

# The Update



The '80s impact on Pop culture  
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## Client connections

### Learning how to design a key chain based on clients needs

For the past six years, CTE engineering teacher Corey Spurling taught the Client Key Chain project to his Intro to Engineering Design class. His students reached the end of this 3D printing project, which takes about three weeks to complete. They learn how to use Computer Aided Design, also known as CAD. This is the main software that students will use throughout the year to model their designs. For this specific project students were asked to design a key chain that is based on a clients' wants and needs. By introducing the client aspect this gives students the opportunity to practice tasks an engineer may have to do in a professional setting.

"I think the Client Keychain is a good introduction to what the engineering space is actually like because you are usually creating a product for some sort of customer or business; [that] is what a commercial engineer typically would do if they're designing something like that," sophomore Addie Wolford said. "So I think it's a good introduction into [engineering]."

In the engineering field, most things aren't always as simple as just agreeing on a design with a client. Agreeing on a functional design is the goal, however, there are many additional steps in designing before that goal can be met. The Client Key Chain project is no different.

"We made, basically, the goal on what we want to accomplish with the design and everything, and then, next, we did concept sketches," Wolford said. "Then the next piece was a finalized sketch of the version we actually ended up making. So you do a much nicer sketch, add some dimensions, so you know how big you want to make it in CAD, and then the next step is modeling it in CAD, which I think took maybe five days. And then after that, we went into the actual 3D printing [process]."

For the most part, the project is done at the students' own pace. With students working at different paces, some finish steps quicker than others. A lot of the timing depends on the level of intricacy of what the students decided to design, as some designs were more complicated than others.

After 3D printing, the students give their final product to their clients. Students were given the deadline of Nov. 7. for this project. Some students were able to get their key chain done before this due date.

Many students chose their client to be someone they're close with, such as a significant other, parent or grandparent. For example, senior Zane Rastello chose his mother as his client, inspiring

him to design a butterfly key chain for her. Wolford, on the other hand, chose her boyfriend as her client. Together, Wolford and her boyfriend agreed on a design of his jersey that included special relationship momentos.

Each key chain can be as personal as the student likes; the only restraints for the project are volume dimension, sizing and making sure the key chain is school appropriate. Other than that, students are able to design their key chain however they like.

Intro to Engineering Design is a hands-on class, with a lot of the work being self-taught. When students run into problems or errors in their project, rather than receiving immediate assistance, they have to problem-solve the situation themselves.

"The way I teach is, I teach the skill and give them the constraints of where we're going to apply this within, and then they go do it," Spurling said. "If a student asked me a question, they're like, 'What is this?' If you ask students that have had me for a few years, they know I'm not gonna give them the answer. I'm gonna lead them in that direction, and they're gonna come up with the answer."

With engineering being such an independent class, Spurling grades on the process of the project instead of the material outcome. One of the ways he does this is by reviewing students' sketches.

"Engineers follow a very systematic process of solving problems," Spurling said. "And then they're graded on the modeling on the computer, and then finally, the actual 3D printed prototype. So as we go through the process, in their engineering notebooks, they maintain an organized notebook that keeps all track of everything. They had to define the problem, generate concepts, brainstorming, create their solution and then finally, at the end of it, they have to

analyze it. It's all about their process, not the actual product."

With it being early in the year and many students' first engineering class, many haven't had previous experience with CAD and struggle with its tools. Because of this, when students used CAD this year to create their designs, some students took up to a week to finish their design.

"The whole CAD space is kind of a completely new thing to me, so that's hard," Wolford said. "The thing for me on that first project, the hardest part was scaling because it's gonna look the same in CAD no matter if you make it a 10th of an inch big or 20 inches big."

With the lessons learned from trial and error, many believe this project has been extremely beneficial. This project being repeatedly part of the engineering curriculum for the past six years shows its value to teachers and students. Not only does it give students a real life experience of being an engineer, but it also teaches them vital planning and organizing skills.

"This [Client Key Chain Project] is one that has come in, and I thought has been really effective," Spurling said. "It's small. We can quickly get through many of them. Especially with our printers, students get a chance to go through the entire process and quickly produce something that they can have, and most students that I've even talked about in college still have it."

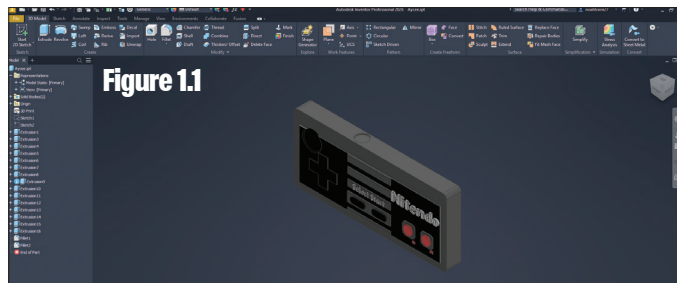


photo courtesy of Noah Trombley

**Creative CAD:** Junior Noah Trombley models his design in CAD for his Client Key Chain project for his Intro to Engineering Design class. He finished this project on Nov. 4. "[I like] the details I added, which are the buttons and stuff," Trombley said.



photo courtesy of Arya Karthikeyan

**Clash Crown:** On Nov. 6, sophomore Arya Karthikeyan finished his model for the Client Key Chain Project for the Intro to Engineering Design class. "[I like] how clean it looks because I was not confident on how it's going to print," Karthikeyan said.

**Name:** Madalyn Blohm  
managing feature

graphic by Tanner Witzke

## The Feed

Tanner Witzke  
managing design

### Impacting the community with CAS projects

The CAS project can be a variety of things, but they must be well thought-out and meaningful while having a positive impact on the community. Students come up with the project themselves through brainstorming and reflection. Designing the project takes at least a month to put together and has to be collaborative among IB peers.

Seniors Meha Shivakumar and Avery Nickel are working together for their IB CAS project. Their project was based off of their award-winning MPS Sustainability Competition idea from their junior year.

"Our project is basically establishing can recycling in several schools, as well as the stadium in the district," Shivakumar said.

As well as can recycling, the group incorporated bottles into their recycling project. With the help of Shivakumar and Nickel, multiple recycling bins are located around the Midland district, especially in the Midland Community Stadium.

IB diploma candidates not only have a full schedule of IB classes, but they also have to complete three requisites. These requisites include IB testing, a 4000-word extended essay, and a Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS) project.

### Preparing for DHS RenFair

A variety of students have prepared original acts for RenFair to showcase their talents. RenFair will take place on Jan. 17, 2026 at the Midland Center for the Arts. Recently, the official performance list was released, and there will be 12 acts in total. There will be a contemporary dance, a vocal duet to "For Good", a spoken word poem and many other types of acts. Seniors Dylan Bovee, Carter Gross, Carston Broderick and Alora Rishko will be the emcees for this year's RenFair. They will be announcing the acts while also giving their own separate performance.

Every year RenFair consists of a plethora of acts, ranging from ensembles by the orchestra to solo singing and dancing acts.

"People have been practicing for like a month or two already, putting their acts together," junior Ashley Pietrzak said. "And then you have to audition and keep practicing."

Acts can only have a maximum run time of five minutes. If a performance exceeds this time limit, it will be disqualified. After months of preparation, many come to watch the multitude of acts RenFair offers.

## TAKE a NUMBER

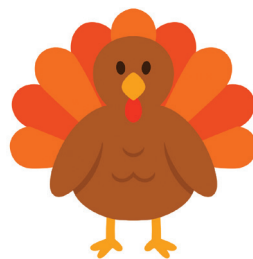
Madalyn Blohm  
managing feature



graphics from Canva

**404**  
years ago was when the first documented Thanksgiving took place

info from American Association of Retired Persons



**1941**  
When Thanksgiving was officially declared the fourth Tuesday in November

info from American Association of Retired Persons

**101**  
years ago was when the first Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade took place

info from American Association of Retired Persons

**6 miles**  
long was the distance of the first Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade

info from American Association of Retired Persons

**1975**  
When Black Friday was officially given its title

info from American Association of Retired Persons



**84**  
games have been played by the Detroit Lions on Thanksgiving

info from the Detroit Free Press



**2.5**  
days are given to MPS students for Thanksgiving break

info from Midland Public Schools

### OPINION

### FEATURE

### SPORTS

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# Rooted in researching

## IB HL Biology students detail lab experiments, processes in ecology IAs

Madalyne Oliver  
managing opinion

In IB/AP Advanced Biology 2, students have begun to conduct their Internal Assessment (IA) research projects. IA projects are mandatory, individual research projects that can be submitted for credit for the IB higher level test. The IA counts towards a portion of the total score on the IB HL biology test. While the IA projects are required for IB testers, those not taking the IB test still participate in the project, and receive class credit.

The process is testing and time-consuming, and students began the long process by selecting topics they were interested in and passionate about. Unlike previous years, where students were able to research any topic related to biology, this year requires students to select topics that have something to do with ecology, the branch of biology that deals with organisms' relationships with one another and their environments.

"I am especially interested in plastics and microplastics because it's a global issue these days and how those plastics affect our environment and contaminate the soils," senior Hyunseo Sung said. "So I wanted my topic to really be related to sustainability."

The purpose of the research projects is to give students an opportunity to conduct individual investigations on topics of their choice. The project gives the students a personal chance to demonstrate practical scientific skills and leadership. Students use this opportunity to experiment with an original experiment, identifying control variables, analyzing data and creating a final report of their findings.

Sung's project originally started out with the broad topic of how microplastics and plastics affect the environment. Sung felt especially passionate about researching microplastic because of his love for the environment and involvement in Go Green.

However, after reading an article about biochar, a black carbon produced from biomass sources, Sung became interested in researching how biochar can be used to mitigate the negative effects microplastics have on soil. This then shifted his research to solely focus on biochar.

"I was wondering if I could relate this to microplastics and assess the behavior of the microplastics after adding biochar to the soil," Sung said. "So my actual topic became how biochar would be able to mitigate the negative effects of microplastics and soil and plant germination and growth."

After selecting a topic of his choice, Sung then started piecing together the initial research and what the experiment itself may look like. As Sung's topic changed, so did his experiment.

"I was worried because of the microplastics, like,



**CONDITIONS APPLIED:** Three jars containing radish sprouts, with three different conditions applied. The data from the jars was then recorded by senior Hyunseo Sung, for his IB/AP Advanced Biology internal assessment research project on Oct. 31, 2025.



**CHOICE CHAMBERS:** One of two habitats offered to pillbugs in senior Jackson Englade's IB/AP Advanced Biology internal assessment research project on Oct. 31, 2025.



photos by Gillian Smith

**IN THE LAB:** Senior Hyunseo Sung conducts research for his internal assessment in Cynthia Meyer's lab on Oct. 31.

"Where I am I gonna get that?" so I was searching [microplastics] up on the internet and Amazon," Sung said. "Then I figured out there were some polystyrene beads, which are normally used for sofas to make things more comfortable."

Sung used the beads as a substitute for microplastics by cutting them to be less than five millimeters, similar to the size of microplastics. After planting radish seeds in 32 pots, Sung placed various amounts of the beads in the pots to resemble microplastics. Sung regularly checked the pots to look for germinated seeds. Recently, Sung has begun measuring the biomass of the plants to calculate the effects of the microplastics in the soil and on plant growth.

In another IA research project, senior Jackson Englade chose to study how pillbugs react to environments differing in moisture.

"So what I'm doing is I have 10 pill bugs in each trial, and I spray water [in the choice chamber] to see how much water they prefer in a habitat," Englade said. "So I give them a choice chamber, and they switch. They choose which side they want, depending on their preferences."

Similar to Sung's, Englade's project took some twists as his original idea evolved into an actual experiment. Between the uncontrollable factors and additional research, both Sung and Englade's experiments changed as they continued learning about and developing their projects.

"I had to kind of change it up a bit because there were some uncontrolled variables in [the experiment], like the pill bugs got wet in the choice chambers, then they brought the water to the other side," Englade said. "So I had to figure out a way to keep the water over there without actually getting the pill bugs extremely wet, so they wouldn't get [the water] over

there, by using a paper towel so that it would soak it up instead."

While the experiment alone was difficult and time consuming to develop, Englade soon discovered another challenge:

keeping the pillbugs alive overnight and over weekends. Compared to other projects, choosing one that needs live organisms comes with its disadvantages. During these times, Englade must make sure that the pillbugs have enough water and food as well as a breathable container that is inescapable.

Keeping the pillbugs alive is a challenge in itself, but staying consistent throughout the experiment was a whole other challenge.

"So I'm making sure that after I'm done using the choice chambers in each trial, I have to dry them off, and get all the stuff out," Englade said. "You also have to dry off the bugs if you want to do another trial with them, because if they keep [the water] on them, they just won't care."

These IA research projects push students out of their comfort zones and encourage them to put their scientific skills to the test. Having a passion for biology and ecology is beneficial when taking a class like IB/AP Advanced Biology 2, and students having awareness of their passions allows them to design experiments that they will truly enjoy and put their full effort into.

**2,500**  
words

is the average amount for an HL Biology IA

**20**  
hours

is the average amount of time a student spends on an HL Biology IA

**78**  
days

is how long the IA research and writing process spans

**45**

Higher level biology students are writing IAs this year

**17**  
years

is how long DHS students have been writing HL biology IAs

## Club Briefs

Jocelyn Larson  
managing social media

### Girl Up! details future volunteer opportunities

Girl Up! club meets once a month in Leigha Worden's room, room 346. Junior and club president Nishi Narayan encourages anyone and everyone to join, to learn more about how to create a more inclusive community at DHS.

The club's mission statement is "Envisioning a more equitable and just world for girls and women,

which benefits all people."

This statement was designed to align with the club's main focus of women empowerment.

"We do a lot of volunteer events with MyMichigan or Midland Open Door and holiday cards and hygiene drives," Narayan said.

The club's next meeting is on Wednesday, Dec. 3 after 6th hour.

### German Club works on newsletter "The Waffle"

German Club aims to teach others about German culture and history. The club adviser is Kate Falvey, and seniors Avery Nickel and Gretchen Snyder are co-presidents. German Club is a culture-focused club, there is no German language knowledge needed to join.

"We learn about the culture, not just in Germany, but also every other German speaking country because there are six," Snyder said. "We do fun things."

The club's next meeting will be on Nov. 25 in room 367. They meet every other Tuesday after both sixth and seventh hour. Their next meeting will be focused on "The Waffle" articles. The Waffle is a newsletter produced by the club. There will also be coloring pages and word searches for members.

"It's not just learning about the school systems," Snyder said. "We learn about more niche topics, like the music genre and different industries and stuff like that."

### GIDAS prepares for annual research conference

Meet and join others in adviser Jessica Pettipas' room, room 338, after sixth every Thursday for a Genes in a Disease and Symptoms (GIDAS) club meeting. Their meeting after seventh hour is located in Rowan Meddaugh's room, room 324. GIDAS focuses on studying the importance of genes in health. Club members learn about genetics, biology, chemistry and researching, preparing to present at the annual GIDAS Research Conference on Jan. 25, 2026.

"A lot of stuff we do goes

with different websites, like how to navigate and finding genes and diseases," junior and president Sanvi Patel said. "It kind of prepares you for future experiences with [those subjects]."

Patel aims to teach members valuable skills that she hopes will be used in the future, such as the skill of writing a scientific abstract and creating a research poster. The club is planning a mock contest at their club meeting on Dec. 4, to prepare for their actual contest.

**Mission Statement**

As a public forum for student expression, The Update will honor the H. H. Dow High community and the journalism profession by placing truth, accuracy and objectivity first and encouraging all sides to voice their opinion.

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7: Kelly Daoud

8: Isabelle Hetherington

**Distribution**

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**Staff Editorial**

The staff editorial is the managing editors' response to current news events. The staff editorial reflects the opinion of the Editorial Board. The final draft is subject to a vote by the Editorial Board. A majority vote is required for the document to achieve publication.

Letters are encouraged. They will be screened for libel, defamation, and/or obscenity and may be edited for length. All letters must be signed, although the Editorial Board will consider withholding names upon request. Letters may be rejected due to limited space, untimely material, or unbalanced representation. A full editorial policy is on file in room 218.

**Open Column**

The 'My Turn' column is open to the whole school. Columns will undergo the same screening process as letters. All columns should be turned in to room 218 and should include the author's name.

**Membership/Awards**

The Update is a member of the NSPA, CSPA, and MIPA. The Update was a CSPA Gold Crown Winner in 1999, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2007, and 2019. It was a Silver Crown Winner in 2006, 2009, 2016 and 2017. It was an NSPA Pacemaker winner in 1999, 2000, 2002, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2011, and a finalist in 2001, and 2003. In 1989, 1999, 2000, 2004, and 2005 The Update won Best of Show in NSPA competition. It won second place Best of Show in 2006, eighth place Best of Show in 2007, and third place in Best of Show in 2008. The Update has won 27 MIPA Spartan Awards since 1989 and was inducted into the MIPA Hall of Fame in 2004.

# Later bells for healthier minds

## Starting school hour later will boost student well-being

Maddie Oliver

*managing opinion*

A typical Michigan high school starts around 7:30-7:40 a.m., according to an research done by AAA State Of Play. This means that most teens wake up anywhere from 6-7 a.m., depending on how far from the school they live and how long it takes them to get ready for the day.

Rather than students waking up at 6 or 7 a.m., it would be more beneficial to the students mental and physical health along with the overall learning environment, for class to start later in the morning, ideally around 8:30 a.m..

"I try to wake up at like 6:30 to 7 a.m., but more towards 6:30 a.m. so we actually get here on time," junior Gabriel Kibler said.

This may not seem all that bad, considering that lots of adults wake up around this time for the majority of the week. However, it can be very overwhelming for teens when the time spent on homework, studying, sports, extracurriculars and jobs is taken into account. Not to mention that teenagers are still in the process of development.

"I try to get all my homework done in class, but if it's like a couple things left over, I probably end up getting to sleep at like, midnight to 1 a.m.," Kibler said.

While homework amounts and activities outside of school vary between students and grades, staying up this late isn't that uncommon in teens. At DHS, school ends at 2:25 or 3:25 p.m. depending on whether or not students choose to take a seventh hour. In addition to seven to eight hours of school, students may also have sports practices, homework and studying, work and chores. All of those things can easily add up to six or even eight hours of after-school activities. If a student has a seventh hour, then this puts their after-school activities to anywhere from 9:25-11:25 p.m. This time is estimated based on no breaks in between these activities.

It's no secret that teenagers spend their nights doing other things rather than getting the sleep they need. As annoying and frustrating going to bed late can be, teenagers still continue to put themselves in situations that result in losing necessary sleep. Even though the nights can be long and tiring, most teens would say that waking up is even harder than staying up. On the other hand, some parents may argue that teens will stay up late regardless of whether or not they have work, school or homework to do.

"During puberty, youth undergo a shift in their circadian clocks that makes it harder for them to fall asleep until later in the night," Kristen Weir of American Psychological Association wrote on apa.org. "Meanwhile, they can stay awake longer before experiencing an increase in the pressure to sleep."

Yes, teens stay up late, but it's not always caused by social media, but rather a change in the circadian rhythm or better known as the sleep cycle, that every teen has, and will experience during puberty.

The National Institute of Health found that without proper sleep, the brain is not capable of learning or storing new information. So why does society expect 14 to 18 year olds to wake up at 6 a.m., and sit still for seven hours, all while trying to learn a multitude of different topics? Not to mention that each subject has their own vocabulary, systems and learning programs. Some may say it's so that teens adapt to the "real world" and learn how to manage their time, before entering into their respective careers. Others may say 'that's just the way school works' and argue that school starts so early, because teens need time after school for all of their activities.

Ask almost any teenager, and they will agree that the first two classes of the day are almost always the hardest to pay attention to and effectively learn in.

"I think schools should start later because I feel like kids in the morning aren't, like, 100% ready to learn, and aren't fully awake," freshman Ellie Hollingsworth said. "I think it would have a positive effect, because I feel like students would be more awake to focus and concentrate."

Research done by the National Institute of Health found that a lack of sleep in teens doesn't just affect academics, but also the mental and physical health of students. Research also displayed that less than 8% of the surveyed students were receiving the recommended eight hours of sleep. Even worse, this number only seemed to get smaller as the students got older. The academic stress of high school causes students to get less and less sleep as time goes on. With this, the teens with limited sleep were linked to those who experienced excessive weight gain, decreased physical activity and increased food intake. All of these results are

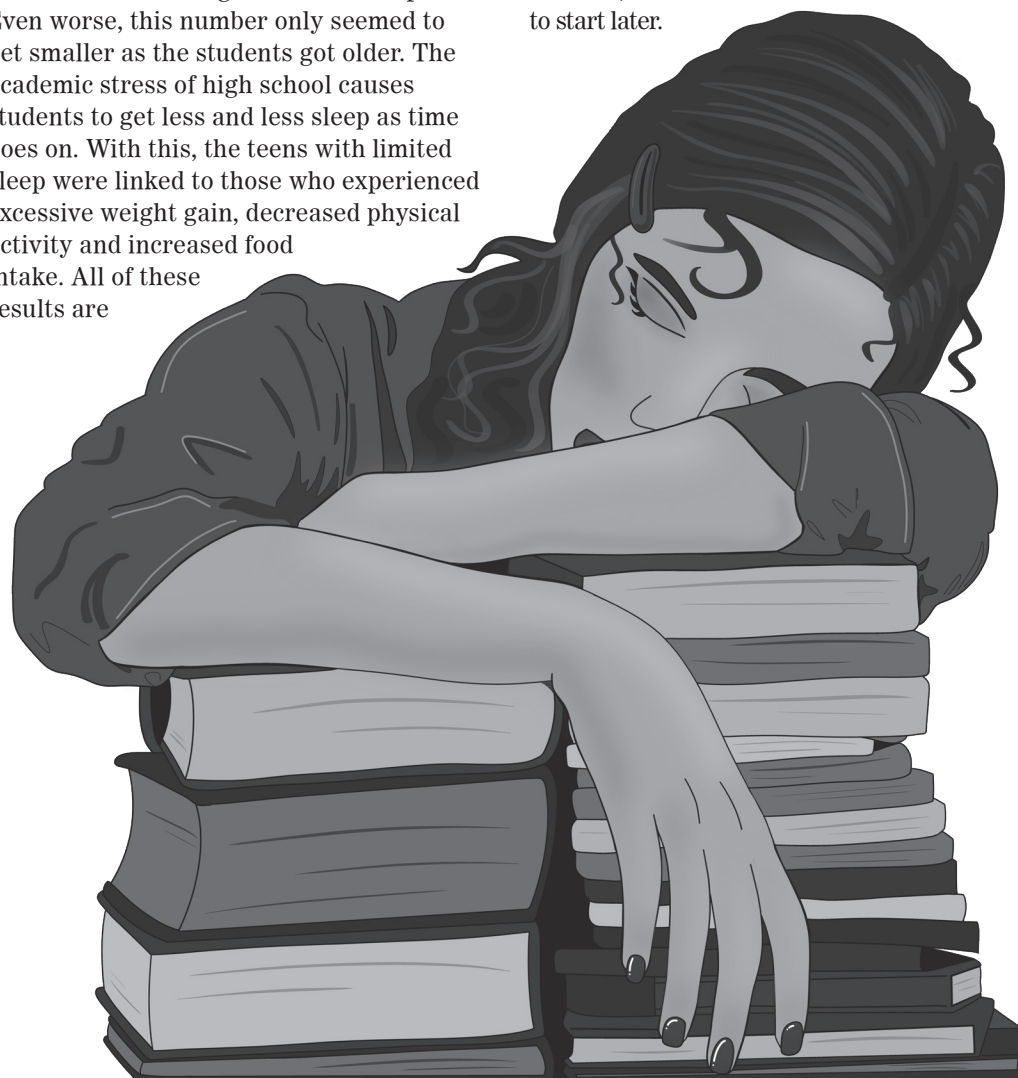
caused by changes in appetite regulating hormones that occur from lack of sleep.

Those are just some of the physical health problems that are caused by not getting enough sleep. The mental health problems that occur from lack of sleep can be even more detrimental. Depression, erratic or risky behaviors, mood swings and anxiety are all linked to teens who receive insufficient sleep.

"I feel like [school should start at] 8:30 a.m., because it would let me sleep in longer and have more time to get ready and eat breakfast," sophomore Konner Prescott said. "I think it would be like the students would be more awake, nobody would be sleeping during class and just be more engaged."

Most students wouldn't expect or want school to start any later than 8:30 a.m., because they understand that starting later means getting out later, which might impact after-school activities. While there are downsides to starting school later, starting later would have more benefits on students' mental health and overall learning capabilities. Starting school at 8:30 a.m., compared to 7:40 a.m. is less than an hour apart, but that extra hour of sleep could make all the difference in students' health and learning.

After all, schools all over the country should prioritize student learning and health above all. Given the effects that waking up early has on the physical and mental health of teenagers, it would be beneficial for both students and teachers, if school were to start later.



graphic by Tanner Witzke

## Bringing it back: negative impacts of school fully online

*staff editorial*

Over the past five years, education has slowly been reconstructed to be almost fully online. Paying attention and soaking up the information from class is imperative for good grades and complete comprehension. Some may say a classroom lecture tends to be much more beneficial for students when it comes to understanding the subject, completing homework or taking a test, rather than just reading material on a Chromebook.

With the increase of online learning applications, young students are having to grow and adapt to using them. This is unnecessary and sometimes problematic for elementary and early middle school students. Children should be learning in a classroom environment with a teacher who is actively engaging with them, rather than an online video. It is crucial to teach engagement skills in the early years, so when high school or college comes around, all of the preparation pays off, and no one is lacking basic skills, such as communication and responsibility.

Online learning is not just undependable, but the negatives outweigh the positives in many ways. For example, there's limited ways to ask for assistance on a difficult assignment. There's limited social interaction with other

students. Staring at screens all day can strain eyesight, and there is no easily accessible one on one time with teachers.

On the other hand, some might say online education gives students control over their learning experience and time management. This can be helpful for students who prefer to be more independent in their learning, but most students want a consistent schedule when it comes to managing time between extracurriculars and school.

According to an article by elearningindustry.com, one of the biggest challenges of online learning is the struggle children face with focusing on work when staring at a screen for a long period of time. This means that students are more likely to become distracted by other materials like a phone. With students using their devices more, the use of artificial intelligence (AI) would only increase, as well as the inability for teachers to keep students mostly on task during class. This means that students might use AI to complete their work rather than having to learn the materials of the class.

After the worldwide shutdown due to COVID-19, most schools went virtual, having only online assignments and zoom meetings. Some say this causes a decrease in children's attention span and school performance, which affected their learning negatively.

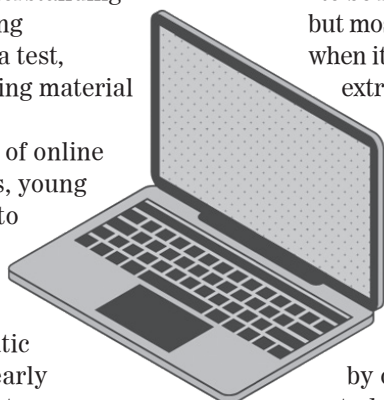
"Previous studies have indicated that moving away from in-person instruction during

the 2020-21 school year to online teaching methods reduced student achievement and educational development, adversely affected children's mental well-being and decreased school enrollment," Tracy DeStazio of Notre Dame News wrote on news.nd.edu.

Another article by elearningindustry.com states that having children engage in hands on learning is not just something that entertains children, but also helps them learn and retain new information. Additionally, learning at home and not a classroom might mean students don't have the necessary materials nor parent supervision to complete their work correctly. This adds weight to parents' shoulders who have to devote time to help their children with their school work.

There are definite consequences to staring at screens all day, but it must be acknowledged that technology has had a significant impact in at home or long distance learning. Students can both learn and complete assignments from pretty much anywhere at any time.

Still, online virtual learning can have an adverse affect on a number of things, such as school attendance, social skills and the classic school environment experience. Learning is so much more impactful in a classroom with real people when compared to a computer screen. What is the point of going to school for 12 years just to sit behind a screen the whole time? Learn and retain information in a positive way. Stay in the classroom, stay proactive, keep learning in person.



graphic from Canva

# Taylor Swift's new album lacks

## "The Life of a Showgirl" shifts Swift's public image once again

Addyson French  
co-business editor

Taylor Swift's new album "The Life of a Showgirl" has everyone talking. Some people love the new music, while others don't, but it's definitely different from anything she's done before. Swift decided to shift into a completely new genre and it left the fans puzzled.

"So the first time I listened to it, I decided I hated it," IB Psychology and U.S. history teacher Tess Striebel said. "I was like, I'm not gonna listen to this album again. I think it's terrible because I just didn't like the vibe of it. But I really like it now."

There was controversy at first, with Taylor Swift fans posting videos either loving the album, or hating it. But, as listeners have seen before with Swift's previous albums, people take a minute to adjust to the new album's style.

Swift's older music is more lyrically centered. She focused more on the content she was writing back then, whereas this album contains more happy and simplistic lyrics. Though it takes time to get used to an album, the album has been out for quite a while and the majority of her fans still don't seem to like it. Fans often say that there is something missing or that the music doesn't feel the same as it used to.

Swift received hate ever since she rose to fame with hits like "Shake It Off," "Bad Blood" and more. Some people say that they want more of a pop album, until they get a real pop album. Then they say that she's "too pop." However, that's the point of her eras, nothing is going to be exactly the same. The Eras Tour was arguably a defining point in Swift's career, showcasing her ability to make multifaceted genres of music.

Swift fans can almost always find a correlation between the lyrics of her songs to a relationship she had during production, like the songs titled "Cornelia Street" and "You're Losing Me." Swift's lyrics always look into her past experiences and the affects they had on her.

Taylor Swift has never stuck to just one type of music. In each of her albums there are different styles, vibes and lyrical concepts that signify different eras of her life. These

unique albums highlight Swift in new ways and show her life through song. Each song has a meaning shown through Swift's self-expression.

"Speak Now " and "Red " are so different from what she has now, and I think that's what makes people continue to like her, is because, like, she kind of has something for everyone," Striebel said. "So if this album isn't for you, that's fine. There's definitely another one that is."

There are some fans that only like one or a couple of Swift's albums. She has a variety of different styles of music to choose from, so it's mainly about what type of theme or genre a person is into.

With many artists, some people tend to criticize their work as well. However, with Swift, the criticism can be harsher. People and fans tend to expect more from her because she is one of the top artists in the world.

"When Swift releases a new album, there's always people that love her and hate her," Striebel said. "It's a very strong opinion one way or another."

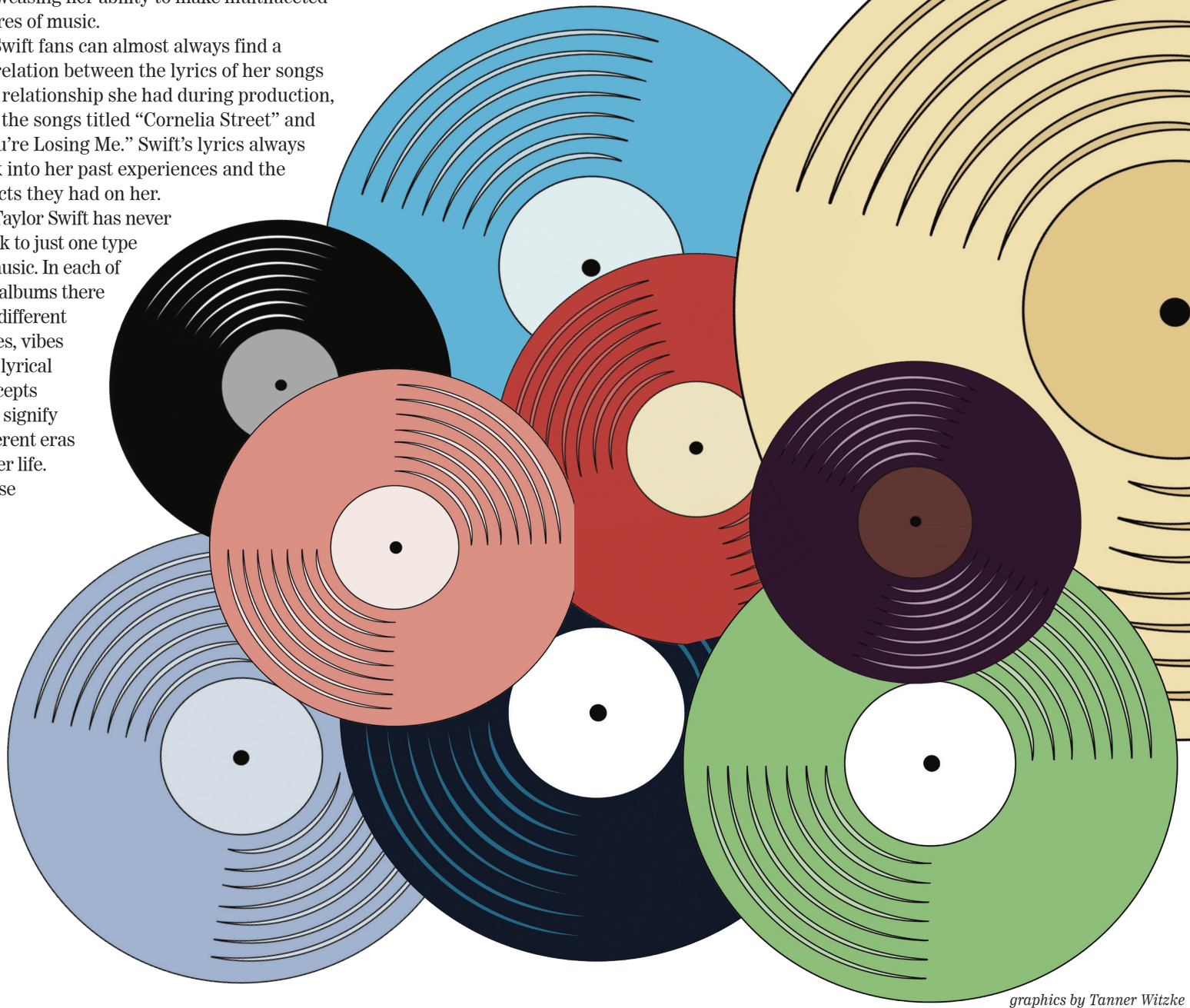
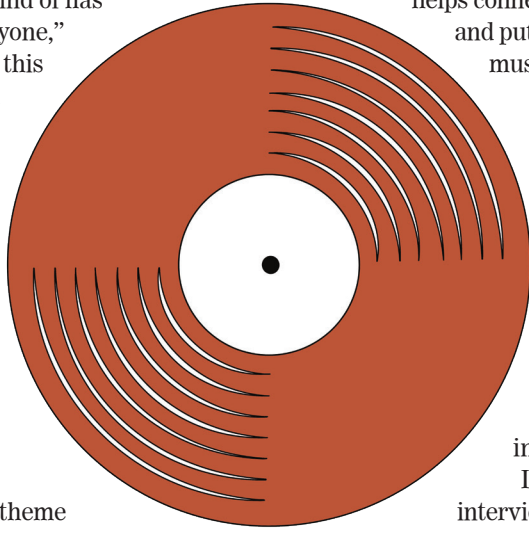
Even though Swift is known for trying new styles, "The Life of a Showgirl" feels bland. The album lacks the emotional lyrics and

storytelling that made her older music so special. She tried to go for a 1920s showgirl aesthetic, but the album fell short. In this specific album, Swift's songs lacked instrumental features. When compared to her other albums, having instrumental moments helps connect the song to the listener and puts more emotion into the music.

The 1920s was commonly known as "The Jazz Age" but Swift didn't incorporate many jazz elements into this album, which the majority of her fans were expecting. Jazz music includes trumpets, saxophones and trombones, but Taylor Swift did not utilize these instruments.

In Swift's most recent interview with BBC Radio 2, she explained that she was making this album while the Eras tour was still going on. She claimed that she was very tired while recording these songs, which one has to assume plays in the lack of spark that her other albums contain.

Overall, Swift's new album has received a wide range of feedback by fans. While it may not be her most popular or most likeable album, there is no doubt that Swift can produce amazing albums with strong lyrics that resonate with fans.



graphics by Tanner Witzke



It's a question that even with all of our technology, scientists can't find a clear answer. A question I've wondered since I was little. As Cliffe Knechtle says, "Love is the ability to freely choose to care for another human being". You can choose to hate just as much as you can choose to love. It's also not prompted solely because of a person's actions or because they deserve it.

I believe that love is a clear indicator that there is more to life than just matter and energy. You can't x-ray the heart and find love, you can't draw a blood sample and measure it. Love is intangible, implying there is more to us than just the physical. We are human beings, created by an intangible God, given a beautiful ability to love. So, what is it in humans that sparks genuine care and sympathy towards others? Why were we created this way? To me, the answer is logical and has shown itself to be more and more true since the moment I accepted it. The truth is "God is love" (1 John 4:8). We were created in His image, and so "We love because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19). Humans love because He created us in His likeness. That's the answer to my first question.

So, the perception of the world and the deep consciousness that we all have, on the most basic level, is proof to me that there is a Creator of this unfathomably intricate and undeniably designed existence. The next question is, does God love us? This question was answered in the most famous book of all time, the Bible. As well as being the most famous, it's also one of the most misconceptualized pieces of literature. It's mostly known that the Bible is the story of creation and Jesus. Some think it's more fairy tale than factual, which couldn't be farther from the truth. The Bible is a collection of books written by people including ancient kings, musicians, poets and peasants, all who are witnesses to the truth of God. These accounts mention real places and real events. It's a history book made up of accounts from many different people spanning over thousands of years, that all point to one conclusion... Jesus, who is the expression of God's love.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). Because of these recorded eyewitness accounts, I know that there was a man named Jesus. He sacrificed Himself for us out of love, then He miraculously rose from the dead, proving everything He said to be true. This truth means I now know why we love. I know because God unconditionally loves us, not because of the things we've done or haven't done, but because we are His.

## STUDENT REACTIONS

Tyler Witzke  
Copy Editor



### "The Life of a Showgirl" album review

"I think it's a good album. I think that some songs are good, but there's just a couple of good songs I've listened to."

Mallory Hoeh, freshman



### 3D printing project

"If I could get something 3D printed as a key chain, it would probably be a pom, because I do pom at Dow High."

Allison Ebeling, sophomore



### School starting later

"I think school starting later would be beneficial to all students."

Henry Potts, sophomore



### Boys soccer team winning districts

"I think boys soccer winning districts is pretty impressive."

Daniel Lowe, sophomore



### Biology IA

"My IA about testing the nitrogen in soil in proximity to the road, so if road affects the health of the soil by either adding excess nitrogen or not enough."

Maddie Varhola, senior



### '80s fashion revival

"I think 1980s fashion is still relevant because we just take it and more modernized it in our own kind of fashion way."

Ryder Poirier, senior

photos by Tyler Witzke

# Inspiring involvement

## Junior Alaina Weyrowske balances busy schedule, inspires youth

Gabe Nix & Julia Lacher  
managing news & managing sports

Stress. The word sends a shiver up some people's spines. However, this is not the case for everyone. As someone who has been constantly busy since elementary school and has kept her schedule stacked with class, sports and other extra-curriculars, she completely redefines the meaning of the word.

By the time she was in high school, she had racked up leadership positions in multiple different extracurriculars. She is the Vice President of Outreach for DHS's chapter of DECA, an NHS member and a volunteer for Girls on the Run. She is a Miss America Pageant contestant, a cross country runner and a dual enrolled college student. She is a soccer referee, a Chamber singer and, simply put, an entrepreneur.

Her schedule is packed, but that's the way she likes it. Junior Alaina Weyrowske operates with a fully packed schedule.

"I thrive in the stress," Weyrowske said.

Weyrowske's passion for being involved started at a young age and has only grown since. Taking advantage of all the opportunities available to her has been a key value that she has lived by in order to become a well-rounded individual prepared for the future.

"I typically like to go, go, go, go, go," Weyrowske said.

At the end of her sophomore year, the news of a business pitch competition made its way to Weyrowske, an opportunity that she couldn't pass up. After formulating a plan for a flavored lemonade stand business called Sunny Sips, Weyrowske presented her pitch to judges.

She won first in the competition, giving her the opportunity to sell her products at the Dow Championship, an LPGA tournament, over the summer of 2025.

After bringing in over \$1,000 in profit at the championship, Weyrowske decided to continue her business venture over the summer by attending a handful of events in the region to earn some additional money to help pay for both gas and college.

Weyrowske's objective for next year is to hold an independent venue spot at the championship.

Owning a full-time business in the future is also a goal of Weyrowske's, and she thinks Sunny Sips can serve as an inspiration for her business endeavors later in life.

"This has kind of given me a little taste of okay, 'this is what a small scale business looks like now'," Weyrowske said. "How do we make it bigger and improve on [it]?"

Weyrowske has learned a few lessons throughout the process of establishing Sunny Sips.

"It can be a lot, especially [because owning a business is] just not something that is super common at this age," Weyrowske said. "So kind of figuring it out has definitely been a process with a lot of resilience in it because I've

definitely had some ideas that did not work."

Apart from owning a business, Weyrowske also competes in one of the nation's largest women's scholarship organizations: Miss America. Pageants in the Miss America organization give out more than \$3 million every year in scholarships. Contrary to the stigma often associated with pageants, the Miss America organization aims to empower young girls to inspire change and get involved in their community.

"I think there's also kind of a stigma around it of it being like the average beauty pageant in the Miss America organization," Weyrowske said. "None of it is actually judged on how you look. It's really just [judged on] how you handle yourself."

Each competitor participates in a platform known as a service initiative where they work to solve or improve an issue they believe is important in their community. Weyrowske focuses her initiative on increasing the involvement of youth. Through her initiative, Weyrowske seeks opportunities to help children in the community get involved, and she exercises her leadership skills through that.

Weyrowske uses her service initiative to help distribute equal learning opportunities to young children.

"I think that kids

in underprivileged areas deserve to have those same opportunities, regardless of their background," Weyrowske said.

As part of her initiative, Weyrowske volunteers with Girls on the Run, an organization dedicated to helping children in elementary school get involved in running and build social skills.

As a result of competing for and winning Miss Bay County, Weyrowske has gained many valuable skills and discovered some of her passions.

One thing that Weyrowske learned through competing in pageants is the importance of never giving up. Through competing, Weyrowske was able to develop resilience, which she now considers one of her biggest strengths.

She not only uses these skills for competition; she believes they can

be applied to her everyday life. Additionally, Weyrowske learned that she needs to stay true to her character by doing activities she's truly passionate about.

"Be true to yourself and find stuff that works for you," Weyrowske said. "You will eventually find your people if you stick to that, but don't try and pretend. Be who you are. That's what's most important."

Through the many activities she has been involved with, Weyrowske has adopted ideas that have become core parts of her belief system.

"Being motivated and persistent, and learning perseverance is really important because you have to know what you want and then have the bravery to go get it," Weyrowske said.

While Weyrowske has experienced lots of success, the joy of helping others remains her paramount source of motivation for everything she does.

"It's always important to remember that at the end of the day, why I'm in [my activities] is I'm there to give back to my community and help the people who have helped me get to where I am today," Weyrowske said.



**ACTIVITY QUEEN:** Junior Alaina Weyrowske models her crown and sash in Erin Royalty's room on Nov. 3. Weyrowske won "Miss Bay County" and implemented a service initiative to work with youth in the classroom. "I like helping other kids get involved," Weyrowske said.

**“Being motivated and persistent, and learning perseverance is really important because you have to know what you want and then have the bravery to go get it”**  
Alaina Weyrowske  
Junior

## DOW Wrapped Top Songs of November

Julia Lacher  
managing sports



"Hangar 18,"  
Megadeth

Wyatt Shaffer, Grade 11



"Sidelines,"  
Phoebe Bridgers

Esther Joshua, Grade 12



"Delusional,"  
John Michael Howell

Elise LeBlanc, Grade 9



"Always,"  
Daniel Caesar

Bella Bills, Grade 10



"You Found Me,"  
The Fray

Justin Corle, Grade 11



"Don't Stop Believin',"  
Journey

Landon Droomer, Grade 10



"she's all i wanna be,"  
Tate McRae

Garam Lee, Grade 9



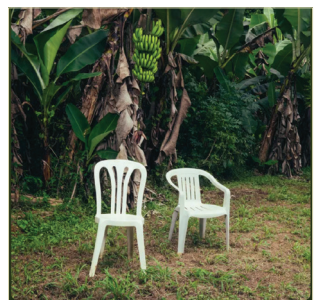
"I Love Me,"  
Megan Moroney

Brooklyn Felske, Grade 10



"Alive,"  
Empire of the Sun

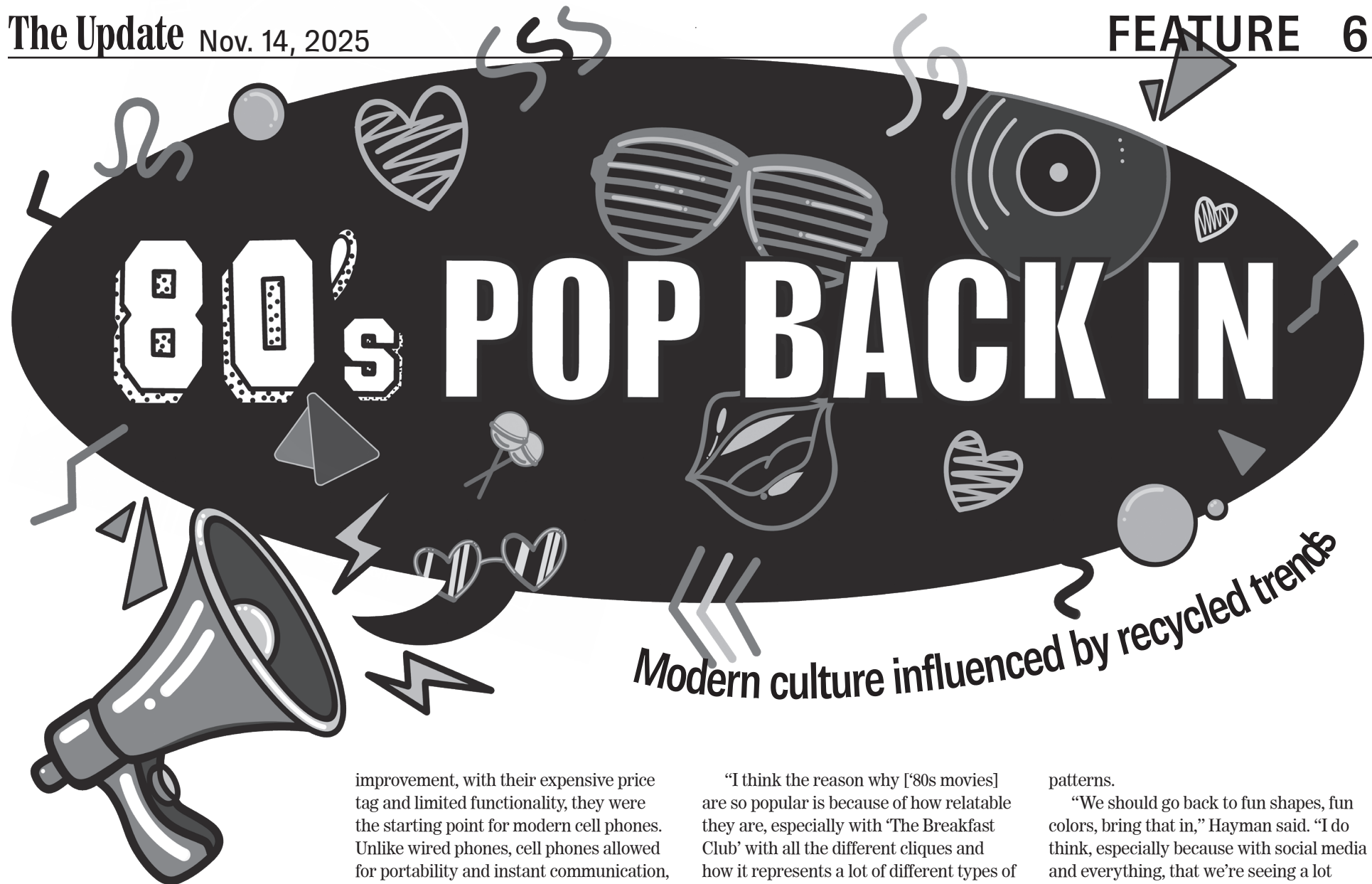
Amelia Wiseman, Grade 9



"BAILE INOLVIDABLE,"  
Bad Bunny

Makayla Nash, Grade 10

screenshots from Spotify



Modern culture influenced by recycled trends

Tanner Witzke & Tyler Witzke  
managing design & managing copy

Pop culture, post-World War II technology, groovy dance music, new movies and bold fashion are all part of one of the impactful decades of the 20th century. The '80s or so-called "decade of decadence" holds multiple historically significant events. These years have influenced modern technology, such as the MacBook and mouse, shows like "Stranger Things," pop artists like Chappell Roan and even current fashion trends.

"[The '80s] were very revolutionary," junior Violet Hayman said. "A lot of change happened during the '80s. We saw a lot more developments in the STEM community, in fashion, and in just how society acted."

One of the most crucial developments of the '80s that greatly impacts today's society were the technological advancements. Technology made huge improvements in the '80s, paving the way for modern technology to have the ability to spread information like wildfire. The '80s introduced the first cell phone, personal computers (such as the Macintosh 1984), CDs and Microsoft Excel. While the first cell phones had much room for

improvement, with their expensive price tag and limited functionality, they were the starting point for modern cell phones. Unlike wired phones, cell phones allowed for portability and instant communication, making an impact on modern life.

"[The '80s is] when I think the technology revolution really kicked in," art teacher Mark Francisco said. "We had reached sort of the end of the Industrial Revolution era, which lasted about 100 years. Then with the computers coming in in the '80s; I mean, it was the Macintosh 1984 so we were halfway through the '80s when that came in and that birthed the whole thing."

While the first ever computer, Electronic Numerical Integrator and Computer (ENIAC), was made in the 1940s, it was the '80s when computers became more popular and accessible. This price drop allowed computers to be found in more homes than ever before. A revolutionary computer design during the '80s was Apple's "Macintosh 128k," which was first introduced on Jan. 24, 1984. It was the first computer to successfully use graphical user interface (GUI) along with a mouse.

GUI allows users to interact with computers visually, with elements such as windows, icons and the mouse, helping users better navigate computers. These inventions helped the general public to understand computers better and be more comfortable with them. The public's acceptance of the Macintosh 128k's features impacted current day computers as well. To this day, people still use computers with GUI for work, school, hobbies and more, because of their original success in the '80s.

Alongside '80s technology, '80s movies have also had their influence on current pop culture. '80s movies popularized different movie tropes, such as the friendship trope. A widely popular movie from the '80s that utilized the friendship trope is "The Breakfast Club."

"I think the reason why ['80s movies] are so popular is because of how relatable they are, especially with "The Breakfast Club" with all the different cliques and how it represents a lot of different types of people," junior Juno Martinez said.

"Stranger Things" is a popular, relatively new, show inspired by the '80s aesthetic. The show is set in the '80s and represents the friendship trope, music and fashion of that time. In "Stranger Things," the costume design features bright colors, oversized silhouettes and big hair.

"[In the '80s there were] people with big hair, big style, big everything," Francisco said. "And it just became very glam-oriented in a lot of ways."

Lately, the runway has taken big inspiration from the '80s. Saint Laurent Spring 2026 and Chloé Spring 2026 both involved bold silhouettes of accentuated shoulder pads, cinched waists and loud colors and jewelry.

"We're seeing a lot more people who want to be outside the box, who want to incorporate their ideas into [the] mainstream," Hayman said.

Recently, many celebrities have been considered to have a no-apologies attitude when it comes to fashion. A list of some celebrities that are experimenting with '80s inspired fashion includes Chappell Roan and Harry Styles. Chappell Roan has especially been '80s oriented with colorful makeup, vibrant colors, big red hair and exaggerated silhouettes. One of her most notable looks was her Met Gala suit, which involved popping pinks, metallic textures

and disco-inspired makeup. Harry Styles has also acknowledged the '80s with his "Love On Tour" wardrobe that included neon colors, sequins, retro sneakers, as well as stripe and polka dot

patterns.

"We should go back to fun shapes, fun colors, bring that in," Hayman said. "I do think, especially because with social media and everything, that we're seeing a lot more of it."

"I think there are still going to be people who carry out the designs, the ideas [and] the aesthetics of the '80s."

Violet Hayman Junior

As a matter of fact, the '80s aesthetic has trickled down into the general public. '80s style jeans, t-shirts and blazers have recently seen a rise in popularity. According to a "Fashion Gone Rogue" blog, high-waist, straight-leg jeans have been in style for a couple of years now. In the '80s, graphic tees had been a staple of self-expression, and it is still widely seen today.

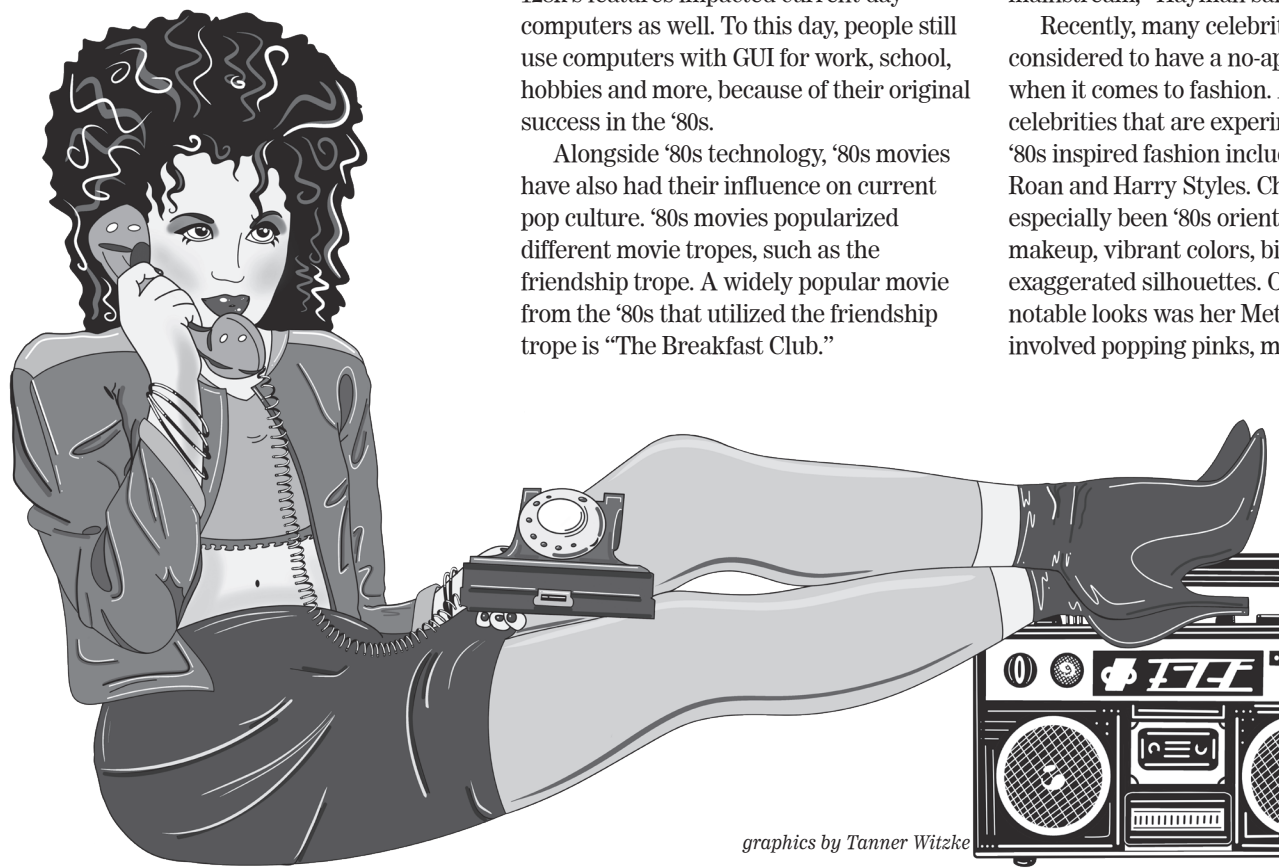
Other than everyday fashion, some '80s subcultures have risen in popularity due to the internet and social media.

"There's a lot of different subcultures, like '80s goth, which is trad goth; it's kind of resurging," Martinez said.

Another industry that has resurged is '80s themed music. Across social media, many '80s songs have been trending. "Material Girl" by Madonna, "Running Up That Hill (A Deal With God)" by Kate Bush, "Two Of Hearts" by Stacey Q and "Eyes Without a Face" by Billy Idol have all resurfaced among TikTok trends. Current songs such as "Say So" by Doja Cat, "Save Your Tears" by the Weeknd and "HOT TO GO!" by Chappell Roan all take inspiration from the '80s with the dance-pop, groovy and synthesized sounds.

Simply stated, the trends of the '80s have come around again through music, fashion, movies and technology.

"I think there are still going to be people who carry out the designs, the ideas [and] the aesthetics of the '80s," Hayman said.



graphics by Tanner Witzke



Alex's Angle with Alex Stichel

Artistic Synthesis

"Mom, why am I dumb?" I asked countless times growing up. "Mom, why can't I solve for x?" "Mom, why can't I understand biology?" "Mom, why did I lose the science fair?" While I can solve for x now, and I had to figure out biology, it took me a lot longer to discover what truly led me to classify myself as "dumb." It turned out that the cause of these thoughts is the "STEM Superiority Complex," a term that's been dubbed by psychologists across the world.

This term relates to the concept that STEM is seen as difficult while the arts are seen as an easy, "softer science."

Think back to a couple centuries ago. Back then, intellectuals were anyone who advanced society—whether they were writers, chemists, or anthropologists. But they were all given an equal level of admiration. What changed? When was it that the Einsteins in the world became the catalysts for knowledge, and buried the arts? When did the advancement of technology have a stronger reaction than the advancement of humanity?

The significance of the arts is neglected in the education system due to these aforementioned prejudices. The arts aren't pointless. You can find a career. In fact, 88 percent of people with degrees in the arts and humanities are employed right after school, and 89

percent of people with STEM degrees find immediate employment, according to London Economics.

I believe that the humanities take a different skill set, (compared to a STEM focused career) rather than no skill set. Something went wrong over the course of history that led to society falling susceptible to inequality regarding intelligence. Psychologically, it must be similar to what leads humans to discriminate against others. Am I dumb if I'm good at literary analysis but my brain can't comprehend physics?

It's not fair to stick children in a classroom for hours on end and spend 75 percent of that time forcing them to memorize their times tables, leaving little room for reading and writing instruction. Creativity cannot be forced. You can't tell a child to read a book on something they

don't care about and expect them to enjoy it, nor can you tell a child exactly what you want them to write about and then proceed to call it "creative."

When it comes to school funding, it's almost always arts programs that get cut. Football? They need their charter buses to get across town. The engineering club? They need new calculators, the ones from last year won't do. But the drama club with ten members? Their props from 1980 will work. DHS is fortunate to have an excellent theater program, but most schools aren't as privileged. In fact, despite the effort of the popular sitcom "Glee," society still seems to have a very Sue Sylvester approach to school programs.

The arts are neglected, and they shouldn't be. They're a "science" that builds the foundation of this earth.

Guest 20 Home 25  
5:16  
**SCOREBOARD**

Gillian Smith  
editor-in-chief

**GIRLS VARSITY SWIM**

The varsity girls swim team finished out their regular season on Nov. 8, 2025. Valley's Conference Championships were held at Grand Blanc High School where the girls placed second overall with a score of 836.

"This season has been really good, not just for me, but for everyone else," sophomore Amelia Malarz said. "We've all dropped time in our events, and, you know, we're all working really hard."

States preliminaries will be held at Eastern Michigan University on Nov. 21. Individual state qualifiers include Malarz, sophomore Avery Angelosanto, junior Sierra LaLonde, senior Avery Nickel, and junior Vera Roberson. State finals begin at noon on Nov. 22.

**VARSITY CROSS COUNTRY**

The girls and boys cross country team ended their regular season on Oct. 15, 2025, at the SVL meet. The girls placed second overall, one point behind the Bay City Western warriors, who placed first. The boys placed sixth.

"We're a super young team, so I think in a couple of years, we could really do something special," sophomore Emilia Garces said.

Garces represented DHS at States, placing 4th.

"[States] went super well," Garces said. "It was definitely my best race ever, and I just felt super confident and capable during it."

**VARSITY HOCKEY**

Coach Cody Keefer needed more time to observe players at tryouts due to an increase of freshmen trying out.

"I'm looking forward to this year," junior Daniel Gabriel said. "I think we have a good set of players, and we have a good amount of kids coming in, and we definitely have a lot of room to grow, and we could be a really good team this year."

Their next game is Nov. 15. at Chelsea High School at 4 p.m.

**GIRLS VARSITY VOLLEYBALL**

The varsity volleyball team ended their regular season with a 1-1 tied game against Skyline High School on Oct. 18. Their regular season record was 23-13-5. They moved to districts where they lost all three sets.

"So we really worked together, and we just try to have fun the whole time, because we normally don't do well unless we have fun," junior Chloe Lambert said.

**BOYS VARSITY FOOTBALL**

The boys varsity football team won 34-7 win against crosstown rival MHS, ending their season 8-1.

"Regular season went awesome," senior running back Garlands Randolph said. "You know, going 8-1, that's pretty good. Obviously, the Mount Pleasant game, that's not what we wanted, and we wanted to win that SVL championship, but, you know, we knocked off a lot of achievements off our little goal sheet, so I think we did pretty good."

The team moves on in playoffs tonight against Orchard Lake St. Mary's High School at home.

"I mean, the boys are definitely pretty tired, pretty sore, pretty banged up, but ready to get cracked down for this cold week ahead of us, and just get ready for them mentally and most importantly, just make sure we know our stuff," senior wide receiver Max Brandt said.

**BOYS VARSITY TENNIS**

The tennis team's season ended with a record of 26-0-1, and broke the record for number of single wins.

"I'm very proud of the team for the season," senior Ian Koh said. "[We] exceeded expectations coming in. We thought we were gonna fall off really hard after last year's where we tied for second. We thought we weren't even gonna get top five, but a lot of people stepped up."

State Finals were held at the Midland Tennis Center where the team placed third with 22 points.

# Spirit meets skill

## Charger cheer team switches from sideline to competitive

Kelly Daoud  
co business manager

As the football season wraps up, the cheer team is getting ready to change from pom pons and sidelines to mats and competitions. That transition can be tough for some, as the competitive season brings with it longer practices and harder routines. With the anticipation and preparation for the transition between seasons, cheerleaders are gaining excitement and setting new goals for themselves.

Junior Addy Broom will be undergoing the transition from sideline to competitive cheer.

"[Competitive cheer] gets more serious because our coach cares," Broom said. "Because sideline is supposed to be more for fun, and 'competitive' has more meaning, things have to be better."

The coaches look closer into cheerleaders to determine which round to place them in. Cheerleaders with higher skill levels will be placed in higher rounds.

"The coaches have specific skills that we need for round two," Broom says. "That's how you decide how many people get to be in other rounds. People are mainly looking for the round two skills."

Broom said she prefers competitive cheer because of the seriousness that comes with it.

"Everyone who does competitive cares more about cheer," Broom said.

Sophomore Ruby Hetherington prefers to participate in the sideline cheer season rather than the competitive season.

"I like the football games and I like the amount of student section participation that we get from sideline season," Hetherington said.

Hetherington described the switch from game-focused routines to a high-level athletic performance.

"We have a week break between sideline and [competitive] tryouts," Hetherington said. "So that week I just kind of switch my mindset to preparing for the rounds and for the new schedule."

Senior Kenzie Kessel explained that sideline cheer helps prepare athletes for the upcoming competition season.

"When competitive season comes around, it gets a lot more serious because we have to be ready for the competitions, and there's also a lot more pressure to get your skills," Kessel said. "Sideline is kind of like building up to what competitive is going to look like. So say you're working on skills for sideline like in your tuck, that's gonna eventually help you a lot when competitive season comes around. So sideline's almost like



photo by Bea Groves

**GUIDANCE FOR GREATNESS:** On Sept. 5, 2025 the DHS cheer team showed off their stunts during the Heritage vs. Dow football game at Heritage's home field. Senior Jaden Forshee gives guidance that might help others be persistent. "Some advice I'd give is to just work hard," Forshee said. "If there's a goal you want to get, keep your mind on it and keep pushing towards it."

prep for competitive season."

Kessel also shared what coaches want and are looking for in a cheerleader.

"For seniors this year, or even if you're a junior, she's gonna be expecting more from you just because obviously you've been on the team for a while," Kessel said. "It's important to go out with like your full potential and show her, all the things that you can and should be doing."

Kessel shared that her favorite stunt to execute is "baskets". This is where the flier gets tossed up high, does a flip, kick, or twist, and lands safely back in the group's arms.

"A lot of people get more excited when they see [baskets]," Kessel said. "It's kind of like a wow factor. There's a lot more you can do with baskets too, like regular stunts you really only have, libs and stuff, so where you go up on one leg and those are fun, but baskets are kind of just creative. You can kind of do whatever you want with them."

Freshman and cheerleader Kennedy Royalty said that the difference between

middle school and high school cheer is quite prominent.

"[High school cheer] is a lot more responsibility," Royalty said. "Your perspective on cheer and everything is just different. You see how much more competitive it gets."

Coach Jacquelyn Delude detailed what the transition looks like for her.

"Sideline we focus on getting our skills and perfecting skills," Delude said. "So when we move to competition season, it's putting everything we learned in sideline all together in sync as one team."

More specifically, Delude expanded on the difference between sideline and competitive cheer.

"Sideline, we'll say is a lot more fun, we do all the fancy sparkle bows and all the game themes and all that," Delude said. "Michigan competitive cheer is very strict, no sparkles. Everyone has to look exactly the same with all their motions and all their movements. So that's the biggest transition. So you kind of have to mentally change."



**LEAD IN:** Kenzie Kessel stands with her cheer team, pom-poms raised during the Mount Pleasant vs. Dow game on Sept. 12. Kessel explained how attitude is important to bring to the team. "Just be yourself, be confident" Kessel said. "Show that you have a good work ethic and just really come and be yourself."

photo courtesy Kenzie Kessel

**Kelly's Korner**  
with  
**Kelly Daoud**  
DHS track coaching changes

For the past two years, the DHS track team has had a lot of new coaches. Two years ago, both of the main track coaches quit, which then caused many students to quit. Last year, two additional coaches left.

These changes in the coaching staff have been a lot of transitions for one team to handle, especially as the team is trying to build consistency and improve every season. I think with so many coaches coming and going, it's been hard to receive the help

that contributes towards improvement. Improving without consistent support leads to slower development and possible injuries, since you're not getting corrected by a professional.

When I joined track my junior year, I noticed our team was somewhat separated, and not that close to each other. Everyone kind of focused on their own events. Team spirit and recognition is really important, even when you're competing alone. However, team bonding was nonexistent.

There wasn't a lot of teamwork, which is logical, since it's a mostly individual sport, but also I felt as if track accomplishments weren't noticed. For example, some athletes perform well in other sports and their accomplishments are said over the announcements. However with track, success is not as recognized, or perceived as such. Even though track may seem like an independent sport, there's still a huge team aspect people don't always see.

Right now, the long distance part of the track team is coached by Gary Loubert and Jenna Oskvarek, while sprinters and hurdlers are getting a new coach, Jenna Gaul. Gaul is a track athlete at Northwood University, and she'll mostly be working with us during the outdoor season, possibly indoor as well.

Even though we haven't met her yet, there's already a mix of curiosity and hope around what she'll bring to the team. With this brand-new change, our team can gain a new perspective, and maybe a new way of pushing each other to be stronger and faster.

Change can be challenging, especially in sports, but sometimes new leadership can bring the motivation a team needs. Maybe this season will be the one where we come together more as a team. With a new season and a new coach joining us this year, there's a lot to look forward to and potentially more success to come. This year feels like a fresh start and I am excited for what's to come.

# 7 years later....

## Boys soccer makes a comeback with their district win

Isabelle Hetherington  
photo editor

**W**e knew we had the ability to [make it to districts], because our team was filled with a bunch of talent," senior Ryan Burse said. "It was all mindset."

The DHS varsity soccer team won districts for the first time in seven years on Oct. 18. To secure the title, the team played Heritage for the third time that season, winning with a score of 2-0.

The Chargers ended their season with a record of 15-7 along with the three additional wins at districts. With only eight days between the end of their regular season and the first district game, head boys varsity soccer coach Cody Schoener made sure to put his best foot forward while coaching.

"[Cody] is a great coach," freshman Sam Scorsone said. "He set out, he gave us things. He was like, 'we're just gonna flush everything that's happened before the season, all the losses, all the downs, all the ups, we're gonna just focus on districts.'"

In the time leading up to districts, the team focused their first 15 minutes of each practice on strengthening their mindsets. "Locked in, heart and honor" were all crucial themes that contributed to their success. The first day focused on heart, more specifically, a "champion's heart," asking questions like "what does it mean to have a champion's heart?" and "how do we exhibit it?" In addition, they focused their attention on each player and what they brought to the team, whether it was their energy or their fighting spirit.

"[Locked in, heart and honor] were our two main [goals], and from those practices then onto now, it's just a lot of communications, a lot of locking in," Scorsone said. "And, I mean, it worked out. I know we didn't perform as good as we could have in regionals, but, I mean, I never thought of winning a district final, and that's the first district final [we've won], in I think seven years. So, I'll take it and it's a good accomplishment."

Schoener has been coaching soccer for over 14 years, most of which was at a recreational level. He started his position as head coach of boys soccer team last year. When Schoener started, he and the collective coaching staff brought a three year plan upon the team. The plan was broken up into three years, there would be a specific goal to focus on each year. The first year's goal was to maintain the team's standing. The second year was to elevate the skill, and the third was to change anything that needed to be improved. By the third year, they hoped to win a district championship. They achieved this goal a year in advance, as a district championship win was originally projected to occur next school year.

"I didn't know I would get that excited about [the win], you know?" Schoener said. "I was very nervous, because the build up to that. The fact that we had lost to Heritage twice already, once at our field, and once at the other field," Schoener said. "I knew we were coming in with nothing to lose. Meaning they were the ones saying that 'we have to beat them three times.' But I knew we had the capability of beating them. When it was done like I was just super, super elated, super excited. I mean, if I could jump in with those guys and belly bump or jump in the air and go, I would have done that for sure."

The three district games took place over the course of a week. The final district game took place on a Saturday.

"I think during the game, we brought the energy, really there, because everyone was up on the sidelines," senior and captain Matthew Huang said. "And a lot of people turned out for that game, which was really, really cool. I think

**EIGHTEEN ON THE FIELD:** Senior Boston Diamond warms up before their game against Heritage on Sept. 9. They lost 1-3. "It was just a great experience," Diamond said. "You know, big team win. Eveybody contributed whether you were on the field, whether you're on defense, offense, goalie, backup, bench, coach."



photo by Macela Owen  
**HEADSTRONG:** Senior captain Matthew Haung throws in the ball during their game against Heritage High School on Sept. 9 with a score of 1-3. "Going into district, we were off three straight losses," Haung said. "So he implemented a lot of like mental training exercises, because it was just so close to that season where we needed a mental reset. winning."



photo by Isabelle Hetherington

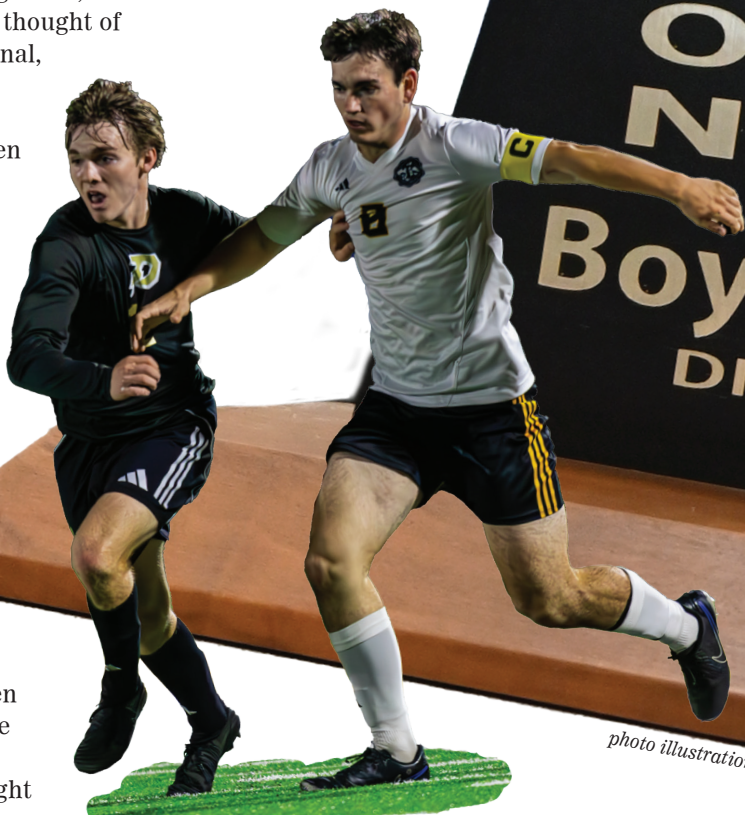


photo by James Wiseman

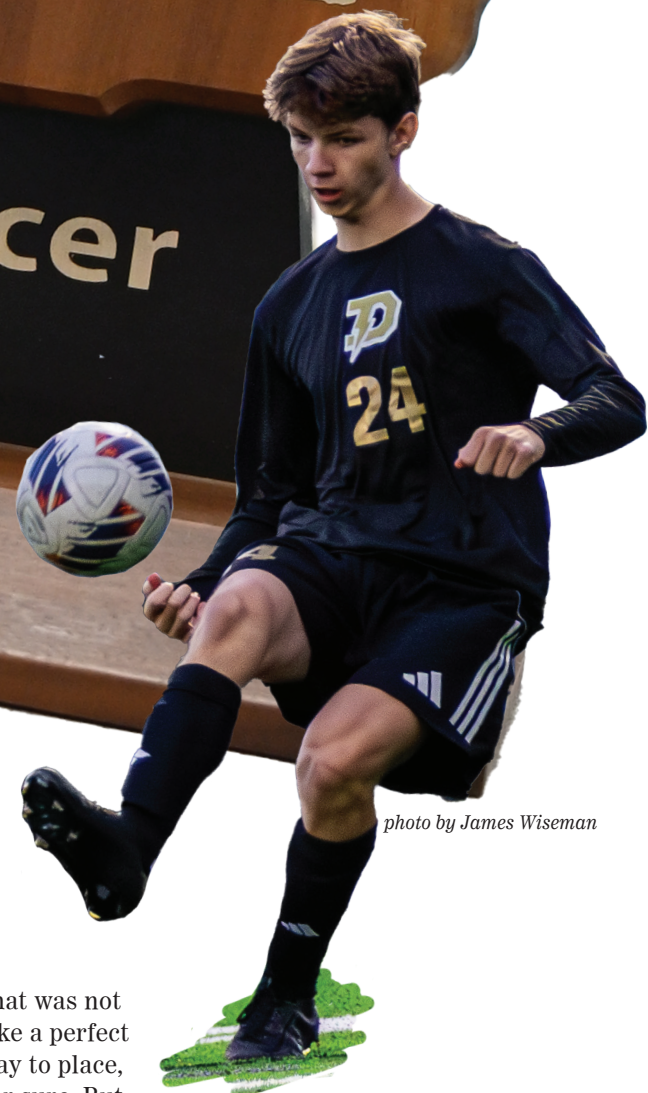


photo by James Wiseman

**PRESSED FOR TIME:** Senior Ian McLachlan holds a against Traverse City Central player during her game against on October 14th. DHS won 3-1. "We already lost against Heritage twice. I mean, it was just like going in the game everyone he was thinking we were going to win the game helped a lot," McLachlan. "We had to all work together. It felt great winning."

that definitely brought the energy and helped us kind of win the game."

Having entered districts with three straight losses, the Chargers changed their tune by entering regionals with three wins in a row, and as district champions. On Oct. 21, the team traveled to Hudsonville to face Portage Central High School, who was ranked the number one team in the state at the time.

"Regionals is interesting, traveling is never easy, that's a two and a half hour drive, and we went through hail and wind," Schoener said. "So

that was not like a perfect day to place, for sure. But what I got out of regionals was, what I hope what these kids saw was a lot of these schools, they're, double our size. So the fact that we got there, and it was kind of no one knew who we were, and it was kind of just because they all had fancy jackets, fancy gear, and we looked kind of like a ragtag. We still have nice stuff, but we're certainly not built up. And we put it to them."

Having lost to Portage Central 0-2, the Chargers ended their season in the first round of regionals. They ended up making it farther than they have in seven years; while ending short they plan on taking their success from this year and going further in their next years.

**AGAINST THE HORN:** Senior captain Nico Scorsone plays the midfield during their game against Saline on Sept. 20 with a winning score of 2-1. "I think it was great that we won first district in like eight years or better," Scorsone said. "It was really a great feeling."



photo by Sydney Kanitz

