

AHS Community Adapts to In-Person COVID-19 Guidelines

By Katie Budinger
EDITOR IN CHIEF

With the start of the year, Andover High School has implemented a variety of guidelines and strategies in order to keep the school community healthy and stop the spread of the COVID-19 virus, but these guidelines have resulted in a very different school experience that has received a variety of receptions.

In school, the hallways and stairwells are now one-way, as indicated by signs and gold and blue arrows on the floors; matching dots mark spaces three feet apart. The school has been divided into "Cohort A" or "Blue Cohort" and "Cohort B" the "Gold Cohort." Within each cohort, students have been divided further into different locations through which to enter the school, such as the Field House, Cafeteria, and the Collins Center, two different lunch locations, either the Dunn Gym or the Cafeteria, and two different class transition times in an effort to decrease the number of students occupying the same space. Each Wednesday, all students and teachers are remote while the school is cleaned; every class meets for half an hour in the morning until 12:15, after which the time is reserved for academic support.

Throughout the in-person school

days, students and teachers take a mask break every period outside. Adi Briskin, a senior, really enjoys these mask breaks, saying, "It's nice to have some time in the middle of class to go outside and talk to people, and while the weather is nice I especially appreciate the sun." Assistant Principal Scott Darlington believes that these breaks have been some of the more effective measures that the school has put in place, and that they have gone over smoothly so far.

However, the system is by no means perfect. Senior Emma Svendsen feels very strongly about the all-remote schedule on Wednesdays. "Wednesdays are a straight-through four-hour nightmare," she proclaimed, "where no one can get anything substantial done, but also no one can afford to not do anything, so you have seven thirty-minute Zoom calls where everyone is mildly panicked and one hundred percent disoriented."

Darlington agreed that "the goals for Wednesday classes might need some refining." The administration has been gathering feedback, and believes that clarifying the nature of the Wednesdays is one of the things that has potential for improvement. They are working on these improvements and anticipate adjustments being made throughout the year in order to create the most optimal

learning environment. "Virtual learning is 100% not my thing but I also understand that it is necessary, so I'm kind of just trying to make it work," said senior Gio Coppola. "What's affecting me more is that we can't have Drama Guild or Show Choir in the ways that we normally do, so that is more what is making my school experience worse... We're able to do them still but it's just not the same and a lot of elements have been eliminated."

Many students used to find solace in activities that are no longer able to happen. Sports practices have changed drastically and entire seasons have been postponed until a later date, commonly referred to as 'Fall II' that will take place in late winter or early spring. Many clubs are meeting virtually or not at all, and groups like the Drama Guild have come up with socially-distanced alternatives to their usual activities and performances.

Coppola is used to a very different school experience on account of last year's unique circumstances, but did not expect the fall of his senior year to look anything like this. Coppola said, "the school is doing a pretty decent job, honestly everything they can do they're doing... They're doing the best they can under the crazy circumstances."



STAFF PHOTO / **Katie Budinger**
"One way" sticker on the hallway floor.



STAFF PHOTO / **Katie Budinger**
Paper signs that help mark the one way hallways.



New Andover High School Principal: Ms. Brown Let's Go and Take a Trip Through the Story of Her Life

By Shravya Sathi
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

A new year, a new principal. Here at Andover High School, we welcome Ms. Caitlin Brown to fill that seat. From the North Shore to Andover, her story is filled with lots of twists and turns.

Ms. Brown grew up on the North Shore and attended Beverly High School.

She also played soccer in college and high school, and was the captain of both teams.

"I never thought I'd go into teaching, I thought I was going to be a lawyer," remembered Ms. Brown.

After high school, she went to Trinity College in Hartford, Conn., as a political science major. She had an internship

where she worked at the State House with the senate president. To add, she worked as a victim witness advocate, as well as in the Attorney General's Office as a paralegal. During this time, she worked at the Boys and Girls Club in downtown Hartford as a tutor.

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Andover District Switches to New Online Program: Schoology

By Olivia Janasik
STAFF WRITER

With school starting amidst a pandemic, remote and in-person learning, and uncertainty through it all, students at Andover High School have also been exposed to a new online learning program: Schoology.

Using Google Classroom in the past, students were used to submitting assignments, joining Google Meets, and completing their at-home work through the site. Most importantly, both students and teachers knew how to use the site, as its simplicity made work easy to post, submit and keep track of over time. This year, the school district introduced Schoology, a site which students and teachers are to use in place of Google Classroom; however, many are finding it to be a difficult substitute.

Sophomore Megan Jones says Google Classroom is the way to go, especially given the amount of online assignments students are assigned. "I prefer Google Classroom over Schoology because I know Google Classroom better and how it works, I also think that Google class-

room is easier to manage and I can see all of my work that I need to do and when it's due. I don't like that we added a new program this school year because everyone I have talked to already knows how to work google classroom and we know it better. Unlike schoology, no one knows how to work it." Unlike with Google Classroom, the majority of students weren't taught how to use Schoology or had the experience with it like they did with Google Classroom. This, making it hard for students to use the site, distracts them from the actual assignments they must complete.

Google Classroom is "more organized in my opinion" says sophomore Demitra Hatzigiannis. The significant difference between structure in both websites has many students confused and wondering how to submit assignments.

"I prefer Google Classroom over Schoology because it is something that the teachers and students can easily navigate and are familiar with. Many teachers have made Google Classrooms, in addition to Schoology, because the information seems much more organized and

it shows when assignments have been turned in" says senior, Janhavi M.

Another senior, Hayley K. agrees, adding that Schoology "doesn't tell you when you have submitted assignments. This makes it difficult to tell what assignments you have and haven't done. Google classroom is much more efficient, easy to navigate, and is already understood by most students."

This was a common feeling among students, many saying that they are having trouble with seeing what's done and what has yet to be done through Schoology. But to make it even more difficult, teachers continue making Google Classrooms for their classes, creating as many as three places including Schoology, Google Classroom, and Aspen where students can view and complete assignments. Senior Angie Barrios says, "I think teachers should learn to have one single website. Some teachers use Google Classroom, others use Aspen or Schoology, and others have their own. All of these aren't only confusing but they make it way harder for students to stay on track. I understand that some teach-

ers find it hard to use one specific site but adding so many just ends up being confusing."

Along with this, a survey taken by over 500 Andover High students shows that 94% prefer Google Classroom over the new Schoology. Which leads to this question, posed by Katz: "If we already have a software that is understood and works well for the students, then why are we changing to a new one?" Mrs. St. Laurent, the school advisor, has an answer. "The district decided to adopt schoology as our Learning Management System in July of 2020", its purpose was to "streamline communication and learning resources into one place for our APS community" including students, teachers, parents/guardians and administration, she says. The district wanted teachers to be able to connect with parents as well as students. She adds, "Google Classroom might be more familiar for students (and teachers) at this point, but Classroom doesn't address all of the other challenges we faced over the spring."

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EDITORIAL

Schoology: Yay or Nay?



Perhaps one of the largest current controversies at Andover High School is the debate as to whether or not the move from Google Classroom to Schoology was a good decision. There are those in favor of the new, all-in-one program, as it does not require switching between different applications, and those who vehemently oppose Schoology, and see it as a clunky and impossible educational Facebook.

The biggest flaw with this new program, and the reason that it cannot be successful this year, is on account of the fact that neither teachers nor students, the two groups expected to use Schoology regularly, were given any sort of formal training. Schoology was simply thrust into the system all along with a few video tutorials and basic teacher trainings in the midst of an already chaotic school year. If students and teachers were given proper training in order to truly learn how to use Schoology and all of its features, then it might be able to turn into the great resource for all that it has been argued to be.

ANDOVERVIEW

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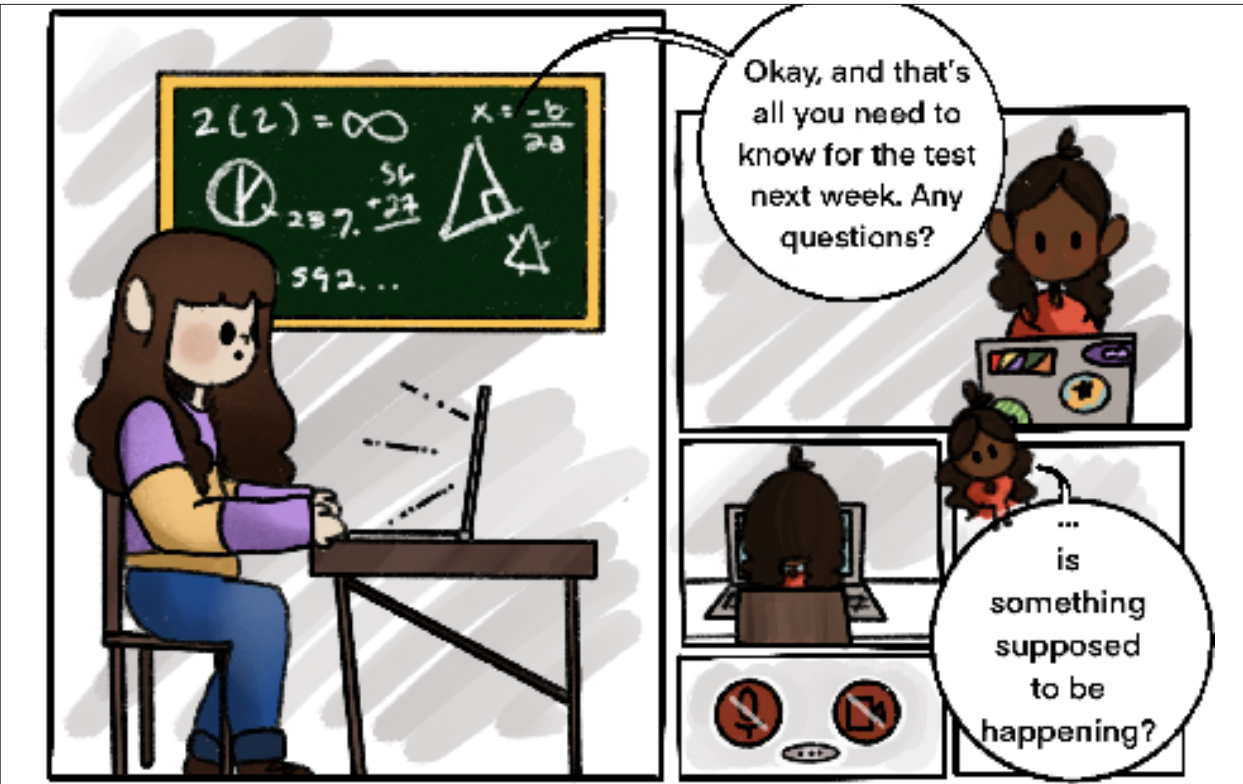


ILLUSTRATION / Juliana Kaufman

Hybrid Learning Concerns: Concussions, Screentime

By Camille Storch
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Let me preface this by stating that school in 2020 with a concussion sucks. How did I get the concussion? You're probably thinking I must play some intense sport or something-- especially during a pandemic, where everyone is worried about everything you come in contact with.

Wrong. I run cross country. How did a person running on the road get a concussion? Yours truly ran into a street sign while running at a fast clip and not just a stop sign, the giant street monitors that are as dense as a TV screen. Little did I know how much having a minor concussion at the beginning of the school year would become such a struggle.

One of the main limiting factors of having a concussion is sensitivity to light. This "light" category includes all technology, including phones, TVs, and most importantly, our computer screens. After visiting the doctor, I was notified to take that specific day off, which just so happened to be a Wednesday, the horror of hybrid. I, personally, hate Wednesdays as much as Taylor Swift hates Kanye West, so no hard feelings with having to take a break from that day.

I went up to my bed to rest, as the doctor had instructed, but not even five minutes into lying down, I started to panic, worrying about all of the important information I was missing. Many teachers have begun to adopt a

system where Wednesdays are the beginning of the "cycle," which also translates to all key information and assignments are doled out on Wednesday. Lying there in my bed, my brain started to stress out, worrying, which induced yet another headache, exactly what I needed at the moment.

OPINION
COLUMN

Throughout these past couple of weeks, I have jumped through gigantic hoops, sent countless emails, made up many quizzes during h-block on paper, listened to the nurses try to find the cure to COVID-19, and much more. And quite honestly, I wonder if the school put any consideration into what would happen if a student was unable to use a computer this particular school year. It has only been three weeks now and I am starting to be able to use the computer as I normally would, but I have had to do a lot of navigating on my own on how to work around the screen.

With all assignments either on Google Classroom or Schoology, there is no real paper-work being handed out anymore. Have we officially shifted out of paper work? Will we be using the computer at this capacity even when the virus is over?

Most of my in-school

hybrid days, I end up in the nurse's office by the end of the day to take a rest, therefore missing a chunk of class. If I end up getting dismissed, I not only have all of my homework to complete online but also the classwork. Not to mention that most teachers in-school class time incorporates the use of the computer.

Concussion aside, this computer heavy use has really begun to concern me, especially with the high usage in the classroom. The teachers are trying their best to create meaningful lesson plans for our remote days, but shouldn't the reward for spending so much time learning online three days a week be to be allowed time in class to do a different activity, a class discussion, something different that doesn't involve students taking out their computers again.

My concluding thought is a message to people who have a say over our hybrid/remote curriculum and how learning is working in this current phase, to really consider how much screen time kids are having to deal with. Even before having a concussion, I would get headaches from the constant computer and would struggle with concentrating by the end of the day. If this pandemic continues, how will our learning abilities possibly waver and struggle if we are on the computer remote days and hybrid, six plus hours a day, not including homework?

I'll let you ponder that thought. I need a break from the screen!

Thoughts from the Remote Academy Students: Person on the Street

Reported By
Naomi Bloom, Philippa Know, Lisa Shin,
Madeline Shin, and Jacqueline Zhu
STAFF WRITERS

ANDOVERVIEW asked students enrolled in AHS's Remote Academy how their experience was going. Here's what some of those students had to say:

Annika Christensen, freshman:
"I like that I can get more sleep to help my adolescent body to grow, and it's easier for my parents [who both commute to work every weekday] in the mornings. However, I have not been able

to see the inside of Andover High School yet. So when life goes back to normal, I won't know where to go or what to do."

Diya Ganesh, sophomore:
"The work ethic you need to get good grades in a hybrid setting is a lot different from the work ethic you need in a remote setting. Since we're meeting with teachers every single day, I think we're closer to regular school. The only good thing that will come out of this is that we'll have the work ethic we need for when we go back to school next year."

Lina Li, sophomore:
"I think I'm satisfied with Remote Academy overall because of the increasing cases of COVID-19. However, I find it

uncomfortable having to sit in front of the computer throughout the day. Additionally, there are many disadvantages, such as how I'm not able to do labs for science classes."

Jaidiliz Salazar, senior:
"This is harder for lowerclassmen than upperclassmen because we're used to the schedule. I personally like the remote schedule because it's easier for me. The only thing I don't like is that I'm starting at a screen all day"

Victoria Specwock, senior:
"Being in a remote environment allows us to focus on things for a long time without having to worry about going to your next class and what not. You have

that real freedom that you wouldn't be able to have in a classroom setting."

Avanthika Suryadevara, sophomore:
"There are not as many opportunities for remote kids, and throughout this whole process, I've felt that [the Administration] is favoring hybrid, and I don't think that's fair. Even though [my family] chose remote for safety reasons, my parents are starting to say that I need to move to hybrid to get my classes."

Manavi Vajhallja, sophomore:
"H-Block used to be so fun... now we need to go to another Google Meet. You have to fill out an exit ticket and now I hate it so much. [It] adds more work."

Getting to Know the New Andover High Principal: Ms. Brown

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She recalled that, because of her interactions with the kids, she was inspired by them and “[realized] what a value they bring to our society.” From tutoring kids, she realized that she really enjoyed being around kids more than studying about the law.

As a matter of fact, Ms. Brown got into law school; however, her true passion for education took her on a detour.

“I ended up at Foxborough High School as a social studies teacher for seven years.” She was also the varsity soccer coach, National Honor Society advisor, class advisor, and the Athletic Director during some of her time there. “I like to get very involved,” she mentioned.

At that time, she was living south of

Boston, while the rest of her family was living on the North Shore. When she saw an assistant principal position open up in Andover, she sent in an application, got interviewed, and moved here, all very quickly.

“I knew it was a great community and a great school,” she recalled. And, she got to be closer to her tight-knit family!

At Andover High School, she was an assistant principal for four years before becoming the principal.

“I’m just excited to work with students in a different way than I did as an assistant principal...I really want to improve student voice, and really get the students involved, and really just opening up that communication with our student body.” At the same time, one of Ms. Brown’s goals

is to “also celebrate the uniqueness of our school and everyone who makes up our school.” Compared to Foxborough, where Ms. Brown last worked, Andover has such a great diversity within the student body population and she wants to be able to really celebrate it and recognize it.

“I have ideas but I am not sure if my ideas are the best ideas; I really want it to be reflective of what the students want,” announced Ms. Brown.

She strongly believes that “we have such wonderful things going on in Andover and [she] just wants to highlight what our students are doing to the community.”

Out of school, Ms. Brown used to love to run. Kids and a working job make it really hard, but she is working towards find-

ing a better schedule to take care of herself and her health. Her favorite thing is spending time with her family. Ms. Brown has two daughters, one in kindergarten and another in second grade. She even has a little friend, Rocky, who is a Lhasa Apso (a dog breed).

“They are the joy of my life. They are wonderful. I am really fortunate to have a wonderful family,” said Ms. Brown.

As her final words, Ms. Brown wants us all to understand that “if there are problems or concerns, always reach out to someone and get help. My door is often open, a student or staff member can always come in and ask a question and I may not have an answer, but at least I can direct you to the person who does. I think all of our building staff feels that way.”

AHS Learning Program Changes from Google Classroom to Schoology

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Although Google Classroom does connect teachers with students to share resources in one place, it doesn’t provide the opportunity for teachers to connect and communicate with parents, administrators and other teachers in one place.”

Teachers are still able to create Google Classrooms and link them to Schoology, “that said, I can imagine it would be difficult as a student to navigate. My advice for students is to take some time to understand how classroom resources are organized by each teacher so that you know where to best find information for

each course.”

However, through the confusion and uncertainty of it all, students continue to complete their assignments and are slowly adapting to the new circumstances. “I am doing okay with in-person and remote learning this year, but I’m still getting used to it,” says Hatzigiannis.

“It will take time for our district to fully adopt all the features of the platform, but we are hopeful that when we do, it will change the way we collaborate as a learning community,” says Mrs. St. Laurent.

Getting to Know the New Andover High Vice Principal: Mr. Moody



By Erin Li
STAFF WRITER

Kwesi Moody arrived at AHS this summer, but he’s been at many schools before. In the last five years, he worked at Methuen High School as the associate principal, and before that, his career focused around Boston and Boston Public Schools.

His education has even revolved around at some of Massachusetts’ top institutions: Boston University, Northeastern University, and UMass. On this day though, ANDOVERVIEW interviewed him as our new assistant principal replacing Caitlin Brown, our new principal:

ANDOVERVIEW: Why did you want to come to AHS?

Mr. Moody: When this role opened up, I applied. I was around the area already, so it was a good opportunity to get into another community and start fresh. And what I mean by “start fresh” is that when I look in a district, I do look for ways I can be impactful. When I was at Methuen High School, I didn’t feel like I was impactful; so for me, it was more of a shift in my personal life and a good time to make a shift.

ANDOVERVIEW: What was your first job?

Mr. Moody: I studied physiology in college, so I was working as an exercise physiologist for a company called Fitcorp. I knew I liked this work, but it wasn’t hitting everything I liked about it. My

parents were social workers, so I had that in me, and I had that idea of working with people. What I really loved was teaching. You have a specialty and you’re sharing your information.

ANDOVERVIEW: What job did you want to do as a kid?

Mr. Moody: I didn’t have that many ideas of jobs, but as a boy, I was thinking about sports all the time. I couldn’t believe how much money professional sports players made. I’ll do that! I also thought I could be some sort of superhero.

ANDOVERVIEW: What did you enjoy the most when you were in high school?

Mr. Moody: It was definitely the relationships I made there. I still have some of them today. There are not many I remember, but I remember those that made an impact on me. Those relationships mattered, and when you look back at it, you really never have it again. Even in college, you won’t get those same experiences. These are amazing years you can’t get back. But some people are right-- sometimes these are not great times for high schoolers because of some action that somebody else created. So it’s also important to recognize that life is bigger as well. It’s not all just these four years.

ANDOVERVIEW: What sports did you play in high school?

Mr. Moody: I played football, basketball, and baseball. All three seasons. It was fun and that was the best part. I think that was more of a lesson my parents were teaching

me. They wanted me to be involved with something I would enjoy. For some students, that something can be robotics or choir. It helps you connect to other people, and when you like it, you do it more and get better at it. For me, that something was sports. Being from a tough area, it was one of the things that helped me begin to see that I could do something else in the world.

ANDOVERVIEW: When you were a senior in high school, did you know what your major would be?

Mr. Moody: Growing up in a low economic area, my parents worked their butts off. I had two older brothers who had already gone through this, and one brother was two grade levels ahead of me. We would visit my brothers so I got a chance to see what college was like, but I didn’t have any idea of what I wanted to do. I just had an idea of what job I liked. I saw a doctor and I was reaching for the stars.

ANDOVERVIEW: Any advice for AHS seniors?

Mr. Moody: If you’re a senior, remember that it’s never too late. Apply for college and don’t be afraid. Why not try it? It’s all out there for you. My daughter is a senior, so she is going through the same experience right now. For some seniors, school is not something they are looking at right away. This year is also about getting different experiences you feel like you need and you want. But know that every avenue is going to require some sort of hard work.

Mr. Moody
Recommends
Books

Rich Dad, Poor Dad by Robert T. Kiyosaki

It helped me begin thinking economically. It’s a book I remember reading and sharing with students a lot. It gave me a perspective I’ve never had and that’s why it stands out. Even though there are people out there that speak more directly about financial things, it’s a fun read and completely caught me by surprise.

Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria by Beverly Daniel Tatum

The reason I like this book is because the title throws people off, and people won’t read it based on the title. But if they dive into it, it has so much rich information around the idea of racism. Out of all the books I’ve read in my life, it gives a good definition of what racism is and the process of at least talking about it. In these times, it’s important to read since schools are so nervous to teach it.

ARTS

Theatre Gone Virtual During Pandemic

By Alana MacKay-Kao
ARTS EDITOR

With COVID-19 shutting down live entertainment, like theatre, much has moved online since global quarantining began in March, for better or for worse. Since April 3 of this year, the YouTube channel The Shows Must Go On has been releasing one full-length musical or concert for free every Friday, requesting donations as a fundraiser for the National Health Service (NHS) in the United Kingdom. Each show is up on the channel for 48 hours at a time, and excerpts and behind-the-scenes clips stay up after the full shows are taken down.

A senior, Sarah Haley, said, "Part of it is because of necessity, but part of it is because people are like, 'wait, this is actually a medium we can use.'" Haley has been taking advantage of the temporary migration online and has watched most of the shows the channel put up. She predicted that more companies would start streaming their shows for an online audience to enjoy soon.

Even though free online recordings of live theatre have existed in the form of things like StarKid, a theatre company started in 2009 that has amassed a cult following through recordings of their original shows (A Very Potter Musical, a Harry Potter parody, for example), mainstream theatre hasn't really taken advantage of this venue. With theatre-lovers stuck at home, this may be the perfect time for more shows to become available to fans online.

Susan Choquette, Andover High School's resident Drama Director, brought up a good point. She said, "All Broadway shows are filmed for archival purposes. Also, over the years many Broadway shows have been turned into movies like West Side Story, Cats, and Chicago with varying degrees of success. It is always a gamble to take a piece of art that was meant to be performed in one way and modify it for another medium."

But the quality of the shows or even whether they can be watched in full online or only in clips aren't the whole appeal of engaging with recorded performances. Sophomore Shannon Chu, a fan of StarKid, recalled her first experience with the company: "YouTube

recommended it to me so I watched one of their musicals. I really enjoyed it so I watched the rest of them. I made a lot of friends through these shows."

Hayley and Chu both also spoke about how watching clips or even full recordings of their favorite shows online didn't decrease their desire to watch them in person at all, and in fact, were a great way to get to know the show better and become more invested in it. Hayley spoke about her favorite musical, The Phantom of the Opera. She said, "I've seen it in real life once and online [many times], and I've never gotten tired of watching it online... I think that says something about the power of online theatre....I feel like

will likely be a virtual performance."

Directing a virtual play presents a different set of challenges and responsibilities. Choquette gave an example: "Actors' entrances and exits are all executed through the virtual platform. Actors are in charge of turning their cameras off and on again." In the meantime, before it gets too cold, you can catch the Drama Guild's fall performance outdoors this year. It will be a collection of eight 10-minute, student-directed plays, three of which were written by students as well. These short plays will be performed Wednesday, October 29 on the patio just outside the cafeteria.

Online and in-person theatre draw the audience into the experience. But

ver alongside her many virtual favorites. "With virtual theater, you can pause, take a break, and rewatch it. You can sit on the couch or in your bed, you can do whatever you want," she explained. "In-person theater just feels different. You're sitting there with a group of people (woah large groups of people) and actually watching these people do amazing work right in front of you. It feels a lot more real."

Choquette described this phenomenon as a learning experience: "Theatre productions are meant to be viewed live with an audience. When we use electronic media to transmit theatre art, it becomes something else. We will learn new things through this process that we will take with us when things switch back to live performances again someday."

Other forms of entertainment have followed suit. Many musicians, from the Indigo Girls to the Dropkick Murphys have live-streamed concerts for their fans in quarantine. Conventions, like Comic-Con and PAX, also moved online with panels and workshops streamed on YouTube, Zoom, and other platforms. Quarantine has presented the entertainment industry with the unique challenge of taking large events and translating them into a totally different medium. This has had the benefit of making them more accessible to people, both financially and physically. All of these shows are usually quite expensive for a single ticket, but when hosted online they were free or had nominal charges. This allowed more people to participate in the events when they might not have been able to originally due to the cost or location of the in-person event.

Ultimately, live entertainment can still be much more exciting to experience in-person as that is what it's built for. However, limitations like cost, location, and a global pandemic every now and then make online recordings a great option for fans who would be otherwise unable to engage with their favorite shows. Choquette said, "I think that we are doing the best that we can in the moment. The theatres on Broadway in N.Y.C. just announced that they will remain closed through May of 2021. I think we are all anxious to be back in the theatre- theatre makers and audiences. I look forward to that day."



SCREENSHOT / The Shows Must Go On Youtube Channel

A screenshot of an iconic moment from The Phantom of the Opera, captured from 'The Phantom of the Opera' clip with Ramin Karimloo as the Phantom and Sierra Borgess as Christine.

I wouldn't have gone to see it unless I had listened to the soundtrack and seen some clips and fallen in love with it that way. I wouldn't have been anywhere near as hyped to actually see it." Chu expressed a very similar sentiment, wanting to see StarKid shows live someday.

Local theatre has been moving online as well. Our very own Choquette is considering doing a Zoom performance with the Drama Guild this year. She said, "Lots of live theatre performances are transitioning to Zoom until we are able to perform live. Is it ideal? I don't think so, but we are making lemonade out of lemons.... Our winter play

because the medium is so different, the feeling isn't the same. Hayley, Chu, and Choquette all shared similar sentiments about these differences. Hayley said, "The theater is built to be immersive, and it's built to connect with the audience. It's completely different when you're staring at a flat screen versus [when] you can see everything moving around you." While she loves to see shows in person, Hayley also acknowledged the difficulties of doing so. "It's so hard to see the shows in real life sometimes because theatre...is so expensive...A lot of people don't have a choice."

Chu has seen several in-person shows in New York, Boston, and here in Ando-

Clear Eyes, Full Hearts, Can't Lose! Watch Friday Night Lights

By Camille Storch
ASSOCIATE EDITOR



PROMOTIONAL IMAGE / NBC

It's a crisp, fall Friday night. You are at home, no Andover High football game to attend. Covid-19 is still spreading it's wrath and you know the couch is your

safest option tonight. Yet, you find yourself craving that rush of adrenaline from a hail mary touchdown. You miss the taste of cheap popcorn and skittles, the crunch of your shoes against the leaves, the screams from the fans. Well, turn on your TV because I have a show for you.

Friday Night Lights is all about football but at the same time it has nothing to do about football. Coach Eric Taylor and his family move to a small town in Texas, hoping to lead the Dillon Panthers to a state championship win. Now, up here in Massachusetts, high school football can be fun to watch, but it does not even come close to comparing to high school football in the South. Andover's appreciation as a town for it's team would be an inchworm compared to a bear that would represent Dillon's team spirit from the town.

In Dillion, Texas, the town revolves around the "fall" season and it is quite literally the most wonderful time of the year. Sorry Christmas, Dillon football has taken over.

Coach Taylor is married to Tammy, the supportive and patient wife along with loving mother to Juliet, an only child and future heartbreaker. The show begins right before the first game of the season, but, like every good TV show, there's a catch. Star quarterback Jason Street takes a hard hit on the first play and is in critical

condition, putting him out for the remainder of the season. The show proceeds to follow rookie quarterback, Matt Saracen, who has barely played a snap in his life, navigate the murky waters of intense football not to mention intense pressure from the town.

We also follow the personal stories of other star players, such as Tim Riggins, a tall parent-less teen who drinks beer like it is water, and Smash Williams, a mama's boy with an ego that will destroy him. Follow the friendships and families in this small, southern town, where everyone knows everything about everyone from your name to what argument you had with your husband last Wednesday night.

Console with the perfect cheer captain, Lyla Garrity, whose life looks perfect and beautiful on the outside, but is swirling in turmoil on the inside. Laugh alongside best friends Matt and Landry (Lance) as they attempt navigating the horrors of high school. Cry with Tyra Collette as her heart gets broken for the tenth time in a row.

Every weekend in a football game, bring the whole town of Dillon back together, cheering, on the one thing that can stay consistent in their lives.

I promise, you will not regret watching this show. Clear eyes, Full hearts, Can't lose!

