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The fight against waste isn't a battle. It's a war.

Sitting in the cafeteria during fifth period lunch, facing Sam, your best friend, who’s right across from you. ... a few aluminum cans turn from a pile into a landfill. Photo by Kyle Fisher

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Drip. Drip. Splash.

A shower head monotonously drips in the locker room, completely unnoticed by the freshman who finished his shower nearly half an hour ago.

Across campus, a malfunctioning sprinkler sprays a sharp arc of water into the air, soaking into the grass.

Unnecessary waste happens all across campus, but there are many measures Marksmen can take to reduce this expenditure — it just takes a little extra thought.

While it may seem like a cheap and abundant natural resource, water is becoming more and more precious in the Dallas area, its price going up ten to 15 percent each passing year.

“The cost of water is going up every year,” Director of Physical Plant Mark Webb said. “Matter of fact, they said it on the news not long ago. So that’s something that we watch closely every year, every month.”

Despite having three LEED-certified buildings, achieved by 40 percent water use reduction, the school is looking to improve on current conservation efforts. Webb stresses the importance of efficient irrigation systems and smart landscaping. The school is always looking for new ways to conserve.

“I think one of the next steps the school should take is putting in a few of these rainwater harvesting systems,” science instructor Dan Northcut ’81 said. “It would be easy to do because most of our roofs on the whole campus are flat or slanted and come to gutters that channel the water to pretty much anywhere you want those gutters to go.”

Once these changes are implemented, harvested water would likely go towards helping irrigate campus ground cover, significantly cutting down on water waste.

“Think about all the gutters we have on this campus and all the rainfall we have,” Webb said. “We could capture all that rainwater that comes off the roof and then be able to store it and use it to irrigate our grass and trees and shrubs and groundcover.”

One way to help prevent unnecessary water waste on campus is to be on the lookout for malfunctioning equipment. Tell-tale signs of broken sprinklers are wet spots or puddles on grass. Students should report these issues to division heads or to receptionist and facilities scheduler Sherri Sullivan at the front desk in Neuburg.

“Those kinds of things over a period of time use hundreds of gallons of water needlessly,” Webb said. “So if the student body could just be conscious of that and report those things to us, we could get those things repaired a lot quicker.”

“Most people don’t realize it, but over half of Dallas’s water is just going to water lawns.”

Dan Northcut ’81, director of environmental studies

Slipping through our fingers

Every year, millions of gallons of water are used ineffectively. Only vigilance can eliminate water waste.

by Axel Icazbalceta, Austin Williams and Jonathan Yin

by the numbers

12 water meters on campus
10 million gallons of domestic water used each year
8 million gallons of irrigation water used each year
170 irrigation zones on campus

Waste. Are we losing the war?
Where does all our trash go?

By Siddharta Sinha and Christopher Wang

Graphics by James Shiao

Richard McDonald, H-E-B corporate director of environmental affairs

Through these practices, Northcut says the community’s waste footprint is comparable to the footprint of any other institution of this size.

“Our waste footprint is no more significant than anybody’s waste footprint,” Northcut said. “It’s a mountain of garbage,” Northcut says it goes straight to the landfill owing to health codes.

Specifically, Northcut says the school’s solid waste goes to the McCommas Bluff Landfill, located only 10 miles from downtown Dallas. “It’s a mountain of garbage,” Northcut said, “but it’s done nowadays in a much more sanitary way than in the old days where it really was just a mountain of garbage. Now it has to be sealed over. It’s something that if you drive by it, you might not notice that it’s a mountain of garbage because they’ve got grass on it. They’re putting new garbage, day after day after day. When it gets to a certain height, they cover it up with soil and put grass on it. From the outside, it looks like a big hill. You wouldn’t notice. It’s an eye-opener.”

To minimize what the school sends to McCommas, Northcut makes a concerted effort to “cut down [the school’s] waste footprint,” focusing primarily on the community’s usage of single-use plastics.

“These are definitely things we can do as a school to cut down on our waste footprint,” Northcut said. “One of those things we should pay more attention to is single-use plastics. I would like to see us definitely get rid of any single-use plastic stuff like those water bottles. Those single-use water bottles are just the devil when it comes to wasted material because the plastics are really hard to recycle anyways.”

Although he had seen plastic usage on campus, Northcut remembers a time when things were different. “When I was a student, we could go into the pig slop and pick up lime to put into our pig feed. It’s pretty difficult to do that.”

From the recycling bins, all the campus’s recycling goes through single-stream recycling, where the recyclables are placed together. “If all goes into one end,” Northcut said. “The paper gets separated, glass gets separated out, any of the steel is separated and then aluminum. Out of the ends come these big bales of crushed aluminum bales and paper stuff. The glass all gets broken up and put into bins so that all that broken glass can go get remelted [and] made into new glass. People will pick up those huge bales of aluminum, and the paper people will pick up that, and then they go and make new aluminum cans or new paper.”

“Your best intention is to divert or repurpose or reuse as many of the products as you possibly can.”

Richard McDonald, H-E-B corporate director of environmental affairs

“We have a contractual agreement with a nationally known disposal firm like most of the other retail businesses do,” McDonald said. “Obviously, if you don’t recycle your product, if you don’t repurpose it or find out a way to reuse it, landfill is the general standard practice for disposal.”

Nevertheless, McDonald says H-E-B is looking to achieve zero-waste status in the coming years. “We’re all trying to move towards that zero waste ultimate goal,” McDonald said.

As for continued programs, McDonald says H-E-B will maintain its program where customers are able to return plastic bags and outer films.

“We have collection bins at each store,” McDonald said. “Most stores have two collection bins at the location to capture plastic films and specific bags that we internally run through a recycle process at H-E-B. We have a return bin center in San Antonio where all of those items are collected and sent back to. We do the sorting and collection at the processing facility and then move them on to the commodities market.”

However, the items that can’t be recycled still have to be sent to landfills, as is standard for all retail disposal.

“We have a contractual agreement with a nationally known disposal firm like most of the other retail businesses do.”
“Reducing food waste is good for the planet. It helps slow down global warming — there’s an economic, environmental and social benefit to conserving food.”

Brandon Barnes, SAGE district manager

Clean up: Lunch time every day sees hundreds of plates, some still stacked with food, deposited on the cleaning counter.

“Reducing food waste is good for the planet. It helps slow down global warming — there’s an economic, environmental and social benefit to conserving food.”

Brandon Barnes, SAGE district manager

Before walking out of the lunch room, you gather your leftovers, walk to the conveyor belt and leave your food. Just how much do you waste?

Waste. Are we losing the war?

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After lunch: School facilities go to great lengths to reduce food waste from lunches. “We have daily food production logs at all of our schools that allow us to forecast in advance food usage and record waste,” SAGE District Manager Brandon Barnes said.

A staggering number According to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization, roughly a third of food produced in the world is wasted, including 1 billion food items annually from U.S. schools.

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What's for lunch today? It’s often a question Marksmen ask themselves when they enter the lunchroom, only to be met with a myriad of options. There’s something for everybody.

Soon, your tray is full. Meats, pastas, carbs, salads and, of course, pancreas fill the plates of the dining hall. But some aren’t eaten.

Some doesn’t even leave the lunch line.

As a growing world problem, food waste affects our community—more than we sometimes like to admit. So how does SAGE Dining Services, the food provider at 10600 Preston Rd., handle food waste on a daily basis?

Campus SAGE Food Services Director Erin Woods says one of the key strategies to save food at school is through a strategy called “batch cooking.”

“We establish how much food we think we’ll need for the whole day,” Woods said. “For instance, if today it’s 200 pizzas, we build them all and then we batch cook. We will start off the day with maybe cooking 50 pizzas, and then as we go throughout services, to also give the best quality we can, we will cook more.”

This cooking strategy not only saves time but also makes it easier to handle excess food. “If we end up with ten extra pizzas, there’s a couple things we can do,” Woods said. “We can freeze them, we can utilize them for concessions that may be coming up or in a short time frame or we also sometimes partner with a local soup kitchen and donate anything that they would have use for.”

Food that’s prepared but not served is product that has already been used in one recipe are not adaptable to new recipes.”

SAGE also makes sure to order food from the best providers it can.

“We partner with local vendors,” Woods said. “Those vendors are all interviewed and vetted through our home office and our purchasing department to make sure we’re getting the best quality.”

After ordering, it’s time to decide how much food to prepare. This as well is a meticulous process.

“We take a lot of information in and use our experience and planning in advance to order the appropriate amounts as fit for our menus,” Woods said. “We use ratios in the recipes and our common knowledge. We also have to account for catering and days off.”

Woods also trains her staff to learn how to be more efficient with food.

“I take time showing them that the core of the celery is useful to make a vegetable stock,” Woods said. “Or we can cut that up and put that into the chicken soup, for example.”

Furthermore, SAGE has also partnered with Director of Environmental Studies Dan Northcot ‘81 to increase its conservation efforts.

“‘We make bags for him to feed his worms, chickens, compost and things of that nature.’ Woods said. ‘That way we can continue utilizing things that cannot be saved as best as we can.’

Further up the totem pole, SAGE District Manager Brandon Barnes explains that company-wide, SAGE has systems in place to save food.

“We have daily food production logs at all of our schools that allows us to forecast in advance food usage and record waste,” Barnes said. “This data is recorded daily by our chefs and is used to manage excess waste each day.”

However, the food-waste policies at schools differ. Barnes says programs are tailored to fit the school’s needs as much as possible, a responsibility that is very much handled by the director of food services at the school.

“Each campus is unique in their own way,” Barnes said. “We tailor our program requirements and policies to align with each school’s expectations and desires. Other than food safety, no specific school is structured the same exact way with respect to policies.”

Barnes says efforts to minimize food waste are not new — SAGE has always looked for ways to work on this.

“Sustainability has always been a focus,” Barnes said. “Food waste in general is typically a common topic we hear about at many schools. At St. Mark’s, the expectation’s to have plenty of food for everyone to enjoy.”

Barnes says the food program here excels in terms of food waste. However, efforts are always being put forth to improve.

“I must say that the dining program at St. Mark’s is one of the best in the area,” Barnes said. “However there will always be the opportunity to enhance more scratch cooking as new recipes are being vetted for sustainability purposes all the time.”

Barnes says that through his experience, when observing alternate food methods, strategies vary. All communities are different and therefore require tailoring.

“Eating habits have varied from different parts of the food industry,” Barnes said. “The vast difference of this is associated with portion sizes and moderation eating. Serving appropriate portions allows consumers to eat their entire meal and minimize waste. Our spotlight program helps promote this in our schools.”

Overall, Barnes stresses the importance of conservation.

“Reducing food waste is good for the planet.” Barnes said. “It helps shine down global warming — there’s an economic, environmental and social benefit to conserving food.”
Almost everything is the U.S. is on the grid. Climate control, lighting, computers, wireless internet routers, televisions. Each is entirely dependent upon electricity for power. But energy is expensive — not only financially, but also environmentally. Big power draws mean a big bill. Households, businesses and schools pay for energy consumption as much with carbon emissions as with dollars. With energy usage proving so impactful in the world, efficient energy management has become a key aspect in resource preservation.

On campus, energy is mainly drawn on power to facilities, according to Mark Webb, campus director of the physical plant. “Energy is primarily used through our central plant mechanical systems,” Webb said. “Through pumps, chillers and air handlers on the mechanical side. And of course, a large user would be the lighting.”

Webb knows the financial toll consumption can have on budgets. “Our school uses about four and a half megawatts to five megawatts of power a year,” he said. “Over a year’s time, you’re looking at 260 to 310 thousand dollars. How we use our power and how much power we use makes a big difference in the bottom line.”

One of Webb’s main goals on campus is cutting down on electricity usage. “It’s one of the most important mandates from a personal level that I have,” he said. “If my department is not looking at best practices, we’re not doing our part for the school to make sure that we’re doing something sustainable.”

One important way Webb has been able to save energy is by converting fluorescent light bulbs to light-emitting diodes (LED). A cheaper and stronger light source, LED lighting cuts back on electricity use and the costs that come with it. “A traditional light bulb will use 100 watts,” he said. “We can go to an LED bulb that uses 15 watts. If you take a look at a classroom that has 30 bulbs in there that are all 100 watts apiece and you take them down to 15 watts and you’re changing over 15 classrooms, you’re going to reduce energy usage by a lot.”

Licensed campus electrician Steven Glenn has been installing LED lighting wherever possible. He, too, believes fluorescent light bulbs aren’t as viable for campus lighting as newer LED panels. “That technology is old, and LED is the way to go,” Glenn said. “We went with those fl at panel LEDs, and they hardly use any energy. It’s way less than what florescent uses, and it saves energy and costs to run it. It’s kind of a no-brainer.”

Additionally, Glenn attests that the cheaper price of LED light sources provides for cheaper maintenance and installation. “We paid $35 apiece for LED bulbs,” he said. “That’s it. So we’re saving electricity because it’s cheaper to run it, but now we’ve also saved at least five times the money on maintenance.”

“We have to pay attention to how we oversee 360 thousand square feet based on our years of experience.”

Mark Webb, director of physical plant

Efforts to save energy here go beyond modernizing campus lighting. The school has a comprehensive energy management system capable of handling a wide range of processes. “We’re able to schedule all of our equipment in each building, our central plant and our lighting accordingly,” Webb said. “So when we know that we have periods when there’s not going to be a whole lot going on, we shut everything down early or we may not even run at all.”

Climate control adds another complexity to energy management, especially once temperatures start rising as summer months — once technology catches up with the demands here. Solar panels could eventually also be implemented to provide some power right from campus rooftops. “With technology today, we can only get so much out of them,” Glenn said. “We’d still have to have the other resources to provide power for when there are rainy days or at night. There’s a lot of stuff on this campus that takes energy, so we would have to have a huge solar panel system here.”

As the efficiency of alternative energy sources increases and costs correspondingly stabilize, 10600 Preston Rd. could rely more and more on generating its own energy. Becoming greener environmentally saves a different sort of green — letting the school expand its opportunities in other areas by managing our energy use. It’s about power, not just electricity.

Ganging for gold

Three steps 10600 Preston Rd. can take to boost its sustainability, achieve LEED Gold certification and waste less electricity.

1. Use sustainability metrics such as those that track water use, energy, transportation and human experience.
2. Keep up with changes to building codes in order to stay current with changing environmental standards.
3. Ensure school nurse energy-efficiently and continue to monitor for inefficiencies in the system.
Will zero-waste Dallas be a reality?

The city of Dallas adopted the Zero Waste Plan, a systematic effort to ultimately reduce waste in Dallas. The incremental goals for the initiative are to reduce waste by 40 percent by 2020, 60 percent by 2030 and 85 percent by 2040, but the city only achieved the first milestone.

Joining the Dallas City Council in 2013, when the Zero Waste Plan was first put into place, councilwoman Jennifer Staubach-Gates knew there was a greater need to work on recycling in the city of Dallas to account for the overflowing landfills.

"In that time, we built our own recycling plant," Staubach-Gates said. "We outsourced it, but it's on our property that is not landfill. It was an environmentally conscious movement with the rest of the city, state and country of getting to zero waste."

Delving deep into the process, Staubach-Gates knew there would be many different difficulties ahead but was willing to press forward to address such a pressing issue as waste. "I knew it would take long and there would need to be different policies that would be made during that time forward," Staubach-Gates said. "We'd have to probably modify and change our timeline, but we felt it was important to go ahead and adopt the policy."

City of Dallas Division Manager of Environmental Quality and Sustainability Danielle McClelland has rewritten the goals of the Zero Waste Plan to cater to different needs as the years have gone on. When the Zero Waste Plan was adopted, there were some specific timelines and strategies to help us accomplish our goals," McClelland said. "When the city council realized we weren't making significant progress for that first milestone, the city council accelerated the timeline for multifamily recycling to provide the service to more Dallas residents. The multifamily recycling ordinance went into effect Jan. 1 of this year.

Running for election, Staubach-Gates started to realize the importance of the multifamily recycling plan and the movement to the Comprehensive Environmental and Climate Action Plan, an initiative by the city of Dallas to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. "It is important to realize what percentage of residents live in apartment complexes. It’s almost 50 percent," Staubach-Gates said. "So when you are only recycling in 50 percent of our population, it is important we get on with multifamily recycling. We put both of those policies on hold while we are formulating and adopting the Climate Action Plan."

Another way the city has promoted waste diversion is social marketing and social media. "Up until that point, it wasn’t a focus for the city to reach out directly to residents to tell them environmental messages," McClelland said. "There’s a lot of information and messaging that’s pushed out on the city, through our social media channel @dallaszerowaste. Our website has a lot of great information and our social media channel is a way for us to reach out directly to residents to tell them environmental messages."

On top of the work with social media and the web, the city has been spreading their purpose by going door-to-door and organizing workshops. "We have a series of workshops — over the course of the last year about 75 — in partnership with the greater Dallas area to spread the word," McClelland said. "While we’ve literally being going door-to-door to make sure that the property owners and managers understand what the ordinance requires. It helps their residents know how to recycle and what goes into containers."

As well as influencing change through media and going door-to-door, both Staubach-Gates and McClelland realize that the way to give importance to recycling and waste management is by education, as recycling offers a priority for families. "When you have families who are balancing more pressing everyday quality of life, education is really key," McClelland said. "So there is a requirement in Dallas’s ordinance that makes it easy for people to understand what can be recycled and where the containers go."

Looking to the future of waste management plans, McClelland understands how our particular system in Dallas works to create real solutions. "The change is driven by resident interest in finance, so our public is very engaged," McClelland said. "That’s how Dallas has been able to do the kinds of things we have."

Staubach-Gates realizes there is a boom in population in Dallas, and to solve the city’s biggest problems, she believes there has to be a way for the city to absorb the growth in order to move forward. "We’re seeing people and corporations relocate here, so being able to absorb that population growth and the infrastructure demands that come with it is key," Staubach-Gates said. "That’s why we, as a city, are looking at adopting the Climate Action Plan. We are planning for the future and planning how we’re going to use our resources and minimally impact the environment."
Students, faculty and administrators here are constantly seeking ways to make the school both more efficient and more productive. They believe that the space we use and try to point out what's left forgotten.

Waste. Are we losing the war?

16

around us

the space

around us

16

students sit in their desks with their feet dangling above the ground. Mullett has an interesting wish.

Better desks.

There's nothing different about the desks. Many

Marksmen have sat in those very same seats.

But Mullett knows that her class can be that much more productive.

Students, faculty and administrators here are constantly seeking ways to make the school both more efficient and more productive with the space that we have, whether it be through new tools or technology.

Mullett’s wish for better desks isn’t only for productivity but also for providing a better experience for her students in general. "I believe in best practices for boys," Mullett said. “This is probably not the most ideal furniture for ten-year-old boys. It's immovable, their feet can't touch the ground and it's not very flexible.”

At the People of Color (POC) Conference in Nashville, Mullett found her ideal classroom environment. "I saw counter-height tables so students could sit at work," Mullett said. "If they chose to sit at a stool, they had regular desk seating, and then they had a lower one where you could sit on cushions on the floor. There were three different levels of height, which would give my students some choice and flexibility.

Mullett also believes that having different shaped desks could be beneficial to the student learning experience as well. "I’d really like to be able to have a small round table that I could sit around with four or five boys and do an editing lesson while other boys are working," Mullett said. "It’s not really easy to set that up in my room. I would like the furniture to be lighter or have different kinds of shapes."

Mullett believes that her students would enjoy the ability to choose seating arrangements from the many options in her ideal classroom. "They would have the ability to choose how they’re doing their work, whether they’re standing or sitting on the floor," Mullett said. "I think having that choice will allow them to fit in their natural way of working. Instead of being forced to work in the seat I give them, they can make their own choice."

Mullett has also found a way to incorporate technology into her class to make it more efficient. "There are two things that are different when the students have computers," Mullett said. "First of all, we get through the work faster. When they have the machines in my room, they all get [work] done, and I can see it in Google Classroom. The other thing is they edit in front of me. Before, I never said, 'You have to edit this and turn it in by 3:05 p.m.,' because we didn’t have access to computers, but now I can. It helps because I can get them to turn it in faster, and they also have less homework because I don’t have to ask them to word-process at home."

However, Mullett sometimes finds difficulty using technology as well. "Sixty to 70 percent of my students have a laptop, and then I go to the Middle School office and I borrow seven," Mullett said. "I believe strongly that you want the audio. Some folks really want to sit dangling above the ground, without excessive excessive

School office and I borrow seven," Mullett said. "That’s maybe fifty percent of my kids today. We could have an exchange through technology but because not every student has a computer, I can’t do that. I could walk around and look at everything, it’s much faster to use Google Classroom."

Overall, Mullett believes her request for better tools and technology would allow her to use her classroom more efficiently than otherwise. "These changes would make my classes more productive because I think the boys would enjoy the flexibility," Mullett said. "They would be more focused on what they were doing."

Associate Headmaster John Ashton has seen first-hand the school’s many efforts to become more efficient, especially technology-wise. "We, over a decade ago, had a formal relationship with the Global Online Academy," Ashton said. "That partnership was set up to allow for boys who were interested to take more online courses. They had a lot of elective courses as a way to offer other boys courses that we may not offer or that might not fit in their schedule."

However, Ashton said, students never really took to online classes. "The boys wanted to take the brick and mortar classes that we offer here on campus," Ashton said. "They wanted access to the teachers. They wanted to go to class. They wanted to be in class with their peers."

In place of online classes, Ashton believes, is the increased usage of online platforms such as Blackbaud. "We have migrated to using learning management systems in more expanded ways such as Blackbaud," Ashton said. "Some teachers use it to a much higher degree than others might, posting activities, videos or notes to try to use an online platform in a way that helps boys have access to the coursework and other learning resources that are only available when you’re at school. I think in that regard we’ve seen some expansion in the way that technology is used here on campus."

Ashton believes the efficiency and productivity of student work depends on flexibility. "I think there are great tools available to us now," Ashton said. "I believe strongly that we want to maintain choice for students. We all learn differently. We all want to interact with textbooks or resources in different ways. Some people are visual. Some folks just want the audio. Some folks really want to sit quietly and read, make notes and write in the margins."

Ashton has found a way to appreciate the better tools and technology that Mullett believes the school will continue to offer flexibility in the resources that are offered to the student body.

"The greater flexibility we give boys and the greater tools available to boys to choose what ways help them learn best is a philosophy that I would use to guide us in our thinking," Ashton said. "I'm grateful that we have so many resources available."

by Paul Sullman and Irene Xi

Photo illustration by Ekansh Tambc and Tyler Nosemeyer
Nearly 170,000 square meters, or 42 acres, make up the campus at 10600 Preston Rd. With over 850 students and 175 full-time teachers attending school each day, the efficiency of the utilization of space on campus is constantly an important issue. For Headmaster David Dini, using space in an efficient manner connects back to the school’s very mission to educate the whole boy and prepare students for adulthood and a meaningful life.

“Efficiency hits a lot of different areas,” Dini said. “It’s a part of a lot of different aspects of the way the school operates. We’re a school that is deliberate, intentional and thoughtful and thinks about leveraging our resources for the greatest impact in everything that we do. Our desire would be to be as efficient in our use of our resources as we possibly can be.”

However, Dini asserts short-term efficiency isn’t always the priority for the school. Rather, the school looks at ways to be efficient in the long run without compromising its core values.

“We want to give ourselves as much flexibility as possible,” Dini said. “We don’t know exactly what the needs are going to be five, ten, 25 years down the road, so it’s a balancing act of trying not to make rash decisions that might compromise future decisions. If you tighten up the efficiency model down too much, then you get to a point of tension and constriction that might inhibit our ability to achieve really important things that we want. There’s this balance, and we want to be right in the middle, not overly inefficient and not overly efficient.”

To achieve this goal of long-term efficiency, Dini and the school’s administration team work closely with the Board of Trustees as well as advice from professional campus planner Jeff Blanchard, who serves as the school’s campus master planner.

“I look at everything through the lens of sustainability,” Blanchard said. “That’s why we’re trying to minimize the waste of space, and we are always evaluating whether the inventory of space on campus matches the portfolio of student experiences,” Blanchard said.

As class sizes gradually increase, the impact of how we decide to use space on campus becomes more and more critical. What is the school doing to ensure Marshmen and faculty members alike feel the balance between efficiency, convenience and flexibility?

As class sizes gradually increase, the impact of how we decide to use space on campus becomes more and more critical. What is the school doing to ensure Marshmen and faculty members alike feel the balance between efficiency, convenience and flexibility?
Where we go, where we stay.

Based on a poll that garnered more than 200 responses, the Green Library, Winn Science Center and Hoffman are the most popular places for Upper Schoolers to spend their free time at school.

“Where do you do work or hang out the most at school during your free time?”

Our most valuable resource is the least tangible — time. We don’t notice it when it ticks by, but when it’s gone, it’s gone forever. In this final section, we search for where time is lost and how it can be better utilized.
Waste. Are we losing the war?

The alarm goes off at 7 a.m. every morning for the Max. Five days a week. He takes his time getting out of bed, breathing in the cool morning air. He glances at his phone just to check his notifications. After browsing his Snapchat, Instagram and TikTok, it’s 8 a.m. and he needs to drive his sister to school. After dropping off his sister, he heads to school. After arriving, he opens his laptop and browses the internet. And just like that, it’s 8:30 a.m. and he has no idea where the time went.

For Marksmen, time is a valuable commodity. It often is the determinant of your grade, your study and your mood. But humans are inefficient with time, and Marksmen are no different.

Max pays great attention in his classes, but when there’s a free period, he sometimes takes the opportunity to enjoy some free time. Max represents the composite Upper School student. During his free periods, his time usage can depend on a variety of factors. Maybe he’s trying to get ahead or a paper or a project on. But don’t count on him staying around for more than a few minutes. Maybe chatting with classmates or being on his phone looking at Instagram. According to the U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average American teenager spends much more time with leisure activities per day than the average working adult. However, when you see, as expected, spends countless more hours with educational activities than the average adult.

Students at 10600 Preston Road, however, spend more time on homework than the average teen. Max usually spends about three hours a night on homework. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the average student spends about two hours on homework a night. Add up your nightly homework and it’s already 7:20 a.m, and he needs to drive his sister to school. TikTok, it’s already 7:20 a.m, and he needs to drive his sister to school.

“TikTok, it’s already 7:20 a.m, and he needs to drive his sister to school.”

Most of our first 18 years will be spent in school. And we only get so much time a day at 10600 Preston Road. Yet we still find ways to let the hours escape us.

In Robert Hou and Will Pechersky’s photo, a student is running through hours of homework waiting.

A complete waste of time.

The never-ending process of learning and studying takes up a lot of a student’s life. But is all that time spent listening to lectures and participating in class discussions beneficial? Could some of that time be used more efficiently? The answers to these questions are extremely important. Every minute should be taken into account to ensure that time spent doing school-related activities is maximized, not wasted.

According to Pechersky, this prioritization of time is critical to success. “If you know you’ve got a busy night ahead of you, it’s probably in your best interest to use all of that time to study, but if you have a free period, it is possibly because you have an assignment due. First, think about how much you need to study.”

Max is a fictitious representation of the experiences of several composite Upper School students.

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Every day of every week during the school year, students-spend-hours either in the classroom or doing homework.

To avoid cramming, Pechersky thinks students should find a way to plan out the work ahead. “The people who are most successful in finding some way to organize.”

English Department Chair Michael Morris understands the importance of avoiding wasted time in class. “I really try to get us started on time, and I like to leave maybe a minute or two for some sort of class business.”

Teachers use their own specific methods depending on the class to conserve time. In English classes, the instructor promotes discussion and ensure that class time is well spent. “I think there’s something nice and symbolic about the Harkness table,” Morris said. “When you’re in it, you’re not just a listener. You’re basically communicating symbolically, that’s the piece of furniture that you have.”

In fact, Morris even attended the Exeter Humanities Institute this summer. “I have a lot to learn about the Harkness teaching methods,” Morris said. “I am going to take a lot from that.”

One of the most focused on the topic of the Exeter Humanities Institute is the process of learning is more important than the product of what you’ve learned. You’re basically communicating symbolically, that’s the piece of furniture that you have.”

But sometimes Morris thinks that class time is wasted. “I don’t like to take too much class time everyday checking homework because there’s so many other things to do.”

Challenge Success is an organization associated with Stanford University that collaborates with schools in improving the student academic experience. Senior School Program Director Jon Kleiman and Director of Research and Programs Sarah Miles strive to achieve this goal for students across the country.

“We work with schools for an extended period, like a year or many years, and we will help them look at different areas where they might be struggling 24/7, ensuring the most efficient and engaging,” Kleiman said. One of the biggest focuses on the topic of the Exeter Humanities Institute is the issue of quality versus quantity. Kleiman and Miles study this area as they examine how homework affects students lives.

“Homework should be assigned just to assign homework,” Kleiman said. “It teachers should make sure that if you’re doing it, they do it for a reason.”

Students tend to spend less time focusing on their homework than they find that it has no value. That’s why engaging work is essential. “When students experience homework as not having purpose or meaning, they become less engaged in school,” Miles said. “They’re less likely to be successful. They will do other things while they’re doing homework, like social media or watching YouTube. So that adds to the quantity because they’re not getting it done as efficiently.”

Too much homework can be detrimental to the productivity of students. According to Challenge Success, after about two hours of homework, a high schooler passes the point of diminishing returns.

“Challenge Success says that even two hours of homework is the point at which students are wasting time.”

When there’s too much, other things don’t happen like they should.” Miles said. “Sleep and free time are being taken away from students.”

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Waste. Are we losing the war? Waste. Are we losing the war? 24

 avocado swimmer both on and off campus, quit similar to Genender, whether they’re in the

 Students lose part of the experience that has

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**Professionally managed time.**

When dialed down to a day, an hour, a minute, a second, it can often be so hard to cram everything we want to and have to do in such tight slots. So how can we fit everything into those hours, minutes and second? How do we manage our time?

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### KA THY CROW

As a mother, a wife and a member of the boards of SMU, Hockaday and St. Mark’s, Kathy Crow’s time is her most valuable resource. Even if they may be unconventional, such as waking up at 3 a.m every morning, Crow has found strategies that work for her to best organize her busy days.

> “I’ve just decided that I really wanted to put my time into boards and do that. I love education, and it has kind of become the thing that I like to focus on. So I’ve been on the St. Mark’s board. I’m also on the Hockaday board and on the investment committee, too. I’m also on the SMU board. That also means you have to join two school boards, so I’m on the Cox Business School Board and the Simmons Education School Board at SMU, and then I also sit on the Teaching for America board here in Dallas.”

> “In order to be prepared and know what you’re doing at the meetings, there’s always a lot of reading to do. It’s kind of silly, but I get up really early in the morning. To me, it’s really quiet. It’s just me, just the dogs and the coffee, and I’m just kind of blissfully happy. I don’t feel rushed. I feel really calm. It’s just a quiet time for me to get all the reading done or prepare for the day. I really need that time in the morning.”

> “I do not use social media at all. One gift is that I just haven’t gotten attuned into that. I just try to keep things pretty simple. With that simplicity, I think it’s a little bit easier to just manage the things you have to do.”

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### PAUL GENENDER ’87

As a Markman from 1979 to 1987, Paul Genender felt asawed as his two sons, junior Jack and freshman George, do today. And now, as Alumni Board President, member of the Board of Trustees, full-time dad and D-Megative winner for Best Business & Commercial Litigation Lawyer, Genender’s time is as valuable as ever. Having to maintain a log of everything he does as a part of his profession, Genender shares some of the challenges and secrets of balancing his crammed schedule.

> “One of the most important things that allows me to be efficient with my time is a couple little things every day to invest in myself. I do some sort of cardiovascular exercise in the morning almost every single day. It is good physically, good mentally and good to get into a groove, and it’s one thing every day that I can control. The other thing is that you’ve got to get enough sleep.”

> “In a profession where there are tremendous expectations for being responsive and replying immediately to clients, that is important, but it has to be within reason. Otherwise, you don’t have any time for yourself and you’re completely at other people’s disposal all the time, as opposed to enough of the time.”

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### FRASER MARCUS ’72

Fraser Marcus’s days are always filled up, often working from 5:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. As the chairman of the board of an eastern European bank, manager of his own advisory practice, member of a number of consumer finance businesses, an advisory worker for multiple large family offices, Chairman of the Investment Committee at 10600 Preston Rd. and father of a Marksman from 1979 to 1987, Paul Genender felt asawed as his two sons, junior Jack and freshman George, do today. And now, as Alumni Board President, member of the Board of Trustees, full-time dad and D-Megative winner for Best Business & Commercial Litigation Lawyer, Genender’s time is as valuable as ever. Having to maintain a log of everything he does as a part of his profession, Genender shares some of the challenges and secrets of balancing his crammed schedule.

> “When I first started in investment banking, my senior partner at Solomon Brothers gave me the best advice I’ve ever had, and I pass it on to everybody. He said to me, ‘be very much between a good pilot and an ace. an ace knows what to ignore in a crisis.’

> “Detail is incredibly important in what I do. The most important thing is also when you’re very busy, you gotta follow up with everything. You can’t leave people that you promise to do things for unfulfilled. I tend to write lists. I keep pretty active to-do lists, both electronically and manually. That repetitive review of what’s on the docket and what has to be done when — consistently doing that with myself, my partners and my colleagues — is very important.”

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### DAVID MCATEE ’87

As the general counsel of AT&T, responsible for all the legal matters at the company for the last four years, David McAtee’s work covers a lot of waterfront in the legal and business worlds, in addition to his full-time job as a father.

> “A normal day for me starts early. If you talk to just about any successful person, nine times out of ten, he or she is going to be an early riser. For me, the day always starts at about 5:30 in the morning, and I get most of my phone calls done first thing in the morning. By the time 10 a.m. rolls around, I’ve touched base with everyone I want to touch base with. And I leave the afternoon for working on important projects where you really need to think about things. That works for me, because after I talk to people in the morning, I know what everyone’s working on and everyone’s thinking — we’re working as a team to move things forward.”

> “Something I picked up back in the day at Duke University — we called it ‘units.’ You study hard for 50 minutes, you take a ten minute break. When you had to study for finals or get a paper done, you could get seven, eight, nine units done in a day. If you just put your mind to it, you know that you were able to clear a bunch of stuff out and do it that way. That’s true in professional life, too. There are times when you’ve got to buckle down and, if you can schedule your breaks and have the discipline of keeping those breaks as scheduled, you’ll crush whatever is in front of you.”

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> “I think it’s most important is to find something about what you have great passion and a great feel. If you’re in a situation that you’re doing, you don’t really enjoy doing it, you’re not going to do it very well. Try and find your passion, find something you’re good at doing or you want to do and pursue it relentlessly.”

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> “I leave time to let your personality come through. It’s the truth. If you schedule your day so much that all you’re doing is working, and all you’re doing is thinking about the next thing you’ve got to get done, people won’t know you as a person. Keep time in your schedule, to spend time with your boss, peers, people that you supervise, and team members.”

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### 3 TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Our alumni offer important reflections and easy-to-repeat time management insights they’ve learned through their diverse experiences, whether juggling the agendas of several boards or feeling overwhelmed my mountains of paperwork.

1. **“There are times when it is really important to be terribly inefficient and chill and just don’t worry about it. When it seems like everything is caving in and I’m not going to get it all done, sometimes I just stand up and start laughing.”**

   — Paul Genender ’87

2. **“I think it’s most important is to find something about what you have great passion and a great feel. If you’re in a situation that you’re doing, you don’t really enjoy doing it, you’re not going to do it very well. Try and find your passion, find something you’re good at doing or you want to do and pursue it relentlessly.”**

   — Fraser Marcus ’72

3. **“Leave time to let your personality come through. It’s the truth. If you schedule your day so much that all you’re doing is working, and all you’re doing is thinking about the next thing you’ve got to get done, people won’t know you as a person. Keep time in your schedule, to spend time with your boss, peers, people that you supervise, and team members.”**

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