

## THE FALL ISSUE



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### *The Attendance Policy*

By Kelly Ly

This year, there have been many changes to the school. We have seen the implementation of the new half-day schedule, the midterms and finals schedules, and the second health class requirement taking action. It may seem confusing at first, but CHS is using these changes to help us learn as effectively as possible.

Another concern for our student population is the Attendance Policy, which says that “a student cannot be absent in excess of 6 days per semester” or the student will receive an “N”, or no credit, for that semester. The Chelmsford High School Attendance Policy from the 2017-2018 Student Handbook states that an exempt absence includes “illnesses, family emergencies... religious holidays, school-sponsored field trips, college visitations for high school juniors and seniors...court ordered appearances”. These absences are considered exempt if there is documentation to prove their legitimacy, like a doctor’s note. If exempt, extended time will be given to catch up with classwork. In contrast, absences can be excused through parent or guardian notes. Despite being excused, the absences still count towards your total 6 days.

To get a true clarification on the attendance policy, *The Voice* interviewed Dean MacIsaac of Whittier House. Dean MacIsaac stressed the importance of coming to school, saying it was “imperative to be in school” for the “curriculum” but also the “peer-teacher relationship”.

Dean MacIsaac advises for students to consult page 33 of the “CHS Student Handbook Addendum”. These rules do not come from just anywhere; they are part of the law. If you are worried about

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### *Classroom Turned Google*

By Hetil Patel

Fifty million students and teachers use Google apps for education, and 10 million of them use Google Classroom. Google Classroom is a learning platform that allows teachers to post their assignments that can be accessed by their students. The Chelmsford Public Schools have endorsed Google for education this year, but have been testing this interface by allowing a few teachers to use it prior to this year.

There are a number of benefits to the program. The teachers can post blog entries, create online quizzes, and open a live feed chat. The online quizzes and the live feed chat are a few different ways in which student and teacher interact. The online quizzes allow teachers to assess their students, while the live feed chat enables students to ask questions and comment on the material the teacher is explaining. This latter tool can be anonymous, allowing the timid students to participate. Lastly, Google Classroom allows the teachers to go paperless, saving money as well as helping the environment.

In contrast with these new features, users need to remember fair use and copyright guidelines that protect online resource use. While using Google Apps, students have access to peer and internet resources and learn about ethical use of other’s work to build upon in creating their own work. The Department Coordinator of Technology, Dr. Marilyn Sweeney, believes that “students have a choice; the technology is just a tool to use for

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## Students who code together, stay together

By: Ummamah Rizwan

There have been a lot of changes at Chelmsford High School lately, but one of the changes that has caused a positive stir is Coding Club. Coding Club is a team of enthusiastic students who would like to learn or continue their passion for coding. Coding Club, which meets on Thursdays in room 105 from 2-3pm, introduces and allows students to explore their interests in the field of coding.

It is a very unique club that has been gaining popularity since September. The founder, Aadhya Puttur, agreed to an interview to answer some questions that many have when it comes to the new club. When asked about the level of experience a student needs to join the Coding Club, Ms. Puttur replied that “the Coding Club in Chelmsford High School is welcomed to all those who are interested to learn; little to no experience is not a problem as it is the goal and responsibility of the club to teach students who want to code.”

The desire to start a Coding Club came from her experience over the summer when she attended a

summer camp called Girls Who Code. During the summer, she realized her hidden passion for computer science as she was overwhelmed with joy when a code finally runs perfectly, or when she finally debugs the code correctly. She wanted to show people how interesting learning how to code was and hoped to give them a guide for the future.

Starting a new club can be difficult, but Aadhya Puttur’s passion for starting a club that was focused on programming had its challenges; she had no idea on how to start a club at first, but she is thankful for everyone who helped her.

It’s inspiring to see people like Aadhya Puttur speak on behalf of the student body to provide more facilities for our fellow students. She encourages students to join the Coding Club and try to get more insight on coding. The students and teachers of Chelmsford High have high hopes for this new club. If you are interested in going, check out the club, or contact Aadhya Puttur to learn more.

### Google Classroom (continued from pg 1)

learning.” To address this issue, teachers have an option where they can direct the students to websites and applications to use.

Dr. Tanini uses the online quiz feature to test her students on various topics, but she allows students to do these quizzes at home. She designs her quizzes to be challenging because she doesn’t merely ask for a definition, but instead she forces them to utilize what they have learned to answer the question. There is no doubt that the students are using the internet, but “in the real world you are never going to have an assignment that you cannot use other resources than your brain.”

In this day and age, most of the students have technology that they can use to complete tasks on Google Classroom; however, some students do not have access to a personal device, but in the classroom, there’s always a solution. After the room changes over the summer, a few computer labs were turned into classrooms, but since the school purchased the Chromebooks, students can still gain full access to the free apps provided by Google. The portable Chromebooks allow the students to have access to the internet without the need of a sessile computer lab.

With the inclusion of Google in the classroom, some people may wonder about Aspen’s use in the future. Dr. Sweeney reassures us that Aspen (X2) is not going to be affected by Google Classrooms: “X2 isn’t only a grade book; it stores students’ demographics, health files, and attendance.” Google Classroom is only used as a friendly interface between students and teachers, whereas X2 stores data.

The implementation of Google classroom is not mandatory, but teachers are encouraged to use it. This tool is meant to create a smooth and easy interface between teachers and students, and the full potential of this platform will take more time to be actualized.

## Seagulls, Sailors, Nightclub Singers...

by Hannah A. Nettikadan

...Seems like something out of an old-Hollywood film, or a dream. But this past November, all of these fantastic things happened right here in Chelmsford at the Theatre Guild's production of the Cole Porter classic, *Anything Goes!*

Set in 1934 on the U. S. S. America, *Anything Goes!* tells the story of Billy Crocker who is madly in love with the sweet debutante Hope Harcourt. But here's the twist: Hope is engaged to Lord Evelyn Oakleigh because her mother wants her to become a wealthy, proper lady. So, Billy makes the decision to stow away on the ship so he can convince her not to be married, and possibly win her back. On top of this, famous evangelist-turned-nightclub-singer Reno Sweeney is also aboard and in love with Billy.

To add to the already-crazy situation, on the boat is Billy's boss, Elijah Whitney, who believes Billy is on Wall Street. This forces Billy to hide and create strange get-ups and disguises to elude his boss. Plus, none other than Public Enemy No. Thirteen, Moonface Martin, and his sensuous accomplice, Erma, have snuck onto the ship. Though they are low down crooks, they try to help Billy get together with Hope. Together these passengers get into all sorts of trouble, even causing Billy and Moonface to land in jail! The plot twists and turns, and the story has (De)lovely little songs and dances that have stuck in our heads for weeks!



### **BEHIND THE SCENES: *ANYTHING GOES!*** by Hannah A. Nettikadan

Getting into the cast or pit can be a nerve-racking situation. Actors and actresses who wish to take part in the show must take part in a three-day audition. First, those auditioning are randomly sorted into groups of 10-15 and then read for a character, assigned by the director. They then act out a scene with this group of people, watched carefully by director Mrs. Lauren Cochran, as well as Stage Manager, Megan Long, and Assistant Stage Managers, Sydney Holmes and Emma Stover. The actor/actress is judged on his/her acting skills and ability to take direction. Next, choreographers Mia Kelly and Justine Long teach two dances, which the actor/actress must perform in front of the same people, this time in groups of 4-6. The other performers are in the room as well, but the environment is nothing if not supportive. After each group performs, the Black Box Theatre is filled with cheers, whoops, and thunderous applause. Finally, on the last day, the performers must sing around 16 measures of a song of similar musicality to the one being performed; for this year, the cast had to find a jazzy song from musicals like *Chicago*, *Guys and Dolls*, and *The Pajama Game*. Once callbacks are complete, the cast list finally comes out. There are always mixed feelings, especially if the part you wanted goes to someone else, but it is usually very supportive.

People trying for the pit face even greater odds, as the pit orchestra calls for specific numbers of instruments. They must audition before Mr. Sexauer, the band director and pit conductor.

The cast, crew, pit and costumes crew pour their hearts and souls into the show, especially during Tech and Production Week. These two weeks before the show consist of grueling hours spent going over every scene, cleaning up each individual movement to utmost perfection. There are many long rehearsals leading to late nights, with the PAC filled with sleep-delirious teenagers. Food is dropped off from parents like blessings from heaven. But this crunch time is when the whole show really comes together, as well as when the company becomes less divided into cast, crew, pit, costumes, and set and really truly becomes a family. We share in each other's fatigue, food, and naps, helping each other out with whatever needs to be done, whether it's homework or zipping up the back of another girl's dress.

Preparing for *Anything Goes* was an absolute delight. The actors and actresses put so many hours into the production, as well as the crew, who have stepped up the challenge of building an extremely realistic cruise ship on our Performing Arts Center stage. Audiences were dazzled by the hypnotic full cast numbers (dances), "Blow, Gabriel, Blow" and "Anything Goes!" which feature some seriously talented dancers. All of the different talents brought together, such as the period-accurate costumes, to the fantastic set, to the pit orchestra blasting out jazzy tunes, evoked the perfect mood that had audiences out of their seats and ready to dance!

Digital Filmmaking by Julia Blair

Digital Filmmaking is a new addition to the Fine Arts department at Chelmsford High. The class is taught by the director of the Theatre Guild, Lauren Cochran. Mrs. Cochran is usually behind the scenes of our plays and other music electives, though this is her first year teaching film. She’s using her knowledge of music choice, casting and storytelling from theater to enlighten us on what makes a production successful.

This class teaches you about the history of filmmaking and the brilliant minds that paved the way. We’ve covered greats like Thomas Edison, the Lumiere Bros, D.W Griffith, Charlie Chaplin and are currently learning about Alfred Hitchcock. Every day we discuss a famous movie quote and watch a video on it. We have quotes from famous films such as *The Godfather*, *Casablanca*, *Star Wars* and more. We view classic films and watch them from a filmmaker's perspective.

For term two, we are starting the movie making process in two teams. Each team has created a name for their production company and assigned roles for their members (director, cinematographer, producer). We have started scriptwriting as well as storyboards. We are all very eager to get into production, which includes casting and filming our final projects. Once we are done with our films, we will work on the marketing aspect of moviemaking. We will create posters and seek film festivals for our work. This class is a great way for artistic students to express themselves and it’s a very welcoming and fun environment. It is a safe place to share your ideas and learn from each other what works best on the big screen.

Fall Playlist - Happy hALTidays  
 - Not so common Holiday Songs to  
 spice up any occasion  
 o by Lily Scheipers

Marshmallow World	The Regrettes
8 days of Hanukkah	Sharon Jones & the Dap-Kings
Christmas is coming soon	Blitzen Trapper
Frosty the snowman	Zee Avi
The christmas song	The Raveonettes
holiday	Vampire Weekend
'Zat you, santa claus?-the heavy remix	Louis Armstrong, the Commanders
Winter wonderland	Valerie June
Christmastime	The Smashing Pumpkins
Silver bells	She & Him
God rest ye merry gents	Sharon Jones & the Dap-Kings
Christmas treat	Julian Casablancas
Jingle bell rock	Rogue Wave
Mele kalikimaka	She & him
Wonderful christmastime	The Shins
Blue christmas	Elvis Presley
Run rudolph run	Chuck Berry

## Baker's Dozen Improv Troupe by Fiona O'Hearne

What is improv? Improv, or improvisational theatre, is a form of acting, where there is no script. Based upon a word given by the audience, an improv troupe performs a scene or series of scenes. There is no planning, no discussion, it's all in the moment. There are four simple rules to improv: never say no, don't try to be funny, listen to your scene partners, and don't steal the scene.

Of course, improv is actually a lot harder than it looks! I can speak about this first hand, since I'm a member of CHS's new improv troupe, *The Baker's Dozen*. Our troupe was established this year, and is headed by Sophie Bellone, who you may recognize as Little Red Riding Hood.

As the name suggests, our troupe is a small organization, but that doesn't stop us from doing big things! In late September, we (along with members of the Theatre Guild) put on a murder mystery. The show, *Till Death Do Us Part*, was written by Julie Ruff, and was set in a bridal shop. The show was full of hilarious accents, kooky brides, yummy snacks for the audience, and lots of fake blood.

Currently, *The Baker's Dozen* has rehearsals on Fridays in the band room or any other available space. So if you hear someone talking about banging on trash cans for clothes, or claiming they are Jesus come again, it's not a lunatic, it's just *The Baker's Dozen*.

*The Baker's Dozen is made up of Sophie Bellone, Natasha Thompson, Eliana Lantheaume, Olivia Buckley, Enrique Santos, Fiona O'Hearne, Peirce Magnet, Jacob Murphy, Victoria Sebastien, Zoe Adoniou, Malik Alwani and Delaney Schiefen.*

## The Attendance Policy (continued from pg 1)

the policy because you already surpassed the number of absences, there is still hope. Dean MacIsaac assures that there are alternatives. An unexcused absence will be "removed if attendance improves in the second semester" or "one unexcused class period can be made up by two FLEX blocks for that specific class".

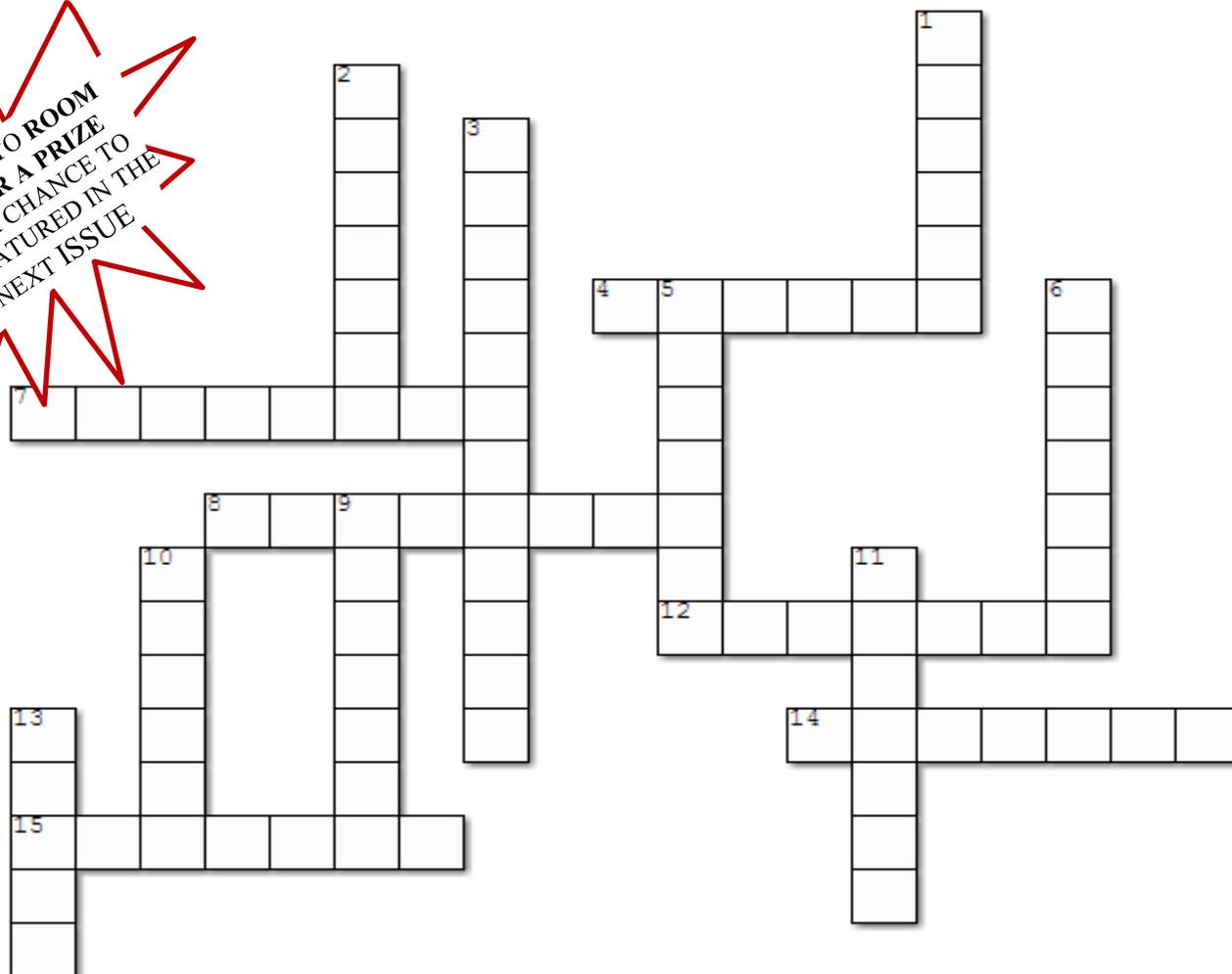
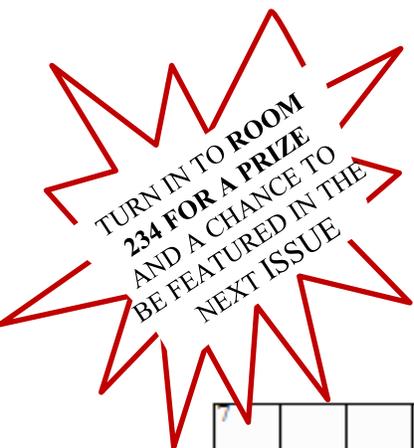
However, it should be noted that as long as the student is making an effort, the Attendance Policy should not be a concern. Dean MacIsaac added that the faculty cares greatly about the students and they want to see students meet the number of credits required to graduate high school and to succeed in life.

School is more than arriving in the morning and leaving at the final bell; the Chelmsford High School experience is about establishing long-lasting friendships and cheering at pep rally and being a part of a caring community.

If you have any questions on whether or not an absence counts towards the unexcused absences, take a look at the "Student Parent Handbook" and the "CHS Student Handbook Addendum" or have a talk with your house's dean.

# TEACHER CROSSWORD

WRITE THE LAST NAME OF THE TEACHER WHO BEST FITS THE DESCRIPTION



## Down

1. Designed her own fruit fly
2. Black Box Lives Matter
3. Bassist of The Middlemen
5. Eyebrows as big as his attitude
6. Most dropped out of class
9. Lamp lady
10. Most likely to send you to the office for lapping
11. Wore a cow onesie during *Into The Woods* in the pit
13. Loves the Constitution a bit too much

## Across

4. The most talkative guidance counselor
7. "Watah", has a dance as a final
8. Mason Jars & Storytimes
12. \*howls\*
14. Makes the hallway smell like wild orange and cinnamon
15. Tree of Life tattoo on his tricep

**Editorial: CHS Should Abandon Its Football Program**

by Mr. Shea, English Teacher

I like to think of myself as a concerned teacher, but I must confess that I have been remiss. There is a legal term associated with teachers, *in loco parentis*, Latin for “in the place of a parent” and it refers to the responsibility that educators assume to act in the best interests of students. While this term is usually applied to discipline and matters of free speech, I’d like to think that it is an all-encompassing term that charges us with looking out for our students’ well-being.

And that is precisely where I have been remiss. For most of my thirty-one years as a teacher, I have sat on the sidelines, both literally and figuratively, of public school’s fascination with, and support of, high school football. However, I am no longer going to sit idly by and say nothing about it. Truth be told, I have felt for several years now that high school football should be abolished, and I think that Chelmsford High School should be the vanguard of this movement.

Now I understand that there are **many** people who disagree with this stance. Hundreds of people come out to support the football team. The marching band performs at the games. Color guard performs at the games. Sports boosters spend their time raising money. Generous donors have seen to the installation and upkeep of the turf fields. I get it...football has been king at CHS for...well...forever.

But just because it’s a popular sport with vast community support, that does not mean that it should continue. The mounting medical evidence against it suggests that football players are playing a dangerous game with potentially lethal consequences. Chronic traumatic encephalopathy, or CTE, is a degenerative brain disease that has been firmly linked to the concussive impacts to which those who participate in football are subjected. You may note that we don’t have a boxing team, and yet we still financially and socially support a sport with the same deadly impacts that were once only thought to plague boxers. Some referred to it as being “punch drunk.”

*But surely this is overblown*, you might be saying to yourself. Believe me, as an avid sports fan for years, I have watched many of my former idols decay into early decrepitude and dementia, and it’s sad. Like most others, I just wrote it off either to their bad luck or to their knowing the risks and being responsible for their own condition, so on I watched. Here’s the kicker, though—most of the information linking head injuries (concussions) to football was coldly hidden from players. According to a report in the May 23, 2016 edition of *The Atlantic Monthly*, the NFL rescinded a 30 million dollar gift to the National Institutes of Health when they determined that the NIH’s study (through Boston University) into concussions was going to be “detrimental to the league’s image.” In short, the NFL reneged on its signed agreement to fund the NIH’s

research into concussions, thus covering up the dangers to their players.

Again, you might be thinking, *Yeah, but these are grown men, and the cumulative effect of all that football probably impacts them more so than high school players.* While that may be true, there is no conclusive evidence that suggests there is a specific age or timeframe at which CTE begins. That's generally because the only way to diagnose it (right now) is in a post-mortem exam. But as any fan of New England football knows, former Patriot Aaron Hernandez was diagnosed with Stage 3 CTE, and he was only 27 years old. Who knows? That may mean that he was already suffering the effects of CTE when he was even younger.

Now I acknowledge that not everyone who ever played football has exhibited symptoms of CTE. However, I'm also aware that 110 of 111 deceased NFL players whose brains have been examined showed signs of CTE according to Boston University's CTE Center (*USA Today*). Couple those alarmingly high statistics with the lack of long-term thinking that goes into the average high schooler's decision to play football, and there you have a risk that most right-thinking people should deem unacceptable.

I wouldn't be sounding this alarm bell without some degree of evidence. This fall, I had a conversation with a high school football player about the dangers of the sport. This student acknowledged that while the adrenaline and excitement of the sport is still quite thrilling, he has been thinking about those dangers ever since the movie *Concussion* was released. He was quite open about at least two times where he had been hit so hard that he saw "nothing but white." The first time, he was so disoriented that he told the referee, "Coach, I'm ready to go back in." The second time he stated that he experienced the same white light, but he never came out of the game. Before he knew it, two more plays had gone by, neither of which he remembers outside of seeing them on game film.

So, do we allow incidents such as this to continue, or do we take a stand to protect our students, our classmates, our children? Do we give in to those whose rhetoric instills shame at the "wussification" of America? Or do we begin protecting those in our charge before the damage is irreparable? While I admire the skill that it takes to master the sport of football, I can no longer sit in silence as our students injure themselves repeatedly, decrease their life spans, and invite tragedy onto the playing fields of CHS. Disband our football team now, and let the Merrimack Valley Conference know why we're doing it. Perhaps everyone will come to their senses.