

ANNAPOLIS HIGH SCHOOL

The ugar Crier

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A monthly tradition since 1974

January 2026



Photo by: E. Blevins.

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The Cougar Crier

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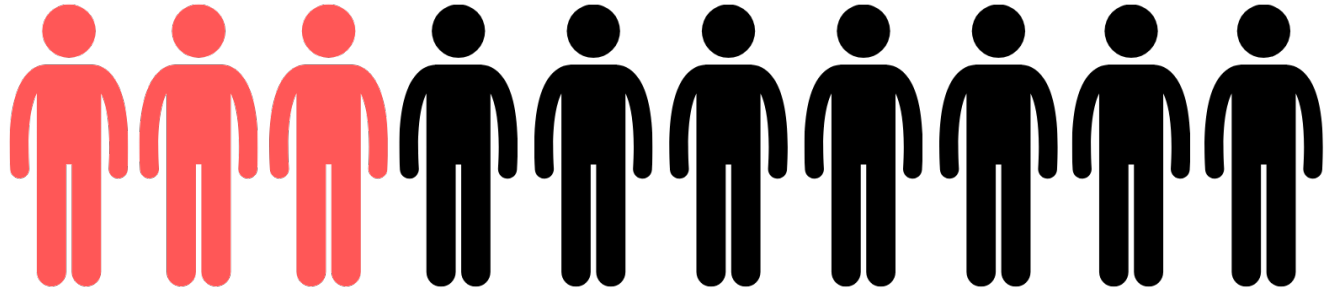
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AHS education over taken by AI

Evalynn Blevins '26 | Social Media Manager & Co-Design Editor

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At least three out of ten students use AI to help complete their assignments. Graphic by: E. Blevins.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become more common in classrooms now more than ever. With answers available in seconds, AI is changing the way students complete assignments and how teachers use it as a support tool. At AHS, teachers have been experimenting with AI to assist with planning lessons, assignments, and helping students. History teacher Johanaton Berent uses AI to help create more engaging content.

“When I use it, it’s to enhance any lessons or activities that I’ve created myself,” Berent said.

While Berent has embraced AI as a helpful resource, he remains cautious about its growing role in education. In Berent’s History of Michigan course, he has seen students use AI-generated photos in projects. Berent expresses his worry about how students might not be able to tell the difference between AI and reality.

“I had a few students use AI to research present people, and all of the images that they came up with were just AI-created; they weren’t even based on reality, so it’s worrisome that the student may not know the difference and just use that in a particular assignment,” Berent said.

Recently, Berent has noticed students increasingly turning to AI for help on assignments, but he is not quick to criticize; he sees it as a teachable moment.

“[I see students use AI on] daily assignments and homework, I’m not super fussy or picky about it, because at least if students are looking things up, they’re engaging with the content at least a little bit...that’s why using GoGuardian is very helpful, because then I can see what tabs students have open and just close them out... It’s a good teachable moment. Like, I would never just mark a student down for that. I would redirect them,” Berent said.

Students at AHS are turning to AI as a tool to explore ideas and gain a deeper understanding

of subjects they are learning. Senior Cooper Riopelle uses AI to help him expand on what he learns in class.

“I have used AI, not like malicious ways, but in learning ways, if I don’t understand something, I’ll pull up an AI I trust, basically, I just use AI to learn; I don’t really use them for answers, for information, or knowledge,” Riopelle said.

While Riopelle uses AI responsibly, he has raised concerns about students relying on AI to complete assignments. He believes that students need to navigate boundaries between learning and cheating.

“I feel like people who cheat their way, basically just use AI, get answers, I feel like they rely on it. But other students who actually prefer their own hard work do what they want to do, I feel like they don’t rely on AI,” Riopelle said.

While some students like Riopelle use AI primarily as a learning tool, others take a different approach when it comes to completing assignments. Sophomore Kaylee Townsend uses AI to tackle assignments and expresses that AI is mainly used as an escape.

“Yes, I have used AI... it’s always just to complete the assignments...with AI, it’s a lot easier to get lazy and just find the easy way out,” Townsend said.

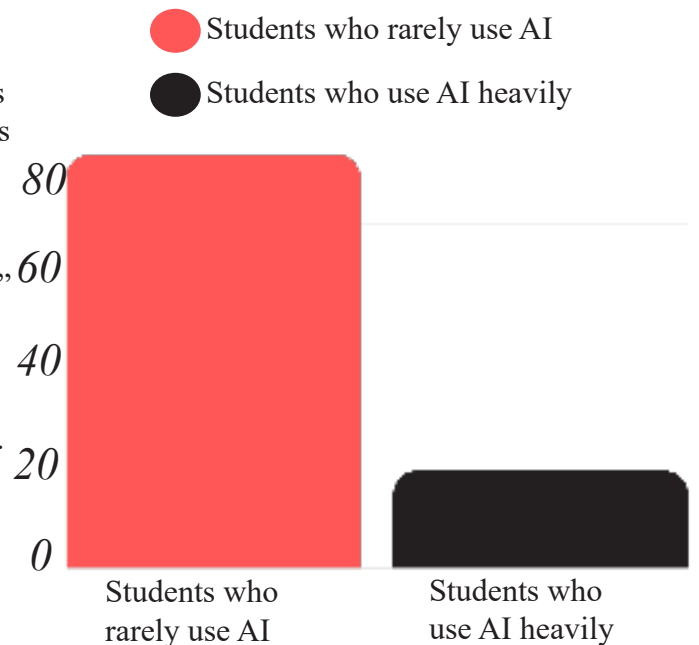
Townsend believes that the better teacher you have, the less likely you will use AI, but there will always be a few outliers who use it anyway.

“If you have a good teacher, you’re less likely to use AI, but there’s always going to be a kid here if it isn’t available, they will use it,” Townsend said.

As AI continues to make its way into classrooms, its role in education is complex. Some students use it as a tool to learn and explore, while others see it as a shortcut. Teachers like Berent are learning to navigate

this balance, turning AI into a teachable moment rather than a punishment. As technology continues to evolve, both teachers and students will play a key role in shaping how AHS education adapts to this new reality.

“AI does not improve peoples learning abilites. It takes jobs, doesn’t help students with learning, and has a negative impact on the enviorment,” Senior Rose Shaker said.



Out of 55 students at AHS, AI usage is getting increasingly popular. Graphic by: E. Blevins.

Winter brings changes for student drivers

Lexi Harleton '26 | Co-Associate Editor-in-Chief

Gas prices continue fluctuate

Gas prices in Michigan are averaging \$2.75 per gallon, the lowest statewide average since the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021. The national average is about \$3.04, according to recent data. While drivers are seeing short-term relief at the pump, prices could rise later this year. A new gas tax structure that took effect Jan. 1 increased the state's excise tax. Although the change is intended to be revenue-neutral, it could place upward pressure on fuel prices later in the year.

For families and teen drivers in Michigan, the dip in prices provides temporary relief as many rely on personal vehicles for school, work and extracurricular activities. Elizabeth Harleton, an Annapolis parent, said rising gas prices can strain family budgets.

"When gas prices go up, it does cause concern for parents. When you need to make sure your tank of gas lasts all week for important things like school and work, sometimes it takes away from doing something fun," Harleton said.

Teen drivers say fuel costs remain a major expense even with lower prices. Many students balance gas expenses with school, work and other responsibilities. Rihanna Diggs, a student, said paying for gas adds up quickly.

"I pay for my own gas and it is a significant expense in my life due to having to fill up every two days," Diggs said.



Gas prices at Clark gas station. Photo by: L. Harleton.

Changing temperatures cause unsure conditions

Winter driving conditions continue to pose challenges across Michigan as fluctuating temperatures and frequent precipitation contribute to slick roads, potholes and reduced visibility.

Encourage drivers, especially teenagers with limited winter driving experience, to check weather conditions before traveling and keep vehicles properly maintained. Emergency kits with jumper cables, first-aid supplies and warm clothing are also recommended. For young drivers across the state, preparation and cautious driving remain essential for navigating Michigan's winter roads safely. Samantha Gates, a student, said winter weather significantly affects her daily commute.

"Driving in the snow affects my commute time a lot. I have to drive slow and careful to avoid causing an accident but I also have to worry about making it on time. Driving in the snow has affected my attendance a few times. I was tardy because I was being cautious," Gates said.



Snowfall on Fairlane drive causes slick road conditions. Photo by: L. Harleton.

Tips for winter driving



Always wear your seatbelt



Drive slow and expect delays



Do not use cruise control



Patience is key to safe driving



Frequently check weather conditions

Graphics by: Canva.

I want the taste of freedom

Ali Alkhaqany '26 | Co-Associate Editor-in-Chief

Students' opinions on school lunch vary across the halls of Annapolis. Some students look forward to it because they enjoy the food and enjoy time away from the classroom and with friends. In other cases, students may dislike lunchtime because of the menu choices or because they have no friends to accompany them. I believe a lunch signout may be a solution to both of these problems.

Under certain conditions, I think students should be able to leave the school campus during lunchtime and return in time for class once the allotted time is over. Though, of course, this allowance should not be without regulations. The following conditions should apply: first, to reduce the number of tardies there might be, if a student is late 3 times the student will be stripped of the privilege until further notice, the student must be a senior, maintain a grade point average of 2.0 or higher, have a clean behavioral record and most importantly, obtain permission from a parent or guardian.

I think having a paper list is the most efficient way to go through the process of signing out and signing back in. These lists should be split between three papers, marking A, B, and C lunch. Each student who wants to leave will have to write the time they exit the building, then, when they come back, they write the time at which they did so. Another option is a QR code scan to ensure the data is timestamped and accurate.

Student safety will remain a top priority for the administration, as I believe they should implement a radius policy requiring that students stay within a specific mile radius. Furthermore,

by requiring a signed waiver as part of the permission process, the school shifts legal responsibility to the guardians during that specific time.

Students can use this time as a mental break from school. Being in a building for hours at a time, constantly intaking information, can be exhausting, so leaving to refuel and replenish will most likely have positive impacts on many students' attention spans. The privilege of open campus lunch shouldn't just be a gift; it should be a reward for years of compliance and hard work. By the time students hit their senior year, if they have met the requirements needed to attain the privilege, they have proven their ability to follow rules and manage their time.

I believe that introducing something like this will reduce the amount of cafeteria food consumed by students, which means there is no possibility of food scarcity in the cafeteria. Schools often overprepare food, resulting in increased waste. The fewer students that need cafeteria food, the less money the school needs to spend on food and the less food they waste. Not only would this proposal help students and the planet, but also boost the economy of the local businesses because kids would be leaving around the same time every day to purchase food.

In a way, this prepares students for real-world responsibilities. They will eventually have to commute to get their own food, calculate their travel times to be back on time, and decide how much they want to spend. This is the reality for many adults, and as seniors approach the finish line of the bridge between childhood and adulthood, this is a good way to prepare them.

Grades up, phones down

Cameron Lauer '26 | Sports Editor

The phone ban has been in place for five months now, and as we approach the end of the first semester, students' emotions are still very mixed. Some students have actually listened fully and are committed to the classroom with no phones. Others have not listened at all and still find ways to look at the media during school. I feel torn about the phone ban myself, because although I understand how addicted people can be to their phones, there are people like myself who are responsible and only access their phones during appropriate times. I agree it is unacceptable to ignore a teacher speaking because of the phone, but it is not necessarily the phone as much as it is the people with access to it.

So, in the aspect of rude kids ignoring and not learning, I agree with the ban. On the other hand, in cases of emergency or when needing a moment to text a relative, or even having music while working on an assignment, I do not agree with the full ban at all. A partial ban would be more sufficient. That way it would still give students their freedom but also give teachers the respect they deserve. Phones are a thing of the new and to future generations, and everyone, including adults, has become accustomed to a life with them. Removing them entirely may help some students in the class with academics overall, but it might have a negative overall effect when considering all the factors.

Phones are not the main issue, but I see how the privilege was abused and why they got banned. The kids who sneak their phones just prove why they should be banned even more. Still, a ban will not stop phones from being used. Instead of taking them away, we should embrace the fact that phones exist and let them be an addition to a learning experience. Since we are still evolving as humans, there is no right or wrong for growth and learning; it is what you make of the resources you have to learn.

Policy at a glance



Seniors only



2.0+ GPA requirement



Clean behavioral record



Parent permission

Why this works



Mental break



ECO & world readiness



Boosts focus

Digital sign-out



A mock up of the policies that this program would have. Graphic by: E. Blevins.

Meet the Student Council

Lexi Cadzow '26 | Photo Editor & Kalyssa Gunter '26 | Archive Manager



Navani Jones



Position: Vice President

Hobbies: Swim team, running

Birthday: Jan. 29, 2011

Responsibility: Keep students in order, make future plans

Photo by: L. Cadzow.



Melina Casares

Position: Treasurer

Hobbies: Hangout with family, play on phone, call friends

Birthday: June 17, 2011

Responsibility: Count money, give fundraising ideas



Photo by: L.Cadzow

Cristal Flores



Position: President

Hobbies: Cheer, flag football, volleyball

Birthday: Jan. 12, 2011

Responsibility: Set up dates for meetings, keep students in order, redirect students

Photo by: L. Cadzow.

Class of

2029

Graphics by: Canva.

Nella Parker



Position: Publicist

Hobbies: Photography, drawing, swim team

Brithday: Sept. 2, 2011

Responsibility: Run all social media (Instagram, Tiktok, etc), make flyers

Photo by: L. Cadzow.



Rylee Bridges

Position: Secretary

Hobbies: Bowling, band team, painting, reading

Birthday: Nov. 1, 2011

Responsibility: Take attendance at meetings, write down notes for staff



Photo by: L. Cadzow.

The path of Arthur Campbell

Montserrat Barba '27 | Broadcast Editor

Starting his first year in 2024, 38-year-old Biology teacher Arthur Campbell is fairly new here at Annapolis. Campbell teaches integrated science in biology to freshmen and sophomores. Prior to beginning teaching, he majored in Biology at Central Michigan University and earned his Masters in Arts in Education. Then, continuing to receive his Masters in Science in Biology, at The University of Nebraska Kearney. Campbell was on the right track of his future plans. Originally, Campbell had planned to become a college professor at Henry Ford Community College. However, the effects of COVID-19 drastically changed the course of his plans.

“When I graduated from my master's program in biology, it was right at when the 2020 shutdown hit. So none of the colleges around were hiring people that didn't already have online teaching experience. Even though I was working with the biology coordinator at Henry Ford to get myself set up for the job, she ended up not hiring me because I didn't have experience,” Campbell said.

Beginning his teaching career in 2021, Campbell taught science at Loyola High School, an all boys Catholic school located in Detroit, Michigan.

“When I started at my first school, I was

a little bit surprised at how behaviors have changed in school. It's not necessarily a bad thing, but students are a lot more open. They like to talk a lot more, and those are things that can be great assets when it comes to discussing science and things. But it's very different from what I remember, just sort of sitting and listening and filling in worksheets, and that's not really the ideal setup for teaching anymore,” Campbell said.

Campbell has always been passionate in the world of science. Therefore, his interest in the subject is the main reason why he chose to go after a teaching career.

“When it comes to science, there's always something new to learn. A lot of the other subjects are very static. They don't change very much but, in science, there's always something new coming out, always something further to explore,” Campbell said.

Campbell believes that becoming a teacher is a major career, it goes so much deeper than just a regular corporate job. It is also substantial to recognize the intention of why someone wants to become a part of a teacher administration.

“Teaching is a calling. If you feel like you really want to be a teacher, I would 100% support it. I would not recommend it as a day job, though. It's sort of a lifestyle. Like if you're

going into it for the money, you've got the wrong career. If you're going into it for the satisfaction of being able to help other people learn and make connections, then you're in the right place,” Campbell said.



Arthur Campbell proudly standing in his classroom. Photo by: M. Barba.

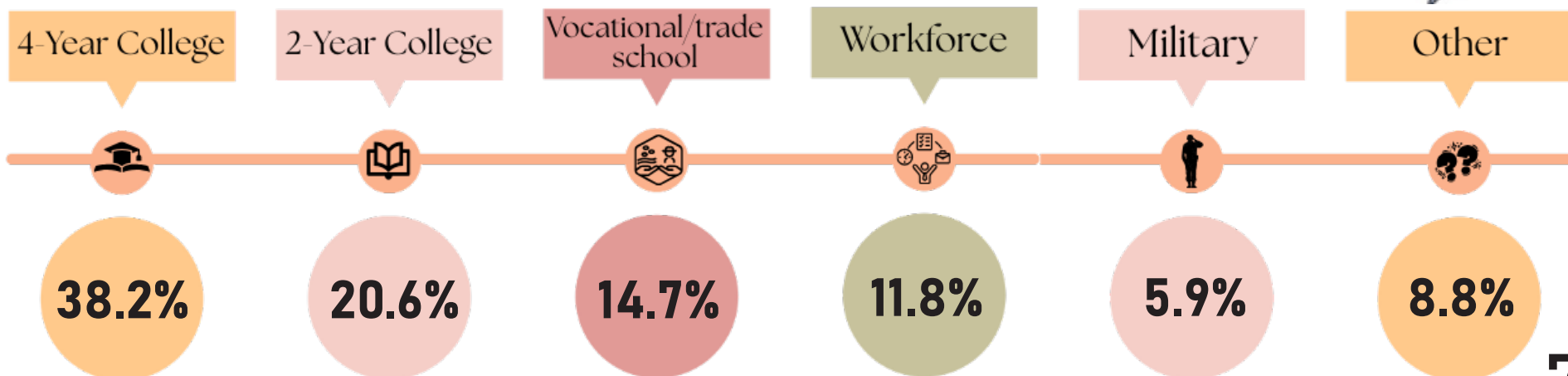
“After high school I plan to work until the college semester starts and I start college at Wayne State,” Joshua Flores said.

“I plan to either go into the trades to learn welding or go into college to learn about and study psychology for five to six years so that I can get my bachelors and masters so I can become a therapist or psychiatrist,” Cooper Riopelle said.

Senior paths

Lexi Harleton '26 | Co-Associate Editor-in-Chief

AHS seniors' plans after graduation



BTS OF MATILDA THE MUSICAL

Evalynn Blevins '26 | Social Media Manager & Co-Design Editor

Following the success of “The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee” musical, the Thespians Troupe 3216 decided to undertake another musical production, “Matilda the Musical,” written by Dennis Kelly and directed by Kristen Sonberger. Auditions were held at the beginning of September. During casting, Sonberger was searching for students with big personalities to help fulfill the character’s full potential.

“During auditions, I was looking for somebody that had a big personality when they were on stage, so character was a big deal for me,” Sonberger said.

When the cast list was released, sophomore Renata HerreraRuiz fulfilled Sonbergers’ expectations and was cast for the lead character, Matilda Wormwood. HerreraRuiz is filled with excitement and feels accomplished that she was able to achieve this role.

“It feels really emotional for me to get it, and I feel really proud of myself for achieving that,” HerreraRuiz said.

“Matilda the Musical” is HerreraRuiz’s first

musical at AHS, and she is beyond excited to work with her cast members. Over the course of rehearsals, the cast and crew have truly bonded together.

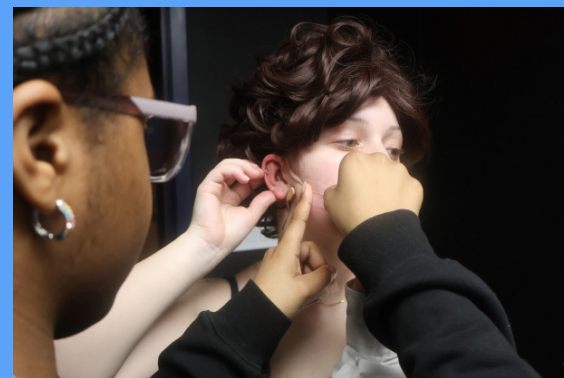
“I love performing with them, since I know everybody and I feel really comfortable with everybody...I feel like it’s like a big family, you know,” HerreraRuiz said.

Senior Selena Deleon, stage manager as well as Mrs. Sonbergers’ right-hand man, for the upcoming musical, is filled with excitement for the play to come together. She loves being able to help everyone out and help piece the team together.

“I enjoy it so much because I help everyone, and everyone is more comfortable with me, and like the crew, everyone is amazing,” Deleon said.

As the production enters its final stretch, excitement continues to build as the cast and crew are now headed into tech week, a crucial time for lighting, sound, costumes, and performances coming together on stage. After months of hard work and dedication, the cast and crew are eager to finally share “Matilda the Musical” with the AHS community.

A group EFFORT



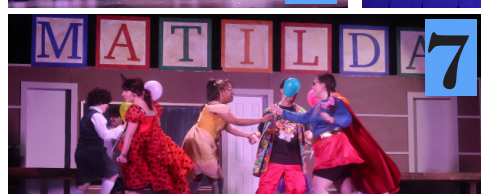
Monae Jones, mic’ing up junior Mackeznie Nichols for a run through of the musical. Photo by: E. Blevins.



Director Kristen Sonberger, checking the audio. Photo by: E. Blevins.



Monae Jones helping out in the sound booth. Photo by: E. Blevins.



1. Ms. Trunchbull taking order by making the kids sing. Photo by: E. Blevins.
2. Matilda, played by Renata HerreraRuiz, showing off her math skills. Photo by: E. Blevins.
3. Ms. Trunchbull, played by Annelise Dockery, points towards Matilda. Photo by: E. Blevins.
4. The kids sing as Ms. Trunchbull dances. Photo by: E. Blevins.
5. Matilda ratting out the other students to Ms. Trunchbull. Photo by: E. Blevins.
6. Mr. and Mrs. Wormwood having an argument. Photo by: E. Blevins.
7. The kids running around and playing with balloons. Photo by: E. Blevins.
8. Lavender, played by Natalie Furman, and Matilda showing off their friendship. Photo by: E. Blevins.

Cougar Bites

What are you most passionate about? How do you incorporate it into your daily life?

Isabella Poulos '27 | Feature Editor



Mustafa Abbas

Class of 2026

“I’m most passionate about my religion, and it keeps me disciplined, it keeps me driven and determined.”



Myles Ward

Class of 2028

“I’m most passionate about the love for my mother, she keeps me going in life, and she a smile on my face everyday.”



Carmen Jones

Class of 2026

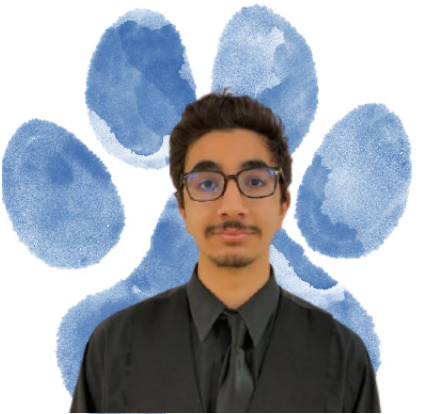
“I’m passionate about art a lot. I want to do tattooing, and I want to own a business with tattooing.”



Annabelle Sliverthorn

Class of 2028

“My parents inspire me because they keep me going with my grades and my everyday life and teaching me how to be a better person.”



Jordan Alshawaly

Class of 2027

“I’m passionate about my sports. Swimming, cross country, and in the future, I want to be a computer engineer.”



Hayder Aldarajy

Class of 2029

“My brother, because he teaches me how to become a better person, and how to be a better soccer player.”



Nariah Leggs

Class of 2027

“I am very passionate about public service. Public service is something I’ve been really interested in, I believe it affects everyone and everything.”



Taina MotaHernandez

Class of 2029

“I’m most passionate about cosmetology, I love trying new styles on my self and my friends.”

Quarter Zips



Photo by: K. Le.

Kimmy Le '27 | Lifestyle Editor & Co-Design Editor

The viral fashion trend, often referred to as “quarter zip movement,” has become popular amongst audiences, particularly young men, from teenagers to adults in the Generation Z community across TikTok. Many of them are ditching casual athleisure wear, such as Nike tech sets, to embrace a look with quarter-zip sweaters.

The start of the quarter zip movement traces back to November 3rd, 2025, from a TikTok by the creator Jason Gyamfi. The video uploaded was captioned, “I’m a Quarter Zip Dude Now.” In the video, Gyamfi states, “I don’t do that Nike Tech stuff which y’all little boys do, I can’t do that. I’m elegant, I’m classy.” Gyamfi associates Nike tech with being childish and suggests that it was worn only by young boys. In another video, Gyamfi captioned, “We don’t do Nike tech and coffee no more.” Gyamfi further expresses his choice of not wearing Nike tech and drinking coffee, but instead, he wears quarter-zips and drinks matcha. Since then, the video has gained over 31 million views, and it has influenced men across TikTok to follow the fashion statement, thus creating the quarter-zip movement.

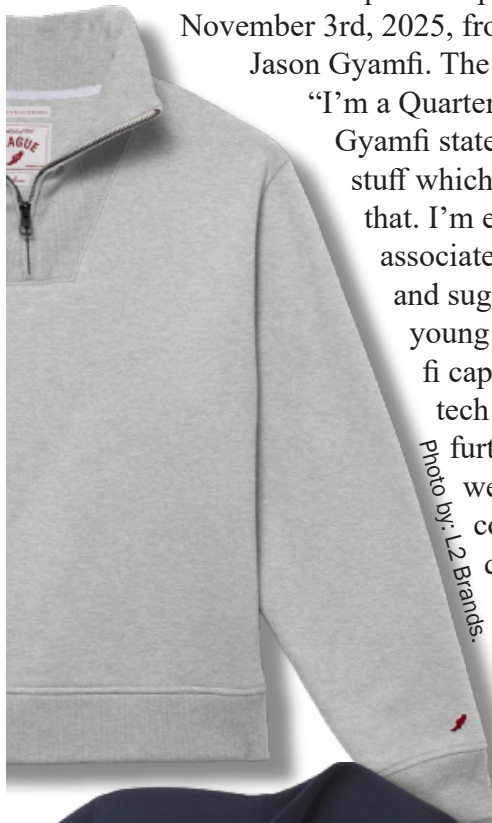


Photo by: 12 Brands.



Photo by: Dockers.

Before the trend arose, Nike tech sets were popular for men. They were known for their lightweight, thermal fabric that kept people warm while maintaining an athletic, streetwear style. However, after Gyamfi’s video specifically pointing out Nike Tech being childish in comparison to quarter-zip sweaters being a sophisticated alternative, viewers began to engage in the movement, which further boosted its popularity on TikTok. The difference between Nike tech

Vs



Graphics by: Canva.

Nike Tech

Graphic by: Wikimedia Commons

and quarter zips shows how clothes can interpret someone, with Nike tech being associated with a relaxed and youthful perception while quarter zips are seen as a more elevated and polished look.

In addition, the trend has given Gyamfi the opportunity to be featured on ABC News Live to explain how it felt different to wear the quarter-zip sweaters by saying, “I feel like it’s important for as young men that we learn how to differentiate whatever it is that we want to put on. If you want to put on a sweat suit and you feel that’s the way for you to go, I understand that. However, it’s also important to know the difference between changing up your appearance from here from time to time.” via (abc-news.go.com)

Ultimately, the quarter zip movement represents the shift in men’s fashion choices from clothes that appeal to comfort to clothes that tailor their appearance. What began as a simple TikTok video has grown into a trend showing how one comment can not only influence the way others alter their attire, but also the way they identify themselves.



Photos by: Nike.

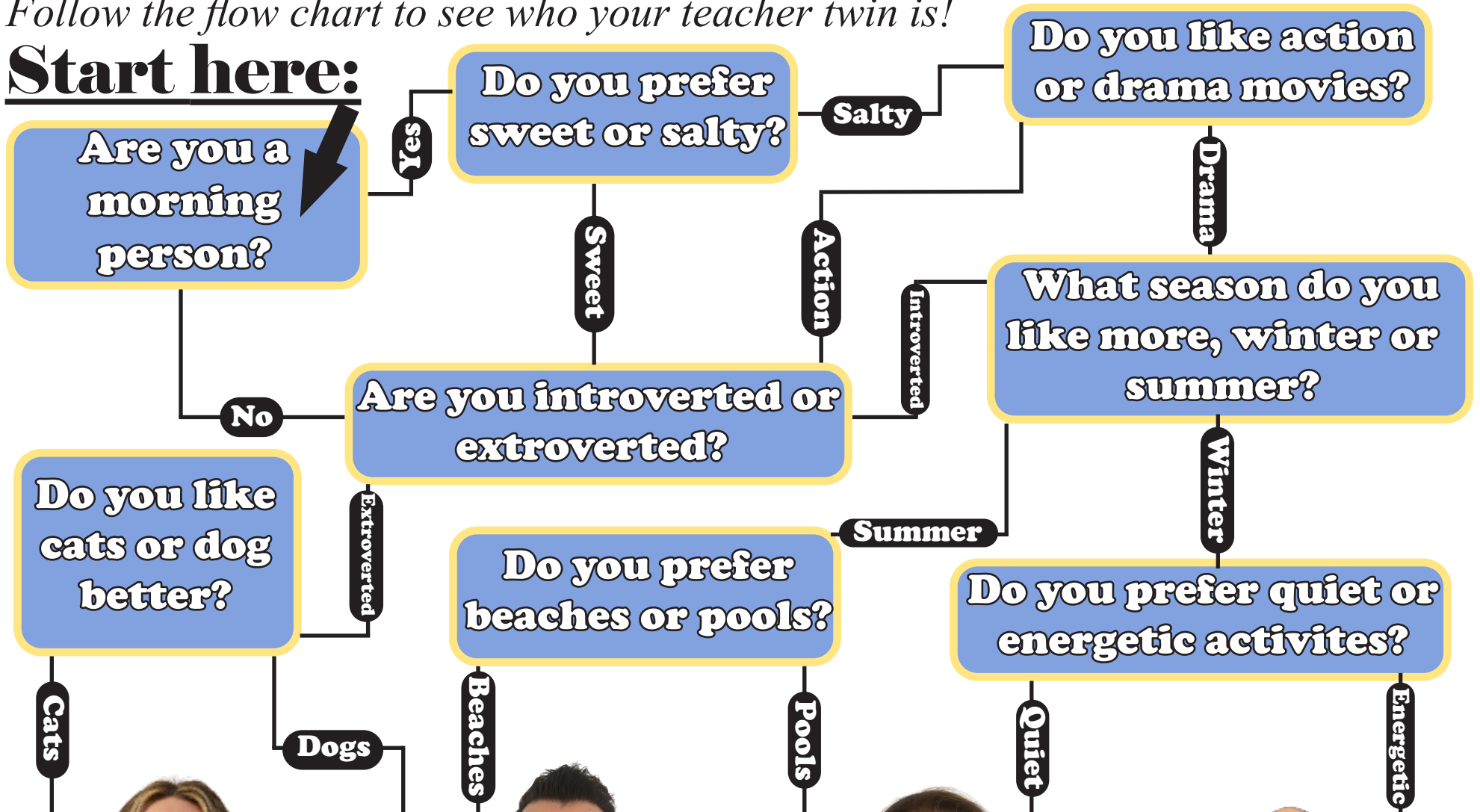
Who is your teacher twin?



Evalynn Blevins '26 | Social Media Manager & Co-Design Editor

Follow the flow chart to see who your teacher twin is!

Start here:



If you landed on Kelly Potter, she is your teacher twin! You may often be described as organized, scheduled and quiet. Determined and intelligent, you enjoy relaxing activities such as arts and crafts. A relaxing weeked at home with your cat and a classic movie is the dream.



If you landed on Ziad Saad, he is your teacher twin! You often enjoy a fun adventure and live a carefree lifestyle. You both are friendly and confident. There is not enough time in the day for your many ambitions. Interesting adventures, fun chaos and a nice cold Pepsi are in your future.



If you landed on Allison Meyer, she is your teacher twin! Definitely a Type B person, you enjoy going with the flow. You thrive in creativity and a relaxed lifestyle. This does not always mean chaos, you may often find yourself cuddled up on the couch with a sweet treat and a relaxing movie.



If you landed on Scott Spencer, he is your teacher twin! A ray of sunshine, you are both positive and goal-oriented. You both enjoy having a calm night in, but love a adventure. You want a structured and healthy lifestyle. Life is all about reaching your goals.

Photos by: A. Alkhaqany

COUGAR SPOTLIGHT

Breyonna Wallace '26 | Opinion Editor & Evalynn Blevins '26 | Social Media Manager & Co-Design Editor

“I think about my family that comes to watch me and my teammates who are playing their best for us to win too,” Rascol said.



ABEL RASCOL

Photo by: I. Dawson.

Senior Abel Rascol’s basketball season started in November and continues on throughout February. Rascol and the team have been keeping themselves disciplined while trying to outplay their competition. They hold not only themselves, but each other accountable to have good communication with one another. Assistant Junior Varsity coach, Bryce Collins, believes that Rascol is an extraordinary player and is fearless on the court.

“[He is] afraid of no one,” Collins said.

Rascol has been working hard in the sport since he was five years old and it has come naturally. He has been playing on varsity since his sophomore year. Rascol has been putting his all into every game with it now being his senior year. He hopes to savor his last high school games with his teammates and have a successful rest of the season.



The team standing together for the National Anthem before the game. Photo by: I. Dawson.



Abel Rascol getting ready at the free throw line. Photo by: I. Dawson.



Abel Rascol thinking about his next move during the game. Photo by: I. Dawson.

Girls striking through barriers

Breyonna Wallace '26 | Opinion Editor



Graphic by: Canva.

The female cougar bowlers are fighting for the school's attention as they continue to dominate. Sophomore Alexis Mousseau is pleased with how the season is going so far.

"We're doing really good, we are currently undefeated and tied for first with Thurston," Mousseau said.

They are currently holding the record of 7-0. The girls have been setting goals for them to reach before the end of the season ends.

"My biggest personal goal is to bowl a 200 this year and my team goal is I want to stay in first and win leagues again," Mousseau said.

The team sets self goals to push towards along with team ones as well. The girls' team rely on each other to go into a meet with high spirits.

"We are all good together and it helps to know that we work well together," Mousseau said.

Their strong connection gives them trust within each other that they will do to the best of their ability. Players like Senior Katelyn Sparks have started reaching the goals that they have set for themselves.

"So far my biggest accomplishment is hitting 200 during league," Sparks said.

Sparks hit a record during her meet against Thurston on Jan. 7. After accomplishing a huge

achievement she set a new goal for herself and has high expectations for her team as a whole.

"My biggest goal is to make it to state or become an anchor," Sparks said.

Sparks targets to be the anchor who is usually the strongest bowler that comes in to bowl last and pull through for the team. The girls are holding out high hopes to make it far this year in leagues. The team believes in themselves and in each other to have better scores during the games.

"What helps me win is keeping confidence and the goal of doing good and winning for our team so we are one set closer to our goals," Sparks said.

Having self-assurance is important when going into a meet because it sets you up for the rest of the game. The girls take this and continue to hold the number one spot and make it to states.



Lexi Harleton rolling her ball down the lane to pick up her loose pins. Photo by: A. Alkhaqany.



Alexis Mousseau finishing her turn bowling. Photo by: A. Alkhaqany.



Katelyn Sparks bowling during her match against Thurston. Photo by A. Alkhaqany.



Amiah Drew preparing herself to bowl. Photo by: A. Alkhaqany.

Varsity girl's basketball aims to improve

Rodolfo Gaona '26 | Broadcast Producer

The varsity girls basketball team has played eight games and one scrimmage as of Jan. 21st. The team has a 3-8 record and hope to improve and solidify their defense as they grow closer to the districts tournament. Head coach Darreus Simmons continues to guide his team.

"We started out a little rocky, we got a new group, and so in basketball, you got a mold. So we're in the middle of a molding session, but they're playing tough.

They're playing hard," Simmons said.

In order to improve, the team must recognize their strengths and weaknesses so they can allow growth during practice. Varsity team captain Aniya Johnson recognizes the growth needed for the team to become stronger.

"We've had our ups and downs. We most definitely have a lot more stuff to work on. Our team effort [along with] our team working together, has become very good.

We pulled some JV players up. They're getting better at, you know, handling the game. So we've gotten better. But there's still more to work on," Johnson said.

There are 12 games remaining in the league's season, this provides the team ample time to work on themselves and perform well at districts. With a younger team led by experienced captains, the girl's varsity basketball team aims to show growth and improve on the court.



Captain Aniya Johnson prepping for a free throw against Garden City. Photo by: A. Alkhaqany.

Swimmers go for a splash

Ali Alwan '26 | Advertisement Manager



The Cougar swimmers getting ready for their meet against Redford High School. Photo by: E. Blevins.



Senior Ali Alwan stepping up for the jump start. Photo by: E. Blevins.

The Annapolis men's swim team has been having an amazing season. With a winning record of 3-1, the boys have been doing a phenomenal job at dominating the pool deck. Originally, the program had been missing at Annapolis for a total of 15 years, that is, until Coach Ryan Stadtfeld came in.

"I love the sport and everything about it," Stadtfeld said.

Stadtfeld has swam for as long as he can remember. Starting to swim as a kid, then eventually becoming his high school's butterfly swimmer. He then as a coach predominantly teaches butterfly, encouraging every swimmer to give it a try despite it being the hardest stroke in his opinion.

"Butterfly is really difficult, easily the hardest stroke in the sport," Stadtfeld said.

Although the butterfly stroke may be considerably the hardest stroke to learn in swimming, Junior Captain Jonathan Barnett has also been doing it for his entire life.

"Swimming is hard mentally, I have to prepare myself by listening

to music. My mom also would give me great advice before meets," Barnett said.

Barnett's mom had him learn many swimming strokes when he was younger. When he does swim, Barnett usually does the 100-meter butterfly swim, swimming two lengths of the pool using butterfly strokes.

"Butterfly is for sure the hardest, it takes a lot of dedication and practice to master it," Barnett said

While he has been swimming for two years, he has also captained the team for that time as well. Barnett hopes to win the division this year in his junior season.

"As long as we all come to practices in the morning and in the afternoon, we will be able to accomplish our goal," Barnett said.

Alongside Barnett, assistant coach Noah Kubitz also agrees with his statement. Kubitz has also been coaching alongside Stadtfeld for two years now. Both of which work hard every day after school to make sure the swimmers get the practice they need.

"We need to work on getting

better at practice and coming in on time," Kubitz said.

Kubitz has also been swimming for a long time. He swam at Edsel Ford High School and broke two records while being there. Kubitz has also coached middle school in the past, although in the 2024-2025 season it was his first year as a high school coach

"We can win the divisional title this year, I know we can do it," Kubitz said.

Kubitz has a lot of confidence in the team.

"I have confidence in my entire team, even the newer guys," Kubitz said.

The Cougar swimmers have been in an ecstatic mood and on great form. After beating out Redford Union, Thurston, Romulus and Garden City, they look forward to the remainder of the season and to hopefully challenge the rest of the division for the title. Their next meet is away at Garden City, on Jan. 29th. With the teams solid record of 3-1 and the spirits being high, the Cougar swimmers are ready to splash their way to victory.



Junior Jordan Alshawaly using his Backstroke to score points in a relay for the Cougars. Photo by: E. Blevins.



Sophomore Abdullellah Aldarweesh catching up to his opponents in the 100 yard Butterfly race. Photo by: E. Blevins.

"Either write something that is worth reading, or do something that is worth writing."



Congratulations to Amanda Steger and The Cougar Crier staff for 51 years of journalism excellence in District 7.
Write on, Cougars!

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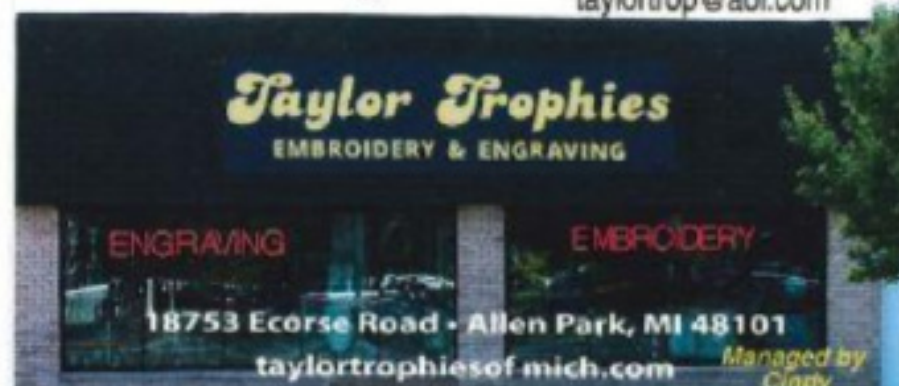


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