

# Increased security creates suspicion & concern

*Strict rules and regulations in response to recent crisis lead to feelings of distrust, uncertainty, & fortitude*

**-EDITORIAL-**

Students returned to campus this year following severe violence and lack of security in Texas schools. With the need for new safety measures, Bowie has added/revised its policies to make the school a safe and secure environment where students feel safe attending.

These policies were created in response to recent shootings, drug abuse, and student misconduct. They are made to keep students safe.

The Dispatch believes that these changes were made with good and noble reasons but are executed poorly. While these rules need to be implemented, their current state is unrealistic when reflecting on student life and what we need.

One of these policies does not allow students to carry over-the-counter medications with them to take whenever they like. This stops students from abusing drugs on campus as well as disguising illegal substances as over-the-counter drugs; ultimately keeping students safe from addiction.

However, this removes the ability to access to over-the-counter and prescribed medication where immediate use is necessary; such as medication combating Panic Disorders, migraines, abdominal pain, etc. These medications should be allowed to be carried by students.

These medications tend not to be abused and it is unfair for students' medications to be withheld from them, especially in times of crisis.

While we should trust students to make the right choices, we have abused our previous restroom policy. This can be seen when kids are roaming the halls, talking with friends, or even vaping in a crowd of 12 when supposed to use the facilities. This year's bathroom policy was put in place to combat that.

To stop students from hurting their education,

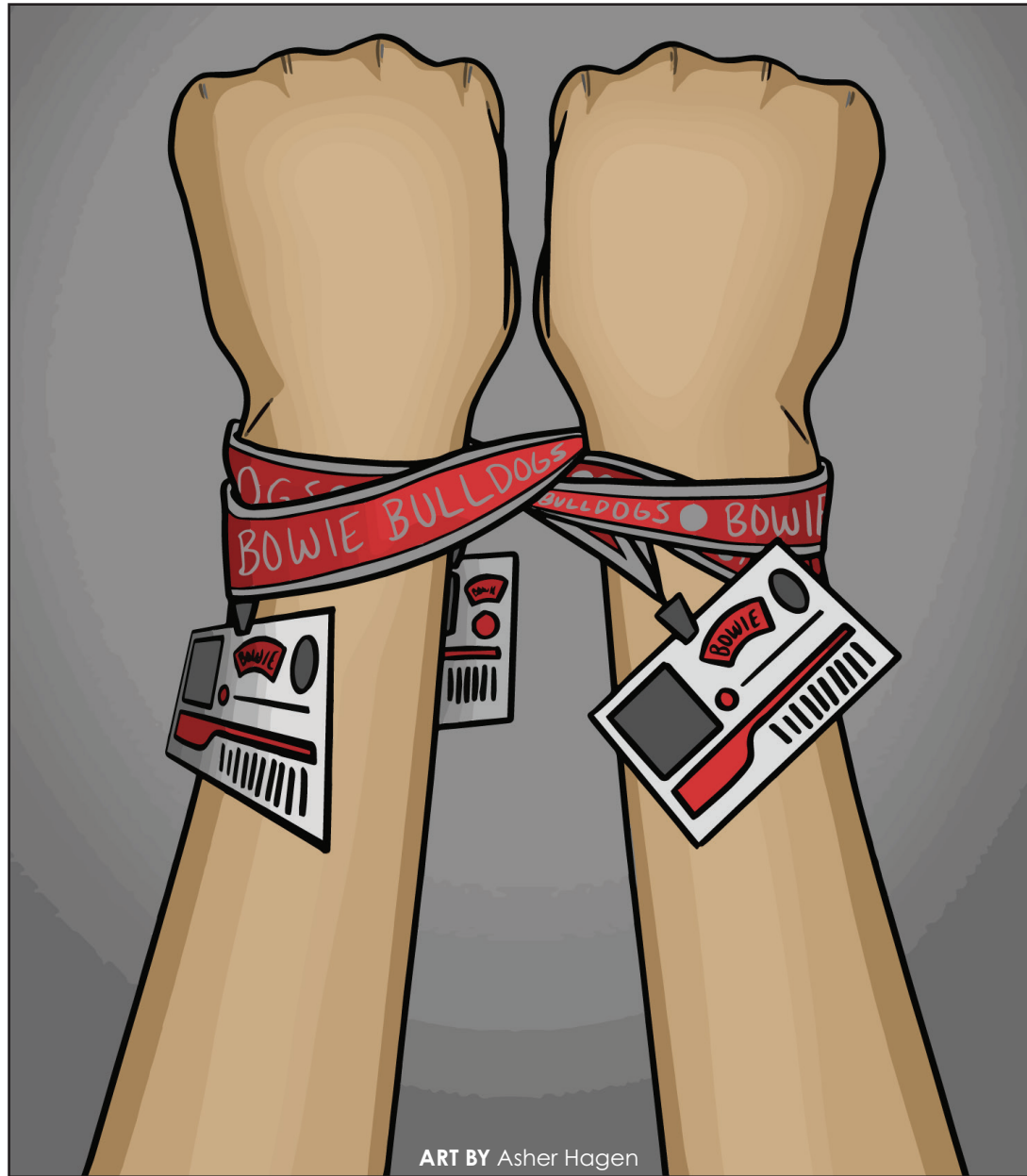
health, and habits, their movement was restricted. Students can only use the restroom residing in the same hallway with a pass displaying their hallway's designated color to catch wandering students. This policy was made to help students stay on top of their education and stop bad habits.

However, this intention is grossly skewed. It disregards the sad truth that our facilities aren't usable. Bathrooms are missing doors, locks, toilet seats, soap, etc. They lack comfort and safety. Students avoid these broken bathrooms by using a different hall's safe and comfortable one. This also helps students avoid those who use the facilities incorrectly, i.e. vaping, and makes it easier for students to find a usable bathroom to use to take care of nature's needs.

When finding a suitable bathroom, this policy doesn't take into account how some students need a gender-neutral bathroom to feel safe and comfortable. Because not every hallway has a gender-neutral bathroom and would require the student to appear wandering, this puts non-cis-gender students at risk of being pulled aside and embarrassed by an AP or faculty.

As stated on the Bowie website for a student to be checked out early, a guardian must park in the short-term visitor parking, enter the main office and present identification, and then wait while the office staff completes their procedure to check their student out of class. Students can also be checked out through parent email and/or phone call, but this can take up to three hours sometimes never releasing the student on time or at all.

This policy is in response to student misconduct: leaving throughout the middle of the school day when not permitted to do so. It is the job of the school to ensure student safety which involves making sure students don't leave campus without



ART BY Asher Hagen

guardian approval. Bowie, and every school a student attends, is liable for student safety, but when a student leaves campus unpermitted the risk of student injury is the school's responsibility.

However, this policy is unrealistic when accounting for how spontaneous student lives are. When a student has to leave campus urgently and immediately, a three-hour waiting period, with the potential to never be released, is unacceptable. Student dismissal shouldn't take longer than if a student's guardian were to show up on campus.

After tragic events regarding the Uvalde shooting where a non-student

entered the campus, our ID policy has become a centerpiece for student safety. Requiring IDs at all times throughout the day and being checked upon campus entry are all important to keep students safe.

When looking directly at the change in ID design, with the addition of a barcode, it's obvious how important IDs are for student well-being. Following a student stroke last year, these bar codes were implemented to make it easier to get the medical treatment that is needed when emergencies require it which is why IDs are to be worn at all times.

Faculty are stationed at the entrance to check for

students only during mornings when students enter campus for first period, and during lunch to ensure only seniors are leaving campus.

When no staff member is stationed to check IDs, the duty falls onto a buzzer-camera duo. To be buzzed in, identification is required to make it virtually impossible for a student to enter the building without their ID.

Sadly, it's extremely easy to wander past our school's "security" with no identification. Faculty members are given the cold shoulder by students or lied to, and the buzzer requires no visible identification for students to gain entrance. Because of this, IDs have become use-

less and void of purpose.

One possible solution to solve the new medication policy is to require parental approval in the form of a note, email, form, phone call, text, etc. While this does leave room for deceptive students it's not difficult to call a student's parent. This makes it so that students are capable of bringing prescription or over-the-counter medications making a more comfortable environment for students while still holding students accountable and keeping everyone safe.

All it should take for a student to leave campus is approval from a guardian. Faculty collecting a student from their classroom shouldn't be necessary because teachers should be informed either by a student's parent or from the front office that a student is to be dismissed.

IDs could be used to scan into the building when no faculty is present, but if a student is missing their ID, their ID number should suffice. We have the equipment put in place already for students to scan in and all that would need to be done is adding students to the school's system to allow for scanning into the building.

While these are all possible solutions, one thing Bowie needs to do is create an open, honest dialogue with students about why these policies were created.

All students have been informed about these policies with the only motivation to follow them is that they'll get in trouble if they don't, and the only reasoning being that past students have broken policies and were out of control. Talking to students like equals telling us directly the real dangers of not following these policies will give students a real reason to follow them.

Bowie needs to make these policies with both safety and leniency to account for the spontaneity and changing lives of students. We should strive to make students feel safe and comfortable. ■

**Letter to the editor**

*Gender-neutral bathrooms misused and mistreated with unsafe behavior and vaping*

The situation with the new gender-neutral bathroom has escalated to a level of disturbance that needs to be addressed. The main reason we have it is to make a safe space for trans students at Bowie, but now it has become the opposite. Most of the people using it go in there to engage in unsafe activities (i.e. vaping) and crowd themselves in to abuse this new space. This behavior has made trans students feel unsafe, unwelcome, and robbed of personal space and respect. This needs to change. What we need to do is educate other Bowie students about why we have this bathroom and teach them how to behave in other ways that make their trans peers feel more content and safer.

While it may seem that the existence of transgender people is

new, transgender people have been around for centuries in cultures and history as early as 5000 B.C. There are transgender people in all societies across the globe. "Lili Elbe, a Danish painter was the first person who got a documented sex reassignment surgery to address her gender dysphoria in 1930.

Currently, the Human Rights Campaign estimates that there are more than 2 million transgender people in the United States. In fact, one in five adults in the United States know someone who uses non-binary pronouns other than he or she. However, even today transgender people face discrimination. 75.1% of transgender students feel unsafe at school because of their gender expression, 63.4% of transgender students reported avoiding bathrooms,

and 41% of transgender or gender non-conforming people have attempted suicide. In addition, research has shown that 36% of transgender or non-binary students reported being sexually assaulted in the last 12 months at school. According to a May 6, 2019 CNN article, one out of every four, reported being a victim of sexual assault.

For all of these reasons, all gender restrooms are necessary for our transgender students to feel safe. Bowie has only two all gender restrooms. However, recently students report feeling that these restrooms are "unsafe" due to students misusing them for inappropriate activities. We aren't saying the restroom is only for trans people, but cis-gender people already have many restrooms to use.

When asked for testimonies about

the situation, these were some of the responses we got from trans or queer individuals. "I feel angry about the situation. The gender-neutral bathrooms [are intended to be a safe space] for trans students to use the bathroom and now some of my friends are not wanting to use them because of the vaping. This creates an unsafe space for non-binary people."

Another student said, "I haven't been in the gender-neutral bathrooms because there's ALWAYS way too many people in there to feel comfortable walking in."

Another issue in bathrooms in general is that people need privacy. As one student states, "It's awkward for anyone to use the bathroom with a hoard of people who are just standing around not even using the facilities, it's not just a gender-neutral

issue... Plus, it's a bathroom! People do their business there! Do y'all not understand how disgusting bathrooms are? It blows my mind that people choose to stand around there for fun."

Gender neutral restrooms are intended to provide a safe and private place for transgender and non-binary students to change and use the restroom. Students need to respect these guidelines, so that our most marginalized students have a safe place. Bowie should be an inclusive community that respects all students. Be considerate.

**Bree Rolfe**

*Bowie Sexuality & Gender Acceptance Club sponsor*

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# Calendar snowballs student holidays

*AISD change pushes back winter break leading to religious & educational disruption*

**EDITORIAL**

Waking up on holiday morning to celebrate with her family. A sinking feeling in her stomach rumbles as she feels unbearable unrest realizing she can't celebrate with her loved ones.

With her Hanukkah traditions trampled on, she drags her feet to her car and begins to drive. She has four and a half hours of testing today. Her holiday has been ruined.

Because of Austin Independent School District's (AISD) 2022-2023 calendar, winter break has been pushed back three days, starting December 22 and ending January 9

(last year it spanned from Dec. 18 to Jan. 4). These three days interrupt the first days of Hanukkah and split finals into two different weeks. The number of days off in the first semester and the number of days/weeks off in the second nine weeks are the same.

The Dispatch believes the winter break of the 2022-2023 school year fails to provide students an equal opportunity for studying and religious expression.

It is wholly irresponsible and ignorant for AISD to ignore the traditions students have when celebrating Hanukkah.

This mistake makes it so people celebrating the Jewish holiday cannot celebrate the first three nights of the eight-night celebration.

With this change, all who celebrate Hanukkah are forced to make a choice they shouldn't have to make. School or religion?

Students must choose whether to celebrate this sacred holiday or study for their upcoming final.

While Hanukkah mainly takes place during the evening, every family has different traditions, and scheduling finals during the first three nights may interrupt those traditions, ruining the plans of those who travel or celebrate throughout the day with family.

However, traveling doesn't only affect people celebrating Hanukkah; those celebrating Christmas have only two days to travel before Christmas Eve. This makes the likelihood of absences during the last three days of the semester very high, causing many students to miss finals to celebrate with their families instead.

In addition, the new calendar doesn't only impact holiday traditions, it also splits finals into two different weeks.

This creates an unequal opportunity and gives more time for studying and prepa-



ART BY Asher Hagan

ration for students who are given an extra weekend for studying. Students who have the same final before the weekend aren't gifted with this same luxury.

This push-back doesn't make sense when seeing that there aren't more or fewer days off for winter break, nor do the extra days off for student mental health relief (called burnout days) interrupt the nine weeks.

This change makes it so that the second nine weeks are longer than they have been, with about ten weeks instead of last year's nine.

Winter Break has always given us a week leading up to Christmas, containing the first three days of Hanukkah within them, but this year winter break gives us a week off after New Year.

While AISD did ask for input about

the 2022-2023 calendar as/after it was made, AISD didn't adequately inform students that they could be part of their upcoming year's decision, nor did AISD ask for input regarding winter break.

AISD shared this information as part of their December 2021 Family Newsletter. The newsletter mentioned addition of extra days off for students and staff called burnout days without mentioning in the newsletter that winter break was pushed back.

When first announced, the newsletter provided a calendar displaying that winter break wouldn't start until December 23, 2022.

While this was changed by just one day, no other newsletters had mentioned the impact of the new dates of winter break. AISD didn't properly inform students about the change.

The main and only way AISD can fix this massive blunder is by shifting winter break back to what it has been every year previously: including religious holidays and keeping finals in one week.

The Dispatch believes AISD's 2022-2023 schedule change needs to be made with the student's interests entirely in mind and only brings confusion and issues with the upcoming winter break.

In addition to this confusion, the new calendar seems to turn a blind eye to Jewish students who wish to celebrate their holiday while ensuring that Christian students celebrate their holiday.

Incorporating extra burnout days shouldn't push back winter break at all, and it doesn't make any sense that they do. ■

# Don't Mess with Texas: Littering piles up & poisons parking

**Dylan Zellner**  
Commentary Editor

Questions? Concerns? Email:  
bowie.journalism@gmail.com

Chris Doe\* slowly watched the construction of Bowie's new parking since his freshman year. He stands in the monument after 30 minutes off campus for lunch, trash in hand. Rushing to class he leaves his garbage parked on the second floor. Doe makes a daily routine of this, consistently littering Bowie parking with garbage.

Doe isn't alone in this, as he and many other students litter their spots with trash and ugliness, leaving the community to pick up after them. This sickness is everywhere.

Students leave trash behind constantly, littering Bowie's parking with the remnants of their food and drinks. There isn't a day when the lots don't have someone's trash left behind, and with the reality that there isn't even enough custodial staff to clean the inside of the buildings, the parking lots tend to be neglected. Which means trashy and ugly.

The school isn't responsible for a mess made by students, and students should take responsibility for their litter with the simple act of throwing it away. Holding onto trash until you are able to throw it away isn't a difficult task. Students need to respect our community and themselves as little enough to throw away their trash.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY Nick Wood & Dylan Zellner

While trash cans may be sparse and aren't around every corner, it takes minimal effort and time to hold onto trash until it can be discarded. It is utterly disrespectful for students to leave litter lying beneath their cars in Bowie's parking. Students should take pride in having these

facilities and respect them and this school for having these parking facilities.

Since students pay for parking, does this mean Bowie should clean up after students? Not at all. Regardless the rising costs to park on campus, which range from \$50 to 200\$, students

should remain respectful and clean up after themselves, and the act of paying should further push students to want to keep their parking in good condition.

Littering on campus can easily be seen as disrespecting Bowie and AISD, but the administration isn't affected by this. Texas is.

Don't Mess with Texas is an organization formed to inform Texans and stop Texas littering.

According to dontmesswithtexas.org, 362 million pieces of litter accumulate on Texas roads yearly, half of which comes from vehicles. Bowie students are contributing to that number and polluting our city.

A simple solution for students is to hold onto their trash until a trash can is available. This can be done by keeping trash in their cars until they get home or another site for disposal or just holding onto trash in hand until they are on campus where there are more trash cans and disposal sites. This action takes minimal effort and keeps our parking, environment, and home safe and clean.

Students should be mature and respectful enough to clean up after themselves and not leave their landfill scattered across Bowie's parking.

Littering here, at Bowie, is harmful to the entirety of the school as well as the land we live on. Have some pride in that land, and Don't Mess with Texas. ■

\*Chris Doe is a made up name for creative purposes

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# Not voting leads to a country of chaos

Recent midterm results prove the importance of youth vote in the democratic process

## EDITORIAL

Alarms blaring into her ears, she shoots up out of bed. Today is the day for her to vote in the midterms. She hasn't done any research or paid any attention to who's running. She slowly rolls back into bed, already given up.

Her voice won't be heard and she doesn't think it matters. This is a similar scenario young voters around the nation are experiencing.

In spite of this shared experience, the midterms revealed an astounding fact to every current and future voter. The voices of the youth completely and utterly matter. They can change the future and allow us to mold our world into what we wish/need it to be. All we need to do is keep voting and get those around us to join and help us create a better future.

We at the Dispatch demand that those who can vote, do. The second students turn 18 and become eligible to vote it is essential that they do. It is essential that the historically silent-young begin to exercise their rights and use their voices.

Every American under 25 who are eligible must vote and play their extremely important role in democracy and vote every opportunity they are given.

What our government does and chooses to do is based around the representatives that we put into office, and it is the voters who make the choices who those people are.

Almost immediately after high school, the world is thrown into the hands of the young. When we leave and

become independent citizens the world affects us more than it ever has with the changes and implementations the government makes impact our daily lives.

When looking at individual states, such as Georgia there was over a million voters in 2022, according to the Georgia Secretary of State. Alongside this outstanding number, the Civic Learning Research Center found that Georgia had the second-highest young voter turnout in the last three decades, 4% less than the highest turnout in 2018.

This incredible voter turnout and the results that youth provides is an extremely significant example of how young voices matter. When eligible, potential voters make the effort to vote, not only does it change our policies, it shares a truer representation of what the American people want in their government.

Many eligible voters share extremely similar ideals. According to a Harvard poll conducted in 2022, 42% of 18-29-year-olds share that they believe their vote won't make any difference. The poll release by the Institute of Politics at Harvard Kennedy School also found that 38% of young voters are less likely to vote at all. They believe their vote doesn't matter and choose to stay silent.

While this way of thinking

is technically accurate, when a large majority of young voters share this ideal, elections vary extremely as to what they could have resulted in. The midterm results are a prime example of this.

While everyone was expecting a red wave, some fearing it and others praying for it, an incredible turnout of young voters changed that. The expected red wave was ultimately voided because the youth of America chose to share their voices.

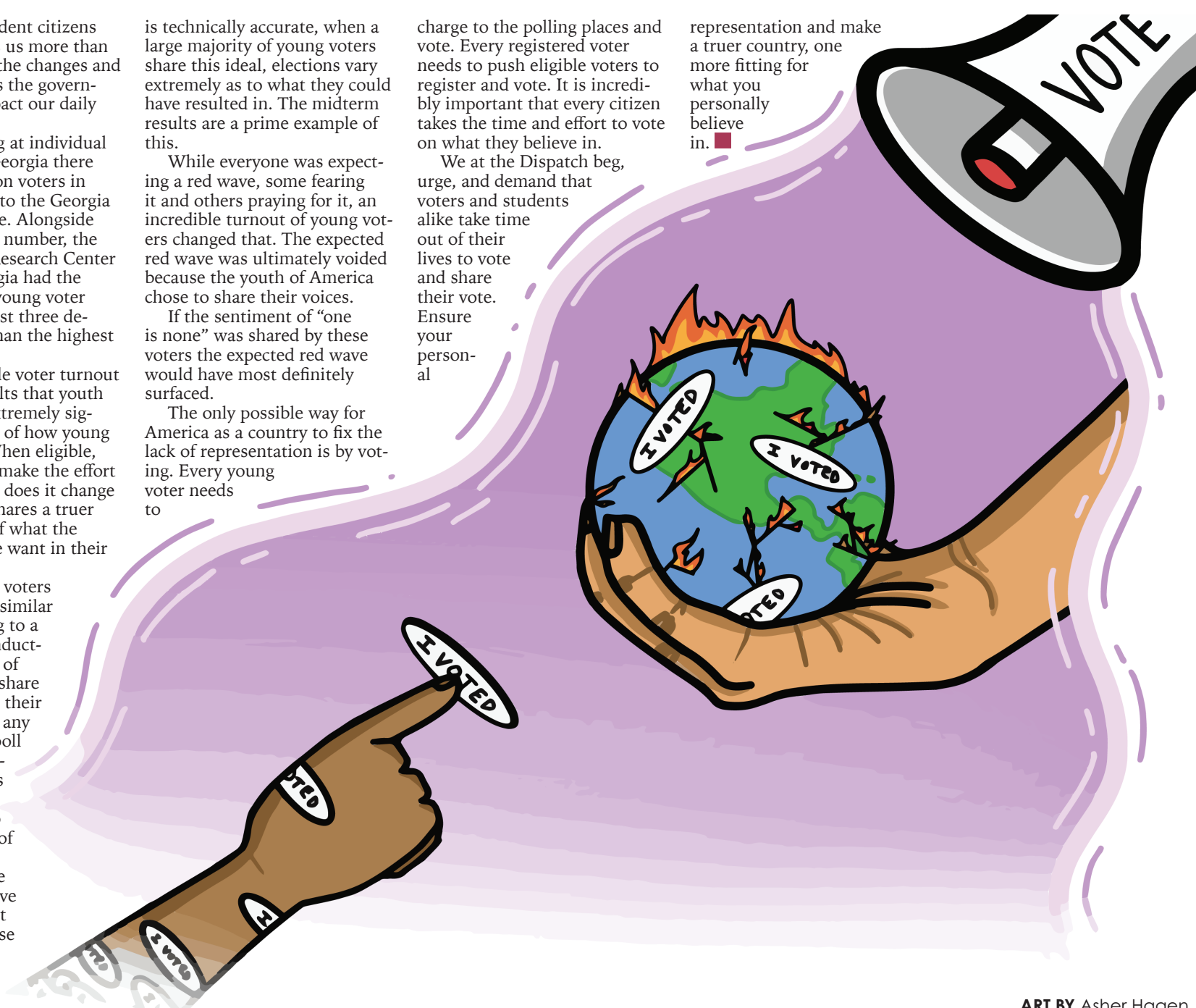
If the sentiment of "one is none" was shared by these voters the expected red wave would have most definitely surfaced.

The only possible way for America as a country to fix the lack of representation is by voting. Every young voter needs to

charge to the polling places and vote. Every registered voter needs to push eligible voters to register and vote. It is incredibly important that every citizen takes the time and effort to vote on what they believe in.

We at the Dispatch beg, urge, and demand that voters and students alike take time out of their lives to vote and share their vote. Ensure your personal

representation and make a truer country, one more fitting for what you personally believe in.



ART BY Asher Hagen

# Freedom of Speech abused & Twitter is a prime abuser

**Nathan Pasley**  
Dispatch Reporter

Questions? Concerns? Email:  
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There has been a huge spike of hate speech on Twitter since Elon Musk took control on October 28, for \$44 billion.

One of Musk's first actions was to un-ban accounts like Kanye West, who was originally banned for writing antisemitic remarks, and

Barry B. Bird @WokeAsf  
Slurs against gay men have appeared on twitter 2,506 times a day before Elon Musk took over now it is 3,964 a day. Also antisemitic post soared to 61 percent after Elon Musk gained control.  
5:23 AM - 12/2/22  
136.8K 4.9K

ART BY Colin Barnes & Nathan Pasley

former president Donald Trump, banned for the January 6 riots at the U.S. Capitol.

Coming into his new position, Musk developed a new system to get a blue verification check mark by paying for Twitter Blue. When an account has a blue check mark it means the person who runs that account is really who they are. Accounts that have this are companies, politicians, and celebrities. Once Twitter Blue was put in place, people began to impersonate companies, politicians, and celebrities leading to chaos until the service was suspended and delayed.

Unbanning accounts is a bad idea because the accounts were banned for a reason and shouldn't be reinstated because it will cause more harm to the Twitter community than good. Before the Twitter Blue service was added, a blue check mark is only given if the account used is authentic, notable, and active with no signs of spam or deception. People will absolutely abuse the service to mess with others.

An example of users abusing the Twitter Blue feature is when someone pretended to be the pharmaceutical giant Eli Lilly & Co. They used the logo, the name of the company, and a verified blue check mark and stated that insulin and other products were free. Eli Lilly contacted Twitter to ban the account that was spreading false information, which took hours. After the incident, Eli Lilly's stock share price fell by 4.37%.

When Elon Musk unbanned users like Jordan Peterson, a host of a right-wing media outlet called the Daily Wire, Andrew Tate a former kick-boxer and entrepreneur, and West, rapper and fashion designer. Musk clearly forgot to take into account that they haven't learned their lesson. When West was unbanned, he immediately posted more antisemitic things and his account



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY Nick Wood & Dylan Zellner

was banned yet again. He did this just hours after praising Hitler in an Alex Jones interview.

A solution to the Twitter Blue problem is to let people who already have it keep it only if they pay for it. This would work more efficiently instead of letting anyone have a blue check mark and become verified. This way Twitter gets to make money while also keeping companies and people safe from impersonators.

I think Elon should make it harder for permanently banned accounts to become reinstated. I

would implement an option to make the violator write an essay on how they can better exercise their freedom of speech. If they continue to be a problem then they become permanently banned and cannot make new accounts.

Twitter will be heading for a rough patch if they cannot improve their situation. They need to focus more on their active users than banned accounts. Twitter Blue needs to be changed to make sure that it cannot be super accessible so that people can't abuse it.

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# Theory & race stolen from education

Politicians discuss forbidding Critical Race Theory from education after Florida bill passes

## EDITORIAL

Imagine a dystopian America. One where education is regulated to be taught using less than 50 words and only 10% of history is allowed to be taught.

To everyone's knowledge war, crime, hatred, and all things that harm the idealistic view of the world never happened. The world has been peaceful and just since the dawn of time.

This is the world we are being marched toward. One where America's history and the cruelty of man are swept under the rug because educators are worried about fines and lawsuits that teaching history has the possibility of bringing.

In 2022 Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis signed a bill called "The Stop Woke Act" into law. This bill outlaws teaching anything other than the fact, such as any theories or speculations historians have made including the well-renowned critical race theory.

This bill revolves around the students' feelings and whether a student feels racially attacked or anguished.

The attempt of enforcing laws that lead to the censoring of facts is outrageous. This bill will only lead to an incredibly flawed education system where educators are afraid to teach what needs to be taught.

The Stop Woke Act specifically mentions the following as offenses that would be reprimanded in the result of a student feeling anguish: the feeling that their race is being villainized, stated to have privilege, morally inferior, racial "colorblindness" viewed as a form of racism, or making students feel guilty for past actions of their respected race.

Punishment of educators can involve lawsuits directed toward the school as well as the possibility of teachers losing their jobs and livelihood. However due to the vagueness of the bill and the unprecedented implementation it brings, many still

speculate how severe enforcement will be when educators are accused of breaking the Stop Woke Act.

While the bill was initially passed in early 2022, U.S. District Judge Mark E. Walker stopped enforcement due to its vagueness and for violating the First Amendment; discriminating against speech based on viewpoint.

History is important and this bill undermines it, contradicting the disclosed purpose of creating the Stop Woke Act.

However, according to DeSantis, as well as those who support the bill's passing, the Stop Woke Act's main and only purpose is to ensure that education is to only teach facts.

According to The Stop Woke Act's supporters, the bill was put in place with the hope of fighting bias and allowing students to use the facts they learn in the classroom to form their own opinions outside the classroom.

Although teaching students with the purpose of them forming their own opinions should be every educator's purpose, this bill misconstrues what fact is.

If important theories such as critical race theory are considered to be biased and untrue due to the nature of being a theory, then in comparison theories such as relativity, the Big Bang theory, evolution, atomic theory, Newton's law of gravitation, etc. should all be inappropriate to be taught in school.

According to this bill and its supporters' logic, theories and speculation are misleading and inappropriate to be taught in school. This is due to the belief that teaching these varying subjects is viewed as indoctrination into the left wing.

While the contrasted perspective of critical race theory is a more liberally founded idea, theory, in general, is important; especially one so consistently discussed with today's current events as well as the rising discussion of social justice and activism.

In addition to theory, history

should be taught without an educator's concern for students feeling about the harsh nature of American history.

If history isn't properly taught as well as the theories as to how our history is still affecting us, it will disrupt student education as well as to avoid unconscious racist beliefs that are possible to form when not exposed to history.

Learning the history of the USA is incredibly important because it acts as a guide on how the misdeeds of our founders are still affecting America today as well as how to right that wrong.

Without the theories of how history is affecting the day-to-day lives of the USA, it will become increasingly difficult to notice and fight the injustice that Americans constantly face.

In addition to the contradiction this bill faces with itself, it is incredibly apparent that the bill was written with a political agenda in mind. The mention of students feeling attacked by feeling their race is villainized or holds privilege is in direct reference to white students.

As a country, we need to set aside our feelings and biases and teach the youth what's important. Students need to be taught everything that they will face outside of school, theories included.

While the Stop Woke Act tries to dress as a law that helps students fight bias, it embodies the opposite.

This new law will hurt younger students despite how much anguish they have a possibility of feeling because it will create less informed students. The Stop Woke Act counters education and counters justice. ■



ART BY Asher Hagen

# Incentives taken from students for nauseating reasons



Dylan Zellner  
Commentary Editor

Questions? Concerns? Email:  
bowie.journalism@gmail.com

Coughing and bedridden for a week, unable to move with a fever burning through the bed she's sleeping on. Jasmine Doe stays home to beat the sickness that's taken control of her immune system when she notices something that sets her mind on fire, more than her fever ever could.

Doe lost her incentives in spite of her attempts to stay caught up with her school work from her bedside. Knowing that she's mathematically challenged and struggles excessively with the pressure of a test, she's going to be forced to take the final and potentially fail.

Attendance incentives are an incredible perk that all students look forward to, allowing students to trade their final test scores with their nine weeks average.

These incentives can save a student from failing a test in a subject a student struggles in or for one who struggles with testing in general.

According to bowie.austinschools, the primary goal is to increase achievement by maximizing the time students spend in instruction as well as discouraging non-essential absences.

However, this purpose is contradicted when looking at how student's can lose them.

For example, sick students who stay home lose their chance of getting one, two, or any incentive with no control of their own.

While students' stay home with the intention of not contaminating their peers, those students get punished.



ART BY Colin Barnes

These TEA rules don't fit the unpredictability life holds, nor does it take into account natural occurring events that affect students' attendance.

While Bowie is obligated to follow the rules that the TEA has set aside, these rules are completely inappropriate and don't reflect students' lives.

However, not all sick days count against

students' incentive. The only exception for a sick student to keep their incentive is for the individual to show up to class for at least 45 minutes.

This is ludicrous especially because it pushes sick students to potentially infect students around them with the hopes of keeping their incentives.

In addition to keeping students and staff safe

from illness, this adds unnecessary stress to students' already stressful day off. While students are taking these sick days they are missing assignments, notes, tests, and are already forced to make up these losses.

On top of apparent stress of falling behind, students are now plagued with the thought of losing their incentive.

Students should only concern themselves with getting better and healing, without the additional stress of losing their incentive.

However, students aren't the only people upset with the loss of incentives, parents are too. According to a Facebook page where parents express their concerns, parents have stated their frustration when their students lost their incentives because of the flu or strep throat.

Both parents and students are recognizing the flaws of this unforgiving incentive system. This alone shows the flaws this system holds over students.

The incentive system we have in place needs to be adjusted to fit student life. The current guidelines are unfair to students who, while sick, attempt to keep up with their schoolwork, or any sick student in general.

A sick day should only count against a student if there is no communication with their teachers and there is no attempt to avoid falling behind in classes.

The current TEA guidelines don't allow room for the randomness and unpredictability life holds. There are too many days that count against students that disregard the entire purpose of the incentive system altogether. ■

\*Jasmine Doe is a made up name for creative purposes

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# State law damages drag communities

Multiple Senate Bills impede on LGBTQ+ lifestyles & rights

## EDITORIAL

Children sit in awe. They witness the story of A Day in the Life of Marlon Bundo and the bunny's journey to getting married to his bunny boyfriend.

The storyteller creates worlds for the children through the many stories they have to tell, and children witness these stories before their very eyes.

This storyteller is an entertainer with a passion for theatre and a love for children and is none other than a man dressed as a woman.

Passed in the Senate on April 5, 2023, Senate Bill 12 (SB12) follows the stance of not allowing men dressed as women or women dressed as men to be viewed by children, specifically when being portrayed sexually. In addition to this bill is Senate Bill 1601 (SB1601), removing library funding if men dressed as women or women dressed as men read books to children.

We at the Dispatch believe these bills are a slippery slope in the wrong direction. They are specifically designed to impede drag and LGBTQ rights as well as politicize issues that don't require to be seen through a political lens. Child development

and safety is not political issue.

While the stated purpose of the bill is to protect children from sexual and prurient interest, these bills seem to focus more on drag/LGBTQ censorship than child development.

It is completely indisputable that children shouldn't be exposed to sexual and prurient interests; however, these bills leave an indecent amount of interpretation that makes members of the drag and LGBTQ communities vulnerable to being targeted and marginalized.

Specifically following SB1601, individuals dressed in drag are not allowed to read to children in a library setting with the threat of the libraries losing their public funding. This contradicts SB12 where the main issue is sexual and prurient interests, revealing that the main issue Senator Homophobe has is only that the performers are men dressed as women or women dressed as men.

Calgary-based registered psychologist specializing in child and adolescent mental health, Ashleigh Yule, and psychotherapist, board-certified clinical sexologist, as well as founder/clinical director of The Center for Relationship and Sexual Health, Joe Kort both seem to

agree on how damaging drag is to adolescent development.

Simply put, it's not. Yule states children's and adolescents' views on sexuality are fluid, especially because they haven't been exposed to gender norms, with drag specifically challenging gender norms in positive ways; allowing adolescents to express themselves regardless of old-fashioned gender norms.

In addition to this, Kort states that exposing anyone, including children, "people with a different sexual orientation or gender identity doesn't influence their innate sexual orientation or gender identity."

He also includes how little people focus on how bigoted ideals as well as institutional harms, are much worse than the ridiculous fear that children can "be turned gay" due to LGBTQ+ exposure.

Yule adds that some drag shows include more "flirty" and sexual performances, which can result in risky sexual behavior later in life.

However, there are also flirty and sexual performances where the performers conform to a traditional set of gender norms.

In the same way, parents restrict their children from

viewing these sexual and flirty performances, parents should restrict their children from viewing the same shows with drag and LGBTQ performers.

Sexual orientation has nothing to do with how sexual a performance is. The parent must protect their child from exposure to harmful sexual and prurient acts, regardless of the performers' sexual orientation.

There is only one real answer to these questions. Prejudice and homophobia. No one on either side of this bill wishes for children to be exposed to sexual and prurient acts. The Drag and LGBTQ+ community wishes to protect children as much as Sen. Hughes.

A solution to these bills should be focusing on real issues that stunt child development. Specifically when looking at sexual and prurient interests, sites found on the Internet are the main accusers.

We need to focus on how children are being exposed to sexual acts and not on how few speculate children get confused when facing the LGBTQ and drag communities. ■



ART BY Asher Hagen

## GoGuardian is necessary for honest education



Dylan Zellner  
Commentary Editor

Questions? Concerns? Email:  
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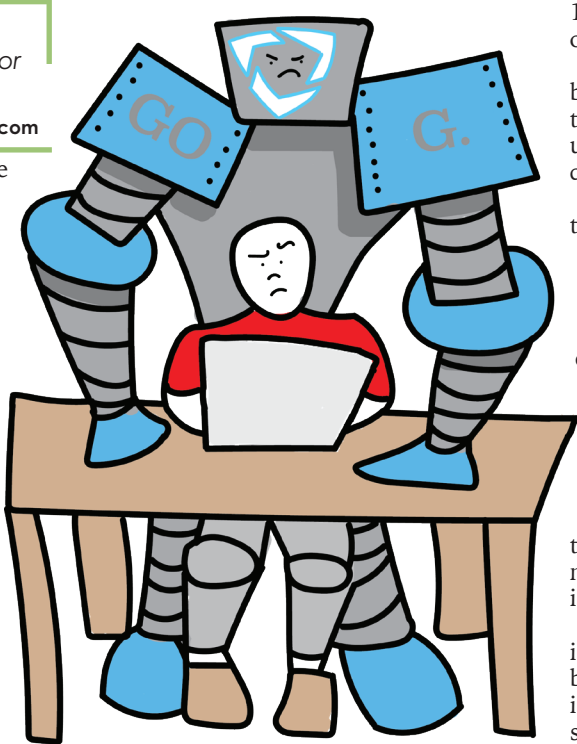
GoGuardian is a pain. It gets in the way of making menial and extremely boring assignments go by fast without having to pay attention to the concept that's being taught.

That has to sound at least a little ridiculous to even those who agree with the sentiment. While GoGuardian may feel to be an invasion of privacy, the only privacy students desire is to do tasks unrelated to school work or indulge in forms of academic dishonesty.

Although being forced to stay honest may be annoying, students should do the work and learn the material. GoGuardian isn't used as a weapon to catch dishonest students; its purpose is to keep students on track with the curriculum as well as be honest.

Because GoGuardian might feel like an invasion of privacy, it's important to ask what purpose privacy serves in class. Privacy isn't something that should be needed when students are expected to be doing classwork.

While privacy is important and everyone has a right to their own personal space, I don't think privacy is necessary



ART BY Liberty Pittman

when simply doing schoolwork. Because plainly put, who cares if your teacher knows you're on task?

According to Harvard, a survey conducted in 2015 found that students check their devices for non-classroom purposes

11.7 times per day, taking up an average of 21% of class time.

In addition to this, a survey conducted by Tindell and Bohlander in 2011 found that 92% of college students reported using their phones to send text messages during class.

I believe that if college students abuse their devices to this degree, as early as 2011 when devices were substantially less advanced, then high school students in 2023 will be just as distracted if not more. GoGuardian helps fight these distractions.

However distracted students aren't the only issue, some have speculated how applications such as GoGuardian can be seen as a breach of student trust as well as jeopardizing student-teacher relations/trust. Contrary to this, I believe GoGuardian was implemented because students broke this trust initially.

If students truly don't want to be monitored during class then that trust has to be reestablished through student academic honesty and productivity. Unless every student uses devices responsibly, then GoGuardian should stay implemented for the sake of keeping easily distracted students on task.

GoGuardian serves its purpose well: keeping students on task and honest. It's a tool that has served well to support both teachers and students with their education. ■

## Correction

### Stacie Feen late work policy misrepresented

In the Feb. 17, 2023 edition of the Dispatch, on Page 2, News, there was an error in the story about Bowie's late work policies causing students to feel stress. In the infographic on the left side under the title Stacie Feen the first data point reads incorrectly: For every day a lab or test is turned in late ten points will be deducted. The correct policy is: Projects that students choose to not turn in on time are subject to a 10 point (sic) deduction per day (excluding week-

ends/holidays).

In the accompanying story on that same page, on paragraph 11, there was awkward wording of the transition sentence. It should read: Feen's late work policy, which aligns with other anatomy teachers, involves a point deduction for work that is late. For students in anatomy classes who fail to turn in daily work like homework or labs the point deduction is 30 points. The Dispatch apologizes for the errors.

- Projects that student chooses to not turn in on time are subject to a 10-point deduction daily
- Daily grades and labs not turned in on time will receive a 30-point late grade penalty
- Late work due to absences needs to be turned in a timely fashion



Stacie Feen  
Late Work Policy

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This year I contributed to my news publication by helping out people who needed art for their pages or stories. I am the current art and graphics editor for the paper. That means that I am the go to person to create art when there is none. This year I did the art for the paper's editorial for all 5 printed issues of our paper. I was also a person that the editor on the politics page relied on to make art for infographics in these 5 issues. I also did a couple of art pieces for the sports page of the publication. On top of those two things I did a lot of art for the reviews and opinions sections of our paper and, at the end of the year, I took over one of the opinions pages and had to design and manage the art for the entire page. Because I create so much art in every publishing cycle, I have to have a tight turn around and I have to be able to make quality art quickly and efficiently. This is something that I have had to learn to do over the course of this year.

This year, I developed new ways of making my art including utilizing the tools at my disposal. I was able to use a drawing tablet to improve my efficiency and quality in my art. I also had to get more familiar with things like Adobe Illustrator and Adobe InDesign that I used to make and design art.

My experience with Illustrator and InDesign helped me a lot with making my own page in the newspaper at the end of this year as well as making a page in my publications online magazine. The online magazine comes out once a semester and this year I worked on the magazine that came out first semester and the one that came out second semester. For this we had to plan our pages and create all of the content on the pages ourselves. I not only did the art and graphics for my page but also helped out other people who didn't feel they were capable of doing the art for their own pages as well.

This year, due to the fact that I was working with so many people, I had to work on improving my communication skills. I had to not only create a piece of art that looks good but also one that works for the person I'm making it for. This caused me to have to communicate with whatever page editor or writer I am working with. Because of this I had to change designs sometimes or make several versions of the same piece of art. Since I was making art for several pages I had to learn how to juggle not only my time making art but also how many people I was talking to and communicating with.

1st thing: A person's hands tied up in student IDs made to shed light on the controversy surrounding student ID policies implemented in our school.

2nd thing: A snowman throwing a snowball to put out the first two candles of a menorah. This is in response to the new winter break schedule in Austin Independent School District (AISD) in which there were high school finals on the first two days of hanukkah.

3rd thing: A young person's hand covering a broken world handed down to them by an older person in I voted stickers. This was made when election season was happening and it's meant to represent how the younger generations are trying to fix the world through voting.

4th thing: A burning pencil symbolizing education stabbing through America. It is meant to allude to the impact that education has had on America in recent years with things like gender and critical race studies.

5th thing: A drag queen holds a sign that states: "Can't drag me down." This is in response to the anti-drag bills in several US states including Texas.