





# Longfellow Middle School moves due to dry rot caused damage

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on short notice. The district was able to secure a new location at the Berkeley Adult School (BAS) in the time between finding the hazard and sending the email. This new location is almost two miles away from the Longfellow campus.

Many Longfellow teachers had left everything in their classrooms. According to Mary Patterson, a history and Two-Way Immersion program teacher at Longfellow, after the discovery, nobody was allowed back on campus, and everything had to be removed by specialists.

“I had 21 years’ worth of stuff in my classroom,” Patterson said.

After a busy summer, Longfellow has been operating at the Berkeley Adult School (BAS) for about four weeks now. Patterson said that the start of school had gone

smoothly despite the move.

However, athletics and after-school programs could face issues, as BAS has no grass and lacks space for some of the former Longfellow programs. “People are having a really good attitude about it, (but) it’s very hard for Physical Education and the athletic programs,” Patterson said.

BUSD Athletic Director Denise Dotson expressed how a lot had to be put on hold in order to deal with the situation. Many teachers had to undertake a bigger summer workload than expected, and Dotson was left wishing that the district had handled it a bit differently and “with more care.”

Plans moving forward regarding athletics and certain lackings in facilities at BAS are unclear as of now. Dotson and many others are working hard to find solutions and make

these transitions as seamless as possible.

“These fields and gyms are already pre-assigned, so you’re coming in, and if you come in in the summertime, you’re pretty much not going to get anything,” Dotson said. Local gym and field usage gets

to BAS has had upsides for some students, Safi Zedan, an eighth grader at Longfellow, explained that the new Physical Education arrangements are easy; they are less work for him and more fun.

However, the lack of a proper yard doesn’t just affect PE, “We’re basically playing at lunch in a parking lot,” Zedan said. According to Zedan, many students have taken to just eating inside because of this.

The relocation to the Berkeley Adult School has also increased commute times for some families. Zedan is one of these students. “I live pretty far away from the school, so it’s kind of hard for me to get there every day in the morning, but they do this shuttle,” Zedan said. A bus was set up to go from Longfellow to BAS to transport students who might have struggled with making

the extra distance required to get to the new location.

While wishes for more support were expressed, with Dotson saying, “There’s a lot of gyms in the area that I feel can be more supportive and open up service to kids,” there has also been a recurring impression of hope from almost everyone in the community.

“After the shock, what really hit me is, like, it’s going

to be the same teachers and the same kids, and that’s what makes Longfellow beautiful. It’s the people,” Patterson said. Despite the sudden changes, many are optimistic about the situation, having faith in Longfellow’s ability to bounce back from this all.

“People really rallied, and it makes us feel really loved,” said Patterson. “You know, I feel really appreciative.”

*“We’re basically playing at lunch in a parking lot.”*

**Safi Zedan**  
*Longfellow Student*

divided up long before the school year starts. Without anticipating the need to use certain facilities, it can get hard to find availability on short notice.

As there isn’t a gym or grass at BAS, the Physical Education program has been granted permission to walk over to James Kenney Park a few times a week. The relocation



Longfellow’s campus is likely to be closed until 2026 **ZOE KOHLMAYER**

# Berkeley Unified Reparations Task Force releases final report

**BY AUBREY CASPER**  
*staff writer*

On Thursday, June 6, 2024 the Berkeley Unified School District Reparations Task Force published a final report detailing how they recommend the district implement reparations for students descended from enslaved persons. The Task Force was created last year by BUSD Superintendent Enikia Ford Morthel after about a hundred Berkeley residents sent a letter to the school board urging

the district to implement reparations. They cited the significant gap between the test scores of African American and White students in Berkeley public schools, arguing that the achievement gap can only be solved by addressing its root cause of systemic racism.

“Berkeley is considered one of the most progressive cities in America yet our schools continue to see racial disparities in academic achievement,” Dawn Williams, an African American Studies Department leader, said. “Reparations should be explored as a solu-

tion to the problem of inequity in education.”

The Task Force is composed of 15 volunteers, including school board members, staff, teachers, parents, and a Berkeley High School senior, who met monthly for a year to assess how the district should implement reparations, both monetary and non-monetary, for students that are Descendants of enslaved people.

“(Reparations) would be putting resources towards communities that have been harmed in the past and continue to be harmed to this day,” Jennifer Shanoski, a school board member, said.

In the end, the Task Force pinned down three categories of reparations that they thought would be beneficial to BUSD families, including financial payments to BUSD Descendant students, truth-telling and acknowledgement by BUSD, and changes to BUSD programs.

These final recommendations were for the district to implement additional curriculum on the history and enduring effects of slavery, create a “harm report,” and make monetary payments to

the families of Descendant Students for educational purposes. A survey conducted by the task force in December of 2023 concluded that there was very strong community support for these types of reparations. Monetary compensation for educational purposes was the type of reparation with the most support, with 85 percent of all respondents — but only 77 percent of Descendant respondents — agreeing that they should be implemented.

The additional curriculum, the report said, should include information about the enduring effects of slavery in California and Berkeley and discuss the harm BUSD has brought upon Descendant community members. The harm report would record the harm BUSD has allegedly inflicted, collect historical data on student outcomes, and include interviews with former and present BUSD community members.

The monetary compensation, which garnered the most support from the community survey of the reparation options, would be a way to attempt to repair the harm that BUSD has caused to Descendant students. Originally,

the Task Force had considered “unrestricted cash payments” to Descendant students but the task force eventually decided to restrict them for educational purposes, since it decided that the harm BUSD has caused, being a school district, is educational.

The task force explored many potential sources that these financial reparations could come from. It ruled out taking money from the BUSD general fund, for the reason that redirecting existing money into reparations payments may take money out of existing programs that are helping Descendant students.

Ultimately, the task force landed on three potential sources of funding: soliciting donations from philanthropic foundations and corporations, launching a lawsuit against corporations whose actions have arguably furthered the legacy of slavery and led to lower funding for BUSD, and proposing a new tax in Berkeley. The report acknowledges that a new tax could potentially cost Descendant families money as well, but asserts that it would be helpful overall.

“I hope that the board will

consider the lawsuit,” Williams said, adding that banks might be a target “Banks have largely escaped accountability in the tremendous role they played in creating segregated housing and schools in Berkeley.”

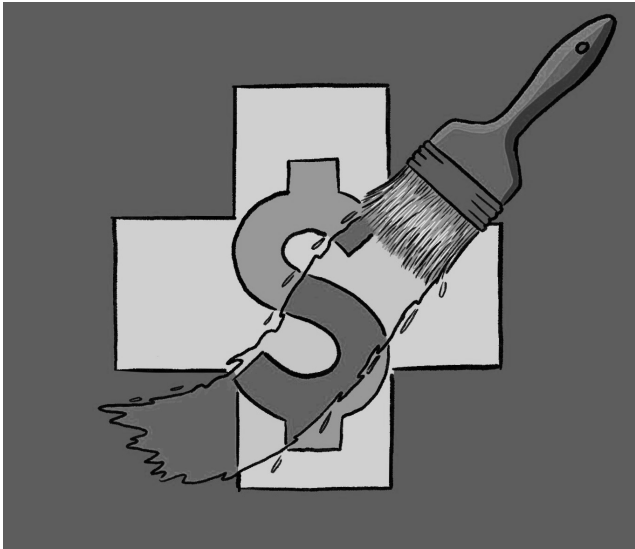
All of these potential sources would require District time and money to implement, but the money would be recovered if the methods are successful.

According to Shanoski, implementing the recommendations would require district support.

“I certainly hope that we do implement the recommendations, but it would need to be agendized by the board president and superintendent,” said Shanoski. “Then, we would need to find and assess the report and determine what to implement, and then how to implement it.”

It is unclear whether the recommendations by the BUSD Reparations Task Force will be implemented, or when, but many community members are eagerly waiting on the next steps.

“We were meant to make a difference and that difference will happen,” said Dr. Monique Allen, a task force member.



**OREN STILES**

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# School board discusses budget and buses



BUSD School Board meeting was held at 1231 Addison St. SUNNY BEVIS-LIPTON

BY YOSHI ROHN  
staff writer

On Thursday Sept. 4, 2024 the Berkeley Unified School District School Board approved the passing of a change to the budget plans and heard public comments about concerns about Longfellow Middle School's sudden campus move and public transportation issues. Superintendent Enikia Ford Morthel took the time to acknowledge the shooting earlier that day at a high school in Winder, Georgia, where four people were killed. "We send them our love and our healing support. Every student, every staff member, and all families who enter schools are precious," Morthel said.

The meeting kicked off with one parent by the name of Nurmala, who only shared her first name, sharing concerns about the lack

of buses to transport students from their schools to after-school programs. "We weren't told until 20 hours before school started, and it was virtually impossible to organize carpools and other means of transport to get our kids to these programs," the parent said. Nurmala explained that she heard that some students got a spot on the bus after their parents lobbied the transportation office, while others were selected by their last names in alphabetical order. "We believe an equitable process should be employed and made transparent to all families," she said.

After this, another parent, Shannon Burman, also voiced similar concerns and thoughts on how to proceed with this issue. She said her kid was also not able to take the bus and she was forced to carpool and had a meeting with other parents about hiring a permanent driver.

The next person to give a public comment was Elizabeth Becker, a mother of two kids, one at Longfellow Middle School and one at John Muir Elementary. Her statement addressed the problems with the current Longfellow dry rot situation. After it was discovered in Longfellow, making it an unsafe, the entire student body was moved to be taught at the Berkeley Adult School (BAS). In early 2021, BUSD announced it was planning on constructing an apartment building on the BAS campus that would be able to fit up to 110 living spaces for BUSD teachers and staff. The project will continue in 2025 despite Longfellow's relocation there.

"What I don't understand is why the district hasn't made a good-faith attempt to address the impact on these vulnerable students. The BAS facility is run down. It's scheduled for

updates, including fire life safety, mechanical air ventilation, and old windows. I want to know how the teachers and the children are supposed to function with major construction less than 75 feet away," Becker said. "I'd love you guys to put politics and ego aside and just think of the students first."

The school board also discussed critical issues regarding the budget, including a seven million dollar reduction and anticipated two million dollars of cuts. Pauline Follansbee, the Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, showed her presentation on the BUSDs 2023-24 Unaudited Actuals. The district met the three percent state-required reserve, but the Undesignated Ending Fund Balance of \$1.7 million exceeds projections by three hundred thousand dollars. There were numerous unspent balances across programs, but these were all offset by the overspending in certified salaries and contributions to the Special Education Program. Executive Director of Special Education Shawn Mansager also attributed the overspending to aids and other resources being hired.

Superintendent Morthel concurred, saying BUSD had to reduce its budget in the last year, with more cuts planned. "We had to make some really hard decisions last year, and there are more ahead," Morthel said.

## THE WONDERS OF SHARKS

ALEX SOKULSKY



Sharks are evil, mean, cold-blooded killers who search far and wide for humans to eat. Right? Really, the only part of that containing some truth is that they are cold-blooded. Since the beginning of time, there have been stories and myths about sharks: they are all the same, they have to keep swimming otherwise they'll die, they all have giant teeth and giant mouths, and so on.

In reality, sharks don't care about us humans any more than we care about plants. Occasionally we might mistake one kind of plant for another and take a nibble. As soon as we realize that it's not what we thought it was we spit it out and move on with our lives. Sharks are no different. Let's talk about some of the myths around sharks and what those myths mean in the real world.

**Do they have to keep moving otherwise they die?** Some sharks do have to be swimming continuously in order to live. This is called ram ventilation, and seems like a bit of an evolutionary mishap if you ask me. Pretty much, they have to have water running over their gills at all times so they can collect oxygen from it. However, they can still "sleep" by shutting down parts of their systems at a time. Either way, it seems pretty tiring to me. Other sharks can hang out on the bottom and breath completely fine. This is called buccal pumping. These sharks have a little hole above their eye called a spiracle, and by continuously opening and closing their mouths they can suck water in, over their lungs, and then out through the spiracle.

**Can they really smell blood from miles away?** Sharks have senses called ampullae of Lorenzini, which allows them to feel motion in the water even if the thing moving isn't super close, but really for most species of shark they can't actually smell very well. They also really can't see with very much detail. Some sharks don't have eyes at all if they are living at depths that don't have light. Most of the sharks we think of though have eyes on either side of their heads. This is good in some ways and really bad in others. They can see all around the sides of their bodies, but they can't see directly in front of them, or behind them, so they rely a lot on their ampullae of Lorenzini.

**Do sharks have huge mouths?** Most shark mouths are actually pretty small, but they might look big when they are eating. That's because all of them have protrusible jaws. This means that they have a ligament connecting their skulls to their jaw that makes it so they can push out the bottom of their jaw and snatch prey better. A protrusible jaw helps them to catch bigger prey, and lets them reach for it quicker. Some sharks don't even move to catch fish, like the nurse shark. They can just be sitting on the bottom and when a fish swims by it sucks it in with a bunch of water.

When someone mentions a shark you might think of a huge shark, like a great white, with a giant gaping mouth, coming straight at you. But really there are more than 500 species of sharks in the world and they range from smaller than your hand, like the dwarf lantern shark, to up to 40 feet long, like the whale shark.

There are many opinions and judgements about sharks, but really, they're pretty cool. They're like dinosaurs, but still alive!

# NEWS BRIEF:

## UC PRESIDENT CALLS FOR ENCAMPMENT BANS

BY LUCY HOHN  
staff writer

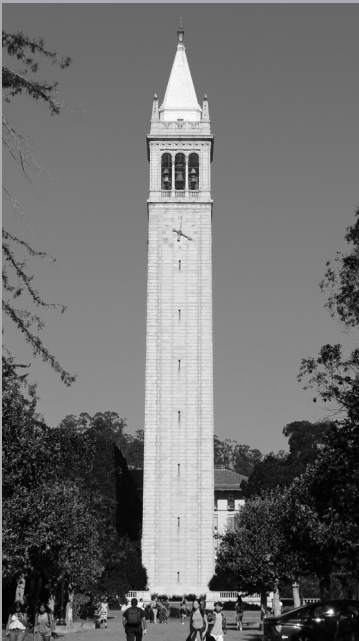
Last spring, in a movement partaken by college campuses across the country and globe, University of California Berkeley students and staff held a pro-Palestinian encampment protest calling for a ceasefire in Gaza and financial divestment from Israel, among other demands. However, protests of this nature could be restricted after UC President Michael V. Drake released a letter on Monday, Aug. 19, 2024 regarding UC policy on encampments and protesting.

In the letter, Drake instructed UC campuses to enact specific policies such as restricting protests that block pathways and the use of masks to shield identities. More specifically, overnight demonstrations such as encampments, overnight loitering, and setting up a tent without approval would be prohibited. Barricades, structures, and other unauthorized buildings would

be banned from UC campuses. Drake wrote that masking would not be permitted "... with the intent of intimidating and harassing any person or group, or for the purpose of evading or escaping discovery, recognition, or identification ...". The letter also called for restrictions on actions like blocking doors and walkways.

Drake said there had been instances of violent protests, although most were non-violent. "Some of the activities we saw over the past year were not (non-violent)," Drake said in his letter outlining the ban for the new school year. According to Harvard's Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation, only a couple dozen out of the thousands of pro-Palestine college protests resulted in property damage or harm to an officer or counter-protester.

According to the LA Times, one member of UC Irvine Divest named Nailah stated, "(The ban is) a clear violation of human rights and abilities to speak up on campus." Additionally, Sarah



Bacon, a UC Santa Barbara encampment member, asked, "If this was a different cause, would the reaction still be the same?"

Berkeleyside says that the plans are due by Tuesday, Oct. 1, 2024, and until then, the state will be saving \$25 million from the UC fund.



# BIHS letter of recommendation process offers support, structure

BY EVA KATZ  
staff writer

“As teachers, we love our seniors, we want to write them letters, and we want to help them on their path to college,” said Melissa Jimenez, a Berkeley International High School (BIHS) English teacher and BIHS co-leader alongside Rebecca Villagran. “We also really care

that all of our students are able to be supported on that process, ... (so) we need to teach kids how to apply for letters of rec,” Jimenez said.

Rec Week is a week where BIHS seniors are given the opportunity to ask their teachers for letters of recommendation for their college applications. BIHS started implementing the process of Rec Week, in the 2023-24 school year. There hasn’t been any negative feedback so far, according to Jimenez. Rec Week aims to organize the college application process, and make it smoother for BIHS seniors.

“Some kids know how (to apply for letters of rec) or they may have access to private college counselors who

are helping them with that process, (but) what about everyone else?” Jimenez said, “We have our amazing counselors here at Berkeley High (School) who do a great job with (helping), but we just wanted to coordinate,

“As teachers, we love our seniors ... and we want to help them on their path to college,”

Melissa Jimenez  
BIHS English Teacher

get everybody on the same page, to help support kids and make sure that it’s a fair and easily accessible process for everyone.”

At the end of the school year in 2024, the BIHS staff leadership team sent an email to all BIHS students asking them to wait until the designated week to begin asking teachers for letters of recommendation. Students in other small schools like Academic Choice were able to ask for their letters of recommendation at the end of junior year.

At the beginning of September, counselors came into BIHS classrooms and explained in more depth what letters of recommendation are and the etiquette

around asking for them. “I have not only noticed students being more proactive and timely with their letter of rec requesting, but more confident, knowledgeable, respectful, and grateful,” Addison Fonseca, a BIHS counselor, said.

BIHS students are given a Google document with a step-by-step process on how to apply for letters of recommendation. The doc details when

Rec Week is, how to set up a meeting to ask teachers in person, as well as a reminder to thank the recommenders and share plans for after high school after receiving college decisions.

Prior to Rec Week, students fill out a Google form stating whether or not they will need a letter. The form asks for the teachers students want to write their letters as well as their application deadlines and whether or not they will need a letter from their counselor.

“I have not only noticed students being more proactive and timely with their letter of rec requesting, but more confident, knowledgeable, (and) respectful ...”

Addison Fonseca  
BIHS Counselor

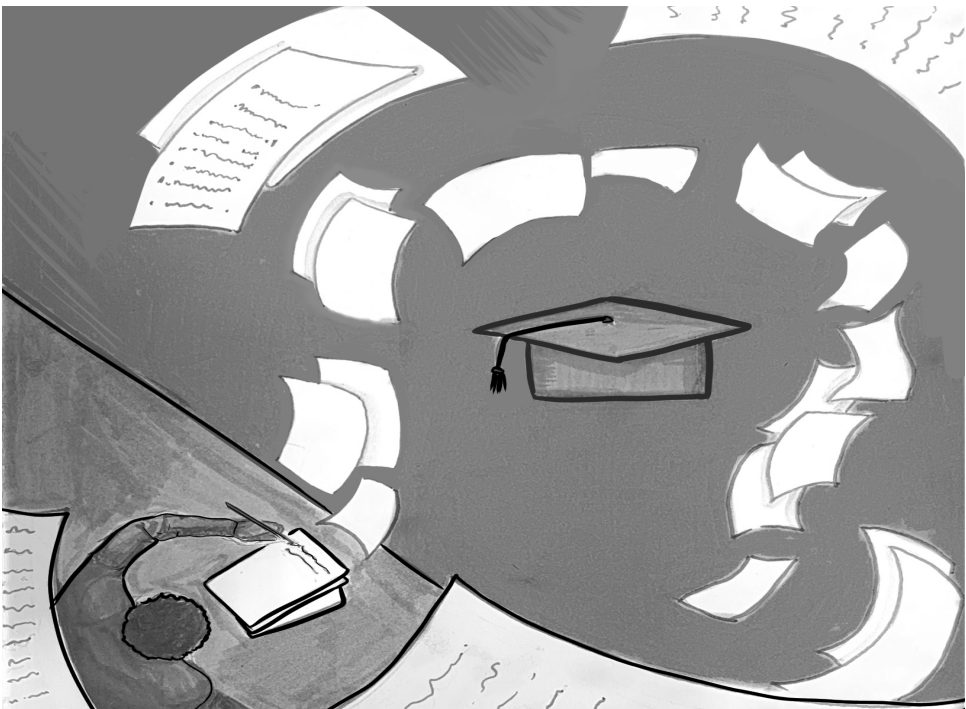
we’ve had in the past is students just assuming that their counselors are going to write them a letter, but

the counselors don’t actually know that (they) need a letter until (students) add them on the Common App.

We had so many students that were doing this the night before the application (was due), the counselors just aren’t able to write that many letters (in such a short time),” Jimenez said.

“My sophomore year, one of my teachers was primarily a senior teacher. She was

so busy all the time with her letters. Last year I was talking to one of my teachers, and he told us that two years ago he wrote 68 letters in one year. (Teachers) definitely talked about how they were having a really hard time getting (letters) done and they weren’t really getting paid for it,” Maya Merhige, a senior in BIHS, said. The first round of Rec Week began on Monday, Sept. 9, 2024. During this week, students were able to ask their teachers and counselors for letters of rec in person. The next round of Rec Week will begin on Tuesday, Oct. 1, 2024.



SABINE SHAFFER

# BHS Welcome Back Assembly highlights on-campus resources

BY TEJAL DOPMAN  
staff writer

On Wednesday, Aug. 27, 2024, Berkeley High School administrators and student leadership hosted the annual Welcome Back Assembly in the Donahue gymnasium. Speakers included Health Center staff, academic counselors, and various student leaders, who were followed by performances from the BHS cheerleaders and the ad-

vanced Afro-Haitian dance class.

According to John Villavicencio, Director of Student Activities, the assembly aimed to bring the community together and introduce students to BHS resources and support systems, which are offered by various programs, student organizations, and campus staff.

Alexis Gonzales, a BHS therapist and clinical supervisor, spoke on services offered at the Health Center.

“(The health center of-

fers) four different types of services, including Grab and Go, reproductive and sexual health services, mental health services, and first aid,” Gonzales said, “All of our services are free and confidential, the only thing that we need consent for is for first aid services.”

The academic counselors also introduced themselves during the assembly.

“Anything you need, we are here to support you, we are here for you academically, socially, and emotionally,”

Ali Ortega-Mendoza, one of the counselors at BHS, said. According to Joanne Dumbrigue, one of the college counselors at BHS, the College and Career Center offers tutoring and study hall with computer and printing access available from 3:30 to 6:00 p.m. on Monday to Thursday for all BHS students.

Jennifer Shanoski, one of the school board directors, spoke about how the school board is a voice for the community, and encourages the students at BHS that are going to be 16 years old by Monday, Nov. 5, 2024, to register to vote so the voice of the students is heard.

After Jennifer Shanoski spoke, the athletic directors Ross Parker and Robin Van Der Vegt urged the BHS community to purchase a \$20 sports pass that will get students unlimited access to home games throughout the entire year. They also recommend that if students are unable to attend games

that they stream the games. “We have a website that you should all burn into your brains, [berkeleyhighathletics.org](http://berkeleyhighathletics.org),” Parker said.

“All of our services are free and confidential,”

Alexis Gonzales  
Health Center Clinical Supervisor  
and Health Center Therapist

“We have a website that you should all burn into your brains, [berkeleyhighathletics.org](http://berkeleyhighathletics.org),”

Ross Parker  
BHS Athletic Director

in women’s floor gymnastics. The teacher of the Afro-Haitian dance classes at BHS, Dawn Williams, spoke about the hard work that the gymnasts underwent.

“We bring up our sisters for working hard and overcoming obstacles to achieve their goals,” Williams said.

For Amaris Sotorosen, a freshman at BHS, the performances were the best part of the assembly and it was exciting to see all the school spirit

Some attendees, however, felt the assembly went on a little too long. “I feel like you could have covered all of that in like, five minutes (instead) of like (over an hour),” freshman Luca

Waugh, said. “A quick little like, copy and paste into documents, or into emails and the bulletin.”

Nalani Rapoza, a BHS freshman, also noted that the freshmen orientation contained the same information as the assembly.

According to Villavicencio, past assemblies primarily contained the voices of BHS staff with few student voices.

“It used to be more adult voices, it’s now about 50 percent (adult voices) 50 percent (student voices), but it used to be like 90 percent, 10 percent,” said Villavicencio.



Students gather in Donahue gym for BHS Welcome Back Assembly. COURTESY OF BUSD COMMUNICATIONS OFFICE



BERKELEY HIGH JACKET

# OPINION

OPINION EDITORS: ADITYA SRIDHARAN & OHAD AVIRAN-FINKELSTEIN

ADITYASRIDHARAN@STUDENTS.BERKELEY.NET

## Research papers: Vital college preparation

BY LUCY GRIFFITH  
staff writer

For many, college is the first time they receive freedom, but that comes with costs. Students must balance their academics without the support they had in their hometown, from school or family. This transition is huge, and regardless of whether a student goes to college or not, everyone must be prepared academically.

The goal of many high school teachers is to help students build study habits, organization skills, and high-quality writing. However, putting all these skills together can be difficult.

According to the Pew Research Center, short analytical essays and journaling are the most common assignments while around 64 percent of teachers assign research papers “less often.”

Students in the International Baccalaureate (IB) program study through a global lens. All Berkeley International High School (BIHS) students going for the IB diploma have to write an Extended Essay (EE). Students can choose a topic ranging from historical events, to pop culture and literature. Regardless of the student's topic, the EE should be 4000 words.

Maya Merhige, a senior in BIHS, chose to write her EE about what role the

US military and government played in drug use by American soldiers during the Vietnam War. “I worked to find something that I actually, genuinely wanted to learn more about,” Merhige explained.

Students should have a chance to dive into a topic of their choice during high school. According to Gerald E. Knesek, a professor at the University of Michigan, many students are fixated on extrinsic motivators such as grades. “What’s apparent in all this focus on grades is that there’s no real emphasis on learning — the true purpose of education,” Knesek explained. This love of learning tends to get lost, especially during the college applications process, but could be brought back by allowing students to dive into topics that genuinely fascinate them.

Amila Morehouse, a BHS senior in Academic Choice (AC), testified to the value of writing lengthy papers. Morehouse recalls writing only one long research paper in her AP Biology class. “I think that it’s really good to practice analyzing information, and the habit of researching. It’s very useful,” Morehouse said, reflecting on her experience. Morehouse hasn’t written long

research papers in any of her English classes. “I don’t wish (we wrote one) but I think it would be helpful. It’s a lot of work but I think it’s beneficial,” she said.

The Pew Research Center interviewed AP and NWA teachers asking about the benefits of writing longer papers. It found that “for formal texts, academia certainly requires a greater level of formality but so does a lot of work in the political, legal, and commercial world.” This highlights how the skills used in writing research papers can manifest in multiple real-world jobs.

Teachers shouldn’t assign the classic “midterm paper” that heavily impacts students’ grade. Instead, they should opt for open-ended assignments that mimic the EE. These assignments would focus on the process behind drafting a thesis and then writing a research paper, allowing students to explore their own unique interests.

All students should have the opportunity to write a research paper in high school. They prepare students for college-level writing, and teach them to approach open-ended prompts, making the academic transition to college the slightest bit easier.



NATALIA KASS

## Graded attendance is unfair to students

BY REECE FONG  
staff writer

Teachers at Berkeley High School often have a form of participation that factors into a student’s grade. However, some BHS teachers consider attendance when grading. As teachers consider adopting this policy, we must evaluate its merits. In California, it is illegal to put attendance into its own grading category. However, there are exceptions. If teachers make attendance part of a participation grade, they are allowed to deduct points. While this system might not impact some, it penalizes students for events outside of their control.

While this policy might serve as a preventative measure to students cutting or skipping class, teachers must account for alternative circumstances. Many students may be late to or absent for reasons out of their control. Circumstances from heavy traffic to a family emergency could get

in the way of a student’s attendance. Neither of these situations warrants a grade drop as they could not be controlled.

Already, if a student is tardy or absent from class, it is their responsibility to make up for the work that they missed. Losing points for attendance on top of having to make up missed work can be overwhelming. “I think (there are) extraneous situations where students can’t control their attendance, and that can lead to stress in that class,” Judah Press, a BHS sophomore, said.

If a student is barely holding onto an A and they miss a day of school, they may end up with a B for points they cannot recuperate. Not only is this unfair, but it creates stress and anxiety. “Sometimes teachers don’t always understand that in life there are circumstances beyond our control,” Press said.

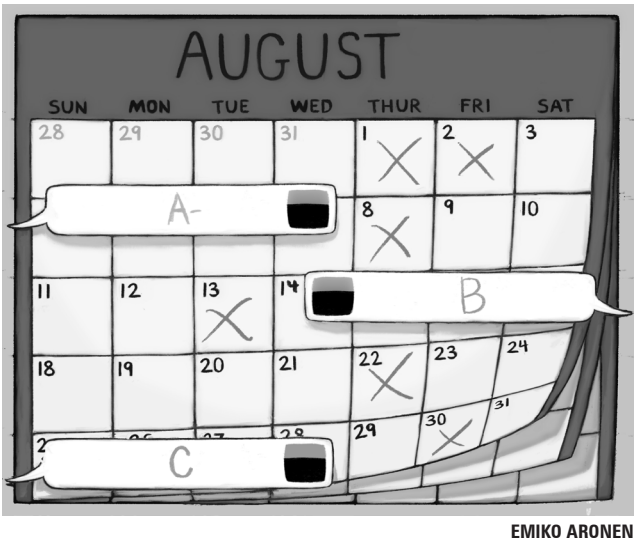
Some argue that this grading policy is the only way to keep students accountable for their atten-

dance. A 2009 National Center for Education Statistics study showed that attendance was shown to affect students’ education for the rest of their lives. High school dropouts in the study were revealed to have a history of school absences. A 2010 meta-analysis by the American Educational Research Association found that weak attendance was correlated with lower high school GPAs.

However, the BHS attendance policy states that there are already measures

in place to improve student attendance. Students who have 30 unexcused period absences or more are not eligible for work permits or prom. These policies are more than enough to incentivize students to remain in class.

In summary, while some argue that graded attendance leads to academic success, this policy causes unwarranted stress on students. There are far too many uncontrollable conditions that affect attendance for this policy to be just.



EMIKO ARONEN

## BOOK TEXTURE: NEAL SHUSTERMAN

SYLVIA BURNS



Neal Shusterman is the author of a host of dystopian series for young adults, including the “Arc of a Scythe” series, the “Unwind” series, and several stand-alones such as “Roxy” and “Dry.” His books explore themes of teenagerhood, life and death, and government and anarchy. His worlds are brutish and filled with a looming sense of existential dread. Part of what defines them is that they are often written in present tense, third person.

Perspective dictates what a storyteller can say. First person is when I go to take my test. Second person is when you go to take your test, and third person is when they go to take their test. Once you know who’s telling the story, you have to know when the story is happening. Is it right now, and it happens in the present? Has it happened in the past? Will it happen in the future? Many books are written in the past tense because stories are usually told after the fact, but present tense is often used to make a reader feel like they’re inside the story.

Third person present tense feels a little like reading the news. In first person present tense, you slip into the mind of the narrator and watch as the plot unfolds. In third person past tense, the audience is distanced from the characters. It takes the reader a step back from the story whereas present tense throws them in.

When combining present tense and third person, the reader has the strange experience of having a picture they aren’t looking at described for them. The reader isn’t sucked into the character’s head, but the present tense lends the writing a bluntness due to the directness of the verbs. The energy of third person present works well with Shusterman’s books because his stories are so down-to-earth. “Unwind” is about a kid, Connor, who goes on the run to avoid being cut up and sold by the government for spare parts. The entire plot is shady and the characters are constantly threatened by the authorities. The bluntness of third person present tense makes Unwind feel less formal and more like a bunch of teenagers living in an airplane graveyard in the middle of the desert. Grimy. Cranky. Bent on making it. In several books, such as “Dry,” Shusterman includes tidbits between chapters — fragments of journal entries, or bits of narration. “Dry” examines a disaster resulting from California’s main water supply being shut off. The narration between chapters looks at the effect of the disaster on innocuous side characters. The third person “snapshots” capture different moments and perspectives while the present tense hits the reader with vivid dread and the illusion of being able to interfere.

Perspective and tense set the guidelines for how you can write your story. They change how you think about the plot and how you make your reader feel. If you write, experiment. Maybe everything falls into place when told in a different way.



EDITORIAL

# Students can make a difference in this election

This November marks a crucial moment in American politics. In the upcoming election, voters have the power to influence policy and legislation affecting a range of critical issues, including abortion access, climate change, healthcare costs, and international conflicts. Through voting, campaigning, and phone banking, every American — regardless of age — has the power to impact the outcome of this election.

Since 1992, California has reliably voted for the Democratic presidential nominee. However, this year’s election will likely be decided by the results from a few swing states; Nevada, Arizona, North Carolina, Georgia, Michigan, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin will be critical in determining the president, according to the New York Times. Even if someone lives in California, far from the swing states, they still have the power to encourage voting and support their

chosen candidate in a swing state.

In the 2020 Presidential Election, more than one in three eligible voters, or 34 percent, did not vote, according to the Pew Research Center. In previous years, voter turnout was even worse: the 2020 Presidential election had the highest voter turnout since 1900. Americans do not vote for a variety of reasons. In 2020, 53 percent of non-voters said they did not vote because they felt voting has little to no impact on their lives, according to NPR. In the 2016 Presidential Election, as many as 15 percent of registered voters didn’t vote because they believed their vote would not make a difference, according to data from the Census Bureau. Phone banking is a great way to let potential voters know their vote matters. Additionally, many Americans face barriers to voting, including voter ID laws and a lack of transportation to polls. To help make voting more accessible, we can advocate for voting rights legislation and help Americans get registered to vote. Why? The collective votes of a community, the campaigning in swing states, and even a handful of votes can decide an election.

In 2016, a single vote decided the Vermont State Senate Democratic primary. In 2018, just 17 votes decided the Democratic primary for Baltimore County Executive. While a single vote is unlikely to decide the outcome of the November election, the collective power of undecided voters and first-time voters may very well be important in deciding our next President.

A simple first step in engaging oneself with the upcoming election could be to ensure family and friends are registered to

vote and have a plan to do so on Tuesday Nov. 5, 2024. Simple actions like calling your aunt or cousin who lives in Pennsylvania or North Carolina and ensuring they know where their nearest polling station is can go a long way.

At turnoutpac.org/postcards, individuals can sign up to get free postcards and a voter list sent in the mail, which can then be used to handwrite letters to potential voters in crucial swing states. The website’s front page also directs to local canvassing events such as door knocking or phone banking.

The outcome of this election decides the path of our American democracy for the next four years. Project 2025, a collection of far right policy proposals designed for a future republican administration including a proposal to withdraw abortion pills from the market and abolish the Department of Education, outline in detail, the threat of a hypothetical Trump presidency. Trump has claimed to know nothing about the proposal. According to CNN, at least 140 people who have worked in Trump’s administration collaborated on Project 2025.

As Kamala Harris said in her Democratic National Convention speech, “In many ways, Donald Trump is an unserious man. But the consequences — but the consequences of putting Donald Trump back in the White House are extremely serious.”

The fundamental rights of countless groups of people will be put at risk by another Trump presidency, and everybody must put in a collective effort to keep us from moving backward. Nobody wants to wake up on Wednesday Nov. 6, 2024 wishing they had done more.

BERKELEY HIGH

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Illustrators

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# Safety or privacy? Weighing the importance of school cameras

BY HAZEL LUTZKER  
staff writer

If privacy is a fundamental right, why are we so quick to surrender it the moment we step onto school grounds? More than 90 percent of public high schools across America have installed monitoring devices along hallways, entrances, school buses, classrooms, and other spaces. Of course, many of these systems are implemented out of a desire for safety, however, they are used without considering the possible negative impacts.

In 2014, Berkeley Unified School District passed a policy on security cameras in Berkeley public schools, stating that cameras are to be placed in areas like hallways and classrooms. It also includes that no cameras are to be placed in private areas, such as bathrooms and locker rooms. The primary purpose of these cameras is to enhance school safety and protect school property from vandalism and theft.

The BUSD policy states that the superintendent shall “provide prior written notice to students and parents/guardians about the dis-

trict’s surveillance system, including the sites where surveillance may occur, explaining that the recordings may be used in disciplinary proceedings, and that matters captured by the camera may be referred to local law enforcement.”

Although BUSD has attempted to be transparent about the security cameras, many students still say they are unsure of where they are being filmed. “They should just let kids know where they are,” Sachi Chakko, a freshman, said. “I feel like there hasn’t been communication of where the cameras are to the students.”

While Chakko knows that cameras are prohibited in bathrooms, they were not aware of any other restrictions.

Chakko believes the surveillance cameras do little to improve safety on campus. “I just don’t really think the kids care,” she said.

Chakko explained that although she feels uncomfortable with being recorded, other students don’t care enough about being watched to change their behavior. The mystery around camera placement makes them easy to ignore or forget.

Although security cameras can provide evidence in certain incidents like a school fight or theft, the extent to which they protect students and staff against larger incidents is disputed.

According to a recent American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) report, surveillance cameras have been present in eight of the 10 most fatal school shootings, yet failed to prevent these tragedies. While the concept of surveillance can discourage theft and bullying, cameras themselves can do little to deter crime. If these cameras aren’t fulfilling their purpose, we may need to question why we are forcing them on students in the first place.

While the idea behind security cameras on campus may be to create a safer school environment, their effectiveness and the privacy implications of constant monitoring raise serious questions. If these devices fail to prevent major incidents and instead contribute to a culture of mistrust, their presence may be doing more harm than good. Schools should prioritize transparency and actively address privacy concerns within the community.



OREN STILES

## Editorial Policy

The Berkeley High *Jacket* is a designated public forum for student expression without prior review by school officials in which students make all final content decisions.

The by-lined opinions expressed in the Editorial/Opinion and Entertainment sections and columns are those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the *Jacket*. Non-by-lined editorials represent the opinion of the *Jacket* and must be approved by a two-thirds vote of the Editorial Board. Any opinions or views expressed in advertisements do not necessarily reflect those of the *Jacket*.

We encourage students, staff, and the community to submit letters to the Editor for publication. All submissions must be signed; anonymous letters may only be printed with a two-thirds vote of the Editorial Board.

Not all submissions will be printed and may be edited to conform to *Jacket* policy or to meet space restrictions.

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# SCIENCE SPOTLIGHT

## New CTE building will catalyze innovation, passion, career specialization, and benefit BHS students

BY ERIN LIAO  
staff writer

Every day, thousands of Berkeley High School students push through crowded hallways to get to their classes. With a 500,000 square foot campus, many classrooms and hallways are overcrowded when they shouldn't have to be. Along with other factors, the need for a staff parking lot ultimately led to BHS deciding to move the softball field and, in its place, create a new building dedicated to Career Technical Education (CTE). Despite the cost, the new addition of a CTE building is worth the investment as it will help support the robotics program, give more resources to CTE classes, and make the most out of the space on campus.

The CTE department at BHS houses classes such as Digital Sound Engineering, CAD Design Studio, Law and Social Justice, Biotech, Bio Health Science, and more. The CTE department was originally named Vocational Education, and it helped train students for jobs after high school. Currently, most CTE classes also function as college preparatory classes, allowing students to use them to fulfill various college requirements. Around 2,000 students at BHS are enrolled in a CTE class, so these classes are currently held in almost every building. The newly built S building will house Robotics Engineering, a Machine Shop, several new BHS classrooms, counselor offices, student restrooms, and a conference room. Four tennis courts and a parking lot for staff will also be built.

This will be a big project for the Berkeley Unified School District, costing around \$15 million to build. In March 2020, BUSD passed \$300 million in bonds for facilities and maintenance, with 10 million over 10 years going to the CTE department. The funding for this building will be coming from the facilities bond, as well as the CTE budget.

The robotics program, which is part of the CTE department, has made immense progress since it was first founded in 2015. It was first funded by the University of California Berkeley Chancellor's Community Partnership Fund and created a small team with less than ten students. Since then, the program has expanded considerably to around 80 members last season. The program allows both beginning and advanced students to thrive, especially with the creation of a new junior varsity team this year.

It is difficult to fit the projects and machines necessary into the current robotics space. The space wasn't intended to be for robotics, and with the hallways and regular door frames, the robotics team struggles to fit large equipment in the rooms. There also is not enough power capability in the space,

as some machinery requires more power than the current room can provide.

"If you come in here during robotics team meetings, although we do have two full classrooms and other small side rooms, you put 80 people in that space and they're trying to build robots, it gets loud, it gets chaotic," said Dirk Wright, an engineering teacher at BHS, "People are working on top of each other, and part of the S building is designed to optimize and separate the drilling and grinding from the computer programming from the CAD design and try to create it in such a way that there's going to be great workspaces where all the different elements of what students want to pursue in the space of their lives."

During robotics competitions, teams compete with their robots on a large field, around the size of a basketball court. Currently, it is difficult for the BHS robotics team to test out their robots, as the size of the room is not nearly big enough for the two robots. The location of the S building will be helpful with moving robotics equipment, as most robotics competitions hosted by BHS are held in the M gym.

The proposed new space in the S building would enable more advanced manufacturing capabilities compared to the current space. The addition of advanced machinery will allow students to familiarize themselves with new equipment and skills for the future. This additional machinery would not only benefit the robotics team but also could be used by other clubs and classes at BHS and potentially even allow more engineering focused classes to be formed at BHS. "All the (new) storage spaces and workspaces have been designed to allow students to function in an engineering and manufacturing environment that's much more like the real world," Wright said, "Ultimately, we hope that students, by working in those spaces, can gain the confidence to go out, walk into a shop, and be like, yes, you could hire me. Yes, I've seen equipment that looks like the equipment you have here. I've worked in environments that look like this."

The parking spaces will also greatly help the BHS staff. Currently, many of the staff use the parking lot by the M gate, which is not large enough for the 208 people on staff. Other alternatives to the parking lot include public transportation and garage parking. Unfortunately, garage parking in Berkeley tends to be quite expensive. For example, the garage located at 2020

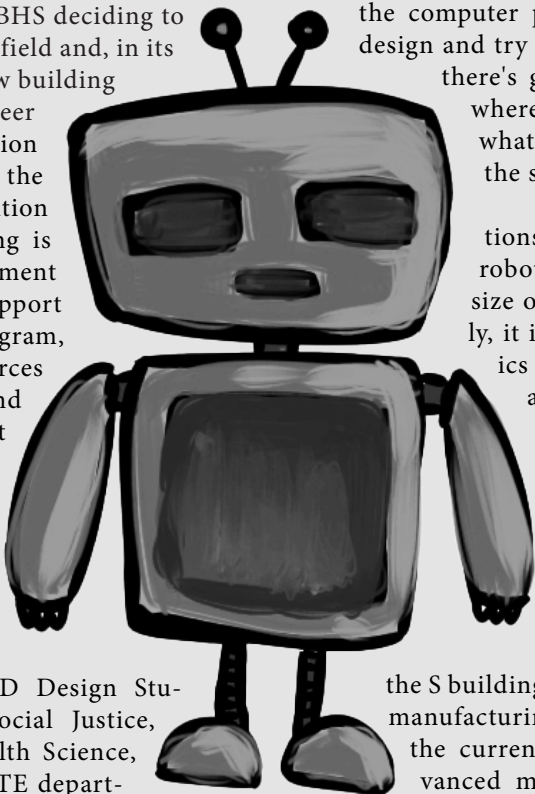
Kittredge Street has reserved monthly parking for \$210. By building a new parking lot, BHS staff will be able to spend less time worrying about and finding parking.

A new conference room will also be added to the building, which will take a lot of strain off of the single conference that BHS has for all of its staff. This long-demanded addition to BHS will aid staff connectivity, provide a meeting space for BHS teachers, and create a more cohesive BHS community overall.

Before the 2000s, BHS had tennis courts on its campus, which was eventually replaced by the E building. The BHS tennis teams currently practice at the Hearst courts on the UC Berkeley campus. Unfortunately, UC Berkeley plans to take down almost all tennis courts on their campus to create more parking. The new tennis courts on the BHS campus will allow the boys and girls tennis teams to have somewhere to practice. The new stands that will be built will hopefully increase audiences at games, as they won't need to hike up Bancroft to see the matches.

Overall, this new project will improve BHS in a myriad of ways. From providing students with more opportunities to gain experience in fields like robotics to allocating more accessible parking to staff, the construction of the new S building will have benefits that will aid many future generations of BHS students to come. By making improvements like these, BHS will become an even more accomplished school and ensure students are prepared to succeed in a world beyond academia.

DISCLAIMER: the Jacket is a CTE class.





# INVESTIGATIVE

INVESTIGATIVE EDITORS: PENELOPE PURCHASE &amp; SYDNEY LEHRER

SYDNEYLEHRER@STUDENTS.BERKELEY.NET

## Students weigh financial costs of summer programs

BY ELSIE YUEN  
staff writer

In the summer, there are many opportunities high school students can choose from to prepare themselves for the coming school year and beyond. Some students choose to take internships, others volunteer, and others participate in pre-collegiate summer programs. Whether the goal is to learn about a possible career prospect, prepare oneself for college, or simply gain new experiences, there's a summer activity for everyone.

This past summer, Amanda Cottle, a Berkeley High School junior, attended a two-week-long pre-med summer program in Boston. "I think I'm definitely interested in the medical field, and I learned a lot about the different paths of medicine," she said. "It was really cool. We got to go to a hospital and, you know, play with fancy, expensive equipment." Cottle also got CPR certified through the program.

However, Cottle explained, the program wasn't cheap. "You could either be on campus, but that costs extra money, or you could be off campus. It definitely is expensive," Cottle said, "I'm very privileged to be able to do (it)." According to Summer Springboard's website, the residential tuition for a Pre-Med program is almost \$5.5 thousand.

The costliness of these types of summer programs was also reflected in the experiences of BHS senior Ilana Nickolaus, who took a six-week program at the University of California Los Angeles called the Summer College Immersion Program. Though she knew that she wanted to do something like the UCLA program even before she entered high school, Nickolaus also knew that college programs of its kind were expensive.

"I worked the summer after my freshman year and the summer after my sophomore year, and I used some of that money for (this) summer," Nickolaus said.

Though the base price of the program was around six thousand dollars, according to Nickolaus, there were "additional costs that you don't always see at the beginning" that made it more expensive. The cost of the program included housing, food, and the classes, but not transportation (Nickolaus drove there herself). "(The classes) are pretty spendy, but the college classes are always spendy," Nickolaus said.

The high costs of the program and general inequitable price structure, according to Nickolaus, was a determining factor in its levels of socioeconomic and racial diversity. "I would say (that) this program

was definitely one of the, like, least diverse places I've ever been in my life," Nickolaus said. Growing up in Berkeley, she was used to more diversity, she explained. Particularly, in terms of socioeconomic class, there were many more wealthy students, according to Nickolaus.

This was similar in Cottle's experience. "There were a lot of kids, especially, who weren't from the U.S. ... and they were like, really, really, extremely rich," Cottle said, "They were talking about how they came (there) on their private jets."

The difference in socioeconomic diversity and question of equity between more expensive programs and ones that were affordable or had financial aid was clear, Sofia Bloom, a BHS junior explained. Bloom has attended two different summer programs and explained that when the program was economically accessible, "I actually saw more economic diversity," Bloom said. "I knew there (were) two kids. ... who were there completely free."

Nickolaus explained the UCLA program was so expensive that she'd recommend that students should take classes at a community college nearby. "I think you can get a lot of the same things out of it by just taking the coursework," she said. "You don't get the social aspect, and it's fun to live (on campus), but I do think that it is the best way to do it (with) less spending."

Besides college programs such as the ones Cottle, Nickolaus, and Bloom attended, there are more affordable ways to gain professional, educational, and leadership experience during the summer. For instance, Daniel Cardenis, a BHS senior, took a biotech internship at Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, a research center located in the Berkeley Hills.

Cardenis' particular internship, which was six weeks long and mostly online, taught not only biotechnology but also skills that weren't related to STEM, such as how to act professionally, he explained.

Jose Rubio-Moran, a senior who worked at the Makers Camp at King Middle School this summer, also attested to this idea, "(I gained the experience) of just working people in general, as well as being like a teacher," Rubio-Moran said.

Another aspect was that Cardenis was paid for the internship as unpaid internships in California are illegal. The internship also covered factors such as transportation making it both affordable and accessible.

"I generally like to save money, but, like, we didn't have to

spend too much, because they had a shuttle that took us up directly out there," Cardenis said.

Another affordable summer time activity that allows for leadership growth and community connection is volunteering. One BHS junior, Iona Hall, gained experience over the summer for volunteering at Dorothy Day House, a volunteer-based organization that provides resources for unhoused and low-income individuals in Berkeley. For six hours per day, Hall's particular job was to assist in preparing and serving food and also hosting a pop-up pantry to provide resources, she explained. Though Hall didn't want to go into public service as a career, she volunteered because, "I've always had a passion for helping people, and when my friend told me about this opportunity, I just thought I really needed to try that out," Hall said.

Both Hall and Cardenis felt that their summer activities were rewarding and worthwhile, both noting it as something they would do again.

"I would 100 percent recommend (the internship) to another person, like anybody (who's) interested in STEM or anything, (even) if you don't know it," Cardenis said.

Conversely, Nickolaus explained that she wouldn't do a similar college program again. "I think what I got out of it the first time ... I wouldn't get a lot more out a second time," she said. "And also, it's just too expensive for me to do more than once." However, for Cottle, the program was a worthwhile time to spend her summer and she'd recommend it to someone else, despite its costliness. "I met a bunch of people through this, and I'm still in contact with a lot of them," said Cottle. "I got to learn about different, not only medical experiences, but people not from the U.S. and how their lives were." In addition to the Pre-Med summer program that Cottle attended, Summer Springboard also offers other educational programs such as business, engineering, and law programs.

Bloom explained she'd do a college program again. "I think if you can do it, you should, because (due to) these programs I'm still in touch with my roommate," Bloom said, "and I made some lifelong friends who live all over the world."





# FEATURES

FEATURES EDITORS: VIOLET MILLER-BRADY AND CARINA THOMAS

VIOLETMILLERBRADY@STUDENTS.BERKELEY.NET

## The annual Solano Stroll event promotes small businesses and creative crafts, inspiring young minds

BY AMARA KAPUR  
staff writer

The Solano Stroll is an annual event with a type of energy that could only come from the Bay Area. It has everything from food stands to political tents to bubble blowers, but some of the most popular businesses at the Solano Stroll are owned by local artists. People who crochet, make bracelets, create paintings, and more, draw a big crowd to this street during the Solano Stroll.

“I love seeing customers interact with these scents, because they haven’t found them anywhere else before,” Jaclyn Hughes said. Hughes is the owner of the candle making business Ember and Fog. She’s been making candles for the past eight years, but she just started selling them during the COVID-19 pandemic. “I blend all the scents myself, so they are entirely unique,” Hughes said. She has scents like Warm Oven which smells like banana bread, Home Office which smells like coffee, and other scents that remind her of her summers in Italy visiting her family.

“If I were to create a new candle set, I would actually sniff different oils that I have, and see what might work together,” Hughes said. After that she writes down the combination, and then melts the wax and adds her blends to the candles. She has to let the candle set for two weeks to let the fragrance bind with the wax. “If the scent doesn’t smell good when it’s be-

ing burned, I need to start over again. If it smells good, then I can move forward with reproducing it and selling it at these markets,” Hughes said.

Hughes said that it feels like the community is really coming out for this event, and that it’s been really well organized. “I’m hoping that this event is getting a whole new range of customers, because I’m based in San Francisco, but I don’t often get to get out to the East Bay,” Hughes said. She’s hoping new customers are buying her product, and when they burn through their candles, will want to buy more from her.

Hughes and Shanindra Rhone are both artists who sold products at the Solano Stroll on Sunday, Sept. 8th, 2024, but they sold different unique items. “This is my first time at the Solano Stroll, and what drew me to it is that they told me that this is one of the biggest events of the year in this area, and so I decided that I wanted to give it a try,” Rhone said. Rhone makes and sells bracelets and other jewelry. The name of her business is “Bead Infinite,” and she’s been running it for almost three years now.

“What inspires my designs? I would say just everyday life,” Rhone says. Every person’s style is different, and the bracelets she makes are an array of colors, thoughts, ideas, things that

she sees when she’s driving, and more.

To create something new, Rhone has to do a lot of shopping. She likes to go in person when she buys her jewels, and often goes to crystal and gemstone stores. “I just recently came back from Texas, so I got some beads from Texas that are different from what we have here in California,” Rhone said. What she likes about her job is that it is sim-

*“Whether it’s painting or ceramics or woodworking, everyone can find something they love.”*

Willa Bender  
BHS sophomore

ple and easy, and people are into bracelets. “If there was one thing I could change it would be being a little more out there, and inviting people more to my area. But sometimes I feel like (my product) is already so sparkly and blingy that it immediately draws people in,” Rhone said.

The Solano Stroll has impacted her business by increasing exposure towards her products. The audience she found was mainly much younger people, such as younger kids and teenagers, which she wasn’t expecting.

“There were some adults, but it was mostly a younger crowd. It’s easier to engage with them because I have kids, so it’s simple — I treat everybody as if they were my family or they were my kids, or parents or grandparents, and I think that’s one of the things that draws people into me. I’m relatable,” Rhone said.

Willa Bender is a sophomore in the Arts and Humanities Academy (AHA) at Berkeley High School. “I have taken Ms. Youngblood’s beginning creative arts and this year I am taking AHA advanced creative arts with Ms. Stahl,” Bender said. She loves the ability to build and create any kind of art she wants.

“Whether it’s painting or ceramics or woodworking, everyone can find something they love,” Bender said.

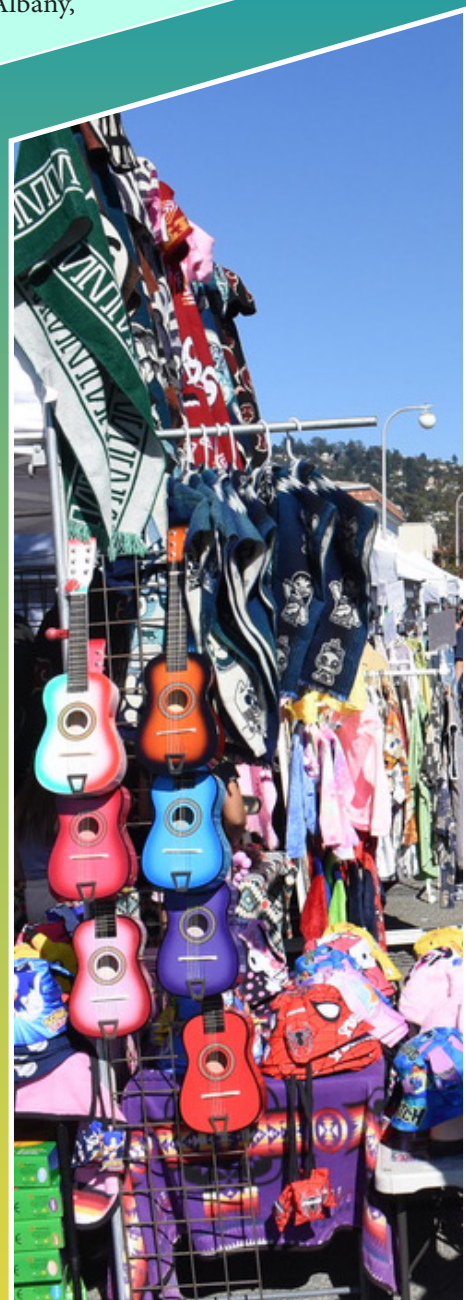
Bender has been to the Solano Stroll at least 10 times before, and she loves that there are so many people that come out for the event. “There are so many people that I know from school and within the community that go to Solano Stroll. It feels like a big hang-out with people from Albany, Berkeley and other places in

the Bay Area,” Bender said. She also likes that they mix it up. “I remember that three years ago and years before that they had rides and a Ferris wheel.”

“There are a lot of pieces of art at the Solano Stroll that are really beautiful,” Bender said. One piece that she remembers specifically is a wolf she saw made out of really small pieces of paper. “The artist spent hours cutting the really tiny pieces of paper,” Bender said. The commitment to the crafts amazed her.

“Another piece that stuck out to me was flowers made out of pipe cleaners. There were sunflowers and tulips and all different kinds of flowers that were handmade, that looked very real,” Bender said. “Everyone can find something they are interested in, and spend hours at the Solano Stroll because there is just so much to see,” Bender said.

If you want to check out Jaclyn Hugh’s candles you can go to emberandfog.com, and on Instagram she’s at @emberandfog. If you want to find Shanindra Rhone’s jewelry, you can find her on Instagram at @beadinfinite.



Local artists, vendors, and stores set up booths during the Solano Stroll on Sunday, Sept. 8, 2024

SASHA BALASUBRAMANIAN



I CAN'T COOK!

HAZEL WOLFF



“How did you make that?!” is one of the questions I often receive from my peers when they try something I have cooked or baked. My answer is always the same; “it’s easy!” Cooking and baking can seem intimidating to many teenagers who are too busy with their everyday lives to learn how. Oftentimes the only things I find on a teenager’s cooking roster are toast, scrambled eggs, pasta, and ramen. Although preparing food for the first time may seem difficult when you have no idea where to start, I can change that for you. I’m going to lay out simple “recipes” for when your stomach is empty, but your wallet is too. These are not traditional recipes, but simple ways to prepare your food and make it delicious.

Let’s start with breakfast: the most important meal of the day. Skipping breakfast is proven to raise your cortisol levels significantly, which leads to increased stress. Don’t skip breakfast because you only have five minutes; set aside time for it every morning to improve your day. This simple yogurt bowl is easy and delicious.

Yogurt bowl recipe: pour about one cup of any plain or vanilla yogurt in a bowl. Then, add about 1 ¼ cups of cereal to the yogurt (I like Cheerios). Add ½ to one cup of sliced fruit — blueberries, apple, strawberries, etc. Mix everything together and top with honey or maple syrup and your favorite nuts. Enjoy!

Next is lunch. Students often find their funds drained due to purchasing off-campus lunch. Making lunch is a great way to practice your cooking skills and avoid this. If you need something fast and easy to prepare for lunch, make these delicious peanut noodles with some simple condiments.

Peanut noodles recipe: boil your favorite noodles to package instructions — Soba or rice noodles are my favorite. Drain the pasta and let sit in the colander while you prepare the sauce. Add two tbsp of peanut butter to your thermos, one tbsp soy sauce, one tbsp granulated sugar, one tsp sesame oil, and one tsp sesame seeds. Mix the sauce until combined. Pour your noodles into the thermos and seal the lid. Shake to mix together. Enjoy!

Lastly, dinner. Dinner is when students will likely have the most time to make a more complex meal. It is when you usually eat with your family, but if you ever find yourself having to cook at home, don’t automatically order takeout. This is a great opportunity to make something new. Here is a super easy recipe for a dumpling and rice bowl. Using frozen dumplings is an easy way to have something delicious on hand.

Dumpling and rice bowl recipe: in a bowl put 1½ cups of cooked white or brown rice. Leftover rice can be reheated in a microwave. Season the rice with a drop of sesame oil and soy sauce. Mix to combine. Prepare eight frozen dumplings of choice — Trader Joe’s has good ones for cheap — according to the package instructions. Pour them hot from the pan onto your rice. Slice a cucumber horizontally and place in your bowl. Drizzle everything with soy sauce and sesame seeds. Enjoy!

Club fair creates community in BHS

BY SOPHIE DRESKIN  
staff writer

“The club fair is a great opportunity to foster the school community and allow students to put themselves out there,” John Villavicencio, Berkeley High School’s director of student activities said.

The 2024-25 BHS club fair took place on Thursday, Sept. 5th, 2024, and was designed to foster student activity and community building. The fair hosts all of the clubs that BHS offers, and allows students to walk around and learn about different extracurricular options, share their passions and ideas, and get to know other students.

It’s a biannual tradition, and the clubs involved range from the Robotics Club, to Youth and Government, to Soccer Without Borders, and many more.

The fair was arranged by many different people, including Mr. Villavicencio and the commissioners of clubs, BHS juniors Sophia Nishioka and Sofia Bloom.

“Clubs are a really great way to get involved in Berkeley High (School),” Nishioka said, “The club

fair is a great way to get that started.”

She expressed the importance of the spirited nature of the club fair in piquing student interest and accomplishing the purpose of the event, which is to get students more involved in the different activities that BHS has to offer.

Because the fair has such a wide range of clubs, communities, and organizations, it reaches a multitude of students with diverse interests.

“The fair really fosters a sense of community within the school, and with students in such close proximity, it’s easy to get to know new people and find shared interests,” Alex Verity, a BIHS junior, who runs the club Friends Without Borders, said. “Every club is different, and there really is something for every student out there.”

Finding BHS clubs can be incredibly difficult because there are so many options to choose from, and students may be unsure of what to expect upon attending. The club fair, however, combats this challenge effectively. It introduces students to club leaders, shows them what they will be doing rather than simply telling, and al-



Students assemble at club booths on Sept. 5th.

ZIVA AMENDOLA

lows students to ask relevant and important questions.

The club fair isn’t only beneficial to students who are prospective club members. It gives club leaders the opportunity to display their hard work to a larger pool of students than they would have otherwise been able to reach.

“The fair is so nice because it’s a good opportunity for clubs to expand their reach and influence,” said senior Zulqarnain Sheikh, president of Youth and Government.

He recognizes the crucial part the club fair has played in drawing in new members for the program, and he hopes to continue to grow the Youth and Government student body with more fairs in the future.

New clubs can be hard to weave into school culture, but the fair aids in growing their membership and finding success.

“It’s nice that we can recruit new members at the fair,” Cormac Lee, a BHS

junior and new club leader said.

New clubs often start with few recruits and need a push to gain enough members to function properly.

“The fair is really helping us recruit a lot of members and find people who have similar shared interests as us,” said Aarushi Bhandari, a co-runner of a new club, called Women in Literature.

Bhandari expressed her gratitude to everyone who displayed interest in her club, and how the event helped her share one of her passions.

The club fair is a chance for BHS students to be drawn into the beauty of clubs and what they have to offer students, and for student leaders to feel confident in their hard work.

“Because we have such a large school, we rarely see everyone all together. The fair is a chance for students to see their peers in action, and get to know each other on a deeper level,” Villavicencio said.

Ms. O’Keefe campaigns for city council

BY SORAYA JUNE BERENT  
staff writer

Shoshana O’Keefe, Berkeley High School’s Computer Science Principles teacher and faculty sponsor for Girls Who Code, has worked at the school for seven years. In addition to her position at BHS, O’Keefe is currently running for City Council Representative in District Five.

O’Keefe’s history at BHS goes back even further than these past seven years. Now an alumni, she reflected on her experience as a student at BHS. “I really loved Berkeley High (School) ... I just always thought it was the greatest school,” O’Keefe said.

From going to class everyday to then teaching

classes at the same school, her relationship with BHS has come full circle. As a teacher, she works hard to make sure her students believe in themselves.

“I strive to give my students a strong sense of empowerment. I want them to realize how smart they are and how much they can do if they put their minds to something,” O’Keefe said.

In the years that Ms. O’Keefe has been working at BHS, she has taught multiple classes including Math Two and Math Studies, and now teaches Computer Science Principles.

“I always tell all the freshmen to take it in their math classes ... (the class) has gotten really popular, and I am really pleased with that,” O’Keefe said.

O’Keefe is extremely pas-

sionate about the work she does in her classroom and within the BHS community.

“I really love teaching Computer Science Principles ... I think it’s a really great class for anyone who’s even a little bit interested in how computers work or just in trying something new. And it’s a class where everybody should feel welcome,” she said.

O’Keefe accredits some of her interest in campaigning to Sophie Hahn, former District Five representative and current mayoral candidate.

“Sophie Hahn ... is running for mayor, and she’s been a mentor of mine, and she invited me to run, and I decided to take on the challenge,” O’Keefe said.

O’Keefe grew up in Berkeley, which is a big part of the reason running for City Council is so important to her.

“I’ve always had a foot ... in Berkeley politics. I really love this community, just like I love the school, and I’ve always wanted to be part of ... the decision-making of it,” O’Keefe said.

O’Keefe has also been on the Berkeley Zoning Adjustments Board for the past 11 years. She has found this to be extremely rewarding be-

cause she has been able to play a role in the growth and development of the city.

Berkeley is continuously evolving in architectural, cultural and social ways, and City Council allows for people from each district to offer their opinions and experiences in order to improve our city. BHS plays a large role in many Berkeley residents’ lives, as the majority of Berkeley teens attend the school for seven or more hours a day, five days a week. Having a BHS teacher serving on City Council would bring a unique perspective to Berkeley’s decision making.

In a diverse area full of so many unique people, BHS has a big part in the demographic of our city. Being a teacher, O’Keefe notices some similarities between being on city council and working at BHS.

“I think it’s important in both pursuits to be a good communicator and a good listener,” O’Keefe said.

Being both a teacher and a representative, understanding the people she’s serving is very important.

These principles are critical in teaching and politics, because they ensure that every voice in the community and classroom is heard.



O’Keefe has helped approve over 10,000 Berkeley homes

RIANA FALCIONI



# Neurodiverse students uplifted by BHS Neurodiversity Club

BY NIALA LENZ-RASHID  
staff writer

“(The goal of the Berkeley High School Neurodiversity Club) is having a safe space to hang out where there’s no judgment,” Pamela Van Der Poel said, “I just wanted to provide a space where students could hang out without the pressure of talking, but if they wanted to talk, they could find people that might be having similar experiences.” Van Der Poel, BHS’ special education and speech teacher, is the founder and staff sponsor of BHS’ Neurodiversity Club, which began in 2021.

To Van Der Poel, neurodiversity means “people that think differently.” Examples of neurodiverse traits include autism, ADHD, dyslexia, and lately, bipolar disorder and depression have also begun to be classified under the neurodiversity umbrella.

Van Der Poel, along with BHS students Karim Meleis and Rose Kosky, the club’s co-leaders, have been attempting to increase and promote more awareness and knowledge around the student experi-

ence of being neurodivergent at BHS.

Kosky believes that having a safe, welcoming, and non-judgmental place for neurodivergent students within BHS is incredibly important, as they will be continuing their involvement and leadership in the club throughout their next two years. “This space is

**“I feel like (the Neurodiversity Club) helped in making me form connections with other individuals.”**

Sam Mascarenhas  
BHS junior

needed,” Kosky said.

Members of the club feel like this space is essential, providing support and offering resources for students to succeed.

Sam Mascarenhas, a junior who joined the club his sophomore year, highlighted his gratefulness for the Neurodiversity Club, a space for him to embrace himself without judgment.

“It’s just a small space where people can be neurodiverse. Individuals can be themselves and find a spot (where) they feel like they’re safe,” Mascarenhas said. “I felt

like hearing the idea of a safe space for neurodivergent individuals was a good idea since when I was growing up in New York, I didn’t really have access to that kind of thing.”

The club attended this year’s fall club fair, with trivia games in order to educate students whilst breaking down stereotypes about neurodivergent people. Van Der Poel, along with other students and teachers, believes in the importance of having an accurate understanding of the neurodivergent experience.

Stereotypes around neurodivergent students are quite common and harmful. As seen throughout the media and history, neurodivergent people are often mocked and degraded, leading them to be perceived as less than or below neurotypical people.

“The misconception is that you’re either a savant, like you have this really special gift that is rare, or (you) basically can’t talk or have difficulty with academics,” Van Der Poel said.

Another common barrier some neurodivergent students face is having to differentiate themselves from their symp-

toms.

“I feel like the misconception is when you get diagnosed with a certain symptom ... that’s it. That’s your identity,” Mascarenhas said. “There’s still that stereotype that neurodivergent individuals aren’t as good as neurotypicals.”

The mission of this club is to invalidate such stereotypes, allowing for students to gain confidence and be comfortable while empowering them to be themselves and take pride in their voices. This inclusive club can also give students the support and strength to care less about others’ judgments and unreasonable expectations. It serves as a multi-use space, allowing students to relax with headphones, eat snacks, connect with one another, and brainstorm ideas for furthering knowledge and recognition of the academic experience for neurodiverse people.

Being a neurodivergent student at BHS poses many challenges, and without support from teachers, peers, administrators, and clubs like the Neurodiversity Club, it can be hard to succeed.

“I have been called countless names, I reported three (bullying experiences) to Title IX last year, (and) I never got a response. I have never gotten any further input about that whatsoever,” Kosky said when asked about the experience of being a neurodivergent student at BHS.

At the end of the day, the Neurodiversity Club fosters

confidence, safety, and authenticity, encouraging students to use their voices and break down barriers.

“I feel like (the Neurodiversity Club) helped in making me form connections with other individuals,” Mascarenhas said. “I finally feel like I have ... people who understand.”

Van Der Poel and Kosky are both deeply motivated by the overall mission of the Neurodiversity Club, which is to provide support in an engaging setting.

“The club is a place of acceptance, to empower who (neurodiverse students) are and take a strength-based approach to whatever neurodiversity they have,” Van Der Poel said.



Meleis and Van Der Poel spread awareness and acceptance of neurodiversity. DANIELA SIERRA ROMERO

# New Vice Principal Keldon Clegg brings expertise to his role

BY RIGZIN GYALTSEN  
staff writer

Keldon Clegg is a man who wears many hats, has many talents, and has a wide spread rapport with Berkeley High School staff and students. Clegg has been working at BHS for 15 years now, and has gained a myriad of experiences from different positions and roles.

This fall, Clegg takes the vice principal chair and now

overlooks and supervises Academic Choice (AC).

Clegg has worked in Berkeley International High School (BIHS), Academy of Medicine and Public Service (AMPS), and AC. He has been in teaching roles in courses such as World of Media and social studies, taken on roles in the technology department, and has served as the professional development coordinator for teachers, a job that entails focusing on the development of teachers

during student holidays and late start Mondays.

Clegg also supervises the Puente Program which functions as an integrated part of 10th and 11th grade AC classes with the purpose of teaching students more about college and college applications. The Puente Program comes out of the University of California system.

“It needs a place to begin incubating. I supervise it because it’s within AC and it made natural sense to put it

there,” Clegg said.

One thing Clegg looks forward to is this year’s presidential election.

“An election year is always an interesting year at (BHS). And I say that as a social studies teacher who loves election years ... (social studies classes) allow us to talk about in more depth.” Clegg said.

After many years of working in many different positions at BHS, Clegg said, “I

AC was founded in 2004, making 2024 a big year for the program as it prepares to celebrate its 20 year anniversary.

“Being a vice principal means that you are already sitting in a position where you get to collaborate in new ways that you don’t get to do with a classroom teacher,” Clegg said.

“I think you have new vice principals and then the school changes and the vice principals work to figure out how to make that change positive, and in line with what students want.” Clegg expressed an open-minded approach to the vice principal position, and is ready to evaluate and support the needs of the students at BHS.

Clegg emphasized the importance of teamwork with both BHS staff and students.

“What I can say is that if we don’t work well together as a team, it’s really hard to get everything done ... I hope that students know that administrators are part of their team.”

For these upcoming years, as vice principal, Mr. Clegg explained his goal to act as a backbone to unify BHS staff and students and focus on the educational needs of all students.

**“Being a vice principal means that you are already sitting in a position where you get to collaborate in new ways ...”**

Keldon Clegg  
BHS Vice Principal



Vice Principal Clegg has been a BHS teacher and staff member for 15 years. KAI HANSCHEN



# ENTERTAINMENT

ENTERTAINMENT EDITORS: AMAR WALKER & ANNIKA JOY

AMARWALKER@STUDENTS.BERKELEY.NET

## THE ALBUMIST: STAND UP

LAWRENCE BAUNACH



Jethro Tull is a band that’s often known as a cornerstone of the 70s progressive rock movement, a style of music incorporating elements of classical music. The British rock band has also often incorporated elements of English contemporary folk into their music, with frontman Ian Anderson being prone to spouting very humorous prose. A heavy amount of these folk influences are part of Jethro Tull’s very identity, most notably a primary instrument being the flute. But, while Jethro Tull’s kinsmanship to olden days was always apparent, what other genre of band they would become was still up in the air in 1969. Would they head for progressive rock, or keep the violent hard rock? Ian Anderson and guitarist Mick Abrahams debated over this. Abrahams wanted to keep the blues of the first album, while Anderson wanted to move away from that for more folk arrangements. Abrahams left the band soon after. With no one to stop him, Anderson moved towards a more orchestral sound with this album, making the album a major transition.

Both sides of Jethro Tull’s vision are shown on this album. “A New Day Yesterday” gleams with distorted guitar licks, the drums pounding like crashing mountains, the dirtiness of the harmonica bringing more of a realness to the music, being perfectly imperfect. The folk influences creep in the middle, with Anderson starting a flute solo to add a little more garnish to this medium rare blues steak. Many of the songs incorporate the hard rock guitar solos, but this song is the boldest statement of the passing Abrahams era. But, this is Anderson’s album, and his vision would soon be realized. In fact, they were almost too obvious, with Anderson going the extra step to cover the classical music piece “Bouree.” Anderson’s flute is prominent here, with the woodwind leading the charge of acoustic instruments, the song changing between a nature-walk and a slow growl, like staring down a bowel of fire. What this adds is not an arrogant statement by Anderson, but an earthy, peaceful prose. World influences of the Middle East and Africa are also present on “Fat Man.”

Stand Up was a great success (#1 in UK and #20 in the US). It set the stage for Jethro Tull’s later prog-rock efforts. It is an early example of prog-rock as well. Folk is simple in its elegance, and “Stand Up” compounds upon that. Ian Anderson’s voice is an instrument on it’s own. I highly recommend one to listen to this album.

For folkiness, an album recommendation would be “Ashes Are Burning by Renaissance”. It cleans off many of the overblown prog-rock aspects for a more simple beauty. For those hitched on hard rock and blues rock, I recommend “Led Zeppelin II.” The songs on it hammer one with catchy riffs, with Robert Plant giving a soulful and screeching voice.

## How to avoid misinformation in the media

BY CECILIA TILES  
staff writer

The last ten years have consisted of one massive historical event after another. Whether it be the recent political turmoil, the COVID-19 pandemic, or the numerous international conflicts, “breaking news” has become very common. As a result of the development of the internet, misinformation has become increasingly frequent as well.

In a study done by the Poynter Institute in 2022, around 62 percent of Americans attest to seeing false information online at least once a week. This can hin-

der one’s ability to form an educated opinion because the information they are getting is not necessarily the complete truth. When propaganda and fake-news can be so easily accessed on the internet, it’s very important to understand how to recognize and avoid misinformation.

According to the Pew Research Center, around half of Americans get at least some of their news from social media. While it can be a valuable resource, informing users on recent important events is simply no longer social media’s intended purpose. For about the last decade, the spread of misinformation has be-

come rampant on social media, because anybody can post anything without including reliable evidence. Social media is simply not a reliable source, and should be looked at critically when researching current events.

In order to avoid misinformation and bias, it is important to be able to distinguish between reliable news articles and advertisements. Some articles or videos one may see are sponsored, and while there is a legal obligation to state when this is the case, it can still be unclear. In a study conducted by Stanford Researchers in 2016, the Stanford History Education Groups (SHEG) research showed that more than 80 percent of American high school students are unable to tell the difference between news stories and ads. While they can be difficult to tell apart, there are a few signs that can signal an unreliable source.

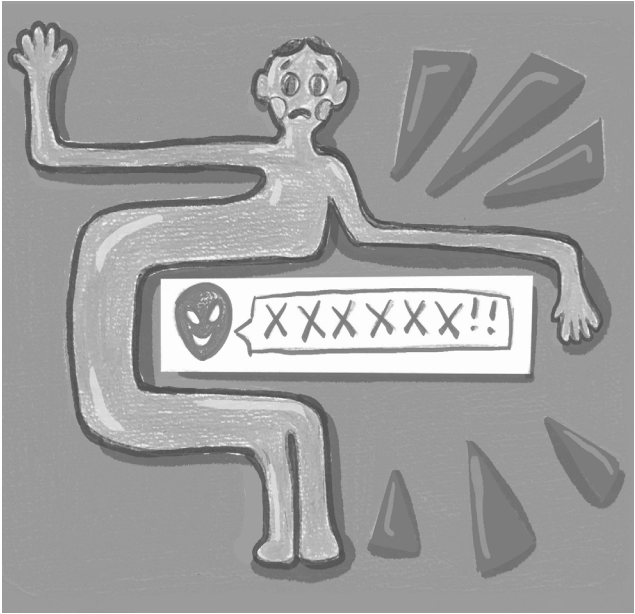
When looking at a website that has news articles or other media, always take note of the image quality and formatting. Aspects of a trustworthy website include organization, and clarity. A site that is relatively easy to maneuver through, and is not glitchy or confusing, is way more likely to be reliable.

Another thing to look for

when deeming information valuable is whether or not the author and their sources are openly displayed. All these qualities are reasons to believe that a website or article has had a substantial amount of work put into it. It should be clear to the reader that the information that is being shared has been thoroughly researched, and was not hastily thrown together to create “buzz”, or gossip.

It’s also important to keep in mind the purpose of the article or promotion. It’s incredibly easy to find information or news that holds a lot of bias, and is written or shared to spread propaganda. Always look for sources that seem neutral and have the purpose to educate readers.

Unfortunately, as technology and artificial intelligence advance, it will become even more difficult to understand what is true and what is not. But a solution to this problem is always cross checking online information with different sources. It’s much more valuable to read multiple sources that are discussing the same topic, to see what news and information seems more reliable. Find trustworthy sources, and have an open mind, only then can one really be truly informed.



ISA SHIMOMURA

## Berkeley Greek Theatre holds memories

BY SIMON VAN DUSEN  
staff writer

Opened on Thursday, Sept. 24,1903, the Greek Theatre has always been an important part of Berkeley culture, it has held countless concerts and events in the amphitheater, and has forever instilled its place as a landmark of the Bay Area. The venue can hold around 8,500 people with many different types of seating in its traditional amphitheater format. Whether you want to dance in the pit, relax on the grass, or sit in the amphitheater, the Greek has it all. As the years have passed it has been host to many famous artists, such as The Grateful Dead, Bob Dylan, and Joni Mitchell. Over 100 years later, it is still a special place for those who live in the East Bay, especially for high school students.

“The first concert I went to was Glass Animals. It was really colorful, there were a lot of lights. The main singer, he’s really animated. I re-

member he was constantly running back and forth across the stage. And it was really loud too, but in a good way. I really enjoyed it,” Berkeley High School junior Joaquin Jackson, said. It’s not everywhere that there is a local venue like the Greek Theatre where students can go to have fun. Numerous BHS students have made lasting memories at the Greek, including junior Rue Bhandari.

“The first one that I can remember was Yo-Yo Ma, and I think the SF Philharmonic there in like, 2016 around then ... I remember, like, the sound system and being very impressed,” Bhandari said, recalling her first concert at the Greek Theatre. “It’s a very beautiful space, and I think it holds a lot of like significance for Berkeley too, like historical significance.”

A unique attribute about the Greek Theatre is the architecture. Before its construction, the hill was already a natural semicircle, perfect for the amphitheater

format. The venue is very reminiscent of classic Greek architecture, and consists of the stage, with tall pillars; the pit, where during concerts people may dance; the stone amphitheater where the majority of seating is; and the newly renovated grassy area. Despite how open the venue is, it still results in amazing acoustics.

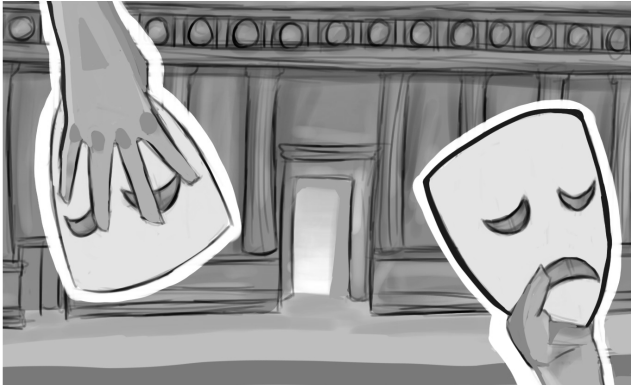
“I think the sound system is great, especially for classical music concerts, because that can definitely be tricky outside. They do a very good job of carrying the sound and everything,” Bhandari said.

The outside weather can

elevate the experience, specifically in the warmer days.

“I definitely like that it’s outside, because, especially in summer, it’s so nice to be there. And usually the weather kind of stays consistently pleasant in Berkeley. So it’s definitely nice to have such a gorgeous outside venue,” Bhandari said.

The Greek Theatre holds important memories for BHS students. Generations of students and staff have passed through, attending concerts and events. The Greek Theatre continues to be a special place for many, cementing itself as a core part of Berkeley.



KAELO HICKMAN



# The rationale of rewinding our favorites: Why do we rewatch TV?

BY ZOE WHITMAN  
staff writer

What makes rewatching shows so comforting? The feeling of sitting down after a long day with a bowl of buttery popcorn, snuggling up with a blanket, and hitting the remote to turn on the show you’ve seen a million times, or the excitement of noticing a new detail,

such as a joke that you may have missed before. Seeing your favorite actors in a familiar setting on screen can evoke nostalgia, which is why rewatching films is a frequent ritual for many. With the rise in streaming services and the slow decline of network television, people now have the ability to rewatch their favorite scenes and get to know their favorite characters better.

Sophomore Nathalia Velasquez Hernandez re-watches shows often. “I’m from South America, and I learned how to speak English from American movies and American TV shows and I rewatch them all the time,” she said. One show Velasquez Hernandez re-watches frequently is “Modern Family,” and even after

all of the rewatches she still finds new details. “I started watching ‘Modern Family’ when I was 10, and I’m 15

can see the value in it occasionally. “The second time I watch, I already know the plot and stuff so it allows me

**By rewatching a show, you are able to go back on it with a fine tooth comb.**

right now and I still watch it. There are some things that I realize: ‘Oh my gosh I can’t believe I missed that,’ you know, just like jokes, or like metaphors,” Velasquez Hernandez said.

Rewatching media gives people the unique tool to learn a new language or further their understanding of another language. People can listen to conversations and dialogue with the ability to pause, rewind, add subtitles, and slow down. By rewatching a show, one can slowly become more comfortable with the theme and storyline, allowing one to focus more on the actual dialogue and jokes that are being told.

Even though junior Felix Waterman doesn’t rewatch shows and films often, he

to focus on smaller details of the shows and movies,” Waterman said. “In general, when you are less focused on what the characters are actively doing in the scene it allows you to observe and enjoy, like the backgrounds and stuff that maybe the background characters are doing.”

Many people rewatch shows and movies to grasp a better understanding of

Social Living teacher, re-watching movies and TV shows is more comforting and nostalgic. “One movie I just rewatched with my nephew is ‘The Parent Trap’ with Lindsay Lohan. It was my favorite movie growing up. I think as a kid, different things excite you and then when you get older you (realize) different themes that kind of have more resonance,” Fong said. “It’s interesting too, because that show came out when I was a kid and it’s been really interesting to rewatch it as my life goes on and how I relate to it at different ages.”

Familiarity is a significant part of rewatch culture. People rewatch shows that they consumed as children, understanding their childhood favorites in new ways. Other times people rewatch television in the background because they don’t want to commit to a new show knowing they’ll end up missing content.

Either way, rewatching shows provides a new look on them, giving you deeper knowledge of their cultural and personal relevance.

**Rewatching shows provides a new look on them, giving you deeper knowledge of their cultural and personal relevance.**

what they consumed. By rewatching a show, you are able to go back on it with a fine tooth comb. People want the ability to analyze what they’ve consumed, especially viewing it through different lenses.

According to Hilary Fong, a Universal Ninth Grade Ethnic Studies and



ALISA KARIN KOLPAKOVA

# Behind the Scenes: The building blocks of BHS productions

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Even before the show is seen at its final, polished state, there are pre-showings in order to get feedback. “It’s a great time for choreographers to present what they’ve made so far and see if their concept is coming across clearly, see if the rest of the class, the audience, has ideas for them,” said Linda Carr, the Visual and Performing Arts Dance teacher. “It’s a great way to get a little feedback from your audience, because as a choreographer, you may think you’re communicating something through your dance, but it’s nice to check in and say, are you getting that this is what I was trying to convey? Or maybe even just asking simple questions, like, are you able to see everything on the stage?” It’s multiple processes like these that polish productions into feeling professional. The backstage process can be a way to gain perspective, so it’s not just an individual creating what we see on-stage, but rather a collection of artistic minds and a community effort.

For BHS productions, just getting the behind the scenes work done isn’t enough. Excellent quality

backstage is a top priority in order to create a beautiful show for eager audiences. This high bar to meet draws in community minded students with a lot of passion for the arts. The hard work and huge time commitment pays off and creates tight communities formed behind and onstage.

Neptune Afifi, a BHS junior in Stagecraft said, “It’s just really fun to see performances from a different point of view. It’s also just really cool! We get to work with a bunch of cool tech and work together to put on a performance.” Afifi described the intense months-long process that went into building the set for last year’s musical production, “Urinetown,” and backstage during the shows is no easier. Oftentimes, there will only be two students working backstage, one in each wing, along with a stage manager, a student on lights, and a

**It’s not just an individual creating what we see onstage, but rather a collection of artistic minds and a community effort.**

student on sound. They described the pride in seeing the stage crew’s finished products, and the breaks in between spent with other stagecraft classmates that



Linda Carr and students practice technique in Beginning Modern/Jazz dance class.

EZRA PAYNE

formed some of their fondest memories. “Everyone’s really nice and we form a special bond with each other. If we’re working on a show for long hours together, you bond over time,” Afifi said.

BHS productions are uniquely hands-on, with most factors fully controlled by the students, even when it comes to high-tech light and sound systems. The process gives students real experience, making the final

shows feel like that much more of an accomplishment. Between the daunting amount of work that goes into these shows and the time required, it’s no wonder that the students involved form meaningful connections with each other.

“Our Monologues” is particularly close to the heart for some students. The production consists of writing, rehearsing, performing, and all of the technical work necessary for stage shows, only the stories are oftentimes very raw and personal

to the students writing and enacting them.

Jessica Hipona, BHS senior and Commissioner of the Arts gives insight into backstage and pre-production work, having been both in leadership roles and being onstage herself.

“I could speak so in depth about how much that production means to me and how many people I think it’s impacted, even beyond the people who are actually in it. But on a very, very basic level, I think it’s a really good example of how the arts at Berkeley High

(School) can provide a really solid community, and in some cases, like it was for me, even a home and a safe place,” Hipona said. “There’s such a big part of me that will be left with that production.” The amount of passion that goes into shows at BHS is remarkable. The months of work from so many talented, hardworking students with different skills and backgrounds, the willingness to put their feelings and ideas out there, all culminates into the numerous high level that we as the audience get to watch.



# Whistling while you work: Does listening to music help focus?

BY LILA GENBERG  
staff writer

Music can help motivate, relax, or entertain you for hours on end. With school starting up, students across Berkeley High School are starting to get back into classwork and having to focus a lot on school. From juggling multiple AP classes, to being buried in homework, what if there was something you could do that would make focusing easier? That’s where music comes into play. While the topic has been debated, music can be very beneficial to helping students to focus. Whether it’s listening to your favorite R&B playlist, or playing jazz or classical music in the background, music can be a great tool to help you focus.

Grace Steckel is a sophomore who likes to listen to both instrumental classical

music and R&B music while doing schoolwork. “I would say it calms me down. And being calm helps me concentrate on assignments, but I wouldn’t say it directly helps me concentrate,” Steckel said.

Playing music while doing work seems to be a lot about setting the mood and putting you in the right headspace to be productive, more than being a magical switch to make you focus.

Steckel also mentioned that it really depends on the kind of music she is listening to, “Usually, it depends on the genre, but if it’s kind

as a distraction, or does it put you in the right headspace to be more focused and productive?

A freshman in Universal 9th Grade, Leda Watson-Lamprey Singer, does not listen to music while doing work. “I just want to listen to music instead of studying and (end up) paying attention more to the music and less to the work,” Singer said. This points out a flaw that critics of this idea bring up, that the music proves as a distraction. Although this is a valid point, what you listen to, as well as the kind of work you are doing are both factors that affect your focus. To say that music distracts someone in every situation is incorrect.

According to a study done by Stanford University, “music engages the areas of the brain involved with paying attention, making predictions and updating the event in memory.” Re-

*Playing music while doing work is a lot about setting the mood, and putting you in the right headspace to be productive ...*

of calming music, then it helps me focus. If it’s kind of more hyped up, or more exciting music, then it kind of distracts me.” This is the big question; does music serve



JAY TRAUNER

searchers found this by using musical compositions from the 1800s and reading fMRI scans. These discoveries suggest that listening to music might enhance the brain’s ability to anticipate events and maintain attention, which can come in handy when studying for something like a test.

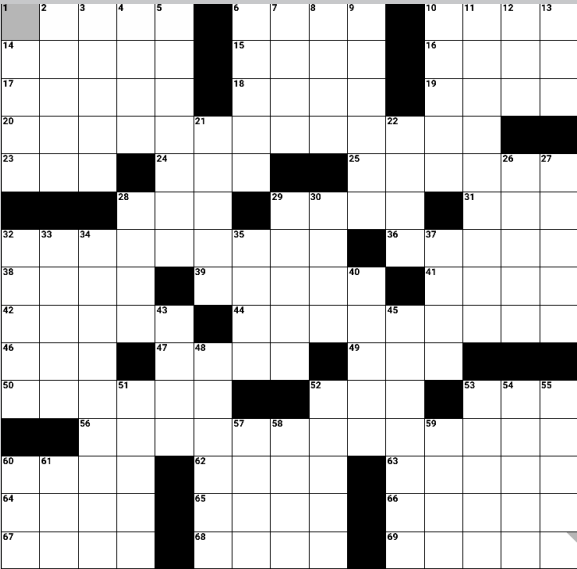
Melissa Jimenez, an English teacher and co-teacher leader of Berkeley International High School at BHS

presents an interesting perspective, that music playing in the classroom can also help the teachers themselves be in a better headspace. “When you’re teaching, there’s a lot of variables that you’re often presented with because you never know what kids are going to do or what they’re going to say. Music kind of helps me to regulate my own emotions in those moments, and I think that does lead

to a little bit more focused teaching,” Jimenez said.

Although it depends on the person, environment, and activity, music can help put you in the right headspace to focus and concentrate on what you are doing. In a classroom setting, music, especially instrumental music, can set the mood for both the students and teachers and allow them to do their work to the best of their ability.

## THE CROSSWORD



ACROSS

- 1. GOAT-ed genus
- 6. “The Odyssey,” for one
- 10. “Alpha male” in Internet slang
- 14. Earth Day month
- 15. Kids’ toy that hurts to step on
- 16. Laugh
- 17. Large fissure
- 18. A lot, or 2,000 pounds
- 19. Enthusiastic
- 20. 1983 Cyndi Lauper hit
- 23. What bouncers check
- 24. “Now watch me \_\_\_\_\_”
- 25. Features of “white water”
- 28. French water?
- 29. Layered haircut
- 31. Percussive dancing
- 32. A quarter or a whole on a staff
- 36. Chicago airport
- 38. Up the \_\_\_\_\_
- 39. Addis \_\_\_\_\_ (Ethiopian capital)
- 41. Ceramic cooking jar
- 42. McDonald’s pork sandwich
- 44. George Washington’s bill
- 46. “The Crow” actress Ling
- 47. Ill, often
- 49. Roman three
- 50. Shock
- 52. Snakelike sea creature
- 53. \_\_\_\_\_ Pre-Check
- 56. Wax museum owner
- 60. Singer-songwriter Apollo
- 62. “Quittin Time”, tourer Bryan
- 63. Like some pitchers
- 64. Singer-songwriter Parks
- 65. Musk-y CEO
- 66. Gradually wear away
- 67. Oven for ceramics
- 68. Nevada city near Lake Tahoe
- 69. No longer fashionable

DOWN

- 1. Desert plants
- 2. Ladybug’s prey
- 3. British strollers
- 4. Come up
- 5. Farmer’s reference book
- 6. Make extremely happy
- 7. Comedian Davidson
- 8. 2019 Tyler, the Creator album
- 9. \_\_\_\_\_ Costa County
- 10. Winner
- 11. 2018 Jason Mraz single
- 12. Sushi tuna
- 13. Pop
- 21. Flora’s partner
- 22. Othello villain
- 26. “Finding Nemo” girl
- 27. Javelin
- 28. \_\_\_\_\_ -o
- 29. Sheet music holder
- 30. Greek goddess of youth
- 32. Fast-moving venomous snake
- 33. Open, as a pen
- 34. Store lineup
- 35. Higher-pitched double reed instrument
- 37. Hindu Festival of Colors
- 40. Common Wordle starting word due to its high number of vowels
- 43. Hairless
- 45. Castor bean or sesame, for example
- 48. BHS periodical with a janky crossword
- 51. Composer Copeland
- 52. Prefix with musicology
- 53. Read cards
- 54. Leather used in shoes
- 55. Undid subtraction
- 57. Rooster or stallion
- 58. Sophomore’s one-semester IB class
- 59. Actress Gilbert
- 60. Wood often used in furniture
- 61. Alternative to an x-ray

— Violet Kessler

# ‘It Ends with Us’ triggers debate

BY ELI LEICHTER WILSON  
staff writer

In 2020, Colleen Hoover exploded in popularity on “Booktok,” Tiktok’s book recommendation community. Since then, she has been the target of both extreme praise and criticism. Her best-selling 2016 novel, “It Ends with Us,” has been a topic of debate, especially surrounding its depiction and alleged romanticization of abusive relationships.

The debate surrounding “It Ends with Us” has only grown since the release of its film adaptation early last month. Like the novel, the film follows Lily Bloom’s (Blake Lively) journey through a troubled romance with Ryle Kincaid (Justin Baldoni) and her rekindled connection with her first love, Atlas Corrigan (Brandon Sklenar). As Ryle grows increasingly abusive, Lily must struggle to break free from his control and protect herself. Much of the controversy surrounding the book’s handling of abuse comes from its ending, in which Lily largely forgives Ryle and allows him to have joint custody of their young child. It’s an ending many readers argue undermines the emotional journey of its main character and disregards Ryle’s actions throughout the story. When asked about the ending, Maya Murakami, a BHS junior, said “I feel like they just made her look stupid ...



COURTESY OF SONY PICTURES

it infuriated me.”

Critics also argue that the portrayal of Ryle as a “charismatic but dangerous” man glamorizes his nature as an abuser and reduces him to a common romance novel archetype. Fans of “It Ends with Us,” however, say that this depiction is realistic and the honest portrayal of domestic violence is valuable to real-life survivors of abuse. Though they object to the depiction of abuse throughout the story, Toby Quilty, a BHS junior, said, “If a book gives someone comfort after they’ve had a horrible life experience, (it’s) a great book.”

The other major controversy surrounding the book and film has been its marketing. In 2023, Colleen Hoover announced an “It Ends with Us” coloring book. Fans found this inappropriate and, after extreme backlash, the book’s publishers canceled it. Days later, Hoover posted on Instagram that “the coloring book was developed with Lily’s strength in mind, but I can absolutely see how this was tone deaf ... I agree with you. No excuses.” Despite this, earlier this year, she partnered with Target and Olive & June to release an

“It Ends with Us”-inspired nail polish line, which faced the same criticisms of insensitivity.

The new movie’s press tour has also been plagued by disapproval. During the last month, Blake Lively, who plays Lily, has been called insensitive for appearing in TikTok videos telling fans to “grab your friends, wear your florals, and head out to see (It Ends With Us).” Many also take issue with the book being referred to as a “romance” or “rom-com.” BHS senior Tatum Ibanez questioned the romantic comedy label, wondering “What comedy does (Blake Lively) find in domestic violence?”

The continued debate surrounding It Ends With Us is evidence of the complexity of handling sensitive topics in media. The conversation surrounding the book and film calls attention to an increasing demand for deeper and more sensitive portrayals of domestic violence. While “It Ends With Us” has drawn attention to the issue, audience reactions emphasize the need for authors to explore serious issues with the depth and sensitivity they deserve.



# BHS athletes transition from middle to high school sports

BY REUBEN WOLF  
staff writer

Berkeley High School has 18 varsity level sports, with over one thousand student athletes. Many of these athletes played sports before entering high school at club or middle school level. However, going from middle school to high school sports is still a large leap.

Owen Stoddard, a freshman at BHS, explained the difference between high school and middle school sports, describing middle school sports as having, “no real competition, It was just a lot more recreational.”

Stoddard explained that the main purpose of middle school sports is to build community. The emphasis was a lot less on hard work and improvement, in contrast to what his high school experience has been so far.

The ways that some sports are played can even change between middle and high school according to Kai Ferlatte, another current BHS freshman. Ferlatte played flag football from sixth to eighth grade at Wil-

lard Middle School. This year, Ferlatte decided to make the transition to play tackle football at BHS. Ferlatte shared how he felt apprehensive when he first began playing tackle football, due to its more aggressive gameplay.

“I know we have pads and stuff, but we can still get injured on parts of your body other than your head, chest, and shoulders,” Ferlatte said.

Even though it took some time getting used to the new variation of his sport, Ferlatte still maintains a positive outlook, and has enjoyed his time on the team.

For some athletes, the biggest change when transitioning to high school sports is not the fundamental rules of the sport, but in the expectations put on them. Annika Silverstrim, a BHS sophomore who plays varsity lacrosse and field hockey, shared her experience with these changes.

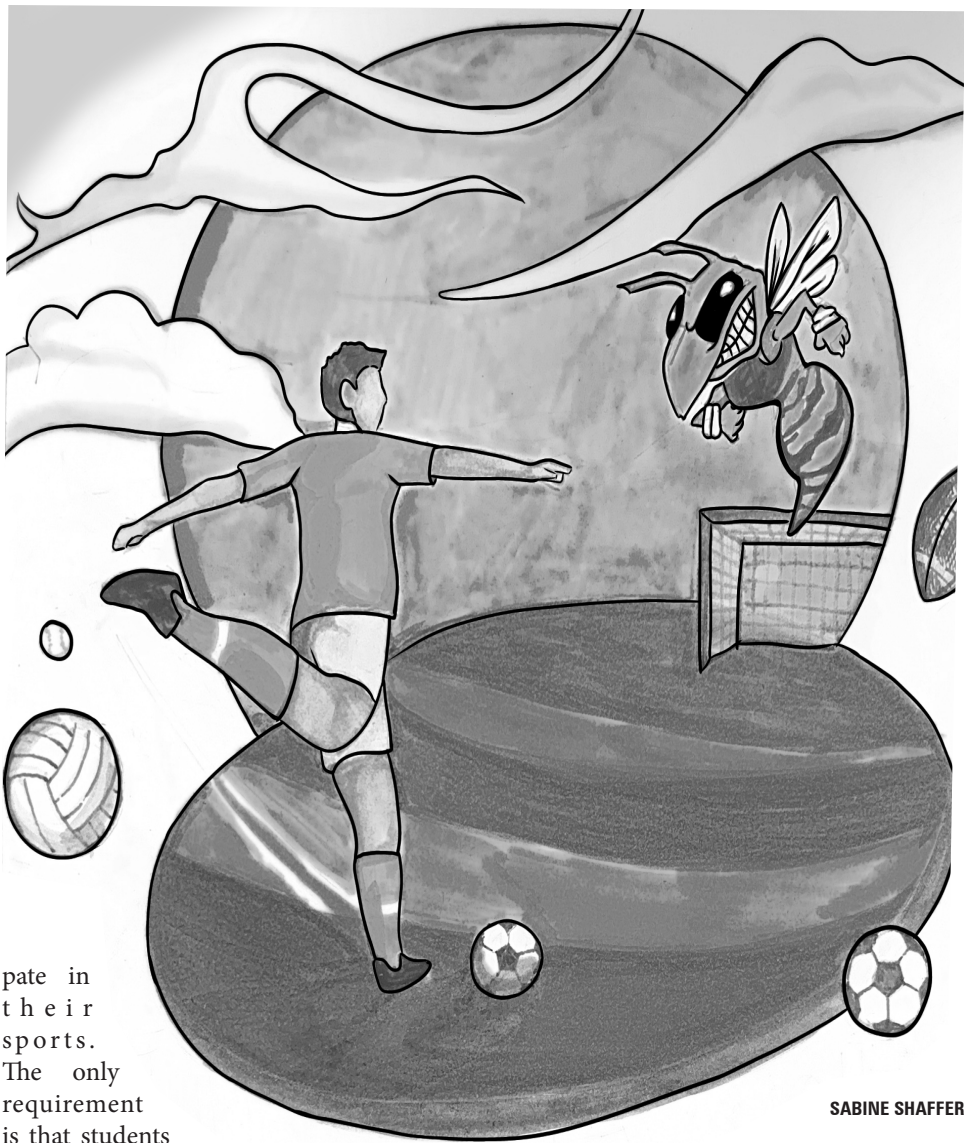
When Silverstrim was in middle school, she received no consequences for showing up late to practice or missing it altogether. At BHS, however, her coaches will take away opportunities

for playing time in games if students are absent.

“There is a much higher expectation with showing up, being present, and actively putting in effort every single day. In middle school, expectations were much lower. We had leeway,” Silverstrim said.

This is a common trend among various BHS sports. Most teams have five to six practices per week, with each practice usually lasting two hours. In addition, student-athletes are often expected to attend all games and practices; if they are unable to, they need to directly contact their coach about their absence. Comparatively, King Middle School only has around two mandatory practices a week for every sport, and each practice lasts roughly an hour and a half.

BHS also has academic requirements, preventing students with a GPA below 2.0 or more than one F from participating in school sanctioned sports. Contrary to this, Berkeley Unified School District middle schools do not enforce any GPA minimums to partici-



SABINE SHAFFER

pate in their sports. The only requirement is that students sign up for Links Enrichment, Academics and Recreation to the Needs of Students, an afterschool program run by the school district. However, in high school, more students feel pressure to not only maintain the minimum GPA in

der to play, but also to devote lots of time and energy to their sport.

“Every grade now matters ... for high school, I feel like every single percentage point matters and every-

thing means more,” Stoddard said.

Despite these challenges, being involved in BHS sports is worth it.

“I was a little nervous, but I was excited, and I really like it so far,” Ferlatte said.

# Girls flag football and field hockey gain popularity this fall

BY CEDAR GILMOUR  
staff writer

With a new year beginning at Berkeley High School, fall sports are in full swing. Of the many athletic programs open to all BHS students, girls flag football and field hockey have been gaining popularity. 2023 was the inaugural year for girls flag football at BHS. This year, so many players tried out for both field hockey and flag football

that two teams were needed to accommodate for these numbers.

The number of women in sports has been steadily increasing. Not only is this apparent in the BHS community, but it is a worldwide trend. Half of the over 10,000 athletes competing in the 2024 Paris Olympics were female. This marks a large shift compared to 1900, when women represented approximately two percent of all athletes in the Olympics.

There are various reasons for this trend at BHS. These factors are specific to each individual athlete. Some girls may be attempting to get conditioning for other sports, some may be curious to try these relatively new sports, and others might want to meet new people and be a part of a community at school.

Mire Vu-Beavers, a BHS sophomore, said, “I was inspired to join field hockey because I wanted to play another team sport to improve

my athleticism. I also wanted to be a part of another team sport to meet new people.” Vu-Beavers, who has been playing lacrosse for six years, felt comfortable being in a team environment. “The girls are all super sweet,” Vu-Beavers said. “And the older girls definitely are role models to the freshman, sophomores, and people

who have never played before.”

Katherine Howarth, a

sports made joining a new team less daunting for her. “It’s definitely introduced me to people that I wouldn’t have encountered without the sport,” Borovicka said.

*“It’s definitely introduced me to people that I wouldn’t have encountered without the sport,”*

**Whitney Borovicka**  
BHS junior

Speaking on the positive outcome of branching out and trying a new sport with a new team, Borovicka shared, “We have a great team dynamic, which is great because a lot of us didn’t know each other before.”

Both womens’ field hockey and flag football are available to any athletes that want to give the sports a try and attend tryouts at the start of the school year. Having developed womens’ sports teams and programs helps to creates more positive experiences for an increasing number of female students at BHS. The impact is not just the athletic aspect; being a part of these teams goes beyond the field for many. Female athletes are gaining the opportunity to learn lifelong skills such as teamwork, leadership and self-confidence, all while finding a sense of community within such a large school and while spending time playing a sport they enjoy.

BHS sophomore on the girls flag football team explained why she felt encouraged to join the team.

“I wanted to be a part of another community at school,” Howarth said. “I’ve met so many new people and I’m excited for the rest of the season.”

Howarth had not played for a flag football team before, but she did have previous experience handling a football. “I’ve always played football with my dad,” Howarth said. “So I thought it would be a good way to keep playing but have another team to do that with.”

Whitney Borovicka, a BHS junior and a new transfer student at BHS, thought joining flag football would be a good way to acclimate to a new school. Borovicka plays both lacrosse and soccer, so having a broad range of experiences with team



The flag football team practices on the softball field.

QUINCY MORRIS-FRY



# SPORTS

SPORTS EDITORS: CLARA TJEN & LULI GALINSON

LUCELAGALINSON@STUDENTS.BERKELEY.NET



The Dublin High School football team prepares for the snap against BHS.

ATTICUS LABANG

## Football wins in home opener

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

and sprinted down the field to score a touchdown. With BHS scoring an electric first touchdown, they end the first quarter with flickering stadium lights, cheering crowds, and a 6-3 lead.

According to Head Coach David Perry, their strategies for the game were for offense to “pound the rock, and run right at their face.” As for defense, “we wanted to pressure the quarterback and make him run so we’d have opportunities to hit the quarterback as much as possible,” Perry said.

Five different players accounted for nine sacks, something the team had clearly set their mind to doing. Four minutes into the second quarter BHS scored a safety, tackling Dublin in their own endzone, widening their lead by two points. Heading into the third quarter, Dublin scored a touchdown, quickly followed by a field goal at the three yard line. With BHS down 10-8, the crowd was on the edge of their seats.

After tense second and

third quarters, BHS wrestled for the lead in the final minutes of the fourth quarter. They entered the final quarter down 10-8. The team succeeded offensively, managing to score a second touchdown, which sent the crowd into a frenzy. With just minutes left, BHS protected their four point lead, securing the win for their first game of the season.

Senior William Puamau highlighted the first kick return as the moment that brought up the team’s intensity which they then maintained throughout the rest of the game. It was a hard fought victory, challenging BHS both offensively and defensively in the final quarter.

Perry stated the team’s preparation for the upcoming season has centered around team culture. “Coming together as a team, building team culture and team chemistry has been huge for us.”

The dedication, culture, and chemistry on the field led to the 14-10 win. Coming off the game, senior wide receiver/defensive back William Puamau said,

“Coach Perry worked us hard, Coach Miles, all the coaches. They got us right for this game, and prepared us, mentally and physically.”

The game had many highlights, but for senior Ian Wong, it was “just going out there, being with my brothers, going to war one last time.” For Coach Perry, “the biggest highlight was just watching it all kinda begin to come together, and play to the level and expectation of my coaching staff and I.”

The Jacket pride radiated from the stands, matching the pride in the community that is built on the field. Coach Perry inspires his players to put their best foot forward in games by encouraging them to play for loved ones, saying, “if you love somebody, you’ll play so much harder for them.”

The outcome of the game is sure to motivate students, friends, and families to continue to show out and support the Berkeley High Jackets at each and every game.

Heading into the season after a thrilling win, Coach Perry warns, “these other teams better watch out.”

## New open weight room helps athletes develop and connect

BY NATALIE GROSS  
staff writer

Berkeley High School’s new open weight room, located in M2, is a new way for student athletes to access cardio and strength training for their sports. The room is used by various sports teams including football, basketball, volleyball, and flag football. Student athletes are highly encouraged to go in order to maintain health and longevity in their sports. The weight room is open Tuesday through Thursday, but each sports team is assigned two specific days to attend within that period.

Major Corpuz, the conditioning coach for the new open weight room, discussed the benefits of the room for athletes. “Strength training is really good for cardiovascular health and lean muscle mass,” he said. “It’s not only for the sport, but also in general, just

health and fitness.”

The room is accessible to most sports at BHS, with an open-door policy that welcomes everyone. “Every athlete, every human being, you don’t even have to be an athlete — I’ll always accommodate anybody that just wants to be healthy and put in the work,” Corpuz said.

Students such as Akasha Manandhar, a sophomore, and Zariyah King, a senior, are already seeing the benefits. “I feel stronger. I’ve learned the different workouts we can do to focus on different body parts, to help strengthen them, and you can do them on your own if you go to the gym,” Manandhar said. King highlights improvements in her physical strength, particularly her endurance while playing basketball, though she mentioned that additional equipment could help improve the weight room further. “I think the weight room is great, but honestly, maybe (add) some

treadmills,” King said.

While the weight room has been well-received, there are limitations. “We have a limited amount of time in there because there are so many kids coming in now, and there’s only one trainer,” Manandhar said. Corpuz also pointed out the challenges with space the number of teams utilizing the room.

Despite this, Corpuz observed a boost in students’ overall enjoyment during training. “People are not feeling like it’s an obligation, but more of an enjoyment, a place that they can spend their time with their friends and the team to develop, for the sport and as well as themselves,” Corpuz said.

In addition to improving student athletes’ strength and stamina, he hopes the weight room will help foster a tight-knit sports culture. “For students, I want them to know that they’re always welcome in the weight room,” Corpuz said.



Coach Major Corpuz motivates a student while lifting weights.

ALEX TRIPCEVICH



## ATHLETE PROFILE

What Eamonn Kaufer, a senior on the varsity men’s water polo team, really appreciates about the team is that it is “really driven towards getting better.” Kaufer has been on varsity since he was a sophomore, and a lot of his teammates are people he’s been playing with for the past four years, both at school and at his water polo club, Contra Costa United. Over the years, his teammates have also become his closest friends. Kaufer said, “I guess we all started off as freshmen together, so we all put the work in on JV together, and we all got to be friends, and so now we’re all pretty tight.” Kaufer describes these relationships as a crucial part of why the team has such great chemistry and “gel” so well together. Being elected captain as a junior taught Kaufer a lot about discipline and how to be a good leader. As a senior, Kaufer feels a lot of pressure to perform well as a team and win. So far this season, the team has a 4-1 record and hope to keep this winning streak carrying on.

— Ava Quandt