

# ORACLE

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## The TikTok Strategy: How viral memes may win Harris this presidential election

Read about TikTok: the secret weapon which may win over Gen Z voters hearts when it comes to Kamala Harris’s presidential campaign

Compiled by Shailey Patel and Victoria Yang, **OPINION EDITORS**, article by Scarlett Clark, **STAFF WRITER**, cartoon by Hanh Dinh, **CARTOONIST**

By Scarlett Clark  
STAFF WRITER



Kamala Harris, with the use of social media, could be the first politician who could convince Gen Z voters to read a policy brief. Kamala Harris is using social media to her advantage, a strategy which will be every influential in this presidential election. The presidential nominee and current vice president has recently flooded her social accounts with references to relevant trends and current online lingo. By embracing the support of trending figures, Harris has branded herself online specifically for the younger generation. Is it possible that these seemingly lighthearted moves may be amongst the deciding factors for the next leader of our nation? The approach has inspired an influx of approval from many young people. Harris’s inclusion of trends and simple online messaging will likely be a game-changer for her success as she employs the influence of Gen Z to win this election. In a nation where communication and outreach are defined by technology, young voters have become pivotal players in our democracy. Citizens between the ages of 18 and 28 make up a critical portion of the United States voting population. According to the Global Change Data Lab, nearly half of eligible voters who fell into this age range in 2016 voted in that year’s presidential election. A great deal of these young people regularly get their news from social media; recent census data demonstrates that over a third of U.S. adults get their news from TikTok, an app upon which Harris’s account, Kamala HQ is very active and up to date. Consequently, Harris’s online presence carries a great deal of weight. Young voters see videos online and formulate opinions on Harris’s political candidacy- ideas which spread like wildfire. Social media is asserting a clear role in this election. and Harris is actively playing into this strategy. In July, the presidential race exploded with online presence. On July 21, trending musical artist Charli XCX posted a simple three words, “Kamala IS brat,” referencing a trending phrase linked to the singer’s most recent

album. This sparked an online movement; Kamala Harris was being rebranded by young people as the “cool” politician. Harris’s campaign took to TikTok to repost Charli XCX’s statement and posted their own TikToks. They welcomed and reposted numerous fan edits by TikTok users. Kamala Harris was suddenly seen as one of the people and was posting with the same templates that young people do and using viral TikTok audios. These things make politics palatable for younger voters. Harris is adapting to the unserious, lighthearted tone of social platforms. The Harris campaign has embraced the support of young people who may be more interested in viral trends than extensive political talk. She receives infinite enthusiastic online comments like “excited to vote” and “obsessed with this account.” This has made Harris prevelant in conversations amongst youth, thus making her relevant and relatable. However, social media is far from Harris’s only area of sway. She is not limiting herself to a young audience; she continues to address topics favored by older voters. She communicates formally about issues of healthcare accessibility and finance. Harris directly focused on the economy in a recent one-on-one interview with CNN, and spoke

explicitly about her plans for the financial system during her recent campaign speech at the Democratic National Convention. Medicare comes up consistently when she speaks along her campaign trail. Despite a sturdy appeal to younger voters, she maintains her hold on older generations. Her inclusion of young people is not a pivot; it’s an expansion of her sphere of influence. By leaning into an audience of younger citizens, Harris increases her chances of bringing Gen Z voters to the ballots. By portraying herself as part of the new generation, she furthers her messaging of relatability which she has repeatedly emphasized throughout her campaign. Harris strives to prove that she will be a president for all people by using social media as a mechanism for inclusion. This will be a monumentally effective strategy in gaining votes from the younger generation. And since younger voters are so paramount to the election, the social media strategy will be a powerful one.

“You think you just fell out of a coconut tree? You exist in the context...”





# Updates and Upgrades

## FJUHSD transitions to new French and Spanish textbooks district-wide

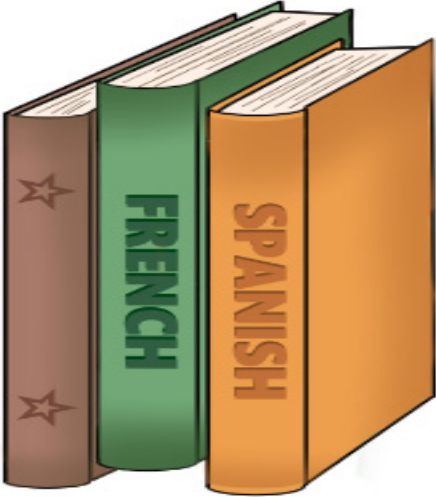
FJUHSD schools used separate language textbooks and curriculums for over a decade before this school year.

By Salman Waheed  
STAFF WRITER

Fullerton Joint Union High School District transitioned to updated Spanish and French textbooks for all class levels this school year. Given that schools used various textbooks for 10 to 15 years, FJUHSD changed textbooks to avoid outdatedness. The educational institution aligned language curriculums by using Wayside Publishing textbooks across the district. FJUHSD teachers tested textbooks to examine how well classes adapted to increased writing and modernized units, and educators discussed analytics during interdistrict meetings to identify advantages and drawbacks of curriculums. Taking into account students

that are interested in advanced learning, FJUHSD selected textbooks which have Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate themes throughout their curriculum levels. Textbooks come with supplemental digital text and videos from public domains instead of skits or scripted dialogue. The updated books embed additional countries and cultural elements into lessons. According to French teacher William Fritz, the new textbooks accommodate teacher needs when structuring lessons or reviews. It is simpler for students to understand verbal components in the curriculum as well, Fritz said. “Wayside does commendable work by tailoring the curriculum towards comprehensible input,” Fritz said. “They also provide many extra online resources that teachers can use to supplement lesson plans or activities.” According to Spanish teacher Jim Portugal, students can apply knowledge learned through the new curriculums in

their everyday lives. Although examining text through a cultural view is challenging, it provides high schoolers the opportunity to become culturally cognizant, Portugal said. “When you look around your classroom you see teachers and students from different backgrounds,” Portugal said. “It is nice to appreciate and learn about various countries’



CARTOON BY MAIFAA BABIKER

**TRANSITIONAL TEXTBOOKS:**  
*Wayside textbooks are now used throughout the FJUHSD district.*

## Majority of AP exams in 2025 are shifting towards a digital format

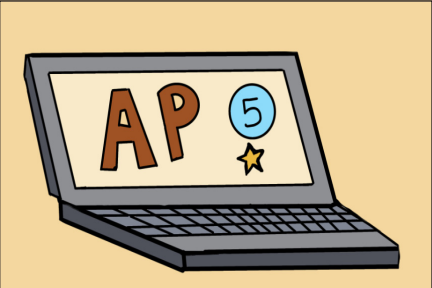
Due to security measures, Advanced Placement exams are shifting towards the online Bluebook application.

By Paulina Lee  
STAFF WRITER

Starting in May 2025, most Advanced Placement exams will transition from standard paper testing to a digital format. According to College Board, students will now test digitally on the Bluebook application instead of the traditional paper and pencil materials. Of the 28 exams changed, 16 will be entirely virtual while 12 will follow a hybrid model. AP history and English exams will be administered entirely online, with students typing free-response answers directly into the Bluebook application. Responses will automatically be submitted for grading at the end of the testing session. For AP science, mathematics and economics exams, the tests will be in a hybrid format.

Students will view the free-response question prompts in Bluebook and record their answers into paper exam booklets. AP exams with audio components or those consisting of portfolio assessments, such as AP foreign languages, AP arts and AP Music Theory will remain unchanged. When the idea of digital testing was first introduced by College Board, it became a topic of discussion and controversy among students and teachers. According to 7EDU Impact Academy, an education-technology company that offers students college related preparation, this transition requires educators to adapt their curriculum and teaching methods to the new AP digital requirements. “Amid the benefits, concerns loom over the security and proper administration of digital exams,” 7EDU Impact Academy said. “The shift to digital exams necessitates a re-evaluation of teaching strategies, especially for aspects like essay annotation, posing challenges for educators accustomed to traditional pencil

and paper exam preparation.” According to UWorld College Readiness, a website that provides resources to high school students preparing for College Board standardized tests, the new format brings accessibility to students with disabilities, reduces paper usage and increases the efficiency of both teachers and students. “Online AP exams offer greater efficiency for students during the test-taking process,” UWorld College Readiness said. “Typing responses allows students to compose essays more rapidly, eliminating the time-consuming aspects of handwriting.”



CARTOON BY MAIFAA BABIKER

**DIGITAL DIRECTION:** 2025 AP exams are spearheading the shift to a digital AP exam format.

## TROY TODAY

### NJROTC RoboSub competition

In August, Warrior NJROTC competed in the RoboSub competition at Woollett Aquatics Center in Irvine, California. International student teams gathered to design and build robot submarines, alongside teams from major universities. Warriors were assessed in various categories such as technical design, design documentation website, technical design, videography and presentation. This was Troy NJROTC’s second year competing with a robot, placing 25th out of 41 teams.

### Care Solace program

Fullerton Joint Union High School District has implemented Care Solace, an online resource that aims to promote the well-being of students and parents. Students and school district staff may call a designated number or visit the Care Solace website for counseling services or mental health programs. The website is available at all times at no extra cost.

### Warrior Cloris Shi Wins at 2024 USA BioOly

Current senior Cloris Shi won the 2024 USA Biology Olympiad national silver medal at Marymount University. USABO is a national competition organized by the Center for Excellence in Education. Shi is a 4-time USABO semi-finalist and a 6-time National Science Olympiad medalist. In USABO, participants undergo three rounds of competition, which are an open exam, semifinal exam and national final. Shi is a current member of Troy’s Science Olympiad and has been a member of the team since her freshman year.

### No 2024-2025 All-Male dance team

This year, there will be no Warrior All Male dance team. The dance team requires at least five members to form, but there were not enough participants during the tryouts held this year. However, tryouts will be held during the 2025-2026 year and Red Hots will still perform this year.



# Construction concludes on 1000s buildings and continues in cafeteria

The district started classroom construction of the 1000s building to replace the portables and address the need for more classrooms.

By Anastasia Efremova  
STAFF WRITER

FJUHSD completed construction of new classrooms Aug. 5, while cafeteria construction is presently ongoing.

The district started construction of the 1000s building Sept. 12, 2023, initially set to be finalized in spring but delayed by about five months due to weather and logistical issues.

Due to the probability of additional costs for moving electrical lines, an eighth classroom was reformat- ted and built behind the others. Teachers received the keys to the classrooms Aug. 5, however, there are some final touches that still need to be implemented. Once classroom construction was complete, the staff realized there was not a lot of time before school started, and Troy’s IT Coordinator Amaan Mahmood worked hard to get the class- rooms up and running, Assistant



PHOTO BY JENNY HUANG

**BRAND-NEW BUILDINGS:** *NJROTC, science, business, film and media classes are being taught in the newly constructed 1000s classrooms.*

Principal Lance Bletscher said.

“There are some details, like where the data ports are for the labs and [getting] blinds for the windows to help with glare [on the] TV screens, that we are working on with the dis- trict,” Bletscher said. “We had a few bumps with the air conditioning, [but] we have figured most of it out.”

A recent grant from the Orange County Department of Education is funding the cafeteria changes, which include a new kitchen, freezer and a new air conditioning system. The main improvements are set to be fi- nalized fall 2024, and a new floor plan, coming summer 2025, will allow students to choose their own

food from the stands, one of the lead cafeteria staff Albert Solomon said.

“The district started cafete- ria renovation because the walk- in fridge was small and a bit cramped,” Solomon said. “With the growing school, we serve more and more meals, and we need more space to store enough food to prepare for students.”

Staff face challenges operating the cafeteria without fully function- ing appliances. They need to walk to the gym to bring food in carts, in- stead of grabbing it directly from the kitchen. Often, the construction was so loud that the office had to supply earplugs for the staff, Bletscher said.

“There was very little impact for the students, however, which says a lot about the work of our chefs and staff,” Bletscher said. “[The staff] figured out a way to function with that inconvenience and still make sure they can de- liver the food that [students] need.”

Both cafeteria and classroom construction recieved posi- tive student and staff feedback. Troy’s 2023-2024 construc- tion was the first major project in over 15 years, Bletscher said.

“There are still some little details we have to work out,” Bletcher said. “But overall, it has been an awesome start to the school year.”

# Warrior Best Buddies President Odelia Ku attends leadership conference

The Best Buddies Leadership Conference is an annual gathering of Best Buddies leaders and adovcates from around the globe.

By Kylie Tien  
STAFF WRITER

Warrior Best Buddies club President Odelia Ku attended the Best Buddies Leadership Conference in Indiana University, Bloomington July 19 - 22.

Best Buddies is a club aim- ing to bridge the gap between the

able-bodied and people with dis- abilities. As a chapter of the larger organization, Troy’s Best Buddies club pairs general education stu- dents with Troy’s special education students, aiming to foster inclu- sion and friendship between them.

The club organizes various events and activities throug- hout the school year. According to Warrior Best Buddies club advisor William Fritz, the Best Buddies club members are passionate about their contributions to the commu- nity and the events that they attend.

“Our [Best Buddies] members participate in weekly meetings [and] strive to have a positive im- pact on the Troy com- munity,” Fritz said. “[Best Buddies at- tends] monthly get-to- gethers, a Friendship Walk in April and so many other events.”

According to Ku, the conference fo- cuses on build- ing leadership and

speaking skills to maintain the Best Buddies clubs. BBLC serves also as an opportunity to converse and relate with other peers, Ku said.

“BBLC is basically a place to build connections with people and to build your chapter,” Ku said. “[We] learn more about Best Buddies and how you can maintain the club.”

The conference features work- shops and sessions to lay a founda- tion of leadership for attendees of the conference. Guest speakers give speeches at these workshops and sessions, sharing personal experi- ences and giving demonstrations.

Conference organizers group attendees based on chapter, al- lowing them to exchange con- versations with other peers from similar areas. The attendees mainly attend the various workshops with their chapter, despite there be- ing many more people, Ku said.

“I think about 2000 other people attended [the confer- ence],” Ku said. “We attended a bunch of sessions about leader- ship with our California group,”

Beyond the leadership workshops and sessions, conference organizers

arranged conference bonding ac- tivities. Every attendee participated in these events and activities as a way to conclude each day of BBLC.

Some activities encouraged at- tendees to engage with the guest speakers by participating in their demonstrations. Other ac- tivities, such as the Friendship Olympics, helped build memo- ries with new people, Ku said.

“[One night] we got to bond with everyone [at the confer- ence],” Ku said. “[One of] the most memorable things was just meeting the people there.”

According to Ku, it was impact- ful to collect memories and meet many people from different chap- ters. Seeing the amount of care for the club is a big source of motiva- tion for students to make a differ- ence in their communities, Ku said.

“The sheer number of people and how passionate [they] were about building the club was beyond my expectations,” Ku said. “Do not come in [to the club] with the mind- set or an expectation of how people are going to act a certain way. Just come in with an open mind and try.”



PHOTO COURTESY OF ODELIA KU

**BEST BUDDIES:** *Senior Odelia Ku with a fellow Best Buddies student leader and UCLA Best Buddies Directors Marc Dobry and Sean Dobry.*



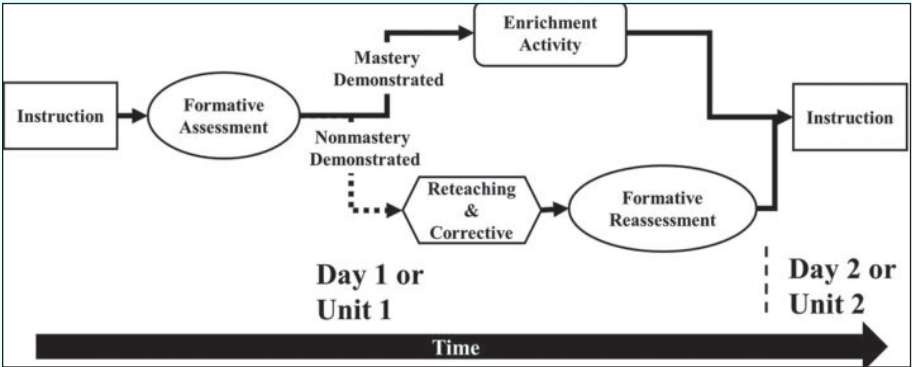
# The mastery curriculum is a more effective way to run a classroom

By Chelsea Engelhardt  
STAFF WRITER



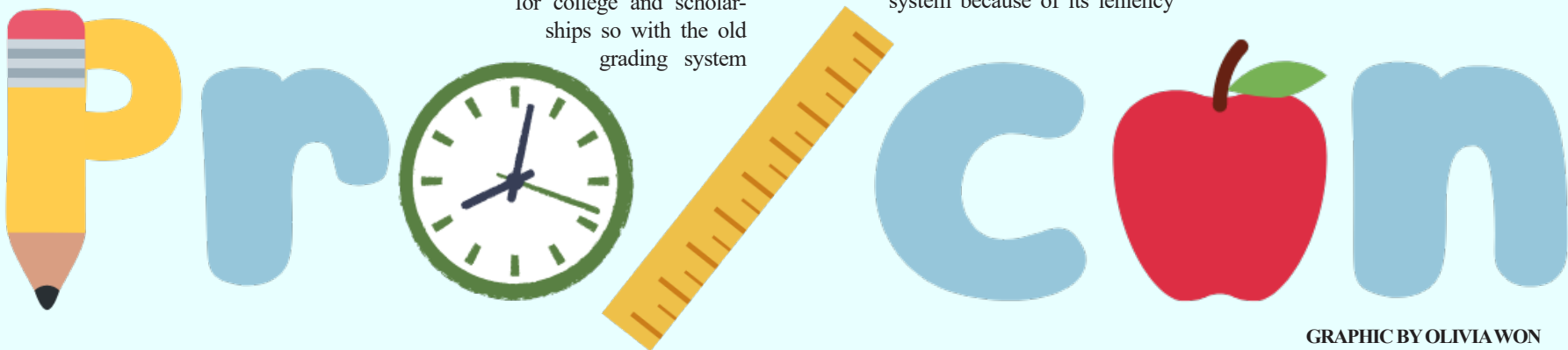
Mastery learning prioritizes the actual learning over busy work and should be implemented in high schools. The mastery grading system will be a more effective way to score students, especially in high school. With the opening of this new school year, new systems and ideas are being tried out on the Troy population. For example, the implementation of mastery grading systems has now found its way into high school curriculums. Mastery curriculum is a grading scale where students' grades are purely based on their ability to understand and apply a skill rather than their ability to complete homework or participate in class. Essentially, the only work being graded is tests and quizzes. The approach is a more effective way to teach because it will allow students to slow down and understand something before moving on. Overall, mastery grading systems will have a positive impact on high schools including Troy because of the stress it will

relieve and the focus it will put on the actual topics being taught. Mastery grading scales will motivate students to focus on studying for tests because of the increased value given to test grades. Since there is no daily coursework to be graded, students will have more time to study a subject and its contents with their own unique methods. Instead of spending time on assignments that are not contributing further to the student's learning, they are able to prioritize based on their needs with this new system. The classwork given isn't guaranteed to help the student, but their independent time to focus could. With this much homework in place, many students will rush through it just to get it done instead of trying to understand. Grading doesn't always help with their mastery of the subject, but without the mastery grading system, it does help their grades. With this system in place, students would have more time to look over the homework and do it to understand it. With the mastery curriculum, teachers can more accurately pinpoint the problem in a student's school life. It is no secret that students and parents care greatly about their grades and depend on them for success later in life for college and scholarships so with the old grading system



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES OF PHARMACY

that factors in participation and behavior is unfair to students. According to the New England Secondary School Consortium, mastery grading is a much more precise measure of how much a student has learned or failed to learn. This means that with tests being the only grade category, students and teachers will pay more attention to the subject in order to help them in the future. This can further help the teacher to know how a student is struggling and to help them. Overall, a student is more motivated to learn with this updated grading system because of its leniency for less important work like homework and class participation. Although this system is a great thing to implement into classes, there are some downfalls. For example, with its newfound lack of importance in grades, class participation and reinforcement work could decline. Regardless of the consequences, the new scale has many interesting factors and is worth implementing and testing out in a classroom setting. Mastery learning has benefits that could facilitate a significantly better learning experience.



GRAPHIC BY OLIVIA WON

# Individual gain for organized pain: How efficient are mastery curriculums?

By Ethan Ferrer  
STAFF WRITER

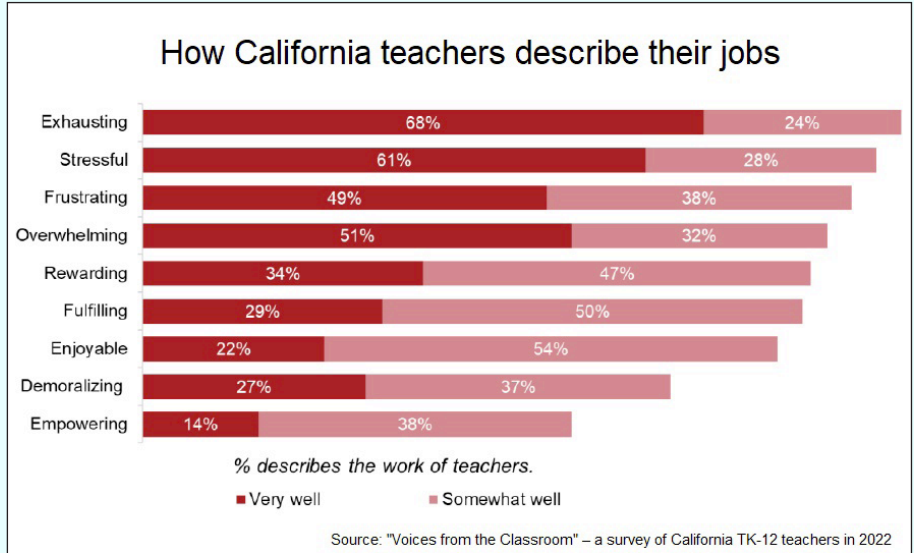


This school year, some classes are adopting a mastery curriculum—however, it is not practical for school environments. This type of learning prioritizes mastery of subjects before moving on to the next, targeting student work towards a specific goal rather than memorization. The cycle begins with standard instruction, followed later by an assessment that tests student proficiency. Students who pass the assessments

are allowed to partake in activities strengthening their knowledge of the course. Failed students, however, are retaught and assessed again later on. Once mastery is achieved, the cycle repeats. In theory, this system works by lowering student stress and allowing them to enjoy learning. However, because it may set a slow pace and create an excessive workload for teachers, the mastery curriculum should not be implemented in schools. To start, mastery curriculums may perpetuate any present imbalances in comprehension across classrooms. In most schools, some students will inevitably be able to understand coursework more than others. While this

creates an unevenness in learning for most classes, implementing mastery-based learning may not have a significant effect. According to statistics gathered from the California Science Test, 70 percent of students were below the standard, whereas 30 percent met or exceeded it in 2023. In classes adopting the mastery system, students with a deeper understanding of the material may need to adopt a slower pace they are uncomfortable with. Although this learning style is beneficial for some, others may be hampered by it. Overall, the possible ineffectiveness of a mastery-based structure may outweigh any advantages. Going further, the drawbacks of a mastery curriculum may not only apply to students, but teachers as well. Educators often face a large workload due to the amount of coursework they must organize and produce. Furthermore, an EducationWeek article showed that U.S. teachers work an average of 52 hours per week—an excessive amount. Albeit students may navigate tasks easier, teachers could face difficulties from the mastery system that wouldn't occur normally. Along with returning to prior-taught topics, educators must continuously reassess the skills of students. This causes various inconveniences, such as having to repeatedly update grades, or draft new retake tests for students.

Gradually, these issues amass, hindering teachers' already busy workweek. Largely, the work needed to support classroom learning could become unmanageable. Regardless, it isn't impossible to implement a mastery-based approach to learning. In smaller groups, or on an individual basis, such methods could help many achieve proficiency in their subjects, working towards remembering, rather than memorizing details. However, this would only work efficiently in small groups. In many schools, classes are filled with a large number of students—too many to properly structure a mastery curriculum. Troy, in particular, retains around 2,600 students. Attempting to coordinate the needs of every student in each classroom would be a painstaking process. While some students get more time on a concept, others move on, creating an inefficient divide. As such, a mastery-based system is infeasible. Overall, although a mastery-oriented curriculum could work in other settings, it is not practical for larger classes. Despite the benefits of this system, the potential disadvantages outweigh the advantages and it should not be implemented, especially in schools like Troy.



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF EDSOURCE



# The Olympics will remain the pinnacle of all athletic competitions.

By Jayden Beaumont  
STAFF WRITER



The Olympics made one mistake—can we forgive them for it? This summer, for the first time in Olympic history, a medal was rescinded, not for evidence of doping or a violation of rules, but for an error made by the judges. United States gymnast Jordan Chiles received a bronze medal in women’s floor after her coach Cecile Landi’s official inquiry was accepted, raising her score from 13.666 to 13.766 and boosting her from fourth place to third. However, on August 10th, the decision was reversed, on the grounds that the inquiry was submitted too late. Chiles’ medal was reallocated to the original third place winner, Romanian Ana Barbosu. In protest, USA Gymnastics appealed this judgment, providing video evidence that the inquiry was made during the allotted time, but the Court of Arbitration for Sport refused to give back the medal. After this incident, people began to question whether the Olympics are still an adequate measure of athleticism if they could make such a mistake. Despite all controversies, the Olympics remain the pinnacle of all athletic competitions. It is impossible to deny that the Olympics have been overwhelmingly accurate in their awards. They gave out a total of 1,039 medals this year. Chiles deserved the bronze medal, but that was only one out

Chiles deserved the bronze medal, but that was only one out of over a thousand.

of over a thousand. A single mistake should not define a whole organization that has been consistently faithful. Furthermore, the Olympics have been working toward correcting medal assigning errors from the past. This summer, they held ceremonies for ice skating teams from the last winter Olympics that moved up in ranking after the original winners were discovered to have been doping. Overall, the Olympics has been and continues to be a place where the most elite athletes can showcase their talents for the world. This year they made a crushing mistake in giving Barbosu the bronze medal in gymnastics instead of Chiles. But to say that the Olympic medals no longer mean anything, is unfair to the thousands of other competitors who fought for and deserved their accomplishments. The Olympics is an organization made by humans for humans, so of course it is subject to human error. By no means is it fair to the athletes who are affected by these mistakes, but all competitions have some room for error. In Major League Baseball, the average umpire has 94 percent accuracy, so essentially one out of every 20 calls made are wrong. It has been argued that in the last

Super Bowl, the Chiefs only won due to a bad call in the beginning of the game. But just because there is a slight arbitrariness, does not mean that the athletes themselves are any less capable or competitive, nor does it take away the value from their wins. And the Olympics are about more than just winning and losing. They are about national identity and pride. As Barbosu herself declared, “The

Olympic spirit is more important than any misunderstanding between authorities.” The Olympics will remain an event for the best of athletes to prove themselves and for their countries to cheer them on. One mistake will not take away from all that they stand for. The Olympics’ written mission is to “ensur[e] that, in sport, the spirit of fair play prevails.” Although the integrity of this Olympics have been declining, it is undeniable that the Olympics has always strived for their mission and live up to their authority. The Jordan Chiles medal dispute may not yet be resolved, but hopefully this even will lead the Olympics to reflect and polish their policies. With that, the next Olympics can come back stronger than ever.



PHOTO COURTESY OF GETTY IMAGES

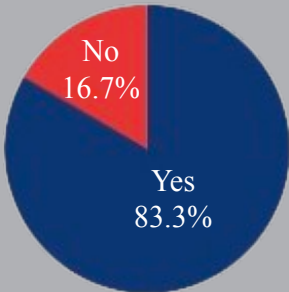
## mark my words

Warriors speak out on campus issues

Read what the Warrior population has to say about the new 5-star app.

“It signs people out randomly, weird to navigate, and overall is not a well designed app.”  
- Soham Dev, Senior

Do you think the 5-star app is easy use?



See the full list of responses here!

“It is simple, convenient, and has significantly improved in terms of glitching since I began using it.”  
- Omika Raina, Sophomore.

“5-star has not provided anything worthwhile to the previous system in my opinion ... Every time that I talk to a club owner, they all express annoyance at the whole 5-star system ... Everything that 5-star has provided could have been done in another way that is more convenient for everyone.”  
- Dorian Aleman, Junior

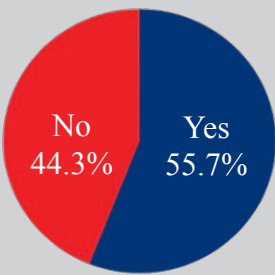
“The 5-Star at lunch to leave is such an issue. They make you wait until 1 p.m to use five star and there is barely any difference but a waste of time.”  
- Michael Bruce, Senior

“Its easy to open the app and have access to my ID and event tickets.”  
- Courtney Black, Sophomore

“It is a pain to constantly have to go thorough your phone find the app and then show the code for everything when I can just show my ID and get it over instantly.”  
- Enzo Bollas, Senior

“In my experience, the 5 star app has been difficult and hard to use when it comes to club attendance. Clubs end up doing attendance twice as well which is redundant and takes more time.”  
- Salvador Gomez, Senior

“If you are an upper-classman, did you face delays or difficulties using 5-star during lunch?”



“It’s nice to see all the school, surveys, activities, and events all in one place.”  
- Anonymous Senior



# ASTRONOMICAL ADDITIONS

The newest additions to our Troy family are out of this world! From a new assistant principal to a new special education teacher, there is so much to learn about their stories. Read below for a glimpse into their lives!

Compiled by Eileen Um, **FEATURE EDITOR**, article by Kathleen Hong, **STAFF WRITER**, photos by Lauren Song, **PHOTOGRAPHY EDITOR**, graphics courtesy of Canva

As a former elementary school teacher for 11 years, Special Education teacher Michelle Altura is no stranger to the classroom. After years of personal growth in the elementary school setting, she felt a calling to teach individuals with disabilities and to aid her students as they progress through their lives. Now, Altura finds joy everyday because of her students' unique personalities and growth. She believes that her students possess a lot of potential and that with the right environments, they can achieve independence and amazing feats. Altura hopes that Troy students seek out opportunities to work with a diverse array of people, including disabled individuals. "I hope that...when you are working with different populations, specifically with people with disabilities, that you are kind and open to helping them. A lot of these guys, they have really good hearts, and if you open yourself up to that, you're gonna meet amazing people."



Avid language lover Anahi Lopez-Peralta is ready to help her students connect with Spanish. When she decided to major in Spanish in college, her passion for the language blossomed. Inspired by her own high school Spanish teachers, who supported her through her struggles with schoolwork, she fully set her mind on teaching. Currently, Lopez strives to strengthen her students' desire to continue learning. She commits herself to help those struggling in and out of her class, creating a safe space for students to voice their difficulties. Lopez personally aspires to learn the unique ways that students best process information and learn material in order to cater to them individually. As a new teacher on campus, Lopez acknowledges there is much growth she can achieve, and that she'll continue to persevere toward her goals. "Not everything is easy right off the bat, but making mistakes is part of trying."



Assistant Principal Destiny Salazar is ready to take on a new career and a new campus. Before coming to Troy High School, Salazar taught Spanish at La Habra High School, Pasadena High School and South Junior High, where she found herself wanting to step into an administrative role. While at South Junior High, the principal at the time encouraged her to pursue the position, motivating Salazar to commit to this goal and receive her Master's Degree in Educational Leadership and Administration. In her current position, Salazar is excited to help support the student body. She adores how she connects with a new student, parent or staff member daily. She wants to work beyond disciplining students and understand the motivations and lives of those she interacts with. Salazar strives to support the entire Troy population and make a positive impact on campus. "I have always wanted to be a part of the change that education needs."



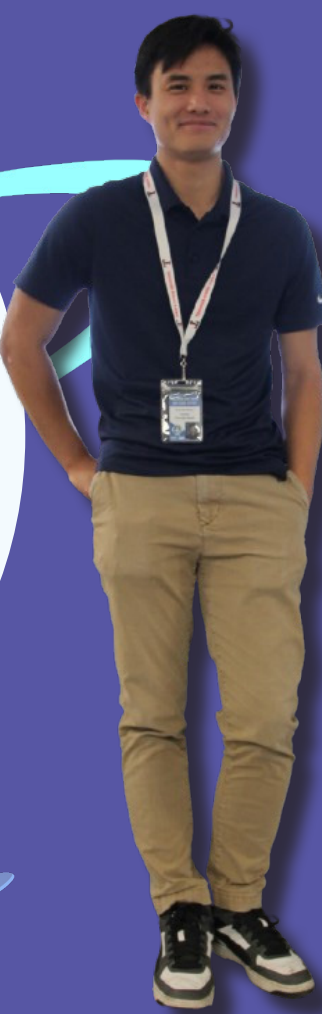
Special Education teacher Emily Abo finds personal and student growth in her classroom every day. From a young age, she wanted to pursue a career involved with children, and channeled her nurturing nature into teaching. After receiving her teaching credential at Cal State Long Beach, she began her career at Valencia High School as a teacher for students with moderate to severe disabilities. Now, she continues her career at Troy High School. Working with special education students gives her excitement because they don't hold back their true selves, leading her to learn an abundance of knowledge every day. As an educator, she pushes herself to make every day better than the last to properly serve her students, hoping that they will eventually become independent in life beyond high school. Abo is constantly reminded by her students to be authentic, and she urges the Troy population to adopt this mindset as well. "Coming here reminds me that we are all human, we all have feelings, and we are allowed to feel what we feel and say what we think."



Computer Science teacher Charles Hwang starts his first year of teaching at Troy High School. From a young age, Hwang aspired to help others, and more specifically, he wanted to teach Computer Science to help his students better adapt to the world's growing technology through computer languages and programming. Because he teaches five classes of Computer Science Principles, he enjoys experiencing various interactions with different students in each unique period throughout the day. He hopes that through his teaching, his students will rely less on their teachers and more on themselves. He personally strives to be the best teacher he can be. "[T]eaching is one of those things where you can't be the best teacher at everything. There's always room for improvement. So I just aim to constantly improve every year."



Physics and Biology teacher Brandon Pham finds beauty everyday in teaching his students. He developed a passion for science from a young age, and his love for learning convinced him to spread that joy to others. Pham's focus in Biology and Engineering guided him towards obtaining his master's degree at UC Irvine. Currently, Pham enjoys the experience of teaching a diverse array of students. Witnessing the impact he has on his students and the collaborative improvement his students have on each other is a transformative teaching experience to Pham. He hopes that his students develop a bright and curious mentality, and become their own scientists. "Don't give up just based on one or two bad letter grades. Really find that drive to keep learning and to keep improving yourself. Because at the end of the day, it doesn't matter what letter you got in one class, it just matters how you've learned from it."





# FOOTBALL FRENZY

With the Warrior Girls Flag Football team kicking off their first season at Troy, they make an eye-catching debut while proving their difference from the Warrior Football teams.

Compiled by Kusuma Kothamasu, **SPORTS EDITOR**, article by Seungwoo Lee, **STAFF WRITER**, graphics by Audrey Liang, and graphics courtesy of Shutterstock

## Flag Football

Flag football is a variant of American football. Similar to football, the goal is to gain points through touchdowns and safeties. But the difference is what makes flag football more unique of a sport. No contact is allowed and a smaller field is used. A normal football field is 100 yards, while a flag football field is 70 yards. As suggested by the name, flag football is played with flag belts. The defense tries to pull out the flags from the offense’s belts to end their game play. This accounts for the lack of no tackling in the sport, whereas in football, it is a crucial factor of playing the sport. Another factor generated from this rule is the need for more agility to score.

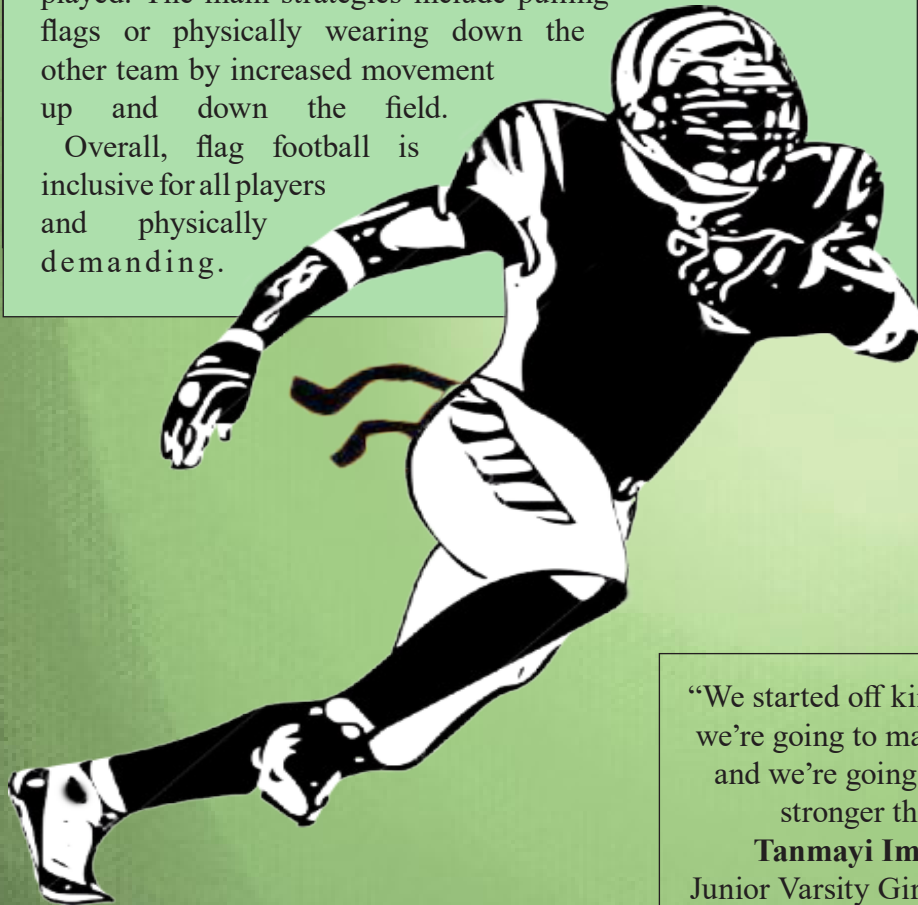
Coach Dave Shiota, the Warrior Girls Flag Football coach, explains some of the differences between football and flag football.

“Everybody can catch the ball where as in regular football only certain people can catch the ball and run the ball.” Shiota said.

The inclusiveness of flag football and the easygoing practices makes the sport a separate variant from football. The lack of contact does not mean that it is not physical. Rather, it is an extremely physical sport.

Flag football is recreational, considering how the game is played. The main strategies include pulling flags or physically wearing down the other team by increased movement up and down the field.

Overall, flag football is inclusive for all players and physically demanding.



## Football

American Football is a team sport known for its competitive nature and physical roughness in its gameplay. The goal of the sport is to score points by advancing the ball into the opposing team’s end zone, by kicking a field goal or scoring a safety by tackling an opposing team’s ball-carrier in their own end zone — the scoring area of the field.

The popular offensive strategy used by football players is “spread offense”, which spreads the offensive players across the field to make it harder for defenders to cover all of them. This procedure creates more opportunities for passes and runs.

Practices are intense, including scrimmages at least once a week.

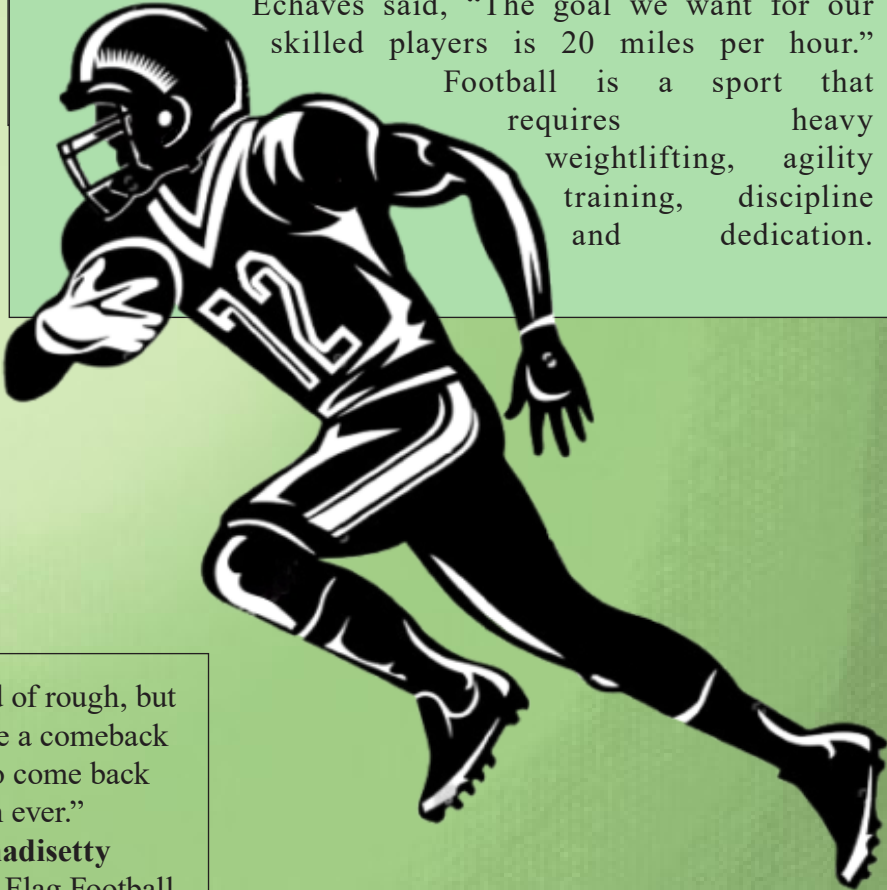
While moving heavy weights is necessary for the football players’ strength building, agility and speed is crucial for a player to succeed. In practices, coaches make sure to track the miles per hour of each player on the field.

Coach Michael Echaves, the football head coach for the Warriors, elaborates how the 20 miles per hour club works.

“Clock the guys for a ten yard fly, so they get a 30 yard buildup and they run as fast as they can for ten yards, and we capture their miles per hour,”

Echaves said, “The goal we want for our skilled players is 20 miles per hour.”

Football is a sport that requires heavy weightlifting, agility training, discipline and dedication.



“We started off kind of rough, but we’re going to make a comeback and we’re going to come back stronger than ever.”

**Tanmayi Immadisetty**  
Junior Varsity Girls Flag Football

“We definitely have gotten more confident with all this training which was really exciting to see. We definitely have advantages with height and speed on our team compared to other schools.”

**Samantha Neill**  
Varsity Girls Flag Football

“Every one of those girls from the freshman to the seniors can always say they were part of the first flag football team ever in the history of the school.”

**Dave Shiota**  
World History / Government & Economy  
Teacher, Girls Flag Football Coach

“I feel both confident and nervous for this upcoming season. Nerves are inevitable, especially since we are playing so many new teams in our league. However, I am confident in our abilities as athletes and as a team.”

**Steven Logwood**  
Varsity Football

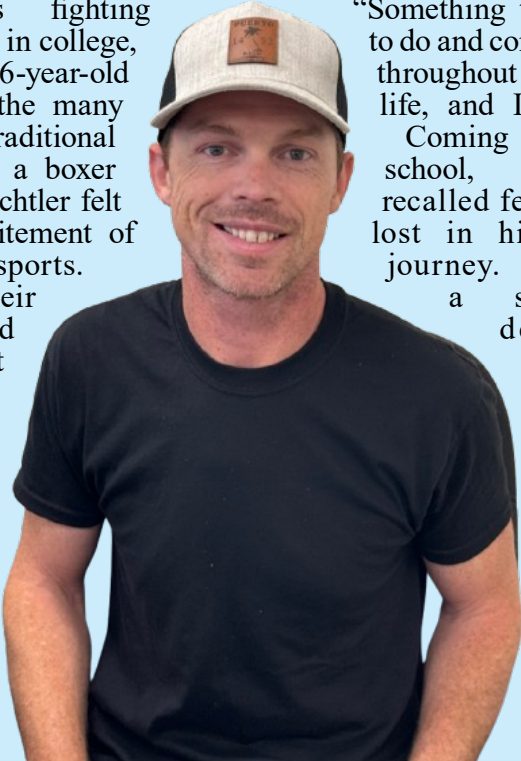


# Jiu-Jitsu Warrior

Teachers have hidden talents, too. Whether that be in arts and crafts or martial arts, the teachers that master a sport are warriors, like Mr. Dachtler, who competes in Brazilian Jiu-jitsu.

Compiled by Kusuma Kothamasu, **SPORTS EDITOR**, article by Emma Gong, photo by Kusuma Kothamasu, **SPORTS EDITOR**

The chatter of competitors fills the bustling dojo with a lively atmosphere, buzzing excitedly as a familiar face appears. Both a Biology and AP Environmental Science teacher for the Warriors, Sean Dachtler bravely navigates the world of Brazilian Jiu-jitsu with his enduring belief in lasting physical activity. Mr. Dachtler’s fighting journey first began in college, when the curious 26-year-old student explored the many forms of non-traditional sports. Previously a boxer in high school, Dachtler felt drawn to the excitement of non-traditional sports. He appreciated their durability and encouragement of lifetime physical activity. Following his foster brother’s world championship in kickboxing, Dachtler was inspired to begin his study in Brazilian Jiu-



jitsu at an academy in Santa Ana. Soon after, he transferred to a local club at Cal State Fullerton. Pairing his newfound interests with his love for athletics, Dachtler firmly believes in the idea of having fun and finding passions through continued physical exercise. “Jiu-jitsu is something that I do as a hobby,” Dachtler said. “Something that I want to do and continue to do throughout my whole life, and I enjoy it.” Coming out of school, Dachtler recalled feeling very lost in his athletic journey. He felt a sense of depression from leaving his old sports behind; going from a life as a scouted baseball player to falling

behind, sustaining injuries, and feeling as though he lacked in the sports he used to know and love. However, as a firm supporter of lifetime activity, he endeavored to stay physically active through the use of non-traditional sports groups, and is now an expert with experience in various sports like rock climbing, disc golf and paddle boarding. He also struggled with having to leave his old team and missing the bonds and camaraderie of his old teammates. Despite the struggle, by joining various Jiu-jitsu communities, Dachtler soon found friendly learning circles that welcomed him warmly into the sport. He found a new sense of courage and humility by endeavoring to explore and go to new events and gyms. Dachtler encourages many of his current students to do the same: to take that risk, to explore further

beyond their past experiences and seek out opportunities that fuel their passions. “Be courageous,” Dachtler said. “Go to that event, show up to that gym, whatever sport it is, because people will be inviting [towards] you.” Dachtler also hopes to inspire his daughter to explore Jiu-jitsu, believing in its strong empowering nature, and encouraging people to be courageous and protect themselves. Although Dachtler has recently been competing in fewer competitions, he still aims to continue pushing himself as he strives to continue pursuing the things he loves while staying physically healthy. “Jiu-jitsu is a hobby. It is something that I’m never going to be the best at, and that’s okay, but I enjoy being [the] best version of myself at it every time.”

“Everyday you do it, you are going to be humbled. And it’s one of the few sports where you realize how much you don’t know.”  
**Sean Dachtler**  
**Biology / AP Environmental Science Teacher, Brazilian Jiu-jitsu Competitor**

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## TROY HIGH SCHOOL



# HIGH SCHOOL SURVIVAL GUIDE

Especially during the first years of high school, it can be a challenge to navigate through the many demands of academics, sports, clubs and extracurriculars. Read more about the advice of Troy’s upperclassmen, who have managed to find a balance while making the most of their resources.

Compiled by Zoey Bahng, LIFESTYLE EDITOR, article by Bianca Naranjo and Kailey Reichman, STAFF WRITERS, cartoons by Hanh Dinh, CARTOONIST

## #1. Find balance and support

Starting off with the elephant in the room, grades are a high priority for most students. Because of this huge importance, it can be useful to gather resources, opinions and advice from upperclassmen who have successfully made their way through Troy’s academic rigor. It is important to try your best to succeed in your classes, but this does not mean that grades should take over your life. Senior Jay Ananth has found peace with an intentionally calming mindset. “I checked Aeries so much less my senior year than I did my freshman year, and I’m so happy about it,” Ananth said. Living from a perspective of acceptance, rather than anxiety, allows students to reap the benefits of both ambition and optimism. Ananth credits part of his success to an underappreciated resource at Troy: counselors. Many students do not realize just how great of a support system their counselors can be: “I did not think the counselor was anything more than dropping classes, but [my counselor] helped me navigate through what I am doing and my projects,” Ananth said. Whether it be class concerns or curiosities about colleges, it is a great idea to simply go talk to your counselor and build a relationship with them. When students complement academic ambition with a healthy mindset and an openness to advice, it becomes a completely realistic goal to ace both your classes and your mindset.



## #2. Try joining team sports



Balancing sports and academics can be difficult to learn, especially for new Troy students who are still unfamiliar with the demands of being a Warrior. Luckily, Troy’s well-rounded seniors are here to help. Senior Azul Galarza recommends joining a sport that pushes you to improve not only athletically, but interpersonally and socially as well; for Galarza, this sport was cross-country. Not only did she grow as an athlete, but also as a person as she became part of a tight-knit team and “[gained] experience in leadership [and] teamwork.” Senior Jalen Williams has grown in similar ways thanks to his experience on Troy’s volleyball team. “It is such a faster way to meet friends and develop connections,” Williams said. On top of building team relationships, being a student-athlete also requires students to build strong foundations of time management. Both Galarza and Williams recommend developing a routine to figure out “when to prioritize [yourself] and other things,” Galarza said. When there is a full agenda of school homework and sports training to complete, it is crucial to establish a clear order of importance. With a combination of passion and strategy, underclassmen can master the balance of commitments to school and sports, just like these seniors have learned to do.

## #3. Participate in clubs

From cultural representation to community service at the beach, if you can think of it, Troy has a club for it. Joining Troy’s clubs can be an amazing way for students to branch out and try new things—especially during the first two years of high school. One Troy student who embraces the club lifestyle is senior Steven Logwood. From the organizational skills of choreographing performances for the Pilipinos Sharing Smiles Together club, to the leadership skills of heading the Black Student Union club, Logwood reflects on how “being part of these clubs has given [him] many skills for success.” While expanding their breadths of experience, students often find a great support system within their clubs’ like minded communities. “My favorite part about being in a club is the bond that comes with it. I have made some of my best friends from being a part of clubs,” Logwood said. As a part of the National Honors Society and ASB, Katrina Moncada finds balance through a tried-and-true time management strategy: using a planner. Planners are a great tool to keep track of responsibilities, especially if you have a complex variety of assignments across clubs and academics. “I’m a big calendar person, I have my whole life there,” Moncada said. Joining clubs that you are genuinely interested in is an amazing way to explore new interests while deepening your connection to the Warrior community.



## #4. Explore your passions



Even whilst tackling academics, athletics and the various programs that Troy offers, many students go the extra mile to pursue extracurriculars outside of school. A stellar example of one of these students is senior Cloris Shi, who ambitiously involves herself in organizations of both sciences and humanities. Shi volunteers for STEAM for All, aiming to establish an inspiring STEM environment that integrates arts and crafts. “I wanted to give kids that opportunity because that was what got me into being interested in biology,” Shi said. Shi furthers her extracurricular commitments by involving herself in Polyphony Lit, a literary magazine for young writers, and taking a hands-on approach to her musical talent through piano; “It’s something that I’m really lucky to be able to still do as a form of relieving my stress and just like playing around,” Shi said. Shi uses her extracurricular activities as not only a medium of personal growth, but also an outlet for self-expression. Like Shi, if underclassmen find their passions and ambitiously pursue them, they can make a positive impact on their communities too.



# Short n Sweet

Come check out Sabrina Carpenter’s latest album, “Short ‘n Sweet,” for a delightful mix of catchy tunes and fun lyrics!

Compiled by Kate Berger, ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR, article by Riddhi Arora, STAFF WRITER, graphics courtesy of the *Rolling Stone*

“Please Please Please” come get a “Taste” of Sabrina Carpenter’s new album, “Short n’ Sweet!” The rising popularity of refreshing, summer-time hits “Espresso” and “Please Please Please” left fans in anticipation for Carpenter’s sixth studio album: “Short n’ Sweet.” Released Aug. 23, the album has made a lasting impact on the music industry and challenged the definition of teen pop. Though the album has its flaws, “Short n’ Sweet” is nothing short of sweet, sweet tunes.

While “Short n’ Sweet” contains a few standouts, the overall album lacks musical creativity. The constant strumming of similar chords and incorporation of soft vocals overlapping the instruments is not unique when compared to Carpenter’s previous hits, as they all consist of the same generic pop sound. “Lie to Girls” and “Sharpest Tool” are perfect examples of the album’s repetitiveness. In both of these songs, Carpenter begins almost identically by leading into the story with a witty or deep statement, followed by the subtle ramping up of the background

music. Although constant repetition in music is the easier route to go when attempting to make a hit song, a unique rhythm can make a song even more memorable. By incorporating generic ideas into “Short ‘n Sweet,” Carpenter limits her potential as a singer-songwriter.

While the majority of her album lacks musical creativity, the songs “Bed Chem” and “Slim Pickins” bring along a fresh and refreshing feel. The first few seconds of “Bed Chem” instantly puts the listener in an imaginary 80’s disco feel, taking advantage of an overlaid twinkle sound effect. On the contrary, the song “Slim Pickins” exhibits a soft country aesthetic, making use of an acoustic guitar throughout the entire song. Being uniquely different from the rest, these two songs demonstrate Carpenter’s effort to dive into new genres.

Carpenter proves to be the “Sharpest Tool” in the shed when it comes to lyricism. Throughout the album, Carpenter explores various relationship dynamics such as toxicity, mutual interest and one-sidedness, along with numerous others. Her diverse range of relationship dynamics

and witty lyrics allow her to create music for anyone in any situation, further proving her intelligence in lyricism. An example of a playful lyric is “We love to mistake butterflies for cardiac arrest,” from “Lie to Girls,” implying how easy it is to make minor feelings feel like major, more serious ones. Her witty remarks add to the charm of her album by giving it a fun yet analytical feel. Such playful lyrics force the listener to decipher Carpenter’s intent and true meaning with each line, therefore demonstrating Carpenter’s sharp songwriting skills.

“Short ‘n Sweet” is an exceptional listen, including an abundant amount of lyrical originality and effort from her as well as her production team. The music she releases perfectly captures her humorous and playful essence, flawlessly telling her stories about past relationships. “Short n’ Sweet” hits all the right notes, making you want to hit play over and over again!

## Get a “Taste”

Sabrina Carpenter’s new music video for her song “Taste” from the album “Short n’ Sweet” stands out in the midst of an unoriginal and generic music video epidemic. Co-starring twenty one year old actress Jenna Ortega, the music video rapidly gained popularity throughout social media, mainly due to a kiss both Carpenter and Ortega share. Inspired by the 1992 comedy, “Death Becomes Her,” Carpenter exemplifies the more gory side of her lyrics, playing as a character constantly trying to execute her partner’s mistress. Unique special effects and top-tier acting skills unite to create an original experience. The over-the-top exaggerations throughout the video and the soft warmth in Carpenter’s voice directly contrast one another, creating a distinctive music video like no other. Carpenter’s iconic recreation of the beloved comedy demonstrates her one-of-a-kind imagination, and the fans are loving every second!





# brat summer

Come take a deep dive into the true meaning of “BRAT summer” and learn more about Charli XCX’s revolutionary album!

Compiled by Kate Berger, ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR, article by Celeste Hollingsworth, STAFF WRITER, graphics courtesy of The Cut and Spotify

The “It Girl” of 2010s pop has come to reclaim her throne a decade later with her hit album “BRAT.” Charli XCX (Charlotte Aitchinson) released this spunky album on June 7, 2024, serving as a perfect send-off to a summer free of worries. Her sixth studio album not only became the soundtrack of the summer, but set forth a cultural phenomenon that took over social media, turning her songs from simple tunes into a mindset. “Brat summer” is a term created on social media to personify the summer of 2024 as effortlessly lively, just like the album. While

many artists try to hit it big by self-identifying their songs as “the song of the summer,” never before has an album truly defined a summer like “BRAT.”

Just as the traffic light turns lime green, Charli revs her engine and speeds up into this new era of her career, altering the course of lifestyle trends along the way. Originally discovered on MySpace, Charli XCX began performing raves at the young age of 14. Along with being a well-respected singer-songwriter, she is also a longtime DJ whose extensive knowledge of music production is how this album is crafted to electropop perfection. After her feature in the global hit “I Love It,” Charli’s original albums never got quite as much public attention. Regardless of this, she stayed unequivocally faithful to her unique pop style, leading her to create one of her most vivid and well-known albums to date. In “BRAT,” Charli replicates the sounds and details of her previous works while still creating a new character entirely. “BRAT” may resemble her past music, but Charli’s distinctive soft pitch and powerful tone cannot be found anywhere else in the music industry. Despite Charli’s popularity in the 2010s, no one quite expected this dramatic of a comeback for Charli, let alone one that would give electropop a seat at the

table of trending genres. While the plain arial font of the album cover alludes to simplicity, “BRAT” is the complete opposite. Charli fully embraces her genre by experimenting with vocal effects that integrate her voice into the electronic background, creating a futuristic and intense auditory experience. By letting the instrumentals and vocals become one entity, Charli distinguishes her music from other pop songs, showcasing the extent of her originality. Even more than just the vocal production, she uses special effects like glitches, a loud bass, and an overall energetic and gritty sound that transports listeners to a hype atmosphere. Charli has devoted herself to her music by unapologetically committing to the electropop genre. She has not changed her music taste to conform to current trends, and now listeners can appreciate her impressive discography.

Charli sings about the “Club Classics,” but “BRAT” has become the most renowned club classic of them all. Through the chaotic, carefree energy associated with parties, the message is to prioritize fun in any way you can, especially during the summertime. Despite that, this album is more than simply fun times, as Charli’s vulnerable storytelling showcases the realness of her struggles with imposter syndrome and the idea of motherhood. This range of themes brings forth a diverse album, proving that music is more than just the melody and the beat, but about creative lyricism. Not only can Charli pump up a crowd as a DJ, but “BRAT” allows her to invigorate listeners no matter where they are.

“BRAT” stands out among current hits by capturing the essence of a colorful and memorable summer. The impact of this album will last more than just “365” days, as we all will eventually look back with fondness on the individuality we had no idea a summer could hold.

