

COURTESY PHOTO / Andrew Magner

Feaster Five sign at the Shawsheen intersection in Andover.

Feaster Five Running What Happens When Race Goes Virtual?

By Philippa Konow
STAFF WRITER

Many of you may be asking this Thanksgiving: "How will the Feaster Five run this year with COVID?" Well, virtually, of course.

The Feaster Five 5K race has been an annual event in Andover since 1988, bringing communities and people of all kinds to run a friendly race together and eat pie on Thanksgiving morning. With the coronavirus at full force this year, schools closed, and big events canceled or postponed, it's impossible for the big Thanksgiving race of 8,000-plus participants to take place.

According to Feaster Five's website, the race organizers will be asking the participants to track their running time on either the Active's Feaster Five phone app or with their own timing device as the way

to participate this year. After registering, they will submit their running/walking time for the 5K and will then receive a race buff (a scarf) and medal. This information will all be due the week of November 23-29, 2020, around the same time the Feaster Five would usually take place. You can even purchase merchandise on the Feaster Five website at www.feasterfive.com.

Another race improvement going virtual is that people can participate from all around the world. The virtual part of the race allows even more people to sign up and participate without the limitations of location. People with a passion for running will be glad to hear this so they don't have to worry about COVID transmission when flying or taking a bus to get to the Feaster Five race.

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COVID Changes the Way Seniors Apply to College

By Olivia Janasik
STAFF WRITER

Get the grades. Take a test. Teacher recommendations. Fill out the applications. Getting into college used to be easier. Or at least a little more formulaic. Andover High School seniors are finding the pandemic has changed what they need to apply to college, including more schools with test-optional policies.

With COVID-19 cases still rising, many test centers continue to close or postpone, leaving many students without traditional SAT and ACT results to send along with their college applications. This includes AHS which conducted their

own SAT exam last month for about 150 seniors on a first-come, first-served basis. All other listed AHS test dates have been canceled until the spring. As of press time, the College Board and ACT websites do still include many test dates that won't happen because of local town health and social distancing restrictions.

Senior Ayush Zenith told ANDOVERVIEW that all 12 of the colleges he's applying to have gone test-optional. He believes that many of those schools may continue this policy and give more students a better chance at getting into their top choices based on their high school efforts and application, rather than relying

on a single score from the SAT or ACT.

"Maybe for some schools I have a better chance at getting in," he said. "I don't think it affected me too negatively."

A survey of about 500 students from Andover, North Andover, and North Reading revealed that about 60 percent of seniors were more likely not to submit their test results this year, while about 40 percent said they would. Many, including Senior Lainie Debonis, would use this opportunity to only submit them to some schools but not to her "reach" schools. She believes she has a better chance of getting in without the scores.

Senior Daon Hatzigiannis said his

11 schools have also gone test-optional and agrees that more schools might go test-optional in the future. For his applications, though, he's "relying on his test taking skills" to get him into his top colleges.

The college application process has also changed because many students haven't been able to tour the schools in person before sending in applications. It could make for a crush of college visits in the spring if and when pandemic restrictions are lifted. Although many schools are holding virtual events, students agree that the real-life versus online touring experiences are very different.

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New Staff Take Andover High School by Storm, Part 1

By Avi Shapira
STAFF WRITER



Sarah Mathews
Special Education

Originally she wanted to be a psychologist, but then Sarah Mathews realized she was "more effective and happy" in a classroom.

As a special education teacher, Mathews teaches academic support classes and helps students create plans to complete school work. Before this, she was a high school teacher outside of Andover, then a special education teacher at Doherty Middle School. But she really wanted to go back to teaching high school students.

"I like all the different teachers here and all the students are really polite," she said. "Everybody who I've met has been super nice and friendly."



Erin Cherry
Social Studies

Erin Cherry intended to go into law, but then she found a love for teaching while volunteering in a public school tutoring program.

She decided to go to graduate school for secondary history. Teaching in Andover, which is a larger and more diverse school than the one she formerly taught in, has been great so far because of her wonderful students and supportive fellow staff members. Cherry now also gets to teach more courses, since she previously only taught U.S. History and now gets to teach World History as well.

"I find myself loving each year of teaching more than I did the last," she said. "The thing I enjoy most about teaching is how much I learn every year from all my students!"



Krista Paminger
English

Even though she always wanted to be a teacher, Krista Paminger worked in the publishing industry for 13 years before getting her first job as a teacher.

Last fall, Paminger was a student teacher at AHS and then a substitute teacher in the spring. This is her first year teaching English. She intended to only work in publishing for a short time, but ended up staying longer than expected. Having her kids created a major change in her life, which inspired her to finally become a teacher like she always planned. Paminger's favorite part of teaching is being with students.

"As soon as I'm with the students... everything is okay, this is why I'm doing it, and I really love it," she said.



David Brown (right)
Engineering

David Brown is both a mechanical engineering teacher and head of operations for a company that's mapping the moon.

At AHS, he's teaching Exploring Engineering right now and might teach an electrical engineering course next semester. He was always interested in engineering and how different things like radios and televisions worked, and was an amateur radio operator as a teenager. Brown became interested in a position teaching engineering at the high school level after teaching classes in community college for the last few years.

"I have always liked working with young people, having been a youth coach for sports and raising my own children," he said.

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EDITORIAL

2021 Prediction:
Testing Fatigue

January is going to be cold, snowy, and the start of a testing onslaught. Actually, that's your new reality. Prepare now.

Not you, seniors. Enjoy getting your final college applications in and prepping for your last AHS semester. Not you either, freshmen. Finish your first AHS semester strong and get ready for your first set of midterm exams. But listen to us, sophomores and juniors: Massachusetts just unwaived the MCAS testing requirement for you. Say what?

Those infamous MCAS tests which you have been taking since third grade were canceled or "waived" last spring because of COVID-19. At AHS, last year's sophomores didn't have to take the tests. Originally, the thinking was that testing would be postponed to spring of junior year. Everyone had their hands full just doing remote schooling, right? Then after much deliberation and debate, the MCAS board decided to waive this testing, also a graduation requirement for students at AHS, which made sense considering juniors have a lot of other testing to prepare for.

But let's digress a little here... MCAS tests are designed to ensure the schools are continuing to provide a rigorous and challenging curriculum to students, yet the way the test is designed, it tends to create more stress for students, rather than simply checking in on the school's teaching standards. According to the MCAS administration, the tests are designed to "strengthen public education...and ensure that all students receive challenging instruction based on the learning standards in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks." So why are students being subjected to this intense testing throughout seven years of their public school lives if it doesn't truly reflect their own learning? And maybe a better question: Is a standardized test the best tool available to access learning during a pandemic?

Well, guess what, the board just recently recanted their original statement, and decided to unwaive the MCAS requirement. Juniors, you now have to take the tests. Sophomores, you're up next. How fair is this? The PSAT was also rescheduled this year, from fall to spring, because of a random power outage. Sophomores don't even get the chance to take the PSAT this year. Now juniors will be taking the PSAT and MCAS in January, midterms in end of January/early February, SAT beginning of spring, AP exams at the end of spring, and finals in June. Wow, that gives us a migraine just thinking about it.

We know it's only November, but how is all this test preparation going to work for students and teachers? And how will all of this impact a curriculum that probably gets delayed with every change to the school schedule? It makes us question the true importance of standardized testing. Heck, was standardized testing ever truly important? The pandemic forced the hand of colleges to make the traditional SAT and ACT scores optional this year. It will be interesting to see how long this sticks. Last spring, there was finally some talk on the state and local level about the importance of MCAS. Are any of these tests a true reflection of a student's academic ability? Or even a teacher's ability to teach?

For now, these may be just questions to throw out to the universe. We know we're in for a lot of testing in the spring. Bring it on? The bottom-line is this: We believe that standardized testing needs to be cut down, in a sense, or even altered, to allow for more students to be able to showcase their academic abilities in different ways.

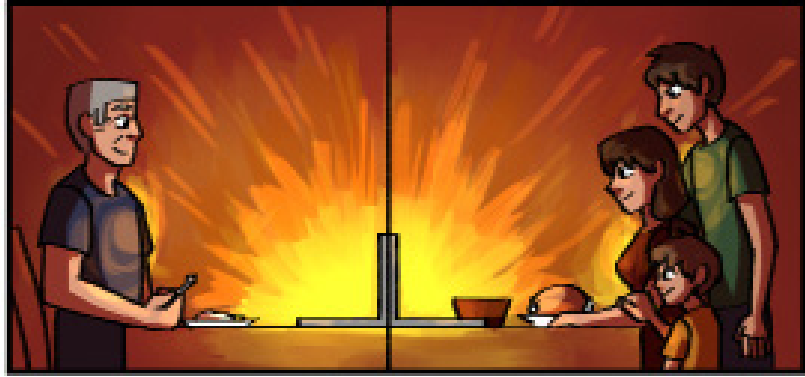
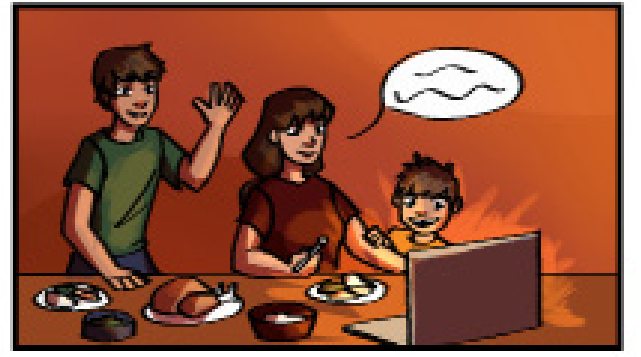
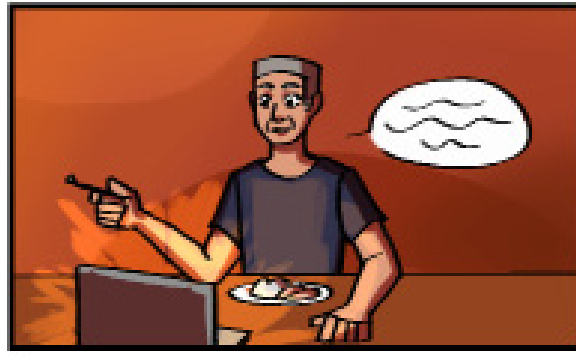


ILLUSTRATION / Alana MacKay-Kao

Now is the Winter of our Cooperation

By Eliza Marcy
MANAGING EDITOR

Now is the winter of our discontent.

Shakespeare wrote this line in Act I scene i of his play, Richard III. He also wrote King Lear, Macbeth, and Anthony and Cleopatra -- some of his most famous pieces-- during the worst outbreak of the bubonic plague of his lifetime.

I find the Shakespeare anecdote above more relatable now, nearly eight months post the start of COVID-19, our own personal bubonic plague. He probably felt the same helpless sort of dread many of us feel now, as COVID-19 cases rise in the weeks leading up to the holiday season. Not just here in Andover, but throughout the globe.

We have had to sacrifice many of our habits and rituals in the name of social distancing, and holidays don't get to be the exception. Traveling to see relatives, large gatherings of family and friends, exchanging gifts -- most of these fundamental traditions are a superspreader event waiting to happen.

Yet, as the pandemic wears on, there seems to be a waning sense of urgency when it comes to following guidelines. People are tired of the restrictions, so much so that they're willing to risk exposure in order to regain some normalcy, and this disregard has had serious ramifications for the AHS community. As confirmed by AHS PAC Co-President Christa DiNapoli on Facebook: "Superintendent Shelley Berman told a town-wide PTO meeting that... there were two Halloween parties for which they were conducting contact tracing." The parties, in addition to confirmed cases within athletics, led to the decision for AHS to go completely remote until the end of November.

Although I and many other students are disgruntled to be back in front of the screen full time, I can't fault the families completely. Halloween is my favorite holiday and eating dollar store candy while finishing my calculus homework wasn't exactly how I would have liked to spend the evening.

It's not just the festivities we're missing either. I am aware, now more than ever, just how much family time I took for granted. How many moments did I waste in the past with my grandparents? With baby cousins? With my own family?

I promise, I'm not here to depress you or even chide you. Any news network could instill the same sense of doom and gloom in half the time. Hey, just be glad you don't have a mother who's an honest-to-god indoor air expert right now. I know way too much about airborne transmission of COVID-19 and ventilation in schools; much more than any other 17-year-old in the world. (I hope.)

For now though, I ask you simply to have hope. Be thankful for all you do have this Thanksgiving. Be inspired by the Christmas spirit, or whatever holi-

days and traditions are most important to you. Be optimistic about the new year. Carry on the sense of accomplishment you feel after sending in your first college application... your driver's test... your drama audition... you're waking up for remote school every day. Whatever.

We have the same capacity for creative solutions we had eight months ago, when all of this started. I saw hope all five nights of Diwali, as I walked my dogs past my neighbor's house, peering at the dots of light illuminated within. I saw it in my baby cousin

(no longer a baby, according to her religion), when she had her Bat Mitzvah and made me cry through the Zoom call.

The bubonic plague outbreaks of the early 1600s, though deadly, were not new to Shakespeare. He had lived through disease before and he would do it again. And even as quarantine shut the doors of London's Globe Theater, he continued to write. My classmates

and I heard this fact repeated often during the lockdown last spring. Our teachers were probably trying to motivate us, give us an example of the achievements of mankind in the face of adversity. What they didn't mention, however, was that the playwright had also lived his entire life under the shadow of the Black Death. Epidemic wasn't some earth-shattering calamity, but rather a hardship that came and went like the seasons.

So let's not call this upcoming holiday season our "winter of discontent" because we won't be doing what we normally would do. Let's call it our season of cooperation. Cooperation to keep ourselves and our community safe for a little longer. All the while, continuing to produce our best work and becoming our best selves during these crazy times.

OPINION
COLUMN

ANDOVERVIEW

Andover High School
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ANDOVERVIEW is a publication written, edited and designed by the Newspaper Production class to serve as an open forum for students to discuss issues relevant to the Andover High School community. Letters to the editor and guest commentaries are encouraged; please email submissions to the following address: andoverview@andoverma.us. Include contact information for verification purposes. The staff of ANDOVERVIEW reviews letters to the editor and guest commentaries and reserves the right to refuse material for reasons pertaining to length, clarity, libel, obscenity, copyright infringement, or material disruption to the educational process of Andover High School.

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Annual Race Goes Virtual

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The Kid's K entry fee will cost \$10 with every kid registered getting the usual medal. For the 5K or 5Mile, the entry fee is \$40 and will receive the custom 2020 finishers medal. And finally, for the Challenge run, you will enter for \$55 to run the 13K/8.1Miles required to receive the custom 2020 finishers medal And a bigger challenge medal. For the 5K or 5Mile as well as the Challenge Run, if you create a team, each person on the team will have \$5 off their entry fee.

Feaster Five is a staple in the Thanksgiving tradition for many people in Andover, such as John Jannetti, an Andover High School teacher and local runner.

"It feels like a huge family," Jannetti told ANDOVERVIEW. "A lot of kids from the high school [who have now] graduated and are now in college, they come back and they run that race and then go to the Andover football game."

Another thing that Jannetti likes is the scholarship opportunities for AHS seniors.

"Last year, there were \$2,000 scholarships, he said. "It usually goes to kids who run or do track and cross country." The money made during the Feaster Five races goes back to the community in the form of

scholarships and end-of-the-race pies.

"I love the Feaster Five because it is a fun tradition to participate in with my family and friends," said Alex McNally, an AHS student and six-year Feaster Five runner. "It is unfortunate that we are not able to run together on the road but I am thankful that the organizers of the feaster five were able to put together a good alternative... I will definitely be running."

McNally and Jannetti both agreed that the most memorable thing about the Feaster Five is "[when] you start, and you're freezing." Because the race is at the end of November, McNally recalled that "the fall of 2018 [Feaster Five] the temperature was so low that they couldn't pass out water because if it was dropped it would make the road slippery."

So hopefully no slippery roads this year and make sure you buy your little pie to celebrate after the race!



College Application Changes

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"I'm pretty nervous about the college application process," Senior Maude Focke said, adding that she hasn't had the chance to tour colleges in person yet.

Similarly, another senior, Emily Hamby, said her colleges have gone test-optional, but she did get the opportunity to tour one school back in February "before the world shut down."

"It's hard to get a sense of the campus and community of the school because you only get to see what they want you to see," she said.

This lack of in person information may make the college application process more difficult and stressful for some students. Although some seniors may think schools going test-optional may improve their chances of getting accepted, it may also require much more effort from students compared to previous years.

With hybrid and remote schooling this year, Hanby is spending a lot more time in front of her computer screen.

"The process just becomes more time on a screen and it's just really draining," she said, adding that this aspect of it wasn't really a problem in the past. The

fact that it was a task you had to complete on your computer made it easier to access and accomplish, but this year, it may take a lot more effort for students to get it done, considering the amount of work already assigned online.

And what about the schools that are still making test results mandatory for their students? Luckily, numerous students had the opportunity to take their tests back in March, before the pandemic, or recently at AHS. But many tests that were scheduled over the summer were either cancelled or postponed without further notice and many were left without the chance to improve their scores.

Over the summer, senior Lizzie Jones, experienced a situation like this: She signed up for a test in August in New Hampshire, because all of the other nearby test centers were closed. On the day of the test, she got there only to find out that it had been canceled without anyone telling her. Fortunately, she was able to take the SAT at AHS last month, but agrees that "it was a long and stressful process" to get it completed. Some schools that still require students' test results don't require them to be sent in with the application. Instead, students can send their scores within a separate deadline that the schools assign.

Online School Impacts Health

By Naomi Bloom
STAFF WRITER

According to Andover High School staff and students interviewed, remote learning takes a toll on students' physical and mental health, affecting posture, eyes, eating and sleeping patterns, and stress levels. This is especially detrimental to fully remote students, who experience the strain of remote learning full time.

Spending upwards of seven hours a day staring at a screen for classes, as well as additional time on screens for homework or for recreation, and remaining seated for just as long, it's evident that it can't be healthy, according to those interviewed. With frequent technical difficulties and back-to-back classes with little to no downtime in between, it adds a lot of stress to students' plates as well.

Merideth Emery, the teacher for Remote Wellness for Life, said part of the reason that online classes are so draining is because people are "struggling to process nonverbal cues, such as body language or voice tone." She believes online classes can negatively impact students' sleeping patterns, resulting in many students having trouble focusing in class.

Additionally, she pointed out that while online classes don't necessarily result in students getting less exercise, she noticed that for many, "it's hard to eat mindfully when fully immersed in online classes. This can make it hard to detect when you are truly hungry and when you are satisfied, and many stu-

dents are likely relying on more convenience foods that do not require prep before class," which makes it very easy to go for unhealthy foods. She also mentioned that though staying hydrated is "imperative," many students are not drinking enough water because they are sitting at a computer all day.

Ohad Mamet and Diya Ganesh, both remote AHS sophomores, told ANDOVERVIEW their posture was getting worse.

"Now I just slouch in my chair because nothing else feels right anymore since I've been sitting for so long every day," Mamet said. "I find myself constantly turning my lights on and off because nothing's really comfortable."

Ganesh said that while regular school affected her a bit, "remote school is like jumping off the deep end." They both think one thing that would help resolve these issues is more asynchronous time. This would allow for students to have less time sitting in front of a screen, and more time to do their work, reducing stress, too.

In regards to students' mental health, social worker Toni Kirby said, "our routines have been disrupted, expectations have changed... we live with a lot of uncertainty. All of these things affect our mental health." She also said one important step in "managing these complicated issues" is to acknowledge them and talk to someone you trust about your feelings.

"We are going to get through this together," Kirby said.

New Staff Members

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Bryan Bolden

English and Special Education

Formerly a middle school teacher, Bryan Bolden is excited to teach at the high school level again.

Bolden teaches special education across all grade levels and 9th and 10th grade English. He has been enjoying teaching at a larger school like AHS, since the schools he formerly taught in were relatively small. Teaching special education is important for him because, in his opinion, "getting an education and earning a diploma are two of the most valuable assets that a young person can obtain today in our society."

He believes special education aids students and makes sure they all have access to these things, adding "this job is great as I have more time to teach and the Andover High School community has been very welcoming."



Kerrilyn McCarthy

Special Education

Since losing her voice in 2000 and being treated differently, Kerrilyn McCarthy has been interested in helping students with disabilities succeed in school.

As the program head for the special education department, McCarthy worked on students' schedules and hiring teachers before school started, and now she mostly oversees meetings and makes sure the AHS special education programs are functioning well. She became a special education teacher after realizing it was important for her to support students with disabilities.

"Instead of me saying to a student, 'Oh, you must be really bad at math,' I say, 'Is math hard for you? How do you learn math? What makes it easier for you?'" she said.



Dr. Daniel Angell

Special Education

Dr. Daniel Angell became a school psychologist at AHS in order to connect and collaborate with teachers, social workers, and other psychologists more easily.

After years of working across various school districts, he's enjoying the single-school environment. His job includes assessing students for emotional and learning difficulties and working with students who are transitioning back to a school environment after a time away from school. He has been interested in psychology since high school, and decided to become a school psychologist in college.

"[Learning about school psychology] brought the interest of working in schools," Angell said. "[Schools are] a very interesting world."

ARTS

Performing Arts Get Their Groove Back

By Erin Li
STAFF WRITER

It's quieter at Andover High School this year. There is the disappearance of students marching down the field; there's no beautiful singing down the Collins Center hallway; and the relaxing jazz music after school and in the evenings has left the band room for now. But even with the rise of COVID-19 risks, the Fine Arts Department is starting off the year safely and creatively. Here are just a few examples:

Marching Band

According to Catherine Hofius, director of the AHS Marching Band, a lot has changed for the band this year. "When we started off this year, we couldn't play any wind instruments during school at all," she said.

As the safety guidelines are changing every day with the number of COVID cases in the area, Hofius was told students can play together outside while being 10 feet apart from each other. She was excited to receive that news since the woodwind instruments had not been able to play inside because of the limited classroom size not allowing musicians to social distance.

For the Marching Band, the best parts of their normal fall season were cut off by the pandemic. They usually have a week-long band camp before school starts. Students would use this time to rehearse every day with their peers and to learn their first show on the field, which they would perform during the football season. They would also have practices on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays to prepare for the competitions they would have every weekend in October, and then a final state competition in November.

The biggest event during the season is the football games, where other students and members of the community would be able to see their performances. Unfortunately, their competitions were canceled and the football season has been moved.

"We are looking into a year where instead of it being super hefty fall time, it's getting smeared into all the way through the year," Hofius said. "We are hopeful that maybe we will have some kind of performance venue with the football team, but all of this is up in the air and ever-changing."

Just like the hybrid school schedule, band practices are half remote and half in person. The band is currently using an online program called Smart Music that allows students to follow the music, record themselves, and get graded based on their performance. This program gives students a sense of playing with an ensemble while staying home.

Jazz Band

According to Jeffrey Buckridge, the AHS Jazz Band director, Smart Music is also being implemented. He agrees this software is more practical than teachers lis-

tening through video recordings from students and telling them individually every little part they missed. Because it may be impossible to have in-person practices with the whole band, Buckridge said, "it's a little more on the individual student to work with this program, self motivate to improve upon... it will only work if students make an effort to implement the benefits it would help you with."

Under the same COVID guidelines as the Marching Band, the Jazz Band will never have the whole band together at once. Instead, they are separated into three sections: brass (instruments like the trumpet and trombone), woodwind (instruments like the saxophone, flute and clarinet), and rhythm (instruments like bass, drums, guitar, keyboard). Each section will take turns every week to come into school for in-person practice in a large room, staying 10 feet apart. The other two stay virtually, using Smart Music to get a similar experience of live practice.



STAFF PHOTO / Erin Li

A snapshot of *Perfectly Gilded Pineapples*, written and directed by Katie Budinger. Sophomore Ava Vassilopoulos played Virginia (far left).

All About the Journey

Looking into the season, Hofius and Buckridge are both prepared for the best and worst situations to work with. Instead of focusing on the result and competitions, Hofius thinks this year is more about the journey. Taking a different angle, this year, the most important things are for everyone to get together as a community, keep the program moving forward, and give the students an opportunity to learn and improve as musicians.

"Best case scenario would be having some sort of performance on the material we are working on, probably in some sort of odd setting where we have tons of space," Buckridge said, adding that if the pandemic gets worse, the end goal would be creating a live concert by collecting recorded videos from individuals and editing them together. Compared to the video created at the beginning of quarantine, this time students would be more prepared, recording a good quality video with concert clothing on, decent lighting to make it look more like a concert.

Drama Guild

The AHS Drama Guild already had a head start with their season. Last month, the group hosted their first performance of the year outside, in front of the cafeteria. With the short preparation time, they were able to perform eight 10-minute plays with all student directors and actors.

Usually during the fall, the Drama Guild will work on their first musical of the school year. But Susan Choquette, the director of the Drama Guild, decided this year to replace it with the 10-minute plays. The last time the group performed 10-minute plays was three years ago. Because they have a four-year cycle of different kinds of performances they do during the school year, they were supposed to perform next year.

"At the beginning, it was one hour, and then later on it got to two hours, and then I don't even remember how long I was there for the last few days," said Ava Vassilopoulos, actress for Virginia Johnson in the play *Perfectly Gilded Pineapples*, which was not only student-directed, but also written by senior Katie Budinger. (Editor's note: Budinger is the editor in chief of ANDOVERVIEW.)

The announcement about the 10-minute plays was made in the second week of October and the auditions were a week after that. Each performer had to record and submit a one-minute monologue. After a long week of waiting, the final cast list came out, leaving them only a total of two weeks to prepare and perform. Within these two weeks, actors and directors met after school every day while staying safe and strictly apart from each other.

Behind the scenes of the incredible performances are the hard work and dedication of the tech crew. Right when they got the final announcement, they started planning and building the stage sets and props. Stage managers and set designers would meet every day, while other members met based on their cohort.

Since the preparation time was short, they reused a lot of props from past shows such as hardcover flats for the backgrounds and furniture for the sets and customized the rest.

"We had furniture that we could reuse, but it was a lot of detailed painting to fix up pieces to make them specific for the show," said Grayson DiNino, the set designer for the 10-minute plays.

With the success of the 10-minute plays, both DiNino and Vassilopoulos are looking forward to the Winter Fest, short for the Massachusetts High School Drama Festival, which is a competition of 45-minute plays from many schools around the state. Last year, their competition was cut abruptly. This year, they are hoping for at least an online competition, even though you can't meet people from other schools in person.

"It's still a really good experience because you get close with the cast," Vassilopoulos said.

Giving Thanks for Great British Baking and Others

By Alana MacKay-Kao
ARTS EDITOR

With the global pandemic ongoing—bringing remote school into our everyday lives, endangering loved ones, and making the world feel slightly tilted on its axis—it's no surprise that our Andover High School community is experiencing a lot of stress. What better way to combat this stress than to unwind with some music?

How about discovering a new world through a book where the world might still seem like its ending, but hey, the protagonist has a magical sword so clearly, they've got it covered. Many of us also have more time to fill than we're used to with our usual activities being put on hold. With Thanksgiving coming up, it's the perfect time to reflect and be thankful for what has been getting us through this pandemic.

Senior Adi Briskin said the podcast *Hello Internet* was helpful to her during quarantine.

"It helped keep me entertained

when I had a lot of sudden free time," she said. "I could listen to it while going on walks and doing puzzles, two things I did a lot of." *Hello Internet* can be found on Spotify.

Some of us have used this extra time to explore and learn more about ourselves. With college right on the horizon for many seniors, exploring interests is the name of the game for those who haven't yet decided on a possible major. Senior Karli Robbins said her interest in Tchaikovsky has significantly grown during quarantine.

"It has really opened up this whole new world I never knew about and helped me come to the conclusion that I want to go into classical singing," she said. Much of Tchaikovsky's music is on YouTube and Spotify, as well as other platforms.

Another music lover, senior Alan Svendsen, cited *Songs by Adrienne Lenker* as an album he is thankful for.

"It came into the world at exactly the right time," he said. "I think it's the perfect thing to listen to while watching

the leaves fall while thinking about everybody you've ever loved!" This is also available to stream on Spotify.

English teacher Rebecca D'Alise raved about *Schitt's Creek*, a Canadian television sitcom.

"It's light-hearted but also speaks to underlying issues in a serious way," she said. "It holds a sophisticated balance between the hyperbolic and the grim reality of life, which I appreciate tremendously. Many of us are stuck in the uber seriousness of our own lives and losses, and we forget how to lift our heads to see what is happening to other people in the world.

Schitt's Creek addresses this from so many angles pretty brilliantly. And, it's super funny, which is the best part."

Math teacher Megan Mulert has been watching the *Great British Baking Show* and *Get Organized with The Home Edit* to unwind, finding them calming and light. Both shows are available on Netflix. Others have been turning to YouTube for entertainment or reading books. Business teacher Ashley Kinsman said her favorite

book that she read during quarantine is *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens. "Books can be a good mental escape when dealing with other stressors," she said.

If you've been into a piece of media lately that you think others should look into, feel free to email us at andoverview@andoverma.us! We'd love to feature you in our next issue! Just include your name, grade, the piece of media, and a bit about why you like it.

Consuming media is a fantastic way to get a glimpse into other people's lives. Asking a friend what they've been watching, reading, or listening to over the pandemic can be a great way to connect with them and check in when nothing seems certain. It's also a less calorie-heavy way to enjoy Thanksgiving! Whether you haven't stepped foot inside the high school yet as a freshman doing remote school or you've been inside the school four days a week teaching classes, doing something different can be a great way to take your mind off things.

New Breaks Planned for Upcoming Wednesdays

By Elisabeth Shin
STAFF WRITER

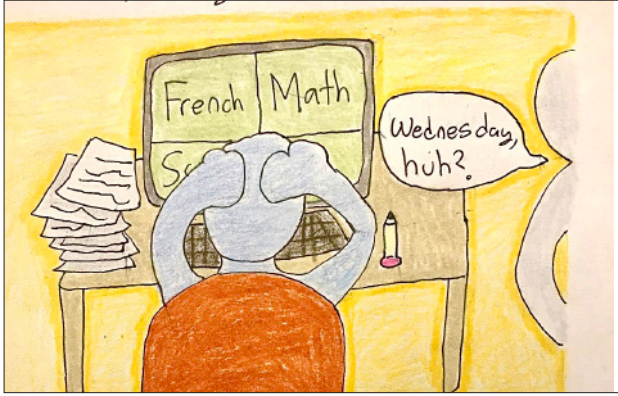


ILLUSTRATION /Elisabeth Shin

Andover High School students will have the opportunity to take a brief break during their Wednesday schedules later this year.

The only day in which all students are united through remote learning, many students face stress and anxiety navigating through all their classes on Wednesdays in a short period of time. To counter this problem, the AHS administration has decided to implement 10- to 15-minute breaks. The changed schedule will take effect next week.

The push for a break all began with AHS Student Government Association (SGA), an organization that bridges the gap between students and administration. After a brief discussion on how many teachers, students and parents were unhappy with Wednesdays, SGA members concluded the issue was important enough to be brought to the Andover School Committee.

"We wanted to bring up these arguments for giving a reasonable break because it can make a difference

with the extra time," said Kerry Costello, head advisor of SGA. "Both adults and students feel very pressured during Wednesdays."

SGA had found the schedule simply too short to have a thoughtful and meaningful lesson. It was difficult for students to keep the lesson in their heads with such a short time period, and in the attempt to improve the lesson the classes went overtime. Thus, students missed their breaks and had to rush to their next class.

There were additional problems as well, especially for teachers. According to Costello, "being on [digital meetings] with that many students is very wearing. Two hours later, you don't even have a minute to turn off the [digital meeting] or work with the next group. You're going, going, going!"

Sending Avinaash Janarthanan, an SGA member, to the Andover School Committee, he discussed the issue and added breaks as a potential solution to the problem. The committee showed interest in the issue and said they would be willing to work with the administration on the break.

AHS has already begun planning for the breaks.

"Somewhere in between, maybe two classes or so [students and teachers will] have 15 minutes (of breaks) to unplug," Assistant Principal Kwesi Moody told ANDOVERVIEW.

The break, according to Assistant Principal Scott Darlington, will begin sometime in the second semester.

For some teachers and students, this break is much appreciated.

"It is good that they are looking at alternatives and changing the schedule," said teacher Jessica Thistlethwaite. "I'm glad and I would hope that teachers and the administration are listening to that and making changes that work for the people."

WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE:

Block A 8:15 – 8:45 (5 Minute Break)

Block B 8:50 – 9:20 (5 Minute Break)

Block C 9:25 – 9:55 (5 Minute Break)

Block D 10:00 – 10:30 (15 Minute Break)

Block E 10:45 – 11:15 (5 Minute Break)

Block F 11:20 – 11:50 (5 Minute Break)

Block G 11:55 – 12:25 (5 Minute Break)

H-Block Changes Allow Students, Teachers to Take a Breathe

By Madeline Shin
STAFF WRITER

H-Block has changed for students at Andover High School, giving teachers and students more time to work and communicate together.

AHS H-Blocks used to be a time for those to work independently, meet counselors, communicate with teachers, and more. This year, however, the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the structure of how the school is run, and therefore impacting the nature of H-Blocks for all students. Through the collaboration of teachers and the administration, H-Blocks are now starting to reflect what they were originally like for students in 2019.

Betsey Desfosse, a AHS health teacher, has been recruited to help out with the planning of H-Blocks this year because of her experience with them over the past three years.

"Caitlin Brown was the one who used to do the planning, and now, she's principal, so Mr. Moody is the one doing the planning, but he's never seen us run an H-Block and he didn't know what it looked like," she said.

The start of the school year was a surprise for many students who were used to using H-blocks to go to a specific teacher and do work as they pleased. Before, there were separate activities to do before they could move on to independent work, and their access to extra help was lost. In the Remote Academy, these problems

were addressed quickly.

After listening to many student and teacher responses, progress has been shown in the Remote Academy since last month. Remote students can now freely do independent work and can get extra help from certain teachers.

"[The Remote Academy] was a small enough group, meaning under 300, and the teaching staff was smaller, and they were all in agreement, so once the conversation had begun, the planning started," Moody said, explaining why the change happened more quickly for remote students.

Now that the school has completely moved to remote learning, changes have just been introduced to both the Hybrid and Remote H-Blocks. In the most recent addition, this month, a spreadsheet was created for students to more easily access their teachers. It provided the codes that students needed to join special extra help groups on Schoology that teachers provided for them. Here, they could get

questions answered or get support through Schoology conferences.

"Kids really want time to do their own work," said Desfosse, explaining the initial dissatisfaction with the old H-Blocks. She feels that even the time to do video games for students is something that they should be able to do to manage stress.

Meanwhile, for students like Lina Li, a sophomore in the Remote Academy, they are not satisfied with the current H-blocks. For Li, she feels that H-Blocks "have completely turned into homework periods this year."



Uncertainty Emerges After the PSATs Are Cancelled

By Jaqueline Zhu
STAFF WRITER

Andover High School juniors taking the PSAT last month were suddenly in the dark after a power outage caused testing to be canceled.

The outage occurred around 8:10 a.m., the same time the PSAT exam was slated to begin. The backup generator was only running in the cafeteria, so the Dunn Gym was in the dark. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, PSAT testing was only offered to juniors this year and not sophomores. Now more questions are arising regarding rescheduling the PSAT exam in the midst of a pandemic.

A statement from the Town of Andover was read by a teacher proctor informing participants the PSATs would be postponed and were cancelled for the day.

"Principal Brown is working behind the scenes to find a date to reschedule the PSATs because she fully

recognizes the importance of this test to Andover High students," said Judy Rickley, co-coordinator of the PSATs, and an AHS English teacher. "In the past, Andover High has had a number of students receive National Merit recognition and scholarships as a result of their performance on the test."

The significance of PSAT testing meant that many students and faculty were concerned when the test got canceled.

"When the power outage happened, I didn't think too much of it because I knew that it would come back eventually," said junior Aimee Lu. "However, I was shocked when the test got canceled."

"This year we had a good plan for social distancing by using the cafeteria and the gym for our testing locations," Rickley said. "I think that we will probably use the same set up for the rescheduled test date if this config-

uration still meets the health and testing requirements that we need. Student safety is always a priority in making decisions about how and where to test."

The pandemic has caused much of learning to be moved online, and there are some questions regarding whether or not PSAT testing should be moved online. Other standardized testing, including the SAT and ACT, have not made this jump to online only. The AP exam format was changed to online last spring.

"I think taking the test in person would be better because staring at a computer screen with so much focus for three hours would hurt my eyes," Lu said. "I also have never taken a PSAT online before, so I'm not familiar with the format."

The PSAT is currently rescheduled for January 26, 2020 at Andover High School.