



THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE BOSTON LATIN SCHOOL

GPA Mix-up Muddles Admissions

By **Joanna Lin (II)**,
Kevin Zhong (II)
& **Ailin Sha (III)**

Head Editors and Assistant Editor

On April 12, Boston Public Schools informed families that it had calculated the GPAs of many Boston students incorrectly, thus wrongly informing them of their eligibility to apply for exam schools.

According to BPS, they incorrectly calculated the GPAs of 67 rising seventh-grade applicants because they used the “wrong methodology.” Of the 67 students, 41 were wrongly informed that they did not meet the requirements to apply, while 26 were incorrectly told that they did.

To be considered for admission to Boston’s three exam schools — Boston Latin School, Boston Latin Academy and the John O’Bryant School of Math and Science — a student must have a minimum GPA of a B or higher. Then, eligi-

ble applicants are ranked by their GPA and Measures of Academic Progress test scores against other students in their assigned socioeconomic tier to determine acceptance to the exam schools.

This year, BPS hired the external auditor Borderland Partners to verify the GPA data, a change from the firm they had hired last year, Ernst & Young. Neither Borderland Partners nor the BPS auditing department caught the errors in the GPAs before sending notices out to students. The district only discovered the errors when a family reached out with concerns about their student’s GPA. As a result, BPS has delayed sending invitations to applicants from the usual mid-March period to early May.

In a digital statement, Boston City Councilor Erin Murphy criticized BPS for this error.

“I am also disappointed to learn that BPS appears to not have the ability to implement its new and complex exam school admission policy in an efficient,

transparent way,” says Murphy.

The continued uncertainty surrounding Boston exam school admissions has left some families feeling anxious waiting for their students’ acceptance letters. Furthermore, families have expressed concerns about the lack of concern about the lack of clear communication and support from BPS throughout the process.

“The biggest impact is more likely with families and how they view the process that was put in place,” says BLS Head of School Jason Gallagher.

The mistake also has led some to question the accuracy and efficiency of the calculation process, as this is not the first time the district has made errors in determining students’ GPAs. In both 2019 and 2020, many students were either incorrectly admitted to exam schools, or denied admission despite being qualified. This mix-up was because of the different grading systems across BPS elementary schools.

One comment on *The Boston Globe* April 13 coverage on BPS’s GPA miscalculation says, “The disturbing reality is BPS consumes over 35 percent of the overall city budget and can’t do simple math. This entity is long overdue for a top to bottom overhaul.”

The district originally hired Ernst & Young, an education consulting firm, to prevent the GPA miscalculations from reoccurring in the 2021 admission cycle. Following this year’s miscalculation, BPS has rehired the company to confirm GPAs alongside the BPS Office of Data and Accountability.

Still, many families have lost trust in the exam school application process and the district as a whole. Superintendent Mary Skipper says, “We recognize that this mistake impacts not just the students most directly affected, but it also impacts the trust our families have in BPS [...] I’m committed to rebuilding that trust in addressing challenges transparently as they come up.”

BLS Beyond the Avenue: April Break Trips

By **Xintong Guo (IV) & Trinity Ngo (IV)**

Contributing Writers

Atlanta

The African American Studies class, led by BLS history teacher Mr. Brian Smith, jetted off to the South to visit prominent historical sites relating to the Civil Rights Movement of 1955-1964, exploring Atlanta, Georgia, Birmingham, Alabama and Montgomery, Alabama.

This trip was in collaboration with Boston Latin Academy and Dearborn STEM Academy, with a group totaling about 50 students and teachers.

Students visited numerous locations, such as Stone Mountain Park in Atlanta, which features a monument with the names of Confederate leaders carved into its side, and the 16th Street Baptist Church, where four young girls were killed in a bombing that stirred the nation.

One of the most notable places the group visited was the Legacy Museum in Montgomery, which showcases a collection of compelling art pieces from the Civil Rights Movement.

Trip participant Melanie Guilderson (II) shares, “Seeing these things in real life just makes you process and understand things in a completely new and emotional way.”

In addition to these dense and powerful scenes, students visited aquariums, malls and restaurants that not only gave them a taste of Southern life, but also allowed them to process the new environment and bond as a group.

Mr. Smith adds, “It’s not just what you’re reading in a book; it’s not just a film that your history teacher puts on, right? These are real people, real stories, real ancestors.”

Executing such an extensive trip is complicated. As with any school trip, gauging student interest played a major part in organizing the itinerary.

In terms of logistics, however, Mr. Smith admits that “reaching out to places in Atlanta and Alabama and trying to see if they could accommodate 50 people just showing up is the trickiest.”

He ultimately aims to leave students with a conviction to act against the racial injustice that remains prevalent today as a result of the past.

Guilderson echoes this sentiment, hoping that this opportunity will be open to all students, so that “[they] would all understand each other a little bit more.”

Eastern Europe

BLS juniors and seniors embarked on a Facing History and Ourselves Eastern Europe trip, learning about the horrors of World War II by exploring Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic. This trip, guided by Facing History teacher Ms. Judi Freeman, spanned 13 days and eight different cities.

“There is so much to talk about when you are talking about the Holocaust, and so the scope of everything to cover was one of the challenges,” explains Assistant Head of School Ms. Danielle Murray, who helped coordinate and chaperone the trip.

Students also had the opportunity to tour a variety of places and update a blog to document each day.

The group first arrived at Berlin, Germany, where they visited museums, neighborhoods, memorials and bomb shelters that brought them into the lives of a wide spectrum of people. Students learned about the history of these places and how the cities grapple with their pasts in the present.

Afterward, they visited four cities in Poland: Kraków, Oswiecim, Lublin and Warsaw. There, the students visited concentration camps and mass grave sites at Plaszów, Auschwitz, Birkenau and Majdanek.

Jolie Bellerand (II) shares that Majdanek, a concentration camp in Lublin, “was extremely haunting and I will always remember it.”

In Warsaw, the students explored the concept of resistance during the Holocaust. Having arrived on the 80th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, the group joined a celebration of Jewish resistance by donning paper daffodils. They also visited the Jewish Historical Institute, which housed an underground archive of documents from Jewish people living in the Warsaw Ghetto, and the Warsaw Zoo, where people were smuggled out of the Warsaw Ghetto.

On the last leg of the trip, they headed to the Czech Republic, stopping by Prague and Terezín. There, they uncovered more about the lives of prisoners during WWII and the nature of Nazi propaganda and its effects.

From trying local specialties, including pierogi and schnitzel to creating friendships with German high school students from the Reuchlin Gymnasium in Ingolstadt, Germany, students took advantage of their downtime to explore the culture of central and eastern Europe and reflect on their journeys.

Ms. Murray summarizes the purpose of the trip: “You can look at numbers and you can look at charts and maps, but it is that human element that helps transform people.

Morocco

This April break, a group of students from Classes I, II and III traveled to Morocco for ten days, where they explored its rich cultural history.

Boston Latin School history department Program Director Mr. Thomas Kennelly and English teacher Mr. Kamissa Barry led this trip alongside their partner organization Council on International Educational Exchange.

The planning of this trip was hinted at several years ago. During the pandemic in 2020, Mr. Kennelly’s World History students completed a virtual exchange with students from a high school in Morocco. Mr. Kennelly and Mr. Barry also led a trip to Kenya five years ago; since then, they have talked often about going on another trip to Africa.

For the first several days, students stayed in the homes of families in Morocco’s capital, Rabat. There, students traced Morocco’s history from antiquity to the present day by attending a civilization tour.

In addition to these tours, students engaged in hands-on activities with bamboo, pottery and mosaics with local artisans in Oulja.

“We didn’t just go as tourists, we went as students. For example, in that mosaic shop, we didn’t go to just see stuff and buy stuff; we went to learn about the people,” comments Adi Acosta (III), a participant in the Morocco trip.

In the next few days, students departed from urban areas of the city to explore Morocco’s geographical diversity, hiking the High Atlas Mountains from the city of Marrakech and walking from the Rif Mountains to Chefchaoune.

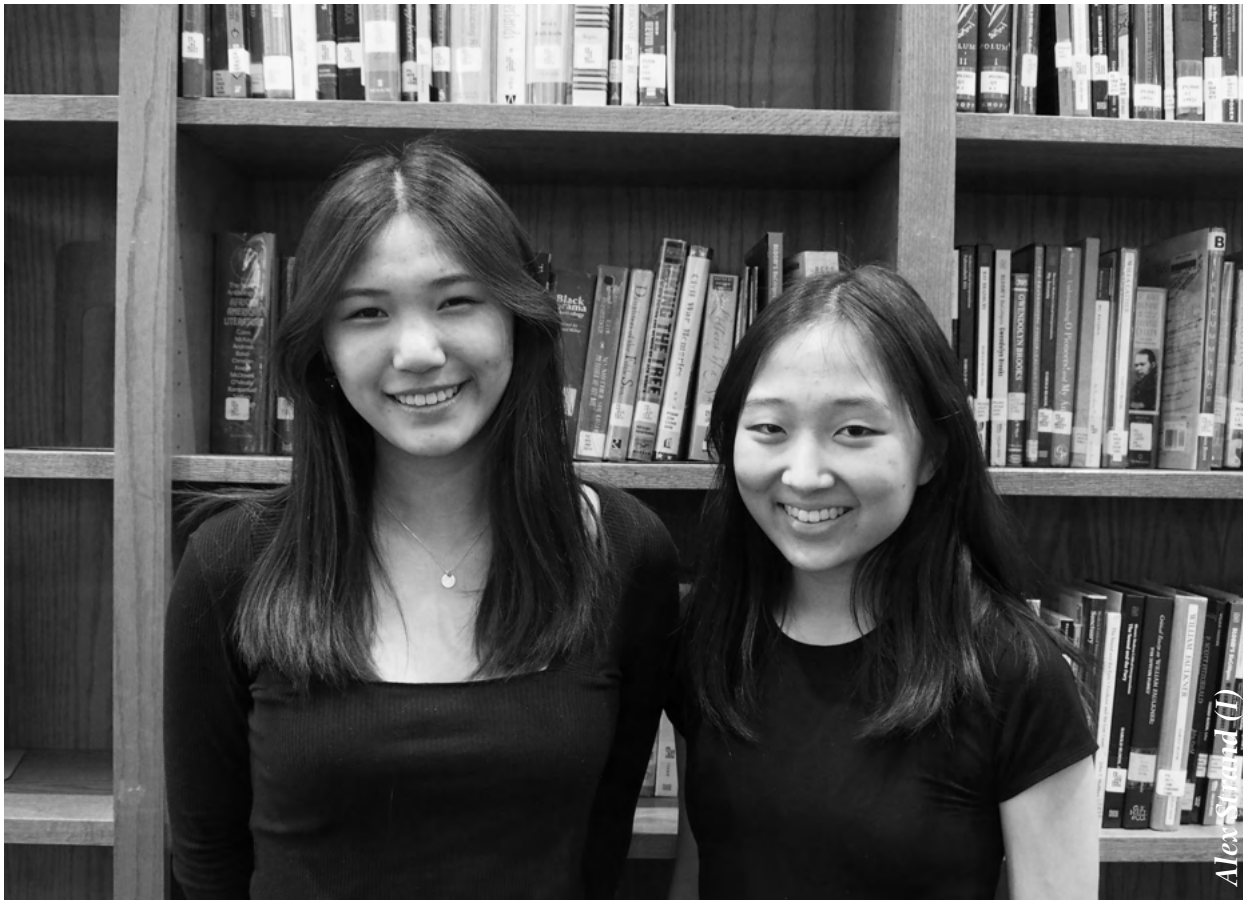
Toward the end of their trip, students visited the Hassan II Mosque in Casablanca, where they engaged in intercultural discussions and activities with local Moroccan high school students. Students also had the chance to experience Moroccan culture by receiving henna hand designs and wearing traditional Moroccan attire.

Mr. Kennelly advises, “All BLS students should try to participate in either of these trips or a summer travel program because they are unique, [once in] lifetime opportunities to go someplace you would never go on your own with your peers and teachers and have an eye-opening experience.”

To see photos from the trip, scan the QR code with your phone!



EDITORS' NOTE



For the last time...ahoy beautiful readers!

The 2022-2023 *Arrgh-go* ship is rapidly approaching the shore with our last issue before the next crew takes over. This mast-erful edition would not be possible without everyone aboard our board and beyond.

Starting with our production pirates, the Copy cabin spied for Oxford commas and straight apostrophes with their monoculars. Layout carefully mapped out each of the 16 pages in your very hooks. Photo captured booty-ful images throughout our voyage.

At the bow is News, which has fearlessly headed the paper with an article about Boston Latin School's April break trips and a spotlight on Ms. Vasquez's recognition by the Boston Teachers Union. Next is the feisty Forum, traversing into the waters of personality types and second-hand fashion to shiver your timbers. Anchoring pages 11 to 14 is A&E with their stories on *Daisy Jones & The Six* as well as the Institute of Contemporary Art's current high school art exhibit. Sports mans the stern and their scoops on the Boston Marathon and the boys' baseball team.

Lastly, we want to give a big thank-you to our senior seadogs, who will land on beaches beyond BLS. Our journey together has been worth more than any treasure.

We wish smooth sailing to next year's Argonauts; we have no doubt that ye will make us proud.

Your captains,
Selizabina

P.S. Be on the lookout for information about savvy shoutouts on our *Instagram*, @blsargo. Celebrate yourself or your friends with a photo, message or both in the Graduation Issue!

P.P.S. We are happy to announce that the *Argo* won first place in Editorial Writing and second place in News Writing at Suffolk University's 53rd Greater Boston High School Newspaper Competition!

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.



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Trump Struggles With Legal Troubles

By **Sylvia O'Hearn (II)**

Staff Writer

On March 30, former President Donald Trump was indicted in New York on 34 charges of falsifying business records, making him the first president in United States history to be charged with a crime.

The charges stem from payments Trump allegedly made to Stormy Daniels and Karen McDougal in an attempt to cover up his affairs with both women. According to New York Public Radio, the payments, called "hush money," do not violate the law on their own. Trump, however, illegally manipulated records to hide the existence of those payments, leading to his indictment. Since he also allegedly falsified the records to conceal a separate crime, his charges are at a felony level.

Even though Trump's indictment is recent, his alleged crimes are not. *The Washington Post* reported in 2018 that he instructed his lawyer Michael Cohen to pay Daniels 130,000 dollars before the 2016 election. Cohen eventually pleaded guilty to various financial crimes, including violations of campaign finance laws. The lack of legal precedent for criminally investigating a sitting president, however, deterred prosecutors from bringing charges against Trump himself until mid-to-late 2022. Aidan Ormsby (II) says, "I'm surprised

it took so long for him to be indicted, but the legal system is complicated."

Trump pleaded not guilty to the charges, insisting that they are part of an unfounded "witch hunt." He also called on his supporters to protest against his indictment.

Trump's indictment has been met with opposing viewpoints from different political parties. The National Public Radio reports that most prominent Republicans, even those who have been critical of him, agree that the charges are politically motivated. Many have expressed that pursuing charges against a former president would divide the country and harm the Republican image. Most Democrats, on the other hand, consider the indictment to be a demonstration of the universalism of law — it applies to everyone.

In a U.S. criminal trial, prosecutors gather evidence and present it to a grand jury. If the jury agrees that the evidence is sufficient to prove probable cause, they will indict the accused, allowing prosecutors to formally file charges. If the defendant pleads guilty, they are convicted and sentenced, often working out a plea deal with prosecutors; if they plead not guilty, the case goes to a trial, where a jury will hear evidence from both sides. If the defendant is proven guilty by the jury, they will be convicted and sentenced.

Trump's former presidency

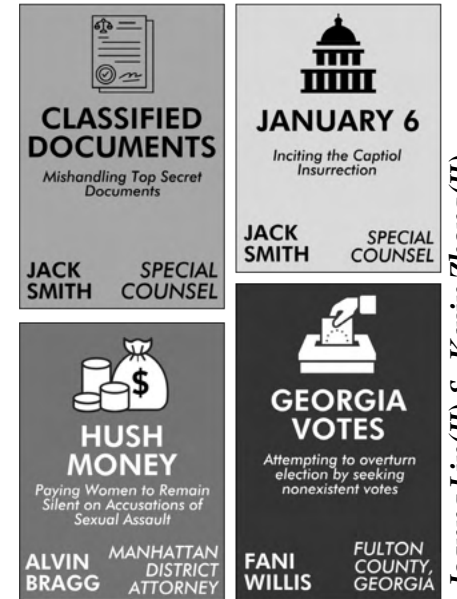
complicates this process. Boston Latin School AP Government teacher Ms. Meredith Elliot explains, "Not charging Trump because he is a former president would be problematic, but charging Trump because he is a former president is just as problematic. So, the New York attorney is trying to balance all of this."

Amid this, Trump is campaigning for a second presidential term — the Constitution does not prohibit someone who is charged or convicted of a crime to run for and serve as president. An indictment and possible trial will undoubtedly garner large amounts of political attention, leading many to speculate how it will affect the 2024 election. Some predict that it will tarnish Trump's image and hurt his campaign, while others think that he will use it as a way to rally up political support. Jacob Marberblatt (II) says, "We could see a sort of martyr effect that could boost his support among Republicans in next year's primaries."

Although the "hush money" investigation is not the only criminal investigation Trump faces, it is the only one so far that has resulted in an indictment. Prosecutors have also been working on three other inquiries about whether the former president broke the law with his alleged efforts to overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election in Georgia, including his team's alleged attempts to install fraudulent electors in key states, his mishandling of

Four Criminal Investigations of Donald Trump, 2023

Inspired by Vox



Joanna Lin(II) & Kevin Zhong(II)

classified government documents, and his role in the January 6th Capitol insurrection.

Ms. Elliot highlights the importance of proceeding slowly in these investigations: "The institutions investigating and potentially charging the former president are moving carefully. [...] A slow-moving investigation and not rushing to charge a former president with a crime is hopefully evidence of prosecutors adhering to the rule of law instead of a politically motivated investigation."

Mock Argues No Moot Points



BLS Mock Trial's excellence is not a moot point!

By **Darren Seto (I)**
& **Weian Xue (V)**

Staff Writer and Contributing Writer

Move over, Harvey Specter! This April, Boston Latin School's Mock Trial Team competed at the Yale Moot Court Tournament.

Hosted annually by the Yale Un-

dergraduate Moot Court, Moot Court immerses participants in the world of Supreme Court oral arguments. Partners take on the role of lawyers, arguing a fictional case before judges, drawing on United States Constitution amendments and Supreme Court precedents.

Under the guidance of their coach Mr. Gerald Howland ('66) and the leadership of co-captains Mirabelle

Berman-Reinhardt (I) and Mira Yu (I), the team competed and earned several awards.

Three of BLS's students ranked in the top 10 for speaker awards. Michelle Chen (III) obtained first place, and set a new record for the highest number of points ever awarded. Amirah Redwing (II) secured second place, and Emily Yu (III) took seventh place.

The recent competition offered an opportunity that had not been available in several years. "Part of the experience of presenting an argument to a panel of judges is that you get to see their responses in real-time and have them interrupt you," remarks Yu.

During the rounds, judges evaluated the teams based on various criteria that included legal analysis, argumentation and presentation skills. The case partners argued involved two constitutional issues in a fictional case on *Murray/State of New Storke v. Pritchett*.

The first issue dealt with affirmative action regarding Native American students applying to medical school and whether it violated the fifth amend-

ment's guarantee of equal protection.

The second dealt with federal and state powers in the anti-commandeering doctrine of the tenth amendment. Additionally, students studied past Supreme Court cases to gain a holistic view of the case principles and law.

The competition not only provided an informational case packet for teams to prepare arguments for both sides of the case, but also offered a platform for participants to sharpen their legal reasoning, public speaking and critical thinking skills.

"I learned how to analyze complex documents, from creative arguments and arguing eloquently under demanding active questioning," says Chen. Though preparation lasted several months of research and team meetings three times a week, the work yielded results.

Mr. Howland was not surprised by the team's success. "In order to win, you can't just be smart, you have to really be prepared."

The team feasted on success, leaving no crumbs behind at Yale.

Tennessee House Expels Lawmakers

By **Ross Wilson (IV)**

Staff Writer

On April 6, Tennessee state representatives Justin Jones and Justin Pearson were expelled from their seats, while a third lawmaker, Gloria Johnson, narrowly maintained her position.

The expulsions came after all three lawmakers led gun control protestors on the Tennessee House floor in response to a shooting that left six dead at the Covenant School in Nashville. All three lawmakers were Democrats and all the votes to expel were Republican lawmakers.

Republicans justified these expulsions, by arguing that the protesting lawmakers broke decorum rules and that expelling them set an example for others. Democrats argued that Republicans were trying to silence these representatives, and that they were motivated by other factors including

race and age.

Boston Latin School history teacher Mr. Nicholas Fogel comments on the gravity of the situation, "We think of democracy as something that is set in stone, but there are a series of rules that can be manipulated, and I think we saw that in this case."

On April 10, the Nashville Metropolitan Council unanimously voted to reinstate Justin Jones to his seat, and Justin Pearson was also reinstated on April 13. Both have now pledged to run again in a special election in the future.

The fallout from the actions of the legislature has gained national attention, with lawmakers from around the country weighing in on the issue. President Joe Biden met with the three lawmakers at the White House on April 24, and Vice President Kamala Harris traveled to Nashville to visit them. It also sparked conversations around the potential biases that contributed to these actions. Both

expelled lawmakers were among two of the youngest Black members, while Gloria Johnson is an older white woman.

BLS history teacher Mr. Daniel DeVelis shares his opinion about the Republicans' actions, saying, "For the action of the supermajority Republican House to expel these lawmakers trying to serve the people's interest, it's certainly not a good look."

In addition, this controversy has sparked accusations of hypocrisy among Democrats, who accuse the Republicans of not expelling other Republican members who were accused of sexual assault, questionable comments, and inappropriate retaliation against colleagues. Democrats further claim that Jones and Pearson would not have been expelled if they were Republicans.

These expulsions are not the first to be deemed as unjustified. Back in 1920, the New York Assembly expelled five lawmakers from the Socialist Party due to the perceived

threat that their ideology would pose. Those lawmakers were eventually reinstated, but that fight raised into question voters' rights to elect their representatives.

As a result of the recent events, Tennessee's Republican Governor Bill Lee has pushed for a red flag law that would take firearms away from people who are deemed as security risks. As of this writing, however, Tennessee Republicans have not taken action on the legislation, with the governor pledging to call another special session in order to force the legislature to take action. Protesters have continued to fight for gun control at the Tennessee state capitol.

Niall Reynolds (I) comments on the broader picture of this issue. "This isn't, and never has been about disrupting the rules. It is about restricting the conversation around gun violence, and it illuminates just how far the right will go to keep their NRA [(National Rifle Association)] money flowing."

Mary Skipper Shapes New Leadership



Featured are eight of the 24 members of the BPS Leadership Team.

By Mary Deng (IV)

Staff Writer

This March, Boston Public Schools Superintendent Mary Skipper appointed new members to the district's executive team after employing a new Regional Network Support Model.

The Superintendent's new Leadership Team comprises several Department Chiefs working in Operations and Equity, Community Advancement and Academics departments. Three Deputy Superintendents oversee the department leads. The new leadership team includes several parents, alumni and staff who come from diverse cultures and backgrounds, with the goal of proportionally representing BPS's demographics.

BPS Superintendent Skipper explains,

"It's a team building [our] vision. [...] I really wanted folks who knew BPS or who had worked in BPS and had a mindset of what it would take to make BPS successful because they had experienced it either as a student or as an employee."

Elda Alibeaj (III) shares, "The leaders are good, many have lots to offer; however, it is the matter of action taken to prove them effective and whether they utilize the plan in a sufficient manner."

The executive team has focused on closing the opportunity gap for students of color, streamlining district procedures and increasing accountability for the BPS central office.

Deputy Lead Chief of Staff Rochelle Nwosu, for instance, will be responsible for monitoring the district's staff and educa-

tional projects, while Senior Deputy Superintendent of Academics Linda Chen will be working on closing the opportunity gap, especially with underserved Black or brown students. Deputy Superintendent Dr. Ana Tavares will work on closely engaging with families and the Boston community, and the Deputy Superintendent Dr. Samuel DePina will deal with operational needs.

The district also plans on implementing new programs such as an equitable literacy framework and an inclusion model. BPS hopes that these will support students, especially multilingual learners adjusting to a new language. Furthermore, the district aims to provide high school students with more opportunities to challenge themselves through AP courses, dual enrollment offerings at local colleges, and career training.

Ming Pan Hern (III) explains, "equity and equality are very important, and knowing family situations behind each student is important, as well as the communities. [...] I hope that they do improve some of these schools' policies and make school life better for students."

In addition, the district plans on achieving their outlined goals through the Regional Network Support Model, a framework that will provide several staff and leaders across BPS's nine regions. Operational workers will be responsible for improving around 10 to 15 schools within their region. Since these staff will be running only a limited number of schools, each regional superintendent will have time to focus on academics.

As Superintendent Skipper concludes, "Our hope is [...] that over the course of the next several years, students really start to feel that impact in a different way."

Spotlight on ... Ms. Vasquez



**By Thomas Blanchet (IV)
& David Wang (VI)**

Contributing Writers

Boston Latin School social worker Ms. Ginnelle Vasquez was recently recognized by the Boston Teachers Union (BTU) with an Oscar.

Ms. Vasquez won the award for her participation in a working group within the Boston Public Schools department that created a video about directing a student support team (SST). An SST is a team of school staff members that consistently meet to discuss the concerns of students and ensure that they are learning properly.

In March, the BTU hosted a professional development event in recognition of Social Work Month. During the event, several social workers from across the state were presented with "Oscar" awards to acknowledge their contributions to social work as a whole.

Ms. Vasquez aims to help students with mental health diagnoses or those who just need to talk to someone. She tries to match the personal needs and wants of a student with healthy habits. Ms. Vasquez defines a good social worker as "a person that you can talk to about the things that are on your mind [and] will help you make sense of these thoughts or things that you have done or wanted to do in the past."

Ms. Vasquez chose to become a social worker later in life because she remembers how difficult high school was without any support. After meeting with a seemingly unhelpful social worker, she decided that she could do better and changed careers in order to provide help to those who might need it.

After obtaining a master's degree in social work, Ms. Vasquez worked for a Boston Children's Hospital program that led her to spend four days a week at BLS before deciding to work full-time. About her job, Ms. Vasquez states, "The best thing is just [...] being there for another person and knowing that that person can talk to you and identify what they need, and then seeing them grow in that moment." Despite how much she loves her job, she says that it can be difficult, especially if she doesn't have enough time to work with individual students.

Part of Ms. Vasquez's job is talking with students who experience difficulties managing the stress of school. Despite the academic rigor of BLS, Ms. Vasquez feels that the school has a strong support system for people who are struggling with the school curriculum or have issues in their personal and academic lives.

Ms. Vasquez's work as a social worker is essential to many students. She concludes that working with students is extremely rewarding. "It's amazing [to see students' progress], and I'm just very grateful that I am part of that journey."

Go Green, Germany!

By Lena Thai (III)

Staff Writer

Boston Latin School German students recently traveled to German International School Boston (GISB) and attended a panel in the Seevak Room with students from Germany's University of Stuttgart, expanding their learning beyond the classroom.

During their visit to GISB on March 17, AP German students greeted kindergarten and preschool students with animal toys crafted from disposable materials. This project was part of the AP German sustainability unit: students learned about the damage of microplastics and overconsumption on each of their specific animals and habitats.

AP German student Veronica Serwatko (II) felt fully prepared for the trip because of the extensive vocabulary practice during the sustainability unit, which eased communication between the GISB and BLS students. The unit also allowed students to reflect on how frequently they use plastics and how to reduce plastic use. Serwatko shares, "This was such an eye-opener since [...] half the things within my reach are plastic, and since I'm now so hyper-aware and conscious of the plastic I use, I've been trying to reduce it."

This year, GISB's school-wide goal was building sustainability. All GISB students, from preschool to twelfth grade, were given the task to create a village out of everyday disposable items. BLS students helped the preschoolers and kindergarteners with their projects after their presentations.

GISB's sustainability project stems from Germany's heightened awareness of climate and recycling. In reaction to an energy crisis sparked by the Russo-Ukrainian War, Germany has turned to new initiatives, such as employing more electric delivery vans and reducing plastic usage.

In the past, Frau Heidemarie Floerke has brought BLS students to GISB to read Ger-



AP German students show their creations to children at GISB.

man fairy tales to the children there. She believes this change of pace immerses students not only in the German language and culture, but also the importance of sustainability.

"I hope that I have made them more aware of how much plastic we use and how we could perhaps avoid using these plastics [...] and what damage microplastic does. We don't see it, but it's there," Frau Floerke reflects. She hopes to move past topics of overconsumption and return to fairy tales within the next few years despite the success of the AP German students' presentations about endangered animals and habitats.

On March 31, German 1 and 3 classes attended a meet-and-greet in the Seevak Room with university students through the cooperation of Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of Stuttgart. Aspiring teachers from the University of Stuttgart came to BLS to observe and discuss the American education system. They were given the opportunity to chat with students about their personal experiences, comparing and contrasting the vast differences between German and American education.

"It helps them to see if they would want to possibly move here to teach, and so they could get a perspective of what it would be like if they teach in America versus if they taught in Germany," says Jack Sawyers (III), a German 3 student.

After the meet-and-greet, Sawyers found that his conversations with the University of Stuttgart students expanded his outlook on secondary education. For instance, he learned that it is cheaper to attend university in Germany than in the United States.

As a result of these ongoing activities, the German program at BLS would like to both continue the tradition of visiting GISB and keep in touch with the University of Stuttgart. In addition, the success of these events have sparked a possible German student exchange program for the 2023-2024 school year.

"Whenever you have the opportunity to allow your students to come in contact with the culture and the language outside of the classroom, it is incredibly enriching. Those exchanges are always very memorable," Frau Floerke concludes.

BLS Students Slay the Competition

By Constance Fang (VI) & Brian Xu (VI)

Contributing Writers

High School Quiz Show



On March 14, Boston Latin School appeared on the *High School Quiz Show* (HSQS), where they defeated Commonwealth High School in the competition quarterfinals, but lost to their rival Lexington High School on April 22 in the semifinals.

The team was led by coaches Ms. Theresa Cojohn and Mr. Andy Zou and consisted of Khugan Chan (I), Kyler Hoogendoorn-Ecker (I), Mira Yu (I), Biya Brook (II), Denis Cunniffe (II) and Maya Koreth (III). This year, there were 16 high schools competing in the HSQS bracket. To earn a spot in the bracket, teams must compete in the Super Sunday qualifying event in November.

In preparation for competitions, the BLS team reviews questions previously asked on the show and answers them in real time. The four students divide the topics of study and are each responsible for one area of expertise.

For Koreth, the event was “a great experience [where] I could talk with my teammates. Being on television was also very new, so I was definitely nervous at first.”

This is the fourth year that BLS has competed in the HSQS. BLS won the state championship during the 2018-19 school year, the first year BLS was on the show. The following year, they won the championship a second time.

The BLS HSQS team will be back in business next year, with tryouts starting up in October.

Harvard Certamen



On April 1, members of the Boston Latin School Junior Classical League competed in the Harvard National Certamen Tournament.

Similar to a quiz bowl, certamen is a buzzer-based trivia competition centered on knowledge of the classics. Participants are quizzed on Latin translation, vocabulary, culture and geography in three rounds of 20 toss-up questions, each with two bonus questions.

BLS certamen teams have competed at Harvard for over ten years. BLS Classics teachers Ms. Elizabeth Moguel, Mr. Dustin Brownell and Mr. Michael Howard coach the Novice, Intermediate and Advanced teams, respectively.

Each week leading up to the competition, the teams focused on playing rounds from previous competitions for practice. Students were thus able to have a better grasp of the questions’ difficulty levels, which helped them to identify their weaknesses before the competition.

Thanks to their practice, competing in the preliminary rounds of the competition felt familiar. Audrey Kollett (V), the MVP of the Novice division, explains, “The preliminary rounds were fun because you could mess up, and other than your team getting a bit mad with you, it didn’t matter all that much.”

Certamen is more than just learning the language; it also consists of a rich combination of culture and mythology. Kollett believes that the most intriguing part of studying Latin is “the order and organization of it all.”

Harvard Economics Challenge



On April 8, members of the BLS AP Economics class competed in the Harvard Pre-Collegiate Economics Challenge (HPEC). The competition consists of team and individual rounds, which challenge students’ understanding of economics.

The rounds mirror a quiz bowl format and students compete in teams of one to four. At this past competition, question topics ranged from economic news and history to recent research and applications. Team member Alex Yu (II) relates, “A lot of the questions were on topics that strayed away from the AP Econ courses.” To prepare for the competition, students communicated their specific areas of study over text and attended practice sessions.

Time posed a difficult challenge for the team. Yu explains, “Since everyone was a junior or senior, it was hard to find times to meet with each other to prepare for this.”

The team also met with Greg Mankiw, an economics professor at Harvard University and a former member of the Council of Economic Advisers under the Bush administration, who lectured them on modern economics.

The HPEC was a rewarding learning experience that taught students about economics and allowed the BLS team to connect with other schools. Yu concludes, “It was good to see how much we’ve learned in the curriculum for AP Economics and also how much more other schools across the nation and internationally know about economics.”

Program Directors’ Secret Meetings Revealed

By Olivia Chen (V)
& Meilin Sha (VI)

Contributing Writers

Beginning last year, Boston Latin School program directors meet every Wednesday to discuss teaching, learning and professional development.

BLS Mathematics Program Director Mr. Gerald Bilodeau initiated the weekly meetings because he believed that it would be an excellent opportunity for program directors to meet and collaborate. Mr. Bilodeau remarks, “It’s important that all the departments are on the same page in terms of teaching and learning. This is a way that we get to share between departments.”

Each week, program directors discuss a different topic. In terms of schoolwide improvement, they have

considered having BLS be reviewed again by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges within the next few years, which is an organization that accredits educational institutions.

Program director meetings are opportunities for school department leaders to discuss improvements and projects, and received input from all perspectives is crucial. These meetings address differences and similarities between the departments and consider the best practices moving forward.

Jiajia Zhang (I), co-president of the BLS Student Council, mentions the importance of connection among different departments, saying, “Across departments, maybe if they communicate with other teachers, especially on testing days, it’d be helpful because the students will be able to allot their time

much better towards each subject.”

With the close link of STEM fields, the math and science department aim to collaborate through challenges, such as the rigid structure of the BLS curriculum and schedule. Mr. Bilodeau reports that the close link of math and physics makes it easier to schedule times for collaboration despite the difficulty of finding time to meet.

In particular, the mathematics department is working on recovering from the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic and trying to support students whose learning may have been delayed because of online school. They are adapting to a group-centered environment where teachers can connect with students more closely and identify the needs of each individual.

Teachers are also working together

to create more intersubject projects. BLS Class VI English teacher Mr. Aaron Weitz recalls an interdisciplinary project with Humanities. After reading *To Kill a Mockingbird*, students analyzed the current prevalence of injustice by writing letters to stakeholders. He reflects, “I think that it felt meaningful and authentic for students. And that’s something that, to me, feels really relevant.”

Zhang expresses that cross-department projects may bring some difficulties to students, such as the possibility of posing a challenge to certain students if a particular subject is not their strong suit. She suggests that “for those [meetings] to be effective, they need to have a lot of student feedback and honest discussion with the students of what they want to see differently.”

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MBTI: A Personality Test, Not a Trait



Students can take an MBTI test to determine their personality type.

By Roan Wilcox (III)

Contributing Writer

In just 15 minutes, you can discover what many spend their entire life trying to figure out: who you are and what makes you tick. At least, that is the supposed promise of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), a widely known personality test. In reality, the MBTI test is usually unreliable, biased and only successful in padding the test taker's ego.

Since its publication in 1962, the MBTI has seeped into mainstream American society, proliferating in the

realms of culture and business. Many individuals and businesses view it as an innovative tool to gain valuable insight into themselves and potential employees with just four letters.

Far from being a harmless tool, however, individuals and companies have allowed the MBTI's usage to go unchecked, giving it the power to dictate everything from who to date to employment decisions. In fact, many individuals on dating sites now post their MBTI types in their bios in hopes of finding the perfect match. A 2008 poll found that 80 percent of Fortune 500 companies have employees take the

MBTI to determine if they are a good fit for the company.

None of this would be an issue if not for the fact that the MBTI is largely based in pseudoscience and has no place in careers, much less life. Indeed, *Psychology Today*, a leading psychology magazine, described the test as having "relatively little scientific validity."

William Kirchman (III) adds, "[MBTI tests] really shouldn't have any bearing on your life. Your life isn't going to drastically change since you took one. I just look at them as scientific versions of zodiac signs."

The clear fallibility of the zodiac-esque MBTI test begs the question: why is it even used? The answer comes back to the users. Unfortunately, many who take the test *like* their results, regardless of whether they are based on science or not. Indeed, the company behind the MBTI, which generates 2 billion dollars per year off of a variety of personality tests, has an incentive for people to like their result and share it.

Take me for instance. According to the MBTI test, I am an ENTJ, known for having an analytical mind and a way with words. Whether or not this categorization is accurate is irrelevant. What matters is that I *like* the result and that it makes me feel good, which makes me more likely to recommend it. This sentiment is confirmed by the 92.4 percent of test takers who rated it five stars. If the MBTI were really providing meaningful insights, it would

tell you hard truths, not just pad one's ego.

Aleksa Angjeliu (II) offers another explanation: "I think people get really into them because they categorize people into patterns." Either way, the motives behind widespread interest are misplaced, focusing more on personal perceptions and feelings than empirical data and records of reliability.

More concerning than boosting a person's ego, though, is the unfortunate reality that companies use variations of the MBTI in hiring decisions. The largest job posting site in the United States, *Indeed*, for example, has an article on their website explaining how employers can use the test to "hire and build better teams" — that is to say, how companies can use the MBTI data to make uninformed employment decisions.

Angjeliu questions this trend, saying, "I don't know if it's accurate enough to use for employment decisions."

While Myer-Briggs, the company behind the MBTI, does clarify that their tests should not be used for employment decisions, the extent to which people actually rely on it is out of their control and calls for a re-evaluation of the status quo.

It is perfectly fine to take the MBTI test for a bit of fun and to share with friends, but to let it guide your life choices is a mistake and likely reveals more about you than any personality test ever could.

Good-will Good Clothes

**By Fiona Yuan (II)
& Mindy Luong (II)**

Staff Writer and Contributing Writer

Oh, spring — the time of year to trade in fleece-lined sweatshirts for loose T-shirts and shorts. As seasonal sales embellished with sensational buzzwords make their way onto *Instagram* feeds, everyone is looking for the newest summertime fashion trends.

With the influx of these fashion advertisements, however, it is even more crucial for us to reconsider how we can be responsible consumers — especially in a fast fashion market where one's stunning outfits come with ugly backstories of environmental waste and labor exploitation.

It seems too good to be true. Why are the prices so unbelievably cheap? A quick browse through SHEIN, a popular women's online shopping site, will yield an endless array of dresses, beachwear and jewelry, all at unreasonably low prices. But anything too good is never a good sign. The rock-bottom prices come at the expense of outsourced laborers — many of whom are underage children in developing countries compensated with unlivable wages.

It also takes a large carbon footprint to mass-produce clothes, and with them constantly being marketed at low prices, customers might as well buy in bulk. Of the materials used in fast fashion, cheap textile dyes are toxic and major contributors to the pollution of waterways, and the inexpensive fabrics have only exhausted more fossil fuels from the planet.

In addition, *Earth Day* finds that "the average person today buys 60 percent more items of clothing than they did 15 years ago, but keep them for only half as long." An exponential rise in consumerism has only contin-

ually supported this devious business as more and more clothes accumulate dust in wardrobes.

In response to the increased awareness surrounding the harms of fast fashion, many brands have thus been releasing new "eco-conscious" lines. Although they are well-intentioned, their products are not always accessible to the wider public because humane work environments, wages and higher-quality materials come at a larger cost. This leads many to believe that the slow fashion movement is elitist because it is only applicable to consumers who can afford a higher price range.

Contrary to popular belief, however, shopping sustainably does not have to be financially out of reach for young people, especially students. Being part of the slow fashion movement and curbing this inequality starts with being informed. It is always important to do research on clothing brands, such as checking their mission statements to see if and how they commit to promoting sustainability.

For example, some popular brands like H&M are starting to adopt more eco-friendly practices, but many of their mission goals are still set for the distant future. Even though a commitment to transparency shows better signs of progress than others, promises are not enough; there needs to be clear-cut evidence that change is occurring. Consumers should be wary of vague or indefinite promises to meet goals far into the future rather than addressing what is currently being done to tackle issues like labor exploitation and environmental preservation.

For younger consumers, slow fashion most closely aligns with thrifting or shopping second-hand. Although popular alternatives to fast



People dig through bins filled with clothes at Goodwill.

fashion allow students to reduce their carbon footprint without sacrificing their style, they can also pose a problem of excess.

Thrifting is no exception when it comes to social media-induced overconsumption. Bella Guthrie (II) voices, "It's the same with everything, just don't get more than you need. If you're really wealthy and you buy a lot of clothes, then I think you can afford to buy from sustainable companies that aren't thrift shops."

Although thrifting is a much more sustainable way to shop, it should still be practiced in moderation, since many local communities depend on the cheaper prices of thrift stores for their necessities. Popular second-hand apps including *Depop* and *Poshmark* have already become inaccessible due to skyrocketing prices driven by popular demand and mar-

keting tactics.

A recent *TikTok* trend called "de-influencing" surfaced over the last couple of months that addresses this tendency of "buying more." Influencers share their opinions on products that do not live up to their reputation or are simply a waste of money. Such trends are extremely informative, as they teach young consumers to be more critical of what they buy and to consider whether a product is truly necessary before buying it.

Ultimately, shopping sustainably means limiting how much you consume, regardless of price or brand. A higher price range does not always guarantee better quality or a smaller carbon footprint. That means students can absolutely take part in promoting sustainability, benefiting their wardrobes and the environment without incurring any cost to themselves.

Should Students Cram?

Yes, Students Should Cram.

By Angelina Wei (IV)

Contributing Writer

In a fast-paced school environment like Boston Latin School, there is no realistic way for students to juggle countless assignments, assessments and out-of-school responsibilities without cramming. As the most practical study method, cramming helps students in their professional and academic careers, preparing them for their future careers and allows them to develop skills that will benefit them beyond the classroom.

Cramming improves students' ability to absorb information quickly. Austin Nguyen (V) shares, "I started to cram for tests and quizzes, and each time I crammed, my comprehension skills became better and better. I started receiving amazing assessment results in a matter of time." The ability to absorb information rapidly is a life skill that can be applied to one's professional career, as learning is a lifelong process.

By regularly cramming, students are also able to manage deadlines more efficiently. This builds up time-management skills, so much so that stress and pressure diminish and become easier to deal with.

Such a skill can be applied to professional experiences like job interviews. During an interview, anxiety skyrockets as the interviewee must formulate a response on the spot. Being familiar with that kind of pressure reduces stress in the moment and helps the interviewee succeed.

Cramming also hones one's concentration and heightens attentiveness, which is necessary for achieving preferred outcomes with limited time. The mindset of intense productivity as a deadline approaches can be applied in the workplace or to other responsibilities, allowing individuals to excel.

When cramming, short-term memory improves. Remembering concepts in preparation for a test makes them more prominent in a student's short-term memory, benefiting them during an exam. Nguyen adds, "The information I obtain is able to marinate in my head just long enough for me to thrive during my exam."

While cramming has occasionally yielded undesirable results, there are a plethora of techniques a student can employ to effectively cram, such as laying out the foundation of the concepts using notes, textbooks, study guides and more.

Although cramming can be seen as a method of absorbing superficial, fleeting knowledge, it helps students learn how to manage their time effectively, identify key concepts and prioritize information under pressure, which can all prove invaluable beyond their academics. Even if their knowledge gained through cramming is not retained in the long run, the skills and qualities developed can be instrumental in shaping a successful and fulfilling life.

No, Students Should Not Cram.

By Louis Nguyen (IV)

Contributing Writer

The usual Boston Latin School student is all too familiar with the rush of a stress-filled night right before an exam the next morning, often resulting in an all-nighter cram session. Although many students turn to cramming when preparing for an exam, it is not an effective or reliable studying method, despite its overwhelming popularity.

In today's fast-paced world, completing schoolwork can be a challenging experience. With a seemingly endless list of assignments, tests and projects, it is easy to fall behind on the workload. Cramming may seem like an immediate solution to time crunches, but it is ultimately harmful and threatens to have negative consequences on one's academic performance.

Research conducted by the Association for Psychological Science indicates that cramming for exams can result in diminished learning and poor retention. Although studying the night before a quiz may result in a decent test score, students will most likely struggle during

future cumulative exams and larger-scale projects. Allowing for enough time to learn and absorb class material is the key to academic success.

Some students believe that effective study habits can prevent them from feeling swamped by a heavy academic workload in the long run. As Lateef Lawal (III) puts it, "Over my high school years, I don't feel like I've felt overwhelmed due to the fact that I usually study which prepares me for the exam." By this logic, the pressure to perform well on exams and assignments increases with every instance of cramming.

Cramming can also give students a false sense of accomplishment. Even though they may feel as if they have mastered the material, this feeling is often short-lived. In most cases, students forget the information they had learned the very next day.

Kenny Mak (II) agrees with this sentiment, saying, "For the few times that I do cram, my results end up where I want them to be or around the level where I want them to be. However, I don't think that cramming is the most effective way to learn. It's important to not neglect the extra time I have for studying, but to also make sure that I don't overthink questions and panic."

While cramming may initially lead to decent results, it does not help in learning and retaining material long-term. It is important to allocate extra time for studying in order to truly familiarize oneself with the material. Gradually, healthy study habits will pay off and relieve a large part of the stress that comes with test-taking.

Completing homework assignments also to reinforce one's memory is a much better alternative to cramming, as students can break down the workload into manageable pieces. Taking the time to think about homework reduces the extra studying time allotted to cramming. Completing assignments in advance also helps students identify areas of need.

Although cramming may appear to be a quick fix for the average student's academic struggles, it ultimately does more harm than good. So, the next time you find yourself reaching for that energy drink and pulling an all-nighter to study, think twice. Rather than sacrificing a good night's worth of rest, give yourself enough time to genuinely learn and retain information properly. As the old saying goes, slow and steady wins the race.



Ask the Students: Should Students Cram?

Cramming is a great way to learn only the most essential material in a short amount of time.



Junxiang Lin (I)

Yes, students should cram since studying right before the exam helps significantly more than not studying or studying a few days earlier. However, a better strategy would be to study a bit every day leading up to the exam.



Zach Chen (II)

They technically shouldn't, but it is inevitable and learning the material right before makes it fresh in one's memory.



Mae Noonan (III)



Aliana Kowalczyk (IV)

Ideally, students should spread studying over many days, but it is often done on the day of tests anyway. So ideally no, but in reality, yes.



Chase Comeaux (V)

Yes, cramming can help you pass your tests and classes. It is what I have been doing for most of my BLS career.



Connor Chin (VI)

You shouldn't if you don't need to, but if you really need to, you should.

Data-based Profiles Destroy Democracy



Cameras keep Chinese citizens under constant surveillance.

By **Neil Jin (II)**

Staff Writer

While many Western nations struggle to balance surveillance and privacy, autocracies like China have already implemented data-based profiles for their citizens heavily dependent on monitoring. In 2014, China piloted its “social credit” system, which can punish people for something as inconsequential as buying too many video games. A bad social credit score makes it harder to take out loans and can even prevent people from traveling. Although some may argue that they are necessary to carry out more targeted

policies, countries should not adopt data-based profiles as data can easily be leaked and profiles contradict democratic values.

Ensuring the security of data is becoming impossible with more advanced technology. When companies or countries collect people’s data, it must be stored somewhere, whether in a physical database or cloud. The Federal Trade Commission discovered that Equifax, a credit score company, released the social security numbers, addresses and phone numbers of over 147 million people after being hacked. If countries adopted a data-based profile for everyone, data breaches would release even

more information. Such a breach could include anything from medical records and financial information to internet browsing history and location data.

Also, hyper-surveillance often discourages protests. People are less likely to protest if there is a camera constantly watching their every move and relaying any suspicious activity to law enforcement. The impact of this monitoring hinders not only physical protests with megaphones and big signs, but also digital protests based on social media. Social media gathers a lot of information about each user, from who they interact with to what type of content they prefer. If people know that the government or social media companies are building entire profiles on their data, they are less likely to speak out against injustice for fear of getting arrested.

This scenario would be detrimental for democracy as a whole. Messages on social media are able to reach millions of people across the United States in minutes, allowing individuals to organize and support protests in real time. Social media is more accessible than other forms of protest since anyone with an internet connection can access it. In fact, many movements such as the George Floyd protests in 2020 and the Iranian Mahsa Amini protests in 2022 used social media as one of the primary ways of spreading their message.

Some may think that the U.S. and other democratic countries are far from creating these authoritarian data-based profiles, but that is not true. Boston Latin School AP U.S. History and Economics teacher Mr. Dominic Rinaldi comments, “I think our credit score system

may be too much. It is similar to what China wants to do, [but] credit scores are economic.” A credit score system can be seen as a first step towards a more comprehensive data-based profile. For example, a good credit score allows people to get loans with cheaper interest rates, but making one payment late could tank one’s credit score for more than seven years.

Some argue that data-based profiles can provide more accurate information for politicians to make more effective targeted policies. After all, data-based profiles provide a lot of information. There are other, however, more effective avenues such as the U.S. census, which compiles data for regions as a whole, without identifying specific individuals.

Sam Chen (II) notes, “Data-based profiles can increase the efficiency of a litany of programs and can ensure authenticity of individuals.” With automated data profiling, organizations do not have to survey populations manually, which inevitably would have errors. Thus, many social media platforms automatically sort users’ data to generate curated ads, and countries automatically register passport data for travelers.

In a way, everyone may already have a data-based profile. For instance BLS students all have their own student ID, which can provide information on every class, grade and misdemeanor mark someone has received. Social media keeps track of who, when and how much users interact with others. As cliché as it may sound, everyone should be more mindful of how much information they reveal online.

Should Alma Matter?

By **Annie Dai (IV)**

& **Brandon Flores (IV)**

Staff Writer and Contributing Writer

Academic pressure, extracurriculars, stress and sacrifice. The blood, sweat and tears that go into cultivating the perfect resume for an Ivy League university. Society has long been fixated on achieving the American Dream, teaching that attending a top university is essential to success. In fact, submitting a job application boasting “Harvard” at the top is almost guaranteed to be met with an offer. In the flawed American college system, however, professional aspirations come at the cost of priceless sacrifices. Perhaps it is time for a change: it is in the best interest of the nation to ban job applicants from disclosing their university.

The effects of the bias currently present in the professional world is detrimental. When organizations mostly recruit people who attended prestigious universities, it becomes a widespread notion among students that getting into those schools is essential for a bright future filled with various opportunities.

Cynthia Wang (IV) says, “Many schools, including our school, treat getting into college as either ‘you get in, and you’ll be successful,’ or ‘you don’t, and you’re a failure.’” Hoping for a better future, students are attracted to the prestige associated with attending a “top school.” This makes them feel obligated to spend excessive time solely focusing on academics and extracurriculars to be admitted into these high-ranked institutions.

These motives, however, support unhealthy lifestyles because they cause

students to neglect their genuine passions, relationships and sometimes, even their health. Wang continues, “The pressure to attend good colleges is so immense that it practically takes over a highschooler’s entire life [...]; your entire school career is only about getting into a good college, and that’s it.” Expanding beyond individual consequences, this mindset fosters a competitive and demanding environment. Finding a job is especially challenging because there is a higher demand for “more qualified” workers, where qualifications are measured depending on where one’s higher education was received, resulting in an unfair recruitment process for countless organizations.

Maya Tran (III) says, “[Hirers] should base [someone] off of their work ethic, their capabilities and what that person has done and what they’re willing to do, instead of things like the college they went to.” The absence of university names will help students pursue what they enjoy and live more fulfilling lives because they are no longer pushed to believe that their future is so heavily based on resume particularities. Prohibiting applicants from disclosing their university also promotes more fair hiring guidelines, taking the first steps towards erasing bias and stigma from all career fields.

Many universities often fail to recognize and admit truly eligible students, as their judgment is clouded with bias. According to *The Atlantic*, admissions officers often do not judge everyone fairly and equally and do not spend enough time reviewing each candidate, sometimes overlooking perfectly qualified applicants.

Along with its prestige, secondary



Students at University of Wisconsin-Madison show off their diplomas.

education in America is notorious for its absurdly high tuition, making financial obstacles a significant factor in deciding what university to go to. Many students who receive acceptance into top schools are forced to turn them down simply because they cannot afford it. If job applicants were prohibited from disclosing their university name, these institutions would lose a large amount of their prestige and would have less of a valid reason to back up their costs, most likely reducing unaffordable tuition.

Furthermore, there is a notion that it is harder to earn degrees at prestigious universities, therefore making those graduates “more qualified.” Boston Latin School Latin teacher Mr. John Kerpan counters, “For most degrees, I don’t think that happens. [...]

At Harvard, you get more support, more opportunities, so just because the course load looks more impressive on paper, that doesn’t necessarily mean [students] work harder.” To earn any degree, students must meet specific requirements, regardless of their school. These standards provide a better benchmark of one’s qualifications than the college they attended.

The current college enrollment system is unfair and steeped in bias, so not attending a prestigious university should not determine one’s future opportunities. Implementing this ban will provide more opportunities for everybody, and above all, bring more equality and fair judgment to a system that had previously promised just that, but has failed to enact it.

Support Students Taking the SAT

By **Luke Joseph (II)**

Contributing Writer

The College Board frequently undergoes drastic changes. One of the most recent is an alteration to the SAT, a standardized paper and pencil-based test administered to schools nationwide. By March 2024, schools across the country will transition to a completely digital testing format. The College Board has been providing information in order to support schools and students with the transition process. Thus, Boston Latin School must do the same and use its assets to provide additional SAT prep workshops and resources to alleviate any apprehension regarding the new format, providing students with the necessary support for a smoother transition.

Colleges use the SAT to assess applicants' strengths and readiness for college work. Currently, the SAT is a three-hour and 50 minute exam consisting of four sections: Reading, Writing and Language, Math without calculator and Math with calculator. Mr. Steven Chen, Assistant Head of School, states, "The SAT transitioning into an all digital format follows the trend that most testing is going into now." With the current redesign, however, students will be given 64 minutes for the Reading and Writing section and 70 minutes for the Math sections for a total of 2 hours and 14 minutes. Calculators will be allowed at all times during the Math section, and the Reading section will consist of shorter reading passages covering various topics. Furthermore, the digital SAT will be adaptive, meaning the difficulty of the questions will change as students take the test.

Despite the SAT becoming more streamlined, students would greatly benefit from additional support. Over the course of the next year, students will need to become accustomed to the new style. The most effective way to ensure this is to provide students with workshops that cover the new format and strategies that will best prepare students for the test. Although a college preparatory curriculum does help BLS students excel in many aspects, students often have different experiences with standardized testing.

As Graham Owens (I) says, "The college preparatory curriculum doesn't directly prepare you [for the SAT], because you are not doing any SAT practice tests in class." For some students, class content does not suffice in effectively preparing them for the SAT.

Many students at BLS are overwhelmed and stressed with tests, sports, clubs and other commitments. Even though the digital SAT has a more simple format, students



Students take the paper-and-pencil SAT in school.

will feel extreme pressure and anxiety knowing that they are expected to adjust and excel given these new circumstances.

These SAT prep workshops could potentially be administered via the BLS National Honor Society (NHS). One of the main pillars of the NHS is service. The organization stresses that its members will continue to demonstrate their character by providing services to the school and the larger community.

KC Kirby (I) suggests, "[This] could be a way to fulfill NHS's service requirements while also being able to help the community." The upperclassmen of NHS can be a great asset for future students preparing for the SAT.

Moreover, most colleges are currently test-optional and some are even test-blind, meaning that standardized exam results are not considered during the application process even if they are submitted. Nevertheless, BLS students will

feel motivated to improve their test scores, giving them the upper hand when competing for admission into top colleges. Such resources would allow them to improve their scores and demonstrate their academic accomplishments.

Danielle Krauss (I) states, "Providing workshops would allow students to feel more comfortable and do better on the SATs." Evidently, test publishers have shown that the average SAT score improves by around 60 to 70 points with extra practice. Some can even improve by hundreds of points after additional help. Clearly, SAT prep workshops provide a significant boost to students' scores and long-term goals.

BLS stresses the importance of preparing students for their post-secondary education and successful lives post-graduation. Therefore, it is only right that BLS provides its students with the proper support they need to thrive on the SAT and, consequently, their future endeavors.

Work Hard, Play Harder



Eighth graders play spikeball on Clemente Field for field day.

By **Mia White (II)**

Contributing Writer

If you ask an average Boston Latin School student what word comes to mind when they think of school, there's a good chance it won't be "fun." Something along the lines of "stressful" or "difficult" is more likely. Although school is intended to be a place of learning, spending so much time in a rigid, high-stress environment harms students' mental and social well-being. Introducing a more relaxed, activity-based element to school through "fun days" could be the answer.

BLS is structured to prepare students for college, which comes with a heavy course load and immense amounts of stress. The demanding seven-class rotation leaves very little room for students to even catch their breath, let alone spend time with their peers and relax. As a result, BLS students lack the positivity necessary to effectively engage with their community.

Since students spend so much of their time at school struggling, the relationships they form tend to reflect that. Building relationships based on mutual struggles is normal, but bonding over fun activities would nurture genuine

connections based on shared interests, replacing the conversations over the things that trouble them.

Forming positive relationships is especially crucial for underclassmen who are familiarizing themselves with people they will be spending the next four to six years with. Following the recent eighth-grade field day, Ireland Fisher (V) remarks, "We could interact with people from our homeroom, which was good because I don't really see them that often." Fun days allow people to connect with others outside of classes.

As for upperclassmen, events such as schoolwide dances or competitions would give them more to look forward to and a reward for their demanding course load and college process. Many high schools organize events like homecoming dances or sporting events. BLS only has prom, exclusive to juniors and seniors, and the occasional sports event, which cannot include everyone due to the enormous population of the school.

Wider connections promote class unity, something that the school lacks. Some students go their entire BLS career without meeting some members of their class, even in passing. Being so close to someone for so long but never getting the chance to know them is unfortunate, not only due to the lost potential friendships but also the community's lack of interconnectedness.

Gabriel Dantas (I) remarks, "I personally have met so many people in extracurricular activities such as sports and clubs, and I believe fun days would just add to that by introducing you to people you might not see in your classes or day-to-day activities." Giving students more opportunities to connect with one another is an important step in bringing the BLS community together, which is what the school's mission strives for.

By implementing "fun days," BLS could also uplift student voices by including them in the planning process. If students are the ones responsible for their activities, they can organize events that guarantee relevance and enjoyment, likely increasing active participation. According to Fisher, the field day involved "a lot of games involving bean bags and relay races." Although these are universally enjoyable, student-led activities have the potential to be more effective in connecting students with one another.

Senior Spotlight on Winnie Yuan (I)



By Catherine Cox (III)
& Kassidi Thompson (I)

Staff Writer and Contributing Writer

Various forms of artistic expression — visual arts, music and dance — shine throughout the Boston Latin School community. It is rare, however, for an individual to embody talent in all three areas. Winnie Yuan (I) defies the odds by matching this description, claiming the “Most Artistic” superlative for the graduating class of 2023.

Yuan’s love of the arts began while she was a young child. Immersing herself in the arts at the age of three, Yuan entered the performance world as a dancer. A versatile dance student, Yuan embraced a

number of diverse dance styles, including ballet, tap, jazz and Chinese folk dance.

In this wide range of dance styles, Yuan found her first outlet for creative expression, with a lot of her passion going into her dance performances. “I am a very emotional artist,” Yuan says.

Continuing her love for dance today, Yuan is involved in dance activities outside of school, including classes and a competitive dance team.

While dance may have been her first love, Yuan’s artistic talent includes music as well. She has played flute in BLS’s Symphonic Band and Wind Ensemble since freshman and senior year, respectively.

Yuan also shares her versatile musical talents in flute and alto saxophone in the Big Band. Her excel-

lence in performance has been recognized by the BLS Music Department: she played a flute solo at the 2023 Cape Cod Jazz Festival during Big Band’s set, where the band took home a gold medal.

Yuan’s love for music does not stop at the instrumental level. She sings solo and with various groups, recently participating in BLS Asian Students in Action (A.S.I.A.)’s 23rd Annual Holiday Sing-Off, and Vietnamese Students’ Society’s Annual *Tet* Festival Show. In fact, Yuan’s band, “Winniesaurus and the Pterodactyls” took home the honor of first place in A.S.I.A.’s Holiday Sing-Off with their outstanding performance of “Let It Go” from Disney’s *Frozen* (2013).

“[In music,] you can sing and play instruments [...] so it’s very versatile,” Yuan shares. “With singing and playing an instrument, there is less pressure, so it is more fun.”

Yuan also continues to develop her drawing and painting skills. She will complete her senior year with an AP Art portfolio focusing on self-discovery throughout teenhood. When asked how she manages all of these activities, she responds, “I really have to be in the mood to create something.” The most important thing to Yuan is having fun, which is easy to do when immersing herself in art. “[I feel like] art is a really good form of self expression [...] whatever mood you’re in, art is always a good outlet,” she remarks.

Yuan’s words of wisdom to aspiring artists are, “It is never too late to try anything. If you want to pursue any kind of art, just do it, and you won’t regret it [...]; you won’t have to wonder what you could have been.” Yuan continues to follow her own advice, creating and developing new art as she wraps up her senior year. We can’t wait to see where her artistic tenacity takes her in the future!

Yuan’s art is on display during the BLS Spring Concerts, and you can also catch her live musical performances at this year’s Asian Night on May 12.

Daisy Jones Rocks Our World

By Alex Strand (I)
& Zoe Colimon (II)

Contributing Writer

Amazon Prime’s adaptation of the novel *Daisy Jones & The Six* has taken its fans by storm. With its exploration of ‘70s fashion and original music, the show has blown viewers away and drawn them into the era in which it takes place.

Author Taylor Jenkins Reid, who has written other notable titles such as *The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo*, released *Daisy Jones & The Six* on March 5, 2019. She chose to outline the story as a fake documentary, which is a niche way of story building. Readers loved this format and quickly became attached to the characters. Following the novel’s success, Amazon Prime decided to work with Reid to adapt it into a television show.

The story follows the young Daisy Jones, a native of the Hollywood Hills of Los Angeles, California. She has a rocky relationship with her parents and finds sanctuary in rock and roll. She begins writing her own music as an outlet for dealing with her struggles and proves to be a prodigy.

After realizing how difficult it would be to be taken seriously as a female songwriter, Jones decides to harness her grit and be her own authentic self, despite causing tension among her band. Evan Casali (II) especially liked how Daisy, specifically in the book, “fought to have control over her artistic process and didn’t care about what other people thought about her for that.”

The main conflict of the book is between Jones and Billy Dunne, a brilliant but egotistical musician. When Jones starts collaborating with Dunne’s Band, the Six, the two musicians come together and create masterful music. The complex, romantic yet hostile relationship between the two grows throughout the novel,

culminating in a chaotic band breakup. The novel explores the other characters phenomenally as well, fleshing out each of their backstories and motivations. Reid believes that side characters are often neglected, and she proves to be phenomenal at giving them the life they deserve.

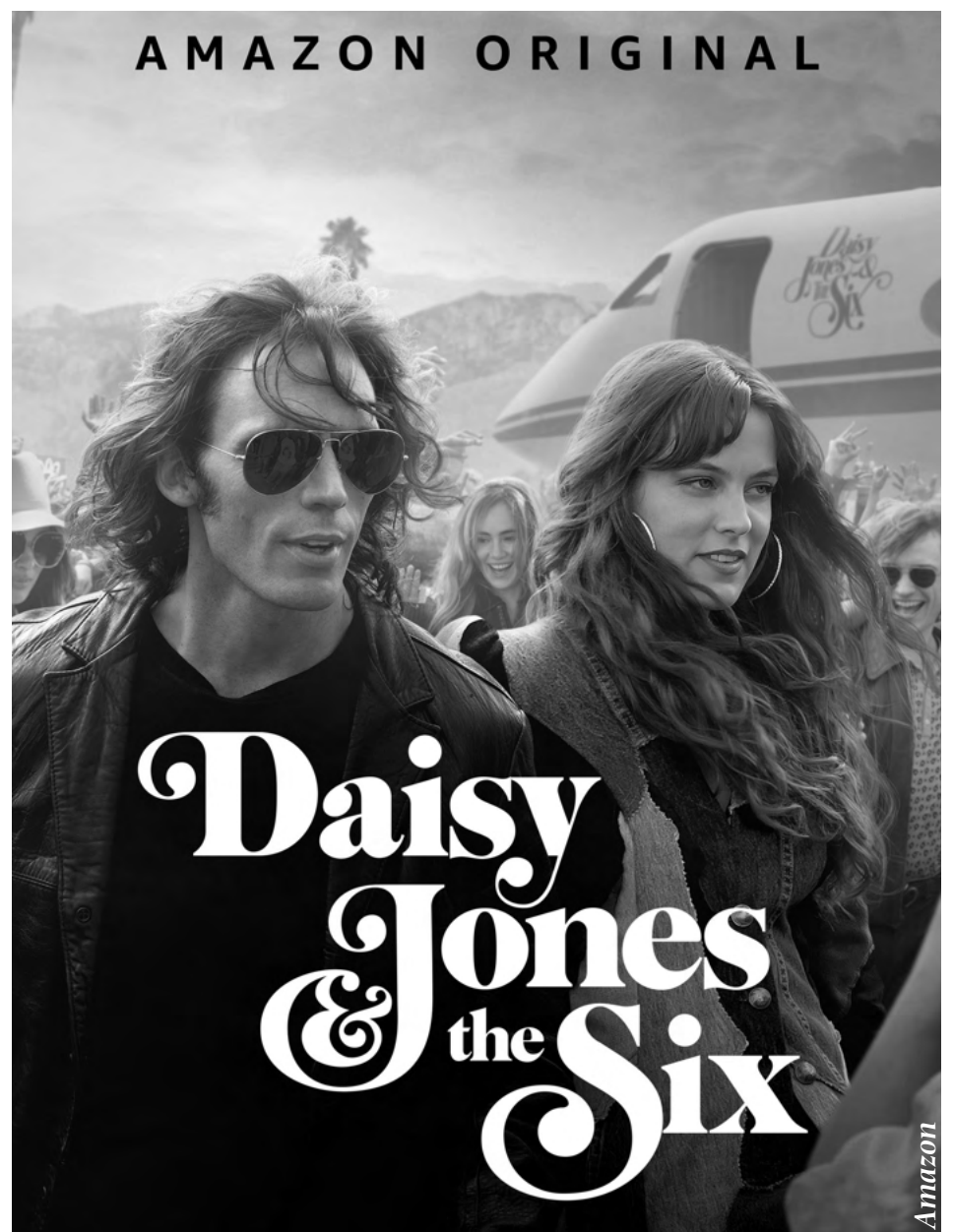
Viewers agree that the overall highlight of the show is its well-developed female characters. Camilla, Billy’s wife, is especially outspoken and wise. Veronica Smith (I) agrees that “she was such a strong-willed female character who always stuck up for herself even in the face of her friends who had risen to fame.”

The band itself is also heavily based on Fleetwood Mac and the discord within the band. Smith agreed that the show “did a great job portraying the ‘70s rock culture, and was honestly giving Fleetwood Mac.” Many viewers loved the ‘70s magic the show offered, and the underlying layer of rock and roll discourse.

The show produced its own original music, using both lyrics included in the novel and lyrics written by the show’s production team. It was even filmed in the same recording studio where Fleetwood Mac’s *Rumours* was recorded, adding another layer of musical magic to the show.

Although the show has received rave reviews, many people took issue with its deviations from and omissions of the source material. These changes, although disappointing, ultimately push the show’s magic forward. The dramatization of media for television adaptations is not new, and therefore not all criticism is warranted.

Some fans of the novel were also disappointed by the lack of grit in the show’s portrayal of the 1970s. Carly Chung (I), a reader who watched the show, felt that “the aesthetics were a little too clean. It felt super polished and it could’ve



Daisy Jones & The Six follows the journey of a fictional rock band.

been more nitty-gritty in a realistic way; the costumes were very ‘Free People.’”

Despite the criticism, the show has received lots of publicity, and its inclusion of celebrity actor Sam Claflin and well-established model and musician Suki Waterhouse supplemented its success.

Since the show is based on the book, it will not be renewed for another season. Overall, we would give it four out of five stars. It receives the deduction mainly due to the unnecessary changes, and its strengths include its unique format and engaging character relationships.

The Making of *Matilda the Musical*

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

Staff Writer and Contributing Writer

After *Qrumpet*'s astounding success this past April at the Massachusetts Educational Theatre Guild's High School Drama Festival, Boston Latin Theatre has begun its next production: this year's Spring Musical, Dennis Kelley's *Matilda*.

Debuting in the West Midlands of England in 2010, the musical combines themes of magic and rebellion to tell the tale of a young, intelligent girl who discovers a love of reading despite her abusive parents and the school headmistress. After gaining much success, the Royal Shakespeare Company announced *Matilda*'s arrival on Broadway in 2013. BLS Theatre's production is directed by co-directors Ash Albert (I) and KC Kirby (I) and supervised by BLS theatre teacher Mr. Joseph Gels.

Although it is still relatively early in the process, cast and crew members are well into their two-month-long preparation for the musical, which will open on June 1. With all of the different processes that make up production, the *Argo* asked both onstage and offstage members of the play to describe some aspects while the show is still in production.

Head of Costumes Isa Gonzalez (II) gives an overview of her hectic job to come: "The biggest thing will be keeping everything backstage orderly when so many people are constantly changing." She continues, "I have a system where we label every hanger with the name of the actor and what character they play. That helps prevent everything from getting lost or confused with another person's."

The sheer size of the cast, with multiple leads, supporting characters



Actors huddle around a desk while rehearsing a dance piece.

and an ensemble, adds depth to all aspects of the show, including costume design. "Matilda's family and Ms. Honey are going to need a new outfit nearly every scene they're in, which will be a bit of a challenge to put together," Gonzalez says. She is especially excited to design costumes for the character Ms. Wormwood, whom she describes as a "fashionable diva."

Onstage members undergo a different kind of strenuous work. Mia Hosokawa (V), cast as a Henchman and ensemble member, shares their experience as a first-time musical performer: "All we've done [so far] is learn the ensemble parts of the songs — but it was a bit tough learning the harmonies because I

had to learn to forget the melodies that I had originally learned before being [cast]."

Actors will soon begin running scenes according to their production calendar in preparation for a fantastic opening night.

Matilda presents challenges that are unique compared to other productions this year. "The thing that's really different about [it] is that there are so many people," says stage manager Alexa Schmitt (III). "You have the whole ensemble coming out of Guild where [*Qrumpet*] was a really small cast; we're [going to] have to keep that level of organization, that level of togetherness, in a bigger sense."

Despite this, morale remains high among cast and crew members who work tirelessly to perfect the details of the show. BLS Theatre, unlike many other high school programs, is almost entirely student-run. "There's only really one adult in charge of the acting, Joseph Gels, and then Mr. Snyder who does the music, and then student[s] do choreography, blocking [and everything else]," Schmitt remarks. The variety of student work and leadership speaks to the department's talent and dedication.

Even though the production is weeks away from debuting, keep an eye out for details of where and when to catch BLS Theatre's latest and greatest this upcoming June!

Art Tells the Story at ICA Exhibit



Stories that Make Us exhibits work by high school students.

By **Yongyu Qiu (I)**
& **Alice Li (V)**

Staff Writers

Immerse yourself in the inspiring messages of the *Stories that Make Us* exhibit in the Teen Gallery at the Institute of Contemporary Art's (ICA) Seaport studio. Opened on January 31 and up for display from Tuesday to Thursday each week until May 26, this new exhibit showcases artwork by high school students who delve into personal narratives to explore themes of migration, belonging and resilience.

Organized, planned and installed by the ICA Teens Exhibition Program (TEP), this exhibit weaves together the powerful stories behind each piece of art. The purpose is to share the unique experiences of individuals whose voices are not always heard, such as students who have disabilities or are immigrants.

According to the museum website, the exhibit "embodies how different stories intersect and finds the commonalities we all have with one another," aligning with the program's goal of using art to foster community and growth.

TEP member Samantha Pincus (I) explains, "We like to uplift voices that are not always heard and give them a space to express themselves."

TEP is a group of teens based in Boston who work collectively to curate and install artwork in the ICA Teen Gallery, focusing on highlighting the art of teenagers and encouraging community involvement. The program offers two exhibitions a year, and the previous exhibit, *Sides of Me: Exploring Connections*, focused on mental health and the struggles people face in times of uncertainty.

The group also works on smaller projects throughout the year, collaborating with artists around Boston. From these experiences, the teens are able to apply what they have learned to plan their own exhibits.

Another TEP member, Leandra Bautista (II), says, "Being in TEP feels like being part of a family [...] It's refreshing to see such a diverse group come together to collaborate on art."

In preparation for the opening, TEP started by evaluating more than a dozen design proposals submitted by potential artists. Then, they interviewed the artists to understand their thoughts on the exhibit's goals and talked with the ICA curatorial staff members in order to envision a layout and environment that combines common themes.

TEP organized *The Stories That Make Us* in conjunction with I Learn America (ILA), an education program

that seeks to address immigration issues and amplify the voices of young immigrants through personal works and stories.

ILA started working with students to design their artwork two years before being introduced to TEP. They met with artists around Massachusetts from the Horace Mann School for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, Everett High School, Boston International Newcomers Academy and Engaging Newcomers in Language and Content Education Academy at Lawrence High School to create panels based on their personal experiences for display in the exhibit. These artists' incorporation of stories into their works offers a glimpse into the diverse experiences, evoking strong feelings of compassion and understanding in viewers.

The exhibit also contains an interactive side. A wall is set up for visitors to add their own story in a panel, creating a sense of belonging. Bautista comments, "[The project conveys] the hope [...] that people [can] relate and leave their story, and the belief that sharing one's story helps others share theirs."

Hannah Oh (I) echoes, "The pieces were evocative, and I felt that I related to many of them." The artwork in *The Stories That Make Us* features stories of hardship from disabled students and those with unique backgrounds, giving a voice to underrepresented communities. The display is well worth exploring while it lasts!

Mary & Emilia's Corner

How do you find motivation to get homework done? -Lord of Geese

Dear Lord of Geese,

This is a tough one and something I'm struggling with as a term four senior. There are a few different ways to think about it. Ask yourself why you don't feel motivated: is it the content? Is it busy work? Is it too difficult?

You could think about how great it would be not to have homework after school. Visualizing the relief that you will have at the end of the day is sometimes enough to motivate you to complete those harder assignments. Utilize the fact that you are in a space of learning; you can work in spaces like the library and the Schawbel Center (if you are a junior or senior). Do NOT work next to your friends. Separate yourself and think about how you will be able to have fun with them after finishing homework.

You can also consider the big picture. With every homework assignment you finish, you get closer to life beyond high school. If you struggle with getting your homework done as an underclassman, talk to your guidance counselor about your course selection and taking classes that are both challenging and enjoyable. If you are an incoming junior or senior, there is time at the beginning of the year to switch your classes if they aren't the best fit for you.

If visualizing your future doesn't work for you, trick yourself using a reward system. Reward yourself with talking to your friends or a sweet treat. What I wouldn't recommend is punishing yourself because that will make you hate homework more. Prioritizing your mental health is important and many teachers will be willing to work with you to ensure that you are alright. You can talk to a trusted teacher, and your guidance counselor is always a safe choice.

Best,
Emilia

How should I force another to do a group project (or an Argo article) when they don't want to do it (cough cough). this guy didn't write anything, and i'm mad >:(((((-Anonymous

Dear >:((((,

I have definitely experienced this in group projects. There are a few ways out of it and it depends how much you care about the other person.

If they are just a random classmate who is difficult to work with, there is nothing wrong with telling your partner or editor that your partner didn't do any work. Google Docs has revision history, which makes it easy to form a compelling argument. This may help you get a better grade and the recognition that you deserve.

However, if they are a mutual friend or someone that you don't want to upset, you have to let it go. My dad has told me that there are people like this, even in his Harvard biostatistician world, so it's safe to say that difficult people are just a part of life. If they are consistently unresponsive when you ask them to do work, you have to accept it and just do your best. Don't overwork yourself, though!

Best wishes,
Mary

I'm in love with someone who is aro-ace. What do I do? -Short

Dear Short,

As someone who was actually broken up with because my ex realized they were aro-ace, I have some experience with this one. Although I don't hold the identity myself, I've learned that aro-ace people (and people in general) each experience their sexuality differently. For clarification, asexuality is experiencing a lack of sexual attraction and aromanticism is experiencing a lack of romantic attraction. Each person, however, may experience varying levels or types of attraction.

I know it seems awkward and uncomfortable, but if you're really interested in this person, you need to tell them how you feel. I would first ask them if they're okay with discussing your change in emotions, but the conversation is also for you to figure out if you can have a compatible relationship with them. It is important to have your needs satisfied in a relationship. If this discussion makes it seem like the relationship will be filled with difficult compromises and miscommunication, you should consider if friendship is a better option.

By no means will telling this person your feelings result in having to remain just friends. It's the same as any other person. You need to determine what each of you will be able to contribute to the relationship and decide if it is one you want to pursue. It is true that some people are just not compatible, but I have hope for you and your love.

Best of luck,
Mary

Hi readers! If you are interested in becoming the new writer of the advice corner send us an email at blsargo@gmail.com!

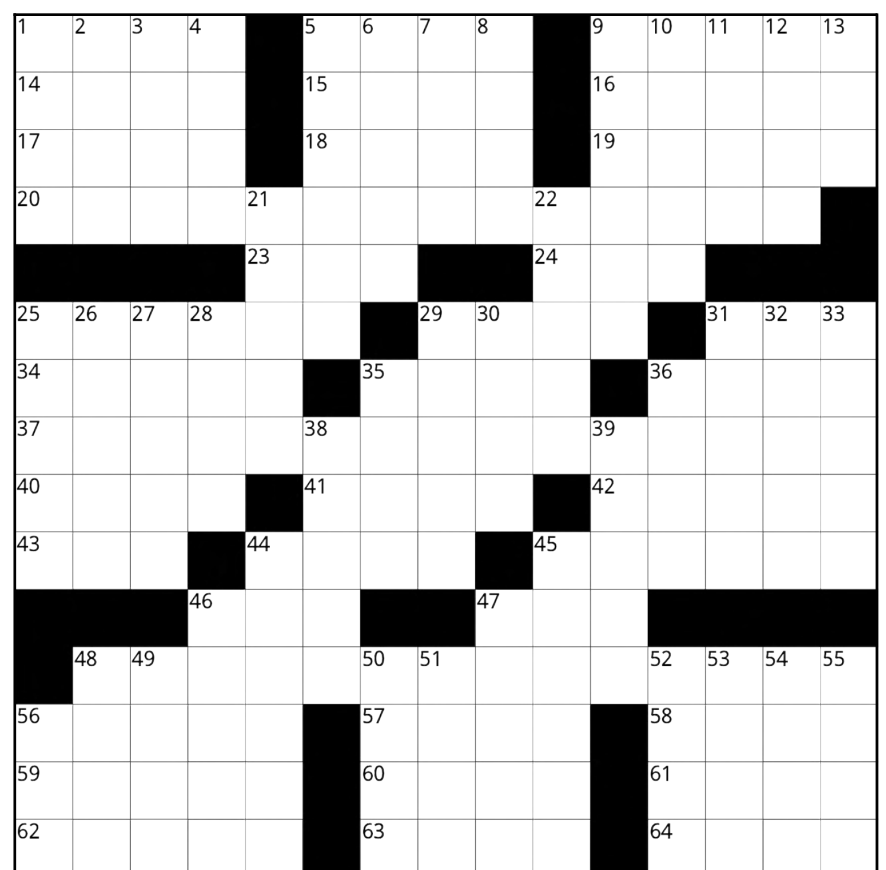
Across

1. Taco Bell drink: ___ Blast
5. Taylor Swift's The ___ Tour
9. Iridescent gemstones
14. Piece of Orthodox Christian artwork
15. 1920s style Art ___
16. Partially frozen precipitation
17. Lit ___: book analysis
18. Something that might be scratched
19. Diamond measurement
20. First Latina Supreme Court justice (2 words)
23. Floor-cleaning tool
24. Paleozoic or Cenozoic
25. Element that is the basic building block of life
29. Chocolate candy bars: Kit-___
31. Stitch up
34. "Bye" in French
35. For ___ jolly good fellow... (2 words)
36. Colorful fabric band
37. Sweetener, like Stevia (2 words)
40. Tech billionaire Musk
41. Aristo-___ or Bureau-___
42. WWII radiolocation system
43. Violin, harp, guitar: ___ instruments (abbr.)
44. Base of an onion
45. A kind of humor
46. Math educator Khan
47. Objectivist writer Rand
48. Precious metal used for jewelry (2 words)
56. "Royals" singer
57. Opposite of starboard
58. Georgetown cheer "Hoya ___!," meaning "What rocks!"
59. Disney mermaid played by Halle Bailey
60. World Scout Jamb-___: large gathering of Scouts
61. With maximum haste (abbr.)
62. Tale
63. Daily allowance: per ___
64. "Topic," in Spanish

Down

1. Lighters or pens from a certain brand
2. ___-bat or ___-polis
3. Become a part of
4. Opposed to
5. Inventor Thomas
6. Replace the upper portion of
7. Bank ___ number (abbr.)
8. Trendy lower Manhattan neighborhood
9. Annual film awards
10. "Beach," in Mexico City
11. ___-space or ___-dynamic
12. Famous Shakespeare king
13. Financial company with headquarters in Boston, in stock terms (abbr.)
21. "Love" in French
22. Convened in (2 words)
25. Court affairs
26. 18+
27. ___ mortis
28. Black, pinto or garbanzo
29. Tasty meat skewer
30. Helper (abbr.)
31. Mecca resident
32. "To be" in Spanish
33. Who, what, when, ___, why?
35. Throw forcefully
36. "Immediately" in a hospital
38. Type of crew boat
39. Resident of Tehran
44. By a hair
45. Set of principles or interconnected things
46. Jewish Passover meal
47. Be on the same page
48. Classify
49. Group of three
50. 2000s music listening device
51. Dried seaweed
52. Law students' entrance exam
53. Flower holder
54. Something students take to test their knowledge
55. Indigenous people of Easter Island: ___ Nui
56. ___ Vegas

APRIL CROSSWORD



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

“Nepo Babies” Steal the Screen

By Harrison Tran (I)
& Anneliese Yu (VI)

Staff Writer and Contributing Writer

In the entertainment industry, nepotism is everywhere. You may know that Jaden and Willow Smith, Kendall Jenner and Zoë Kravitz all owe part of their success to their famous parents, but did you know that Robert Downey Jr. is also a “nepo baby?” How about Benedict Cumberbatch or Angelina Jolie? In fact, even Taylor Swift is a nepotism baby, and chances are one of your favorite celebrities is one as well. As widespread as the practice of nepotism is in Hollywood, it has gone unnoticed by the general public until recently.

Nepotism is as old as Hollywood itself. The film industry of the 1920s was a fairly insular community with few opportunities for newcomers. Connections were an absolute must for entry, and as such, the children of famous actors, musicians, producers and studio owners obtained preferential access. While their parents were working, they played minor background characters, gaining early footing and experience in the entertainment industry. This pattern continued even as the industry expanded.

The issue of nepotism in the entertainment industry received mainstream attention last December, when *New York Magazine* released a cover story titled “She Has Her Mother’s Eyes. And Agent.,” a deep dive into the phenomenon. Many children of accomplished performers in the industry were quick to snap back. O’Shea Jackson Jr., the son of rapper Ice Cube, responded, “I had to get my [***] up and make it work.” Jamie Lee Curtis, the daughter of actors Tony Curtis and Janet Leigh, said that although she got hired very early into her acting career, she still had to work incredibly hard in her roles throughout the past 44 years. It is clear that nepotism has become a polarizing issue within the entertainment world.

On one hand, it’s easy to hate nepotism babies because they have an unfair advantage. As Hollywood is becoming more and more diverse, roles in Hollywood are also becoming increasingly competitive. This problem also relates to the lack of multiculturalism that



Lily-Rose Depp, daughter of Johnny Depp, is considered a “nepo baby.”

Hollywood still faces: there are large groups of people who are not adequately represented in film, so it isn’t fair that the faces we see on screen are the same faces we were seeing 50 years ago.

Logan Le (II) states, “‘Nepo babies’ can take [...] opportunities away from others who may be equally or more qualified.” The children of Hollywood’s elites have a head start before the race has even started.

On the other hand, just because you get your foot in the door early doesn’t mean you aren’t talented or good at what you do. Life is inherently unfair, and some people are born with advantages compared to others. As Zoë Kravitz notes to *GQ* magazine, “It’s completely normal for people to be in the family business.” It’s

only natural to want to do what you love and take advantage of every opportunity that comes your way.

Maya Castro (VI) says that “if a ‘nepo baby’ [...] turned out to be good morally and good artistically, then it would help the entertainment industry,” but “it may overpower some actors and artists who have made and created their own paths.” Olivia Huynh (III) agrees, stating that they “did put effort into their career [...] it’s just a matter of if they’re transparent about it.”

Nonetheless, “nepo babies” continue to make up a large part of Hollywood, gaining many roles and privileges unavailable to those wanting to enter the industry for the first time.

Album Review: *the record* by boygenius

By Ellis Seul (I)

Head Editor

Last month, indie-rock supergroup boygenius released their long-awaited debut album, *the record*, and it has fascinated fans and critics alike with its introspective lyrics and excellent interplay among the three band members. Consisting of singer-songwriters Julien Baker, Phoebe Bridgers and Lucy Dacus, the band formed in 2018 and released their self-titled debut EP in October of that year. This year, they put out their first full-length LP, and it has turned out spectacularly.

the record opens with “Without You Without Them,” an acapella in which the singers reflect on the importance of their family and friends to their identity. The song then transitions into “\$20,” which starts as a Baker-led rock jam before shifting into a complex jumble that showcases the three singers’ musical chemistry. Next up is “Emily I’m Sorry,” a sentimental song in which Bridgers apologizes to

an ex; its downbeat nature is reminiscent of her acclaimed 2020 album *Punisher*. Finishing up the trio of lead singles is “True Blue,” led by Dacus, which dabbles with alternative-country leanings.

After the harmonious ballad “Cool About It” comes “Not Strong Enough,” a highlight of the album. The song juxtaposes an upbeat instrumental with lyrics about self-doubt, and it culminates with an anthemic refrain of “always an angel, never a god” in which the singers’ vocal harmonies shine through. “Revolution 0,” another standout track, follows. Revolving around an acoustic guitar riff, Bridgers’ lyrics offer insight on how depression has influenced her songwriting process.

The next track, “Leonard Cohen,” is short and sweet, in which Dacus reflects on her friendship with the other boygenius members while interpolating a line from Cohen’s own music. Another more upbeat number, “Satanist,” follows this one. On it, Baker, Bridgers and Dacus exchange satirical lines about adopting different ideologies, resulting in a touching

tribute to youth and rebellion.

The album begins to wind down with “We’re In Love,” a guitar-driven, Dacus-led ballad about love and loyalty. Her soulful vocals combine with soft piano background to create a moving standout track. After this is “Anti-Curse,” a more straightforward indie-rock cut on which Baker reflects on a near-drowning experience and feelings of teen rebelliousness.

Finally, *the record* closes with “Letter to an Old Poet,” in which all three members consider a toxic relationship and its aftermath. The song rounds out *the record* perfectly, with the members’ vocal coordination reflecting their togetherness, both as musicians and people. This unity is an overarching theme of *the record* and part of what makes it such an incredible album.

Baker, Bridgers and Dacus’ musical chemistry make *the record* stand out as one of 2023’s strongest releases so far, and fans of the band will be excited to see where their musical partnership takes them next.



Cat Zhang (Pitchfork.com)

THE RECORD

By boygenius

Released: March 31, 2023

Genre: Indie Rock

Highlights: “Not Strong Enough,” “Revolution 0,” “We’re in Love”

Rating:

8.5 / 10

Glory and Controversy at the Boston Marathon



Evans Chebet crosses the finish line and wins the Boston Marathon.

By **Jessica Li (II)**

Staff Writer

On Monday, April 17, the 127th Boston Marathon took place, hosting nearly 30,000 athletes from more than 100 different countries. The notoriously difficult 26.2-mile race took off in Hopkinton, up Heartbreak Hill and ended near Copley Square in Boston. On Marathon Monday, inclement weather boasted wet streets and foggy skies. Nevertheless, half a million spectators showed up to support those who attempted what only 0.01 percent of Earth's population has accomplished: finishing a marathon. The Boston Marathon has always been a consistent presence in many people's lives; however, this year held a multitude of surprises.

As one of the world's most prestigious marathons, the Boston Marathon consistently attracts the most elite runners from all over the globe. This year, Kenyan legend Eliud Kipchoge, who currently holds the marathon world record of 2:01:39 and has won 15 out of the 17 marathons he has run, was the favorite to win.

With Kipchoge considered to be the Tom Brady or Michael Phelps of marathons, analysts were shocked

when Kenyan long-distance runner Evans Chebet won the marathon for the second year in a row. Having triumphed over Kipchoge, who placed sixth in his slowest marathon finish ever, Chebet tells the reporters after the race, "I'm happy because I won last year and this year, so maybe next year, I'll come back again."

This year's diverse line-up featured many other impressive figures. In the women's division, Kenyan middle-distance runner Hellen Obiri secured first place, in only her second marathon ever. Switzerland's Marcel Hug and the United States' Susannah Scaroni headed their respective wheelchair divisions. For the first time, the Boston Marathon had a nonbinary division, which Vermont medical student Kae Ravichandran won with a recorded time of under three hours.

Regardless of the competitive nature of the top athletes, most enter the marathon with motivations besides simply winning. For some, the race is a way to demonstrate their support towards and fundraise for different organizations.

Boston Latin School's very own girls' assistant varsity and head junior varsity basketball coach, Vanessa Federico, ran her fourth overall marathon but first Boston Marathon

as part of the Dana Farber Marathon Challenge team, which raised over 13,000 dollars in cancer research.

"It truly became a full circle moment to celebrate our family's triumphs and to show others that you are stronger than your circumstances," reflects Federico. "We are living proof that you can endure hardships and defy the odds. Research and time [have] saved our lives [...] This was such a special moment to share with [my two sisters] and to raise critical funds for cancer research for the Dana Farber Cancer Institute, an organization that means so much to our family."

Even with all the positivity that radiated from the event, there were some circumstances that clouded this year's marathon. During the race, the Newton Police Department blocked two cheer squads of predominantly Black spectators from the Pioneers Run Crew (PRC) after they were reported to be obstructing the runners by crossing the rope designated to keep onlookers back. Other white cheer squads seen carrying out the same actions, however, were not as heavily policed. Furthermore, accounts from runners and nearby spectators corroborate that the energy from the PRC was extremely uplifting and not at all detrimental to the marathon spirit.

Such differences in policing shined light on the issue of racial disparities in law enforcement, and many took to the internet to demand change. As a response to the public outcry, Boston Athletic Association (B.A.A.) President Jack Fleming released a statement that read in part, "We met with two groups last night, Pioneers Run Crew and Trailblazers Run Co., two of Boston's premier clubs for BIPOC runners. They expressed to us their deep concerns that they were not given the chance to enjoy the day and celebrate their friends, families and all participants as they approached Heartbreak Hill — that is on us. It is our job, and we need to do better to create an environment that is welcoming and supportive of the BIPOC communities at the marathon."

As this year marks the ten-year anniversary of the Boston Marathon bombing incident in 2013, Boston and the B.A.A. hosted two remembrance events to honor victims and first responders.

In the unveiling of the One Boston Day logo on Boylston Street, Mayor Michelle Wu recognized the strength of those impacted: "As we mark ten years, we will gather together in community on April 15 to remember the lives that were lost, the many injured, and the spirit of humanity displayed that day. As we honor those forever impacted, people in all corners of our city will be giving back in a number of ways, and I encourage everyone to get involved."

The Boston Marathon is a meaningful event for so many different people, in so many distinct ways. We will continue to appreciate its significance not only to Boston, but also to the entire world.

BLS Baseball Swings to Success

By **Terence Xie (I)**

Staff Writer

Boston Latin School's varsity baseball team kicked off their 2023 season strong with a winning record of 4-3, as well as a dominant opening game against the Boston Latin Academy Dragons.

Senior Captain Douglas George (I) started off the season with 14 strikeouts on 110 pitches and a no-hitter, the first of his career. George, who also plays for BLS's football and basketball teams, was placed on an 85-pitch limit before Wednesday's game. With George's stellar performance leading up to his 85th pitch, Head Coach Brian Mylett decided to keep George in the game, securing an immense achievement for the star captain.

With George's dominance on the mound, the Wolfpack was able to control the pace of the game, taking a 3-0 win with Kyle Murray (I) and Gavin Wainwright (IV) driving in the runs. BLS's opening game success is illustrative of the team's season thus far, complete with dominant wins and close losses.

"The season is going pretty good, we're off to a 4-3 start through the first seven games. We've won the last two and hope to keep going on a winning streak," states Ben Young (I) in reviewing his team's holistic performance.

A win streak would be monumental for the Wolfpack, as getting to ten wins

would secure them a spot in the playoffs. The team undoubtedly has one of the more challenging lineups this year, but they believe they can surpass the odds and achieve their collective goals by supporting one another.

Mylett echoed similar sentiments, emphasizing teamwork to push the players closer to their playoff goals. "We have a great group of seniors and two great leaders in [George] and John Flynn (II) who set a tone of trying to get better each day," Mylett expresses. At every practice, the two captains push themselves and the team to do their best and give their all.

With how much goes into preparing for games, between the vigorous practices and studying of film, the team's success comes to nobody's surprise.

A typical practice lasts around two hours, with players going through infield and base running. This is usually followed by hitting, either on machines or batting practice with coaches. Practices always include game simulations to train players for specific scenarios during live games.

"We try to incorporate competition as much as possible and make practices game-like. Guys know if they show their ability in practice they will get a chance in games," Mylett describes.

Members of the coaching staff work just as hard as players, identifying areas of improvement for the team, which are then emphasized in practice. These practices hammer out the little,



The BLS varsity baseball team huddles before a game.

costly mistakes the team strives to avoid in their overarching goal of making a playoff run.

"In practice, we typically focus on improving on small details and getting better as a whole," George resonates.

Mylett has high praise for his team and their performance throughout the season but knows that the job is not yet finished. "We are pitching and defending well, which is what we expected returning [George] and [Murray] on the mound," Mylett explains. George and Murray, both seniors, are an integral part of the

team's leadership and prowess.

The coach also cites the inconsistencies at the plate and on the bases from his team; these mistakes would need to be ironed out if the team wants to reach their goals, but Mylett believes that with "the effort [he's] seeing in practice, [the team] will get there."

The boys' next opportunity to showcase their skills and improvements is on April 24 in their game against Westford Academy. We wish the best of luck to the team in their final push for the playoffs!

BLS Powerlifting Powers Through Nationals

By Rachel Li (IV)

Contributing Writer

This year, the Boston Latin School Powerlifting team has broken records with their powerful performance at the USA Powerlifting (USAPL) High School Nationals. Not only did many members qualify for Nationals, but they also competed hard to earn second place overall, complete with two podium finishers and a myriad of personal records!

Having accomplished their goal of qualifying for Nationals, the team worked hard to fundraise for their trip to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. The dedication of the entire team allowed them to compete successfully and gain an extraordinary experience along the way.

While only two members qualified for Nationals in 2019, which was the last time the team attended Nationals, more than ten athletes made the cut this year. The team's expansion in size and incredible work ethic resulted in this drastic improvement. Many of those who qualified had been on the team for less than a year, and some lifters hit the required mark with only two weeks until the event.

The training schedule for the powerlifters consists of going to the BLS weight room three days a week to train for over an hour at a time. Head Coach Eric Cordeiro and Assistant Coach Rachel Kelly created programs and schedules for the athletes to follow. Even with this set agenda, members would often stay overtime in the weight room, training on their own time and over the weekends. This hard work and dedication undoubtedly paid off, proven by their extraordinary performances at Nationals.

The powerlifters often train on their own or in smaller groups, but the team camaraderie and support are strong nonetheless, as mentioned by Trung Le (I): "If someone is trying a weight they've never tried before, whether it be at a meet or just in the weight room, everyone will cheer and scream for each other." Le also notes that these encour-



Coaches Cordeiro and Kelly lift the powerlifting team to unseen heights!

aging shouts could often be heard from the basement hallway.

Going into their meets, these athletes faced many struggles but were ultimately able to overcome and learn from them. In powerlifting, an athlete's performance can be heavily impacted by nerves and stress, with the sport being so much of a mental game. It can be easy for lifters to get in their heads. It is even more frustrating to see an impact on their physical performances. Despite this, the powerlifters were able to stay motivated and pushed themselves to do the best they could.

At the USAPL High School Nationals, where over 600 lifters nationwide compete every year, the BLS team performed amazingly both on and off the platform. Not only did two of the athletes take their spots on the

podium, but the members were also able to channel their energy into succeeding, both individually and as a team. They celebrated their accomplishments and experienced the joy of their successes. These athletes feel supported knowing that no matter what happens, they have their teammates behind them, cheering from the curtains.

President Helena Huynh (I) highlights the general sense of encouragement within the sport, "BLS students cheered at the top of their lungs for lifters from different schools, showing the resilience and support that surrounds the entire powerlifting community."

Powerlifting is a selfless sport and the members of the BLS team display this virtue with their astounding support towards each other. Even if an athlete had endured a rough

day or experienced failure, they would still show up and be there to cheer for their teammates.

As Assistant Coach Kelly reflects, "It gives me so much joy to be able to help introduce so many students to the wonders of the sport so early on in their lives. Our kids are extremely focused, dedicated and supportive of each other and I am lucky to be able to support them in their powerlifting endeavors!"

The BLS Powerlifting team showed amazing resilience and strength at the USAPL High School Nationals, earning them two podium finishers, second place overall and even more personal records. These athletes will only continue to break more records, and we are excited to support them along the way!

Jon Rahm Golfs His Way to the Green Jacket



Masters champion Jon Rahm poses with his trophy.

By Caitlin McDonough (II)

Contributing Writer

On April 6, the 87th annual Masters Tournament officially kicked off. Since 1934, previously unknown golfers have competed on the world's largest stage in front of avid fans to take the first step into their careers. With 72 holes of golf to be played, April 6 to 9 was set to be a busy few days as supporters across the world tuned in to watch the golfers compete.

Even though some consider this to be just another golf tournament, what sets the Masters apart is that "it is

played on the same course every year," says Evelyn Parkerson (IV), a member of the Boston Latin School varsity golf team.

Most competitors were familiar with the terrain, as the tournament was held at the esteemed Augusta National Golf Club; however, they had to adjust to inclement weather. Going into the tournament, Jon Rahm and Rory McIlroy were heavy favorites along with Scottie Scheffler, the reigning champion. Knowing that any outcome was possible, all three golfers honed in on their game to live up to the hype. For the first time in his career, Rahm won,

crowned with the illustrious green jacket that marks golfers' victory. With a number of familiar faces absent from the competition due to their decision to abandon the tournament in favor of the Saudi Arabian golf league, this year gave new golfers a chance to shine. This tournament almost marked the return of the legendary golfer Tiger Woods, but he had to pull out of the competition due to an injury. Many believed that this would have been his last tournament, but "Tiger has made a career of proving people wrong, so I would never count him out," says Parkerson.

At the start of the first day, players were eager to get back on the green, and it showed when multiple golfers shot on par or better. Brooks Koepka took an early lead, making him the favorite to win. The next day, however, play was suspended multiple times because of lousy weather, forcing the contestants to push themselves even harder to avoid distractions. The bad weather caused an exhilarating final few days as each competitor wanted to edge out the rest and claim the green jacket.

Partway through the third round on Saturday, Brooks Koepka was first on the leaderboard, beginning the day with a 13 under. Understanding Rahm was close behind, Koepka needed to shoot two bogeys and a 3-over 75 to conclude his third round. Play, however, was suspended once again due to more rainfall in the area.

Rahm recognized that it was time to step it up and make up the difference

in points. He gained two strokes on Koepka, and the competition's outcome came down to the final round. Koepka hit a bogey three times while Rahm remained steady and hit one under. From there, Koepka could not make up the ground on Rahm.

On April 9 at 7:21 P.M., Rahm sank his par attempt, winning his second-ever major. He finished the tournament with seven pars and two birdies, officially securing his elusive green jacket. The result made him the fourth Spaniard to win the Masters, anchoring his place in history. His already impressive record, including a win at the Sentry Tournament of Champions at the American Express and Genesis Invitational, has grown. Rahm is now receiving significant attention from across the globe, considered by some a force to be reckoned with.

Although the biggest headline from the tournament was Rahm's victory, other major headlines included the apparent rise of a new golf superstar: Sam Bennett. The American impressed viewers early on with 136 in the first 36 holes, but ultimately finished 16th. Regardless, his performance marked one of the best amateur performances in the past decades.

Despite their success, competitors will be putting these results behind them as they prepare for the Professional Golfers' Association Championship in the upcoming weeks. Many familiar faces will be in attendance, looking to claim glory or improve their puts.

Boston Sports in Action



John Fisher/Getty Images, The Athletic, Sports Illustrated

Millions tune in to see the biggest names in Boston in action.

By Julia Sax (II)

Staff Writer

It is exciting to be a Boston sports fan this season! So far, two out of three of Boston's in-season major league sports are competing in the playoffs.

The Boston Bruins and Boston Celtics have done very well, finishing number one in the league and number two in the Eastern Conference respectively. The Red Sox, on the other hand, have had a rougher start to their season, splitting their first 24 games half and half for wins and losses.

The Bruins began their season back on October 12 and have proved to be a force to be reckoned

with, breaking countless records during their 82-game season. They now hold several records — most wins in a season, most points in a season and fewest games played to reach 100 points.

Linus Ullmark also scored the first goal by a goalie in Bruins history when he shot the puck all the way down the ice into an empty net. He became the eighth goalie in National Hockey League history to do so.

The Bruins earned a playoff spot and began their quest for the Stanley Cup on April 17, playing the Florida Panthers in the first of four rounds. Currently, the Bruins are winning the best-of-seven-series 3-2 with the sixth game taking place on April

28. They have managed to do this without their two top centermen, Patrice Bergeron and David Krejci, who are both out due to injury.

Bruins fan Mark Cronin (II) is looking forward to seeing his favorite player and Bruins' top goal scorer, David Pastrnak, help lead the "Bruins [to] win the cup." The fans clearly believe they can do it and will be disappointed with anything less.

For their own part, the Celtics have placed second in their conference. The Celtics started their playoff run on April 9 against the Atlanta Hawks led by the great Trae Young. On April 27, they won their fourth game to give them a 4-2 victory over the Hawks and advance to the next round. They will play the Philadelphia 76ers in round two, with their first game on May 1 at home.

Aidan Zaphiris (II) reflects on watching the season unfold, saying it "was a ton of fun to watch, whether it was seeing our young rising stars like Derrick White and Malcolm Brogdon or watching Jayson Tatum put on a masterclass in the all-star game."

Looking forward, he is excited to see their "great core players and hopefully not have to let go of [their] young depth players like Derrick White." Still striving to win round one, the Celtics hope to head to round two and provide fans with great entertainment that will hopefully continue through the finals in June.

The Red Sox just began their season on March 30, and they have had less of a spark so far. They are also struggling due to missing Trevory Story, an injured infielder who had an elbow surgery during the offseason. They have also had a rotating group of players at first base as well as their go-to pitcher Chris Sale underperforming.

The Red Sox are 15-14 after their first 25 games and are at the bottom of the division. Aaron Cassidy (II) sums up their season so far as "great when we're hitting [and] embarrassing when we're pitching." Despite this, the Red Sox remains a favorite team to watch.

The Bruins, Celtics and Red Sox have all played well this season, and continue to make Boston proud!

Caitlin Clark Headlines March Madness

By Vera Jacobson (II)

& Juliet McVay (IV)

Contributing Writers

March Madness has increasingly become an event to look forward to. What better way to distract yourself from the long month of March with no days off from school, than to make yourself a bracket?

There was no clear favorite for the men's tournament, making possibilities endless. The biggest upset this year was in the Sweet Sixteen when San Francisco State knocked out the number one seed Alabama State. In the final match, the Connecticut Huskies beat San Francisco State 76-59 in Houston, coming out on top with their fifth national title. The Huskies, however, are not the only team to receive recognition from the tournament. Against all expectations, Princeton made it all the way to the Sweet Sixteen after being predicted to not make it past the first round.

This year, people were talking about someone new: Caitlin Clark. Leading her team, the Iowa Hawkeyes from the University of Iowa, in the women's tournament of March Madness, Clark broke three different records over the course of the games. In her remarkable performance, she played as a point guard and averaged 26.7 points, 6.7 rebounds and 7.0 assists per game. Clark's reign of success, unfortunately, came to an end in the championship game, when the Hawkeyes fell to Louisiana State University.

On top of the fun of the games, the tournament increases visibility for women's basketball. The added attention to the games leads to more support and opportunities for women's basketball players in the future.

The BLS boys' basketball team is in support of the tournament. Sam Griffin (I) states, "As a boys' basketball captain, I think it's important to support and show interest in women's basketball, especially during the tournament season. The women's game has its own unique style and flair, and the athletes competing at the highest levels are incredibly talent-



G Elume/Getty Images

Caitlin Clark is an indisputable all-star for the University of Iowa!

ed and dedicated."

It's clear Clark's impressive performances in the NCAA Women's Basketball Tournament have brought well-deserved attention to the women's game. As a rising star, her talent and dedication on the court have inspired many, and her success is a testament to the hard work and passion of female athletes.

Both the men's and women's tournaments are a rallying point for American culture. The tournament's inherent excitement, with promises of upsets

and memorable performances, has captured the attention of the nation.

As a society, we must continue to support and invest in women's sports, recognizing their value and importance. The accomplishments of female athletes should be celebrated and recognized on the same level as their male counterparts. The women's tournament is a reminder of the incredible talent and potential of female athletes, and all should continue to support their growth and success.