

## A Mouse Ate My Homework!

### Students and Teachers React to Persisting Rodent Problem

By Harry Guo and Brandon Nguyen  
STAFF WRITERS

The room is still. The only sound is the buzzing of the fluorescent ceiling lights.

You wait another minute to hear silence, to make sure it's safe to go. You know you have only a couple more minutes until a custodian comes to take out the garbage. With nothing but courage and hunger, you and your friends bolt toward the ultimate prize:

The trash can.

You dive into a sea of half-empty smoothie cups and crumpled bags of Doritos, and quickly indulge yourself. Suddenly, you catch a glimpse of something moving across the classroom. You look up to see a pair of human eyes staring back at you, before you hear a blood-curdling cry: "A MOUSE!"

Andover High has been dealing with a rodent problem for decades. Custodians have combated the issue with mouse traps, some teachers banned snacks in their classrooms, and even the food in the teachers lounges is kept in mouse-proof plastic containers. Many students and teachers have been victims of rodent sightings, but many of them feel more bothered about the banning of snacks than the rodents themselves.

Minda Reidy, a math and computer science teacher at Andover High School, has encountered several rodents during her teaching career here. "I had been sitting and been really quiet," said Reidy. "[The mice] thought the coast was clear... one went across, then another one went across, and then another one." Nathan Gerow, a sophomore at AHS, claimed he saw a mouse in the cafeteria in the morning, before school. He said that the mouse was small, fat, round, and "kind of cute." He's only seen one so far, so the problem doesn't bother him, even though he understands that there's probably a lot more in our school.

Many of the rodents living at AHS may be the descendants of a senior prank from many years ago, according to John Berube, a librarian at AHS. "[The seniors] went to

various pet stores and they bought up all kinds of mice," said Berube. "They released them at lunch in the cafeteria, dozens and dozens of them."

Mary Coombs, another librarian at AHS, points out that the main cause of rodents in the media center nowadays may be people not cleaning their garbage. In 2019, before Coombs arrived at AHS, there were big, open recycling bins in the library, where students dumped leftover food and drinks, which created an invitation for the mice. Since then, she has removed the bins and has seen a great reduction in mouse sightings.

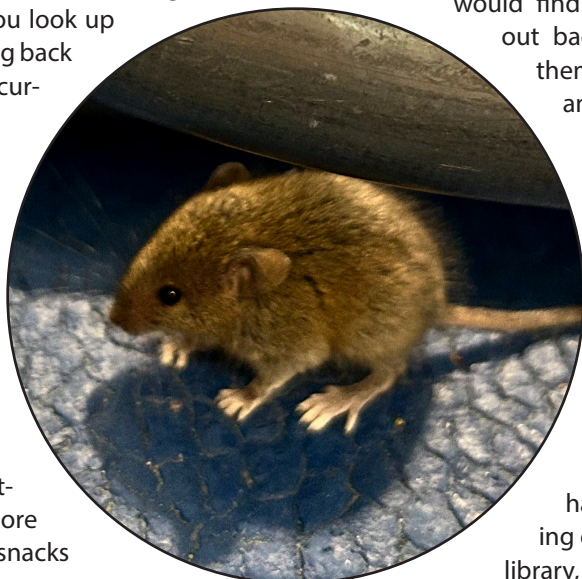
"It's disconcerting to come in and find droppings on your desk, it's not a nice thing," said Berube. "You would find them... on the counter and out back... sometimes I would find them in my office." But, he has seen an improvement since food was banned in the library, making sure to have a "quiet word" with anyone caught eating there.

Student-wise, there has been an indifferent response to the food ban in the library and other parts of the school. Gerow said, "Personally, I don't feel like it's ever really been an issue. I haven't seen many students eating or drinking in the field house or library, and I don't think [the ban] impacts many students."

Other students have a sympathetic attitude toward the ban. "[The ban] makes sense, rodents are definitely a problem," said Shreya Desai, a sophomore at AHS. "It's unfortunate because I like going to the library for lunch... people should be responsible for what they eat and clean up after themselves."

Along with much of the student body, Reidy, who's also described as a mouse enthusiast by many students, doesn't mind the rodents if they don't interfere with her work. "As long as they don't show themselves, it's okay... It's a fact of life," concluded Reidy.

STAFF PHOTO / Brandon Nguyen  
A mouse spotted in the field house.



COURTESY PHOTO / Abby Levin

John Norton hits the ski slopes after retirement.

## John Norton: "One of a Kind"

By Carissa Dessin || STAFF WRITER

Over the winter recess, Assistant Principal John Norton said goodbye to Andover High School after 16 years of working here.

Norton created quite the legacy for himself, with all the great programs and opportunities he made for those in need, as well as his kindness to the students and staff. After hearing all the great things everyone had to say about him, Norton has definitely earned the title of "one of a kind."

When Norton first arrived at AHS, he was a special education department head. The only problem being that there were fewer programs at Andover High to fully meet the needs of all learning profiles. Under Norton, this would be changed.

Seven years later Norton made the move to assistant principal, and in that time, had further developed numerous special education programs. An example is Excel, a self-contained program for students diagnosed with a developmental delay, intellectual impairment or other complex learning needs. Another program further developed was Applied Behavior Analysis, or ABA, a development of individualized programming for students that focus

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## Artists: Assemble!

### AP 2D Art Class is In Session

By Samantha Sun || STAFF WRITER

The Advanced Placement (AP) 2D Art and Design class, introduced at Andover High School this year, requires students to create a portfolio that incorporates 2D pieces to show off their art skills and depth of understanding on a chosen topic.

This course helps students "create a portfolio to get [them] into college or to pursue a career, the kind of thing you would show in an interview," said Meghan Michaud, who teaches the class. "This [class] could be about pushing that study further so that you are prepared for advanced study beyond getting into the program."

Usually, after Portfolio I, in which students create a similar portfolio, students would move onto Portfolio II. This year, Portfolio II was replaced by an AP class, which is a plus for those desiring to pursue art beyond high school. The prerequisites for AP 2D Art and Design are Portfolio I and 1.5 credits in fine arts.

"The big difference this class has from other

art classes is that it's much more self-directed," said Abby Clement, a senior at AHS who is taking the course this year. "We create our sustained investigation question and the ideas for each project."

In the course, students choose a sustained investigation question to explore. A sustained investigation is a body of work in response to that question. Students research, read articles, and refer to visual examples, artists, trends, and compositions. "They pick their own topic, but we spend a great amount of time brainstorming and making sure there is research to back up those ideas before we pursue it and all the different tangents that a possible question could go into," said Michaud.

Students are to be accurate and put effort into both their artwork and information.

"Rather than completing assignments, we can use our own creative liberty to explore other topics," said senior Alva Yanowitz. "[For] my topic,

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ILLUSTRATION / Demi Hatziagiannis

Senior Demi Hatziagiannis's digital artwork from AP 2D Art and Design.



EDITORIAL

Taking AP Courses  
As a Sophomore

The desire for the addition of AP courses for sophomores at Andover High School is a difficult one.

Many are in favor of this change, and there are several other schools in the area that already offer APs for sophomores. This allows for students to increase their GPA sooner and spread the AP courses they want to take over more years. This will also help sophomores not be extremely overwhelmed with multiple APs starting junior year after previously taking no APs.

While it would be beneficial for students to have that opportunity sooner, we also do acknowledge that there could be downsides to it. Especially in Andover, which is a very academic-oriented town, there is a lot of pressure for students to get good grades and take the most difficult classes. Because of this, instead of students spacing out the AP classes they take throughout high school, some may fill up all three years with APs.

However, there are possible solutions to this problem, such as putting a limit on the number of AP courses that sophomores can take, to ensure that they don't overwhelm themselves. Sophomores could also not be allowed to override teacher leveling recommendations, as to not overwhelm themselves.

While there is that pressure to take as many APs as possible, it will be much better for students' mental health and overall grades to take a manageable amount and enroll in ones that they're really passionate about—and not just to do it for the 5.0 GPA. And, of course, not taking any APs at all is more than alright; in the end, the classes you are in do not define your worth, and what matters most is finding classes that are a good fit for you, that you can excel in without too much stress.



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Valentine's Day spending plans



Source: NRF's Annual 2022 Valentine's Day Spending Survey, conducted by Prosper Insights & Analytics



INFOGRAPHIC / NRF

Bar graph of Valentine's Day spending in the U.S.

OPINION COLUMN

Valentine's Day and Capitalism: A Love Story

By Naomi Bloom || MANAGING EDITOR

We all know the holiday well. Pink and red streamers thrown across the rails and rafters, heart-shaped decorations plastered up on bulletin boards throughout the halls. If that wasn't enough of a sign that Valentine's Day was afoot, maybe the other signs would make it clearer: The sudden uptick of PDA, which is nearly impossible to avoid, or the classmate upset about the lack of flowers from their partner.

While Valentine's Day can be a wonderful occasion to celebrate a relationship, it is one that has become extremely capitalized on, especially over the last couple of years. According to the National Retail Federation, that spending added up to \$23.9 billion last year—the second highest to the \$27.48 billion spent on Valentine's Day in 2020. "Capitalism has done what it has done with every holiday," said Andover High School senior Andrew Magner. "[It made] it into a day that requires gifts and fancy items."

Unfortunately, that large amount of spending intensifies and is intensified by the societal pressure and expectation to give gifts, mostly to romantic partners. This occurs even in high school. "There should be no expectation to spend money, regardless of age," said Diya Ganesh, AHS senior. She added that many students may not have jobs or a source of income, and if they do, they may be more focused on saving it for college or their after school plans. "Showing your love through gifts is not the only way to show love."

On that note, some students said that the cost of a gift is not the only determining factor of its value. "I think gifts are a really nice way of showing that you love someone, but I don't think that it's the price that matters," said AHS senior Grace Young. "It's how personal the gift is because it shows that you thought of them." Magner agreed, saying, "What really matters is the effort put into it."

Additionally, there are alternatives to gifts that are not only more cost-friendly, but can be just as meaningful. "The magic of holidays like Valentine's day is that it is really up for interpretation and can be celebrated in a number of ways," said Magner.

All of the students interviewed agreed that the most valuable gift on Valentine's Day is spending time with their loved ones. "I think being present and showing active interest in their personal life shows affection," noted Emma Pantazi, AHS senior. "I am so much more touched if someone asks me how my guinea pigs are doing than if someone gives me a card."

Ultimately, though, it is completely up to each person's own love language for what they choose to do, if they plan on celebrating. "My favorite way to celebrate is to go to CVS the day after Valentine's Day and buy all the chocolate that is on sale," said AHS senior Rachel Irza. She also noted that people shouldn't feel ashamed if they opt out of the festivities.

Magner agreed: "As long as you and whoever you spend your time with are doing something you both enjoy, no matter how big or small, it's a successful Valentine's Day."

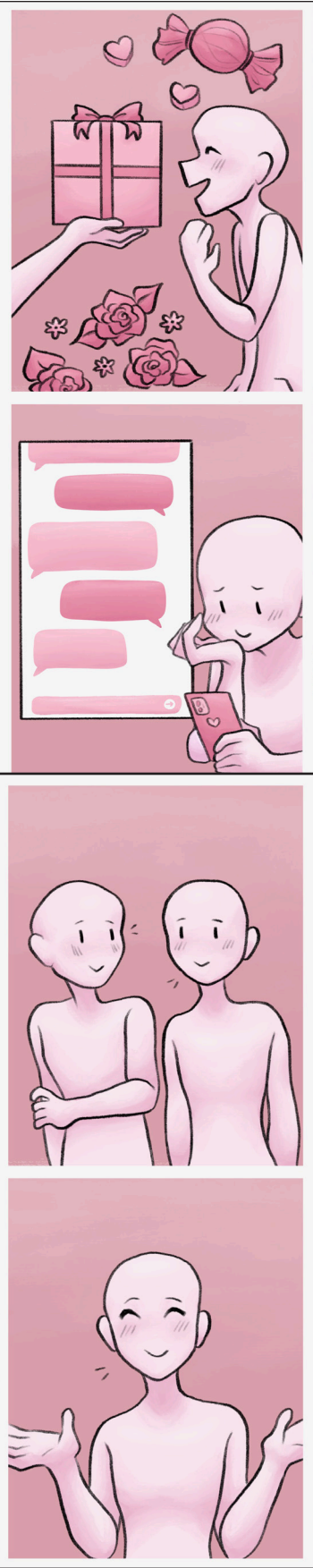


ILLUSTRATION / Naomi Bloom

Have an opinion you want to share? Email us at [andoverview@andoverma.us](mailto:andoverview@andoverma.us)!





STAFF PHOTO / **Samantha Sun**  
Senior Alva Yanowitz works on an art piece in AP 2D Art and Design.

## AP Art Offers Creative Freedom

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I chose to investigate human relationships and human connection.” She is creating art that expresses what it is like to have a relationship with someone struggling with mental health or addiction.

Students are allowed to use any type of 2D mediums at their disposal, and the limits are very loose, giving room for creativity. “I’ve done one [piece] digitally, one in crayons, and one in pen and then scanned and edited digitally,” said Clement. “It’s been fun experimenting with mediums I haven’t worked with before, like crayons.”

The class is fast-paced and engaging. By the end of the course, students are expected to submit a portfolio of what they have created: a sustained investigation that includes 15 high quality works, documents of research to explain each piece, and 5 additional works that show the depth of their progress.

AP 2D Art and Design is highly recommended for “students who are wishing to pursue a career in the arts and have the kind [of] dedication and creativity [to dive deep] into the content and pursu[e] all the possibilities,” said Michaud.

## Colleagues Reflect On Legacy of Assistant Principal Norton

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on building functional communication skills, positive behavior support, and social skills training. Additionally, he was instrumental in the creation of the Transitional Learning Center, or TLC, which supports student re-entries following periods of extended absence due to mental health and medical reasons. Finally, Norton developed the SAIL program for students who require modified academics at a pace appropriate for their learning level, including social and life skills. These only scratch the surface of what Norton did for the special education department.

Librarian John Berube stated that his favorite quality about Norton was how “[he brought] a sense of steadiness, a sense that there was somebody solid and dependable up above you that you could go to if you had a problem.”

This quality of Norton was also visible in his relationship with students. Guidance counselor Abby Levin stated that he even gave her kids pep talks when she felt she wasn’t qualified to do so. “They always worked,” said Levin.

Norton was very close with Levin. One of Levin’s favorite memories with him was the retirement party she helped throw for him, in which about 80 guests showed up.

“We’re best friends,” she said, recounting their numerous memories of going to rock and roll concerts together, at one of which the two of them had the honor of meeting rock-and-roll legend Bruce Springsteen.

Though of course, Norton’s most prideful moment was not meeting a famous rock legend, but the work that he had done in this school.

“He used to be an engineer,” Levin explained. He had left the company that he was working for “because he had the heart of a [special education teacher]. He could feel that light coming from kids

“He could feel that light coming from kids who couldn’t communicate and he could tap right into it.”

who couldn’t communicate and he could tap right into it.”

Assistant Principal Scott Darlington also commented on Norton’s empathy, mentioning “his extreme care for individual students and their unique situations.” Darlington added, “Mr. Norton always seemed a little strict at first, but he was actually the most caring of all of us administrators when it came to his students.”

Norton’s compassion and caring heart was seen all throughout AHS, some instances not even being school related. Art teacher Meghan Michaud shared one of her experiences with Norton, how she would bring her daughter into the building as a toddler, and they would “go see Mr. Norton and he would light up and be a totally different person. He had candy and crayons and I think that was a side of him that not many people got to see.”

It seemed like everywhere that Norton went in his career, his heart was always connected to IEP students. He had this compassion and empathy for them that everyone could see. He helped people “realize that every student has a different background, skill set, and ability level and to meet students at where they’re at,” said Michaud.

“[I’m going to miss] the people, the students and the staff,” said Norton shortly before he retired. This was not surprising considering his ability to connect with staff and students in a way that nobody else could -- as if he had some sort of super power.

“That’s John Norton!” Levin exclaimed. “There’s nobody here like him. He’s one of a kind.”

## OPINION COLUMN

### Understanding Climate Change

By **Anushka Dole** || STAFF WRITER

Climate. Change. On their own, these words are as common as any others; something not worth a second thought in the busy com-motion of our daily lives. Yet, when these unassuming words are put together, they create a bombshell of a phrase that threatens to destroy the very fabric of our society. The topic itself is shrouded in controversy, and discussions often end poorly. However, it doesn’t have to be this way. We must open up the conversation if we are to solve this issue.

“Biodiversity is in crisis, the climate is in crisis, there’s going to be big, big changes in the 21st century, and I think it’s really important that people know and understand,” said Alexis Valenti, who teaches environmental science at Andover High School.

In order to truly understand climate change, asking questions is essential, and one of the key questions in many of our minds is, “Why is it so hard to get rid of climate change?”

Melanie Cutler, who teaches AP Environmental Science and the Environmental Sustainability Internship Course (ESIC) has the answer. “The biggest challenge,” she said, “has been that, for whatever reason, fighting climate change has become a more political issue than it needs to be.” Indeed, as per Truth-out News, in the US Senate, one in every four senators holds investments in the fossil fuel business. The giant industry has generated nearly \$2 trillion in profits since 1990, making it very lucrative to invest in.

Besides the political snags, there are also scientific issues to contend with. The problem lies at the heart of modern living: almost all the contemporary comforts we enjoy are fueled by fossil fuels. Everything, from our TV to home heating to transportation, relies on fossil fuels—even things we wouldn’t normally consider, like concrete (the world’s third largest emitter of CO2, according to the BBC.)

One may argue, “Why don’t we

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COURTESY PHOTO / **Saarvi Deshwal**  
Philharmonica orchestra rehearses in the band room.

## Students Harmonize with New Orchestra

By: **Saarvi Deshwal** || STAFF WRITER

The Philharmonia is a new musical group of the pit orchestra for the first time at Andover High School, and is run by Dr. Derek Voigt.

An ensemble of band and orchestra instruments, as well as percussion, brass, winds, and strings, the Philharmonia is a new orchestra here at Andover High School, composed of around 30 students. Voigt is in charge of the group, and had an information session for the Philharmonia when it first started. Students could try it for a couple of rehearsals, and if it fit into their schedule, they were welcome to stay.

“It was a dream,” said Dr. Voigt, “And now I was able to talk to the administration and get it to be a possibility.” In total, the Philharmonica practiced three pieces picked out by Voigt: Pirates of the Caribbean, Fidelio Overture, and

March to the Scaffold. Pirates of the Caribbean has been finalized as their concert piece.

The Philharmonica will be performing in the early spring, and anyone who is interested is invited to watch the show. The first performance will be an all strings night on March 21 and 22.

This is the first year that there will be a Philharmonia at Andover high. “For a school with as many talented and well-rounded students as Andover, it’s a group that we really need to have,” said Voigt. The Philharmonia was named after a world-class symphony orchestra in London which was composed of soloist level players. That orchestra was founded by Walter Legge in 1945, which was also composed of wind and percussion players. It was widely regarded as London’s best orchestra in the early 1960s.



# Solutions and Status of Climate Change

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just shut down the production of oil as soon as possible?" Though it may seem like the obvious solution, implementing it is not as simple as it seems. The renewable energy technology we have right now is just not up to the mark. Scientific advancements, along with political coordination, must be made if we are to use entirely renewable energy.

Fortunately for us, there is no shortage of ideas in searching for solutions. Valenti and Cutler both have insightful thoughts on ways that society as a whole could tackle this problem. "Environment shapes behavior, so if you want people to behave in a certain way you have to set up the environment... to make it easier to do the right thing," said Valenti. An excellent example she gave was that in New York City, "many people... don't own cars because of the high costs and big hassle of owning and driving a car there; it's much easier to walk and take public transportation."

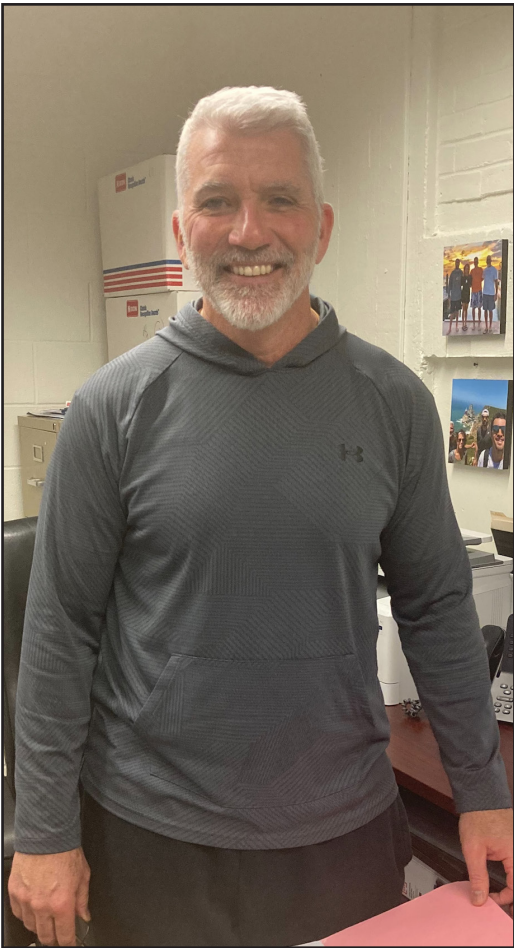
For Cutler, the biggest thing that American society can change in order to contribute to solving climate change is "wean ourselves off of fossil fuels and switch towards renewable." In addition, she said "we need to improve our whole electricity grid and develop a lot more battery technology to store wind and solar power." In this aspect, there is good news: according to a recent article from the Boston Globe, carbon emissions from the national electric grid have fallen—a sign that innovations are being made thanks to the coordination of science and politics. If political leaders give science the funding it needs, it is possible to revolutionize renewable energy technologies.

Climate change is a wide-reaching problem with dire impacts, but that doesn't mean we should lose hope. "The most important thing is to help people understand we need to be more conscious of how we live," Valenti said. Spreading awareness and taking action are things that we can all do together, whether it be through

participating in our school's Environmental Club, using a carbon footprint calculator to find and eliminate our personal emissions, reducing our meat consumption, or even bringing a zero waste lunch. We can also lobby our local and state governments to act for climate change. Our involvement and enthusiasm is what will propel us forward.

The pursuit of science and politics will be essential in tackling global warming, and our school has opportunities for education here as well, including the Intro to Environmental Science course, Advanced Placement Environmental Science, and ESIC. There are a number of ways we can contribute to combating climate change in our own town, and perhaps use the same skills to improve larger communities.

As Cutler eloquently phrased it, "For every problem we talk about, we talk about lots of solutions, and there's lots of good news on the horizon."



STAFF PHOTO / Ethan Maravelias  
Coach Pug poses for a photo at his desk.

## Coach Pug Shares His Experience

By Ethan Maravelias || STAFF WRITER

Wayne Puglisi, often known as Pug, has taken up the job of being the new athletic director after working at Andover High School for twenty three years. He talked about how fun it is to watch the students play, how he became a physical education teacher, and the grueling challenges of being the athletic director. This is Pug's origin story.

**What was your first job?**

"My very first job ever was being a custodian for a trucking company. My first professional job was as a fitness instructor at a commercial fitness facility."

**What are your favorite sports?**

"Boys lacrosse. I grew up playing that so it's always been something that is near and dear to my heart. I love football, I played that as well, and I've certainly enjoyed watching all of the fall sports teams, field hockey in particular."

**Are you still able to keep up with college and professional sports?**

"The local sports, but I'm not a huge fan of pro basketball. I'll watch a few games here and there. Like the Pats, the Bruins."

**Why did you decide to become a physical education teacher?**

"I loved coaching. I started doing some coaching early in my career in 1994, and fell in love with it. The person I was working for told me that I should go back [to college] and get my teaching degree, and I ended up working at it. I wanted to be able to continue to coach and work with young people."

**Do you miss your old job being a teacher?**

"I do, I miss being with the students, I miss being with my guys, Mr. Murnane and Coach Faz. But this has been a nice transition for me."

**Why did you decide to become the athletic director?**

"I was ready to take on a new challenge. I was ready to try something new. [Assistant Athletic Director Kerry] Cashman and Coach Faz were both very instrumental in helping me believe it was something I could do."

**How do you like being the athletic director?**

"It's been an interesting transition, having taught for twenty-three years. There's a lot of different things between teaching and doing this job that I had to figure out. But for the most part it's been a fun transition. It's been something that I've enjoyed doing, and I like the challenge."

**What would you like to accomplish as the athletic director?**

"Number one, I have to figure out how to do this job. It's still in a learning phase. And there's a lot more to it than I anticipated. Now I have to manage thirty teams instead of one, and manage business, finances, ordering, purchasing. Ms. Cashman handles rentals and transportation, which has made it a little bit easier, but there's still a lot to try and manage and figure out."

**What has been the most exciting part of being the athletic director?**

"Watching everybody play. Watching the students on the fields, on the courts, It's been awesome to see them compete."

## Co-Curricular Classes Offer Ways to Learn Outside of Classroom

By Xander MacKay-Kao || STAFF WRITER

Andover High School has multiple co-curricular classes—activities pursued in addition to the normal course of study that are held outside of school hours—like Marching Band and Newspaper Production.

These classes are more rigorous than clubs, and students are graded for their work. Scott Aubrey, an English teacher and the head of Newspaper Production, believes that for certain classes, taking them outside of school is necessary for student growth. Jeffery Kuchan, the director of the school bands, believes that skill-based classes need people to be able to pursue them for more than half a year. If not, students will begin to develop skills and then be unable to implement them.

Kuchan said, "You're not just a class, you're not just a number, you're creating a product." For something that students need to put continual work in, such as a musical presentation, people need to be able to consistently work together. Kuchan said that in his previous experience working at other schools, co-curricular classes are very common. The questions are whether we should make space in our midterm schedule for them, and if there are other classes that

would benefit from being co-curricular.

During the week of midterms at Andover High School, the Newspaper Production class met at noon until 1:30 pm on Tuesday. This meeting served as a midterm for the class. Newspaper Production being co-curricular means that even though students put in effort and work for a grade, there's no designated spot for a midterm. The current solution cuts into the academic support time allotted in the second half of midterm days, but there is also only one medium sized class, meaning setting aside a time frame for it might not be considered worth it. The co-curricular band classes didn't have a midterm at all.

Regarding classes that would benefit from being held weekly or twice a week, this could be any class that relies on work that couldn't be sped up through more classes. A class where the primary work would be reaching out to people, whether that be community projects or interviews for the newspaper, would be greatly helped by not having daily or bidaily classes. A class based on community service or town interaction would require response from officials in the town.



COURTESY PHOTO / Bori Kim  
Bori Kim, a senior at AHS, shares the ups and down of her skiing career. In the photo above, Kim can be seen taking to the slopes and participating in a ski race.

Want to learn more?  
Check out her story on our website:  
[www.andoverview.net](http://www.andoverview.net)