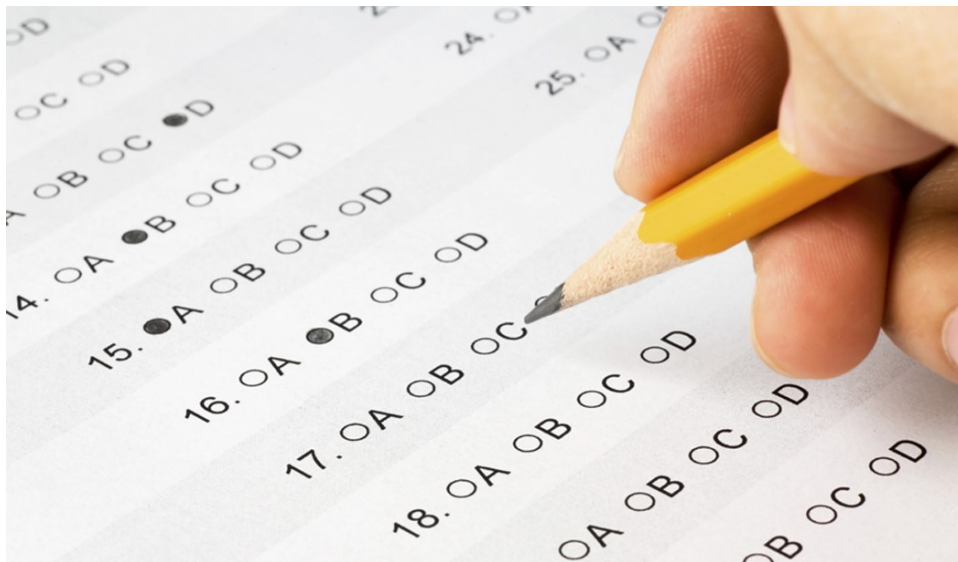


East Hampton High School The New Bellringer 2015 Volume 2 Edition 2



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Standardized Testing: Helpful or Hurtful?

By Haley Rivard-Lentz

Each year, millions of students across the globe take standardized tests. Standardized tests are given to students in order to determine skill level, intelligence, and college preparedness, among other capabilities. The tests are meant to act as a consistent basis through which students can be compared. Unlike regular testing, standardized testing gives the same test to all students and regulates answer-checking, such that answers are not left open to interpretation.

Like with any topic, the value of standardized testing has been hotly debated by teachers, students, administrators, and others involved in the educational process. In the

United States, there is the Common Core testing for grade school, and the SATs and ACTs for students wishing to go to college. From a young age, students are groomed to be able to effectively take standardized tests and withstand the pressure and time restrictions placed on them.

Mandatory Testing

When attending public schools,

taking some standardized tests is mandatory for students in almost all grades. Previously, there were a variety of tests that different states administered. But now, there are nationally mandated tests being taken by students.

"Kids in elementary school now are going to suffer. When we were younger, we had the CMTs, but those weren't as hard as the Common Core test is now. We focused on the CMTs for part of the year,

but the entire curriculum now is Common Core based. They'll learn how to fill in multiple choice questions, but they won't know how to think freely or write an opinionated piece

because of the focus on standardized education and testing," senior Brianna Poulin said. The difference between what elementary school age children learn today and what they learned ten years ago is vastly different.

The No Child Left Behind Act signed by President George Bush in January 2002 required that all states administer to children a test from grades three to

eight, and then one in the tenth grade. Students were required to be tested in math, reading, and science. In Connecticut, elementary and middle school students were given the CMTs, and in tenth grade, the CAPTs.

That system is no longer in place; instead, the Common Core curriculum is being used. The Common Core is a national initiative that mandates what students learn in mathematics and language arts from kindergarten to grade twelve. It aims to prepare all American students for college or the work force.

"Although I understand what the Common Core is for, I think that there are definitely negative effects. It's great that each student in the United States is technically going to get a good education and that it puts everyone on the same playing field. The only problem is that when teachers have to follow a very strictly mandated curriculum, there's not a lot of room for students to learn other things that are more interesting to them or might help them develop their interests," senior Emily Weber said.

Many experts fear just that. Students may not develop interests or a love of learning if they are taught from a young age to follow a certain government-mandated curriculum and that there is no freedom in the classroom to express oneself.

"Kids learn that they need to think inside the box, instead of coming up with

See *Standardized Testing*, Page 10

STAFF BOX

All stories were written by students in Journalism class and in A.P. English Language and Composition

Teacher/Advisor: Mr. Dunn

Editor-in-Chief: Daniel Klemons

Thank you to all of the staff and students who participated in this project.

High School: Reality or Safety Net?

By Alex Balletto

High school can act as a safety net to many. Waking up in the morning, getting on the bus or in the car, arriving to school, seeing friends and caring teachers, feeling safe, following a schedule, going home and following the same routine the next day.

Then, students are dropped off at college, knowing nobody, having no sense of familiarity, and, simply, having to start all over again—with friends and, even more difficult, a schedule that will help better their future and possibly plan their beginning success. After all, college is a good predictor of how individuals will do in life. People get thrown into environments that they don't know or like all the time.

"In college, you need to rely on yourself. You have to be able to develop your own schedule and find out how you work best," said Madison Savage, a college student who graduated from East Hampton High School in 2014.

Savage continued to say that students need to "get in the habit of planning things in advance. You have to be willing to step up and be an adult during college."

Mrs. Lisa Lupacchino-Gilson, the art teacher at E.H.H.S., solidified Savage's statement by saying that "high school is more of a controlled environment, led by adults. In college, you are your own adult."

While going from a high school student to an adult may be difficult, there are many resources that are provided at a college to do so. Professors are looking for students to seek answers for themselves by themselves.

Lupacchino-Gilson said some ways to do that are to "use resources like the library and the study center."

Lupacchino-Gilson often reminds her senior students that the pace of classes is a lot different than high school; the critiques are harsh; the due date is the due date, and professors will give students a zero because they are paying to go



there.

It is clear that college and high school are very different. Although high school gives an idea of how college classes are conducted, it does not provide the

"Although high school gives an idea of how college classes are conducted, it does not provide the whole picture."

whole picture.

"Students that scraped by in high school will have a definite wake-up call," said Lupacchino-Gilson, who later said that "study habits are case by case. When I hear how much some students study, I am amazed. In college, you need to study



your notes every night, not just before the test. The key to college is to manage your time— that is how you will succeed."

"Professors do go out of their way, but the workload is heavier than high school and they do expect students to rely on themselves or to go see the teacher's assistant," said Savage.

Delaney Savage, an East Hampton High School junior, said that she will feel less comfortable in college, "because you are being dropped in an environment that you are not used to at all with no one to be watching over you at all times."

Senior Bekka Agnello said that she doesn't think she will feel as safe as she did in high school, because it is "only yourself looking out for you."

One quality that makes EHHS stand out as a high school and very different from a college environment is that the student and teacher relationships are tight.

"Teachers at EHHS care a lot about the students and would dodge a bullet for them," said Agnello. Agnello later said that, "there are many teachers here at EHHS that you can tell anything to or get advice from."

Although college might be scary for high school students to think about, many are ready to move on and jump into a different world.

"I feel more bored than comfortable in the doors of East Hampton High School," said Agnello.

Delaney Savage pointed out that "there are many opportunities in college." She plans to take internships, and network.

Savage also said that she loves meeting new people, but for a shy person, she "couldn't imagine having to meet all new friends."

"I prefer to have my own schedule, because a daily routine gets old after a while," said Agnello.

Delaney Savage is "not nervous

See *High School*, Page 10

Social Media in School: More Harm Than Good?

By Delaney Savage

Over the past few years social networking has sunk its claws into the lives of people of all ages. Sites such as Twitter and Instagram provide a way to keep in touch with each other, but could it be a double-edged sword?

Some people argue that social media sites are a battleground for bullying. "Students will go home and hide behind a computer screen. There are many people who will say nasty things online that they wouldn't dare say to someone's face. My motto is; if you don't want it published on the cover of the New York Times, you probably shouldn't put it online," said East Hampton High School Senior Alex Balletto.

However, many positive things are posted online as well. Things such as motivational quotes, birthday wishes, workout regimens, and fundraising projects are uploaded daily.

"Twitter and Facebook are great ways to remind me when our school has sporting events and other upcoming activities in the community," said Kyle Cutler, a junior at EHHS.

An up-and-coming app called Yik Yak is controversial because of that fact that it is completely anonymous. The app allows people to create and view "Yaks" or tweets without their name attached. The app shows you what people are saying within a ten mile radius of where you are. Because your name is not attached to what you say, people, especially high school students, are more likely to write negative things.

"The most prevalent kind of bullying in the school environment is definitely people being anonymous. Sometimes it gets really bad," said another junior, Sarah Massie.

A question that will divide public opinion nearly in half is: would schools be a better place without social media?

Someone who saw pros and cons

to social media said yes—and no.

"Social media can be a handy study tool and a lot of kids do use it to their benefit," said sophomore Jordan Hall; "but social media undoubtedly distracts away from classroom learning time."

Social media can also affect school life in more ways than one. When there's a fight online, the fight can be brought into school and even escalate.

"Social media creates so much unnecessary drama that should not be brought into school. It can really impact the learning environment," said junior Sean Pedevillano.

While there are so many reasons why social networking can harm the

computer screen" has become common.

When asked if he thinks students say things online that they wouldn't say in person, Pedevillano said, "I have never been so sure of anything. There are definitely too many kids who say things online that they wouldn't dare say in person."

As face to face interaction becomes more and more avoidable, some kids feel invincible online.

While social media sites are a great communication tool, bullies use them as a way to make people feel bad in a wide variety of ways.

In high school, the most common way of bullying is indirect. Indirect messages, statuses, posts, or tweets are anything that talks about someone else, but doesn't specifically mention them.

"So many people indirect tweet and other people just always assume it's about them," said Kyle Cutler.

Does social media in school do more harm than good? Social networking allows friends and families to stay connected, but bullies use it to make others feel bad. Many fights are initiated on social media, but students rely on it for homework, sports event, and school activity reminders.

Maybe social media is something that should be used outside of a school environment. A lot of class time is taken away when students are constantly scrolling through Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram. Nevertheless, the varied uses of social media in school environments continue to be a point of contention.

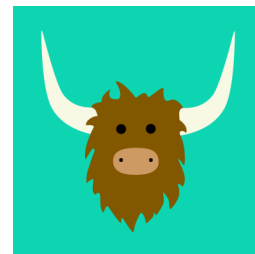
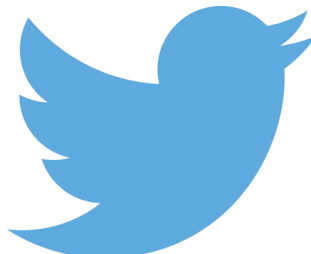


school environment, it provides a way for students to keep in touch and share a variety of information. Alex Balletto loves using Instagram to share pictures with his friends and family.

"One of the other good things about social media is seeing a ton of inspirational quotes posted by friends and other people I follow," said Balletto.

"Social media actually helps me with schoolwork—believe it or not. My calculus teacher has a classroom Twitter that she posts homework, test, and quiz reminders on. That thing is a lifesaver," Balletto added.

With the growth of social networking the reality of "hiding behind a



Opinion: The Ferguson Tragedy

By Stephan Simon

Michael Brown, an unarmed black teen, was shot and killed by police in Ferguson, Missouri. Brown was walking down the street with a friend when he was shot to death by a Ferguson police officer on a Saturday afternoon in 2014.

The unjust execution of a young African-American teen has raised extremely violent protests across the country. From Los Angeles to Chicago, some Americans have come together to go against the slaughter of black lives at the hands of law enforcement. It has come to a point in the United States where black life is valued at an all-time low. Now protestors across the country are beginning to stand up and let their voices be heard.

Reverend Brown, of the East Hartford Faith Church, expressed deep worries concerning the tragic death of Michael Brown. When asked how this tragedy has an effect in the young children and

teenagers in the community, he said, "First, I must say that I am extremely upset of the decision made in Ferguson. Many of the young fellows in this city of East Hartford, mostly being people of color, need to know their rights and how to avoid situations like this from occurring in the fu-

officers alike, in an attempt to prevent other tragic incidents from occurring in the future. He also went on to say, "I'm just about as angry as you could imagine about the killing and decision for the Mike Brown case... Nobody should be shot down in the street and left for their blood to run down the streets, regardless of race, gender, or culture."

The general consensus was that the shooting of unarmed Mike Brown was unjust and should have resulted in the jailing of the officer that committed the heinous act. But instead of the ruling that many expected, the officer resigned.

This decision was not only a slap in the face to the black community,

but a sign that the United States had taken one step forward and two steps back with regards to race. The shooting of Mike

See *Ferguson*, Page 11



ture."

Reverend Brown is trying to get a message across that black youth need to be more aware of the rights they have and learn how to interact with authority and

Classroom Behavior: Declassified

By Alex Basil and Aaron Romero

Maintaining an optimal level of effort and mindfulness is essential to the success of a classroom.

All teachers have experienced offensive classroom behaviors. Several incidences of educational insubordination and other interactions have been reported.

Office referrals are more common than publically received. They can be due to offenses such as not wanting to give up personal devices.

"I've given office referrals for insubordination. That was back in the days when I used to take cell phones—a student would have to give their cell phone," said Dr. Joseph Ochterski, a science teacher.

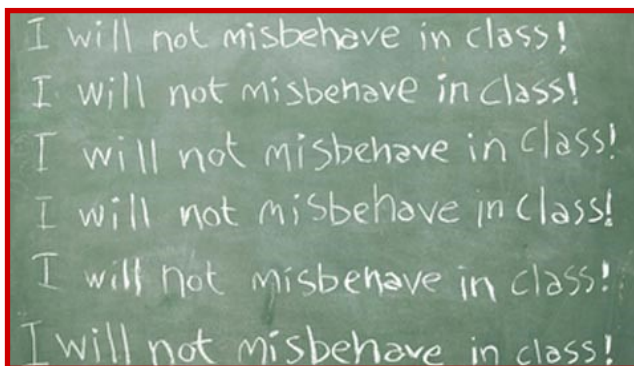
Similarly, classroom behaviors can be detrimental to the school environment.

"One of my first years teaching, I had interactions with a student who would often flat out refuse to work—just saying no, [sitting], arms crossed. That, I think, was the hardest," said Mr. Jarad Demick, a mathematics teacher.

Even though teachers have shed light on some of the worst behaviors, they

regularly see much milder displays of classroom conduct. The general consensus is that students are mostly focused and ready to learn.

"Generally the behaviors are positive. They have their stuff. They have their writing utensil, and they are ready for class," said Mrs. Kristen Keska, a social



studies teacher.

However, the atmosphere in the classroom can differ.

"Over the last several years, I've had really, really great groups of students and I haven't had many disciplinary issues. The biggest issues sometimes are getting going, a little bit of talking as the bell

rings, and people are still kind of all over the place and need to be specifically asked 'Hey, take a seat, take out your notes,'" said Mr. Demick.

Students can have distractions or issues in the classroom that take them down the wrong paths, or they can simply be confused. Their learning can be hindered, and that is when student-to-student interactions become vital.

"I love it when students interact with students, help them out, make sure they're on task. And if they're behind on something, or don't understand something, they help them out," said Mrs. Keska. She revealed this interaction as one of her best observed classroom behaviors.

Additionally, other teachers have witnessed positive actions. Many educators strive to elicit a positive work ethic from their students. When asked about the best behaviors he sees, Dr. Ochterski said, "Focusing on the task at hand and being mindful as they do their work is number one; focusing on their work and being inquisitive."

It is a well-known fact that class-
See *Classroom Behaviors*, Page 11

Decline of Drug Use at E.H.H.S.

By Devin Caramma and Austin Kelly

Despite the fact that drug use has declined at East Hampton High School, drugs are still a major issue for students and society as a whole.

There's no denying that there are drugs in every high school. While the presence of drugs itself is concerning, it's the fact that the substances take away from the educational environment that have teachers and parents urging for change.

Change is exactly what happened at East Hampton High School. Head of Security, Mr. Tony Vecca, recounted his experiences of his first year working at EHHS.

"Kids would be laid out in the hall from being drugged up. I would see them after school selling drugs out of their cars with scales. I'd say from then to now we've come a very long way," he said.

Over the past five years, the East Hampton High School administration has accounted for few serious-drug confiscations. These confiscations might include drugs like marijuana and various types of pills such as opiates, benzodiazepines, stimulants and more.

Vice Principal Mr. Michael Dalton claims, "The new trend that seems to

be very popular among students is e-cigs, or also known as vapes." E-cigs, or vapes, are electronic devices that students use to smoke nicotine based water vapor. Students frequently use these in school, be-



cause they lack a distinct odor and are easy to conceal. He said, "When we confiscate these items, we usually run the liquid inside the device through a test. From what we've seen most of them contain just liq-

uid or liquid with nicotine."

Nicotine, like any other drug, is highly addictive. Drugs produce a sense of euphoria in the brain that increases the level of dopamine and serotonin that are produced. Students get pleasure from these drugs, because they produce a high that makes them feel "good." It's highly important to not get involved in the use of drugs, because they have such a crippling effect over the person in the long run.

"Students don't realize the harm they are doing to themselves because they don't see any immediate results; the results accumulate over time," said Mr. Dalton.

Therefore, when students are doing these drugs, they don't have the slightest care or worry about what it's doing to their body.

Addiction to drugs such as nicotine can be an effect of many different factors that lead students into trying them... Mr. Geoffrey Lucas, social studies teacher at EHHS, said, "Peer pressure is easily one of the leading causes for drug use." Mr. Vecca classified high school

See *Drug Use*, Page 11

The Purpose of Advanced Placement Summer Work

By Tristan Winquist

AP summer work is often employed by the East Hampton High School teachers as a tool for student success. It provides useful information for the student regarding the course, and the teacher information about the class that they will be teaching.

Students enrolled in AP classes at East Hampton High School will often be assigned work to be completed before the class begins the next year. To students this work often seems like an unnecessary burden that takes up time during their summer vacation, but this work can provide much needed information and teachers at EHHS gave insight into what this work does for the students and themselves.

Assigning summer work is an important part of the class and helps prepare students for what the course will be like. Mr. Geoff Lucas, the AP US History instructor, explained that it can really help students decide if they really want to take the class or if they can handle the workload.

"I would hate for a student to find



they don't want to take the course [once it has already begun]," he said.

This can help lessen stress by ensuring that students start taking the right classes for them at the beginning of the school year. Mr. David Dunn, who teaches the AP English Language and Composi-

tion course said that it, "gives them a feel for what college work is like."

This is important, because it can ensure that a student really has the drive to take an AP course, but according to Mr. Lucas it also, "Thins the crowd," and maintains only the most qualified students take the course.

AP summer work assigned during classes that bridge two years also helps keep a student engaged in the act of learning and helps keep the pace going for large comprehensive tests like the AP United States History test. This summer work helps the student continue their learning outside the classroom and helps ensure that the entire text book is read by the exam date.

"It keeps the kids in the process of working on skills," says Mr. Lucas.

This work not only helps the student prepare for the class to come, but lets the teachers learn important information about the students that they will be teach-

See *Summer Work*, Page 12

White Privilege: Societal Expectations or Education

By Carli D'Antonio and Lindsey Hopkins

An individual's perception of white privilege in today's society is largely determined by his or her surroundings. Faculty at East Hampton High School (EHHS) was recently interviewed about white privilege on what it is, where it stems from, and where it can be seen.

White privilege is a phrase used to describe certain advantages that Caucasian people experience more so than non-Caucasian people, whether it's through social, political, and/or economic factors. The issue of white privilege is an important, but sometimes overlooked topic, especially as the United States elected its first African American president, Barack Obama, in 2008. Even as the nation makes progress, there still appears to be an issue of race.

The extent to which this is perceived varies as much as any other political topic: in jobs, education, and social standing, as well as in an individual's self-worth. It's the idea that white people are exposed to more benefits only because of their race, which can encourage the idea that Caucasians are superior to other races.

The degree to which white privilege exists in society may change from community to community, and person to person. Mr. Joseph Holloway, an English teacher at East Hampton High School, said that white privilege is evident "particularly [with] men, not necessarily women."

Similarly, Mr. Geoff Lucas, a history teacher at EHHS, described white privilege as "the unconscious, or lack of awareness, of benefits of simply being a white individual, or especially a white male in American society." Lucas noted that, "Today [white privilege] is more subtle." He believed that white privilege is a prevalent issue, "especially in jobs and social standing."

Lucas exemplified subtle white privilege in areas like jobs when he said, "You're twice as likely to have your resume be picked for an interview if your name is Lisa instead of Laquisha, as an example."

He explained that often times in today's society, "The more African-American sounding a name is, the less likely it is to be picked in terms of being granted an interview for something like a job, or for something like college admission."

When asked if she believed white privilege was a prevalent issue in today's society, Mrs. Sandra Mannino, a Spanish teacher at East Hampton High School,

said, "If you look at society in general and then you see who has the jobs that have power... who is in the school system or anything like that, and you see who are the people who are in charge of the schools—the superintendents, the principal, and people like that—you are probably going to see white people."

"And then you ask yourself, 'Oh how come they are [in charge]?' But you have to look at the population itself. So if you go to a school like [East Hampton High School], or where the pool of non-whites is very low, you wouldn't see that so much. But if you go to the inner cities, then you see a different story. So you can see it both ways, I think, depending on your location."

"It's a give and take," said Mannino about the job application process.

Like Mannino, Holloway recognized the connection between location and white privilege. He said, "The majority of people are going to go with what is established in [their] community; they're going

"White privilege is a direct result of society's attachment to superiority."

to follow along and try not to rock the boat, whereas in a city atmosphere you have such a variety of viewpoints that you're going to see larger variances in people's attitudes and belief systems."

Mannino made an important point in regards to not only the connection between community setting and white privilege, but also education and white privilege. She was asked if she think that the community plays a large role in the prevalence of white privilege.

She said, "I think yes, it does, depending on where you are. But, it also has to do with education." She said, "Who are the students who are going to college to prepare themselves to actually have these jobs? I mean I feel that if you want to compete in this society, and I'm talking as a Latin American, you have to prepare yourself and be in this same pool as everybody else."

Mannino's statement enforced the idea that education is an important part of

understanding not only white privilege, but racial diversity in general. She discussed how many Latin Americans think that "everything will be given to them" if they come to America, which she does not believe is true.

She then questioned what Americans are taught. "The white people in America... Are they being taught to fight for those jobs too? Or that they're just going to get them just because they're white? So I think it has a lot to do with education, and yes you have to fight for those jobs, but because there's an older generation who will be the people in power, maybe they have biases."

Mannino's statements influence ideas that the more a person is exposed to the history and culture of various races, and the fact that there will always be different races, the more accepting a person will be. People, no matter what race, will make decisions based on perception rather than knowledge.

"I think it's a little bit of everything," said Mannino regarding a person's perception of white privilege and other cultures.

After stating a similar view, Lucas said, "That isn't to say that a community that is not very diverse actively supports, or actively promotes, racial discrimination. That doesn't mean they are not consciously aware of what they're doing, though."

Lucas agreed that white privilege was not always intentional. When asked if he believed white privilege could be unintentional *or* intentional, he replied, "Absolutely it can." He then said, "And generally white privilege is mostly unintentional."

Even as the majority of white privilege is seen through unintentional acts, that leaves room for the *intentional* acts of white privilege. Lucas said, "I think naturally, people who see things different from themselves, are not drawn to something like that, or don't aspire to associate with something that's different from themselves. But racism or white privilege is definitely something that's a learned behavior from society."

When it comes to a racist mindset, Lucas, referenced Aristophanes, and quoted, "Youth ages, immaturity is outgrown, ignorance can be educated, and drunkenness sobered, but stupid lasts forever."

Those who consider white privilege to be a prevalent issue in today's soci-

See *White Privilege*, Page 12

How Standardized Tests Don't Measure Education Accurately

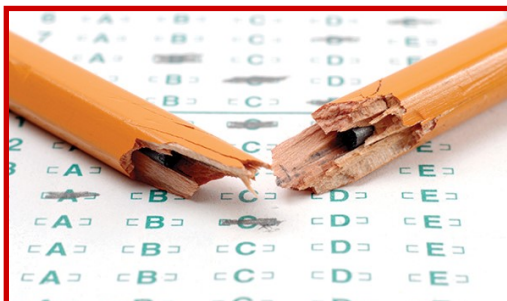
By Natalie Dash and Nicole DeMartino

The East Hampton High School staff revealed key components in composing college applications. As millions of students began the grueling application process for college this past fall, they were focusing on their grade point average and class rank, which are the least important factors colleges look at.

Mr. Michael Dalton, East Hampton High School assistant principal said, "I would encourage students to have a well rounded academic life."

"That you were really interested in things that mattered and you put your heart into them. The [applications] attest to your character and those are the

types of things that ought to matter more." The importance of having a well-rounded



academic life is imperative when applying to colleges due to the fact that these uni-

versities need to obtain a strong sense of one's personality through one application.

As some students base their high school career solely off academics, their focus should be on becoming a well-rounded student with achievable grades, clear participation in extracurricular activities, and leadership roles within the school system.

Standardized testing is extremely influential when applying for college, yet it isn't the only base that an application should be viewed off of. It's helpful to take SATs and ACTs as many times as possi-

See *Standardized Tests*, Page 13

The Terror of Cyberbullying

By Daniel Einsiedel and Ashlynn Morse

In modern times, a student can ruin someone's life in the comfort of his own home.

Since the expansion of social media, American society has, in some ways, taken a turn for the worse. Facebook, Yik Yak, Twitter, and other social media sites have been detrimental to students' mental health.

Alyssa Mercaldi, a student at East Hampton High School, said that "...some kids get really affected by what people say and there's been many instances of self-harm, suicide, [and] cutting. Now that the internet has increased so much in the past couple years, people can just say whatever they want."

It seems that many students think that what they post online will not affect them outside of the home. Many students would not be brave enough to say in person much of what is posted online. The internet creates a false sense of security for students, which leads them to post harmful things about peers. When a peer sees what has been posted online, he sometimes has no idea what to do.

Mercaldi recalled of her own online conflict, "[Students] don't know what to do. In my situation I didn't know what to do. Do I go to the school or do I ask her to stop? But I knew if I asked her to stop, she would just keep doing it, so my only option was to go to the school."

Cyberbullying has not been limited to just one social media site. It is most commonly seen on Twitter through indirect tweeting, which is tweeting something negative about someone else without using their name, or through the app Yik Yak.

One of the newest additions to

the line of social media is Yik Yak. In this app, people can post whatever they want anonymously. This has led to many problems nationally, because students are being cyberbullied on it, and no one knows the identities of the posters.

Mr. Michael Dalton, Assistant Principal at East Hampton High School, discussed the inevitable dangers of Yik Yak: "[Students] use initials, but it's obvious who they're talking about."

However, there is a way that Yik Yak cannot be used in school, called a Geo-Fence. When a school puts up a Geo-Fence, students cannot use Yik Yak in school. This prevents students from being harassed on Yik Yak in school, but the Geo-Fence stops there.

Dalton explained how Yik Yak cannot be prevented in out-of-school situations: "Let's say, for example, we're at an away soccer game, and all these fans are there and they're Yik Yaking—there's nothing I can do," he said.

In every school with victims of cyberbullying comes ways that it should be dealt with. For more serious cases, like threatening someone on social media, the law dictates that the local police must get

involved. But in cases of pure bullying or harassment, the administration intervenes. However, sometimes that is not enough. In many cases, the suspect retaliates by cyberbullying the victim even more. At East Hampton High School, there are several techniques used.

According to Dalton, "Administrators have to be consistent in following through on harassment investigations, and on punishments, even when it's difficult to do that. It sends the message to the rest of the students that the administrators take this seriously." Mrs. Kristen Keska, a social studies teacher at East Hampton High School, proposed other ways: "I think a lot of it has to do with positive role models; teachers talking about it, talking about what's going on, talking about consequences. I also think that some of it is the parents keeping an eye on what their kids do."

Mercaldi had something different to say about handling cyberbullying. "Our school has tried assemblies, but most of the time the kids don't pay attention or they think it's really stupid, so many kids won't take that into consideration. The internet has expanded so much and I don't think anyone really can control it and if you punish all the kids that do something bad, then most of our school will be having detentions right now."

Mr. Dalton, Mrs. Keska, and Mercaldi all came to the consensus that East Hampton High School does have a cyberbullying problem.

Although cyberbullying is a huge problem, it does not mean the internet is all bad. Keska explained that she uses

See *Cyberbullying*, Page 12



East Hampton Sees the Light

By Katie Barber and Renée Radavich



The new high school soccer lights have developed a more involved community that is supporting the athletic programs.

The lights were a long time in the making. Countless people have been pushing for the installation of lights at East Hampton High School, especially Mr. Glenn Gustine and Ms. Paula Mallory, who have spent over ten years doing so.

Residents of East Hampton found it to be the right time to receive the lights by taking advantage of the high school building renovation. The supporters of the lights and the building committee believed it was appropriate to add this expenditure to the project. But, this caused controversy with the town's board of finance, because the lights would not be reimbursable by the state, for they did not partake in educational purposes. Because of such enthusiasm from the community about the possibility of soccer lights, the three boards, (Board of Education, Board of Finance, and Town Council), ultimately decided it would be best for the school and town to remove the lights from the building project and utilize the town funds to afford this undertaking.

After the boards approved this decision, the town vote was unanimous; there was no opposition to the lights. "After the lights were finally approved, the process of putting up the lights was a smooth process. This is what the town wanted and we finally got it," said Mallory.

By separating the soccer lights from the building project, the lights were able to be finished by the summer of 2014, while the high school building project just started in November of 2014. Soccer players of all ages are now allowed to utilize the lights much earlier than expected.

Gustine, the head coach of the girls' soccer program at EHHS, personally rooted for the lights for over 15

years. When asked why he committed so much effort into the development of the lights, Gustine said, "I felt like the lights [would] enhance the experience of the high school and youth soccer programs."

Mr. Shaun Russell, the Athletic Director at East Hampton High School (EHHS) said, "I have been in favor of the project since I became athletic director with the idea, however, to light all the fields here on campus, all three soccer fields as well as the baseball and softball fields and the tennis courts."

Although not all the fields nor the courts received lights, the main soccer field inside the track did.

The exact cost of installing the lights is unknown, but some of the factors involved in the cost were labor, material, hours of work, machinery involved and the length of the project. The lights are currently paid for as part of the town's overall operation budget. As for the cost of the lights per game, it varies. Russell stated, "[The] cost varies with how long the lights are on for a particular contest or event. There is no set fee for a game or event; it is all contingent on how long the lights are on for."

But ever since the lights have been installed, there has been a considerable increase in the fan base.

Mallory, past president of the Sports Boosters at EHHS, said, "Due to the later start time, more people are able to attend, [including] college kids, and families."

The lights have brought a wider range of students out to watch also. The band played at two of the night games, and nothing is better than seeing people from varying grades standing up and cheering for East Hampton. Gustine recalls that the number of fans has doubled in size, which he believes is a direct result from the addition of the lights.

As most people in East Hampton know, the field next to East Hampton Middle School has had lights on their field for years.

When asked about this, Mallory said, "Middle school sports are important, but I believe that there would be more fans for a high school game."

This is probably true. So why did the middle school get lights before the high school?

Russell said, "The fields located next to the middle school belong to the town and those fields have had lights for over 20 years and were originally installed to support town youth and adult athletic programming. They were not installed to service middle school athletics."

In other words, the middle school just happened to be next to the lighted fields.

Above all, the players on the field have felt the encouragement from the people of East Hampton. The EH soccer players, young and old, now have the opportunity to play in front of crowds and feel the effect that a night game has on the sport. Gustine can see this in his players during the night games. He said, "My players were enthused by the atmosphere."

There is nothing but high hopes looking into the future. Gustine believes the lights, "will add to the future success of teams, because of the additional exposure and the larger crowds who will attend the games."

When asked about the future for the lights Russell said, "I would like to think that we will be able to continue to improve on the environment we create for our student athletes to compete in and that all of our fans and supporters will realize how special it is and treat it that way in the future."

See *New Lights*, Page 11

How Far is Too Far?

By Jenna Marteka and Hannah Welburn



Day after day, hour after hour an athlete spends working to maximize every aspect of his or her game; but when does training become too much? The question has come into light across athletic boards and parents' protective minds over the rigorous training that athletes of all sports and levels are put through on a day to day basis, and whether today's society is exceeding the safety limit. Ultimately this is setting their players up for failure- or worse- severe injury.

In 2003 alone, more than 3.5 million children, under the age of fifteen, required medical treatment for sports injuries, nearly half, of which were the result of simple overuse. Sports are becoming a crucial part of more and more children's lives, giving coaches another reason to get them ready for higher levels of competition. High school is said to be the biggest chance to get recognized by a college coaches, which just increases the pressure to perform, and perform *well*. Coaches try and prepare their teams and show off their

best kids at the start of opening day and in that process is where coaches make the biggest mistake. Coaches are ruining the athletic careers for so many young athletes by overworking them, and pushing them past their limits.

According to the National Federation of State High School Association's report on sport participation for the 2013-2014 school year, a little less than 800,000 kids participate in soccer across the nation, while basketball's popularity has reached close to 1 million kids. Outdoor track and field beats that statistic, coming in at just over 1,050,000 athletes, but football supersedes them all with just shy of 1,100,000 players this year. Just by glancing at those numbers, it is clear that athletics play an important role many kids' lives.

When asked about this issue of athletes depleting their bodies while training for their sports, East Hampton's very own title-winning women's basketball coach and athletic director, Mr. Shawn Russell, said, "I do not think that specific

coaches are overworking their athletes. I do believe that some athletes are overworking or over specializing in a particular sport or discipline. For example, a player may play high school soccer in the fall, indoor club/travel soccer in the winter and travel or club soccer during the spring and or summer. This athlete can play for three or four coaches during a year and each coach is putting them through a rigorous training program specific to their season."

It is often in these cases that young children exhaust their bodies, leading to injury and jeopardizing all the work they commit to their passion. This ideal brings up another question; are the coaches overworking their athletes or are the athletes pushing themselves too hard?

When asked how to solve this problem, Mr. Roger Abraham, former indoor and outdoor track coach and father of a collegiate athlete, had some very practical suggestions; "There just really has to

See *Overtraining*, Page 13

Gym Class: Necessary for Student Athletes or Inappropriate Use of Energy?

By Samantha D'Anna and Sydney Georgiades

Coaches from East Hampton High weighed in on whether gym credits should be awarded to student athletes.

Three East Hampton coaches shared their opinions on physical education class for student athletes: Bill Wilkie, the cross country coach; Shaun Russell, the athletic director; and Cheryl Girardi, the gym teacher.

Students at E.H.H.S. focus strongly on both academics, while maintaining a commitment to school sports. Whether it's soccer, football, cross country, volleyball, tennis, or track, a majority of students are physically involved.

The strong force of athleticism in E.H.H.S. poses a question: should student athletes be exempt from gym class if they actively participate in a sport within or outside of the school?

Wilkie shot down the idea, sug-

gesting that "[gym class] provides a small break from the classroom setting, where six hours of sitting can often dull the mind and body."

Gym class is taken as more of a social bonding time between students, where they can actively participate and work together through physical activities within a classroom setting. Coach Wilkie still strongly believes that gym class will provide energy to students to last them through the entire school day.

He said, "I personally think that everyone in a school or work environment would benefit from a physical activity break during the day." He suggested that physical activity is not only important for students, but for faculty as well.

Wilkie believes that gym class can have long-lasting benefits to students' lives. He expressed this, saying "Non-team

oriented sports and fitness activities provide the student exposure to options that are available to them, [and] can be used for improved physical and mental health throughout their lives."

Activities in physical education class at E.H.H.S. open new opportunities to students, including opportunities that can support them through the daily struggles of stress and even depression. For these purposes, gym class is necessary regardless of whether students participate in sports, according to Wilkie.

Coach Girardi, as a physical education teacher, has been a major source of fitness to students in the school. She be-

lieves that gym class is not only necessary to get the students moving, but also to teach them how to work together.

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Standardized Testing

(Continued from Page 1)

new ideas or solutions to problems, when they're taught that the test is the most important part of their education. The fact is drilled into their heads, so I'm sure that that doesn't allow for much free thinking, even when they're older," said Angela Tallberg, a senior.

Optional Standardized Testing

Students can opt to take the ACTs and SATs for required for college admission and AP tests for college credits, while still in high school. These tests, while not mandated by the government, are highly encouraged by teachers and college admissions offices.

"It's so important to do well on the SATs or ACTs, because colleges look so closely at the scores and hold them to such high importance. No one wants to do badly on the SATs, just because colleges value a good score," said Tallberg.

Not only do colleges and universities consider student SAT or ACT scores, but they also matter when looking into scholarships. Merit-based aid is awarded to students who have high test scores and grades. Some schools even focus on student test scores, rather than more qualitative factors, when considering prospective students.

"The unfortunate thing is that sometimes GPA and actual intelligence don't match up with someone's test scores. There are plenty of students who are really intelligent, but aren't good test takers, so their scores don't reflect them accurately. There's too much emphasis on the tests

when there are so many other aspects to a student," said senior Alex Balletto.

Many students have to worry about AP tests as well. Taking an AP class looks good on a transcript, and motivated students seek a rigorous class load. The objective of an AP class is to perform well on the test, and then hopefully earn college credits from the class.

"I take my AP classes very seriously, because I want to earn college credits, but I don't like how the tests put a time limit on the classes and don't allow us to get really in depth with anything. You have to learn a lot in a short period of time, then remember it all for one test, so it can be pretty stressful," said Weber.

Students have to memorize a lot in a small time frame, because the tests take place in May, instead of at the end of the school year, when all other classes have final exams. Teachers cannot go into the detail or spend as much time on topics important to them, because they have to focus on preparing their students for the test at the end.

"I don't like that the structure of AP classes limits discussion time, but I do understand why doing well on the test at the end is so important. I prefer the slower, more detailed way of learning in a non AP class, but I appreciate that we're completely prepared for the test at the end of the class," said Balletto.

The debate over standardized testing being beneficial for students will continue as the Common Core Initiative develops further and students continue to take AP classes, the SATs, and the ACTs.

Since the beginning of standardized testing in America, the education system has grown and developed, and along with it, more testing. Even with the changes over the years, standardized testing has remained a large part of the educational process, and will probably remain.



High School

(Continued from Page 2)

about going to college," because she thinks change is good academically, and she "is a person who likes change."

"Freedom wasn't scary for me, because I was ready. I had friends that weren't, however. Some ended up going home or having a mental breakdown. I planned my future through the classes I took during college. I took many interesting classes, but never ones that I wasn't interested in," said Lupacchino-Gilson.

Because Lupacchino-Gilson used her time in college wisely, she eventually made a career out of it.

Lupacchino-Gilson's college tip is to never take boring classes, because students should enjoy and love what they are learning.

Often colleges use a block schedule, where classes are taken every other

day. Therefore, an extra night is given to complete assignments and the duration of classes is longer on days they meet.

Madison Savage also added that a college schedule is more effective than the high school version, if it is used wisely.

"It goes by faster, and it gives you more time for your own activities."

Agnello is worried a little, because she has "to make all new friends."

She is also nervous "to have endless freedom." Her biggest fear is that she "will mess up and make the wrong decision."

"It is easy to make friends in college if you put yourself out there. You are always surrounded by your friends, too, even at night, so friends happen fast," said Savage.

One last tip Madison Savage added is to "get in the habit of planning things in advance and never worry about going down the wrong academic path, because you can always turn around and reevaluate."

Ferguson

(Continued from Page 4)

Brown has raised questions on the duties of police officers in this country and whether or not they are really helping or hurting. Make no mistake that there are excellent officers in this country, but deep down in the police force are corrupt indi-

viduals who may not care about the safety of citizens. Hopefully in the future Americans will see more laws that help prevent corrupt cops from killing innocent bystanders. Unfortunately, it was too late in Mike Brown's situation.

Classroom Behaviors

(Continued from Page 4)

room conduct is varied. However, after close insight into actual classrooms, it can be concluded that behaviors are not the same as perceived. Every classroom is different, and keeping the environment

stable can prove to be challenging. Maintaining an ideal level of effort and mindfulness, while difficult, is necessary for a healthy, well-functioning classroom.

Drug Use

(Continued from Page 5)

students into three different groups; "There are kids that will never use drugs; kids that will always use drugs, and kids that belong to the biggest crowd—the susceptible ones. These are the kids that are vulnerable to sway in either direction, and it's our job to stop them from having the desire to use. If we can guide and educate them enough to have no interest in drugs, I'd say we've succeeded."

Mr. Lucas also noted, "The most prominent reason is most likely a dysfunctional home life. Kids will self-medicate to take them away from the reality that they feel like they are forced to face. They feel the need to use excessively so that they can zone out and pretend they're anywhere else other than where they are at that moment," he said.

The main obstacle that exists in combating the drug use is its accessibility to students. "School is the best place to sell drugs because the student body is a market," Mr. Vecca said. "All your customers are right in front of you. Not many kids can drive and it's a convenient place to sell".

The number of drug deals in the school has gone down substantially. As

Vecca mentioned previously, kids would set up shop in the parking lot and sell straight out of their cars. Under this administration, the school has been very proactive and successful with searches and has come a long way towards a cleaner environment, compared to what it had been before.

There always has been and always will be an issue with drugs. Vice Principal Dalton claims that the problem is "societal." Not only do students face the constant influences and pressures of drugs, but society as a whole does. In comparing the United States to other countries throughout the world, there are obvious differences in customs in relation to drugs and even alcohol. America is a country known for bingeing; "It's always big in America" said Mr. Dalton. This issue can be directly seen in the fan base for sports. It's difficult for most Americans to go to a football game and casually drink a beer or two. It's more likely that they go to a game and get drunk. In other countries, like Spain, people drink leisurely without abusing the substance.

Countries that are able to participate in activities such as drinking without

going overboard are educated enough to know how harmful an excess amount of those substances can be. Mr. Lucas said "The most effective way to combat drug use is through extensive education. By informing kids of just how easily it is to become hooked on a substance and how dangerous they are, we can hopefully provide the proper guidance to sway them from even wanting to try them."

Drugs are a problem everywhere; it's a national pandemic. Ridding the nation of drug use seems highly difficult, but Mr. Dalton has a powerful message. "We are not helpless to change. If we immediately change ourselves, one step at a time, we can get better."

New Lights

(Continued from Page 8)

The first East Hampton High School soccer season with the lights has concluded, and it was one for the record books. For the first time ever, the East Hampton boys' soccer team won the Class S State Championship.

They share the championship title with Somers High School.

Nonetheless, this year has been an eventful one for East Hampton High School, and has a bright future ahead of it.

Summer Work

(Continued from Page 5)

ing. Mr. Dunn said the work, “Gives an excellent idea of what they excel in and what I have to work on. It gives a feel for the student’s enthusiasm for the course.” He also said that it shows a “rock solid commitment” to the class. The summer work also gives teachers like Mr. Dunn an idea of where to go and how he should plan. If he assigns something that all the students bomb, then he knows what he has to work on with the students. It creates a more tailored class that can really improve the student learning experience. The class becomes much more focused on the students and what they need to work on.

These teachers are not required to assign summer work by the school system, but do it, because it creates a more effective teaching environment. Mr. Dunn said that he is “very glad this school trusts me to [assign summer work].” He also takes his teaching very seriously, saying that it is his job to challenge the students. When they were asked

if there were any alternatives for the papers often assigned during the summer, the response was that it depends on the course. History courses and other social studies based classes lend themselves well to this.

Teachers find that real world examples can give students a better understanding of the topic.

The purpose of AP summer work is often forgotten by students who simply find it a nuisance, but can really improve their AP course experience. Time management is very important, and the disadvantages are small. It only creates a short period of summer work and a lot of correcting for the teacher that assigned the work. Students should make sure they do their best when working on the summer work assigned to them and complete it to the best of their ability to maintain an engaging course.



Mr. Lucas said that papers can be supplemented by visits to historical sites, plays or museums. But Mr. Dunn said that, “Writing must be emphasized in all its forms.”

White Privilege

(Continued from Page 6)

ety believe it stems from the community a person grew up in, as well the education a person received, not necessarily academically, but socially and culturally as well. The more someone is educated on other races, and their cultures, and their histories, the less likely they will take part in white privilege.

Regarding this aspect, Holloway said, “I would say [white privilege] is a direct result of society’s attachment to superiority. It’s almost like a relation to how people have been treated in the past. It’s a reactive term to express that.”

Holloway foresees moving away from white privilege only “once we have

economic equality. As you see more and more people of different backgrounds finding financial success in our capitalistic society, that trend is going to differ. But really, it comes down to the ability to obtain that, and that’s where that concept of privilege comes from. It’s really getting the opportunity to get to that point, which in some communities is going to take a lot more education and a lot more ability to think in global terms and become ‘successful.’”

Cyberbullying

(Continued from Page 7)

social media to connect with family and friends. “It’s made my family closer. Aunts and uncles I probably would not have talked to now see me and comment on my baby.” She went on to explain the academic value of social media. “Believe it or not, even though grammar is not there, it’s actually allowing kids to write more.”

Mercaldi said something very similar about the internet’s benefits. “People can communicate from long distances and it’s a good way for families to interact. It’s also a good search engine for students.” When something good comes out, someone will always find a way to abuse it, and the internet is no exception.

Standardized Tests

(Continued from Page 7)

ble, though. Mrs. Kaitlin Sullivan, an East Hampton High School guidance counselor, said "The ACT is a more variety view of the student. It's 20% mathematics, 20% reading, 20% writing, and 20% science." However, there are some schools that don't even require test scores, showing how standardized tests aren't the main priority.

Ms. Pam Malcolm, another guidance counselor at East Hampton High School, added, "Some students are smart and don't test well." In this case, it is important to acquire a personal essay and letter of recommendation that can balance it out.

As standardized testing gives a level playing field for colleges to look at and compare applicants, it does not measure the entirety of the student's aptitude. These tests lack the ability for colleges to examine the creativity, determination, attitude and work ethic of a potential student.

When discussing whether or not the application process should place more focus on qualities not determined by standardized testing, Dalton was affirmative with his response and said, "Yes, definitely." He continued on to discuss what should be examined, along with standardized tests, "Teacher recommendations, an emphasis on that, the student essay, and some universities are already doing these things. Ideally, universities should adopt the digital portfolio to look at student work

over time."

Students studying the arts can showcase their art portfolios to colleges when applying. Applications to academic colleges should adopt a similar system and be given the opportunity to showcase their work as well. Dalton said, "Ideally, adopt the digital student portfolio system to look at student work over time and see how a student's writing develops over time. It is very useful to see that and then, you can really see how hard a student has worked in the academic classes on a day to day basis and really start to compare meaningful things."

Digital student portfolios not only advance a university or college into a new age of the application process, but it also allows the student's profile to be examined at a deeper level and allow admissions to gain a better understanding of the applicant. The digital portfolio examines the creativity, work ethic, and dedication that a student has towards their school work, that a standardized test omits.

Other than standardized testing, important factors that are highly considered include letters of recommendations and the essay. Malcolm said, "In your application, showcase yourself in the essay. The essay describes who you are." She added, "It's important in choosing the right people in writing the recommendation letter."

The recommendation letter is crucial, because it is a chance to show how one reacts to setbacks, as well as ones character as a student. Sullivan stated, "Letters of recommendation are proof of your personality traits, such as perseverance and use of time." It can answer questions phrased by Sullivan such as, "Did they just settle for a grade?" and "What makes them unique?"

As students prepare for the admittance to college, they need to create a well-rounded application that encompasses their positive qualities not determined by standardized tests, which can be done with letters of recommendations and their essay. Students need to create an application that not only focuses on numbers and grades, but also develops a student's capability of creativity, dedication, hard work, and uniqueness. Those individuals will gain a better learning experience and be a favorable applicant by the admissions board, because they will be able to see a complete picture of the student.

Overtraining

(Continued from Page 9)

be monitoring a little more from the administration on watching what's going on. Some coaches are a little more prone toward wanting to win than others."

As a coach, Mr. Abraham noted that one way to ensure an athlete isn't being overworked is to do the workouts with them, and be observant, particularly in the summer and hot weather. Breaks from long intervals of intense exercise must be rewarded regularly, and frequent water break opportunities must be given in order to give athlete's body's a break and keep hydrated. A coach must also keep a watchful eye on the athletes body pains- multiple muscle strains or injuries should spark the attention of coaches.

From a students' perspective, junior Sarah Massie, an athlete who participates in multiple sports throughout the year, including volleyball and basketball, knows from experience the danger that lies in pushing athletes too far. While she said she's never had a coach that worked her

too hard, she has experienced injuries that barred her from finishing the season.

"I overworked myself," she said, "I played so many sports for so many years and so many consecutive days that my back was hurt.; but I kept playing, and broke my back."

She learned from this however and now has a delicate insight to the dangers of being overworked. With respect to athletes pushing themselves to the limit, Massie said to other athletes, "You want to be smart with your body and protect your body, because in sports, your body is your biggest weapon. You're only hurting yourself." While some athletes think spending an extra hour on the field, in the gym, or on the track will improve their performance, too much can actually have the adverse impact.

The importance of not overworking athletes is often clouded by a coach's desire for victory. However, athletes around the globe have begun to note the

dangers of this trend. Coaches know there's an issue, but there's little they can do to control the spread of injury, as there's no across the board protection program set in place. The best athletes could do is to be in control of themselves, and interpret what their bodies are telling them. Pushing yourself is a good thing, but pushing yourself too far crosses that threshold of health and safety.

Gym Class

(Continued from Page 9)

She stated, "It's not only about playing and being involved. It's learning how to socialize and get along with each other."

It's recommended through several different programs, such as the Institute of Medicine and the NFL Movement for an Active Generation, that children get at least sixty minutes of play a day. Girardi agreed with the fact that children need to exercise daily in some way, stressing the importance of how technology is compromising their physical fitness.

She said, "It's more important now, because technology has taken over and kids are sitting around, texting each other more." The importance of physical fitness during school hours is more important now than ever due to the takeover of technology and the increasing number of hours spent on a couch, compared to the time spent outside.

High school student athletes are also at an age where physical fitness is a major part of their everyday actions. While also participating in sports after school for two plus hours, student athletes have to exercise through physical education at least forty-five minutes every other day, plus a two hour practice, game, or meet after school. Girardi believes that, regardless, physical education does not affect students and contribute to their exhaustion.

She said, "High school students are at an age where they can play for forty-five minutes, and it won't impact their performance after school. It's not about the game. It's about the branches that come off of that." Student athletes have no reason to be missing physical education class, according to Girardi.

As opposed to both Girardi and Wilkie, Coach Shaun Russell believes dif-

ferently, "that students should receive gym credit for participating in school-sponsored athletics."

Coach Russell, as athletic director, controls all the details of East Hampton High School sports and supports all student athletes participating. Russell believes that student athletes get enough physical fitness in their after school athletics and stressed the importance of an athlete's education over physical education class.

He said, "In the interest of time management and keeping on top of their classroom workload... their gym class should be replaced with a directed study hall," specifying that by 'directed' he means, "a period for doing school work, not a period of rest."

As for students that do not participate in sports? Russell said that, "It has value for students who do not get any exercise outside of school."

While believing that student athletes should not be required to participate in gym class, he does believe that the option should still be left open to students.

He said, "There are still students who interact with other peers who do not play school sports. [This] can be an im-

portant part of the educational process."

Russell supports the proper fitness of student athletes and believes that students working physically for fifteen hours per week or more should not have to participate in gym.

Every teacher and student at East Hampton High School seems to have a different opinion on the well-being of student athletes. Depending on different perspectives, gym class for student athletes is both supported and not supported.

Presently, gym class is a requirement in order to graduate, and there is no indication that such will change.



NOTICE:

From the New Bellringer staff...

Happy Spring