

OPINION

EYE OF THE TIGER'S VIEW

Harassment demands greater scrutiny

RJUHS placed tenured teacher Doug Mason on administrative leave late last month in the wake of multiple sexual misconduct accusations against him, according to a district communication to students' families. This action has been a long-time coming and falls nearly a year after a Woodcreek student first alleged Mason sexually harassed her in a spring Health and Safety course. District decisions related to investigations into Mason's sexual misconduct reasonably raise questions about RJUHS's discernment and particularly, why it took so long to remove Mason from the classroom.

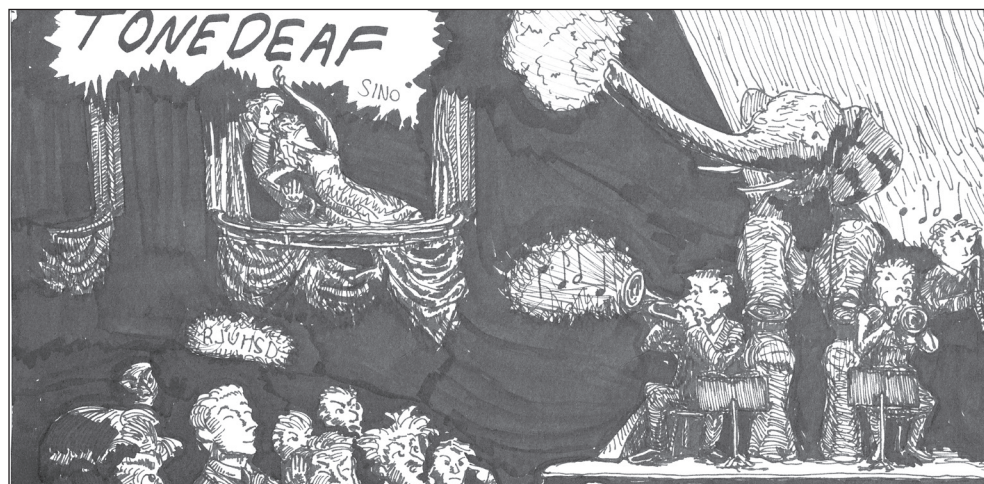
Despite inquiries, the specific timeline is unclear to the general public. According to reporting conducted by the Sacramento Bee, the student came forward in April last year alleging he "massaged her shoulders regularly, pulled an ankle-length skirt up to her knee, winked at her flirtatiously during class and asked that she call him during the summer so he could hear her voice." Some time

later, the district ended its initial Mason investigation. RJUHS concluded that his behavior, while in violation of professional standards, was not sexual harassment. A questionable decision.

According to the Bee, at this time a district letter sent to the student's family acknowledged Mason made their daughter feel "creepy" but said he would not be fired until he showed more signs of sexual misconduct because her grade in his class was unaffected. The known record shows Mason only underwent district counseling at this time. Another questionable decision.

Sexual harassment and a victim's level of success are not in a causal relationship. The logic behind the direct correlation of an earned "A" grade to appropriate classroom culture lacks any sort of merit. A teacher who accurately assigns grades should not remain on staff if they are also taking the time to sexually harass students.

According to the Bee, the student's family then requested the California Department of Education review the case. Although anonymous, the student and



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family's consistent perseverance and determination during an inevitably trying time are to be admired.

The CDE redirected RJUHS's attention to the case, saying it had not been conducted properly to ensure student safety. Although the timeline is unclear, one can assume this action fell around fall of last year. The #MeToo movement was already making waves and headlines. In a time of such blatant cultural and societal revolution, erring on the side of caution and ensuring the student's voice was heard should have been the only obvious course of action. This broader movement,

the CDE recommendation, the student's family's resolve and Mason's CDE documented "extensive" history of inappropriate behavior should have led the district to take aggressive action. Instead, their tone deaf response was simply not enough.

The district's second investigation concluded Mason did in fact sexually harass the student, but not to the point of firing. To ensure her individual safety, he was transferred to teach periods at both Roseville and Oakmont instead. At this school year's start Mason was introduced to two new, potentially vulnerable student bodies.

This move draws too many parallels to the assigning of a "sick leave" designation to a Catholic priest for it to meet moral standards.

Ultimately, the story ended up in the hands of the Sacramento Bee and the family granted an interview. The story was published Friday, Jan. 12. RJUHS announced Mason would be placed on administrative leave Monday, Jan. 15, citing newly surfaced allegations and showing an obviously heightened sense of urgency in the face of the story's publication.

Executive director of personnel services Brad Basham told the Bee Ma-

son had been punished earlier "to the extent allowed by law." However, assistant superintendent of personnel services Steve Williams told Eye of the Tiger in an email, the damning severity of evidence is determined by district personnel. It seems, if RJUHS wanted to punish Mason more severely than it initially did, the restrictions that prevented these actions could have been resolved internally. They didn't. Yet another questionable decision.

It is reasonable to wonder why Mason had not been put on administrative leave during the two district investigations that took place last year. We crucially urge caution and thoughtfulness when dealing with the remainder of this case and possible similar situations.

RJUHS has sent two communications to families emphasizing its prioritization of student safety. However, it is unclear what steps RJUHS is currently taking and will take next. As students of the district, we want and deserve to know.

(This article represents the views of the 2017-18 editorial board.)

College Board stunts success



BY SINO OULAD DAUD
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To exploit American students, one must slow the progress of American education as much as possible.

The best way to do this would be to place education in the hands of one organization that squeezes every penny out of students, yet uses none of it to benefit society. Some sort of monopoly would establish standards which American schools will accept, corrupting the nation's education, while convincing the public that education is progressing. This task seems impossible, but so long as there are those who want to abuse the students of America, it can be done.

First, the company must establish basic standards for all high school students. They must be low, as students must not become skillful or intelligent. An aptitude test might contain remedial mathematics and grammar questions, but demand lightning speed and unreasonable accuracy. They would spend hours studying concepts they learned years ago, and eventually master this exam while learning nothing, as one might master spinning a pencil around their thumb.

The company would need a convincing face. It could be named something official, like "The College Council," or "The University Board" and call itself a "nonprofit" organization

so that Americans think the company aims to benefit society, not monopolize education. The company could settle a profitable agreement with American universities to legitimize, and even to require their exam as the key to admission.

The company could use these college-entrance exams to penny-pinch America's children, charging them some \$40 to \$50 to mail their school an exam in bulk and send their score to one college, and charge them yet again for every additional college they hope to attend. Better still: the organization could send a few scores for free on the condition that the student send the scores without seeing them, and for no rational purpose take two weeks to send them electronically.

They should birth an entire curriculum - a supposedly more sophisticated one - based on scoring well on another exam, and call it something like "Advanced Selection." Schools could introduce these courses, force teachers to adhere to its standards, and award additional weight for completion of each course. Gullible students would then have further incentive to take them, and the most gullible

might take some solely for the weighted grade boost.

In reality, the courses would be 100% theoretical - science classes would "design" labs rather than do them, mathematics students would write more words and solve fewer problems, and all other courses would lead students to fantasize about careers rather than experience them. Americans would be left with consistently mediocre students entering the job market, and yet be convinced that this curriculum is somehow better than that of the past or even those belonging to other countries (though statistics would probably show the contrary).

The above mentioned "Advanced Selection" exams should prove difficult, be administered in a cluster once a year, and cost double the price of the college-entrance exam. Students could take any exam they wanted any time, for they must not be denied the opportunity to spend more money even if their school fails to offer a course. Regardless of whether colleges accept the scores as transferable credit, students would take the exams to satisfy their own academic egos and receive a number—a vague score

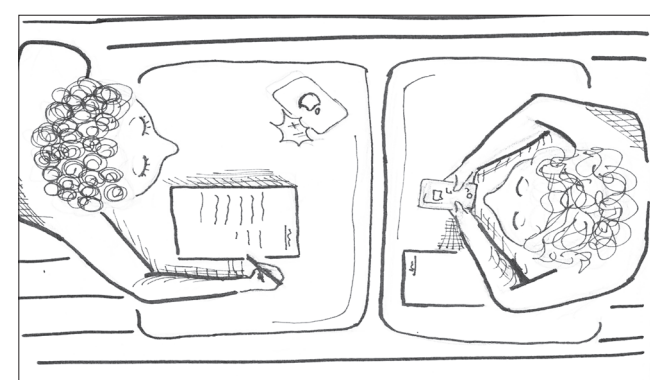
out of 5 to remind them how little they understood the subject.

The "high-achieving" students would provide the greatest revenue, for they pay hundreds of dollars on tests and study materials to perfect their college-entrance exam. Some will hire tutors for tips on taking the once-in-a-lifetime exam! Other students meeting the National Lunch Act criteria might qualify for exam fee waivers and, annoyingly, be charged a fair price of around \$5 for each exam. But this is alright, since one regular-price exam can pay to produce some 10 others.

If done correctly, this corporation could halt, and ideally reverse American education. Statistics centered on the company's exam pass rates would define the quality of teachers and schools, and ultimately represent the progress of American education. As a result, the "Advanced Selection" classes will proliferate, teachers will become slaves to the exams, and eventually, students will solely learn the company's curriculum.

Any governmental attempts to reform education would be ineffective, so long as the company controls the American high school curriculum. Students will spend hundreds of dollars and hours and learn nothing of worth; and the "nonprofit" company's owners will keep the surplus money for themselves. It's foolproof.

Well, not entirely. Hopefully they continue believing college is the only doorway to happiness. They won't change though, so long as they continue to believe their education is safe in the "free market."



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Pocket Points app effective incentive



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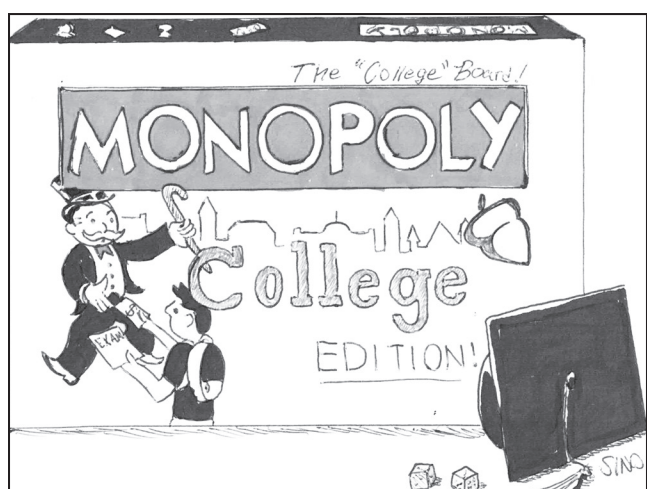
Recently, Roseville High School began using an app called Pocket Points that rewards students for locking their phones and not using them during class. In order to do so, students must open the Pocket Points app, then turn their phone off. If the student keeps their phone off while the app is open, they will receive a point every 20 minutes. After starting with 30 points, students can earn more points by continuously keeping their phones off, and can then use those points to purchase coupons to various restaurants and stores.

When one of my teachers introduced this to me, I felt ambivalent towards the validity and usefulness of the app. I mean, could this app that gives students virtual points really work to keep people off their phones at school? I caved and decided to download it, and now I am a huge supporter.

Before the app, I did go on my phone a lot during class. Now, I go on my phone less, and it's nice that I'm rewarded. My good deed of staying off my phone now gets noticed.

It's a really unique idea that you're able to buy coupons with the points. Rather than giving out physical points like the ROAR bucks, Pocket Points targets students who will shop and purchase things at the places where they offer coupons. This draws people like myself in and is more influential towards student behavior than ROAR bucks are now. Although I haven't purchased any coupons yet, I am particularly excited about it, because there's coupons on the app that I want to buy and use - 20% off to Tilly's, buy one dozen get a glazed dozen frozen at Krispy Kreme, and 25% off an order from Pura Vida.

Along with buying coupons, countless people have stayed off their phones in hopes that they can beat their friends. Under the tap leaderboard, students on the app can see who's leading in points from the day, the week, and of all time. Even if the app's coupons don't keep students off their phone, they may use it to compete with their friends.



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