

AHS APUSHing It?

High AP Drop-Out Rate in 2021-2022 School Year Brings Attention to Difficulty of Classes

By Melody Tang and Grace Wang
STAFF WRITERS

With many students dropping out of Advanced Placement and Enriched classes, a pressing question persists: How has the COVID-19 pandemic impacted the student drop rate in these classes?

AP classes, which are college freshman level courses taught in high school, are known to be both quick-paced and work-intensive. Throughout the year, some students will request level changes down to honors, bringing a bit of light to the difficulty of some of these classes. According to some AP teachers, Andover High School has experienced more students moving down from AP levels this year than ever before.

When one thinks of an AP course, there are a few infamously difficult ones that come to mind: AP U.S. History (often abbreviated to APUSH) and AP Calculus are among the few. But what do actual students and teachers of these classes have to say about them?

APUSH is a class that is known to be extremely difficult. The pace, depth of content, delivery, and assessments of APUSH are more challenging than what students are used to. "For juniors who are first taking an AP class, it's quite an adjustment. If you think about it, it's literally skipping two grades," said Mary Robb, who taught APUSH up until this year.

Andover High School junior Bori Kim said, "APUSH is definitely a challenge, but it's not always hard. The pop quizzes are hard to study for, though, and projects are a lot of work. The key to APUSH is time management."

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STAFF PHOTO / Shravya Sathi

AHS's Varisty Track team using the fitness room after school for practice on January 3rd, 2022.

Fitness Room Renovations

By Jocelyn Barton
STAFF WRITER

Positive improvements brought about by recent Fitness Room renovations addressed most concerns surrounding air quality and upgrading fitness equipment.

The Fitness Room has been designated as a space for students and school faculty to practice physical exercise and wellness activities. However, previous inconsistencies with maintenance have resulted in sub-par air quality.

Meredith Emery, Physical Education teacher and primary user of this room, stated that the Fit-

ness Room was "like an airplane, it just recycle[d] the fresh air." Prior to COVID, its main source of circulation originated from outdoor drafts, heating in the winter, and the locker room's breeze through vents.

In the midst of the pandemic, Andover High School revised the air quality for the entire school to make sure all areas met the required standard. As a result, the Fitness Room was temporarily shut down and the doors had been locked ... until this fall. The no-access protocol was finally lifted this September, allowing classes to be held once again in this area.

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Spotlight On Actress Julia Kole

By Angela Mac
STAFF WRITER

Julia Kole, the lead from the recent play Mamma Mia, plans to major in the field of public health rather than performing arts.

Kole is a senior and a widely known performer at Andover High School. Being a performer takes a lot of time and work, and Kole doesn't know if that's something she wants. She stated, "You have to know what you want and you have to go at it full force." She may love theater, but she isn't interested in that type of tough and intense environment.

Kole takes interest in public health for a multitude of reasons. She has always been fascinated by different diseases and loves measuring and experimenting; however, what she loves most is helping people. Though she doesn't plan on majoring in theater, she plans to contin-

ue it on the side. All the colleges Kole applied to have acapella and theater groups, as they are a "requirement for [her]." Another option she considered was either minoring or double majoring in music; however, it would be along the lines of music production or theory instead of performing arts.

Kole's love for theater started in second grade. She always enjoyed the feeling of being on stage. Though Kole's been on stage countless times, she still gets nervous because she wants to give the audience a good show. The people in the Show Choir and the AHS Drama Guild have always been family for Kole. After rehearsals, she would hang out with her fellow cast members in the dressing room. "I talk to them a lot," Kole said. "They were my people. I like to think I was kinda their person. But you gotta find your people."

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STAFF PHOTO / Angela Mac

Actress Julia Kole hopes to pursue public health after high school.

APS District Receives 2 Million in Federal Education Grants

By Naomi Bloom and Eva Liss
STAFF WRITERS

Through the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), the federal government has provided just under \$2 million to help support Andover Public Schools, where the COVID-19 pandemic has left a lasting impact on students.

The Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funds (ESSER) are federal educational grants given to aid schools during the pandemic. The first part, ESSER I, granted the Andover Public School district just over \$150,000 issued in March of 2020. It was geared towards helping schools adapt to the pandemic and the switch to remote learning. The second grant, ESSER II, was passed in December of 2020, giving over \$550,000. This grant was given to support schools in their attempts to reopen buildings and keep people safe, as well as to fund professional development, social emotional training, and

academic support for learning loss. Andover has applied for an additional \$1.25 million through the ESSER III grant, which is targeted at fighting learning loss and supporting students' mental health in these challenging times. As the status of the pandemic and school districts' needs are constantly shifting, the aim of the ESSER funds is also changing to match what is needed at the time. Some of this money still continues to fund the daily needs of APS schools, Andover High School included.

"We hand out over 100 masks every day to students coming in; [there are new] desks coming in," said AHS principal Caitlin Brown, speaking on how some of the money has been allocated. "We're also running some preemptive programs to help students who may need some support, like academic support... where we're helping them catch up in their work so they don't get behind."

As the aim of ESSER I was to help schools adjust to the pandemic and reopen, much of the grant was spent

on devices for remote school, more desks for socially distant classrooms, cleaning supplies, and personal protective equipment (PPE). ESSER I has mostly been spent, although some of it is still going to daily supplies, such as the masks distributed at the doors of AHS each day.

The second grant, ESSER II, was meant for a combination of combatting learning loss and contributing to daily school needs. As the focus of APS shifted from remote learning to hybrid learning and keeping students and teachers safe in that environment, so did what the federal money was being used for. The deadline for ESSER II's spending is 2023, and currently it is being spent on daily supplies for AHS, salaries for substitutes caused by teacher absences due to the pandemic, and making sure ventilation is up to code. It is also being used to fund supplementary learning programs, such as before-school programs and academic enrichment, or social emotional learning (SEL) training for teachers.

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EDITORIAL

YikYak Needs To Go

YikYak, an online forum where nearby users can post and view comments anonymously, has resurfaced at AHS.

The app was launched in 2013 and re-launched in 2021 after being banned due to continuous cyberbullying and online harassment. On YikYak, people have the option to only interact with other users in a five mile radius, which creates a more personalized and relevant experience for the user. The app has a feature for users to upvote or downvote posts they like or dislike. When a post gains enough upvotes it makes it to the “hot”, or trending, page. YikYak contains age restricted material and has an age restriction of 17 and up.

Because of the app’s anonymity, AHS has been experiencing an influx of posts targeting specific students and faculty, as well as exposing their private information. Because of the five-mile radius “rule” the app has imposed, students at AHS have been arguing with students at the nearby Merrimack College. This has resulted in what we believe to be unnecessary drama. Additionally, some students are becoming increasingly anxious in fear of defamation. Principal Caitlin Brown sent an email addressing the problem on December 9, and it seems that the severity of the app’s drama has since died down. However, the problem continues. While certain AHS students have been suspended for inappropriate behavior on the app, anonymity has resulted in the continuation of such activities.

We believe the misuse of YikYak violates the school’s cyberbullying rule, and those involved should be held accountable. As a first step, we encourage students that currently have YikYak to delete the app. For students who have not previously downloaded the app, we suggest keeping your curiosity at bay.



ILLUSTRATION / Naomi Bloom

OPINION

Desperate Call For Return Of Snow Days

By Camille Storch and Shravya Sathi
EDITORS IN CHIEF

The classic snow day always starts the same way. You check the Snow Day Calculator before bed, it says fifty percent, and you already know what is to come at five a.m. the next morning. You don’t even set your alarm because you know you will be woken up by the good news: It’s a snow day!

You sleep to your heart’s desire, before the sunlight burns through your windows and wakes you up. You get up, brush your teeth, and you cuddle near the fireplace while grabbing breakfast, before picking your next activity on this refreshing day. It could vary from playing video games, playing outside in the snow, and if you’re a stressed-out junior, working on missing homework assignments during the hardest year of high school. No matter what you choose to do with your day, we can all agree, snow days are irreplaceable jewels.

“I did a lot of different things with snow days, but I mostly took these days to return to lost hobbies, bake, spend time with family, and just used them as a treat,” reflected Caroline Pritchard, a senior.

For students as young as five or old as eighteen, for even the teachers, snow days bring a kind of excitement like no other. With remote learning last year, we were stripped of this excitement.

Instead of waking up on a snowy morning and going down to make a warm breakfast or taking a walk outside, we were forced to roll out of bed and immediately log onto a Google Meet.

Despite teachers being kind and lenient on these days, it was still a full day of online school, nonetheless. School can lead to unwanted stress, anxiety, and emotional breakdowns. The beauty of the snow day is that all of this built up stress from the previous day easily dissolves.

“I think one of the reasons last year was so difficult, other than the entire hybrid situation, was that we had no snow days to look forward to and we didn’t have that excitement,” said Riley Caruso, a senior.

In this day and age, all students (regardless of grade) are glued to a computer screen all day in class, and many more continue to be attached after school, doing homework. Having the opportunity to go take a walk outside in the crisp, fresh air or make a snowman with friends is exactly what students need.

This year, there were rumors and fears circulating throughout schools: snow days will be lost to remote days. However, that is not true. There will be no more remote days as per Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. “Remote learning is not an option this fall, unless a district has created a virtual school within its district,” said DESE’s website.

As mentioned in a Patch article from November 11, 2021, “Salem Superintendent Steve Zrike said, ‘they have not issued any guidance for that at this

point. So right now if we were to have an inclement weather day it would have to be a traditional snow day because [the Department of Education] not allowing remote days — only in the event of a classroom closure due to COVID, not for snow days.”


This news is music to our ears. Especially for the younger students, it is something that is fairly new. Those who are in middle and high school have all experienced the joy and thrill of a real snow day before, but many of our younger elementary school kids have been faced with school on what should have been a real New England snow day.

Due to COVID restrictions during the past two years, children have also not been able to hang out with friends. If children were able to hang out with friends, masks could have stolen the full experience of breathing in the snowy air, going home with chapped lips and a pink nose.

Last school year, the one wind storm that took out power in the majority of town was the closest we came to a “snow day.” However, many of us got it back and attended classes the next day.

It is hard, but we are all in this together. As of now, we have had no snow days. Luckily, there is the chance for real snow days this year, and hopefully, Mother Nature will cooperate and throw a couple snow storms our way.

OPINION COLUMN



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Advanced Placement Classes Pose Challenges

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AP Calculus, which is one of the most notoriously difficult AP classes, is split into two levels: AB, which teaches half a year of college calculus in one school year, and BC, which teaches one full year of college calculus in one school year. “AP Calculus specifically is also, for some students, the first time that they struggle with math,” said Megan Mulert, who teaches both Honors Calculus and AP Calculus AB. “For a lot of students, it’s the first time that they actually have to put in the work and learn how to study.”

While there are usually only one to two students who drop down from BC to AB, Mulert said she has had around 10 this year. Mulert remarked, “The main skills you need for AP Calculus are algebra II and pre-calculus, and... most of that for them was during COVID. So, I’ve seen the effects of the pandemic much more this year even than I did last year.”

AP Calculus BC teacher Karen Waters also brought up an important point: although there were many students who moved down this year, there were also many students who were taking courses in a level higher than they were recommended for. This might have played a role in the increased number of students moving

down, since they were not well prepared for the rigor of the class.

Shawna Chu, a senior at AHS, said that AP Calculus BC is especially rigorous because there are no “homework grades or participation grades, so your grade is just however well you do on tests.”

A couple students interviewed mentioned that APs weren’t as difficult as they thought. Several say that most of the difficulty is self-inflicted. AHS junior Yash Kalwani, who is taking four APs, explained, “Honestly it’s not really a lot of work, it’s just poor time management that leads juniors to struggle with APs.”

Procrastinating can become an AP student’s worst enemy. AHS junior Annie Song, who is in AP Chemistry, also gave a piece of her advice. She jokingly warned, “Don’t be like me and play nine hours of games before you start homework.” Altogether, the general consensus is that APs definitely require more work and effort than a college prep or honors course. However, as long as you don’t procrastinate, the work shouldn’t become crushingly overwhelming. Unfortunately, many students are tempted by procrastination and it snowballs into being behind on lots of classwork and homework, which often results in doing poorly on tests.



STAFF PHOTO / Melody Tang

AP students Larissa Cardine (left), Julia Kole (middle), and Julia Benjamin (right) study in the morning before class.

Although AP classes are infamously difficult, there are many tips and tricks on how to get through these courses while maintaining a good grade.

Interviewed teachers stressed to always ask for help, to be at every class present and participating, and to do homework every night so as to not fall behind. AP Calculus BC teacher Karen Waters mentioned that summer work is important as well, observing that students who really put in the effort to thoroughly do their summer work did better when classes began.

Mary Robb, an AP U.S. History teacher up until this year, also noted the importance of reaching out for help when needed, mentioning that the students who came to see her during H-block were the ones who showed the most growth throughout the year.

“If you pay attention in class, you should be pretty set for the tests anyways. I say to not go in over your head because if you end up taking too many APs, that can take up a lot of your time,” junior Annie Song added, “Depending on the person, it can stress you out a lot, so know your boundaries... [and] always make time for yourself.”

Kole Discusses Future Plans

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To students that are interested in doing theater in high school, Kole said, “It never hurts to try.” She explained that theater is a great community and that in a tough environment like high school, it’s good to have that kind of support. It also opens up opportunities for students interested in theater, show choir, and performing arts.

Besides acting and performing, Kole loves playing guitar, songwriting, and learning American Sign Language (ASL).

Being expressive is something Kole excels at and is one of the reasons why she loves theater and performing. Though Kole has plans in the field of public health, theater and performing arts will always be a part of her life.

Fitness Room Undergoes Changes

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During this shutdown, the renovation began and included the implementation of a Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning system (HVAC) allowing for the flow of outdoor air and new workout equipment which was completed in September. A shipment of ceiling fans and speakers was added recently as well.

There have been noticeable differences due to the renovation which boosts the confidence of faculty in the Fitness Room. “I’m not concerned about the air quality in the room because I feel very confident in the work [the engineers and facility managers] did to make sure that the air quality in the school is okay,” Principal Caitlin Brown said. “You can definitely feel in [the Fitness Room] that there is not stagnant air and that

there is air flow that is coming through the vents,” said Donna Ruseckas, Physical Education department coordinator of AHS.

Emery has also asked students to wipe off workout machines when they are finished using them. The care of equipment is a big priority for improving the Fitness Room’s cleanliness. “Students have responded very well to that and that is a big piece of being able to come in here,” said Ruseckas.

Yet, there are still areas left to improve. The vents in the Fitness Room have gathered dust overtime due to the in and out flow of the filtration system, causing some worries to arise.

Anthony Morgante, a junior and a student of Emery’s, stated, “It’s scary, honestly, because not only do we have to worry about the bacteria of viruses going around, but we also have to worry

about the actual air quality.”

Brown acknowledges that the appearance of these vents don’t help people feel optimistic about the air quality, but plans on keeping up with its maintenance and working closely with custodial supervisor Vernon Jones to make sure these issues are solved as soon as possible.

These improvements are all beneficial in the long run for both students and staff, especially those who take physical fitness as their physical education credit. For these students to have a clean and sanitary environment to work out and burn off some energy is extremely important and essential.

Emery, who probably spends more time in the Fitness Room than the entire AHS population, said “I’m definitely feeling really good about [the fitness room].”

Midterms Are Back In Session For 2022

By Philippa Konow
STAFF WRITER

For the classes of 2022 and 2023, midterms are almost a memory. Having not taken the tests since winter of the 2019-2020 school year (pre-COVID), these seniors and juniors may find it almost strange that it’s happening again this year.

Midterms will be held in January. With two weeks to go in the first semester, midterms are getting extremely close. Many students are experiencing heightened stress around the tests, especially after a whole year of missing these exams.

“I don’t like the school’s decision to bring back the midterms,” stated junior Zoe Isbell. “It leaves most of us unprepared and not knowing what to expect, and we also missed a lot of information last year that we could need on the test.”

Junior Madelyn Blanchette shared that she doesn’t really see a benefit to midterms because of the

increase in stress and anxiety: “I don’t like midterms because I don’t like tests. I value my time off from school and would rather spend it doing a hobby rather than spend it studying.”

Isbell added, “Personally, the midterms are extremely stressful and the teachers spend about a week just preparing you for it. This takes time away from valuable learning time where we could be learning new information that we could use during the finals or other exams.”

Some students don’t mind bringing back midterms. “Sure, it’s one extra test that has a decent amount of weight to it,” said Andrew Magner, junior, “but it has benefits too, like those breaks between tests and just getting out from school early.”

While many students dislike tests, there are some students that believe there are benefits to these midterm exams. Magner said, “It helps create a long-term memory of the thing you’ve been learning about, as well as giving students practice before finals

and allowing freshmen to get comfortable with these big tests.”

“I enjoy getting to spend the 30-minute breaks wherever we want between midterms,” said Audrey Hetherington-Young, a senior at AHS, referring to the open campus policy between each exam.

Isbell believes it’s a good thing that these tests are graded; the exams provide a way for teachers to understand what level of understanding their students have in their classes. This can help them either adjust something that may be confusing as well as figure out what to remove or add to their lesson plans or methods.

Many may be asking what the purpose of midterm tests even is. Math teacher Scott Armstrong explained that midterms are used as a midway point for courses in order to prepare students for the larger assessments ahead in college. “We give departmental midterms so that the final does not cover all the material from August to June,” added Armstrong.

Grants Used At AHS

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“This is a true mental health crisis,” said APS superintendent Dr. Magda Parvey, speaking of the emotional and mental state the pandemic has left on school communities.

Fortunately, the district is looking to the third grant, ESSER III, as a possible solution. APS has applied for the grant, which, if spent by the deadline in 2024, would deliver over \$1 million to the district. Much of this money would go to training for teachers, such as SEL training and how to help students who are struggling due to the pandemic. Brown also added that a main priority of APS schools always has been, and should be, meeting the needs of their students. “Based on what the survey said,” Brown stated, in regards to a survey sent out to families about what the funds should be used for, “there was a lot of support for more mental and social emotional support training... we’re still in this space and we really just want to be prepared and make sure we’re ready to meet the needs of our students and staff.”

The APS district also plans to use the grant as a supplement for learning, such as funding summer school programs if necessary. The pandemic is not over yet, and the funding may not be, either. “I don’t think we’ve seen the end results of the funding,” Brown said, “but I’m hopeful that it will continue to help out students.”



COURTESY PHOTO / Magda Parvey

Interview With Dr. Parvey

By Avi Shapira
ONLINE EDITOR

In June of 2021, Dr. Magda Parvey was hired by Andover Public Schools (APS) for a three-year term as superintendent, replacing interim superintendent Dr. Claudia Bach.

Bach was hired as temporary superintendent at the beginning of 2021 after Dr. Sheldon Berman left at the end of 2020. Berman started as superintendent in 2015.

Parvey is also the first superintendent of color in Andover.

In explaining why she chose to take a job in this particular town, Parvey stated that “Andover had a good reputation of academic excellence and forward thinking in terms of education, students, and equity.” Parvey was the chief academic officer in Middletown, Connecticut before taking a job in Andover. Previously, she was an assistant superintendent, and before that, a teacher and principal. Before moving to Andover, she served in district-level roles for 13 years.

After teaching for seven years, Parvey figured she “could have wider impact” if she took on a role where she could reach beyond just the students in her classroom. This made her decide to become a principal.

Parvey said that she has always had a passion for curriculum and instruction and working with both students and teachers. She wanted to do more work around the curriculum and help improve it. “[As superintendent,] I have a hand in the [curriculum] without having my hand slapped for not following what someone else from central office was saying had to be done, whether I believed that it was good or not,” said Parvey. For this reason she decided to become assistant superintendent and work at the district level.

Becoming a superintendent during a pandemic has been challenging, but Parvey is glad she is able to do so in the middle rather than beginning of the pandemic. This year everyone is all in-person and has more certainty. “I don’t think anything has been easy,” Parvey said with a smile.

As the first superintendent of color in Andover, Parvey is able to bring another perspective to the mostly white administration of APS. “I get to show whatever beliefs there may be out there about students, adults, families of color, that... [people of color] have different experiences and perspectives and we do have

a voice,” said Parvey. “I can actually push back and ask questions about the way things are done and always have been done and ask people, ‘Who does this benefit?... ‘Are we really thinking about all of our students?’”

Figuring out how administrative decisions affect students is one of the things that are important to Parvey. She wants to hear the concerns of students, families, teachers and administrators. “People want to be heard,” she said.

In her six months as superintendent, Parvey has held office hours to talk to community members. She also plans on sending out a survey and holding focus groups with students and families. Generally, she has been trying to engage with the school community in student and community events. “I love the student performances, I love to see the student work,” Parvey said. “The job calls for genuine engagement and community building, and I think that’s important and that’s what I’m doing.”

In order to engage with students, Parvey has attended meetings with the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Student Advisory Committee (DEI) and plans on attending Student Government Association (SGA) meetings. She described hearing “so much insight” from students. “They are our most valued customers, our prized possession... At the end of the day it’s about students,” she said.

Parvey added that she would like to hear more from students in the future.

“Change comes... from students saying ‘Here is what we really need: Adults are planning over here but students are like, ‘Stop planning, this is what we need.’ So I would like to hear from students and what they need,” said Parvey. Besides hearing more from the community, Parvey wants Andover to live up to its reputation and make sure as many students as possible have an excellent experience. She is especially concerned about all minority students having good experiences regardless of their “race, gender and sexuality—all of those things that really [should not] matter when you’re talking about making sure you’re educating students and allowing them to feel like they have a voice.”

When Parvey is not working as superintendent, she likes to run, do pilates, read, and listen to music. After a busy job, one of her favorite things is “doing absolutely nothing and decompressing and trying to clear [her] head.”

What Happened To All The Composting and Recycling?

By Jill Slotnick
CORRESPONDENT

The district was not supporting recycling and composting in the cafeteria at the start of this year because compostable lunch trays and silverware are not as accessible.

As of January 3rd, 2022, recycling has returned to the cafeteria.

According to Melanie Cutler, a member of the green advisory board and an environmental science teacher at Andover High School, about 60% of all cafeteria waste at Andover High can be recycled or composted, but because of supply chain issues, almost everything was being trashed this year. Principal Principal Brown recalled that last year when there were two different lunch rooms, it was difficult just getting the lunch materials to each lunchroom so there was no discussion surrounding composting and recycling bins being brought back. This year, even though everyone is in the same lunchroom, there was no composting or recycling happening at the beginning of the year.

“I was told the district would not be supporting compost this year [and] I was very disappointed in that,” said Cutler. “It took us a very long time to get compost in the high school in the first place. We spent years on it so it’s very frustrating.”

Senior Eva McKone, head of the Environmental Club at Andover High said, “Not having any composting leads to a lot of waste in our environment.” She went on to say that “It takes hundreds of years [for trash] to actually break down and it’s just kind of left in piles. If we did have a compost system it could be reused for plants and fertilizing [and] for recycling; everything we use in the cafeteria could be given a second life.” According to National Geographic, 5.25 trillion pieces of waste are in the ocean at this moment

and over 100 million animals are killed by it each year.

Even when we did have both composting and recycling bins, many students were still contributing to the problem by not putting their waste in the correct bin. Approximately four years ago, when AHS first got composting and recycling bins, parents volunteered to make sure students put their waste where it was supposed to go. Once COVID started, the parent volunteer program was stopped and students didn’t take the time to sort their waste anymore. “Our lunches are so short, people prefer to, and I understand, sit and eat lunch with their friends,” said Cutler. “You don’t want to spend five whole minutes sorting your waste. It’s a lot easier for everybody, when the bell rings, to get up, dump their lunch, and run.”

When students just dump their waste, that causes contamination. Contamination is when waste is sorted into the wrong bins (compost in recycling bins, trash in compost, etc.). When this happens, the batch of waste that is contaminated has to be thrown out and the school pays a fine. Brown urged students, once composting and recycling is brought back, to make sure they are putting their waste in the correct bins.

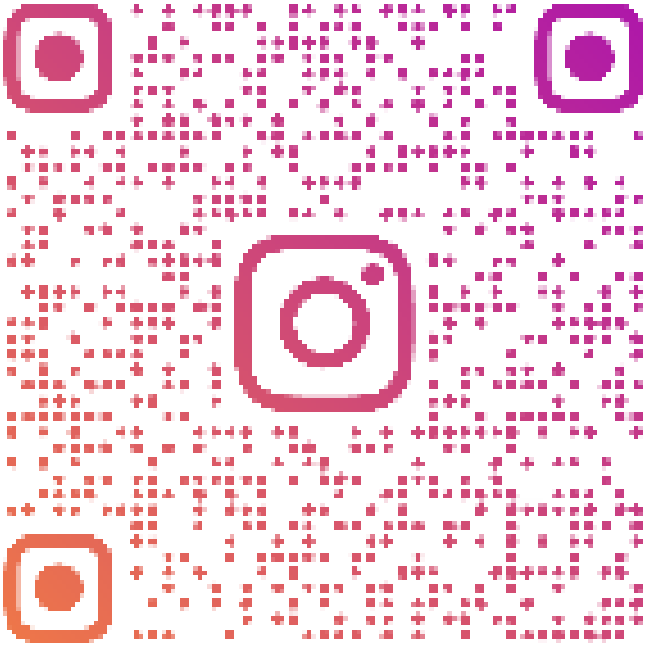
She went on to say that the school has to pay for the contaminated compost and recycling piles when they shouldn’t have to.

In regards to whether composting will be back at the high school, Brown said, “I was supposed to have a meeting [in November] with the cafeteria, the facility staff, Ms. Cutler, and some people from the town in terms of composting and recycling, and [we were supposed to be] trying to figure out the best way to start [composting] again.”



STAFF PHOTO / Avi Shapira

Recycling bin placed in cafeteria on Monday, January 3rd.



AHS Freshman Adjust Into In-Person Learning

By **Ethan Zabbar and Dane Connor**
STAFF WRITERS

Andover High School's current freshmen, the Class of 2025, is adjusting to the transition into a high school environment after the COVID-19 pandemic.

After COVID-19's outbreak in March 2020, the lives of many people changed drastically, for better or worse. School sessions were held in a hybrid or fully remote setting, and that was a huge adjustment for students everywhere. Now, Andover High School's Class of 2025 must handle the transition back into fully in-person learning on top of the massive change to learning in a high school setting.

Katherine Johnson, an English teacher at AHS, believes that despite the setbacks caused by the past year in online learning, the class of 2025 may be able to take valuable lessons away from that period and apply them to their freshman year. "In my opinion, though not ideal, the skills that students were able to gather and hone during remote learning could be a huge asset to draw from for their high school experience," Johnson stated. "Remote learning forces a lot of students to look at themselves as learners, and understand what works for them as students in terms of organization and time management."

Johnson is of the belief that from a teacher's standpoint, expectations for students should not change, but should come with empathy after a long time struggling with the COVID threat. "My standards have not changed," Johnson said. "Students are people; we are all here to learn from each other and to do the best work we can do. We're here to think, and read, and learn, and write, and laugh... I appreciate that for all students the past couple of years has been intense and challenging. We all need to be sensitive and approach one another from a place of compassion, understanding, and kindness."

She continued by saying that teachers had adjustments to make as well. "As a teacher, logistically, remote learning forced me to be incredibly clear about my expectations and pacing." She then stated that she sees this year's freshman class as highly engaged learners, and hopes that as a teacher, her class is a safe and productive learning environment for the new additions to AHS.

Sahil Khosla, an AHS freshman, felt that the trajectory of his peers' maturity dipped during the pandemic. "Overall, I feel as though the growth of most of the people around me has stagnated, and I find more and more of them beginning to approach education and school with

carefreeness and listlessness," he said.

However, Khosla felt that COVID's impacts are beginning to fade. "Overall, the effects of COVID only really affected my eighth-grade year, as that was when the experience was new to all of us," he added. "We've been going through it for so long now that the memories of how we did things before seem less realistic with each passing day."

Although their eighth-grade year during the heat of the pandemic is over and memories have started to fade, many freshmen still feel a great impact from their time with COVID. Brody Harris, another member of the freshman class, said that life, especially school, has still been difficult for him as a result of COVID's impact. "My eighth-grade year was very bad grade-wise, and I am in classes that are a little lower than I would like to be in," stated Harris. "For example, my eighth-grade math teacher did not let me do geometry this year and Algebra 1 is mostly repeat stuff I already know."

Harris also felt like communication with teachers was as difficult in his freshman year as it was in eighth grade with the pandemic present. However, he did credit the teachers, acknowledging that the school staff had just as difficult a time.

Possibly the biggest worry about the pandemic impacting incoming freshmen

was that they have matured slower during their time in isolation and that as a result, they'd have a more difficult time making responsible decisions. Conversely, in an unofficial survey run by ANDOVERVIEW staff, two-thirds of the interviewed students felt that socializing with their peers was as easy as it had always been, despite a possible dip in social maturity.

Ms. Reidy, an AHS math teacher, gave some comments about the freshmen's transition into high school. During their last year of middle school, the class of 2025 was thrown into an online learning environment, and Reidy believes that the high school workload shocked inexperienced freshmen. "They didn't have that year to ramp up work," she said.

Reidy stated that the increase in workload from middle school to high school is a difficult transition for everyone, and the circumstances given to the freshmen have only made that transition more difficult. She added that she felt the freshman being isolated for so long impacted their ability to socialize with peers and adults. "They weren't with anybody," she said. Reidy felt that the freshmen's excitement to be back in person for introduction to high school would provide a boost in energy and morale, and in turn, motivate them to make up for the lost time.

Substitute Teachers Valued At AHS

By **Sonja Kruecker-Green**
CORRESPONDANT

Across the United States, chaos has, yet again, hit the classrooms this school year: even before omicron changed the equation, some classes were canceled for thousands of students in Seattle and Denver in November, and several other school districts have followed suit. Meanwhile, students elsewhere have remained at school without proper instruction.

What is behind this chaos? The root of the problem can be found in staff shortages, and a lack of substitutes to fill in for absent teachers.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the demand for substitute teachers across the nation has been overwhelmingly high, yet the supply has remained significantly low. Many districts have had to resort to desperate measures to find people willing to fill in for absent teachers.

The substitute teacher situation in the Andover Public School District (APS) has not been dire despite the nationwide shortage.

According to Andover High School Principal Caitlin Brown, "we do have a lot of teachers that are out, and it's been harder to fill those positions, or even [find] just like a long-term substitute for when someone is out for a short period of time or sick." However, this year, the school has more per diem and full time substitutes compared to last year during the hybrid learning model.

The problem lies in the fact that many full-time teachers have had to be absent, sometimes for extended periods of time, and although the substitute pool is large, it isn't enough to cover the many longer-term absences.

In some states, the full-time teacher shortage has been extreme. A combination of low pay and challenging working conditions, especially in the context of COVID, has led many teachers to retire early. This is especially true in states that have been less likely to support mask mandates, and where the COVID vaccination rate is lower than the national average.

According to New York Times reporting, in Arizona, nearly 1400 teachers left their jobs within the first couple of months of the school year. Likewise, according to Florida Education Association president, Andrew Spar, the school year in Florida began with 5000 teacher vacancies.

Recently, many districts made the announcement that one day of each school week would become a "remote-school day", in an effort to prevent teacher burn-out. The hope was that this would deter more teachers from resigning, and therefore schools might avoid the

need for more substitutes.

Even in the nearby town of Lowell, the pool of substitutes remains alarmingly small despite the increase in wages taken effect there in October. In Lowell, changes to the academic calendar have had to be made, converting the last day of school before the holiday break into a half-day, thus encouraging teachers to be in school.

Here in Andover, some attempt has been made to make the substitute teacher salary more competitive with some nearby communities. The minimum wage in Massachusetts increased to \$14.25, from \$13.50, on Jan. 1, 2022. This means that if they are teaching a full 6 ½ hour day at \$75 a day, they have been earning less than the minimum wage.

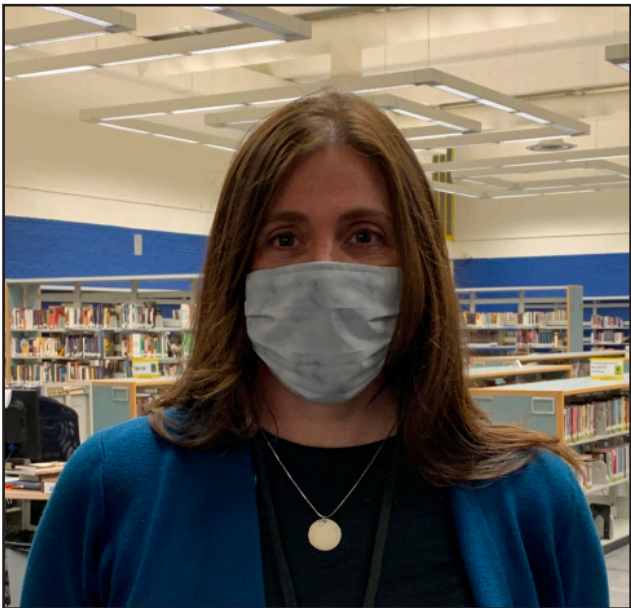
At a recent APS School Committee meeting on December 2, it was unanimously voted to revise the current substitute rates. More specifically, the daily substitute rate was raised from \$75 to \$85 per day; the daily rate for substitutes who have at least a bachelor degree was \$85 and is set to be raised to \$100 per day; the daily rate for substitutes who are retired teachers was \$105, and will now be raised to \$115 per day. These rate changes for short-term substitutes took effect on January 3, 2022.

Despite the number of short-term substitutes that APS has managed to acquire, there are still substitute position openings that are harder to fill: According to Principal Brown, finding longer-term substitutes for a specific subject or class has proved to be quite a challenging task. This likely stems from the major difference in the necessary background for a short-term versus a long-term substitute.

While a short-term substitute needs only to have graduated high school, in the case of a long-term substitute, "We'd like you to be licensed in the field that you are subbing for, so it is a little bit harder to find, there's not enough people available to choose from," Ms. Brown said.

According to School Committee member, Shannon Scully, the longer-term substitute pay is commensurate with experience. The teacher Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) allows the district to employ a "permanent substitute" –defined by at least 10 consecutive days of substitute service– at a daily rate between \$280 and \$307.

With COVID cases surging in Massachusetts due to the more aggressively transmissible variant –Omicron– APS may need to prepare for the possibility of more teacher absences, and thus the need for more substitutes; new approaches to attracting substitute teachers and dealing with staff shortages may become necessary in the future.



STAFF PHOTO / **Anusha Sambangi**
Kelley Papa working in the library.

New Faculty Profile

By **Anusha Sambangi**
STAFF WRITER

After working as a classroom teacher in Reading, Kelley Papa came to Andover with intent to shift careers. Now Papa works as a digital learning coach at Andover High School.

Papa used to teach 4th and 5th grade and was a library media specialist during her career in Reading. In Andover, she works with staff to help them integrate technology into their teaching and learn about the tech tools they have available. In addition to working at AHS, she coaches at Wood Hill, West, and Doherty middle schools.

Papa has had a great experience working in Andover so far. "Everyone has been super helpful and friendly," she said, "you also [have] a very respectful student body."

Papa has had an interest in teaching since she was young. "When I was little I would play school," she said. The biggest factor that contributed to her career choice is that she has always been interested in learning and trying new things. "That comes from my grandmother," she said, "[She] was an immigrant to this country." Papa's grandmother didn't attend school past the third grade, and Papa says she "was really smart, and knew that there was always something new to learn."

More faculty profiles can be found on www.andoverview.net

AHS Robotics Club Competition Warms Up Team

By Caitlin Connell
STAFF WRITER

The Andover Robotics Club (ARC) gears up for competition at qualifiers on January 15.

Bouncing back from COVID-19, Andover Robotics has been exceedingly successful coming into this school year. This year, club member Avanthika Suryadevara says Andover Robotics are “stronger than in the past.” After COVID, the club has grown as students have come back to in-person learning.

This year, the club has the most members it has ever had, with a current total of 76 students. The club allows students as young as middle schoolers all the way up

to seniors in high school to join. The club is a big commitment as it meets every Wednesday and Friday to continuously work on their robots.

Andover Robotics played in their first scrimmage on December 2 at Andover High School, getting their robots ready to start their season. On January 8 and 9, the AHS team hosted qualifiers for robotics teams from all over Massachusetts, but AHS themselves will not be participating in qualifiers till the 15. AHS, being fortunate enough to have the space and support of the school to give the surrounding teams a place to compete, will be hosting. AHS’s own teams will finally get to show off their skills shortly after on

January 15.

The three robotics teams at AHS consist of two co-ed teams, ARC Thunder and ARC Lightning, and one all-girls team, ARC Hailstorm. This year, the club’s biggest competitions include Pioneer Robotics (Shrewsbury), Gearticks (Lincoln), and Brainstormers (Lexington). All teams will be competing against each other in the future.

Although a competition, Suryadevara explained that it is all “friendly competition” and the teams “admire what [the other teams] can do.” Club President Rashika Agarwal said, “Gracious professionalism is how you are supposed to treat other teams, and even though it is a com-

petition, you’re really there to make progress in STEM.” The goal for this year is to make it to states and then worlds, which one AHS team has done in the past.

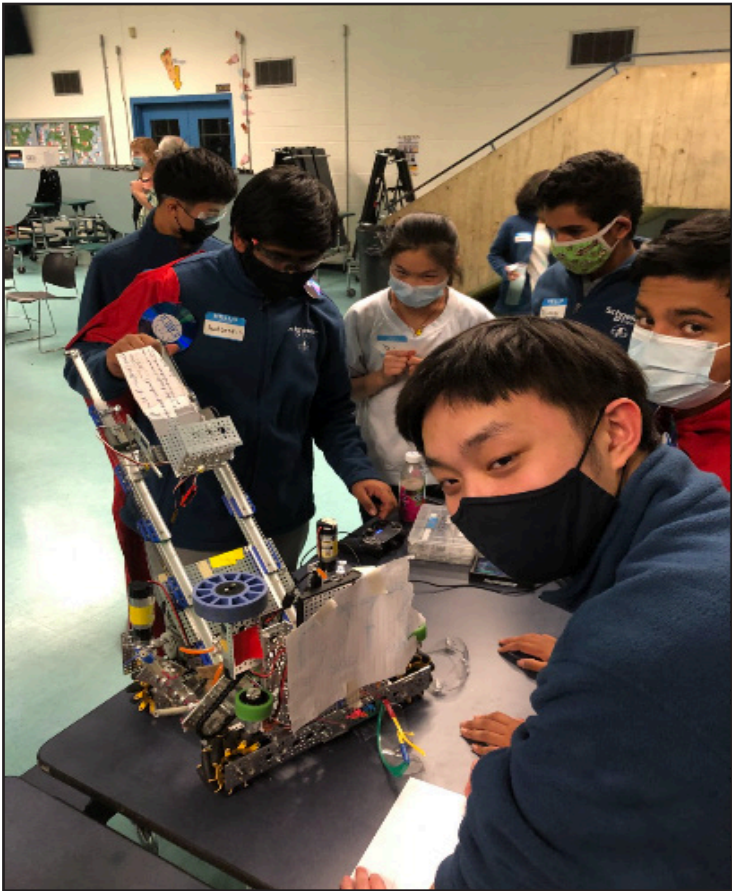
In comparison, AHS has more teams than the other schools. Member Sasha Diczovsky said, “Most schools that have robotics teams have either one or two, and we are really lucky that we get to support each other during our meetings. If we have questions we have two other teams we can ask for help.”

The club strives to push each other and continue to challenge themselves in STEM. After coming back from break, they will be diving straight into deeper competition.



Andover Robotics’ robots in action.

STAFF PHOTO / CAITLIN CONNELL



Club member Steven Zhang and team prepping their robot.

STAFF PHOTO /CAITLIN CONNELL



Teams Lightning and Thunder gearing up for their scrimmage.

STAFF PHOTO / CAITLIN CONNELL

SPORTS

Sports Review: AHS Basketball, Cheer, Gymnastics

Boys Basketball:

Hoping to make it to the state championship this year, the boys basketball team has been putting many hours into this season. “Last year, we were undefeated going into the league championship, and we lost to Central Catholic by one point,” recalled longtime coach David Fazio, also known as coach Faz. “We are going to use that loss as our motivator [this season so] we can maybe not lose our last game this year.”

The team had a great group of talent last year, and Faz believes that will carry right into this season as well. Not only is the team full of talent, but they all share a special bond, a piece that Faz believes is extremely important. “The best part for me is the camaraderie in the relationships I have with these guys,” stated Faz. “It ends up being a lifelong relationship, where I see them go from young men to fathers to role models in the community.”

Senior captain Logan Satlow reiterated this relationship, adding that his favorite part is “just hanging out with teammates and getting to talk to kids [he] probably wouldn’t normally speak to.” The bonds created with each other off the court has a positive effect on the court and the team’s successes. Senior captain Richie Shahtanian expressed the same sentiments, “The best part of basketball is just the teamwork aspect of it. It’s not an individual sport and you have to rely on all five players on the court to play well.”

Since last season, the team faced various challenges due to

COVID, such as having to wear masks. “It is really difficult from a standpoint of continuing your stamina because it is really hard to breathe with the masks on,” Faz added.

Yet, the team is optimistic that it will not be too much of an impediment, and they are instead focusing on their end goal. “We want to make a playoff run and win as many games as we can, and hopefully get Faz the title that he’s never gotten,” said Aidan Camman, senior captain. Shahtanian echoed this goal, while adding that he and other players from the class of 2022 also want “to have a great last year because it’s [their] senior year.”

Many of the younger players only played on the JV or freshman team due to COVID. “This will really be their first year truly playing a high school sport,” said Satlow. “They went from eighth grade to sophomore year, so having to merge everyone in and making sure everyone is together will be a big step.” The captains are optimistic that with the talent they are seeing, this will not come in the way of the team’s achievements. “That could be a challenge, but they are also really good underclassmen,” said Shahtanian.

The team is also encouraged by the prospect of having fans back at games. “We’re really looking forward to the Jungle being in our gymnasium creating havoc and creating chaos, dancing, and making a lively scene in the gym... that is such an advantage for us as we’re playing,” concluded Faz.



STAFF PHOTO / Caitlin Connell
Captains, Hailey Doherty, Morgan Shirely, and Tess Gobel sizzle on the court in the light of their upcoming winter season.



STAFF PHOTO / Caitlin Connell
Junior Ari White preps her shot for the season.



STAFF PHOTO / Ethan Zabbar
Junior Anna Foley prepares to shoot a basketball during practice on December 20, 2021.



STAFF PHOTO / Ethan Zabbar
Senior Hailey Doherty (left) and sophomore Michaela Buckley (right) run a play during practice on December 20, 2021.



COURTESY PHOTO / Marlena Bresnick
AHS Girls Varsity Gymnastics Team of 2021-2020.

Girls Basketball:

The Lady Warriors have flourished as a team over the past four years, making it to the state championship in 2019, and are hoping to reach that milestone once again this year. “We would like to win another state championship on the court, dominate in the classroom and make sure that we give back to our school and town community,” said Alan Hibino, the team’s coach and Andover High School math teacher.

The past season was different compared to the rest. With COVID in its full effect, players were forced to shift their perception of the normal and adapt to playing in COVID-safe ways. “Last year was different from the past as our season was cut short and we also were not allowed to play in the state tournament,” stated senior captain Morgan Shirley. Now, entering year two of COVID, the players will “still have to wear masks on the court,” said Hibino, “which is certainly a challenge.” Yet, “we also

get to have fans this year,” said captain Hailey Doherty, a positive change.

For this basketball team, “the biggest challenges are getting caught up in the immediate outcome when we have short-term and long-term goals that we want to achieve,” said Hibino. An important part of the whole learning experience is accepting the setbacks that come in the path of the ultimate destination. “Mistakes are part of the learning process. Once they have served their purpose, [the team] wants to make sure they have learned from them and do not repeat them in the future,” said Hibino.

“Our main goal this year is to work together as a big family,” said senior captain Tess Gobel. “We have already started with a solid foundation so I think it will only go up from here.” The whole aspect of playing together as a family has been a constant thread throughout this team over the years, and the athletes hope to continue that in the future.

Cheer:

Cheerleading is such an amazing sport, and I think oftentimes their hard work goes unnoticed,” said Katie Rex, who has been the AHS cheerleading coach for three years. “The girls do many things for school like attend games, volunteer, and pep rallies. At the same time, they are practicing four to five times per week and working on their competition routine.”

In the past year, the team made it to States in the fall and New Englands in the winter, which was a great accomplishment. Despite making it to both competitions, the team faced challenges due to COVID, as they “had to stay six feet apart and wear masks,” said Ashlyn Rose, senior captain. With time, the team has been able to adjust and find ways to perform their stunts and routines with the masks on.

“Cheer is very individual but also a team sport, so everyone has to work together,” stated Brooke Rose, senior captain. “Everyone has to give 100 percent because, if not, a stunt could fail

and result in injuries, thereby defeating our progress.” Creating a successful stunt can take time and patience, but the end result always makes it worth it. With these values, the team hopes to reach their end goal of New Englands. Throughout the season, the girls all become one big family and this relationship brings out the “best part of the team, which is working as a whole to reach our goal,” said Taylor Henderson, senior captain.

For this season, the senior captains are excited to share their love for the sport with the rest of the team. “I’m excited to meet new girls who are trying out this year,” said Brooke, “I am also very excited for the games.”

This season holds a bittersweet place in the hearts of the three senior captains. They all started cheering around the same time in elementary school with a summer cheerleading camp, and have remained best friends ever since. “I’m looking forward to this being a great last season and spending it with my best friends,” Henderson concluded.

Gymnastics:

“My goal for the season is to showcase each gymnast’s talents, clean up their routines, and aim to beat their personal best scores to ultimately maximize our team score,” said Marlena Bresnick, head coach of Andover High School’s gymnastics team. This is Bresnick’s first year coaching the AHS team, but she has had lots of experience in the past coaching at Reading Gymnastics Academy and judging gymnastics for many years.

Bresnick spoke about the “athleticism, power, strength, and beauty” of this particular sport, adding that despite it being “mentally and physically challenging, the team motivates and encourages each other with each skill and routine.”

Amber Ferris, senior captain, who has been doing gymnastics for eight years, also spoke to the various mental challenges, stating that “the biggest challenges for [her] in gymnastics is being able to mentally push through skills on different events that [she] is afraid of,” adding that competing in front of judges can also be a bit nerve racking. The support of the team and the fans always helps her pull through.

Bresnick “can’t wait to see the team compete in person,

looking forward to new routines, competing new skills, beating personal best scores, laughing about mistakes, and smiling because the girls did something great.”

Regardless of the successes, there were many challenges last year due to COVID. One specific challenge for this team is practice logistics. “We have to be creative with our workout space and efficient with our shortened time in the gym,” said Bresnick. Luckily, Legends and Reading Gymnastics has allowed Andover to use their facilities to practice.

Another setback that this team faces is that “there are definitely less gymnasts on the team this year,” reflected Ferris. Gymnastics, truly a team sport, could have seen a decrease in motivation due to this; however, there is a talented group of girls this year, and all the coaches and captains alike feel that they are in for huge successes. “It is the team score that counts and with that comes lots of cheering,” reflected Bresnick. “They encourage, scream, cheer, and celebrate each completed routine.”

Along with assistant coaches Sarah Muolo and Jimmy Tommachio, Bresnick “[feels] really honored to be asked to coach the team this year... and is looking forward to an exciting year.”

Movie Review:
“Cruella”

By Anusha Sambangi
STAFF WRITER

Many people know the classic story 101 Dalmatians, which follows two dalmatians and their adventure to get their puppies back from the movie’s antagonist, Cruella DeVille. However the story doesn’t provide much of a backstory for its main villain. In May of 2021, Disney released an action-packed PG-13 comedy/crime movie titled Cruella, which follows Cruella as the main character. We find out that Cruella was an orphan, and her love for fashion is what powers her through the events of the movie. Cruella focuses on Cruella’s life before the events of 101 Dalmatians, and features Emma Stone (Cruella), Emma Thompson (Baroness), and Joel Fry (Jasper). From gripping drama to unexpected twists, this movie has it all. You will be on the edge of your seat as there is never a boring moment in Cruella.

AHS Club:
Women in STEM

By Anusha Sambangi
STAFF WRITER

Women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math is run by Eunchai Kang, Baishali Chaudhari, Emily Packer, and Rishika Agarwal. Women in STEM aims to inspire and empower women and non-binary students in STEM fields, and offers resources to support them. Club activities range from inviting guest speakers to running fundraisers and drives. Members also discuss summer programs and STEM opportunities for high school students.

“I love that I get to meet new people and make new connections,” said Packer. The club encourages members to interact and learn from each other, as well as share ideas and have fun.

WIS meets every other Thursday at 3 p.m. in room 205. For more information about the Women in STEM club, visit ahswis.weebly.com

Important Dates: January to March

JANUARY			
	1/5/2022	Kickoff for Juniors: College Rep Speaker	7:00 PM
	1/6/2022	MML January Math Meet	3:00 PM
	1/7/2022	AHS Blood Drive: Field House	School Day
	1/9/2022	RoboStorm 6.0 FTC Qualifying Event	8:00 AM
	1/13/2022	SCHEDULE DAY 5	
	1/14/2022	SCHEDULE DAY 6	
	1/17/2022	NO SCHOOL: MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY	
	1/18/2022	SCHEDULE DAY 7	
	1/19/2022	MIDTERMS	
	1/20/2022	MIDTERMS	
	1/21/2022	MIDTERMS	
	1/24/2022	MIDTERMS: 2nd TERM/FIRST SEMESTER ENDS	
	1/25/2022	Second Semester starts	
FEBRUARY			
	2/2/2022	MML February Math Meet	3:00 PM
	2/3/2022	Math Team Meet: North Andover	3:00 PM
	2/4/2022	Report Cards	
	2/9/2022	Junior Class Admissions Panel (H Block)	
	2/10/2022	SCOIR for Junior Parents	7:00 PM
	2/21/2022	NO SCHOOL: PRESIDENT’S DAY: WINTER RECESS	
	2/22/2022	WINTER RECESS	
	2/23/2022	WINTER RECESS	
	2/24/2022	WINTER RECESS	
	2/25/2022	WINTER RECESS	
MARCH			
	3/3/2022	CAP Workshop for Juniors (H Block)	
	3/4/2022	Term 3: Progress Reports	
	3/18/2022	EARLY RELEASE DAY	

Andover High School Midterm Schedule

Exam Time	Wednesday, January 19th	Thursday, January 20th	Friday, January 21st	Monday, January 24 th
8:15 – 9:45	A	C	E	G
9:45 – 10:15	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK	BREAK
10:15 – 11:45	B	D	F	MAKE- UP
11:45 – 12:15	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
12:15 – 2:51	ACADEMIC SUPPORT	ACADEMIC SUPPORT	ACADEMIC SUPPORT	ACADEMIC SUPPORT



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