



THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE BOSTON LATIN SCHOOL

History Courses Extend Across the Globe

By Mary Deng (IV) & Xintong Guo (IV)

Staff Writer and Contributing Writer

The Boston Latin School history department will introduce two new courses for the upcoming 2023-2024 school year: AP African American Studies and Modern Asian Studies.

AP African American Studies

The AP African American Studies is an interdisciplinary course, drawing on a range of academic fields. This course, available to all students in Classes I and II, will be taught by Mr. Brian Smith and Ms. Cheralyn Pinchem.

Offered as a pilot course by the College Board, it provides students with the benefits of a GPA boost and comprehensive AP-level material — much like regular AP courses — but without the stress-inducing AP test at the end of the year.

Although BLS already offers an African American Studies course, it will now be one of the 60 schools in the nation implementing it as an AP course for the next school year. Ms. Pinchem initially recommended implementing AP African American Studies to the Head of School. Former Head of School Rachel Skerritt and current Head of School Jason Gallagher were both supportive of adding the new course. Mr. Smith comments that offering the course, which teaches highly specialized material at the college level, was also a progressive move for the College Board.

The course curriculum consists of four units: “Origins of the African Diaspora,” “Freedom, Enslavement, and Resistance,” “The Practice of Freedom” and “Movements and Debates.” The course will also feature various supplemental field trips to significant African American monuments, providing students with a deeper understanding of the experiences and contributions of African Americans throughout American history.

“From a historical perspective, it is important to understand how [...] the Black experience has shaped all of the opportunities that all groups enjoy today,” says Mr. Smith.

The implementation of the new curriculum, however, is surrounded by heavy controversy. According to *Politico*, Governor Ron DeSantis (R-FL) has criticized the course material for being “woke” and an exercise in “indoctrination.” Specifically, he objected to lessons on Black queer studies, feminism, intersectionality and Black Lives Matter for being “contrary to Florida law.” He cited laws which the state passed in 2022 that restrict the teaching of race, sexual orientation and gender identity — the Stop WOKE Act and



Room 114 is the future home of AP African American Studies!

the “Don’t Say Gay” bill. Therefore, Governor DeSantis has banned Florida public schools from offering AP African American Studies to students.

Supporters of the Florida laws argue that it is necessary to prevent the teaching of divisive or politically biased materials in public schools. Critics, however, argue that it is an attempt to whitewash history and restrict the discussion of important historical events central to American society.

Oriana Dunker (III), who plans on taking the course next year, offers her perspective: “I think that this curriculum is completely nonpartisan. And if you take out crucial information about race and about the Black experience in America, to preserve American history, you’re doing the exact opposite.”

After the first round of piloting, the official curriculum of the new AP African American Studies course was released by the College Board on February 1, 2023. According to *The New York Times*, changes made to the original draft include the omission of several secondary sources, as it is “quite dense” and that students connected more with primary sources.”

Additional changes are more particu-

Modern Asian Studies

partment Heads.

Mr. Zou adds, “The big theme is really to understand [...] these really diverse groups of Asian people such as China, Japan, Korea, of course, and little known and not as covered as much of within the curriculum, even at BLS, such as Vietnam, Cambodia [...] so that students can walk away with a grander understanding of many, many people. Really half the people on Earth are from the Asian continent as well, so I feel that they’ll be more well-rounded individuals and more civically-engaged and socially-responsible young people.”

The course will offer additional opportunities to learn topics in Asian Studies in more depth than in a typical world history

course, even covering unconventional topics such as anime and K-pop. To supplement the materials, the class will analyze primary and secondary sources, current event articles and literature to better understand Asian perspectives from the last two centuries.

Nha Truong (I), co-president of BLS Asian Students in Action, shares, “It’s a really amazing thing that they explore all of these different cultures now. And especially for Asian culture, I know that there are a lot of different ethnicities and countries that get involved. [...] I’m glad that along with making the student body more diverse, they’re hoping to make the course selections more diverse as well.”

Headlines You Missed

By Joanna Lin (II) & Kevin Zhong (II)

Head Editors

Boston City Council Passes Rent Control Bill

In an 11-2 vote, the City Council approved the proposal that would associate rent prices with inflation, with a maximum increase of ten percent for apartments in Boston. The proposal now heads to the State Legislature for approval as rent control was banned by Massachusetts voters in 1994.

President Joe Biden Approves the Willow Project

The controversial Willow Project would allow oil drilling on Alaska’s North Slope, which is estimated to hold 600 million barrels of oil. In addition, the project is expected to release 9.2 million metric tons of carbon pollution a year. While some Alaska Native groups support the project for its economic benefits, other environmental and indigenous groups have protested the project and filed lawsuits challenging its approval.

Supreme Court Hears Biden’s Student Loan Case

Biden’s student loan program would cancel up to 20,000 dollars in debt for people with federal student loans. Six Republican-led states have sued the Biden administration opposing the plan. The justices will render a judgment on this case by June.

Upcoming Events @ BLS

By Ailin Sha (III)

Assistant Editor

- Mar 28-29 ● ELA MCAS (Class III)
- Mar 30 ● Fourth Public
● Declamation (Class III)
- Apr 5 ● Community Service Fair in Dining Hall
- Apr 6 ● 3 P.M. and 7 P.M. -
● Improv Show in Black Box Theatre
- Apr 7 ● Good Friday (No School)
- Apr 11 ● 2:30 P.M. - JCL Chess
● Tournament in Seevak Room
- Apr 26 ● 6 P.M. - College Fair (Classes II and III)
- Apr 27 ● Orchestra and Chorus Music Night
- Apr 28 ● Band and Chorus Music Night

EDITORS' NOTE



To our dear readers: hello!
We'd like to talk about the lack of snow,
But first we have to *Argo*.

First up is News!
Learn about the Asian studies and AP African American Studies courses you can choose,
Or read our English Department Head and BLS alumni interviews.

Forum has some opinions to share!
High school relationships, do we care?
And is the Boston School Committee unaware?

Pages 10-13 are A&E!
At the SAG Awards and Oscars, *Everything Everywhere All at Once* went crazy.
You can also discover the branches of the Boston Public Library.

Following close behind is Sports!
The basketball teams dominated the courts,
While the fencing team conquered with their swords.

Working around the clock,
Each writer overcame their block,
Each associate made edits like a hawk,
Or laid out pages that rock,
Or took photos that aren't stock.

Enjoy this issue!
We had fun writing this for you,
Elizabeth and Selina too

Editorial Board

Elizabeth Choi (I)	Editor-in-Chief
Selina Tang (I)	Editor-in-Chief
Joanna Lin (II)	News Editor
Kevin Zhong (II)	News Editor
Elyssa Cabey (I)	Asst. News Editor
Ailin Sha (III)	Asst. News Editor
Cinly Mo (I)	Forum Editor
Jessie Wang (II)	Forum Editor
Michelle Wang (III)	Asst. Forum Editor
Irene Deng (I)	A&E Editor
Ellis Seul (I)	A&E Editor
Eliza Duff-Wender (I)	Asst. A&E Editor
Lauren Choy (I)	Sports Editor
Romy Li (I)	Asst. Sports Editor
Madelyn Taylor (I)	Asst. Sports Editor
Darren Seto (I)	Copy Editor
Fiona Yuan (II)	Copy Editor
Justine Wei (I)	Asst. Copy Editor
Lindsey Jiang (II)	Asst. Copy Editor
Jenny Chen (II)	Layout Editor
Lily Huynh (II)	Layout Editor
Mari Baker (II)	Asst. Layout Editor
Aidan Tran (II)	Asst. Layout Editor
Mary Bosch (I)	Photo Editor
Karen Dong (I)	Photo Editor
Alex Strand (I)	Asst. Photo Editor
Andrew Lay (II)	Asst. Photo Editor

Copy Associates

Haley Do (II)	Andrew Xue (III)
Christine Hur (II)	Andrew Zheng (III)
Vera Jer (II)	Mary Deng (IV)
Diamond Nguyen (II)	Trinity Ngo (IV)
Jennifer Nguyen (II)	Vicky Su (IV)
Jessica Zhao (II)	

Layout Associates

Alex Lam (II)	Dimitra Minasidis (IV)
Angelina Moy (II)	Elizabeth Noronha (IV)
Tyler Nguyen (II)	Sophia Fortuin (V)
Angelina Tran (II)	Ashley Hur (V)
Kadin Tran (II)	Sam Parsi (V)
Christina Dang (III)	William Yu (V)
Jolia Tsan (III)	Alan Zhao (V)
Rachel Li (IV)	David Wang (VI)
Juliet McVay (IV)	

Photo Associates

Derek Corcoran (I)	Ama Ambroise-Louis (III)
Marlo DeCapo (II)	Ben Choi-Harris (III)
Christa Gay (II)	Dayaniris Sanchez (III)
Alicia Moy (II)	Lauren Dong (V)
Uyen Nguyen (II)	

Creative Consultants

Mary Bosch (I)	Emilia Saldaña (I)
----------------	--------------------

Faculty Advisor

Ms. Moon

Special Thanks to

Ms. Ellis	Mr. Hourigan
Ms. Harari	Head of School Gallagher

Argo

Boston Latin School

Ad Veritatem Petendam

The *Argo* strives, in accordance with the highest standards of journalism, to inform and inspire its readers, to provide a forum for constructive debate, and to foster understanding among all members of the Boston Latin School community.



THE BOSTON LATIN SCHOOL ASSOCIATION

has proudly supported and funded Boston Latin School's sports, extracurriculars, music, academics and publications — including the *Argo* — for over 160 years.

Salve, Ms. Thompson!

By **Sylvia O'Hearn (II)**
& **Weian Xue (V)**

Staff Writer and Contributing Writer

Ms. Angelene Thompson has started as the new program director for the Boston Latin School English Department, filling a position that has been vacant for three months.

She previously served as the English program director for the Neighborhood House Charter School in Dorchester, where she developed the curriculum for grades 6 through 12. After passing a series of interviews, Ms. Thompson was appointed program director on January 31.

Because English classes are required for all students, Ms. Thompson directs one of BLS's largest and most central departments — she will lead 22 faculty members in providing English instruction to all 2,423 students at BLS.

During her first few weeks at BLS, Ms. Thompson focused on observing classrooms, building relationships with teachers and learning about the English Department's current curriculum. BLS English 11 and humanities teacher Mr. Peter Sullivan comments, "Ms. Thompson shows herself to be someone who wants to learn about us and what we do."

Although Ms. Thompson anticipates

several challenges to come in her time at BLS, she believes that being prepared, such as by collaborating with and taking advice from the other English teachers, will make it easier for her to overcome them. She recognizes the positive impacts that many BLS English teachers have on students and hopes this important work continues. Currently, Ms. Thompson wants to focus on ensuring continuity in the English curriculum across all classes and grade levels.

"We can be even better and stronger when everything is aligned. We're making certain that students are getting the best and equal academic experience within each grade level," says Ms. Thompson.

Regarding the English curriculum at BLS, Hannah Oh (I) states that she is generally satisfied with the curriculum and believes that it has improved a lot in recent years, especially in terms of the diversity of books taught in class. Oh, however, notes that she "wish[es] that AP [English Language and Composition] could fulfill the English 11 requirement [...], because I would've loved to challenge myself in that AP class instead of English 11 while still fulfilling the English requirement."

Former Program Director Ms. Susan Moran had held the position at BLS for 20 years until she retired at the end of the 2021-22 school year. Dr. Samantha McGuane



BLS welcomes new English Director Ms. Thompson!

replaced Ms. Moran in the fall of 2022 but unexpectedly resigned in late October, which led the school administration to search for a new program director.

After Dr. McGuane's departure, Mr. Sullivan took over the teaching of her English 11 class. He says, "I would say [the transition] was a less than smooth beginning because it wasn't expected." Eventually, however, the English Department was able to overcome the challenges caused by the lack

of a program director.

"It was surprising, but most people could handle it. [...] We just kind of waited until they went through the [hiring] process," continues Mr. Sullivan.

Ms. Thompson looks forward to continuing her experience at BLS. She concludes, "Overall, I really enjoy the school; I love visiting classrooms and witnessing students' critical thinking and just overall students having fun learning. It's really great to see."

Q&A with Dining Hall Staff... Ms. Lisa Adamson



By **Joanna Lin (II)**

Head Editor

Joanna: What are some challenges of working in the dining hall?

Lisa: Our goal is to feed every child. So, it's hard when you don't know how many kids are going to come to lunch or if there's a field trip, and maintain the quantity of food.

J: What motivates you?

L: You guys! You guys coming in and the speed that y'all come to lunch. It's like, "Okay, let's go!" They come with full-force energy.

J: What do you like to do for fun?

L: I have a 15-year-old son and he plays basketball for New Mission High School, so I always go to his games.

Chew On This: BLS Food Updates

By **Darren Seto (I)**
& **Trinity Ngo (IV)**

Staff Writer and Contributing Writer

Boston Latin School Youth Climate Action Network (YouthCAN) recently launched a composting pilot in partnership with Black Earth Compost, an organization committed to making businesses in eastern Massachusetts more sustainable.

Following lunch in the School's Dining Hall, students are encouraged to dispose of their food scraps in green composting bins. Student volunteers then sift through the bins with tongs, removing non-compostable products like cartons and banana stickers. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, Black Earth Compost picks up the waste for processing at their specialized facility.

The pilot has been in the works for about a decade but has faced several setbacks, including a lack of available composting partnerships. Virginia Leary, the Zero Waste and Sustainability Project Manager for Boston Public

Schools, however, helped restart the pilot in partnership with Black Earth Compost.

In Massachusetts, businesses that generate more than one-half ton of food waste per week are required by law to have a disposal plan that does not involve dumping waste into municipal waste streams. This law, however, does not apply to public facilities, such as school buildings. YouthCAN co-president Maya Nelson (I) remarks, "Boston Latin School absolutely generates over the threshold where any sort of other building would be required to compost their food waste."

At the Black Earth Compost facility, food waste is exposed to hot air and pressure, speeding up the decomposition process and producing nutrient-rich soil amendment. This process also produces heat, which can fuel machines or power grids.

One challenge that the School faced while implementing the pilot was the lack of clarity about which items could be composted. As a result, YouthCAN members re-sort compost-

ing bins after school to mitigate contamination. Zone Captain Emily Yu (III) shares, "If you can eat it, then it goes in the green bin."

The dining hall has seen other changes this school year. Last fall, BPS began a contract with City Fresh Foods, a Roxbury-based Black-owned business, to produce packaged lunches. Head of School Jason Gallagher explains, "We had to have food delivered in because we did not have enough staff in the kitchen to make the food here. Once we were fully staffed in the kitchen, we went back to having the meals made here and prepared here."

Diversifying its sources, the school district's Food & Nutrition Services now partners with a range of suppliers, among them Ace Endico New England and Czajkowski Farm, according to co-chair Kelly Thompson.

The School's composting pilot represents a meaningful stride towards sustainability. Head of School Gallagher remarks, "Our goal now is just to get a little better at it every day."

BLS Desi(gns): Henna Week!

By **Olivia Chen (V)**
Contributing Writer

Throughout the week of March 7, Boston Latin School Desi, a club that promotes South Asian culture, hosted Henna Week to design hennas for students.

During Henna Week, students got a henna design of their choice drawn on their hands by student volunteers. For each design, the artists used an ink called henna, which is a plant-based dye created from a henna tree. The henna print costs five to ten dollars depending on the difficulty of the design. As the biggest annual fundraiser for BLS Desi, Henna Week helps to support schoolwide events, such as Asian Night.

This event attracted many artist volunteers for a wide range of reasons, with the most prominent one being that students were genuinely interested in this form of art. Henna Week artist Anna Wadsworth (I) shares, "I want to tattoo because I enjoy tat-

toeing and body art a lot and would like to be able to give back the way that I've enjoyed all these years."

With this event, BLS Desi sought to inform the school community about South Asian culture, as well as clarify any misconceptions about henna. Most people associate henna with only Indian culture, but it is significant to South Asia as a whole. In these cultures, henna is often used for special events or holidays, such as weddings and *Diwali* — the Festival of Lights: in which people celebrate the victory of good over evil.

BLS Desi officer Tara Gipstein (I) explains, "It's really important to us to show people what traditional henna looks like. And it's actually not called 'henna.' It's called 'Mehndi.'"

Henna Week distinguishes itself from other events that design henna, which may not have any cultural purpose except to operate for profit or trendiness.

"This is cultural appreciation, not ap-



BLS Desi members recreate traditional henna on students.

propriation," expresses Henna Week volunteer Anjali Patel (IV).

Going forward, BLS Desi and its participants hope this tradition will continue for many years while maintaining its original

intention and motivation.

Gipstein concludes, "I always hope that our events can be even bigger. So maybe [we will incorporate] multiple Henna Weeks throughout the year."

Bryant Nguyen (I) Heads West!



Congresswoman Pressley signs off on Nguyen's commitment.

**By Lena Thai (III)
& Meilin Sha (VI)**

Staff Writer and Contributing Writer

In early February, Bryant Nguyen (I) was accepted into West Point Academy, a prestigious college known for its immersion in rigorous academics and military training.

Nguyen became interested in West Point during his junior year when the school reached out to him.

His family history was an important factor toward his decision to apply to West Point.

"My dad was a Vietnam War refugee. So, you know, coming [to America] was really big. [...] It provided me with a lot of other opportunities, like building the family and giving me what I have now. I see this as my way of paying back by helping other people get that same opportunity," he explains.

As a student at Boston Latin School, Nguyen participates in extensive extracurricular

activities, including both varsity swimming and varsity crew. He also established the BLS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance club.

Nguyen believes that the key component to the application process for West Point is starting early, since acquiring a recommendation from a U.S. Representative or Senator and passing the physical examination are complex, arduous processes. Nguyen himself had to take the physical examination twice.

Nguyen received his nomination from Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley, who is the U.S. representative for Massachusetts's 7th congressional district.

West Point Academy, located in New York, provides students with both a fundamental college education and a foundation on America's military values. Unlike most colleges, West Point is tuition-free; however, graduates must serve five years of active duty in the military and three years in the reserve.

A first-year West Point student, also known as a plebe, has to attend a bootcamp, where they learn the foundations of military life, from shoe-shining to salutes and marches. After six weeks of this camp, the academic year starts. A typical day of academics, studying, athletics and military training usually runs from 6 A.M. to 11 P.M.

West Point alumnus Jack Keleher (P'24) is appreciative of the long-lasting relationships he made out of the school's demanding environment and of how the school has shaped his mindset.

"Along the way, you're learning lead-

ership lessons, learning how to have tough conversations, learning your own personal leadership style," he says.

Ethan Sardina (III), an aspiring West Point student, agrees that gaining leadership qualities and training for the military while balancing a general college education is an enriching environment to be in.

He mentions, "When I found West Point, I realized not only can you get free college, but you [also] get rigorous training. And five years at minimum in the army as an officer, but you can also get a degree, which I can get in engineering, and I really liked the idea of that. It is a very competitive but friendly environment."

The friendships created at West Point extend into the Long Gray Line, a large alumni network for West Point graduates. On the surface, it allows them to connect with other fellow alumni in new workspaces and cities. For graduates, however, it represents being a part of a family that has experienced similarly high-pressure situations.

Nguyen is nervous about the transition from civilian to military life, but he remains eager for about this new chapter in his journey.

"I'm really excited for all the other relationships. Over the summer, I went there to visit and saw how exciting it was. I'm just really excited to be part of that type of community, where everyone is really supportive and really pushing each other to get better," remarks Nguyen.

Breaking Down the BLS Budget

**By Ross Wilson (IV)
& Aidan McCue (IV)**

Staff Writer and Contributing Writer

It is budget season, and Boston Latin School and Boston Public Schools are gearing up to unveil their operating budgets for the upcoming school year.

BPS funded BLS with over 17 million dollars this year, which is an increase of over a million dollars from last year's budget. Most of that money goes toward paying for the school's basic services, like staff and supplies. The additions of another social worker and special education programs have also increased funding for BLS.

Head of School Jason Gallagher explains, "Even though we are a large school with an enormous budget, we don't have a lot of what they call discretionary funds. Most of the funds that we have go to things that we absolutely need."

In addition to the budget provided by BPS, the Boston Latin School Association (BLSA) directly provides money for the arts department and extracurricular programs. The BLS administration does not have access to these funds, and only the BLSA can spend them on these activities.

This year, the BLSA plans to spend 2.5 to 2.75 million dollars to support various programs across BLS, including 150,000 dollars for the arts, over 500,000 dollars for athletics and approximately 650 to 750,000 dollars in scholarships and prizes on Prize Night.

The general BPS budget for 2024 is over 1.4 billion dollars, a 65 million dollar increase from the current fiscal year

2023 budget. This increase was in response to higher costs, such as 28.7 million dollars for faculty salaries and 18.9 million dollars for improvements in facilities. In addition, there was a 26-million-dollar increase in strategic investments, such as 9.6 million dollars for Inclusive Education across the district.

In addition to that money, there is a 50-million-dollar commitment by Mayor Michelle Wu to build inclusive school communities. Mayor Wu also proposed a two-billion-dollar investment into a BPS Green New Deal, which will fund a range of school building renovations in order to better support environmental initiatives.

These new investments come at a time when enrollment has been declining for six consecutive years, falling by 7,667 students or 14 percent of the total BPS population. The district is trying to solve this problem by spending more money per pupil, with an 8,100-dollar increase in spending on each student.

BPS Chief Financial Officer Nathan Kuder explains why the district is increasing its budget: "As we've added more support positions in schools, our costs go up. So part of our plan is to use some of the cost savings that come from enrollment decreases to reinvest."

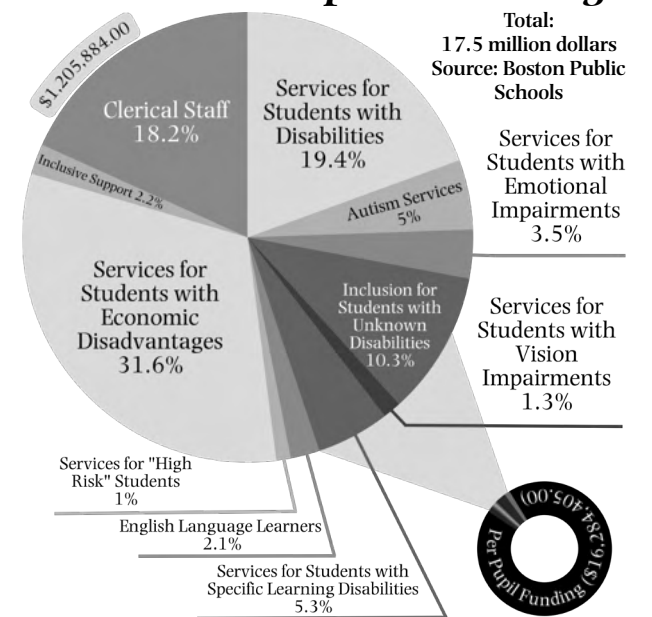
BPS claims to distribute its funding in a fair and unbiased way. The "weighted student formula," which assigns each student a monetary "value," allows the district to calculate the total funding needed for each school. Many districts use the weighted student formula due to its flexibility and need-based nature.

Another change from last year's budget is the end of Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESS-

ER) funds given to the district for pandemic-related activities. Within the budget, ESSER funds are being liquidated into the district's general funding.

Despite all of these investments, some believe that BPS should shift its priorities. BLS English teacher Ms. Lynn Burke comments, "More teachers per pupil would benefit everybody, so I would say more than nice furniture, more than air conditioners and more than art supplies, we need more teachers for our students."

How Does BLS Spend Its Money?



Electric Bus Pilot Program Sparks Interest

**By Rachel Starr (III)
& Noehly Esteves (IV)**

Contributing Writers

As the first major project of the Boston Green New Deal, 20 electric buses entered the Boston Public Schools transportation system on February 27.

Mayor Michelle Wu's administration hopes to transition all 700 buses currently utilized by the transportation system to electric vehicles by 2030. For riders, there will not be significant changes, except for the possibility of less noise from the vehicles. The BPS Department of Transportation took the lead on the bus transition and will continue to play a major role in the city's climate action.

BLS YouthCAN co-president Maya Nelson (I) says, "Electrifying the MBTA is a whole, bigger project, so this will only affect the select number of [Boston Latin School] students that get the yellow buses."

The Green New Deal is an environmental initiative that has appeared in cities around the country, inspired by the national proposal introduced by Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY). It aims to prevent harm to the environment by mitigating the effects of climate change. Boston, especially vulnerable due to being a coastal city, has made a City Green New Deal, which entails creating environmentally resilient and accessible schools to promote health and social learning since schools make up almost a half of the city's carbon emissions.

Boston's Green New Deal director Oliver Sellers-Garcia explains the vast amount of considerations that go into projects: "The Green New Deal is a decision-making framework. [...] It's like what can we do for justice, [...] quality of life, and climate together?" He continues that in discussions, the intersectionality of environmental justice is considered through an economic lens. Often, women and people of color who manage small, locally-owned businesses do not receive sufficient support. The contracts set up by the Green New Deal cater to these businesses by considering price and transparent communication.

The initiative will also open up many skilled jobs, training for those positions, and allow for more efficient energy use within

businesses. One idea still in development is to disallow construction of new buildings that would house fossil fuels. In addition, electric charging stations would become more common in the next few years as well, increasing the demand for electricians.

YouthCAN co-president Maia Frost (I) is eager for these changes, saying, "It's so great that we are having legislative action because that's the main way to lower carbon emissions."

The positive impacts of the other projects are on the horizon. Since the bus transition is only a pilot program, local officials are still looking to solidify the next steps.

Sellers-Garcia predicts, "I think it's going to be really easy [...] to adjust to it, but [...] the plan is to really learn from this year."

From Classroom to Capital: Facing History's D.C. Trip

By **Jenny Chen (II)**
& **Constance Fang (VI)**

Staff Writer and Contributing Writer

In early March, Boston Latin School Facing History and Ourselves students hopped aboard the Amtrak for a four-day trip to Washington, D.C., where they visited a variety of museums, organizations and the White House.

This marks the reboot of the class's annual trip after a three-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Even though students returned full-time to classrooms at the beginning of the last school year, Boston Public Schools only recently lifted their restrictions for overnight trips.

BLS Facing History teacher Ms. Judi Freeman says, "It wasn't until November that the BPS officially said publicly that they would allow field trips. I didn't collect a single piece of paper from anybody until Novem-

ber." In other years, paperwork for this trip would have started right at the beginning of the school year.

COVID-19 restrictions also altered the trip's itinerary. In previous years, students met and spoke with a Holocaust survivor at the United States Holocaust Museum, but they were not able to this year because of health concerns. The group was also unable to access any of the public rooms within the museum, which, in past years, hosted experts like Daniel Solomon, a researcher from the museum's Simon-Skjoldt Center for the Prevention of Genocide.

Similarly, there were several roadblocks involved with the planning of small-group visits to social justice organizations, media outlets and federal departments, including *NPR*, the Pulitzer Center for Crisis Reporting and the U.S. Department of Justice. Certain organizations including *Bloomberg News*, *CNN* and *NBC* were unable to host any students this year.

"[Back then,] anywhere between 20 and 30 people would go to each [organization]. And they all could accommodate that. But the [COVID-19] rules said no," says Ms. Freeman.

Some organizations also declined a visit from BLS students last minute, while others were not popular enough when students were choosing where they wanted to go to. This led to complicated schedules which Ms. Freeman frequently changed in order to accommodate students' preferences.

These organizations, however, still provided enriching experiences for those on the trip.

Having visited the Department of Justice, history teacher and chaperone Ms. Ashley Balbian adds, "As an [AP U.S. History] teacher, seeing those New Deal paintings [...] was so neat."

On the final day of the trip, the group visited the White House. During the event, students had the unique opportunity to

stand in the Rose Garden, which is located just outside of the Oval Office. Annie Tomasi ('98), Director of Oval Office Operations, made this part of the trip possible. She spoke to the students and chaperones about her experiences as a Traveling Chief of Staff for President Biden and how she came to possess this job.

Joey Mitchell (II) comments, "It was just very surreal because I was having a hard time processing that I was in the White House. And I can't believe we were in the Rose Garden."

Three museums, two organizations and one White House visit in two and a half days made for a tightly-packed schedule. Those on the trip, however, agree that these few days were extremely memorable and an invaluable learning opportunity — all thanks to one teacher.

Victoria Mabington (II) concludes, "There's just so much that we couldn't have done without Ms. Freeman."

Interviewing Impactful BLS Alumni

By **Halima Mohamed (I)** & **Amanda Adjini (III)**

Contributing Writers

Peter Bynoe ('68)



Since graduating from Boston Latin School in 1968, Peter Bynoe has become a successful businessman and attorney. Bynoe earned three degrees from Harvard University and was part owner of the Denver Nuggets. In honor of these exceptional achievements and other recognitions, the *Crain's Chicago Business* named him on their 2013 list of "Who's Who in Chicago Business," and in 2008, he became one of six recipients of the Harvard Alumni Association Award.

The Argo: When and why did you decide to pursue your current career path?

Bynoe: I never had a career plan. I just wanted to be the best that I could be. I have focused on preparing myself through education and work experience to be able to take advantage of opportunities as they have been presented to me. Fortunately, I have been offered a wide range of unique and exciting opportunities.

A: Looking back, what would you say is the most important lesson you've learned in your life, or in your career?

B: Trust but verify. People may mislead you intentionally or unintentionally, but the real metrics never lie.

A: What is something at BLS that you enjoyed being a part of and why?

B: I enjoyed playing Varsity Football and beating Boston English four years in a row. I was Game MVP in my senior year.

A: What was your favorite class at BLS and why?

B: History, as taught by Mr. Kenneth Johnson, my first African American teacher. He taught us that of all our studies, history rewards us best.

A: What is one piece of advice that you would give to a student at BLS?

B: Absorb and enjoy every element of your high school experience. Life will only get more difficult and complicated once you graduate. You owe it to yourself and your parents to take full advantage of the unique Boston Latin School education, inside and outside the classroom.

Alfa Demmellash ('99)



Alfa Demmellash ('99) was born in Ethiopia and immigrated to the United States when she was three years old. As refugees, she and her mother lacked financial stability when first moving to the country. After college, Demmellash founded the nonprofit Rising Tide Capital, which provides financial education to communities of color. This, along with other organizations, has since raised tens of millions of dollars in 13 states across the country.

The Argo: When and why did you decide to pursue your current career path?

Demmellash: I've always been very interested in understanding migrations, conflicts, wars and genocides. My curiosity in understanding those aspects of history led me to major in Government at Harvard and learn about different interventions. A lot of that work has been happening around peace-building and government, but also by a lot of nonprofits. Helping people see one another as partners, collaborators, regardless of background, is what actually works on the ground with different countries and communities.

A: How did your time at BLS help prepare you for your current career?

D: It's stressful, but I think it taught me a lot about how to manage that volume of work. I could have a more relaxed approach to my college work and actually invest more of my time networking, meeting people and getting involved with a variety of different organizations because I could handle that academic rigor.

A: Looking back, what would you say is the most important lesson you've learned in your life or in your career?

D: When people say no, don't take it personally. Nobody enjoys rejection. Whether it's applying to college, a job or an internship, you will experience a multitude of "nos". Rather than run away, stay; at least stay long enough to listen for why that might be happening. And keep asking different questions that might unlock a "yes."

A: What is one piece of advice that you would give to a student at BLS?

D: I would say stay focused on what matters. Don't give away your attention so easily. Don't be distracted and manipulated. Focus on learning from your fellow students, making friendships that will stick with you for the long haul and being bold and asking questions that allow you to think beyond the obvious.

Kristen Orthman ('04)



Kirsten Orthman ('04) graduated from American University, majoring in international studies. She served as Senator Elizabeth Warren's Deputy Chief of Staff and Communications Director during her 2020 bid for the presidency. Orthman has been the Communications Director for the Democratic National Committee since January 2022.

The Argo: When and why did you decide to pursue your current career path?

Orthman: It actually starts at BLS. I decided to go to school in Washington, D.C. for college. While I was in college, one of my friends from BLS — his name is Houston Pang — messaged me on *Facebook* asking if I wanted to apply for an internship for a Senator named Harry Reid. I applied and I got the internship, and that was my first big foray into the national politics scene. And fortunately, I graduated the following year and Harry Reid's office had a press assistant role open that they asked me to apply for, and I ended up getting it.

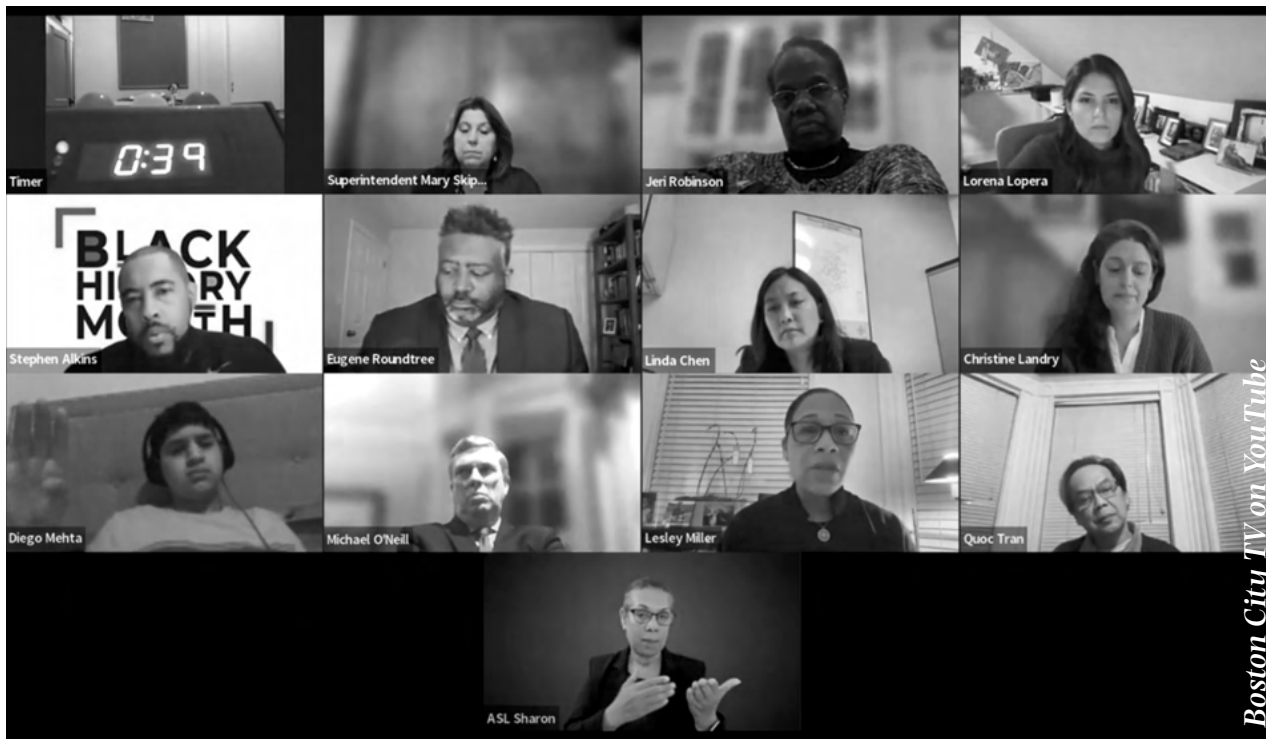
A: Looking back, what would you say is the most important lesson you've learned in your life, or in your career?

O: Being nice and professional and a good person to every and anyone you meet. The person who sits next to you in homeroom at BLS, or the person you're an intern with, or is your classmate in college, or who's your boss in your first job — those people will stay with you in many stages of your life. Ruthzee [Louijeune ('04)], who is a city councilor in Boston, she and I went to high school together. She went off to law school, I went off and did my thing. All of a sudden, we're reconnected on Elizabeth Warren's presidential campaign, and that's someone that I had English class with in tenth grade, right? So, you just never know where you're going to come across people again.

A: What is one piece of advice that you would give to a student at BLS?

O: Don't be so hard on yourself. I know that sometimes there is an expectation to be the best at everything and do all the activities. And I think doing what makes you happy and fulfilled is a lot more important than doing what's going to look good on a college application. There's a lot of different paths for people, and knowing what fulfills you is ultimately what's going to drive you and make you as happy as you could be.

Ballots Are In; Democracy Is Out



Boston School Committee Zoom meetings are held weekly at 5 P.M. on Wednesdays.

**By Luke Joseph (II)
& Roan Wilcox (III)**
Contributing Writers

As the academic year progresses, so do the mounting issues troubling the Boston Public Schools district. Despite the district faltering, the BPS school board seems to be doing nothing more than twiddling their thumbs, leaving behind a trail of limited accountability for results, poor district MCAS scores and a revolving door of superintendents. Boston Mayor Michelle Wu seems more intent on maintaining her control over an ineffective school board than to actually drive meaningful change, necessitating the shift to an elected school committee.

The Boston School Committee is responsible for “defining the vision, mission and goals” of BPS, per the district website. Their visions, missions and goals, unfortunately, have fallen short of success, as the district was found to have overstated its

long-heralded graduation rates in five of the last seven years, according to *The Boston Globe*.

A damning 162-page report in April 2022 from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) found that leadership instability is “endemic” at BPS. Structural challenges remain unresolved; key performance indicators are unreliable and resolutions to parent complaints are unresponsive. The last point is especially noteworthy, as it gets at the crux of the argument against the unelected School Committee: a lack of accountability to families.

Members in senior leadership of the school committee, such as the current chairperson and vice chairperson, hold no formal background in elementary and high school education. So why have these folks continued to lead the board in light of, in DESE’s own words, “endemic” problems?

Unlike an elected school board, the BPS School Committee members do not go door-to-door campaigning for their positions; they do not have to publicly debate each other on key issues or respond

to parents’ calls for change to remain in power. Mr. Dominic Rinaldi, an AP United States History and economics teacher at Boston Latin School, remarks, “If the public’s not involved in the process of selecting the committee, there’s an argument as to how democratic is this whole process?” Indeed, all they have to do is be popular with another unelected 12-person Nominating Panel and get the mayor’s seal of approval.

The counterargument to an elected school committee is largely predicated on the belief that BPS, an urban school district, is predisposed to underperform due to the city’s socioeconomic background. The DESE report, however, found that BPS underperformed by virtually every metric, even when accounting for the economic background of students.

For example, in grades three through eight, BPS trailed the state average among economically disadvantaged students in English and math by a stunning 17 and 21 percent, respectively. The statistics suggest that much of the achievement gap is driven by district failings, not the socioeconomic status of BPS students.

Mayor Wu has not yet emerged with a compelling rebuttal to the overwhelming 80 percent of Boston residents who supported an elected school committee in the non-binding ballot proposal (notably, more Bostonians voted for an elected school committee than voted for Mayor Wu). She simply stated in a February 2023 interview with WGBH: “I ran [to become mayor] because I want to make a difference in the schools. I want to have accountability and responsibility to be able to make the changes that we need.”

Zach Chen (II), when asked about why parents are so supportive of an elected school committee, says, “I think they’re just tired of the current status quo.” We are, too. If Mayor Wu really wants to be accountable, let us have school committee members be selected based on the results they can deliver for families, not on the whims of an opaque nomination process that has not done enough for students.

As the old saying goes, “Show me the incentives and I’ll show you the results.” It is time to get the incentives for the school board right and democratize it.

Going Green Shouldn’t Cost Green

**By Denis Cunniffe (II)
& Angelina Wei (IV)**
Contributing Writers

Erewhon, Tesla and Patagonia are all brands that heavily market the sustainability of their expensive products. They claim that they are making enormous steps in the fight against climate change and that their products are the future to justify their steep costs. These brands market exclusively to wealthy audiences and are well aware that their products can never be widely accessible. Instead, these companies should make the eco-friendly lifestyle more available, regardless of one’s economic status.

The three brands listed above are not the only ones with this marketing. In recent years, there has been a growing trend with “green” startups claiming to directly fight climate change while offering products with extreme markups. This practice contradicts these businesses’ supposed environmentalist goals and makes living sustainably unrealistic for the average person.

Sustainable goods are being viewed as a luxury brand, with less and less focus on affordability. In fact, according to *Deloitte*, the only reason that 52 percent of American consumers refrain from buying sustainable products is because of their price.

The grocery store chain Erewhon is infamous for its extreme pricing and heavy celebrity marketing. Since its founding in the 1960s, the

company has had numerous collaborations with popular celebrities including Miley Cyrus, Gwyneth Paltrow, Kim Kardashian and many more. The store quickly grew after its founding in Southern California and now operates eight stores throughout Los Angeles and Ventura counties in California. Erewhon’s prices are sky-high, with a half-liter bottle of water costing 25 dollars, a gallon of milk for 20 dollars and vinegar being 49 dollars.

Erewhon seeks to frame itself as a luxury grocery store, but also floods social media with advertisements of them creating a sustainable future when they are doing the exact opposite. As Aidan Ormsby (II) puts it, “They are motivated by the same thing that people hurt the environment are: greed.” It is important to not buy into their misleading advertising and hold them accountable for being the insanely greedy corporation they are.

Despite the fact that only the wealthy can adopt a green lifestyle, green products are reducing harmful environmental effects. *GreenCoast* has found that becoming sustainable reduces pollution, energy costs and toxic waste while also conserving natural resources.

Of course, the sustainable life only being obtainable by the rich is not an effective long-term solution in minimizing negative environmental impacts. Instead of blaming consumers, people should blame companies for making the green lifestyle impossible. Maya Nelson (I) believes that “we



Organic fruits and vegetables fill the shelves of Erewhon market.

should be thinking beyond reliance on corporations to solve an issue they have continuously profited from.”

In order to make green products more accessible, the government must begin to promote and invest in the eco-friendly lifestyle. It can start by opening up zero-waste stores, which are shops that encourage refillable containers and eliminate packaging by providing reusable bags. Providing food vouchers would also encourage more to follow the path of sustainability.

Government regulation of certain unsustainable industries can also help make eco-friendly lives more obtainable. Boston Latin School econom-

ics and U.S. history teacher, Mr. Edward Kearns says, “Using the power of law to require sustainable and responsible practices is the most effective option available in our society.”

As of this moment, sustainable products are mainly marketed toward the wealthy, but there are still thousands of other ways to go green. Planting a tree, picking up some trash off the ground, using a reusable water bottle and composting are some actions you can take to go green. Anybody can reduce their ecological footprint by committing to these simple actions, demanding less from the environment while not having to be uber-rich.

Are Romantic Relationships in High School Worth It?

Yes, Romantic Relationships in High School are Worth It.

By Tessa Reidy (III)

Contributing Writer

High school is a time of firsts — first car, first job, first taste of independence. But what about first love? Contrary to popular belief, prioritizing romantic relationships in high school has a positive impact on personal growth and social development. Teens should go beyond their fear of rejection and consider making a move on that special someone who has caught their attention before it's too late.

The physical affection and sense of companionship from dating can provide much needed emotional support, leading to increased happiness and self-esteem. Having a partner who validates and appreciates them can heighten a teen's sense of self-worth, especially at a time when teenagers value their social reputation.

High school can be a drag. Between the endless classes and mountains of homework that makes students question their will to live, it's a wonder how they make it through at all. Having a romantic partner can make all the difference.

They motivate you to get through the day, even if it's just to catch a glimpse of them in the hallway for two seconds. You also get to experience the joy of giving and receiving gifts on special occasions, like anniversaries and Valentine's Day.

Who doesn't love a good surprise note or a small trinket to show someone cares? It's like getting a reward for surviving another day of school; it is a win-win. So whether you are contemplating talking to that person in the halls or your class, just do it. It'll probably make high school a little more bearable.

Dating in high school can help with navigating through the socially awkward hallways or preparing you for your future. Not only will you be able to meet new people and broaden your social circle, but you will also gain lifetime communication skills. It can be a way to meet new people and develop social skills, empathy and understanding, all of which will help you get a job and work with people of all backgrounds in the future.

In addition, having someone to share experiences makes life more enjoyable. Who else are you going to share your embarrassing gym class moment or your epic debate tournament victory with? So, don't be afraid to gamble on love.

It's a miracle we have time to breathe between preparing for exams, training for big games and competitions and attempting to maintain some kind of a social life. Yet, dating in high school can really benefit the balance of these goals and improve time management. You'll learn to multitask to the point where you can simultaneously text your crush and study for a test.

Even if it doesn't work out with your crush, you'll develop a better understanding of what you want in a partner — who doesn't love the opportunity to have some fun with someone special? Just don't forget to blast some Taylor Swift and eat a pint of ice cream when things don't go as planned.

So, go ahead and take a chance on love. Worst case scenario, you will simply have more material for your emotional playlist and plot development stories for your friends.



No, Romantic Relationships in High School are not Worth It.

By Benjamin Jacobson (III)

Contributing Writer

Although high school relationships can be fun, they are simply not worth the time and effort. Romantic relationships in high school rarely last and distract teens from their priorities — possibly even their futures. The relationships depicted in the media are not applicable to real-world relationships, which pose many more challenges.

Realistically, most high school relationships are not going to last forever. Since they rarely do, it's unnecessary to commit one's full attention to a romantic relationship. Some may reason that even if relationships fail, they are valuable because one can learn and grow from the experience. Most of these relationships, however, are not that deep anyway. Anything that someone is going to learn from their high school relationships is likely not worth knowing. It is quite probable that students' classes are more important than their relationships.

It is vital for students to stay focused in order to succeed. Students have a lot to do between grades, extracurriculars, sports and getting enough sleep. In high school, teenagers are prone to hyper-fixating on temporary matters — such as relationships — and losing sight of what's truly important.

Cal Hale (III) explains, "Swimming and school are my women. Relationships are temporary, [...] do math. I get into relationships when I am off my grind, and I am always on that grind." Hale prefers to allocate his time to academics and extracurriculars instead of pursuing a romantic relationship. Students should prioritize activities that will have a greater impact on their lives in the future rather than temporary distractions.

Relationships are also often the root of petty drama and nasty rumors, as they are intertwined with popularity. Especially during adolescence, when it is easy to exaggerate drama, relationships just add a new burden of stress for students. As Boston Latin School English teacher Mx. Dana Amico explains, "It can feel like a lot of pressure to have to date or you will feel like a loser." Under these societal pressures, students tend to seek out relationships based on public images and a desire for validation rather than a genuine connection.

Furthermore, breakups among high school students are usually immature and have the potential to ruin friend groups. Since social circles are relatively limited in high school, students end up dating within the same ones. Given the size of BLS, you risk awkward experiences in the hallways, or worse, classes — imagine you and your ex are assigned lab partners in chemistry class.

Ultimately, although relationships can provide for fun experiences and validation, as well as boost one's social reputation, they distract from what should be one's true priorities.

As Ibrahim Dagher (III) jokes, "I would not be half the *Rocket League* Mobile Player today if I was preoccupied with [relationships]."

In high school, when time is of the essence, remember that you only live once, so spend your time on things that actually matter.

Ask the Students: Are Romantic Relationships in High School Worth it?

Yes, I think high-schoolers should be in relationships because it helps you develop socially.



Nha Truong (I)

No, I think that one shouldn't prioritize relationships because one should prioritize school, extracurriculars or anything that you enjoy doing!



Nick Lai (I)

Yes, if both people are mature enough and can both commit to it.



Evan Casali (II)

Yes.
Hit me up.



Cat Zee (III)

No, at least for freshmen, relationships don't last; there's no point. Real goofy.



Jasper LoRusso (IV)

No, I think you should date people, but don't go crazy and fall in love when you're 13.



Margaret Hanlon (V)

City vs. Suburbs: Urban Kids For the Win



Lauren Dong (V)

Students rush out of school into the city.

**By Hannah Stoll (III)
& Ariel Mura (III)**

Staff Writer and Contributing Writer

Why settle for a boring childhood in the suburbs when you can have an adventurous one in the city? It is widely acknowledged that people, especially children, are products of their environments. From rural areas to suburbs to the concrete jungle, growing up is a varied experience shaped by different circumstances. It is evident that kids who grow up in the city are far more independent and thus better equipped for adulthood.

Cities are fast-paced, busy and crowded environments, which, to some,

may seem inopportune for raising children. An urban environment, however, fosters independence from a young age and instills valuable life skills, such as navigating public transportation and remaining safe while doing so.

Catherine Vu (III) explains, "Living in a city makes you very close to other people, work [and] shops. The suburbs isolate you from different services and people." Children learn how to navigate interactions with service workers in stores, ask for help when necessary and spend money responsibly, an opportunity that is prematurely exposed to city kids.

Meanwhile, in the suburbs, younger kids are forced to rely on their parents to get from place to place due to the expansive

nature of suburban towns. For working parents and their children, this presents a challenge, as kids struggle to move around and parents are forced to frequently rearrange their schedules based on when and where their children need to be driven.

In addition to mastering self-reliance, city kids are granted with opportunities across a range of fields and interests. This is visible in the sheer number of experiences accessible to Boston Latin School students, including summer jobs, internships and other programs that span from volunteering in hospitals to painting murals. Through these opportunities, students can network with a wide variety of people, a valuable experience that is primarily available in bustling and vibrant city environments.

These opportunities largely stem from cities, which are often diverse areas filled with people from many distinct backgrounds. Ita Berg (III) expresses, "I've met some of the people I respect and admire the most in Dorchester, and I am always grateful to live somewhere with many cultures, languages and foods. I think city-living, because of its diversity, produces children with more respect for other people than they might already have, and I think it teaches them to have open minds." This greatly contrasts with the suburbs, which are often much more homogenous and financially exclusive, leading to closed-mindedness and a lack of exposure to people of different socioeconomic backgrounds.

While suburbs are known for being smaller and therefore more community-oriented as a result of residents who are more familiar with one another, peo-

ple living in cities are stereotyped as colder and not as intimate. Despite such claims, this is often not the case. Instead, small communities within cities create more enriched environments that feature the diversity so unique to urban areas. Berg emphasizes, "Boston is full of diverse and wonderful neighborhoods, which means you can always find somewhere fun to go and experience many different cultures in one area"

A counterargument to raising children in the city is that it is more dangerous, in consideration of crime rates. The National Bureau of Economic Research, however, disagrees, elaborating on how "the connection between cities and crime is both so strong in the [United States], and so much a part of our history that it becomes almost impossible to remember that in many times and in many places cities are places of safety, not of danger."

Often, these beliefs are rooted in systemic prejudices against people of color, people with disabilities and people in other marginalized communities. Referring to these cities as dangerous is merely an attempt at justifying not only the biases against marginalized communities, but also the insufficient support for the area, perpetuating the issue.

Everyone has individual definitions for what an ideal home should look like. Some prefer the energetic buzz of city life, while others crave the tranquility of a roomy, suburban abode. From endless opportunities and diverse communities to a valuable set of life skills, urban environments provide the ideal foundation for young people to thrive and grow into well-rounded adults.

Redefining American History

**By Mia White (II)
& Brandon Flores (IV)**

Contributing Writers

Stories are told as a means to glorify, often depicting impressive, heroic and almost unrealistic leaders at the forefront of history. For many generations, public education in the United States has made its nation's heroes — such as the founding fathers — appear perfect, while neglecting equally important figures in American history. Although there has been a shift towards a more inclusive and accurate depiction of U.S. history, much of the nation has refused to accept the flaws and deficiencies in our cherished heroes.

Ever since the Civil Rights Movement, there has been advocacy for incorporating ethnic studies classes which provide a more diverse perspective on American history. An ethnic studies class, namely that of Asian Studies and African American studies, should be an option to fulfill the U.S. history graduation requirement at Boston Latin School.

It is clear that the U.S. history course still does not capture the full story of the nation. World History teacher Mr. Andy Zou shares, "We're discussing if we're covering enough African American history; that could be covered more. [...] And there's definitely a lack of Asian American history." The current U.S. history curriculum is falling short, as it continues to be taught from a predominantly white and male perspective, leaving important narratives untold and perspectives unheard.

Given the vastly diverse makeup of American history, no single class can adequately represent every historical event. The opportunity to take an ethnic studies course, however, would give students the chance to explore histories they have not previously considered or learned about. Mr. Zou adds, "There are so many little stories of marginalized groups that get untold in some ways because you're focusing so much on the broader context." On top of that, having the freedom of choice would also encourage students to venture into new perspectives and ideas.

The best way to avoid repeating mistakes of the past is to learn about them. While grim events and policies are usually glossed over in general history classes, ethnic studies would offer a meaningful space for stu-



Lauren Dong (V)

With a lack of emphasis on ethnic studies, students must read independently to learn more.

dents to learn about the true history of this country in a setting that instructs these topics with the detail they deserve.

As the face of the future, it is imperative for youth to understand the modern world that we live in. If students do not have the opportunities to learn about different cultures and truly understand the foundations of the modern world in school, they will not be able to fully thrive as socially responsible and civically engaged citizens.

With the rise of social media and global news, today's world is becoming increasingly interconnected. In the face of globalization, people are exposed to many different cultures and ideas, and having insight into complex histories is vital to putting the world into context.

Moreover, hostility between groups of people is still a pervasive issue and forms the basis for some of the

most pressing political battles. Amid the polarization of ethnic studies, there is significant opposition to the idea of making ethnic studies a priority since the concept of "othering" has been woven into the fabric of American society for centuries; fear, hesitation and even hate continue to shape the way people view one another. The question is, will we continue to let these forces dictate our future, or will we take action to rewrite the narrative?

Breaking down the stigma and bridging the gap between different groups starts with understanding the different perspectives of history. If the U.S. truly wants to embody the values of equality, union and liberty that it so often espouses, then it must take proactive steps to foster a sense of unity. It begins with taking steps to educate younger generations in history classrooms, thereby unlocking the potential to make meaningful contributions to build a better, more just world.

Is Cultural Appropriation Appropriate?

By Annie Dai (IV)

& Ruby Dai (III)

Staff Writer and Contributing Writer

With the conversation about the thin line between cultural appreciation and cultural appropriation becoming increasingly relevant it is imperative to educate oneself to show respect to the cultures represented. There is nowhere else in the world with a greater diversity than the United States, a nation of varying cultures and identities. Yet also, there is nowhere else in the world with a greater belief in the notion known as “cultural appropriation.”

Modern American society has recently popularized this term, primarily on social media. Many consider calling people out on cultural appropriation as unnecessary, ineffectual and ultimately outdated. But this is one of the rare situations where change is undesirable. Americans should continue having conversations about cultural appropriation and refrain from simply dismissing the issue.

Some may argue that cultural appropriation is synonymous with “gatekeeping” or limiting access to cultures. Cultural appropriation, however, occurs when a dominant culture takes select aspects of cultures from minority or marginalized groups without giving credit or showing respect. Labeling cultural appropriation as gatekeeping undermines the impacts on the targeted communities.

There is a blatant difference between cultural appreciation and appropriation. People are usually excited to share their cultures with others because it is an opportunity to present their cultural identity to the world and take pride in it. It only becomes an issue when others refuse to respect and learn about what they’re actively participating in. Biya Brook (II) shares, “If people did their research and are educated, I would be happy that they’re enjoying parts of my culture.”

The recent viral use of the *gua sha*, a traditional Chinese medicine tool to stimulate circulation, is an example of cultural appropriation. It differs from appreciation and stems from a lack of education. Catherine Zee (III) explains, “[If] someone was trying to market it by saying ‘it’s a tool to improve your face shape,’ that would be cultural appropriation because you’re not giving the credit, rather compared to saying ‘this is *gua sha*, which is used in traditional Chinese medicine.’” There are countless other examples of cultural appropriation, including sports teams using Native American tribal names or images and appropriating traditionally Black hairstyles, such as cornrows.



Gigi Hadid wears a dreadlock wig in Marc Jacobs’s 2017 runway show.

Partaking in different cultures is acceptable, but refusing to acknowledge the culture or using it for aesthetic purposes and personal gain is not. The right to call people out on cultural appropriation is imperative for minority groups and immigrants because it allows them to speak out against this disrespect and discrimination. To them, the term cultural appropriation is a protection that prevents others from taking advantage of their heritage and community.

Faria Zaman (I) agrees, “I am very happy with how discussions are being held more, because in the past, I would be upset with something I see on social media and I [would] see no one discussing it. But now, more people are being called out and I appreciate it. If it were up to me, I think we should continue having those conversations. We are heading off in a good direction.”

Boston Latin School enjoys a diverse environment, so it is not surprising that there are instances of cultural appropriation within the community. It is, however, important to respond in an appropriate way.

While discussion concerning cultural appropri-

ation should continue, the practice of “canceling” people over appropriation has proven to be ineffective. Bombarding people just causes more tension and stigma around cultural exchange. Building connections and establishing trust across different groups of people is only possible if the negative stereotypes surrounding it are eliminated.

Brook expresses, “A lot of times it can be out of love. [...] They could be doing it to appreciate the culture, but they’re just not doing it in the best way. Talk to them and explain why what they’re doing is wrong. Don’t just jump to attack them.” Although there are several problems concerning “cancel culture” now, teaching one another the rights and wrongs can transform appropriation into appreciation.

Cultural appropriation remains an essential part of socially educating others and respecting minorities. It helps people understand others better and become more open to different ways of life, especially in a country as diverse as the U.S. Disregarding other cultures completely is not the right path. It is better to have these complex and admittedly difficult conversations about culture and heritage, rather than to dismiss them altogether.

Section 230 Is Here to Stay



The Supreme Court hears cases on the legality of social media.

By Neil Jin (II)

& Louis Nguyen (IV)

Staff Writer and Contributing Writer

Discourse on social media platforms is an important part of modern society and only possible thanks to Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act. Without this legal protection, online media today would be very different, and for the worse. Dating back to the creation of the internet, the law has provided technology compa-

nies with a legal defense against claims based on content shared on their websites; for example, you may be able to sue someone if they defame you on *Instagram*, but you cannot sue *Instagram*. While the current way that Section 230 is enforced does have flaws, the government should advise companies on how to moderate their platforms more effectively instead of overturning Section 230.

One of the many benefits of social media is its easy access to discussions and current events, where users

can post live streams of things that are happening right now. Section 230 was enacted in 1996, during a time when the internet only consisted of around 100,000 websites, as opposed to the 1.6 billion websites today. Websites like *Instagram* and *Facebook* are popular platforms for people to share news and opinions, and Section 230 protects these companies from liability for anything users post on their sites.

This protection has come under attack with renewed considerations in the Supreme Court case *Gonzalez v. Google*. Plaintiffs argue that Section 230 protects Google from being held liable for promoting ISIS terrorist recruitment content in its algorithms. While this is a valid concern, Sam Chen (II) explains, “Section 230 being repealed would be one end of an extreme that is simply unnecessary.”

A repeal of Section 230 would also hinder innovation in the social media industry. With the increased liabilities of people suing the company over content out of their control, social media companies will expend more resources hiring a legal team. The strain in budgeting would stunt developing new features or streamlining functions of social media apps.

A protection from liability would

allow companies to experiment more freely with different ideas for social media platforms. Many features on social media, such as *Instagram Live*, are possible because companies do not feel pressured to monitor all user action in real-time. If Section 230 was changed, companies would likely disable live streams to avoid legal liability and ensure compliance to social media regulations.

In a world where anyone can sue social media companies for any reason, companies would need to pay a lot more attention to what is published on their sites. The removal of Section 230 will force them to limit free speech and likely prohibit the spread of legitimate information out of fear of spurring misinformation that is liable to lawsuits.

Although social movements spark heated controversy and debate, it would be worse to censor them. “Freedom of speech is more important than preventing people from saying harmful things,” Benjamin Leung (IV) argues, “Because unless a post or thread is incredibly harmful, or dangerous, I think that it should be allowed on a platform.” If users were to lose their freedom of speech, social media would lose its appeal, and important discussions would be much less accessible.

Appreciating the Boston Public Library



The Boston Public Library provides an array of resources for Bostonians.

**By Caitlin Donovan (I)
& Anneliese Yu (VI)**

Staff Writer and Contributing Writer

The Boston Public Library (BPL) was founded over 170 years ago and has evolved to meet the needs of the Boston community. With a network spanning over two dozen branches, the BPL provides countless resources to students and the public. Many patrons, however, have yet to realize all that it has to offer.

The BPL offers several types of services outside of physical books. *Kanopy* and *Hoopla* are two examples of how the BPL has acclimated to modern technological needs. *Kanopy* is a streaming service with on-demand movies and documentaries, while *Hoopla* is a hub for e-books, movies and TV shows. Users are able to access both services through their BPL library cards, where they can borrow six and ten items per month, respectively.

In addition to literary and streaming services, the BPL also sponsors various events within the

community. Local branches offer their patrons free or discounted tickets to places such as the Museum of Fine Arts, the Boston Children's Museum and the New England Aquarium. The BPL also sponsors the annual Boston Book Festival, which brings hundreds of authors and readers to Copley Square.

The Central Branch in Copley Square is a popular tourist attraction as well. With a marble courtyard, tea room and a space designated for teenagers called "Teen Central," the building balances historic architecture with modern spaces. Boston Latin School Keefe Library Librarian Ms. Susan Harari comments, "I went [to the Copley branch] to see a play last year. They have a beautiful theater." The Copley Branch also houses the Norman B. Leventhal Map & Education Center, which contains numerous map collections and rotating exhibitions available to the general public.

Although Keefe Library is not an official branch of the BPL, they share many resources. The Keefe Library utilizes the BPL's literary records to update their book catalogs. They also receive technical support for their computers and online resources from the BPL. Additionally, students use their BPL library card to check out books from the Keefe Library.

Even though many BPL initiatives — such as SAT preparatory classes and preschool story times — are targeted towards children and teenagers, their resources also encourage working adults to continue reading. "I like that so many books are available online now," shares BLS English teacher Mr. Aaron Weitz. "I can instantly pick up a book that I'm interested in reading, and the BPL probably has it online."

Public libraries are a central part of any community. BLS Keefe Librarian Ms. Deeth Ellis remarks, "Libraries allow all citizens to have equal access to very important resources." They provide quiet study spaces, digital resources and over 23 million books, serving as a grounding space for learning and community interaction in Boston.

Everything Everywhere All at Once Is Everything

**By Yongyu Qiu (I)
& Mindy Luong (II)**

Staff Writer and Contributing Writer

At the 2023 Screen Actors Guild (SAG) Awards on February 26, the A24 film *Everything Everywhere All at Once* (EEAAO) swept the ceremony with four out of six possible wins, more than any other film in SAG history.

EEAAO is a sci-fi and adventure comedy directed by Daniel Kwan and Daniel Scheinert, featuring a talented and diverse cast led by Michelle Yeoh. The supporting cast, including James Hong, Jamie Curtis Lee, Stephanie Hsu and Ke Huy Quan, gave excellent performances that added depth to their parts.

The bizarre but exhilarating film follows the journey of Evelyn Wang (Yeoh), a Chinese immigrant mother, as she juggles a failing laundromat and a shaky marriage with her newly discovered obligation: saving the multiverse. Navigating through parallel worlds, she encounters different versions of herself — opera singer, chef and martial artist, to name a few — and must confront them as she races against time.

From googly eyes to telepathic rocks to bagel-shaped voids, each nonsensical aspect of the film connects back to a central lesson: love and family give us purpose. The film also explores themes about the immigrant experience, queer identity and breaking the cycle of generational trauma.

EEAAO has been well-received by audiences and critics, which has helped to showcase and highlight Asian actors' and filmmakers' skills and creativity on a global level. The film has been hailed as a breakthrough in the industry, pushing the boundaries of what is possible in terms of its unique visual style and genre while

striving towards greater representation in the film industry.

Angela Guan (I) resonates with the film's characters and message, saying, "It was the first time that I ever felt connected to a movie protagonist. Like Joy, I felt the pressure to live up to expectations that my mom set for me, but it was difficult to accept and understand that she was doing this out of love, which is why disagreements with my mom sometimes led to arguments. The fact that the Wang family is able to go through a journey of healing together through all the chaos is what makes *Everything Everywhere All at Once* such a beautiful movie."

Yeoh won Best Female Lead for her role as the overwhelmed but determined protagonist, becoming the first Asian actress to ever do so. Fellow cast member Jamie Lee Curtis won Best Female Actor in a Supporting Role for her portrayal of Deirdre Beaubeirdre, a villainous IRS inspector who is Evelyn's lover in a parallel universe.

Vietnamese American actor Ke Huy Quan won Best Male Actor in a Supporting Role as Waymond Wang, Evelyn's good-natured husband. He was also the first Asian actor to win in that category. In addition to these remarkable wins, EEAAO took the title for Best Cast with a cast composed primarily of Asian American actors.

EEAAO's success at the SAG Awards went on to accurately predict the outcome of the Academy Awards. All four SAG-nominated actors were nominated for Oscars in their respective categories: Yeoh won Best Actress, Quan won Best Supporting Actor and Curtis won Best Supporting Actress. EEAAO also won Best Picture, Best Director, Best Original Screenplay and Best Film Editing, becoming the ceremony's most acclaimed film with seven wins from eleven nominations. Stephanie Hsu, who played Evelyn's daughter Joy, became the first openly



Everything Everywhere All at Once makes history with their wins!

queer actor nominated for an Oscar in a queer character.

The film's record-breaking accomplishments mark a significant milestone in addressing Asian underrepresentation in Hollywood. Historically, Asian actors have been overlooked in the movie industry, garnering little recognition and awards. They are frequently stereotyped, relegated to supporting roles or subject to white-washing, while white actors are cast in roles that were originally intended for Asian actors. James Hong, the 94-year-old actor who plays Evelyn's father, recalled his time in the acting industry when presumably white actors would have "their eyes taped up [...] because the producer said the Asians were not good enough [for the] box office."

In his acceptance speech, Quan later stated that "the landscape now looks so different than before," affirming the positive direction that Hollywood is taking by providing more opportunities for Asian-

cast roles. The lack of such opportunities had been the reason for Quan's two-decade-long hiatus from acting.

These wins signify a turning point in an industry that is working toward inclusivity and equal representation. They also demonstrate to younger generations of Asian Americans who may feel marginalized that their dreams are within reach. Yeoh was speechless as she accepted her award, dedicating her accomplishment to all Asian Americans who feel unseen and unheard. She proclaims emphatically, "This is not just for me. It's for every little girl that looks like me."

Everything Everywhere All at Once, both an engaging and inclusive story, has the potential to inspire and empower a new generation of filmmakers and audiences alike. It motivates viewers to embrace their creativity, believe in the possibility of their imaginations and, most importantly, pursue their dreams with passion, enthusiasm and determination.

Care for a *Qrumpet!?:* BLS Theatre Takes the Stage

By Catherine Cox (III)
& Kassidi Thompson (I)
Staff Writer and Contributing Writer

Earlier this March, Boston Latin School's very own theatre group collectively presented their fourth production of the school year, *Qrumpet!*. Directed by Kyler Hoo-gendoorn-Ecker (I), Ethan Mostoslavsky (I) and BLS theatre teacher Mr. Joseph Gels, the play's plot follows the plight of a group of scientists who seek to prove the scientific theory of quantum tunneling by repeatedly throwing crumpets at a wall. By the end of the performance, chaos ensues, delighting audience members with its eccentric hilarity.

A unique play by all definitions of the word, *Qrumpet!* maintained its audience's attention from beginning to end, never quite revealing what would happen next. From the absence of dialogue, dramatic use of sound and light and consistent dismantling of the fourth wall, *Qrumpet!* created palpable tension without saying a word. The show's actors unanimously testified that such a performance was not easy to achieve. Erika Monteiro Tavares (IV) highlights the difficulty of "figuring out how to act with our expressions and physicality" instead of speech — arguably the greatest obstacle of them all.

Given the minimal dialogue, the actors' use of props was instrumental in delivering comedic effects. From the bike that controlled the lights of the show to the seemingly endless amounts of butter used in each trial of the

experiment, actors masterfully incorporated every prop into the performance.

Actor and crew member Mitchell Phe-say (II) shares the challenges that surrounded the cast's inclusion of the props: "The most challenging part was probably the clean-up, whether that be getting butter off the wall, butter off of shoes, or butter off of anything else, and doing all that with butter in my socks. But I wouldn't trade it for the world." The unusual components that *Qrumpet!* combined with the passion and enthusiasm of the cast and crew ultimately melted together like butter, ensuring the play's success.

Qrumpet!'s audience mirrored this enthusiasm. The show called for audience participation throughout its duration to supplement the absence of dialogue. When the bell to deliver a crumpet for a new trial is rung and a crumpet is nowhere to be found, the audience is faced with the realization that something must replace it — something that may not exist on the stage.

During the performance on March 3, the actors invited one lucky audience member to sacrifice a shoe for the sake of "science," to be buttered by the scientists and take the place of the experiment's test crumpet. Throughout the entirety of the play, as the scientists' experiment is compromised by a variety of factors ranging from the consequences of a faulty pen, to the absence of crumpets to throw at the studied wooden wall or even a missing checker, they turn to the audience for help, creatively breaking the fourth wall. These interactions were praised by audience members.



Ash Albert (I) clutches two freshly toasted crumpets.

Kyra Huynh (V) enjoyed the actors' reaction to the unexpected fill-in for their test subject, saying, "Honora's [face] when she [was] handed the butter and [the] shoe [was] true gold."

Qrumpet! is certainly a play like no other, involving an experiment throwing crumpets against a wall to the buttering of an audience member's shoe, all within the 40-minute runtime. Mr. Gels reflects on the unique adventure of shaping *Qrumpet!* with the production's cast and crew: "[*Qrumpet!*] is a really unique show, and that is part of why

I wanted to do it. Our audiences will probably never again see a play that is quite like it, and I think that's really fun."

On March 4, BLS Theatre took *Qrumpet!* to the Massachusetts High School Drama Festival, where they were selected as one of the four acts to advance to the semifinal round. The cast and crew members of the show were also rewarded with ten individual awards. Then, on March 18, the show moved onto the final round of the competition, which will take place from March 30 to April 1. If you haven't yet, be sure to catch *Qrumpet!* live then.

EP Review: *Like..?* by Ice Spice

By Harrison Tran (I)
Staff Writer



Like..?

By Ice Spice
January 20, 2023

Genre: Drill

Highlights: "Bikini Bottom," "Munch," "Princess Diana"

Rating: 7.5/10

Internet sensation Isis Gaston, better known as Ice Spice, has finally released her debut EP *Like..?*. Released on January 25, only a few hours after it was announced, *Like..?* includes some of Ice Spice's iconic singles such as "Munch" and "Bikini Bottom," as well as some new tracks like "Princess Diana" and "Gangsta Boo." *Like..?* is a short but sweet EP that reminds us all why we love Ice Spice.

Ice Spice's upbringing in Bronx, New York heavily inspired her music, which primarily belongs to the Bronx drill genre. Ice Spice started off her music career as a *SoundCloud* rapper. She gained traction with her song "Name of Love," sampling Bebe Rexha and Martin Garrix's "In the Name of Love."

Like..? starts with the viral hit "In Ha Mood," released only a few weeks prior to the entire EP. If you have been scrolling through social media recently, you have probably seen two white dogs dancing to a remix of this song. This selection tells you everything you need to know about Ice Spice, showing her confidence proudly. It is no wonder why this track has gone viral on social

media: the lyrics are easy to sing along to, and Ice Spice comes off as incredibly charming.

The next track, "Princess Diana," is also a staple of the EP. The song takes its name from Diana, Princess of Wales, who was known as "the people's princess" while part of the British royal family in the 1980s and '90s. Both she and Ice Spice have mass cultural appeal due to their openness, causing fans to dub Ice Spice as this generation's Princess Diana. Ice Spice gladly accepts this title; resulting in a catchy track that keeps listeners hooked. The song continues Ice Spice's drill beats and classic confidence; she is a princess, and she knows it.

The EP proceeds with the only collaboration, "Gangsta Boo" with Lil Tjay and "Actin A Smoochie." Both songs feature the themes present within the EP: Ice Spice is still a baddie, still rich, famous and ready to steal everyone's significant other. These tracks are where the cracks of EP's flaws start appearing. If you listen to these songs continuously, they become repetitive. Although each song has a unique beat, they all fall within the typical Ice Spice formula. This is great for listening to the songs individually, but when listening back to back, they

start to mesh together.

These songs are not bad by themselves, but their placement in the EP hurts them. "Gangsta Boo" is good, but its beat is eerily similar to that of "Bikini Bottom," a much more iconic song on the EP. "Actin A Smoochie" is a strong track on its own, but again, it falls into Ice Spice's usual formula. It won't turn an Ice Spice hater into a fan.

The album ends the way it started, with two viral tracks. "Bikini Bottom," the second to last song, is my favorite song in this EP. The Spongebob beat strangely works for a song like this one. How could I lose if I'm already chosen?

The last song is the classic "Munch," which needs no introduction. This song is what made Ice Spice go from viral to truly famous. It has changed the general language of the public, just like Shakespeare, and is popular for a reason.

Although Ice Spice's EP *Like..?* is somewhat repetitive, it has no songs that I would say are objectively bad. Each selection contains Ice Spice's charm and swagger, which is essential to her brand. If you have heard one of Ice Spice's songs and liked it, I suggest giving this EP a listen! I can most definitely say that I am a munch after listening to *Like..?*

Capture that fresh spring feeling with the Winston Flowers Spring Collection — available for same-day delivery throughout Greater Boston.

WINSTON  FLOWERS.

WINSTONFLOWERS.COM
(800) 457-4901



Mary & Emilia's Corner

Should I confess my feelings to my friend, which might mess up our relationship? If so, how should I?

Hi Anonymous,

I know from personal experience how tricky that can be. I think the best way to decide whether or not you should confess your feelings is to think about how much NOT telling them is interfering with your relationship. Is it all you think about when you're with them? Does it bother you even when you're not together? If this is the case, confessing your feelings might be in your best interest for your own mental well being.

If it just feels like a small crush, however, then maybe hold off for a little while and see if your feelings get stronger or fizzle out. If you do end up feeling like you want to ask them out, start simple. Ask to hang out one-on-one and feel the situation out. If you are too nervous for that, just send them a text and say you've been thinking about being more than friends. It will take the weight off of your shoulders. Not telling them how you feel and regretting it later is worse than not telling them at all.

Best of luck,
Emilia

As a guy, if you let a talking stage go on for too long, how recoverable is it later down the line with a girl?

Dear Anonymous,

I've seen this situation happen to my friends time and time again, and it's all a result of poor communication. The talking stage is likely going on too long simply because you haven't actually told the girl how you feel.

You can't keep dragging this out. Are you waiting because you're scared or because you're not sure if you really like her? It can be daunting to express your feelings and move on with a relationship, but if you like her, all it will take is a little bit of honesty.

Best of luck,
Mary

How can I convince my friends that pigeons aren't evil? - ThePigeon

Hi ThePigeon,

You can't. To be honest with you, ThePigeon, pigeons are a public health hazard, and your friends should beware. According to the Canadian government, pigeon poop has been associated with diseases such as histoplasmosis and cryptococcosis, and you don't want those. Pigeon poop is also acidic and can even destroy buildings! Please do not spread pro-pigeon propaganda.

Best,
Emilia

What is the best way to get your grades up after you have made up all your work???

Dear Anonymous,

Every student has been here. There have been classes where I tried my hardest and was still unhappy with my grade, but it's important to know that your grade in this class does not define you. If you're trying your best and learning in the process, that's all that can be asked of you. Remember, term grades end up as end-of-year cumulative grades, so it usually all balances out.

I will say this, however: if you're unhappy with a grade, you should talk to your teacher. You shouldn't demand a better grade, but some teachers are sympathetic to students who feel their effort is not accurately reflected by their grade. Some teachers might frown at you for asking, but a lot of them appreciate a student who fights for their grade.

Still, the best thing you can do is just keep trying.

Best of luck,
Mary

Do you support the LGBTQIA+ community?

Hi Anonymous!

Here at the *Argo*, we are big supporters of the LGBTQIA+ community! In fact, many of us are queer ourselves, including Mary and I! A fun fact about the two of us is that we both worked at local LGBTQIA+ organizations last summer. Mary worked at the Boston Alliance of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Queer Youth, and I worked at Boston GLBTQ+ Adolescent Social Services. Both organizations have been helping queer youth in Boston for years, and you should definitely check them out.

Best,
Emilia

Across

- 1. Secret romantic meeting
- 6. Like those interviewed on page five
- 11. Landmark Obama healthcare law
- 14. All the vowels
- 15. Skincare brand known for their hand cream
- 16. On the ___: at large
- 17. Part of a continental breakfast in Paris?
- 19. Common BLS student's worry
- 20. Coming after (abbr.)
- 21. Traditional Scottish garment
- 22. Those who anticipate optimistically
- 24. Green Jedi master
- 26. Facebook parent company
- 28. Sluggers' stats
- 29. Imperial Russian ruler
- 31. Snitch
- 32. Of few words
- 33. Non-verbal approval
- 35. Eye, in Madrid
- 37. Nation known for its kangaroos (abbr.)
- 38. Part of a continental breakfast in London?
- 43. Card that can be high or low
- 44. Actress Dunham
- 45. Regret
- 46. Tenth-grade science option (abbr.)
- 48. Not yesterday nor tomorrow
- 50. Furniture store known for its meatballs
- 54. ___ list: daily goals
- 55. Stroller, to a Brit
- 56. Bothersome insect
- 57. Part of a continental breakfast in Copenhagen?
- 61. Prepare, as in food
- 64. Multi-billionaire Musk
- 65. *C'est la ___*
- 66. EPs or LPs
- 67. *Je t'___*
- 68. Velvet finish?
- 69. Capital of Taiwan
- 70. Golfing necessity
- 71. Mrs., in Spanish

Down

- 1. Laffy ___
- 2. Transplant, again
- 3. Gives way to pedestrians
- 4. Male offspring
- 5. Fold inward
- 6. Deer's head accessory
- 7. *Goodfellas* star Ray
- 8. State school founded by Jefferson
- 9. Fabric used to keep out mosquitoes
- 10. 1974 Japanese Nobel Peace Prize winner
- 11. Ninth-grade math class
- 12. Juice that comes in a pouch
- 13. Adds up
- 18. He/___ pronouns
- 23. ___-workout
- 25. *Avatar: The Last Airbender* protagonist
- 27. Building block of matter
- 30. "___ Tide!": Alabama chant
- 32. Soy-based protein
- 34. Sugar-free soda
- 36. Courtroom group
- 38. Lover of Narcissus
- 39. Require
- 40. Sleeping noise
- 41. Sat down
- 42. Pretend, as an expression
- 43. SAT alternative
- 47. Create a prototype
- 49. 2001 comedy about a woman in Paris
- 51. ___ *Out*: murder mystery by Rian Johnson
- 52. Less difficult
- 53. Greek goddess of war & wisdom
- 58. Scottish philosopher David
- 59. Vaulted ceiling
- 60. Hydrocarbon suffix
- 61. Feline
- 62. "Hello" in Portuguese
- 63. ___ Wan Kenobi

MARCH CROSSWORD

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14					15					16		
17				18						19		
20			21				22		23			
24		25	26			27		28				
29			30	31			32					
33		34		35	36			37				
38	39			40	41			42				
43			44				45					
46			47	48			49		50	51	52	53
54				55				56				
			57	58				59	60			
61	62	63				64				65		
66						67				68		
69						70				71		

By Caitlin Donovan (I),
Kylar Hoogendoorn-Ecker (I)
& Alex Strand (I)
Staff Writer and Contributing Writers

Rihanna Redefines Super Bowl Halftime Show Success

By **Penelope Meisel (II)**
& **Parker Hastings (II)**

Staff Writer and Contributing Writer

This February, international sensation Rihanna took the stage at the Super Bowl LVII halftime show, one of the most prestigious gigs in the music industry. The show, being the singer-songwriter's first performance since 2018, was highly anticipated: 112 million people tuned into the annual mid-game concert to celebrate the end of her hiatus.

Instead of a solid stage, Rihanna went super for the occasion with multiple floating stages, reminiscent of a *Super Smash Bros* map. They were the setting for her 15-minute performance, which included hit songs like "Rude Boy" and "Umbrella," accompanied by incredible choreography.

The performance's focus on its dancers set it apart from past shows. Formerly, halftime shows have surrounded the singer, leaving little room for choreographers to explore the art of dance as the program's main attraction. Rihanna's choreographer, Parris Goebel, however, helped redefine the role of "background" dancers to give them the spotlight they deserve.

The show began with a solo shot of Rihanna on a floating platform then panning out to reveal six other platforms occupied by dancers. By the second song, they surrounded the singer-songwriter on all sides of the runway-shaped stage

and remained front and center until the outro.

"As a dancer, it was definitely great to see [them] have more of the spotlight," says Henning Washington (II). Washington, an avid member of Boston's dance and choreography community, has closely followed Goebel's work over the years. "She always allows for her dancers to dance at their highest level possible. [...] I think that's why dancers enjoy working with her and why audiences enjoy watching her choreography," Washington remarks. "A goal of mine is to be in [one of her] projects one day."

Although the Super Bowl is known for its game-interrupting advertisements, the halftime show usually provides a break from the ads. Rihanna, however, did not shy away from promoting her cosmetics line, Fenty Beauty, during her performance. Halfway through the concert, she paused to re-apply her brand's "Invisimatte Setting Powder" to restore her flawless, "Fenty-guaranteed" look.

The promo paid off. Within the first 12 hours following the halftime show, Fenty Beauty gained over 5.6 million dollars in revenue — an amount unheard of for the Super Bowl, which does not directly pay its halftime show performers.

Though the stunt has garnered support from fans, Rihanna's economic gain has left some questions about the performance's motive. Business analysts for *Excel Sports Management* estimate that "Rihanna's performance will generate 37.5 to 75.1 million dollars in incremental sales growth for Fenty Beauty in 2023 based on reported revenue figures for



Rihanna at the Super Bowl halftime show.

the brand." Could this growth have come solely from her setting powder pause?

Regardless of Rihanna's monetary motivations, her performance will certainly go down in history. Not only was the halftime show Rihanna's musical comeback, it was also the "hard launch" for her second pregnancy with her partner, rapper A\$AP Rocky. The show has left fans wondering, yet again, whether she will rejoin the music industry; some even joke they will not be seeing new music "until 2060." Rihanna herself remains neutral, insisting that "[performing at the] Super Bowl is one thing — a new album is another thing."

Her supporters, however, remain hopeful that new music from Rihanna is on the way.

Hamilton Blows Us All Away



Hamilton returns to Boston.

By **Alice Li (V)**
& **Lauren Dong (V)**

Staff Writer and Contributing Writer

In the beginning of 2023, the widely acclaimed and award-winning musical *Hamilton* was brought to Boston, a historically rich city and the birthplace of the American Revolutionary War.

Hamilton was performed at the Citizens Bank Opera House for two months, opening on January 17 and running until March 12, with tickets selling out quickly. The musical is about 2 hours and 45 minutes long and is split into two acts, with an intermission in between. The first act describes events in the Revolutionary War, while the second act portrays the early founding years of the United States.

Watching *Hamilton* at the Opera House in Boston seems fitting to the plot of the musical. A significant part

of the Revolutionary War took place in New England, with events such as the Boston Tea Party and Boston Massacre marking the start of the rebellion.

Georgia Ryan (II), who was able to watch the musical live, describes the experience: "Seeing and hearing the ensemble in person, with all of the mass group dances and harmonies, was truly breathtaking."

Drawing inspiration from Ron Chernow's 2004 biography *Alexander Hamilton*, Lin-Manuel Miranda started composing music and lyrics for the musical in 2008 and completed it in 2015.

Alexander Hamilton, the leading character of the play, became the first Secretary of the Treasury for the U.S. after the revolution. The musical describes Hamilton's hardships of growing up as an orphan and struggling to get an education, while also detailing his personal relationships and journey towards becoming an American founding father.

A large part of the contemporary significance of *Hamilton* comes from its cast's diversity. Both the casts in the original Broadway production and the Boston production feature people of various ethnicities and backgrounds who play white figures. In doing so, the musical recognizes the people of color who have gone unrecognized in their contributions to the U.S. and more accurately represents the U.S. population today.

A remarkable part of this story is the musical twist, which features rap music, in addition to songs with jazz and R&B influences. Famous figures of the founding period include Hamilton, his nemesis Aaron Burr and Thomas Jefferson, former presidents James Madison and George Washington, who appear and rap in the show.

The rap music provides a fast-paced environment, en-

hancing the revolutionary plot.

Ryan expresses, "My absolute favorite song I saw live was 'Non-Stop.' I think it's genius that one song can have so many references to past songs layered on top of each other and still sound amazing."

These collections of songs feature humorous and catchy lyrics, which explains the attractiveness of videos pertaining to the musical. *Hamilton's* TikTok account has gathered 1.9 million followers and 48.7 million likes. Thousands of users around the world continue to use songs from the musical in their own videos, proving that *Hamilton's* popularity continues today.

The original Broadway show received a Grammy and 11 Tonys, including Best Musical, among other notable awards. In November 2016, the show made 3.3 million dollars in a week of eight performances, exceeding the previous record for the most money grossed in a single week on Broadway.

After watching *Hamilton* both on Disney+ and live in Boston, Cleo Barowsky (V) notes, "It's also really emotional and is really entertaining and moving throughout!"

The play shows the audience a different lens of the revolution, focusing on the personal hardships that Hamilton faced in his complicated relationships with his wife and the devastating death of his son.

Boston Latin School history teacher Mr. Andy Zou comments, "In many ways when we learn about the politicians and historical figures, we really only see their accomplishments and achievements or their failures, and really, they become characterized [in the play]." *Hamilton* creatively blends history with an emotional storyline and catchy music to produce a musical that has impressed millions.

The Last of Us Brings Zombie Shows Back to Life

By **Mai Babila-Weigmann (I)**
& **Zoe Colimon (II)**

Staff Writer and Contributing Writer

Released in 2013, the video game *The Last of Us* is known in the gaming community as the perfect apocalypse saga, incorporating aspects of shooting games into a well-developed storyline. Being a form of zombie media, it takes on its own narrative as to how these zombies function. *The Last of Us* excels at adding a creative aspect to a common trope with its well-developed lore.

Because of the game's success, its producers planned to bring it to the big screen. In June 2020, *Home Box Office (HBO)* announced a television adaptation of the acclaimed game. Neil Druckmann, the co-president of the game's home company, Naughty Dog, joined the show's team as a creator and director.

Fans expected great performances when the leads were announced: Pedro Pascal as Joel and Bella Ramsey as Ellie, and they did not disappoint. Season one has become a showpiece for HBO, and with a second season on the way, *The Last of Us* will certainly go down in

television and gaming history.

The story starts in Texas in 2003 and follows the first days of the breakout of "Cordyceps," a brain infection. Joel must take Ellie, who is immune to the virus, across the country to help produce an antidote, while warding off rebel groups and a dictatorship.

The Last of Us television series tries to replicate the game's scenes, particularly the outbreak scene, and the two turned out almost identical. The show makes these parallels time and time again, demonstrating how much thought went into its production.

The show, however, also contains some plot differences. Boston Latin School history teacher Mr. Andy Zou notes, "[It] deviates from the original source and fleshes out new perspectives." Additionally, "[The episode 'Long, Long Time' was] a great example of building new narratives, so it's not a rinse and repeat of the same story."

Although most gamers appreciate the show, there has been criticism from parts of the fandom. Bella Ramsey's acting is phenomenal, but she does not look like the original Ellie from the video game. Much like the game, the show sexualizes 14-year-old Ellie, furthering an issue that is sadly common in the world of media.

Even though Ramsey has faced this criticism, she still serves as a role model for all viewers. Having worked with Pedro Pascal on HBO's *Game of Thrones*, she plays off of him skillfully and demonstrates true acting expertise, even at the young age of 19.

Gabriel Feinberg (II), a fan of the two actors, comments, "They work so well together, and their performances in the show compared to *Game of Thrones* prove that they are amazing actors."

Pascal has also gained a new reputation as a heartthrob, and iconic edits of him have become a new fad on TikTok. He has also been invited onto *Hot Ones* and recently participated in a *Saturday Night Live* skit regarding the edits.

The show's finale rounded out its plot beautifully. It followed the game closely, and Ramsey and Pascal provide an exceptional delivery of what these characters face in the game's ending. While watching the finale, Lila Aylwin (II) expresses that their final interaction "sent shivers down [her] spine in the best way."

All in all, the show has done an exceptional job of bringing this game to life. With its amazing cinematography and performances, it is able to bring a beautiful game to both a new medium and audience.

BLA and Snowden Thrown for a Hoop

By Caitlin McDonough (II)

Contributing Writer

Girls' Basketball Senior Night:

On February 13, the Boston Latin School girls' varsity basketball team stepped onto the court feeling confident and sentimental. Honoring eight seniors who had become role models, emotions were high and the team wanted to put on a show for their season's penultimate home game.

Posting up against crosstown rivals Boston Latin Academy Dragons, who they already defeated earlier in the season, the team knew what they were up against. The atmosphere was electric, encouraging the BLS Wolfpack to raise their anticipation.

Before the game even started, it was clear that the players' heads were in the game, and they were determined to bring home an important win on Senior Night. As captains Lauren Choy (I) and Paige Fitzgerald (I) shook hands with the referees before tip-off, the girls were set and ready for the win.

The game tipped off at 5:30 P.M. and the starting lineup was eager to get the first points on the board. At the start of the first quarter, the team "played with aggression on both sides of the court," explains Sofia Francisco (I).

While BLA players resorted to physicality from their increasing frustration, the Wolfpack continued to play their calm and composed game.

"We had great ball movement on offense and never settled for bad shots," adds Francisco, asserting the team's confidence and high energy throughout.

Slowly but surely, the team started to pull away from the Dragons, continuing to sink their shots and stifle BLA's attempts. There was a sense of camaraderie as the seconds ticked away in the fourth quarter. Although the season was filled with injuries and some tough results, the team came together to produce one of their best performances of the year. At the sound of the final buzzer, BLS defeated BLA with a final score of 56-24.

Congratulations to the senior players, Sofia Arvanitis, Lauren Choy, Paige Fitzgerald, Sofia Francisco, Colleen Lombard, Maayan Magaziner, Adele Orellana and Madelyn Taylor on their incredible basketball careers at BLS!



BLS girls' basketball seniors celebrate their last home game.

the class of 2023 want to be remembered?" and reminding them to "correct the things [they] can control and calm down and settle into the game."

Knowing what they needed to do, the boys continued to chip away at the enemy. This time it was BLS who was exerting pressure on Snowden. Multiple three-pointers and impressive defensive stops allowed the Wolfpack to come within one point of Snowden.

Now comes the grand finale: at the final second of the game, Will White (V) sprints to the corner and shoots. The three-pointer is up in the air. All eyes focus on the ball. The gym falls silent as the buzzer sounds. *Swish!* Final score: BLS 58 - Snowden 56.

White expresses that as the shot was in the air, he had only one thing on his mind: "To make the shot to win for the seniors in the last home game of their BLS careers."

Coach Etienne reflects that although it is sad to see players graduate, the class of 2023 "will always be special to [him] as [he has] had some of these guys since they were freshmen, as [he was] their guidance counselor."

Congratulations to the senior players, Ivan Belobokov, Weslin Diaz, Odin Edlund-Slarsky, Princwill Eke, Douglas George, Sam Griffin and Connor Tran on their fantastic basketball careers at BLS!

Boys' Basketball Senior Night:

With 5.2 seconds remaining, the score is 55-56 in Snowden International School's favor. Snowden shoots the free throw. *Clank!* The ball hits the front rim. 4.6 seconds left. The fight for the rebound ensues and BLS comes up with the ball. 2.7 seconds left. The ball's at half-court and is passed to the corner. One second left.

As exhilarating as the final few seconds against Snowden were, the game didn't start that way. Playing Snowden for the first time this year, the boys' varsity basketball team didn't know what to expect. Without their starting captain Sam Griffin (I), who was out due to an injury, the team struggled to wrestle with Snowden's pressure, leading to a sluggish start for the Wolfpack.

With lots of work left to do in the second half, the coaching staff and players knew the game was far from over. Coach Etienne rallied his players, asking, "How does

BLS Fencing Foils the Competition This Winter

By Christopher Choy (V)
& Vera Jacobson (II)

Staff Writer and Contributing Writer

This season, the Boston Latin School fencing team had many great successes. BLS hosted a fencing meet at the School for the first time, which would later go down to become one of the most important moments in BLS fencing history. The team also celebrated their tenth anniversary alongside an entire season's undefeated women's epee team and men's foil team. Along with their outstanding record — winning 99 out of 117 total matches at States — the men's team placed first. The women's team placed second.

Niara Dagli (I), senior captain for the women's team, explains that even though she is graduating this year, she hopes that next year, "our women's team can reclaim their seven-year streak and that our men's team will win again for a second year in a row."

The team is predominantly led by the senior class; however, there has been an increase in younger, less experienced, but hardworking teammates this year. Michael Nil (I) expresses, "As a senior on the team, I'm most looking forward to see how the new wave of fencers will take over and what they can do to make the club just a little bit better."

As four out of the five team captains among the men and women's teams are seniors, some aspects of the team's leadership and team chemistry will change. The senior captains will pass down the torch and leave the roles of leadership with this season's only returning captain, Declan Gorman (II). Gorman views next year's season as a season where the team can improve throughout the program, and he is confident in the strength



BLS Fencing celebrates its victory!

of next year's team.

Team chemistry is an extremely important factor for succeeding in team sports. When reflecting on this year's season, Dagli recalls, "Everyone was comfortable enough to cheer on their teammates and feel inspired when they were praised by non-fencers on the team." These seniors have played and practiced with one another for most of their time at BLS. With so many practices and events, teammates were quick to get to know each other, creating a sense of community,

comradery and family within the program.

Nil reflects, "The fencing team's biggest pride is our connectivity with each other. Whenever my teammates or even me are on the strip competing, I always feel a sense of family and empowerment by my peers." Fencers on the team echo these sentiments, emphasizing and repeatedly mentioning the team's huge impact on family and connection.

Although BLS fencers may appear intimidating on the strip when they compete

in full protective gear and weapon in hand, the team is compassionate and members have each other's back. After facing many challenges from the COVID-19 pandemic, the team has rekindled, coming back stronger than ever. After speaking with members of this tenacious team, it is clear that their success this year is only the beginning. As dedicated and motivated athletes, the BLS community will be on the edge of their seats to see what the BLS fencing team will accomplish next.

Federico Rollo ('19) ROLLS to the Boston Marathon

By **Terence Xie (I)**

Staff Writer

Boston Latin School alum Federico Rollo ('19) recently announced his participation in the 127th Boston Marathon, which will be taking place on April 17. During his time at BLS, Rollo was the captain of the boys' varsity soccer team, which won the Dual County League twice in a row and competed in the state tournament. He was also a member of the wrestling and lacrosse teams.

Beyond sports, Rollo filled his schedule with clubs and extracurriculars. One of which, the Political Awareness Club, encouraged weekly active discussion from students with differing political values.

Having been an active member of the BLS community, it is no surprise that Rollo has decided to represent purple and white in this year's upcoming marathon.

"The Boston Marathon is one of the most famous races, and I couldn't think of a better charity to run for than my alma mater! I'm very grateful for Boston Latin and all the lessons I learned along the way. BLS made me the person I am today," Rollo expressed.

Rollo is also grateful for the extensive lessons about teamwork and embracing the grind he has taken away from his time here. Aside from his alma mater, Rollo also credits his father as his inspiration for running and training.

Despite the sheer physicality re-

quired to run a marathon, Rollo emphasizes the other half of the battle: the mental challenge. From the beginning of the race in Hopkinton to the finish line on Boylston Street near Copley Square, the Boston Marathon spans a grueling 26.2 miles.

Rollo, however, is no stranger to hard work, and shares that he has been training rigorously in preparation for the upcoming marathon. "I've been training for about ten weeks now, and by this point I'm about one month out from the race. It's been an awesome experience so far and I can't wait till April 17," states Rollo about his preparation for the big day.

The BLS community and those close to Rollo have also played an instrumental role in his preparation for the race. Federico's AP Calculus teacher Ms. Theresa Cojohn has seen him grow as both a student and a person over the years. Ms. Cojohn speaks to Rollo's qualities as a student, highlighting his strong work ethic and unwavering motivation.

"He has the drive and determination to succeed at everything he does," Ms. Cojohn explains. To Ms. Cojohn, Rollo was always focused and determined in his endeavors. Due to his dedication to his community, Rollo's decision to run the marathon did not surprise Ms. Cojohn. He has always been committed to doing his best in the classroom or out on the field. The Boston Marathon simply marks yet another goal that he set his mind to overcome.



Alessandro Rollo

Federico Rollo ('19) trains along the Charles River.

"I'm really happy that my older brother is running the Boston Marathon, and even happier that he is running for the alma mater," says Riccardo Rollo (I), Rollo's younger brother.

R. Rollo then explains that the funds his brother is raising will go towards the Boston Latin School Association. Since the BLSA uses donations to fund the various extracurricular activities BLS has to offer, Rollo's campaign will allow for more opportunities for BLS students to pursue

their passions, whether it be a sport or another extracurricular.

Seeing Rollo train for the last few months, R. Rollo is fully confident in his brother's ability to complete the marathon and "finish it in a striking fashion."

With ample support from all those around him and a strong sense of self, Rollo is in top condition for the upcoming race. The entire Boston Latin community will be cheering him on at the Boston Marathon on April 17!

Team Giannis Shoots for the (All-)Stars



Ja Morant reaches for the stars on February 19 at Vivint Arena.

By **Jessica Li (II)**

Staff Writer

On February 19th, the National Basketball Association (NBA) All-Star Game was hosted in Salt Lake City, Utah, showcasing 24 star players of the league. Two of Boston Celtics stars, Jayson Tatum and Jaylen Brown, as well as the Celtics' coaches, led by Joe Mazzulla, headed off to Utah. NBA superstars, LeBron James of the Los Angeles Lakers and Giannis Antetokounmpo of the Milwaukee Bucks, were chosen as captains. Ultimately, Team Giannis triumphed over Team LeBron in a close score of 184-175, ending James's winning streak of five consecutive All-Star Games. How did this all happen? Why was there some controversy this weekend? Let's find out.

Every year, players who are voted in as All-Stars are drafted by the two captains. This year, however, the NBA tried something new — captains James and Antetokounmpo took turns drafting players just before the game started.

Coached by Michael Malone from the Nuggets, Team LeBron's starters consisted of James, Luka Dončić, Joel Embiid, Kyrie Irving and Nikola Jokić, with Jaylen Brown being drafted second as a reserve on James's team.

Celtics Head Coach Joe Mazzulla led Team Giannis, whose starters consisted of Antetokounmpo, Ja Morant, Donovan Mitchell, Lauri Markkanen and Tatum.

Antetokounmpo's move to acquire Tatum proved to be a great decision. In his first ever All-Star Game, Tatum scored 55 points in 35 minutes, making history by breaking the previous point-record held by Anthony Davis, who had scored 52 points in 2017. Tatum also put up ten rebounds and six assists, scoring ten three-pointers out of 18 shots attempted. Therefore, it was no surprise when nine media members unanimously voted him to be the Most Valuable Player.

"It means the world," expresses Tatum after hoisting the Kobe Bryant MVP award over his head, with a big smile on his face. "You think of all the legends and great players that have played this game. In all honesty, records are made to be broken. I'll hold it as long as I can, but I'm certain somebody will come along in a couple years and try to break it."

Jaylen Brown also showed up, scoring 35 points to put Team LeBron in the lead. In one of the most notable highlights of the game, around the end of the third quarter, Brown and Tatum went head-to-head in a one-versus-one. With their teammates standing off to the side, the battle ended in Brown's favor, winning 5-3. "Going up against my brother

[Tatum], going back and forth, it was like nobody was in [the arena] at all, just me and him," says Brown.

Many believe, however, that the Celtics teammates' exchange was the only exciting part of the night. With the lowest viewership and ratings in two decades, viewers complained that this year's All-Star Game was boring. Many players had opted out of the games due to injuries, contributing to this alleged dullness.

Among them, beloved superstars Kevin Durant, Steph Curry and Zion Williamson were ruled out. Furthermore, captains Antetokounmpo and James were also taken out very early in the game due to small injuries. Their positions as franchise sensations bring countless fans to the All-Star game every year, and without them playing, not as many people tuned in.

Another explanation for fans' disinterest relates to the game itself. Without any incentive to win the game, besides bragging rights, the All-Star Game is considered far less competitive. Especially in the past few years, little to no defense has been played, which has made the game less enjoyable to watch.

"The problem is the risk of injury," explains Boston Latin School boys' varsity basketball player Luke Fredericks (II). "Each of these players are crucial to their team, and if they were to get injured in a non-vital game, it would be detrimental to their franchise. I think the best solution is to go back to the way the game was before, with all the players from the Eastern conference playing those from the Western. The winner of the game would get home court advantage in the finals."

As controversial as this year's All-Star Game may have been, it continues to serve as a huge inspiration to many young basketball players. This event brings together the current best basketball players and pits them against each other. The sheer display of skill — in shooting, handles or passing — demonstrates players' passion and dedication for the sport.

Fredericks expresses admiration for one of the All-Star players, saying, "De'Aaron Fox inspires me the most out of this year's All-Stars. Last year, he was one of the worst fourth quarter performers. He would often make terrible decisions late in games, costing his team the win. This year, he is second in the league in fourth quarter points and has had a lot of clutch performances while he led the Kings to a win. Thanks to his talents this year, the Kings are in third place in the West and are going to make the playoffs for the first time in 16 seasons. As someone who is constantly looking to improve, Fox is a great example to follow."

Next year's All-Star Game will be held in Indianapolis, Indiana. Hosted by the Pacers, star-studded teams will be battling again, entertaining and inspiring millions.

Are Esports Helpful or Harmful to the World of Sports?

Yes, Esports are Helpful to the World of Sports

By **Julia Sax (II)**

Staff Writer

Sports video games have been popular ever since their invention. Take hockey, for example: *NHL Hockey* was released in 1991 by EA Sports, and the games have remained a popular choice for sports enthusiasts. These video games, because of their widespread nature and universal offerings, have had a tremendous positive effect on the world of sports.

Electronic sports, or esports, inform people who are unfamiliar with various sports and how each sport is played. Harry White (II) is one of those who have benefitted from the flexible and explorative structure of this sports media. He “didn’t know a lot of the basketball rules when [he] started playing *NBA 2K*,” and reflects that the game made him want to learn more. He ultimately figured out the rules and is now an avid watcher of basketball, specifically the Boston Celtics.

History and economics teacher Mr. Patrick Boor had a similar experience, as he previously played the soccer game *FIFA* and “learned a lot about the team rosters and all the teams in each league.”

Not only are esports informative, but they also encourage interest in the sport. People will buy these video games because they want to play with their friends or try them out. While playing the games, people realize that they find the sport interesting. They then end up watching and possibly even attending sports events.

Mr. Boor has experienced this phenomenon: “The *FIFA* video games are a major reason why I started getting into watching the English Premier League and La Liga [the professional soccer league in Spain].” Mr. Boor found his love of soccer all because he played *FIFA* with his friends in high school and in college.

Electronic sports build communities, inform its players and garner interest. Communities are a vital component of the sports world. Where would we be without bonding with friends, and even strangers, over a game or match? What would life be like without championship parades? Video games form a strong connection that brings people together.

This human connection was especially vital during the pandemic, when friends could not see each other in person. Video games allowed people to connect while keeping each other safe, and yet again fostered growth and community without an otherwise disconnected group of people. While sports video games will always have naysayers, their positives certainly outweigh the negatives, and they enhance the sports world.



No, Esports are Harmful to the World of Sports

By **Juliet McVay (IV)**

Contributing Writer

Competitive esports, or electronic sports, can be viewed as insignificant compared to the rest of competitive sporting, yet they still damage the world of sports as a whole. Most sports fans and players, especially those from older generations, prefer physical sports, but if future generations are conditioned to compete and engage in esports, they will lack the same love for these sports. Thus, the existence and rise of esports only prevents the hard-earned legacies of physical sports from living on.

While esports may appear fun and amusing, they do not embody the foundational philosophy of putting both physical and mental dedication into a game, unlike athletic sports. With the rise of media and technology, the temptations of the less physically demanding

option of esports can be largely influential.

The differences between the physical abilities of esports players and traditional sports players are drastic. Boston Latin School English and humanities teacher Mr. Peter Sullivan voices his thoughts, saying, “For the players, I do think that of course it is different, as real sports for the participants involves a mind-body dynamic that takes virtues like courage, moderation, etc. [...] The fact that they are actually real people would seem to change something.”

He also notes that the lack of any real change for the larger group of spectators may be where a shift toward esports stemmed from. If the spectators watching the game find the same level of enjoyment in either form of sporting, people may begin to contemplate the point of players pushing themselves physically, while esports players face almost zero chance of getting injured.

The physical factor of athletic sports can be difficult to work with, but it can come with a true reward. BLS Koreo member Nabayit Fassil (IV) reflects, “Esports take away time to interact in person and develop healthy habits.” After spending a considerable amount of time dancing with Koreo, she says that she enjoys the challenge of “pure activity and exercise.”

Although athletic sports are greatly valued by some, others who deem online gaming a better medium to play sports can depreciate the values that physical sports have imparted through generations of athletes.

Esports are completely changing the workings within the world of sports and becoming harmful to the traditional sports that most of the world are familiar with. It is detrimental to allow esports to fill the place of sports like soccer, basketball or tennis in the newly modernized generation.

Spotlight on Girish Raghunathan (I)

By **Rachel Li (IV)**

Contributing Writer

Not many high-school student-athletes go on to play their sport at a collegiate level like how Boston Latin School boys’ varsity soccer player Girish Raghunathan (I) plans to. After making the varsity team in his sophomore year, Raghunathan has become a crucial member.

Being in the program throughout his entire high school career and on the varsity team for three years, Raghunathan has gone through a plethora of experience---both good and bad---with his teammates.

During this past season, Raghunathan’s team had to adjust to the many new members. Although they were unable to make it to the state playoffs, they were still able to improve from last year, largely because of Raghunathan’s significant role on the team, as he always pushed himself and his teammates to play their best.

This season, due to both his leadership and technical skills, it was no surprise when Raghunathan achieved his goal of being named a Dual County League (DCL) All-Star, a tremendous accomplishment.

Head Coach Nick DiCicco adds, “I knew [Raghunathan] had a chance of being named a DCL All-Star because of conversations I had with other coaches in the league. They knew about [him] and some of them adjusted their tactics to account for his ability.”

Developing such a skillful ability in soccer does not come without hard work. Ever since the age of four, Raghunathan has been resolutely attached to the sport, spending six days a week practicing outdoors and training at the gym. Every summer, he attends an elite soccer program to further develop his



skills.

With this level of dedication, it is no surprise that Raghunathan has been recruited to play soccer for Lasell University. He was drawn to Lasell because of the overall environment and the locality of the campus. Mainly, though, he felt that unlike other college coaches who had talked to him, the coach at Lasell had a clear idea of how he would fit into their team. He felt the Lasell team would be a good fit for

Raghunathan’s perseverance and mindset.

Raghunathan reflects, “For me, soccer has always just been a way of life. I could not imagine living life [without] it. The sport gets me through tough times. It allows me to forget everything and just be in a state of peace and happiness when I am playing the sport.”

Raghunathan will undoubtedly be a force to be reckoned with at Lasell.