in name, Independent Projects and Studies are slightly different. Class I Dean Kim Genecco said, "An Independent Project is an aspect of our afternoon program that was designed to help students pursue an activity that they're passionate about that we don't offer." The vast majority of students choose to participate in one of the many afternoon programs that Nobles offers; however, others find themselves excited and passionate about other topics that Nobles does not offer. In this case, they may participate in an Independent Project in place of an afternoon program. Examples may include competitive ballet or an affiliation with a community service organization outside of Nobles. Similarly, an Independent Study is a course that a student may take in place of or in addition to a class that Nobles does not offer. For example, if someone is very passionate about a language such as Arabic or Greek, they may consider taking on an Independent Study. Genecco says, "Often, we will have juniors and seniors who have fulfilled all of their requirements but would like to do a deep dive with a member of our faculty.

If the faculty has the bandwidth to do that, they will work one-on-one with the student." Students may speak with their advisor who will reach out to Genecco or Head of the Upper School Alison Easterling before filling out a proposal for their project of study. To gain a deeper understanding of Independent Projects and Studies, we spoke with a couple of Nobles students currently undergoing In-

dependent Projects and Studies. Lia Gavin (Class III) is currently doing an Independent Study focused on photography. Gavin participated in Photo I during her freshman year and knew that she wanted to do more photography in the future. Gavin said, "I knew that I wanted to do AP Photo my senior year." However, rather than taking Drawing I in the year between Photo I and Photo II, she took on an Independent Study with the help of Mr. Mann. Gavin takes pictures in her free time and meets with Mann every week or

the start that I wanted to continue that, but especially getting more time to take pictures now has allowed me to realize how much I love doing it," Gavin said. Tahira Jean Muhammad (Class I) and Grace Oliver (Class I) both completed an Independent Project this fall, coaching a 7th and 8th-grade basketball team through the nonprofit AAU organization Shooting Touch. Both Muhammad and Oliver ran practices and drills twice a week and ran additional weekly enrichment activities focused on topics such as mental health. Muhammad said, "I chose to work with Shooting Touch because I was also a player on that team, and I know the impact they had on me and other girls of color in my community, and giving back to them was really important to me." Avery Winder (Class II) has been participating in an Independent Study of Ancient Greek with Classics Faculty George Blake since she was in Class V in the Nobles Middle School. Winder mostly reads texts from Classical Greek philosophers, such as Sophocles and Sappho, and discusses them during her meetings with Blake that take place once or twice a week. Winder's love of Latin sparked her interest in Ancient Greek, and she said, "I'm really interested in the classics, and I feel like Greek pairs nicely with Latin, so I wanted to use it to complement my learning." Max Daniello (Class I) is currently enrolled in an Independent Project with Digital Video

Producer and Writer Ben Heider focused on filmmaking. Daniello develops short films, including one based on a screenplay that he wrote. Daniello said, "I do a lot of planning before shooting. During preproduction, I'm drafting a screenplay, planning the shots, figuring out actors, locations, cameras, and equipment." Despite the photography and vid-

"I've learned so much from my Independent Project with Mr. Heider, but the [time] 'commitment' [for an Independent Project] should be something that you want to do."



(Photo Credit: Avery Winder)

ographer opportunities at Nobles, Daniello said he wanted to "hone in on filmmaking," specifically narrative films. "I've learned so much from my Independent Project with Mr. Heider, but the [time] 'commitment' [for an Independent Project] should be something that you want to do." Independent Projects and Studies are great opportunities for students to expand their learning in ways that Nobles' classrooms, fields, and courts don't often offer. Easterling said, "What's great about the Independent Course is it allows a student to design and customize an academic experience that may not fall within the bounds of our curriculum, but which really interests them."

once every other week to discuss any questions that she may have. "It was a really cool experience to get to do Photo I, and I knew from

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Holiday Themed Content

Quotables

“Wait but Wales is a county!” declared Val Lane (Class II) during AP Euro. “I thought Wales were an animal,” said Brooke Johnstone (Class II) quizzically.

“What in the Doja Cat is happening here? What in the Cardi B is happening here?” exclaimed Language Faculty Amadou Seck (no context provided).

“I like to kick kids when they bend over to pick up items,” confessed a jovial Science Faculty Jeremy Kovacs while digressing from a lecture on meiosis in AP Biology.

“Whenever there is a golf cart on campus and the key is still in it, I just want to steal it.” says Calleigh Brown (Class II) during a Happiness PD Class.

“It’s gotten to the point where I just sing the Weird Al version when people play the songs they’ve covered.” confesses Weird Al-enthusiast Karina Cruz (Class I).

“Have a great weekend, go forth and don’t multiply!” bellows Mr. Polebaum after a lively journalism class.

Naughty’s and Nice’s

Dart to the lack of assembly sign-ups and Muppet Christmas

Laurel to FLIK for back-to-back chicken nuggets and Mac & Cheese

Dart to people who leave the tables in the castles grody

Laurel to having a full three weeks of Winter Break

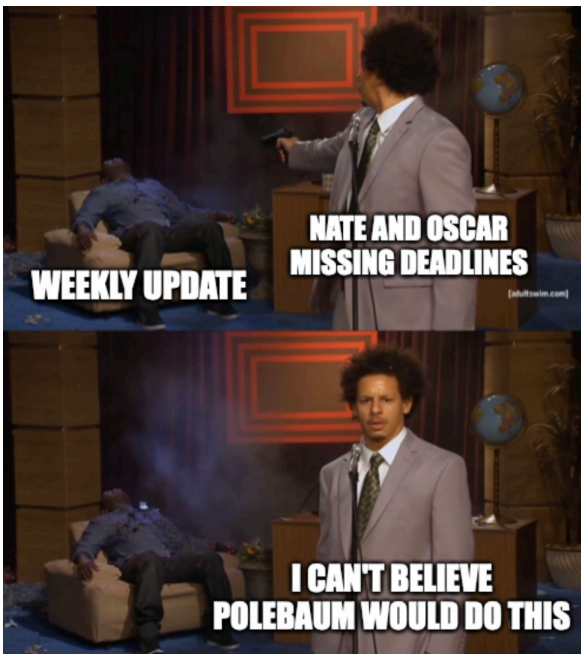
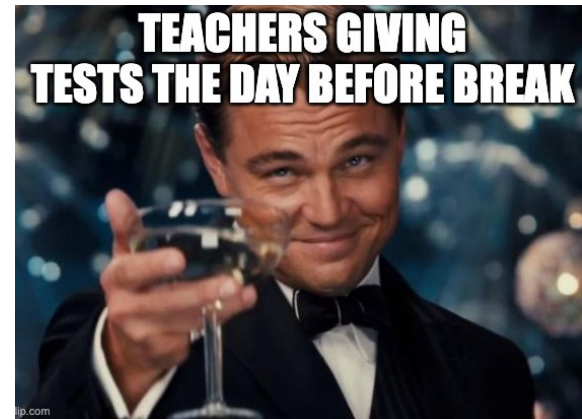
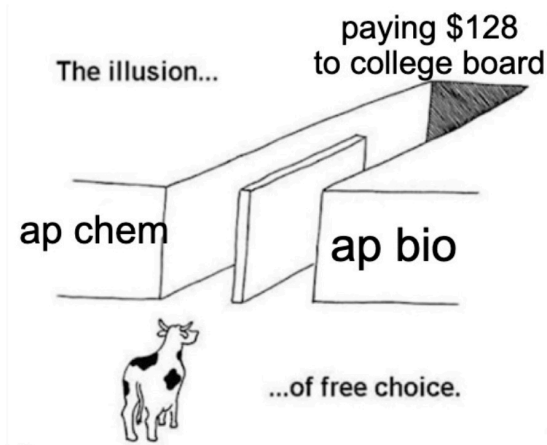
Dart to having 5 major assessments in 2 weeks

Check out our Instagram!



12 New Year’s Resolutions

1. Go to bed earlier and try and get 8 hours every night.
2. Pick up a new hobby like journaling or drawing.
3. Work on your current skills (maybe it’s a sport or a special interest you already have).
4. Branch out and listen to new music.
5. Try taking a break from technology. and spending less time on your phone
6. Practice acts of kindness and do something positive for someone else.
7. Increase your productivity and practice good study habits.
8. Clean up your closet and donate old items.
9. Branch out and meet new people.
10. Read a good book or subscribe to a new magazine.
11. Spend more time with friends and family.
12. Take more risks and be bold.



3 WEEKS OF BREAK

