

“We have similar responsibilities and commitments to the other sports on campus.”
 — Senior **Gaby Avila** on sideline cheer’s ineligibility for Sports P.E.

OPINION

Give sideline cheer athletes some credit

Team practices like other sports, can’t qualify for Sports P.E.

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Staff Writer

Most cheerleaders have heard the phrase, “cheer isn’t a sport” at least once during their athletic careers.

In 2015, former Gov. Jerry Brown signed a law (called the CHEERS Act) that finally considered competitive cheer as an official interscholastic sport. However, no such action has ever been taken toward sideline cheer. It’s a big oversight.

Athletes know of the work and commitment that goes into sports such as football, volleyball, basketball, and even competitive cheer, because they practice to compete, forcing them to strive for excellence.

These are the sports included as options for Sports P.E.

Many people do not consider the work ethic and commitment that go into sideline cheer, which isn’t eligible for Sports P.E. designation.

Competitive cheerleading is eligible, however. The sport consists of a two-and-a-half minute routine packed with stunts, tumbling, jumps, and dances. Teams memorize and practice these routines multiple times per week. These teams work to compete against other teams at competitions throughout the county and state. The Branham Competitive Cheer team practices up to two hours a day, 3-4 days a week, with about 5 competitions every season, from August to February.

By contrast, sideline cheerleaders perform at sports games and school events. They are expected to memorize numerous cheers and new routines consisting of stunts, tumbling, jumps, and dances every week.

Sideline cheerleaders must also follow all of the same criteria as the other sports. Like other programs, there is a minimum 2.0 GPA to be eligible to participate.

Even though sideline cheer teams do not compete, they have multiple practices per week to prepare for performances at upcoming events. The Branham Sideline Cheer team is a year round sport and practices for 1-2 hours, 2-3 days a week, even during the summer. They also cheer at football games every Friday for the entire football season and performs at 2-3 basketball games every week throughout the entire basketball season.

“We cheer in rain or shine, and if we are invited to an event, we are there,” said senior Gaby Avila. “Sideline cheer should be given the opportunity to receive Sports P.E. credit because we have similar responsibilities and commitments to the other sports on campus.”

From the physicality to the grades, sideline cheer is required to fit the expectations of the other sports at Branham without being considered as one, and without the benefits. Despite all the similarities, sideline cheer is still not an open option for Sports P.E., and should be a consideration.

PERSONAL ESSAY

SKIN DEEP

Written and illustrated by Audrey Nguyen

There are about 21 million Asian Americans in the United States, yet this group is barely represented in American media. Even less represented are Asians who don’t particularly fit the American stereotype, those who aren’t fair-skinned with black hair and slanted, or almond-shaped, eyes.

From a very young age, I have been aware of my own skin color. Growing up, the only other Asian I knew with dark skin was my father.



TO MY PEERS



FROM MY FAMILY

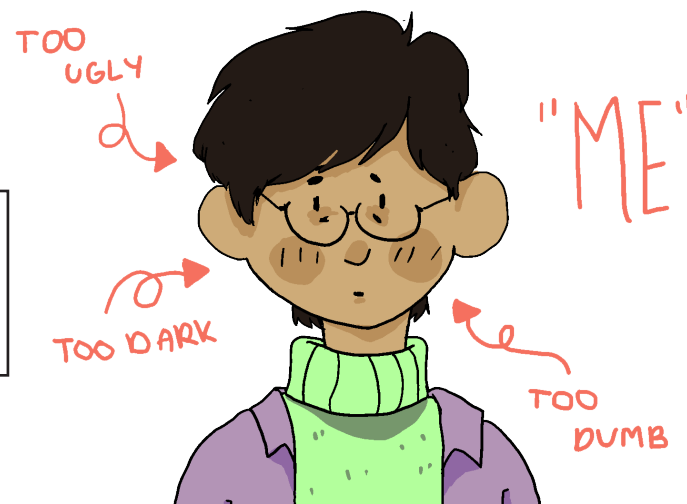
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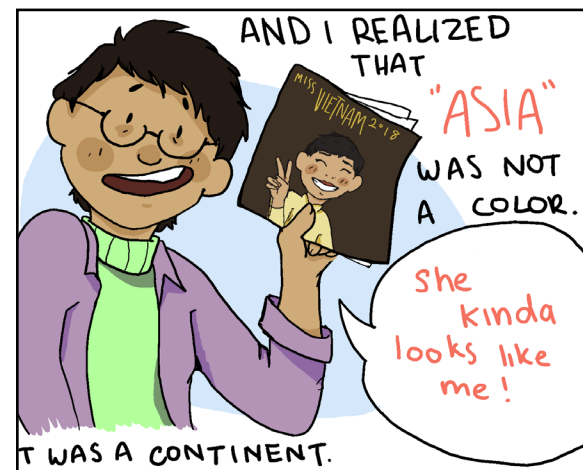


"BROWN" or "DARK" or even "COLOR"

There were no “pretty Asians” with dark skin.



The hashtag #praisint-Asian, where Asians posted photos of themselves celebrate diversity, helped me realize how much there was in the label “Asian.” It included people of all shapes, sizes and colors.



For the first time, “Asian” was not limited to the pale person with small eyes and a skinny frame ...

For the first time I could be Asian.

BULLETIN BOARD

Weighing in on bell schedule

Teachers have finally chosen a new bell schedule, a modified block schedule where students will see all of their teachers one day and alternate block periods for the rest of the week. It will take effect next school year.



Nick Hames
 Junior

“I think it’s chaos. It’s like two different schedules, with different people going to see people with different times, people are gonna be walking different places, it would be chaos.”



Elina Vakunova
 Junior

“This will just give me more time after school before I do any activities to do my homework. I know that a lot of sports practices start a bit after school is over. This will give students time for more for an opportunity to do school work.”



Joshua DeSouza
 Senior

“I think that they’re trying to fix something that isn’t really broken, like they are trying to find an extreme solution to a problem that doesn’t seem to be requiring something that big.”



Kate Turner
 Freshman

“I don’t like how there’s different start times. It’s too confusing. We have a car-pool schedule so it’s going to be kind of hard to make everyone aligned with sports after school.”