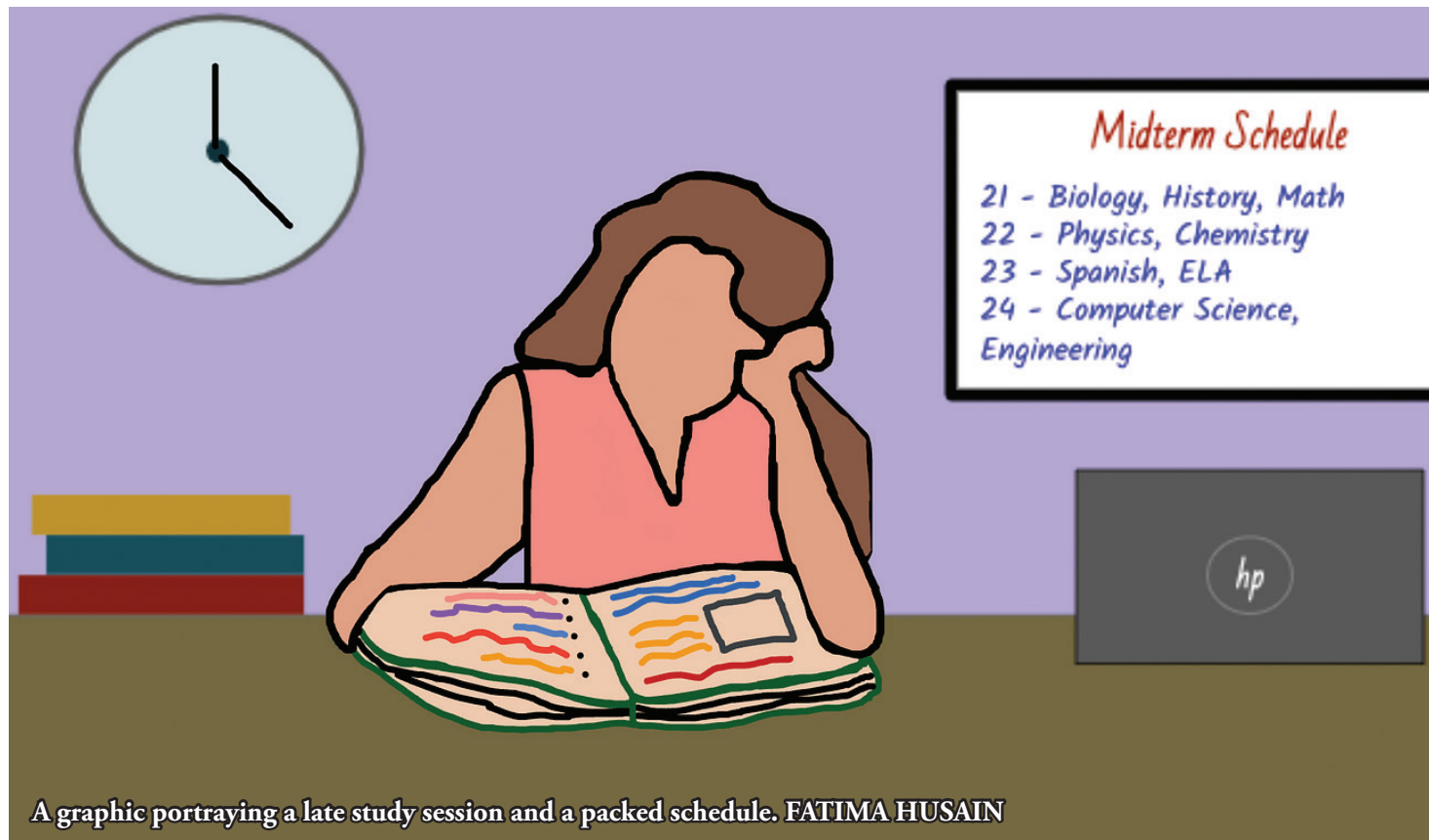


Nerves Around Midterms



A graphic portraying a late study session and a packed schedule. FATIMA HUSAIN

Fatima Husain
Reporter

Midterms. The mere mention of the word can send shivers down students' spines. This period of intense academic pressure—typically occurring halfway through the school year—is a breeding ground for anxiety, stress, and a general sense of dread. While a certain level of challenge is motivating and healthy, excessive educational strain can negatively impact a student's mental and physical well-being, hindering their overall performance

in school. Despite high expectations and toilsome study sessions, midterms offer educators, students, and guardians an opportunity to reflect, learn, and improve.

Midterm Madness

According to Malden High students, midterms are a multifaceted experience, with a majority loathing the strenuous mental pressure and others seeing the benefits of the school-wide testing. "Students are overwhelmed enough juggling different things like homework, jobs,

after-school activities, etc., that midterms—to an extent—become your life for a while with the excessive studying for most of your classes," explained sophomore Trini Le.

Adding to Le's argument, sophomore Lilian Fang expressed, "Many teachers don't give us sufficient time to study or don't go over everything on the test. Many classes haven't even decided if they are going to give a midterm or not."

While many view the effects of exam-related stress on students as prominently mental, academic

Continued on page 5

Indoor Track Warms Up for a Promising Season



Slade Harding competes in the 600-meter race. JESSICA LI

As the days get colder and colder during this time of year, the Indoor Track team has been warming up for their winter season.

The team held their interest meeting on Thursday, November 14th, inviting new and returning players to share information about the sport, explain meet details, and introduce both their new and returning captains.

Throughout the week of November 18th, the seniors hosted multiple captains' practices at MacDonald Stadium from 3:00 to 4:30 pm. Sprinters and distance runners warmed up and did stretches together, but had separate workouts.

"We host them because it's good to have time to be with the team and do things together," explained senior girls' distance captain Nashalyn Rubert who added that the practices are "just to really help you improve if there are certain goals you're trying to achieve." Captains' practices can benefit those who want to ease their way into the sport and get a good idea of what practices will

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Girls' Basketball Triumphs over Mustangs in Thrilling 41-32 Game



Kimberly Tropnas scoring layup while Medford struggles to keep up. ASHTON CALIXTE

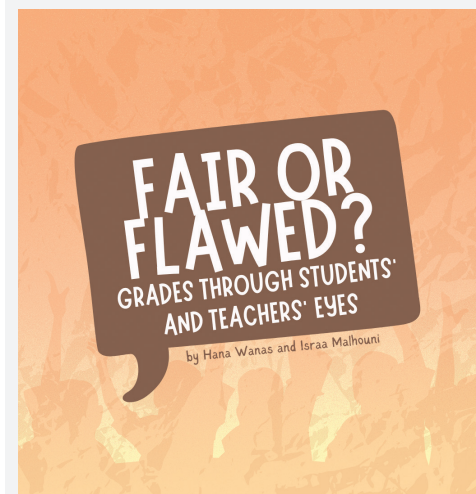
Aundrea Cifuentes
Reporter

The Malden High Girls' Varsity Basketball Team won 41-32 against the Medford Mustangs on January 2nd at Malden High's Finn Gym. This was an intense, back-and-forth game with the ball on each side of the court.

The first quarter of the game consisted of many back-and-forths. Though the Medford Mustangs

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Fair or Flawed? Grades through Students' and Teachers' Eyes



Hana Wanas
Reporter

Israa Malhouni
Reporter

Do you tend to worry about your grades? Are you unsure if there are fair systems in place for grades so that all students benefit? It is not just students who have opinions on the grading system; teachers have them too.

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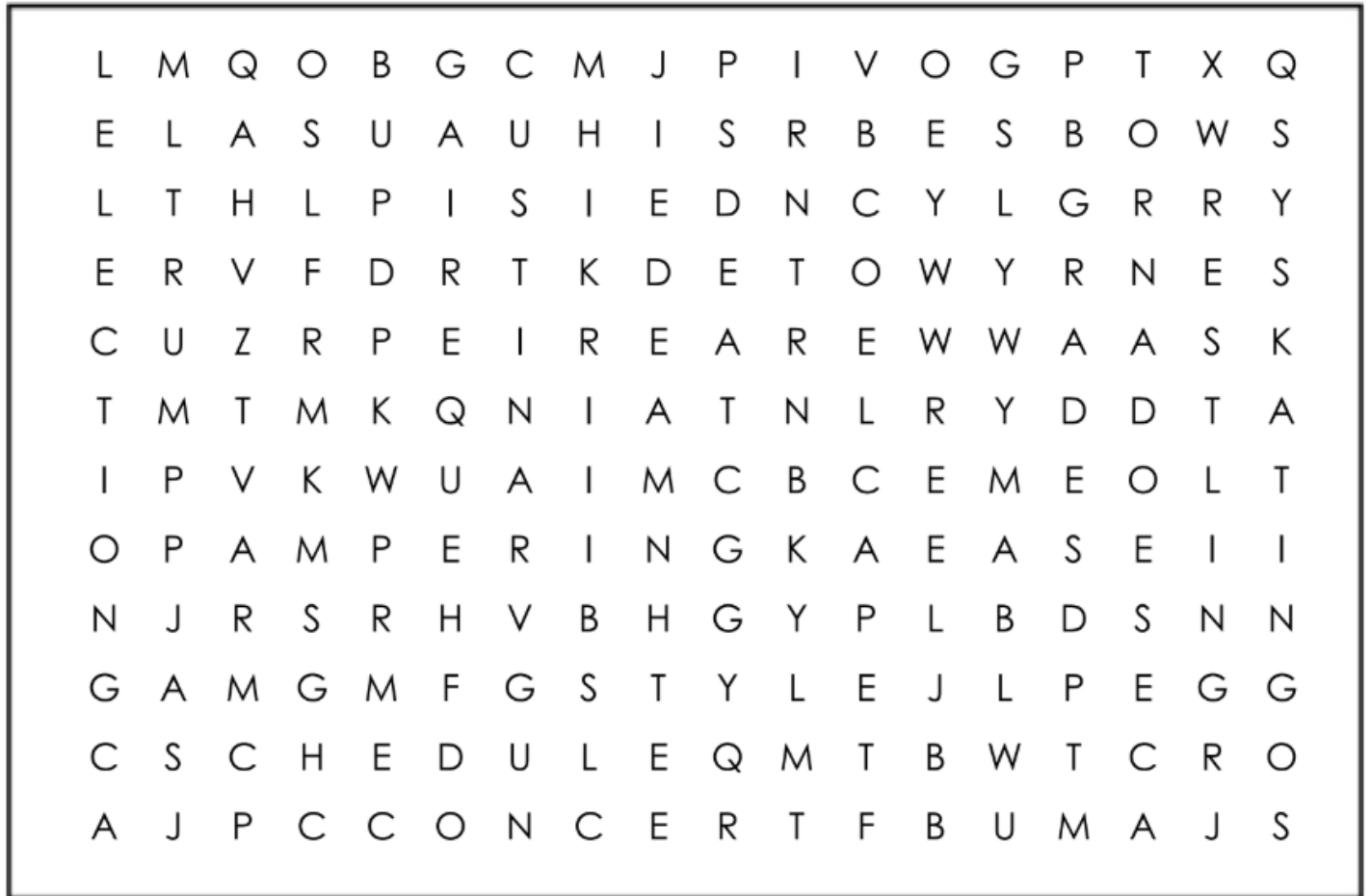
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Find the following words in the puzzle.
Words are hidden → ↓ and ↘ .

BASKETBALL
CHEERLEADERS
CONCERT
ELECTION
GRADES
GUIDANCE

MALDEN
MIDTERMS
PAMPERING
SCHEDULE
SKATING
SNOWY

STYLE
TORNADOES
TRACK
TRUMP
WRESTLING



Scan the video to watch Head of Sports Gabriela Parini Cordova's highlights from a Selects Market event, covered on pages 18 and 19 by Editor-in-Chief of Social Media and Print, Jaslie Fang.

The Blue and Gold

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Read more on our website at MALDENBLUEANDGOLD.COM



From left to right: Editor-in-Chief of Print and Design Abigael Fesehaie, Editor-in-Chief of Social Media and Print Jaslie Fang, Editor-in-Chief Jessica Li, Editor-in-Chief Mack Keating, Editor-in-Chief of Web and Mobile Bo Stead, and Editor-in-Chief of Web and Mobile Lily Nguyen. GABRIELA PARINI CORDOVA

From left to right: Managing Editor Thomas Tierney, Head of Local Delina Yohannes, Head Copy-Editor Chouaib Saidi, Head of Sports Gabriela Parini Cordova, and Managing Editor Ashton Calixte. JESSICA LI

MLK Day in Malden

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Malden Residents Make Late Activist's Dreams 'A Reality'

Haset Tesfaw
Lead Reporter

Over 60 years have passed since Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. stood on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial and gave his iconic "I Have a Dream" speech. To this day, many worldwide are still inspired by his actions; and to commemorate them, the Emmanuel Baptist Church in Malden hosted a Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration on Saturday, January 18th, 2025.

Eric Henry, a church committee member, explained how this celebration was a "recognition of our past and the struggles we've been through."

The event began with the pastor thanking and praising God for the opportunity to bring everyone together on such a significant day. Following this, everyone rose to sing "God Bless America."

Reverend Dr. David Kilpatrick, West Medford Baptist Church's pastor, personally knew Dr. King. He marched in the civil rights movement and was on a committee with him in New York during the 1960s. In his speech, Reverend Kilpatrick spoke passionately about how God encourages humans to stay strong in difficult times. He discussed the importance of finding the strength and courage to speak up when it matters most, particularly for minorities who must ensure their voices are heard.

"The battle has not been won, but the battle is ongoing. We are a part of it, and we will do our part to make this world what God envisioned," Reverend Kilpatrick stated.

"As far as we've come, we've still got distance to go," Henry agreed.

Malden High School's Holland House Guidance Counselor, Kristy Magras, announced that they were selling food by the entrance and that all proceeds were going towards the church. "Not only does it feed the stomach, but also the soul," Magras emphasized.

Mayor Gary Christenson attended the event and spoke about many of Malden's achievements. "I want Martin Luther King Jr. to know that we're not just about the words he spoke, but we're about the actions that need to be taken in order to get where we all want to go. Most times, we talk, but we don't do. I wanted to let people know today that we're taking that action. It's going to take us all to make Malden all that it can and should be."

"What are you doing for others? That's how I function each and every day. I'm always thinking about what we could be doing to help others," Christenson said.

Afterward, Eldana Abrhame, a junior at MHS, went up to give a motivational student reflection speech about the importance of taking action. As a young leader, Abrhame believed that it is essential to learn from the example set by Martin Luther King Jr. and "help the youth adopt a mindset of perseverance and determination."

"The main message of my speech was to inspire the youth to continue dedicating themselves to their goals no matter how big or difficult they may seem," explained Abrhame. "Although many times our ambitions and dreams may be diminished by society, we must always work twice as hard to make our dreams a reality."

A series of performances were then displayed, starting with Malden High School's step team who presented an empowering routine. This was followed by a beautiful saxophone rendition and then two young girls who danced soulfully as a gift of worship for God.

There were also online viewers, and one woman spoke virtually through a Zoom call to add a few remarks. She began by giving thanks to everyone who helped put the event together before she expressed the significance of the civil rights movement and the lasting impact of Dr. King's work.

Reverend Dr. Debora Jackson appreciated her virtual presence and explained how, for those who were unable to come in person, joining online shows true commitment: it is so easy to just leave without anyone knowing, in comparison to being in person where everyone can see you if you get up and walk out—showing their commitment to being there to celebrate that day.

Reverend Jackson then continued to give her speech. "As people of African descent in 2025, can we say we have justice? Are we truly free? Even though we faced difficulties, he still had a dream. What about you, what about me, what about us? Are we still able to dream? 62 years later, it's not enough to dream. We have to take action to make this dream a reality. The question is, what must we do to make this dream a reality."

Emmanuel Baptist Church is "one of the oldest black churches in Malden, and I'm super proud of it," Kashawna Harling, another committee member, said. "I want to continue that legacy and would love to grow the church. It's a small church, but I would love people to know more about it and that we're not just a house of worship and support, but we're also here to uplift and do other things for our community."

"We've done Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebrations in the past, but this year's theme is making a dream a reality," Harling stated. "I remember when this was not a holiday and how we had to get



Step team performs at Emmanuel Baptist Church. Photo submitted by Rashmi KC.



Eldana Abrhame giving her student reflection speech. HASET TESFAW



The choir singing "God Bless America." HASET TESFAW

together for breakfast and then go to work. To now have this holiday and still think it's important to come together is so wonderful to me," Reverend Jackson said.

Before going to eat, acknowledgments were given, and gratitude was shown to everyone who attended and came together to celebrate this day as a united community.

"For a lot of people, the day that they feel energized is New Year's. For me, that day is Martin Luther King Jr. Day," Christenson finished.

Reverend Jackson said.

Before going to eat, acknowledgments were given, and gratitude was shown to everyone who attended and came together to celebrate this day as a united community.

"For a lot of people, the day that they feel energized is New Year's. For me, that day is Martin Luther King Jr. Day," Christenson finished.

A special guest performing their dance as a gift to God pictured above. HASET TESFAW

MY THANK YOU LETTER TO SPORTS

In the United States, high school and extra-curriculars go together like peanut butter and jelly. Sports have practically defined my high school experience, as they have for millions of other teens in America. So, sports will also define this editorial.

As I have now finished my final season of golf and will soon begin my final season of baseball, I have realized this: it is so important that kids play sports in high school or join an extra-curricular where they can be a part of a team.

Friendships are usually one of the few things that we can actually carry with us once we graduate; while friends are made everywhere in school, there are none quite like those made when you played on the same team. In fact, this is so special, that they made a whole word for it: teammate. They are the people who you make daily Chipotle runs with, despite the negative balance in your bank account. To me, teammates are the people you spend more time with than your family—but you never complain because, to me, they are family.

While I had so much fun playing golf for Malden High, I only began playing the sport itself in my freshman year. Baseball, on the other hand, has been my life since I was held in the hospital room as a newborn. As a kid, my grandfather and I, who fostered my love for baseball, would play in our living room, where he would hit me hundreds of ground balls and not stop until I successfully fielded exactly 100 in a row. Every long summer night, I would fall asleep lying on him as we watched the Red Sox. My grandfather was in love with baseball, and he caused me to feel the same way. While most kids' heroes were Superman or Iron Man, mine were Dustin Pedroia and David Ortiz.

While many people seem to believe that sports are nothing more than silly games, I am here to tell you that sports have so many lessons applicable to our lives.

Sports are vital to someone's character development not only in high school but also in younger grade levels. Sports teach us teamwork, problem-solving, and perhaps most importantly, that sometimes we lose and do not get our way. At the same rate, they show us that despite a loss, there is always a second chance. We learn that when we fail, it is not over: all we have to do is work twice as hard and come back twice as strong.

When there are teammates you may not get along with, you put that aside, because at the end of the day, you are both on the same team. If they fail, then you also fail.

This also goes beyond many people's idea of a traditional "sport." To have a positive effect on a child, they do not have to be playing an organized sport, as playing pickup games with their friends will often have the same effect on fostering community and strong role models.

For kids in school, while it is tragic that children even have to undergo circumstances such as poverty, mental illness, and violence at home, time spent playing their sport or participating in a club, often with their best friends, acts as a temporary oasis for these children to escape their world for some time.

When I look back on my childhood, I have warm and fond memories of school, my friends, and my family. But the ones I remember the most, are



From left to right: Sean Hudson, Billy Gavin, and Bo Stead at a youth baseball game. Submitted by Bo Stead.

the ones from playing youth sports in Malden. Sports create brotherhoods, sisterhoods, and best friends. I am sure others have similar feelings about participating in the band, or performing in the choir or in a play, or any number of activities.

Playing flag football was a pivotal part of my foundation of playing sports as a child. Now, every morning on my drive to school, I find myself looking out at MacDonal Stadium. I cannot help but reminisce on long summer Friday nights, where I met all of my best friends, running ridiculous trick plays named after Fortnite and, of course, causing mayhem at Pisa Pizza after. For me and many others, sports were also social events. Throwing a bunch of eight-year-old boys on a football field, there are bound to be some lifelong bonds forged.

To this day, my friends and I sit around our lunch table and talk trash about our old Little League baseball teams, brag about who won the City Series in certain years, and still argue about who struck who out. The most remarkable part is the tradition and rich history of youth sports in Malden. All of our fathers were in the same leagues as us, and just like us, became best friends because of them. Even they still talk about their legendary games.

My favorite movie of all time, "The Sandlot", perfectly illustrates this idea of the bonds created through sports as it is a beautiful story about helping new people, friendship, and baseball. For anyone who has not had the pleasure of watching this masterpiece, I recommend that after reading this, you go and give it a watch.

As I move into a completely new page in this new chapter of my life, I may never play competitive baseball again. To me this is okay. I have a lot to thank baseball for: making me close to my grandfather, as well as giving me countless hilarious memories and bonds that will last a lifetime. I hope what sports have done for me and millions of other children across the world can continue to have the same effect on my children and generations to come. A world without sports would be missing out on one of the best parts of being human.

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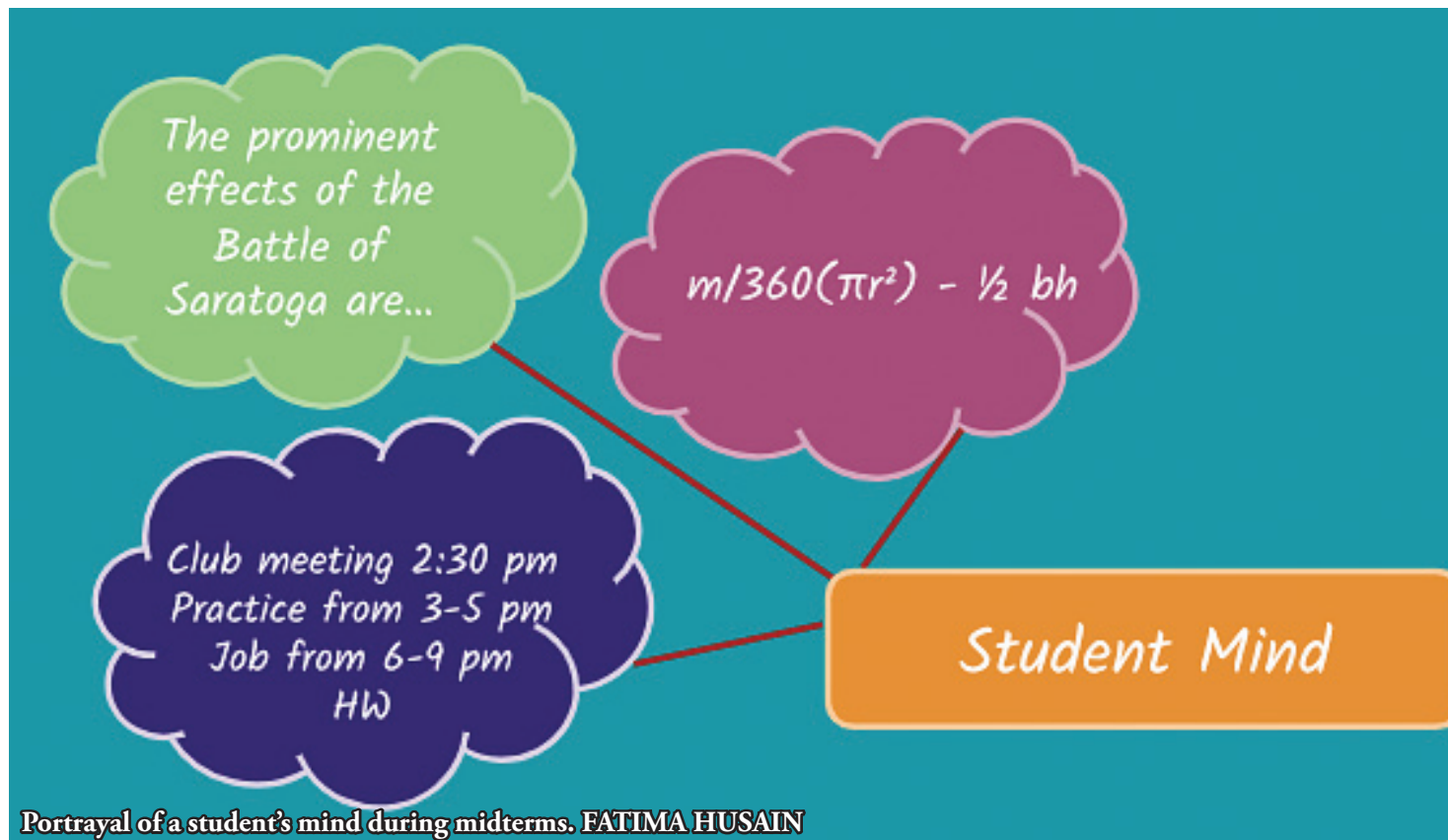
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Portrayal of a student's mind during midterms. FATIMA HUSAIN

Continued from front page.

pressure can have physical drawbacks as well. In 2018, a study from the National Bureau of Economic Research investigated a hormone called cortisol, which is directly related to stress and academic performance. The study found "15 percent more cortisol" in students' bodily systems on the day of high-stakes testing, proving a direct correlation between stress and testing. "It can be challenging for students who do not thrive in [testing] environments—especially timed ones—to perform to the best of their abilities," pointed out counselor Sharon Lee, a former MHS alumni.

Factors such as perfectionism, course load, parental validation, lack of self-care, and time management all contribute to midterm anxiety. Students who pursue flawless scores often lose themselves in their studies and obsess over minor mistakes—leading to pessimistic self-talk cycles—whereas lack of organization may result in all-nighters and cram studying, both providing zero aid to desired test scores or emotional welfare.

"Time management is tremendously difficult with a high school schedule. Aspects such as large amounts of homework, studying for quizzes, sports, clubs, and much more can impact the amount of time you put into education," commented freshman Ruby Neith Forbes.

The main issue that consistently troubles students is the amount of information they have to retain for the big test, containing almost five months' worth of content. "It's a lot, especially if you're taking AP classes," shared senior Nashalyn Rubert. It is grueling and tiresome for students—who all have a life outside of school—to spend hours memorizing every tiny detail learned since September for a heavily weighted test lasting 80-90 minutes. Additionally, if we consider test anxiety, midterms are not a fair judge of character or grades for students who struggle on tests but excel in class, one test score should not cause a feeling of apprehension in students' minds.

"I'm ready for them to be over,"

voiced freshman Vicky Ye.

The Other Side

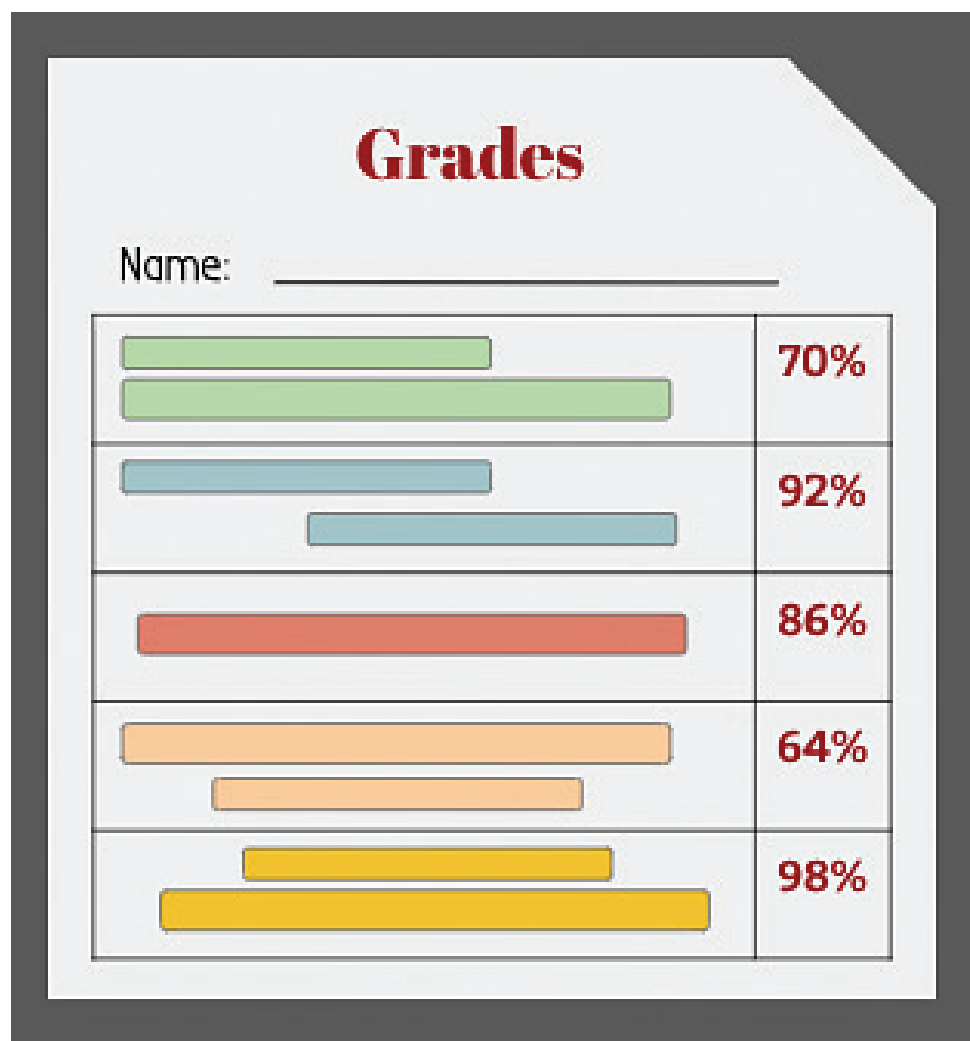
However, midterms and finals—when implemented effectively—can serve as a valuable tool for students, teachers, and guardians alike, fostering deeper learning and advancements. The midterms are a wonderful method for everyone involved to build on their strengths and learn from their weaknesses.

Students who are unsatisfied with their grades can take advantage of the upcoming test by scoring proficiently and getting the boost they want. In this manner, midterms and finals act as powerful motivators, encouraging consistent effort and focused studies. In fact, a study by the National Center for Education Statistics found that students who consistently studied for assessments demonstrated significantly higher academic achievement compared to those who did not.

Martin Berryman, a 10-12th chemistry teacher at Malden High, conveyed the importance of students to "reflect, synthesize, and summarize" the cumulative information they have learned from the "previous quarters," emphasizing the "great opportunity" students have to master a skill such as taking "a big comprehensive test" similar to ones they may face in college.

While all students do not plan on attending college after high school, it is necessary for those who will take this path to have proficient study skills, because an entire semester's grade in university could be a midterm or a final exam. High school's main task is to prepare students for the life ahead of them, and for many, it is college life, which entails taking comprehensive tests. Even for pupils who do not wish to go to college, midterms and finals can improve skills such as produc-

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Graphic created by FATIMA HUSAIN

Continued from front page.

Mental Health and Grading

Many teachers have expressed how they believe that students worry about their grades too often, resulting in academic distress. "It was very rare when I was a student to have so many of my classmates hyper-focused on their grades. You would have maybe a handful of kids that were. I feel like I have whole classes of students who are really freaked out about their grades, and I've noticed that there's not enough mental health support for students," explained English teacher Anne Mooney.

Mooney expressed how she believes that receiving a 100 should not be "the goal" and is an unrealistic expectation. "It is rare that you'll get 100...There's always room to grow. I think sometimes, students get really caught up on things...It's okay to be a B student. I think this is very much a problem of the education system: we have taught you that you need to have As, a 4.0 GPA, and you need to be perfect, because if you're not, you're not going to get into college, and everything's going to be awful." But, she continued, Bs can be "great."

"You've done everything. All the skills are there, but you end up with a 90. It can seem really disheartening, but in reality, the 90s are a stellar grade," voiced Mooney.

AP Seminar and AP Literature teacher Jennifer Clapp mentioned how earning grades can be "time-consuming" and "hard" to maintain every quarter with a lot of student work, which causes stress on teachers as well.

While grades have an important impact in schools, students often become so caught up with their grades that it has a negative impact on their mental health. They believe that grades determine who they are as a person and their future, leaving significant amounts of stress on them.

"I worry about my grades a lot because they determine so many things in the future. They are my main focus and I try my best to keep them up," indicated freshman Aya Bihi.

She believed that even though she provides "a lot of effort" in her work, it is not always considered "sufficient."

Junior Abigail Glaude claimed, "The grading system can be stressful because it makes me feel like my worth is tied to a number. The current system often places a significant amount of stress on students, affecting their mental health and overall motivation. This critical issue needs immediate attention to ensure a healthy learning environment."

While Glaude believes the grading system determines her future," she also believes that they do not determine who she is as a student or person. "Grades reflect some aspects of who I am, such as my work ethic and dedication to my studies,"

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expressed Glaude. “However, they don’t show anything about my character or the complete picture of myself. Good grades can help me get into a good college, but I still need to define myself fully. Everyone has their strengths and weaknesses, and there’s always room for growth and improvement.”

Glaude also mentioned how presenting in front of classes and class discussions can be “extremely difficult for students who struggle with anxiety” and pressures students when left with no other option, “affecting their performance and causing their grades to drop significantly.”

Sophomore Jana Wanas proclaimed that the grading system “affects” her mental health and that she is “constantly worried” when she receives a bad grade on a test since “it’s worth so much.” As a result, she could potentially “fail the class.”

While students often believe that grades “determine” who they are as students, teachers believe the opposite. Math 1 CP/H and Math 3 Honors teacher Lewei Ding believed that students’ grades reflect how much they “get out of the material being taught” rather than the actual grade they earned or received.

Teachers’ Support for Students

Teachers provide extra help to support students throughout the year to help them succeed. “Those students who have kind of had a hard time in my classes...[I try to] give those students more individualized attention, check in with them, more suggestions that they can come after school before tests to ask extra questions or get some extra help...I do try to make myself more available. I can be here after school every day to try to help a student who’s struggling on tests to study and prepare for the next test,” clarified math teacher Joshua Sellers.

While it is hard to maintain good grades, several students always find ways to improve them. “When I receive a bad grade,” said Wanas, “I usually try to stay after school to correct things, ask my teacher questions on the work and during class, and study more in order to improve my low grade.”

Freshman Vicky Ye explained that if she receives a low grade, she “immediately asks for revisions or remakes”—and if teachers give her enough of that support, she will accomplish it to improve her low grade.

Math 2 Honors teacher Genoveva Mateeva stated that she “provides test corrections and is available before and after school and during Enrichment” to help students improve low-grade scores and ask questions if necessary.

“I think test corrections are great because they provide an incentive to go back and learn what you missed when you took the test... So even if you didn’t get it when you first took the test, I still want you to

Continued on page 8

Administration Considers Potential Schedule Changes

Mack Keating
Editor-in-Chief

Education involves more than simply fulfilling graduation requirements—it is about equipping students with the tools to explore their passions and develop the skills necessary for future success.

Since joining the district, Superintendent Dr. Timothy Sippel has been actively investigating the structure of the current schedule, identifying its inherent challenges: “One of [the concerns] coming through [my conversations this year with students, staff, and parents has been] the number of students who don’t have a full set of classes, who are taking one or more semesters with a directed study instead of a full set of classes.”

Among other ideas, Sippel has recently proposed shifting from a seven-period to a six-period schedule as a solution to current staffing shortages and the issue of students enrolling in direct studies, periods where students do not have classes. While the intent behind this proposal is to streamline operations, reducing the number of periods available would also limit students’ opportunities to explore a diverse array of subjects, narrowing their academic growth and career options.

Through the lens of the administration, Sippel and his staff are constantly trying to answer questions such as, “‘Are there ways that we can utilize the staff that we have to give every student seven classes?’ and ‘What would that look like?’” Sippel explained. “If there’s not a way to get every student into seven classes that way, then... six classes is something to have on the table [as an option].”

Direct Studies

Direct studies have been a part of the Malden High academic experience for some time, and while opinions about their effectiveness and value vary, they have become a standard feature in the school—as well as a few other neighboring districts, such as Woburn and Arlington.

For some, direct studies are a necessary pause in an otherwise rigorous schedule, offering students time to catch up on work, focus on personal projects, or simply take a mental break. This downtime can specifically benefit students with heavy workloads or extracurricular commitments, allowing them to



Salemwood staff protesting on campus during a strike in 2022 due to a lack of working contracts. DANI LICONA-CRUZ

more easily manage their responsibilities. Richard Tivnan, a history teacher of two decades, commented, “The direct study is a valuable thing for many students... students in vigorous course loads may need the extra time.”

On the other hand, some educators and students feel that, while helpful in certain contexts, direct studies might not provide enough academic stimulation. Many are concerned that these periods can lead to a lack of engagement with class subject matter and leave students with little to no educational support.

Tivnan believes that direct studies can be a mixed bag; while he does not want the periods to dissolve completely, there should be more limitations. “I don’t think any student needs three studies,” he expressed. “We’re not teaching them enough and they’re not taking enough classes.”

Anne Mooney, who has taught English at Malden High for approximately a decade, believes the blocks should be removed entirely and students should always have a full schedule. While she expects some initial pushback, she believes that, in time, it will become an accepted part of the schedule. “I have students who don’t necessarily want to be in an English class—we’re all used to that,” she explained. Just like how students are required to take an English class annually, students should be required to take as many classes as possible. “You just try to engage them in any way you can.”

Impacts on Students

As Azusa Pacific University explained, “The best way to see yourself in a field is to get first-hand

exposure through a class.” If fewer periods are offered, students may be forced to prioritize core subjects over electives that could help them discover their strengths in fields like the arts, social sciences, or STEM. This exploration is crucial, especially for students who may not be pursuing college but are still aiming for a fulfilling career.

English teacher Nierika Nims echoed this concern, emphasizing how a six-period schedule would reduce students’ opportunities for exploration. “Our students deserve a well-rounded, empowering, and joyful education. This includes the chance to try new things and engage in subjects they are passionate about,” Nims stated. She underscored the essential role electives play in student well-being and future competitiveness, arguing that removing opportunities to explore their passions would ultimately diminish their educational experience.

Tivnan furthered this sentiment, noting that students should have more opportunities class-wise. “We had trouble earlier in the year with people not being able to take classes they signed up for,” he described, referencing classes with a cap on student enrollment lower than student interest, such as AP Psychology. “We shouldn’t have that. We should have more. If anything, we should have too much.”

“Selecting the right high school courses isn’t just about meeting graduation requirements — it’s about crafting a narrative that reflects your intellectual curiosity, academic growth, and alignment with your goals,” described Wafa Muflahi, a partner at Command Education, a top college admissions consulting company based in New York City, as reported by the New York Post.

Additionally, eliminating course offerings could negatively affect students’ college readiness and career aspirations. Research from the Center for American Progress suggests that students enrolled in advanced coursework are more likely to graduate and pursue higher education, emphasizing the importance of maintaining a wide range of class offerings. At the conclusion of the research paper, the authors recommend that schools expand access to advanced coursework by



Malden High staff on strike in 2022, lined up on the corner of Salem and Main Street. DANI LICONA-CRUZ

working to “open up more slots for students in advanced coursework.”

For students who may choose to enter the workforce immediately after graduation, having access to a variety of courses can still provide valuable life skills and a well-rounded education that prepares them for a dynamic job market. As the New York Post noted, reducing class availability narrows students’ opportunities to cultivate intellectual curiosity and develop a broad skill set, which is essential for success beyond high school.

Impacts on Teachers

Teachers have raised significant concerns about the proposed schedule changes. Mooney highlighted that reducing class periods without increasing staff will not solve underlying issues: “The only true solution is to get more staff. The more staff we have, the more electives we offer.”

Tivnan teaches four classes: AP US Government and Politics, Mock Trial, US History II, and semester courses American Law and Justice and Examining Criminal Justice. If the schedule were to be reduced by one period, he may lose the ability to teach one or more of these courses. “Every kid in high school should take a government class... whether they’re new to the country or established citizens,” Tivnan believes. If he were to lose a period, students may have even fewer opportunities to take these classes, if at all.

Electives and the Arts

Moreover, reducing the number of class periods would disproportionately affect students’ access to electives, particularly in the arts, such as Mock Trial, Band, Choir, Play Production, and Journalism, among others. These electives often require multi-year commitment, and some courses—such as digital art—have a course progression or prerequisites.

“Students who attend better-funded, fully-staffed schools in other districts have access to all sorts of enriching electives, and our students should too,” Nims pressed.

With only six class periods available per year, students would be limited to a maximum of six electives throughout their high school experience, assuming they do not take a third year of a language or a fourth year of science or history. This reduction would further restrict students’ ability to explore different subjects and pursue their passions, especially in the arts. “I would always rather have a lot of electives,” Mooney commented.

Even if initially students are not interested in elective courses, “by the end, students may think ‘this is kind of cool,’” noted Mooney. She suggested creative additions, such as sound-based language or cultural arts classes, to engage diverse student interests.

As it stands, students are already balancing core requirements such as math, science, English, history, and a second language, alongside mandatory classes like gym and health. With fewer electives available, students may be forced to

prioritize one subject over another, potentially missing out on opportunities to broaden their horizons and develop new skills.

This reduction would significantly hinder students’ ability to explore different subjects and pursue their passions, especially in the arts. For example, at Malden High, electives like Play Production, Choir, Band, and Ceramics are staples of the creative curriculum, but they already face the challenge of requiring dedicated time, often limiting the ability of students to branch out and take other electives.

Engaging in the arts is not only a means of creative expression but also a critical tool for developing essential life skills, especially in adolescence. According to an analysis by The Princeton Review, arts education fosters creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities, which are foundational for academic success and personal growth. Moreover, participating in the arts can help students develop self-confidence, resilience, and a growth mindset by providing opportunities for success and failure in a supportive environment.

These benefits extend beyond the classroom, as students equipped with artistic skills are often more adaptable, innovative, and well-rounded, traits that are highly sought after in college admissions and the workforce. In this sense, the arts contribute not only to academic development but also to shaping individuals who are prepared to navigate a rapidly changing and complex world.

MLL and IEPs

Shifting schedules could also have a significant impact on Multilingual learner (MLL) students and students with IEPs, particularly in terms of their ability to access both necessary support and elective opportunities. Nims noted that “students with IEPs... many have additional Special Education courses built into their schedules, as well as MLLs, whose schedules may include ESL (English as a Second Language) courses.”

With fewer class periods, these students would face even fewer opportunities to explore electives, which presents an equity issue. For MLL students, changes that disrupt access to ESL courses would hinder their academic growth and limit their ability to engage in a well-rounded education.

These inequities can form in any schedule, as Mooney described. “When we’re creating new electives, we need to be very mindful of how those electives are going to be accessible for our MLL students.”

This critique stems from the idea of language-based learning in non-language classes. “The old way of looking at language learners was deficit-based, whereas it should be viewed as an asset,” Mooney added. This shift in perspective requires a reevaluation of how schedules could best support these students, allowing them to access both language support and opportunities to

thrive in electives.

For students with IEPs, Mooney also highlighted the challenge of balancing necessary specialized support with core academic requirements. “If students with IEPs are going to meet MassCore [requirements] and also have a language class, they couldn’t also have courses necessary to meet the needs of their disabilities,” she emphasized.

Potential Schedules

The superintendent acknowledged that resolving these issues may require multiple approaches. “I don’t think that there’s one root cause,” he said. “I think it could be in some subjects that we might need to hire additional staff. However, I think that it’s also likely that there are some ways that our current staff are scheduled that make things more difficult than they should be.” This underscores the complexity of the issue and the need for both staffing adjustments and scheduling efficiencies.

Currently, Malden High operates on an 80-minute class schedule, with four periods per day in an alternating-day structure. To transition from a seven-period schedule to six, the administration has proposed three potential options: extending the length of class periods, increasing the number of Flex blocks, or scheduling all classes every day. However, none of these options appear to offer a balanced solution.

Pre-COVID, Malden High taught on a waterfall schedule: a scheduling system where classes meet every day, but the schedule rotates each day. For example, one day, students may have classes in the order of 1-2-3-4-5-6, while period 7 does not meet. The following day, classes would start with the dropped period, following the schedule of 7-1-2-3-4-5. To fit six classes into one day while retaining a 2-hour period for lunch blocks, each class would have slightly different period lengths.

Tivnan has been vocal in his support for the waterfall schedule since the switch: “Everyone learns differently, and different kids learn better at different times.” With this schedule, students would have a more fluid schedule, with each day slightly different from the last. While with the current schedule, periods 1 and 5 are always first thing in the morning, students would have each class at each time, rotated throughout the week.

The main issue he finds in the current schedule is the length of each block: 80 minutes is difficult for both students and faculty to do any one thing. While he conceded that it may be more helpful to have long blocks in science classes to host labs and English classes to write essays, in his experience, these blocks are too long. “We had one block that length for lunch, but it wasn’t every class every day. It’s too much.”

Nims advocated for retaining the alternating-day schedule with longer blocks, explaining its benefits for student learning: “I taught with

the waterfall schedule, and I did not find it conducive to best practices for student learning.” In her perspective, longer blocks give students and teachers time to delve deeper into the material, facilitating more effective instruction and engagement.

“If it were up to me, we would collectively put more pressure on the city to fully fund our schools,” Nims furthered, highlighting how reallocating resources toward hiring additional staff could create a more sustainable solution that maintains opportunities for students to explore diverse subjects. “The status quo is not tenable.”

Working Contracts

As the district explores potential changes to the schedule, ongoing contract negotiations with the Teachers Union have become a pivotal element in shaping the future structure. “Anecdotal conversations I’ve had with members and leaders in the Teachers Union have indicated that they are very interested in seeing us settle on a new contract before the end of the school year, if not earlier in the spring, if possible,” explained Sippel. A finalized contract would clarify staffing availability, directly impacting the feasibility of maintaining or restructuring the current seven-period schedule.

One of the key concerns in determining a schedule is balancing staff workloads with student needs. Currently, teachers are limited to teaching five classes, which creates logistical challenges in providing all students with a full schedule. However, any significant changes to teacher workloads, class sizes, or periods offered would require careful negotiation and agreement with the union.

Sippel also noted that the timeline for these decisions is tight, as course requests for the next academic year depend on how many classes students must take. “Once we have clarity about [the master schedule] within the next few weeks, then everything else is going to start happening pretty quick,” he highlighted. Settling the contract before the summer would allow the district to finalize staffing assignments and create a schedule that aligns with student and staff needs, as well as union agreements.

The superintendent also acknowledged that formal proposals for the contract are still in development: “We just started bargaining yesterday... we haven’t formally exchanged [any proposals related to the high school schedule] yet.” Despite this, the district’s collaborative approach with union leaders and staff highlights a shared commitment to finding a solution soon.

The outcome of these negotiations will directly impact the administration’s ability to address long-standing challenges with the current schedule. Whether through hiring additional staff, reconfiguring existing schedules, or exploring alternative structures, the finalized contract will be instrumental in determining the future of student and staff schedules.

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understand it. So the test corrections provide the opportunity for students to go back and relearn the materials, and then get some of the points back on their tests," claimed Joshua Kolodny, a Math 1 CP and Honors teacher. This policy is also intended to prepare students for college-level work where their grades may be mostly—or even exclusively—on tests.

As for Ding, she illustrated how she "provides extra credit Delta math questions" for her students to practice in addition to what she is teaching in class.

Assisting Students in Understanding their Grades

While Clapp and Mooney both provide writing and work revisions, they also provide feedback and rubrics on their students' work in order for them to understand what grade they are receiving and the expectations needed to receive the grade they are pleased with. "Any assignment that I'm giving you a numeric assessment on has a rubric that clearly lays out what the expectations are for each performance standard so that the student can hopefully evaluate their own work," Clapp explained.

Clapp highlighted that numeric grades without rubrics or samples are "meaningless," as students do not know what their expectations are and how to achieve them. This is why she also provides "models," which are "excellent for work. So [that you can see] what to aspire to, and you look at the difference between what you were aspiring for and what you actually did and try to see where you are."

Hopes for the Future

Most students hope for math test percentages to be brought down significantly to improve their stress and academic performance.

Bihi, junior Shahd Abulghani, and freshman Sabrima Bhattarai believed that "it is not fair for math tests to be worth 60-65% of students' grades" as this results in much more significantly lower grades and stress for students with anxieties and high expectations for themselves. Bihi said that, even when students can understand the material being taught, they may still get a couple of questions wrong on a test. This can lead to the incorrect assumption that it is as if "they never even tried."

Bhattarai hopes that tests and quizzes could "weigh lower." Although she expressed agreement with the idea that tests should get the most points, it is still not good because "students are not able to recover from one bad test." This demotivates them in putting greater effort into their assignments.

Bihi also shared her hopes that the percentages of future tests will not "affect student's grades as much" and instead wishes that their "class participation was counted

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MHS 2024-2025 Mid-Year Exam Schedule

Mid-Year Exam Schedule			
January 21	January 22	January 23	January 23
Period 1 - Exam	Period 5 - Exam	Period 1 - Make up	Period 5 - Make up
Period 2 - Review	E4, E5	Period 2 - Exam	E6, Advisory
Period 3 - Exam	Period 6 - Exam	Period 3 - Make up	Period 6 - Make up
Period 4 - Review	Period 7 - Review	Period 4 - Exam	Period 7 - Exam

Midterm Schedule from Jan 21 to Jan 24.

Continued from page 5

tivity, discipline, reduced procrastination, and organization.

U.S. History teacher Ashley Garlick explained, "Teachers can collect data on how students are doing, how they're improving, and where they can make adjustments within their teaching to ensure students are actually learning. They're a good way to measure individual student performance and growth."

Additionally, the exams enhance constructive communication between teachers and students by closing the gap and providing students with personalized feedback and guidance. Before midterms, teachers give their best to prepare students by passing out study guides and reference sheets, as well as offering one-on-one study sessions for those who need extra support. Many teachers stick around after school until 2:45-3:00 pm for anyone who would like to complete missing work and make up tests or talk about their grades. Between all the nerves, bonds between staff and students tend to grow stronger.

"To refresh my students' memory, I help them study and review by playing games, and posting all the notes and handouts on Google Classroom from September...It's a challenge to remember all the materials and having the resources can make a huge difference," stated Joshua Sellers, a Math 2 and Statistics teacher.

Midterms can further act as a checkpoint for guardians to reflect on their child's progress and ana-

lyze in what manners they can support them both academically and emotionally.

"It's quite exciting because [midterms] show how far we've gotten in the year," proclaimed freshman Priscarla Villefranche.

The Middle Ground: A Truce

Between the difference of opinions, midterms have brought one thing in common: a desire for change. Both teachers and students have voiced modifications needed to be made to Malden High's process of taking midterms, starting with its scheduling.

"For us to have meaningful midterms, students and teachers need to have a week to prepare for these huge tests. Proper review schedules and a week dedicated purely to midterms will allow students to get a feel of college since that's how it works," continued Berryman.

If students or educators do not have sufficient time, the results of the midterms will be skewed and inaccurate, wasting collaborative efforts. However, giving time should not mean a jam-packed schedule. "Students should have no more than two tests a day, the ability to leave and go home after their exam, get food, rest, and then study for their next exam. The way the schedule is right now, they don't have a break," added Berryman.

Another idea is an alternative to midterms and finals. Some students would prefer a hands-on activity

that portrays their understanding of the semester in a physical manner rather than memory-based. "Alternatives to midterms or finals could be based around a project or presentation rather than a stressful test, but I feel like if there could be alternatives it should be up to the teacher of the class on how they wish to do it," expressed junior Liam Gallagher.

English classes from freshman to senior year create portfolios for their midterms and finals, which means other classes could potentially create an agenda incorporating the idea. For instance, science classes calculating scores based on a timed lab, and history teachers assigning timeline projects could be appropriate alternatives. Yet, for educators to create labs and projects, they need to have the time and resources to provide their pupils with proper assessments which, unfortunately, they do not.

Lee explained, "All the different options help students reflect their understanding in whatever style works best for them, showcasing their strengths."

Midterms are an inevitable part of the academic experience, and a certain level of stress is to be expected. However, by understanding the sources of stress, developing effective coping mechanisms, and prioritizing self-care, students can navigate this challenging period more effectively. By embracing healthy study habits, seeking support when needed, and cultivating a positive mindset, students can not only survive midterms but also thrive academically and personally.



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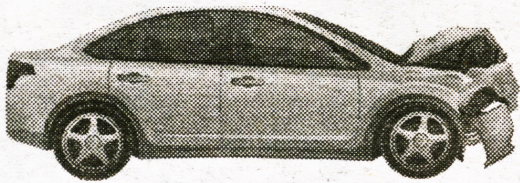
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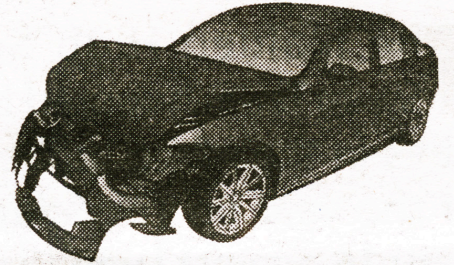
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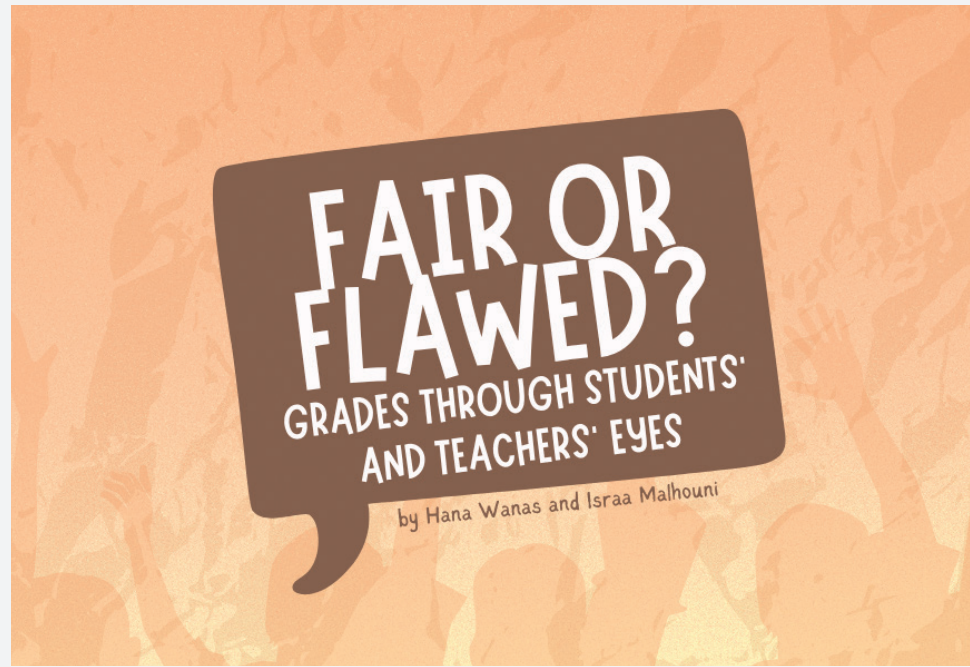
more.”

Echoing Bihi's sentiment, Mateeva desired a decrease in the “percentage for Mathia practice and test corrections” moving forward. Even though Mateeva thinks they are a good idea for students, she still has some critiques. “Students should be able to see the mistakes and write the correct solutions. Sometimes it's difficult to do so, so going over these mistakes in class and then providing examples similar to the problems for students would be better,” continued Mateeva.

Thoughts and Opinions on the Grading System Overall

Sellers suggested how “projects or group problem-solving activities” play a big role in the ways that teachers can accurately measure what students have learned, as there are different ways of taking an assessment. However, he illustrated how those kinds of assessments are “harder to grade, take more time, and take more planning” than regular tests.

Mateeva stated that “adding 20% for practice that students do in class and for homework” is “too much” and that it would be better if it could be changed to “10% for Mathia and 15% for practice and adding the 10% to assessments.” However, she thought that the over-



all grading policy is fair for everyone, and that “there are no perfect grading policies.” If there are, “there will always be weaknesses and strengths.”

History teacher Paul Doucette explained his thoughts, saying that the grading system that teachers use, such as X2 Aspen, is “extremely efficient” for all teachers, students, and parents to see how percentages are weighted, how grades are calculated, and see when things are missing or when to improve a grade.”

Abulghani voiced that she understands that in the last two years of high school, “teachers can be a little harsher grading-wise because they are preparing us for college,”

but they are still teenagers ages 16 to 18 who are “super busy with a lot of different things.” Sometimes, they “just want full credit for something we turned in a day late.”

Glaude mentioned how “teachers who often assign several assignments and projects that are due simultaneously” should be more considerate of students’ other classes and lives.

Adding on, Wanas explained that “grades heavily impact students’ high school career and can cause mental health issues if they didn’t achieve what they typically wanted to achieve, causing them to feel as if they are not smart enough for the grades they receive. This re-

sults in students worrying so much about their grades, causing their high school journey to become extremely draining.”

Even though grades are mostly every student’s main focus, it is hard to always be able and maintain desirable grades. Senior Nashalyn Rubert stated that when she does extracurriculars and extra credit assignments to maintain her grades, it ends up “taking a toll on me because I ended up losing time with family and friends.”

Bihi explained that “students receive 100s on assignments, but their grades only increase by one point,” which is unfair considering the effort they put into their work for such a minimal impact.

The current grading system has its challenges, particularly in how it affects student’s mental health. Teachers have an important role in guiding students through their academic and high school journey by providing emotional and overall support.

Moving forward, there is hope for a grading system that prioritizes understanding and growth. By creating an academic environment where students feel supported, Malden High can help them build a healthier relationship with their education and encourage them to thrive both academically and personally.

Top 5 Places to Hang Out After School in Malden

Do you ever wonder where Malden High students might be headed once the bell rings for the end of the day? In this article, we will dive into the top places students hang out after school, whether studying, enjoying a snack, or hanging out with friends.

Reva Upadhayay
Reporter



A photo of Santa Fe. REVA UPADHAYAY

Santa Fe
205 Pleasant St, Malden, MA
02148

Located on Pleasant Street, just a ten-minute walk from the school Santa Fe hosts “BOWL & BURRITO \$5” every Monday, reeling people from all different places to enjoy their specialty of Mexican dishes. It offers an outdoor setting and an indoor lounge where you can hang out with friends. “I usually head to Santa Fe after school with my friends, specifically on Mondays because of their five-dollar deal; we all just chill around there,” said Ryan McMahon, a junior.



The main entrance to the Malden Public Library. REVA UPADHAYAY
Malden Public Library
36 Salem St, Malden, MA
02148

Conveniently across the street from our school, the Malden Public Library has always been a space for students to quietly study and enhance their learning with the thousands of books and other resources available to them at the library! Free Wi-Fi, private study rooms, and large tables are perfect for finishing homework, preparing for tests, or working on group projects. Sophomore Wongel Yohannes expressed, “There’s no place like the library where I can meaningfully study and focus; it key for me to excel in my classes.”



A photo of New York Pizza. REVA UPADHAYAY
New York Pizza
421 Main St, Malden, MA
02148

An all-time favorite for the residents of Malden, New York Pizza is a go-to spot for students looking for a quick bite or a place to hang around with friends. With affordable slices of pizza, subs, fried chicken wings, plus many more- the restaurant has drawn in a lot of people in the past several years. “Their most famous and well-known order is the ‘Buffalo chicken slice’ I’ve gone since I was in middle school, and it has always been an absolute hit,” said Sophomore Maysaa Choqri.



The Mystic Valley YMCA in downtown Malden. REVA UPADHAYAY

YMCA
99 Dartmouth St, Malden,
MA 02148

The Malden YMCA has always been a spot for students looking for a mix of fun, fitness, community, you name it! From basketball courts to a swimming pool, the sports and recreation center environment has never failed to leave a good impression on parents and children/any others who like to get involved! Junior Billy Gavin expressed, “[The] YMCA has always been a place for us to build friendships and skills It’s not just about working out. it’s where I meet friends, play basketball, and sometimes even get some homework done.”

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Malden Skate Club Glides into Second Year

Delina Yohannes
Head of Local



Members of the Skate Club pose for a photo at Flynn Rink in Medford. Photo submitted by Bo Stead.

As the piercing cold temperatures drop in Malden, so do the moods and emotions of many students at Malden High. Finding fun indoor activities for a reasonable price has become increasingly more complex as the weather worsens. Luckily, the Malden High Ice Skating Club has entered its second year of providing the perfect space for all MHS students interested in ice skating with their friends at a social event outside the school grounds.

While Malden High does offer a plethora of various types of student-ran clubs, the Ice Skating Club is one of the most unique and inclusive clubs at Malden High as it is open to every and any student interested and is set at a reasonable price to make it easier for students to participate without worrying. Additionally, the physical aspect of skating is meant to be an escape from all the mental stresses that students of all grades go through during the winter—and even spring—season as tests and assignments pile up.

Junior and Head Copy Editor for The Blue and Gold Chouaib Saidi described the club as an environment where “everyone is welcome even if they have no experience ice skating whatsoever; we believe that it’s necessary to have this gathering

to free everyone from the stress that high school entails and to remind them to have fun sometimes.”



As welcoming and intriguing as the club sounds at first glance,

there is no surprise that student participation is exceptionally high and arguably the highest at Malden High, with about “50 plus students on our first night, and since then, we’ve consistently had over 20 students every event,” explained chemistry teacher and club advisor John Frigo.

Highly favored among students, Frigo is part of the reason why many kids feel comfortable enough to attend an event outside of school.

“Mr. Frigo is a great guy to be around, especially because he’s always with us when we’re skating; he’s always encouraging and nice when it comes to

beginners and even challenges some of the higher-skilled skaters; it feels weird when he isn’t there, it’s like a missing piece of a puzzle,” commented Saidi.

Although the club itself sounds

like the perfect social event

for students looking for something to do, those unfamiliar with skating may be intimidated at first by the size of the packed rinks and sharp blades that glide right past you.

The events’ timing and location were also a concern for some students: they feared that the group would disband and lose track of each other. This was the case for junior Alecia Louigene, who, before her first skating event, had never been on the ice before, and taking it on for the first time was scary until her experience towards the end made up for it entirely. “I got there pretty late and was confused at first, but overall it was a great experience and what I loved was how organized everything was. When it was time to leave, we all were together

really helped that feeling go away because it is something that we can all look forward to on Fridays now,” explained junior Yeleul Me-

konnen.



added that there is not anything that the club can improve on since it is so straightforward and fun. Mekonnen describes it as a “conclusive activity for the season.”

The temperatures will soon rise again. Still, the Ice Skating Club hopes to have a lasting impact on students beyond this season and after everyone graduates. “I think that a lot of the kids that go feel more connected to their community now,” stated Frigo, who emphasized that that is one of their biggest goals as a group.

President and founder Bo Stead, who is Editor-in-Chief of the



Members of the Skate Club pose for a photo at Flynn Rink in Medford. Photo submitted by Bo Stead.

and walking together to a place to eat, and that was so nice,” explained Louigene, who further expressed her desire to go again to their next event and bring more people with her.

While giving students the chance to explore new innovative activities, having fun overall is the main motive behind the Ice Skating Club. It ensures that students feel appreciated and heard. “Sometimes, when you work so hard as a student, it is discouraging when it feels like there’s nothing that the school organizes for you, but the skating club

Blue and Gold’s website, is someone Frigo recognized for his diligence and friendliness when advocating for the club. He “does a really good job fostering a good sense of community within the Ice Skating club,” said Frigo.

If you and your friends, or if you are looking to make new friends, want to ice skate and enjoy the “pure vibes”—as described by Saidi—be sure to keep up with the Ice Skating Club on Instagram @skatemalden for more information and updates on upcoming events.

Band Brings Holiday Spirit with Annual Winter Concert



Sophie LeBlanc
Reporter

As the years pass, it often feels like embracing the “holiday spirit” requires more deliberate effort—especially amidst the season’s challenges, such as exams, travel, or financial constraints. However, it is valuable to sit back, take an hour or two, and enjoy the key elements of the holidays that make it—as Andy Williams puts it—The Most Wonderful Time of the Year.

Led by music director Lauren Foley, on Thursday, December 12th, 2024, the Malden High School Band Program shared the holiday spirit by putting on its beloved annual winter concert. The performances allowed friends, family, and community members alike to treasure the nostalgic music that we all know and love, as well as artistic pieces that may be less well-known.

“This is a great way to kick off the holiday season,” remarked Kimberlee Smith, a senior clarinet player. “Feels like Christmas, doesn’t it?”

Foley reflected upon the preparation leading up to the display. “It was really exciting preparing for the winter concert. We played several songs that I think the students and the audience really enjoyed!”

The concert started with various performances by Foley’s small ensembles class: individual groups of about four to five musicians performing about two songs each. The groups included Pneumonia (Manal AbouKhalil, Josep Galindo Gaviria, Sorin Mamouzzette, Sean Cochran), setting the stage with some Green Day; Drain without the J (Amanda Souza, Imyrah Occius,

Nico Sedan, Daniel Flores, Raphael Sanchez Martinez) playing “Blue Hair” by TV Girl and “Just the Two of Us” by Grover Washington Jr. and Bill Withers; and The Swashbucklers (Slade Harding, Sean Retotal, Derek Lam, Jeremiah Johnson) performing “Pasilyo” by SunKissed Lola and “Summertime” by George Gershwin.

With the winter concert representing, in many ways, nostalgia and yearly reflection, many senior musicians contemplated what the band program has meant to them throughout the years.

For senior band president and tenor saxophone player Addison McWayne, band was not always a smooth sailing ride. “In middle school, I thought I was going to quit when I got to high school... but that band community my freshman year was some of the best people I’ve ever met.”

Senior Vice President Sean Retotal initially joined band in middle school as a way to skip gym class, but as time progressed, he grew a love for the program and as a senior, his experience in the program has shaped him into so much more. “It was the best decision I ever made,” he recalled. “It really allowed me to be creative.”

Compared to her middle school band, junior clarinet player Dagny Boswell shared, “It’s so much more serious. We’re doing music that’s so much better for who we are as people. It’s a different experience.”

“I love the band community and playing music, and under the direction of Ms. Foley, I have really discovered who I can be in music,” continued McWayne.

Following the small ensemble groups,

the lights switched to a vibrant crimson, and The Bald Ensemble, a newly formed wind ensemble group, performed two Randall Standridge pieces: “Shadow Cove March”—telling the tale of pirates on a mysterious island—and “Scream”—an exciting piece that utilized an Aztec death whistle to create a haunting

roaring effect.

Then, the concert band, which is intended to serve as an introduction to high school band, showcased remarkable cohesion in “The Polar Express” despite some having only picked up an instrument that year.

“The start of the year always feels a little unsteady as the students



Wind ensemble clarinet players John Tran and Kimberlee Smith performing “Russian Christmas Music.” SOPHIE LEBLANC

get to know each other and each group figures out what their sound is,” admitted Foley, “but come the winter concert, everything tends to fall right into place.”

Despite the concerts’ rousing success, the musicians still had to overcome various obstacles, both as a group and personally.

Only joining band this year, Smith reflected on the natural challenges of stepping into a new environment: “Everyone else in the class has been playing consistently for years, so that’s been challenging, but I’ve enjoyed learning from others.”

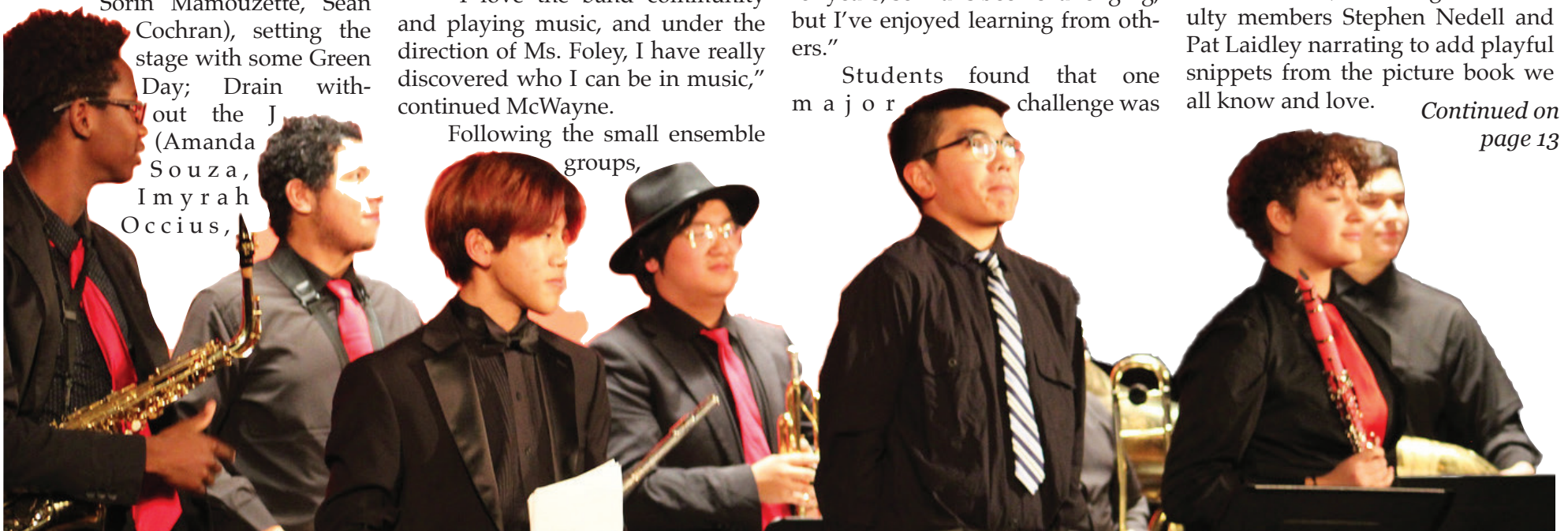
Students found that one major challenge was

“Twas’ The Night Before Christmas,” the only piece that combined the concert band and the wind ensemble.

“Because it’s combined, we had to practice outside of school time instead of using class time to do it... Part of band is making sure your sound is together, that the intonation is good. It was a little challenging to find a balance between that when we weren’t seeing each other every day,” explained McWayne.

Despite this, the song was also a fan favorite, featuring MHS faculty members Stephen Nedell and Pat Laidley narrating to add playful snippets from the picture book we all know and love.

Continued on
page 13



Harmonies of the Season

MHS Choral Arts Winter Concert



MHS faculty member Pat Laidley captivating the audience with a narration of "Twas the Night Before Christmas." SOPHIE LEBLANC

The wind ensemble, a smaller group mostly comprised of upper-classmen, joined the stage to perform two grandiose arrangements—"How to Train Your Dragon" and "Russian Christmas Music"—that blew the audience away.

The highlight of the night, however, was the wind ensemble's final performance of "A Christmas Festival", conducted not by Foley, but by an audience member. As a raffle-style fundraiser, one audience member was offered the chance to conduct the song, regardless of any prior musical experience. While this could have easily resulted in a humorous display, the lucky winner was none other than Bonnie Littlejohn, a previous conductor and drum major. The song was artfully conducted—each gesture landing perfectly—which created a beautifully spontaneous display that truly captured the spirit of Christmas.

"I hope that the students gained the sense of community that music brings, not only between the students but also with our audience," concluded Foley. "I think this concert had one of the largest crowds that I have seen for our instrumental concerts in the last few years, and I'm really excited to continue building connections with our community and give people a fun night of music!"

Following the concert, every student seemed to agree that the most emotionally challenging aspect of the winter concert was that it marked the beginning of the end for their dedicated seniors. With the holiday season and the new year, in many ways, symbolizing both joy and growth, it is clear that taking the time to rest, curating memories with the people we love, and inevitably, letting certain things go is as essential as ever. Boswell captured it perfectly in brevity: "It's a celebration and a goodbye."



Chelmie Hyppolite
Lead Reporter

Concert Choir singing the theme from Elf. CHELMIE HYPOLITE

Around the country, a winter concert showcasing the talents of many students is a well-respected custom. In fact, the Malden High School Winter Concert dates back decades. On Thursday, December 19th in the Jenkins Auditorium, the MHS Choral Arts Society put on its annual Winter Holiday Concert. It is a well-awaited moment for many partaking in it, including senior Kimberlee Smith, Soprano 1 Section Leader, who has worked with Cole since freshman year but began concert choir her junior year. "It's truly one of my favorite parts of the entire school year," exclaimed Smith.

The MHS Winter Concert under the direction of Todd Cole, Chorus director and a long-time educator at MHS, has been put on every year since he has been at MHS—21 years. Accompanying Cole on the piano was Cindy Horsman McKeen. "This is one of the only concerts where I am conducting the choir's start to finish instead of playing the piano for them," Cole added.

As the audience filled with bustling parents, teachers, and students, the lights dimmed to mark the show's start. With the audience silenced, Concert Choir members began to walk down the aisles with candles and sang "Silent Night", a tradition for MHS—sending chills

through the audience.

Soon after the Concert Choir finished singing and took their seats, the lights revealed the Mixed Chorus on stage. The Mixed Chorus started their set with the holiday classic "Winter Wonderland", setting the mood for the rest of the show. It was followed by "Follow the Drinking Gourd", "O Magnum Mysterium", "You Make it Feel Like Christmas", and lastly, "Miracle of Lights".

To continue with the concert, the Madrigal Singers took the stage. They opened with "Christmas Star", continuing with "Hanukkah Hayom!" and "Winter Wolf", then "Le Train d'hiver". The Madrigal Singers closed their stage singing "Carol of the Bells", gaining an immense round of applause from the audience as the Concert Choir took the stage.

The Concert Choir began their stage by singing "Here We Come A-Wassailing" followed by "Candleglow". A personal favorite, however, was when they began singing the Theme from Elf. At one point during the Elf theme, everyone on stage took out a kazoo, continuing to hum the song which made the audience laugh with joy. The holiday spirit filled the audience as some audience members began to sing along with the Concert Choir.

Sophomore Keira Celicourt, who is a part of the Concert Choir, recalled how amazing the atmosphere was.

Next, the Concert Choir sang

"O Chanukah, O Chanukah" where they brought out junior Dagny Boswell to accompany their harmony by playing the clarinet.

Closing the concert off with an annual song, the Concert Choir sang "O, Holy Night". During the last song of the concert, Cole invited his alumni to come up to the stage and join. "I started this tradition my first year at Malden because it was something that my high school did way back when and I thought it was special, so when I became a choir director, I decided to start the tradition here," Cole explained.

The strength and maturity of all the voices together was extraordinary as it truly highlighted how connected the choir is, even after the seniors graduate.

During "O, Holy Night", seniors Smith and Marie Cheng awed the audience with their solos. Smith went on to talk about how one

of her favorite parts of the concert is when the alumni join. "I'm so thankful I was given the chance to sing the solo," continued Smith.

This tradition was a popular segment of the show for many audience members, including Celicourt.

Overall, the atmosphere of the concert was amazing. The flawlessness of the entire show showcased how hard Cole and the singers worked.

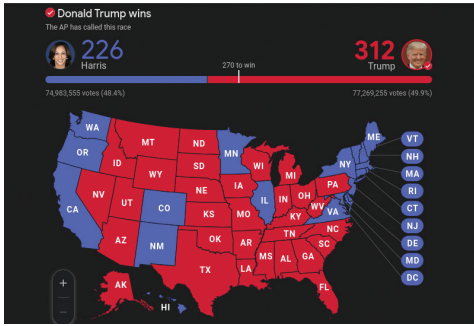
From left to right: Choir Manager Marie Cheng; Soprano One Section Leader Kimberlee Smith. CHELMIE HYPOLITE



Todd Cole receives a bouquet as a gift from the Class of 2025, presented by Marie Cheng. CHELMIE HYPOLITE

Shift in Power: Analysis on Trump's Proposed Immigration Policies

Wafia Saruwar
Reporter



Screenshot of 2024 Electoral College Map. Taken from Google.

With Trump returning to office on January 20th and Republicans regaining control of Congress, several policies are in place to change, with immigration as a major focus.

Many of these policies may not directly impact people living in Massachusetts, as Congress has specific limitations to what laws they are allowed to pass. Additionally, no laws can be made ex post facto: someone cannot be charged for a crime that was not illegal when the act was done.

Despite this, new laws may potentially impact some people living in Massachusetts, including Malden. States with a Republican majority may propose and implement harsher immigration laws, which may impact families of people in Malden. Additionally, these laws may slow or limit future Green Cards or citizenship requests, including those of immigrants in Massachusetts.

In Trump's first term as president, he planned to make a border wall, justifying that it would protect America from any harm that came into it. This wall would stretch across the southern border of the US where it meets Mexico, where many immigrants—documented or not—come from.

In his upcoming term, he and the Republican party have expressed plans to carry out interior enforcement on immigration, focusing on banning and deporting any undocumented citizens in the United States.

"I think if we were to lose the amount of undocumented immigrants we had in the US, we would be losing a lot of good things," freshman Aya Senami stated.

One of the main reasons Trump was ahead in the political race was that he was adamant about enforcing harsher immigration laws. In general, Democrats and Republicans agree that there are several flaws with the current immigration system. People could have immigrated here 60 years ago and still be undocumented, which shows how slow the system is. Due to this, there has been an increase in undocumented immigrants, as it can be easier than the process of citizenship.



Senior Huong Ly has a heartfelt conversation with a senior citizen while painting her nails. EMILLY WEIHRAUCH

Bringing Warmth Senior Citizens with Holiday Pampering

Emily Weihrauch
Lead Reporter

With the holiday season and winter break just around the corner, Glamour Pals dedicated their first event to spreading the positive spirit of this time of year to Malden's Senior Center, which doubles as the Malden Teen Enrichment Center.

On Friday, December 20th, the club participated in pampering the seniors and painting their nails while partaking in heartfelt conversations.

"Glamour Pals is really special in the way that we connect two generations together, and how, despite the feminine appearance of it—being the makeovers and nail polish—we do have people from both genders which is great to see," expressed senior Sarah Pham, President of the Glamour Pals Club.

The Glamour Pals Club



Senior citizens smiling after having their nails done by two club members. EMILLY WEIHRAUCH

Kurtis Scheer, a US History teacher and the teacher leader of the Social Studies department, describes the system as "broken."

English teacher Anne Mooney expressed, "The thing that I value most in education is really teaching students to be critical thinkers and to try and empathize with other people to really consider other people and other people's values. And I worry that is not what [Trump's] administration values."

Madison Rodriguez, another freshman, shared her thoughts about the challenge of immigration

strives to "deepen their connections with the seniors," as stated by senior Vice President Helen Xie. "I felt a deeper connection to my city and my community, not only because I was able to talk to people of different backgrounds, but I was able to talk to someone who resonated with me too because we spoke the same language."

"Last year, we went to the Forstdale senior home," recalled junior Gabriella Lemus, who has been an active club member since her sophomore year. "I just liked hearing about all these different seniors and what their lives were like, and helping make them smile."

Junior Oscar Luc shared a similar feeling. He stated that he likes the club because he can have fun by "making friends that are not specifically around my age, and it's just such a fun time communicating with them."

The club saw a great turnout on this snowy day, with many new—as well as returning—members coming together to celebrate the path between two gen-

erations. Many of the new members consisted of freshmen who came across this club through the activities fair hosted at the beginning of the school year.

"I was nervous at first, definitely, because I was like, 'I've never done this before,' but it's very rewarding because you just made a friend! We never ran out of things to talk about," exclaimed freshman Finn Queen.

"I think it's really cute, and the overall message of the club is heartwarming," expressed freshman Lilyanna Keogh, who discovered the club alongside Queen. "It was really nice knowing that a club like this exists."

Overall, the successful event ended with many smiles and beaming satisfaction from the senior citizens, who received a nice afternoon filled with meaningful conversations and empowering self-confidence. Club members shared the seniors' sense of satisfaction for being able to create a calming environment and provide positive contributions to the Senior Center.

The Glamour Pals meet every other Thursday in room H302. Be sure to check out their Instagram at @glamourpalsmhs for more information and updates on their future events!

on immigrants: "The process was really hard and difficult, a lot of trauma and a lot of heartbreaks leaving behind people when you know you don't want to, but know you have to for a better future."

"It was very difficult transferring from one place to another and adapting to the world around me, along with the language barrier," Wiam Saadouni, a freshman from Morocco, shared. Many other Malden High students shared that they had the same experience when they migrated to America.

For the many undocumented

immigrants in the US, Trump has certain plans to alter the system of immigration. One plan of his that he hopes to enact is family detention, where families of undocumented immigrants are placed into camps where they are held while their cases are processed. Most people do not know how long it will take, especially since the system is incredibly slow.

Until the new administration takes office and implements any of these proposals, it is unclear what bills will become laws and how they will impact the US.

Malden Reads Declares Book of the Year

The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind

Mack Keating
Editor-in-Chief

Continuing its tradition of highlighting powerful stories that challenge perspectives and inspire change, Malden Reads announced its 2025 Book of the Year. The chosen title, *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* by William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer, tells a true story of resilience, innovation, and the transformative power of education.



always rewarding.”

Last year’s choice, *Being Huemann: An Unrepentant Memoir of a Disability Rights Activist*, was celebrated for its raw honesty and empowering narrative of disability rights activism. It sparked vital conversations about inclusion and advocacy, setting a high bar for this year’s selection.

Set in Malawi, the story follows young Kamkwamba’s journey during a devastating drought in 2001 that left families across the country facing severe hunger. Forced to leave school because of financial hardship, Kamkwamba refused to let his circumstances hold him back. In a 2009 TED Talk, Kamkwamba shared how he found hope in his local library, reading as many science books as he could get his hands on. Not knowing much English at the time, he relied on pictures, graphs, and context clues to “learn the words around them.”

In one of the books he read, he learned of a windmill, which could be used to pump water and generate electricity: “Pump water meant irrigation, a defense against hunger,” he recalled. Kamkwamba resolved to build a windmill to bring electricity and water to his community. With no money to buy materials, he scavenged a scrapyards, collecting a tractor fan, shock absorber, PVC pipe, and bicycle generator. Utilizing these scraps, he constructed a functioning windmill that transformed life in his village.

On November 15th, 2024, Malden Reads announced that *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind* would be the 2025 Book of the Year. This announcement marks the culmination of a months-long selection process involving extensive reading and discussions among committee members.

To make this decision, the committee recommended books from the community. In late spring to early summer, they read through and suggest, decline, or recommend books to determine which ones make it to the final selection. “It takes a good couple of months to get our top five book selection,” noted Jodie Zalk, co-facilitator, co-founder, and coordinator of Malden Reads.

Linda Zalk, co-founder of Malden Reads, explained, “We spend a lot of time reading books and figuring out what will work best for Malden. It’s not a light task, but it’s

For *Being Huemann*, Jodie Zalk felt the book just “clicked, but even as the committee narrowed down the final five choices, she felt unsure of where to proceed. That was when Buck suggested a book they had not talked about yet: *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*.

“This is a story about hope, about resourcefulness, about innovation,” described Karen Buck, a committee member who played a pivotal role in the selection process. “But it’s also about what you can accomplish when you push through and think outside the box.”

Buck’s connection to the book began 14 years ago when she first read it with her son. She described it as a book that left a lasting impact on her, even years later. In the 14 years since her first read-through, “I forgot how devastating the suffering of the drought and the famine were,” Buck confessed.

Towards the beginning of their conversations, the book was added to a list of more than 40 books but received no further attention. Months later, in September, Buck recalled that the book “came to me in a dream, and I just knew it was the one.” She brought it up during the next meeting, and a few conversations later, the book was officially chosen.

She emphasized that the book’s themes deeply resonate with their goals: “It’s about what one person can do with their resources, their ingenuity, and their belief in themselves.” The book’s themes of education, sustainability, and resilience align with

the community’s values, which will serve as a foundation for the year’s programming.

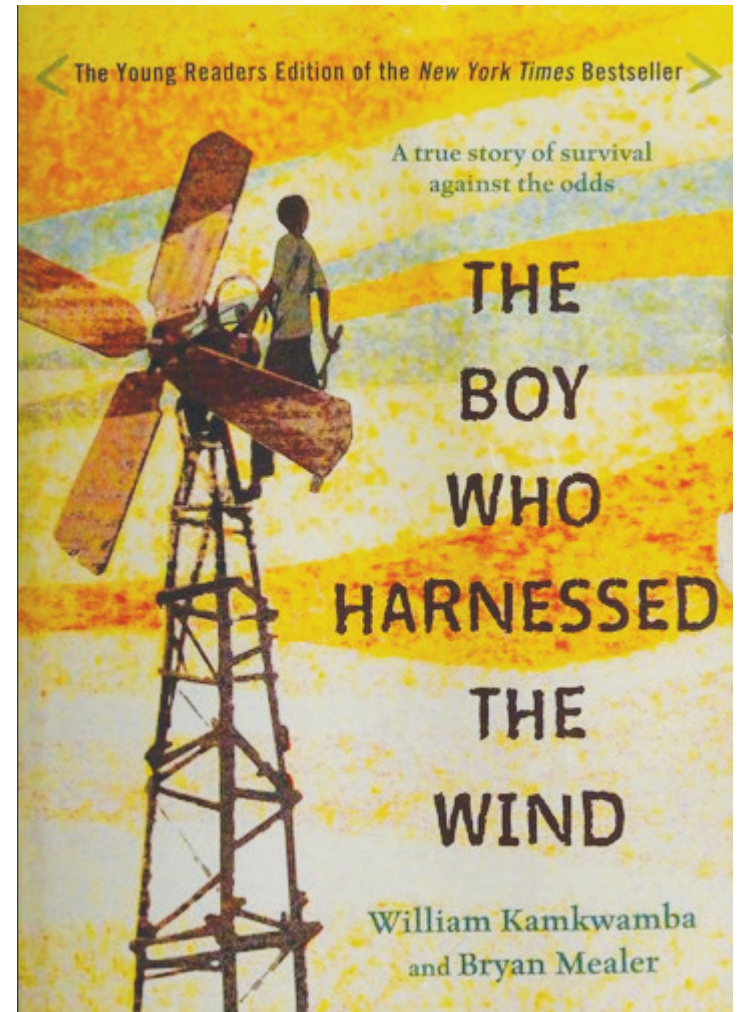
“Every year, we hope the book we choose will open up new ways of thinking for people,” Linda Zalk reflected. “This year, we’re inviting people to explore what’s possible when we embrace creativity and persistence, even in the face of overwhelming odds.”

With several events in the works aligning with this book choice, Jodie Zalk urges readers to look inward. “We hope this story will inspire people to think about what they can accomplish in their own lives,

even with limited resources,” she detailed. “It’s not just a story about overcoming challenges; it’s about the ingenuity and determination that we all have within us.”

Malden’s diversity is one of its greatest strengths, and Malden Reads reflects that by ensuring the annual book selection is accessible to people of all ages, backgrounds, and reading levels. This year, the book’s straightforward narrative and universal themes make it relatable to a broader audience.

To further increase accessibility, Malden Reads incorporates a range of complementary materials and partner books, including



William Kamkwamba and Bryan Mealer’s memoir *The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind*, published by Penguin Random House. Photo from the Penguin Random House website (penguinrandomhouse.com).

ing a picture book adaptation of Kamkwamba’s story. Thai illustrated version offers younger readers an opportunity to connect with the same powerful tale in an age-appropriate format. “It’s a way to bring families into the conversation,” explained Linda Zalk. “By providing different versions of the story, we ensure that everyone, no matter their age or reading level, can engage with these important themes.”

“Lyrically told and gloriously illustrated, this story will inspire many as it shows how – even in the worst of times – a great

idea and a lot of hard work can still rock the world,” described publishing company Penguin Random House.

As Malden Reads gears up for a year of events centered on Kamkwamba’s incredible journey, the committee is excited to see how the community will connect with his story. “This is a story that stays with you,” Linda Zalk professed. “It reminds us of what’s possible when we work together and never give up.”



From left to right: Malden Reads members Jodie Zalk and Karen Buck. MACK KEATING

maldenblueandgold.com

Malden Safe Provides Guidance for Students

Chouaib Saidi
Head Copy-Editor

Malden SAFE is the epitome of a safe space at Malden High School where a student who needs assistance—whether for stress, substance usage, or general mental health—can sit down with one of the advisors to talk about what is going on.

More specifically, it is “an office within Malden High School dedicated to student mental health,” detailed Angela Mastandrea, a Project Amp mentor working at Malden SAFE.

In providing a safe space for students, “we offer snacks and a quiet place to decompress between classes or during your study period,” said Mastandrea. There are even “mindfulness activities, games, art supplies and fidgets available for student use.”

For clients—“the students who are enrolled in either our therapy, mentorship, or substance use programs—we also have the ability to take clients to Dunkin’ as part of our services!” she exclaimed. “So Malden SAFE is a great place to go if you are interested in getting therapy, or if you’re not quite sure about therapy, but you’d like to talk to someone one on one.”

Mastandrea, alongside Chris Sabatuk, an A-CRA (Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach) certified therapist, have contributed significantly to the Malden SAFE program.

Malden SAFE consists of

various programs such as iDECIDE, ACRA Therapy, and AMP mentoring, which are all designed to assist students in mental health recovery.

“iDECIDE’ is a drug education curriculum program for students; it’s an alternative for the school just to lower the suspension rate of students and give them an alternative as opposed to a suspension,” Sabatuk explained.

Malden SAFE has had many impacts on the community—and not just at the high school as they hope to expand their branches to reach other ends of the community with open arms.

“We work in a bigger scope, with the Bureau of Substance Abuse Services and DPH [Department of Public Health], so there are other high schools that offer the very same services that we do,” Sabatuk commented.

“We are really trying to get our name out there,” said Mastandrea. “So far, we’ve met with other Malden High School staff and the Student Ambassador’s Club to clarify our roles, and what we offer, and to answer questions. We’ve also put up flyers around the school as well as maintained a social media presence. You can find us on Instagram @maldensafe. In addition to all of that, we also hold raffles and table events outside the cafeteria.”

They have also hosted past events like a backpack giveaway

and a “Build Your Own Coping Kit” event. In doing these activities, Mastandrea expressed that Malden SAFE hopes to “bridge that gap of being another adult in the room that is there to stand up for the student.”

“We hope to bridge that gap of being another adult in the room that is there to stand up for the student.” Angela Mastandrea

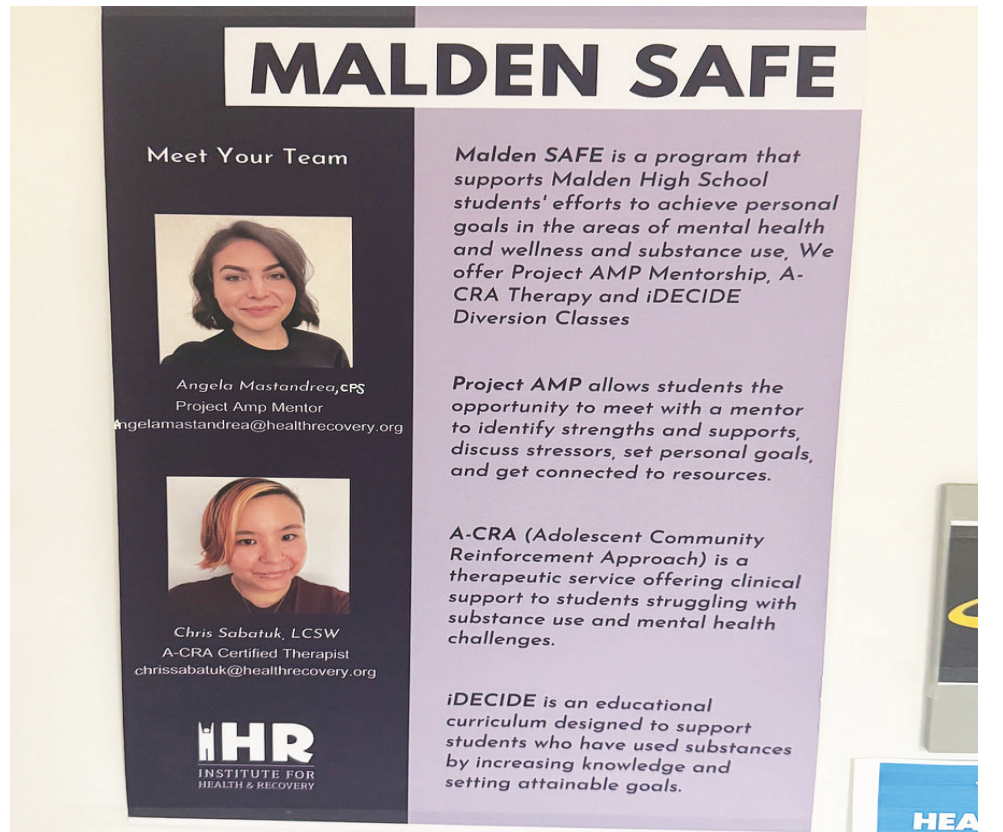
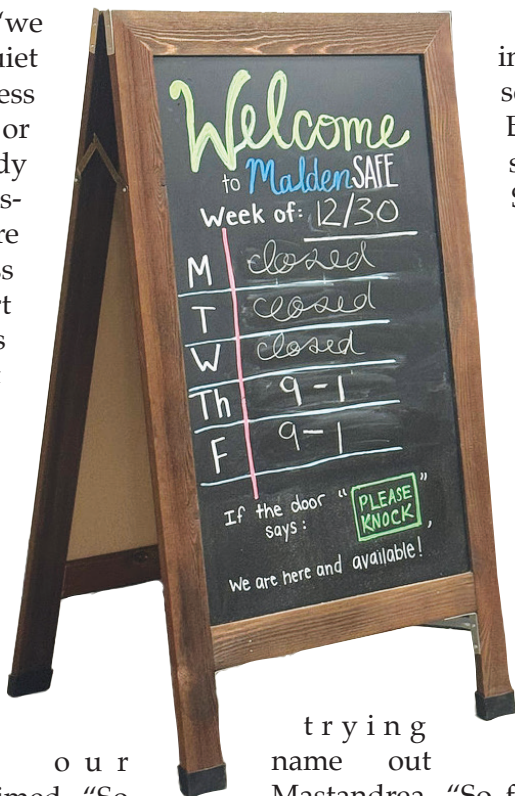
Malden SAFE has been a program for four years; it has had a genuine, and positive impact on the students and faculty of Malden High School. In regards to milestones and achievements in the program, impressive is an understatement.

“I feel most proud when I get to witness students making progress on their goals! Some student goals have included getting their grades up, getting a job, improving their relationship with a parent, improving their mental health, getting over a breakup, getting along with a sibling, cutting down on vaping, build-

ing confidence, having healthier communication, improving in their sport and many more. I work together with students to break these goals down into tangible steps, identify resources and barriers, and track progress,” Mastandrea claimed.

“I’ve been here for eight months, so I’m relatively new. But we’ve been going strong for four years. Angela’s been with us for one year. My supervisor has been on this project for about four years, so she’s very familiar with this program. She worked closely with our previous mentors and was also a therapist in this program as well,” Sabatuk described.

If a student is feeling overwhelmed academically or emotionally, Malden SAFE is available as a safe space. It is located on the Brunelli floor, BR475, where students should not feel shy to swing by.



Descriptive Malden SAFE flyer located in Brunelli. CHOUAIB SAIDI

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A Snowy Epidemic: Seasonal Shut-Ins

Kyle Dang
Reporter

Anna Bui
Reporter

As the Earth orbits around the sun and winter settles in, the days have become shorter and colder. During this season, many people go through seasonal affective disorder (SAD), more commonly known as seasonal depression.

During winter, it is common for many people to remain inside the house in order to prevent the contraction of illnesses. However, in effect, many students feel confined within their houses, rotting away in their beds. The biggest symptoms shown of seasonal depression are seen to be described as exhaustion and solitary confinement.

Effect on Students

Due to the earth's tilt, wintertime is proven to have more of a tremendous effect on the northern hemisphere. With the location of Malden High, the start of the winter season heavily affects the well-being of students which, consequently, has rapidly declined. "I believe the gloomy Massachusetts weather is a

really big contributor to this," sophomore Carolina Rosa De Oliveira clarified.

Students have noticed themselves becoming lazier, unmotivated, and overworked. Freshman Tara Villatore agreed: "When the seasonal depression starts to hit, I start feeling lonely, more lazy... I start to feel guilt, hopelessness, and I start getting frustrated and annoyed a lot more easily."

Freshman Minerva Davenport expressed that "during this time of year," she feels "a false sense of happiness," because she knows "it's all limited." Concerning the holiday season, Davenport believes that the festivity is short-lived, not being enough to sustain her feelings throughout the rest of winter.

Others have noticed an influx of feeling "more pressured and stressed," or "really tired and sluggish," as junior Johnny Mei and sophomore Ryan Huang said.

Cause of Emotions

A huge factor credited to the contribution of this effect lies in schoolwork and grades itself. Some students despise the workload distributed at this time, claiming many assignments are lodged into the

weeks around winter break. Many have believed that teachers are trying to follow a specific schedule to meet an exact deadline.

"This time of year is when all classes are at full swing, so it feels like being crushed under piles of work weeks at a time," explained Rosa De Oliveira, who continued, "Around Christmas break, we typically get midterms as well, so that really adds onto the anxiety."

Typically, winter break at Malden High begins the day before Christmas Eve, allowing students to relax for the holidays. However, students have noticed that the break does not suffice and often causes more stress than comfort. Echoing this sentiment, junior Moon To shared that "the break between the quarter is both a blessing and a curse." To further elaborate, the week-long vacation often leads to students' forgetfulness of the information retained the weeks before break. Hence, many feel obliged to relearn everything without the proper lecture by a teacher.

"It's a build-up of several weeks of work without breaks," added sophomore Sofia Evoras, which many other students have agreed upon. Following the end of the first semester leading up to midterm week, the amount of work assigned tends to feel far more stressful compared to the remainder of the school year.

Backing the increasing amount of classwork, daylight savings messes with students' brains, making them feel as if they have less free time to complete the tasks they need to do. "I think because of how early it gets dark, it just feels kind of drowsy in the evenings," shared Villatore. Junior Linh Do added, "During the winter, it's so hard to get work done and be motivated because it gets dark so early. I just feel tired all the time."

With only about eight hours of sunlight daily, students' moods have decreased with the sun's rays—or the lack thereof. "The main cause for this might be less sunlight, as vitamin D can help boost someone's mood," said freshman Vanessa Nguyen. Rosa De Oliveira added on, stating, "My mood waking up to the sun shining and birds chirping, compared to rain and clouds, is like night and day."

Coping and Solutions

To combat the feeling of eternal dread, many peers alike have developed various ways to entertain themselves throughout the frigid winter. Most students find themselves spending as much time as possible with loved ones. "I think having friends around in making sure you're surrounded with good people is the best way to cope with any depressive feelings during this time of year," stated Do.

A select few, such as Rosa de Oliveira, suggest that "therapy is definitely something worth looking into" if you are constantly overwhelmed by your emotions.

Many students have various methods of indulging in their hobbies to distract themselves from the workload. According to To, "prioritizing... extracurriculars such as sports" brings her "joy."

Sophomore Annyah Azhar expressed that she prefers to "journal... small goals to get done everyday," to keep herself afloat on all of the given work.

Nguyen suggested "...playing games or listening to... [your] favorite songs."

Do also stated that her passion for "doing art or anything creative," occupies her.

Whatever your preferred method might be, a common solution among many students has been to rely on those closest to you or further develop hobbies.

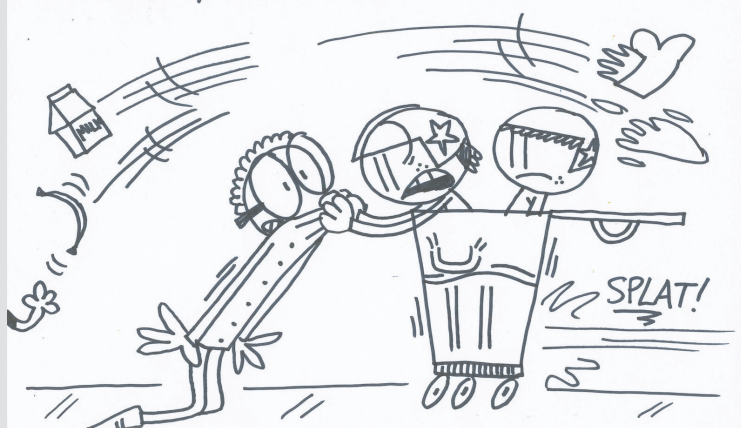
Many have agreed that because of the effect that classwork and grades has on their mental health, building communication between teachers and students could lift a bit of stress off their shoulders. "Some discussion between teachers and students would be ideal, so teachers can work hand-in-hand with students in staying on the right track," expressed Evoras. Freshman Liliana Lin added, "Teachers could lessen the workload and many students... should work on time management."

The phenomenon described as seasonal depression might not be a strange occurrence at all. Described by a flood of work and a lack of motivation, tied with the dreary weather, seasonal depression is bound to happen when December rolls around. Do concluded: "I don't think there's any changes [that can be made] because it's like this every year naturally."

TEEN DAZE

by Richie Cortese

Teen-Daze By Richie Cortese

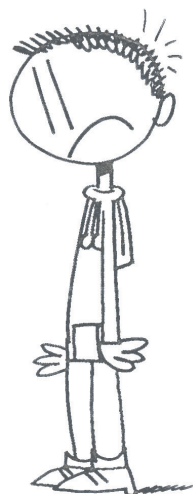


"You should hide in this trashcan, the kindergarteners are having a food-fight again!"

-2025

Teen-Daze By Richie Cortese

"I didn't know where my toys were so I crumbled up your high school homework paper into a little ball and used it as a hairball but what was I supposed to do? Give it back or leave it there?"



Malden High School at Night. KYLE DANG

Style and Sustainability at Select Markets

Jaslie Fang
Editor-In-Chief of Social Media and Print

Gabriela Parrini Cordova
Head of Sports

What began as a means of living for marginalized communities in the United States has transformed into something much more significant. Thrifting's history can be traced to the early 1900s when immigrant populations and low-income families turned to secondhand markets for affordable clothing and household items. Over time, however, thrifting began to represent much more: individuality, creativity, and resourcefulness—rebellious against the homogeneity of mass-produced goods.

Sustainability activism has elevated thrifting from a personal choice to a social movement. As fast fashion exploded in the 1900s and early 2000s, environmental advocates exposed its devastating impact on natural resources, harsh labor conditions, and poor waste management. Thrift stores and secondhand shopping were reframed as acts of resistance, encouraging the reuse of goods to reduce overconsumption. Today, thrifting plays a vital role in both environmental and social justice movements—a role that Select Markets is part of.

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Vendor Bruna Barbalho posing for a picture while selling her vintage watches and Christmas sweaters at the Select Winter Fest Market. GABRIELA PARINI CORDOVA

goods to reduce overconsumption. Today, thrifting plays a vital role in both environmental and social justice movements—a role that Select Markets is part of.

Select Markets, a Boston-based brand founded by Northeastern University students specializes in hosting vintage clothing pop-up events and proudly promotes its motto, "Vintage Finds for Modern Minds." With a significant social media presence, particularly on Instagram (@select.markets), the brand effectively captures the attention of younger audiences, specifically college and high school students.

In mid-December, Select Markets held its final event of the year at The Foundry in Cambridge, a venue described as "a self-sustaining center of creativity and collaboration in the Kendall Square neighborhood, offering the Cambridge community opportunities in science, technology, engineering, arts, and math."

At the Select Markets event in Cambridge, vendors like Agaz Baig (@gazillioneargarments) and Jack Kaplan brought a mix of passion for sustainability and vintage fashion to the forefront. As long-time participants in Select Markets, Baig and Kaplan emphasized the importance of events like these for promoting sustain-

able fashion and fostering community. "What we're doing is keeping clothes alive and keeping them from rotting in landfills," Baig explained, highlighting the environmental benefits of secondhand clothes over fast fashion.

Beyond sustainability, the event stood out for its lively and inclusive atmosphere. Featuring DJs, temporary tattoos, and tooth gem stations, the market offered more than just shopping—it was an immersive experience. "You don't need money to come to these events," Kaplan added, noting how the market is just as much about community and fun as it is about purchasing fashion.

Building on the sense of community previously highlighted, Rachel Eaglin, a Malden High School Class of 2018 alumna, brings a unique perspective to Select Markets. As a jewelry maker and vintage enthusiast, Eaglin sells her handmade fine jewelry and curated secondhand pieces at the market, where she has built lasting relationships with customers and fellow vendors. Having been involved with Select Markets from the beginning, Eaglin sees these events as a space for more than just commerce—they are a chance to mingle, share, and express personal style in an atmosphere that feels more like a social gathering than a typical shopping experience.

"It's a lot of community versus just shopping at a mall,"

Eaglin explained. With her brand, Clover Patch Jewelry, Eaglin invites people not just to buy but to engage with the unique stories and connections these markets bring.

MARQUISE! added to Eaglin's sentiment, stating, "It's a good social event, free for all ages, and a great way to sustain the planet." For MARQUISE!, his love for collecting clothes naturally turned into a thriving business; he now encourages others to explore thrifting, whether shopping or selling, as a fun and impactful way to support sustainability.

Bruna Barbalho, another vendor at Select Markets, brought her passion for vintage fashion to the event with an eclectic mix of items, including vintage watches and sweaters. While she typically focuses on secondhand clothing, Barbalho's love for vintage shines through in her curated selections.

Selling primarily through Select Markets and occasionally her Instagram (@figsvintagefinds) Barbaglio discovered the market through social media and friends from Urban Collection who encouraged her to join. Since then, she has become a regular participant, valuing the community and platform Select Markets provides.

For Barbalho, shopping secondhand is not just a preference but a commitment to sustainability. "I genuinely feel an immense amount of guilt when I buy something non-secondhand," she shared, emphasizing the environmental benefits of reusing existing items instead of creating more. Barbaglio highlighted how curated markets like Select make sustainable shopping more accessible, offering a hand-



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picked selection that eliminates the overwhelmingness some might feel in traditional thrift stores.

Similarly, Eric Pinto, a member of 161 Vintage, delved deeper into this conversation by highlighting the intersection of personal values, fashion, and systemic change. This conversation has allowed 161 Vintage to transform into a thriving business that spans across the U.S. and internationally—traveling from California to Japan and Thailand to curate high-quality garments.

Pinto clarified his views that thrifting is not just a fashion choice but an act of defiance against the wasteful practices of fast fashion and corporate greed. “Capitalism is the real enemy,” Pinto remarked as he urged consumers to make more sustainable choices by investing in

durable, used clothing.

The events held by Select Markets serve as more than just marketplaces—they are centers for cultural exchange, social engagement, and collective action. With each pop-up event, individuals are demonstrating how secondhand shopping can be an expression of personal style and a commitment to ethical values.

As thrifting continues to gain momentum, it is clear that this movement goes far beyond simply buying used clothes. It is about participating in a larger conservation movement about environmental responsibility, consumerism, and the power of community.

Select Markets plans to host another event in 2025, and readers can stay updated on the latest happenings by following them on Instagram @select.markets.



Vendor Eric Pinto posing for a picture while selling his vintage hats, sweaters, and jewelry at the Select Winter Fest Market. GABRIELA PARINI CORDOVA



Vendors Andy Meija, Sebastian Acalva, Ryan Gonzalez posing for a picture while selling custom temporary tattoos at the Select Winter Fest Market. GABRIELA PARINI CORDOVA



Vendors Aagaz Baig and Jack Kaplan posing for a picture while selling their vintage clothing at the Select Winter Fest Market. GABRIELA PARINI CORDOVA

Election Results: Class of 2027 Steps into Leadership

Haset Tesfaw
Lead Reporter

Elections for the class of 2027 were held on November 22, 2024, and many nervous candidates were awaiting the results to see if they had won their desired role in the council. When the winners were announced the new council was excited to “raise school spirit and participation in school events,” Alexia Maciel Lima, the president of the class of 2027 student council and Blue and Gold reporter said.

From the 24 people running, the winners were Lima as president, Amelia Berliner as Vice President, Cat Nguyen as Secretary, Sofia Vargas as Treasurer, Emilly De Farias Weihrauch and Chelmie Hyppolite as the Event Coordinators (both reporters for The Blue and Gold), Raquel Ferreira and Evelyn Ruan (also a reporter for The Blue and Gold) as the Social Media Coordinators, and Sofia Evoras as Volunteer Coordinator.

On November 1st, the Google forms to run for the council officially closed; and on November 4th, the nervous but excited candidates began campaigning and spreading the news that they were running to their fellow sophomores.

The candidates had many different ways of advertising. “I started



Class of 2027 student council selling concessions outside of the parent teacher night. KRISAURY PALACIOS PINA.

by making a social media post with basic information to announce that I was campaigning. After that, my main way was putting up small posters around the school and going from person to person to talk to people in small groups or individually,” Evoras stated. “I also made a sign with my campaign on it and had people who were voting take a picture with it. After I posted online, many of them reposted it, bringing

more attention to the campaign.”

In addition to making and putting up posters and posting online, an effective way of campaigning and getting people’s attention was to talk to as many people as possible. “My campaigning started initially through word of mouth. For months prior to our class even having an advisor, I told any sophomore I came across to keep me in mind for student council president,” Lima said.

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Storefront of Malden Center's Dunkin'. REVA UPHADAYAY
Dunkin Donuts
424 Main St, Malden, MA
02148

Residing just across the street from ‘New York Pizza,’ Dunkin’ Donuts has become a popular favorite hangout spot for many students; it’s a perfect place to catch up with friends after a long day of school and enjoy a new drink off the menu, or especially your favorite donut! Freshman Gyovanna Gomes said, “With the convenience of New York Pizza being across from Dunkin’, I sometimes stop at both!”

After a long day at school, everyone needs a spot to unwind or recharge regardless of what they want to do; these five spots are the best go-to places in our city. So next time the bell rings and you’re wondering where to go, check one of these out!

TORNADOES DOMINATE RED DEVILS



Girls' basketball team cheers and chants before the game starts. ASHTON CALIXTE

Aundrea Cifuentes
Lead Reporter

Ashton Calixte
Managing Editor

As the winter season returns, the Girls' Basketball Team has been ready to make noise back on Malden High's court. They have prepared to ensure they not only dominate the court but also States.

In their first game, they proved their dominance with a stunning score of 52-19 against Chelsea's Red Devils on December 11th, 2024.

In the first quarter, Captain Kimberly Tropnas provided remarkable highlights. Tropnas scored an impressive three-pointer that set

for the game, which bolstered Malden's strong start. There was also a memorable display of defense from Malden that prevented their opponents from keeping up.

Still, some moments within the game demonstrated room for improvement.

"Our defense was good but we missed a lot of open layups so we have to work on finishing laying up and not ball hogging and getting it to other quarters," said Tropnas.

They kept a steady higher score into halftime. The second quarter ended 26-2 in favor of Malden.

This led to high energy from the crowd as if it was their first game. They made sure to keep constant motivation to win throughout the whole game.

"We held our composure, we had a goal and we succeeded in that goal by working together as a team," noted junior Olivia Rodrigues.

They made a big jump from the second quarter, from 26 to 42, almost doubling the score. They kept their heads in the game and did not let Chelsea get anywhere close to the score. The girls knew they wanted to win this game with a remarkable score and did just that.

Their last quarter sealed the win and they kept up a stable pace.



All photos by Ashton Calixte.



Malden Girls on the court preparing for the inbound. ASHTON CALIXTE



Sophia Rodrigues prevents Chelsea players from attempting a layup. ASHTON CALIXTE

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usually be like. They also help veteran runners in other cardio-heavy sports who are not running as often during their off-seasons.

The season officially commenced on December 2nd, with practices hosted at the Salemwood School. On the first day of practice, runners and throwers immediately sprung into their workouts after going over a few courtesies and giving newcomers a “run-down” on what to expect throughout the upcoming winter months. Sprinters worked indoors with Coach Marc Ferrara, who in the beginning was accompanied by Coach Michel-Le Meranda, and coach Niles, while distance runners worked outside with coach Sofiane and coach McCormick.

With heightened expectations and trust instilled in the players this year, Coach Ferrara highlights the importance of training not only at practice but also in their free time, since it's key to self-improvement and discipline. He states “If you're not disciplined as a runner, you're not gonna be disciplined in any other factitive that you do. Coming to track and doing what's expected of you is half the battle.”

Many runners were given a chance to run at an invitational meet on Sunday, December 15th, which served as an opportunity to experience an early competition and measure their progress for the start of the season.

“The invitational was a great opportunity for some members of our team to be able to compete at a high level with lots of competition throughout the state to push them,” explained

senior and distance captain Slade Harding.

The team experienced their first official meet together on December 19th, where they faced Malden's Greater Boston League opponents. Their first competition as a team was the kickstarter for a new season in which the players hoped to break records, reach new heights, and surpass their past limitations.

“I love track because it's not just about the challenge, but also the amazing support. The vibes are always positive, and everyone is friendly and encouraging,” shared sophomore and sprinter Jhillian Dumo.

With their first three meets out of the way, the returning and new members of the team are now going through the final stretch of the season. Distance captain sophomore Keira Celicourt, who runs the one and two-mile events, claimed “This track season feels so much shorter than last year! I feel more comfortable at meets, and this year I had the opportunity to go to an invitational meet, which was so much fun. This year has been different for me since I became a captain, too.”

As each athlete strives to improve practice after practice, they slowly make their way toward the season's finish line.

All photos by Jessica Li.



Christina Anasthal runs the 300-meter race. JESSICA LI

Girls' Basketball Prevails against Lynn Classical



Girls' Basketball team stands together for the national anthem. EVELYN RUAN

Evelyn Ruan
Lead Reporter

As the season continues, Malden High's Girls' Basketball team has already set themselves up with a good start while playing against Lynn Classical. Both teams fought, but Malden was able to take the win home on December 17th, 2024, on their first away game.

Before the game started, the team huddled up together and said their last words before breaking up. Then the team lined up to cheer on the starting players, which included senior captains Kimberly Tropnas and Ina Tolete, senior Amanda Lily Ebenezer, junior Madison Cook, and sophomore Manicha Exilhomme. After cheering, everyone lined up to face the flag for the national anthem. Finally, the game started.

During the first quarter, Malden was nervous about going against Lynn Classical. “I was a little bit nervous because I knew that the game was a big game, especially because it was at the beginning of the season, and last year, we did lose to Lynn Classical School two times,” shared senior captain Kimberly Tropnas. Even though she was nervous, she was still confident that Malden could beat Lynn Classical due to prior practices.

Senior captain Ina Tolete also

shared similar thoughts to Tropnas, believing “that it was a big test for us as a team, because that was an actual team that we had to go against that was our upper division in the GBL. So going into it, we were all pretty nervous, and it showed in the first quarter.”

“When it was the first away game, I felt great to be back. I was a little nervous but in my mind, I kept thinking ‘We got this’ and kept cheering on my teammates,” mentioned junior Jaziarra Antoine.

The start was slow—but within minutes, Lynn Classical was able to score. Their fast running made it hard for Malden to catch up. While not having any points at first, Tropnas gave Malden their first points of the game, with a score of 7-2 before Malden Coach Scott Marino called a time-out.

Even though Lynn Classical was five points ahead of Malden, Malden's tough defense made it hard for Lynn Classical to score over seven points, leaving the first quarter the same with a score of 7-2. Malden was not intimidated by the point difference, believing that they still had a chance to win.

“Although we were down, it wasn't like it was 5-50; there was only such a small gap, which we knew we could fill. So during that

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Girls' basketball team posing for a group picture after a victorious win against Lynn Classical. EVELYN RUAN

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GBL Wrestling Sprawls into Season



Chris Seccareccio attempts to regain control of his opponent. JACOB FUENTES

Sophie LeBlanc
Lead Reporter

Jacob Fuentes
Lead Reporter

While all sports are inevitably competitive, people often forget that building community and developing self-confidence are equally, if not more important, to a successful season. This is especially true for the wrestling team at Malden High School; this season, they aim to make meaningful connections, rewrite the narrative about wrestling, and secure a well-deserved place at States.

A unique element of wrestling in Malden is its multi-city team: instead of being comprised solely of Malden High students, the team includes athletes from Medford, Everett, and Chelsea who make up the Greater Boston League (GBL). This allows players to meet a wider array of like-minded peers that they may not have met otherwise.

Chris Seccareccio, a senior captain and Medford High student reinstated the value of this perk: "As someone from Medford, being able to be on a team with both Malden, Everett, [and Chelsea] has been a great experience—and I have only met amazing people."

"There's a sense of family," remarked Head Coach Kevin Isaza. "Regardless of what school you go to, you're all under one roof, under one team."

Another noteworthy characteristic of the wrestling program is that it is co-educational, and wrestling as a sport is continuously evolving to be more gender inclusive. Isaza has found that "every year, we're increasing the number of

female athletes at tournaments."

Despite the season having only recently begun, the team is already flourishing, having won their first tournament against Cambridge with numerous of its wrestlers placing on the podium.

"This year, we've been off to a great start," said Isaza. "We are now amongst the top ten teams in each tournament, so there's definitely been a big improvement from last year where we weren't really meeting those expectations."

According to junior captain David Para Araujo, "Since last year, the team has improved their technique and work ethic. People show up to practice ready to get into it and work hard."

Wrestling, while rewarding, is not without its challenges. "It teaches a lot of tough lessons, whether that's experiencing a loss or making mistakes on the mat," explained

"Something people may not know about is the mental toll it can have on you: going out on that mat and giving it your all, and still not coming out on top."

David Parada

Isaza. "Wrestling requires a lot of mental toughness... and I hope that they can carry that on through the rest of their lives."

Despite being commonly perceived as a strictly "individual" sport—as in, solely focused on personal achievements without any sense of group responsibility—wrestling in the GBL holds a strong bond between athletes, where personal accomplishments are recognized and celebrated by the entire team.

For junior Caden Toomey, who started wrestling only this year, "as long as you work hard, everyone is accepting."

"Having guys who share the same passion and goals as you—who are constantly pushing you in the practice room to be better every day—is something that I feel like people overlook when they think of a sport like wrestling," commented Seccareccio. "The team aspect of wrestling is just as important as any other sport."

When people think of wrestling, they may restrict it to competition, painting a picture reminiscent of WWE television programs and the sport's injurious nature. Many forget that wrestling is, above all, a chance to connect with others, curate lifelong memories, and instill a deep-rooted sense of confidence. The wrestling GBL—defined by the hard work and dedication of athletes from four neighboring cities—aims to rewrite the narrative that has defined the sport for so long.

All photos by Jacob Fuentes.

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earned the first few points, Malden continued to keep up their defense

Toward the end of the first quarter, senior Amanda Lily Ebenezzer scored a basket that put Malden on the board. These points set the



Amanda Lily Ebenezzer shooting a free throw after a foul on Medford. ASHTON CALIXTE

tone offensively for the rest of the game.

Defensively, seniors Ina Tolete and Kimberly Tropnas, as well as junior Madison Cook, were able to shut down and frustrate Medford's two best players. Their efforts on defense led the way for defense throughout the entire game. "Our defense won the game for us," emphasized Coach Scott Marino.

"We received outstanding contributions from

Olivia Rodrigues, Jenesa Perez Sims, Jaziarra Antoine, Aaliyah Ferreira, and Sophia Rodrigues off the bench as well," stated Marino.

Despite this season having its ups and downs, their main focus and team goals have been crystal clear. "Our first goal is to win the GBL Large, the second goal is to qualify for the MIAA State Basketball Tournament, and the ultimate goal is to win an MIAA State Championship," stressed Coach Marino.

All photos by Ashton Calixte.



“Flying to New Heights” Cheerleaders Begin Competitive Training



The cheer team before their practice. Photo submitted by Claudia Hernandez Escobar.

Delina Yohannes
Head of Local

As the cheer team continues to deliver nothing less than impressive and eye-catching performances for the Boys' Basketball Team, it is now—for the first time since before the COVID-19 pandemic—taking its insane talent to the next level: competitive cheerleading.

Led by Head Coaches and Malden High School alumni Brianna Silva Couture and Bianca Scola, as well as two of The Blue and Gold's sophomore lead reporters, Aundrea Cifuentes and Alexia Lima, the new cheer competition team consists of 20 determined girls who will go on to represent Malden in their first competition on February 23rd. During this competition, they will showcase their skills and teamwork that they have been tirelessly working on for the past month.

As both students and athletes, balancing both can be a struggle at times. With fairly late practices, schoolwork, and other extracurriculars that many of the girls participate in, it can become overwhelming at times—especially for those who are new to the team and to cheer as a whole. Despite this, the encouraging aspect of the team reminds those girls that they are not alone. They are all in it together to reach a common goal, and this uplifts their spirits.

“I come and give my best and try to put my best foot forward for all of us, regardless if you've been on the team before or are new to competing. I feel like I'm just trying to be adaptive,” stated junior Taliyah Lauture, who has been on the cheer team for two years. She further explained how she tries to be as supportive as she can for all the new girls, because “what brought me to join the team was how inviting and awesome everyone was, so I hope to make others feel the same way.”

Junior Claudia Hernandez Escobar is new to the Malden High cheer team this year but has been a competitive cheerleader for

more than ten years, making her extremely familiar with all the requirements that a team must take prior to the competition in order to ensure success and satisfaction with their performance. “I've been in this sport for my whole life and competitive cheer for nearly ten years, and although our time to work is limited compared to my other experiences, we're still in the perfect direction. The coaches and captains are doing an amazing job to keep everything in check,” stated Hernandez.

As good in shape as the team is in terms of their mindsets and physicality going forward, they face

some obstacles when it comes to space and equipment.

“The school doesn't have a full mat, we're missing two panels,” explained junior Sorin Mamouzette, who is new to the team. She added how, as small as that obstacle seems, it can make a big difference in performance and ensuring that everyone is comfortable when it is time to perform in an unfamiliar space. Luckily, over winter break, the girls were invited to Bay State All Stars in Woburn, Massachusetts, where they were able to practice with a full mat and put all of their hard work into effect. Practicing here, they got

a glimpse of what the competition will look like.

“The girls are adapting so well, truly, if I could take all 30 of them to competition I would, but the rules limit it to 20,” stated Couture, who later emphasized how their practice at the All Stars gymnasium went so well that the girls were invited to come again.

“They definitely showed them just how much potential they have so towards the end of January; we're going to be practicing at their gym once a week,” expressed Couture. She also mentioned how one of the owners is from Malden herself and recognized all the physical hard work and desire that the girls have to better their skills. “When we went there, the girls learned so much from all their extensive help.”

With February being sooner than we think, the stakes are high for the cheer team; but with all the sacrifices that they have already to ensure that they are prepared, it is almost obvious that they are going to deliver nothing but the best of their abilities.

“Competitive cheer is all I know, and so, coming back to my high school team to coach, I wanted to make sure that they also get to experience that. I really hope that they place either 1st-3rd, but if not, I know that we will score over 65 points, and that's what you need to go to regionals—which I know that they will do,” noted Couture. She expressed confidence in the girls' ability to show Greater Boston League that Malden cheer is back.



The seniors of the MHS Cheer team. Photo taken from the team's Instagram page, @maldenhigh.cheer

GIRLS' BASKETBALL PREVAILS AGAINST LYNN CLASSICAL

maldenblueandgold.com



#11 Junior Madison Cook boldly plays defense against Lynn Classical player. EVELYN RUAN

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moment, I didn't really put my head down, I was still confident that we could win that game," commented Tropnas.

"My main motto for the season was to always have hope and to always believe in each other. So even though we were down 7-2, it didn't really matter, because whatever five was out there, whether it was the starting five or we had somebody from the bench coming in, we just kind of believed that we could do it," said Tolete. She added that when you believe in each other, then you can make anything happen."

During the second quarter, Malden was determined to score more points, and this quarter showed their determination. Both teams had strong defense, but Malden's was stronger. They were able to cover the ball quickly, making it difficult for Lynn Classical to score.

When the clock hit 5:40, Tropnas scored Malden a 3-pointer, making the score 7-5 with Malden chasing. Two minutes later, Tropnas was able to score two times in a row in less than ten seconds: first another 3-pointer when the clock hit 3:40, and a 2-pointer when the clock hit 3:41—making Malden able to lead the game 10-7.

After Tropnas scored, Lynn Classical called a time-out. Once the time ran out, Lily Ebenezer scored within just ten seconds and scored again with a score of 14-7. With Malden consistently playing strong defense, it made it difficult for Lynn Classical to score.

But when the time was 3:48, Lynn Classical made a 3-pointer, almost ending the quarter with a score of 14-10 until Exilhomme made a foul shot and made the final score of 15-10.

Once halftime ended, both teams undoubtedly

wanted to win. The next quarter proved how competitive the game was with the scores going back and forth. Within minutes, sophomore Exilhomme made another point during a foul shot, and Malden had a score of 16-10. With 6:28 left in the quarter, Lynn Classical made a 2-pointer and then another in less than a minute. The score was 16-14, and Lynn Classical was able to catch up to Malden and eventually tied with 16-16.

Lynn Classical was almost able to lead, but the teams tied again. Yet Lily Ebenezer broke the tie, scoring a 2-pointer and then making a foul shot. This upped the score to 21-18. But Lynn Classical was still able to catch up, with them scoring another 2-pointer resulting in a score of 21-20, and Malden calling a timeout.

After the timeout, Lynn was able to lead 22-21. Junior Olivia Rodrigues was then able to have Malden lead the game by gaining two points during her foul shots, scoring 23-22. With less than 30 seconds left, Tropnas made a 3-pointer and Tolete gained another point during her foul shot, having a score of 27-22.

The quarter ended with a score of 27-23 in favor of Malden, with Lynn Classical gaining a point during a foul shot in the last few seconds of

the quarter.

With the score going back and forth, it became stressful for the players. For Tropnas, "The only thing going through my mind was, 'alright, now I have to score.' Now I have to score, now I have to find a way to score."

During the fourth quarter, it was like a war against Malden and Lynn Classical with both teams wanting to win. Junior Sophia Rodrigues was to get a pass quick from a teammate and scored points for Malden during 7:45 minutes, and then scored again a minute later, lifting the score to 31-23. Following that, Malden called a timeout.

After the timeout ended, Lynn Classical was able to get a point by catching up to Malden with a score of 31-25. Almost 20 seconds later, senior Lily Ebenezer scored and then scored again gaining a score of 35-25. Malden was ten points ahead until Lynn Classical scored a 2-pointer, 35-27, followed by them calling a timeout.

With only a few minutes left of the game, it became even more competitive, and both teams went back and forth scoring points. Lily Ebenezer put Malden ten points ahead and scored 37-27 with five minutes left of the game, but was later ended by Lynn Classical two minutes later, scoring 37-29. Malden again called a timeout.

After it ended, Exil-

homme scored Malden two points. Following that, Lynn Classical got a foul shot and two points, with them gaining three points total and a score of 39-30. A few minutes later, Lynn Classical gained four more points, with a score of 39-34. After that, Lynn Classical called a timeout.

Both teams were tired, but Lynn Classical was quick to catch up to Malden. 30 seconds later, Tolete scored with less than a minute left of the game, following a timeout called by Malden.

Malden had a strong defense with the last minute left of the game, making Lynn Classical unable to score. The game ended with a score of 41-34 and Malden winning against them, which was a huge moment for the team.

"Honestly, it was a huge wave of relief, and also, because we haven't beat Lynn Classical at their gym in a long time, especially like in my years of playing basketball, so it was a nice win," stated Tropnas.

Looking back, the players have found themselves to learn and reflect from the game.

Tropnas further learned how to work together as a team: "I mean, we do have our own talents, but we can't win games solo," she said. She emphasized the importance of "working together more, building more team chemistry, and also keeping our heads up when we're down, as well as lifting each other up at times" to succeed.

Antoine commented that she learned not to give up, "and if I make a mistake, learn from it and fix it on the next position."

Ending with a great win of 41-34 against Lynn Classical, they sure are prepared to use this win to push forward for the rest of the season.



All photos by Evelyn Ruan