



The Mirror

April 21, 2020 The Bromfield School Volume 32 | Issue 02

"Do your part to help flatten the curve!"

Dear Bromfield community,

We hope this finds you well!

A few days after the school closed, this issue was supposed to be printed. We had been working on it for months in advance, and we were just adding the finishing touches. We didn't want to let all of the staff's hard work go to waste. Although it is a month overdue, we thought this virtual issue of *The Mirror* would be a welcome distraction from your quarantine.

These past two months have been unprecedented to say the least, and the importance of journalism has never been greater. When all else in the world shuts down, journalism continues. In times like these, accurate and timely reporting is crucial to keep everybody safe and informed. So, we thought it would be best if we followed suit and continued to publish our newspaper as well.

In this issue, you will find new stories, opinion pieces, photos, and more from a little while back. We hope you enjoy flipping through and reminiscing on some events from the past few months of school!

Stay safe!

Anya and Charlotte
Co-editors

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Mirror	0
SCHOOL NEWS	2
Why is heating so uneven in Bromfield?	2
Mock election results	3
New MacBook updates promote privacy and education	5
New Orleans 2020 service trip met with success	6
Chef Paul criticizes “one-size-fits-all” federal regulations	7
Bruning enters a new position at the Main Office	8
Time for a change?	9
Bromfield counselors clarify intents for Angst	10
EDITORIALS	12
Big Brother seeps into modern society	12
Is homeroom obsolete?	13
The case for key cards at Bromfield	13
Mirror staff perspectives: Quarantine	14
ENTERTAINMENT	16
1917: Redefining what it means to make a war film	16
Parasite cleverly portrays a cynical view about society	17
News trivia: Highlights of 2020 so far. . .	18
PHOTOS	20

SCHOOL NEWS

Why is heating so uneven in Bromfield?

by KeeSeok Lee

Students have been complaining of the heating issues at The Bromfield School. Specifically, these complaints can be attributed to the uneven distribution of heat throughout the school, which is caused by the age and varying quality of the building and individual temperature controls.

Mr. Lynde, the Honors Economics and College Preparatory Global Studies teacher, teaches his classes in Room 291, one of the many classrooms along the second floor high school hallway. He noted, "You just notice there's a very uneven temperature; it's the old building, I'm not sure how easy it is to control, that's what we're feeling." The "uneven temperature" becomes more apparent to him as he teaches throughout the day, as he feels "pretty comfortable [in the morning] in the room and then as the day goes on, whether it's in the winter or it's in sort of the more summer months, things change." Cool and optimal morning temperatures eventually give way to hot, warm afternoons. To him, the entire second floor hallway seemed to face similar problems, with the heat sometimes being too stifling in his rooms. The heating is a special concern for Mr. Lynde because of the difficult impact that it has on his students: "There often isn't a lot of movement, motion in classes, so if you're standing in one place and it's getting really really warm or sitting in one place and it's getting warm, I think it affects people's ability to pay attention, to engage, no doubt."

However, the other primary issue was regarding the uneven distribution of heating throughout the school. Mr. Lynde explained, "I also work in the library one period a day, and the library is like a completely different situation: it's cold, it's cold all the time. I want to be wearing a jacket there for the most part."

Ziyad Ali, a junior, has his homeroom located on the first floor hallway in Mr. Murphy's room, Room 195, and he has noticed that fellow students complain about the cold in the morning. Ali said that the temperature has been "pretty fine for me, I guess, but I'm always wearing sweaters." And, similar to Mr. Lynde, he felt that the heat was worst in the "the whole

hallway because the heat rises up and just gets all over there." Claire Stoddard, a junior, pointed to the fact that "one of the things that stands out to the students is the general inconsistency with the temperature of different rooms, hallways, and stairwells. One of the most notable is the stairwell by Mrs. Zimmer and Mr. Wass' rooms--it seems to be blasting heat."

The current Bromfield School building (before the addition) was constructed in 1962, meaning that the building is reaching its 58th year of use. Mr. Snyder, the former facilities manager at the school, explained that the building relies on a "complex computerized building management system that controls every piece of HVAC [heating, ventilation, and air conditioning] equipment" in order to regulate the temperature throughout the school. Most importantly, according to Mr. Snyder, "there are hundreds of controllers in The Bromfield School. There have been 3 major controls upgrades so we have new, old, and very old controllers. Our system works very well with the new controllers, pretty good with the old controllers, and not very good with the very old controllers." Unfortunately, these controllers are located in classrooms, and are difficult to access during the school day when classes are held. Mr. Snyder has focused on "systematically replacing very old controllers with new controllers based on how badly the very old controllers were working. I've replaced 6 in the last year and a half, with 2 more rooms that are on the list." Mr. Snyder, who left The Bromfield School for a new job, was proud of his accomplishments, citing "regaining control of the heat in the building" as one of his favorites.

Contrary to what some students believe, the heating issue is on the school administration's radar. Mr. Lynde recalled that "the heat and how it's regulated has been brought up, I do know there are discussions and talks about getting more either AC units or having some sort of newer system throughout the school." Similarly, Mr. Snyder explained that "the administration is fully supportive. They want a comfortable school just as much as the students!"

Finally, another complaint among the interviewed students and staff was the issue of cooling during the warmer months. Stoddard noted “In the **HEATING continued**

warmer months, the rooms with big windows (lower hallway -- Zimmer's hallway, and the upper hallway -- with the language rooms) get really warm and can be uncomfortable for students and teachers alike.” Ali explained his frustration “with the heat especially like in the summer, especially during finals week, it's normally always hot, and whenever you're stressed about tests and stuff like that, it's just way too hot to concentrate.” Furthermore, for him, “too cold is okay, but if you get too hot, you just get like irritated and

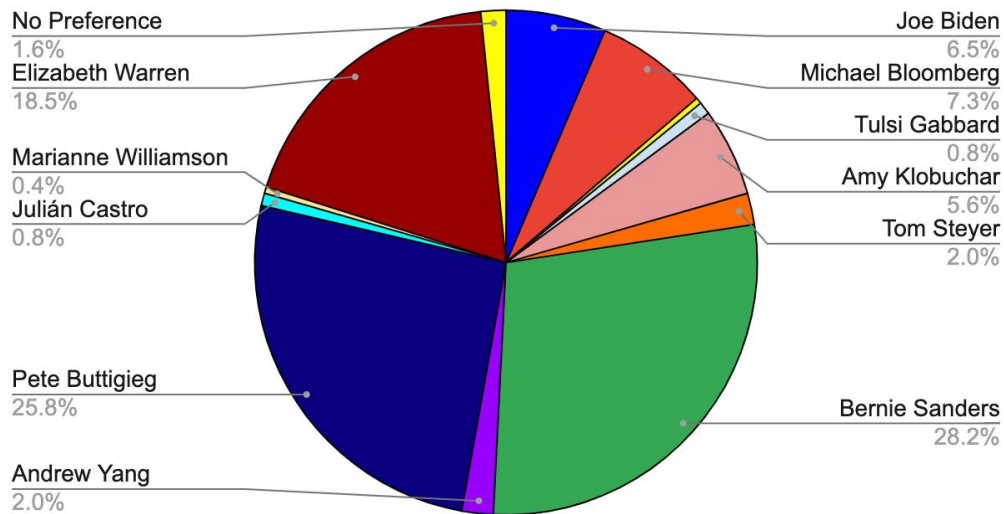
agitated and you just can't concentrate or focus or anything.” Both Mr. Lynde and Ali expressed their desire to have more AC units throughout the school; in a perfect world, both Lynde and Ali would love to see the addition of air conditioning units in every classroom with a window.

In the end, the heating issue is all a matter of perspective and location. While it may seem like the school has been complacent regarding the status of heat distribution, the administration is quite aware of the complaints and working to make sure that each student is comfortable and has the best learning environment.

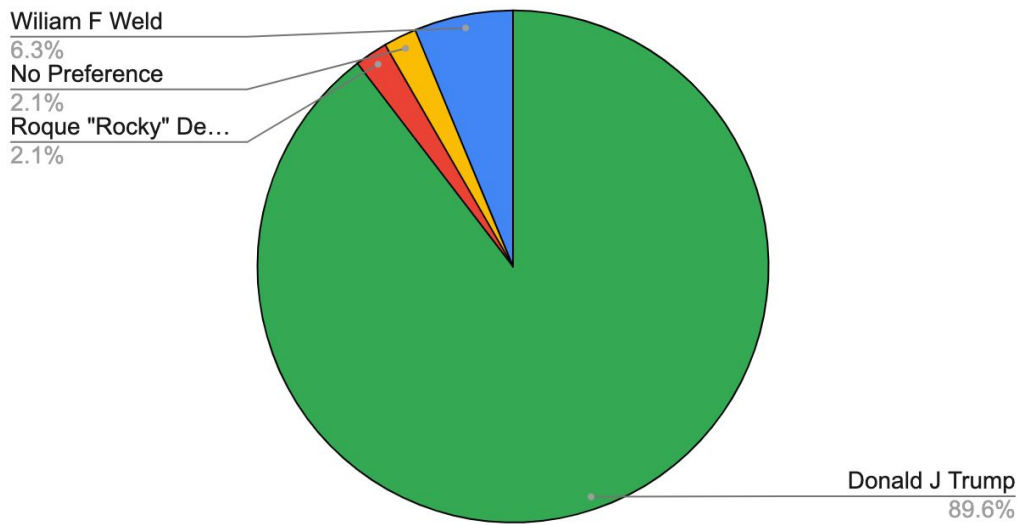
Mock election results

Graphics created by Viven Jamba

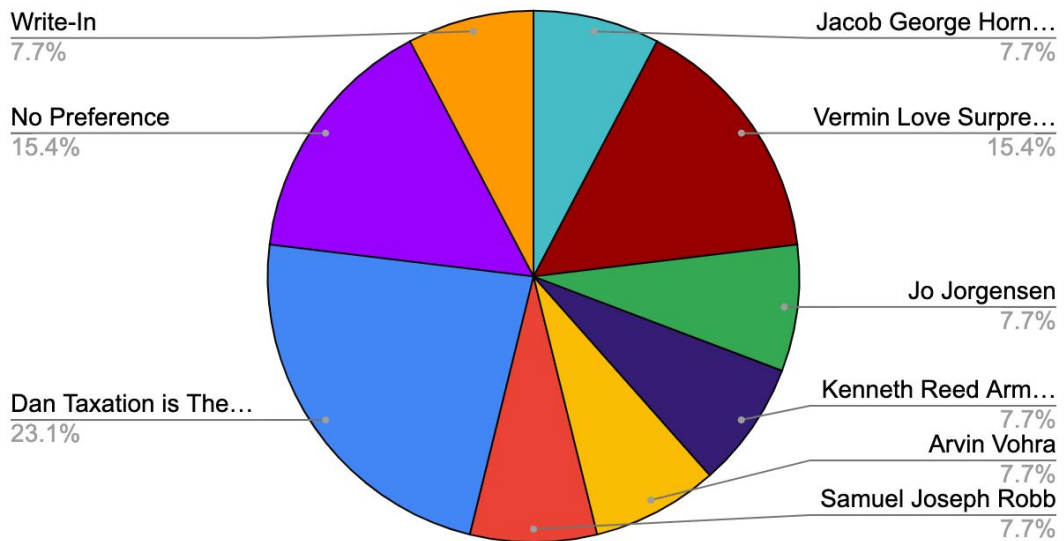
Democratic Responses (248 Total Responses)



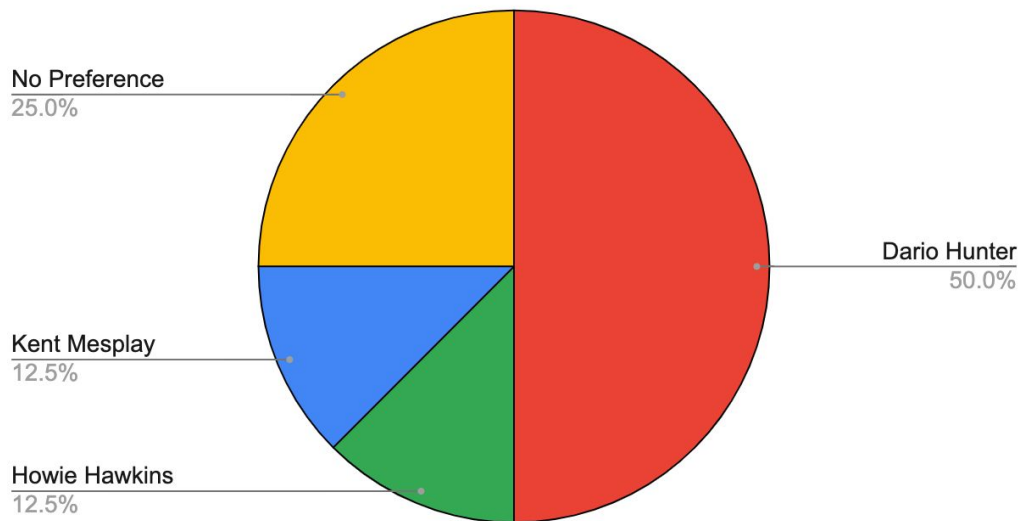
Republican Results (48 Total Responses)



Libertarian (13 Total Responses)



Green-Rainbow Results (8 Total Responses)



New MacBook updates promote privacy and education

by Bodhi Chadran

A Jan. 2 announcement confirmed most chrome extensions had been blocked on school-issued MacBooks. The email from Harvard Public Schools Educational Technology Coordinator Mary-Beth Graham read, "In order to help keep students focused on learning, we created a list of approved Chrome Extensions that meet those goals." It was unclear whether or not other changes were to come. This change was made based on a group decision during a bi-weekly meeting between the IT department and administration

Principal Scott Hoffman said that the change came partly from teachers finding that extensions were distracting students from their classwork and allowing them to bypass the DyKnow monitoring system. Hoffman addressed concerns that the changes would eliminate students' freedom when using their devices. In regards to MacBook freedom, he said: "Our policy compared to other school systems is much more open than anybody else's."

Since the announcement, more extensions have been allowed through the use of a new extension appeal process which is done on the site IncidentIQ. Graham elaborated on this process, explaining that students can create a digital "ticket" through the online IT Help Desk on which they must provide information that justifies use. The ticket is then reviewed by staff and can be approved for one student, a group, or

placed on a section of recommended extensions for all Harvard Public Schools students. Graham is optimistic so far. "As of right now, the process is smooth. Most student chrome extensions used for learning and or management have been approved," she said.

Graham noted that there has been a diverse student response to the changes. "The administration had a few disgruntled students verbally share their feelings in the front office," she said. "The majority of students, at least from my perspective, followed the new process and got their extensions approved."

According to IT department leader Christopher Boyle, the appeal process includes the following: installing an extension to see how it works, deciding if it is for academic purposes, and reading its privacy policy to make sure it is safe.

Boyle said that the majority of applications have been approved, but some rejections have occurred because of security issues. "If I can't figure out what they're going to do with the data or where it's being stored, it's not going to happen, because I ultimately need to make sure everybody's safe," he said.

Graham and Boyle both pointed out privacy as another major factor in the changes, noting the extensions privacy policy in the approval application. "Tech is my field, so I'm always reading articles...so [privacy] was one of the things I thought we needed to review," said Boyle. The IT department has been

MACBOOK continued

working on improving privacy precautions since the beginning of the year.

At Hildreth Elementary School, the focus in technology has also been turned toward privacy. Graham has been checking all applications and software on the school-issued iPads and deleting those which are unclear with their privacy policy.

One student, in particular, had mixed feelings about the changes. Sophomore Ryan McNulty said, "I had lots of extensions that helped me work...I would say those helped, but I won't lie, I had some games which helped me spend my free time in a more enjoyable way." McNulty felt inconvenienced by the updates, but understands why they were made: "I think it's necessary for them to [crack down on non-academic applications], but if they do it too much, they may get the student population frustrated." Finally, he expressed that playing games will not be prevented through the changes: "If people are really trying to play games, they'll find a way. There are always new methods being discovered by students."

Graham admitted the updates could have been implemented more smoothly. "Although we discussed this change at length among staff and school leaders, we admit that we did not give students enough warning that it was going to happen. In the future, we plan to give students a longer notification period before a change is made," she said.

There are no plans to reverse the changes. Graham said, "Our goal is to help students build a foundation of skills so that when they are in a completely unrestricted digital environment, they are making safe and healthy choices." More details on the appeal process can be found in the original email.

"Certainly we did it with the students in mind, but also this is something that we want to make the teachers' job a little bit easier," Hoffman said. "[MacBooks are] a wonderful tool, but when you're in school, we're going to control that machine as best we can to make sure that the focus stays on learning."

NOLA trip brings Bromfield spirit down South

by Hannah Chiou

On Feb. 12, 44 Bromfield juniors and seniors along with three Bromfield teacher chaperones, Mrs. Nilan, Mr. Tabor, and Mrs. Nigzus, set off for the annual New Orleans service trip.

Unfortunately, the group immediately encountered some travel difficulties, as they planned to depart from the Manchester-Boston Regional Airport to Chicago, but the flight was canceled due to weather. The group was forced to return to Boston, where they flew from Logan Airport to Baltimore/Washington International Airport and spent the night there. Eventually, in different and randomly assigned groups, the students flew to New Orleans on the morning of Feb. 13.

Once all the students arrived, they were put to work right away. The types of service varied on a day to day basis and ranged from planting trees to help with New Orleans' problem of deforestation to volunteering in an animal shelter. Other tasks included helping repaint and fix up a local church, as well as helping behind the scenes in a homeless shelter.

One of the outstanding examples of service was a mural project that was the result of a true connection. Several juniors were able to meet a client of the United Saints Recovery Project, the volunteer

organization Bromfield students were working with. The client was a 91-year-old lady named Ms. Denise Gibson who endured many struggles throughout her life, such as losing much of her family and her home by Hurricane Katrina. As junior Lin Lin Yu, who painted the mural, described, "After listening to her story in person, seeing her disabled dog, and viewing all the lovely cards and photos she kept around her home, I was in tears—my emotions propelled me to advocate for an art project, with the help of my classmates, that can remind her that she is forever loved." The mural depicted Ms. Denise (the homeowner), her daughters, and her 17-year-old dog. Many students cited this as a highlight of the trip, as they were able to make connections and see the impact of their work.

In addition, students working on the church mentioned the overwhelming gratitude that was openly expressed by the residents of the area. In the church, students worked with chaperones and guides to refinish the ironwork in the church, repaint walls, and put up new wallboards. As Mrs. Nilan described, "People... would just walk by and say, 'Thank you for being down here'".

On the whole, all of the students recommended the trip as a very worthwhile

NOLA continued

experience. As junior Arianna Thornton explained, “Harvard is not a city like New Orleans.... So it was cool to meet new people there, which you aren’t really able to do in Harvard”. Other students described that they were able to get to know students who they weren’t as familiar with and make new connections. Junior Meredith Greayer described how students had to “listen and understand each other because [they] were all very irritable at some points, so it was definitely a growing experience” for them.

As for next year, some small changes are expected to be made to the trip. Next year’s trip will

occur closer to Mardi Gras, as the holiday is based around the weeks before Easter, rather than a set date. Mardi Gras’ festivities will make travel and traffic in New Orleans more chaotic. As a result, Mrs. Nilan, the principal organizer of the trip, explained that students will be completing some service and background research at Bromfield before leaving, not only to get in the correct amount of hours needed for a senior project, but for the “[students] have a better understanding of themselves as a volunteer.”

Chef Paul criticizes “one-size-fits-all” federal regulations

by Sophia Zhou

Photo by Camille Gomez

As of Feb. 24, to comply with federal regulations, the cafeteria no longer serves whole milk or hot drinks past 7:45 AM, both of which had been around for all of Chef Paul’s career at Bromfield. In response to these changes, Chef Paul ardently asserted, “We do not agree with this.”

According to the USDA, the ban on whole milk, which has been present since 2010, addressed “concern about the national childhood obesity problem and the increased likelihood of preventable diseases such as cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, stroke, and type 2 diabetes.” Childhood obesity is just part of the obesity epidemic in the US; today, around 18.5% of US children are obese, and 1 in 4 children in Massachusetts are overweight or obese.

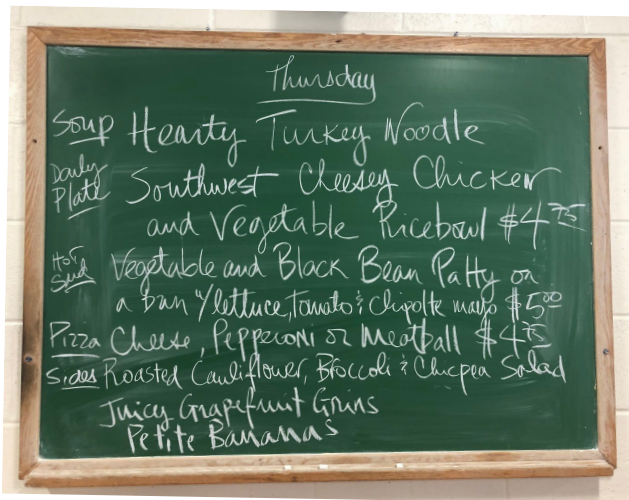
In Chef Paul’s view, “[The USDA’s] reason is that... these are not suitable for growing teenagers. However, we disagree with that.” He explained, “Whole milk is a more complete food. Yes, it does have fat in it, but in young bodies that is not a bad thing. And it helps with the absorption of nutrients.” Recent scientific evidence from institutions like the Oxford Journal of Nutrition and the British Medical Journal has actually revealed an inverse relationship between dairy fat consumption and risk for obesity. Paul also remarked

that some of the flavored low-fat milks have a lot of sugar in them. “So it seems somewhat hypocritical,” he commented.

The limits on hot beverages were, as Chef Paul was told, put into place because they contain caffeine. But he doesn’t understand this move either. “I lived in Europe where kids drank coffee in the morning,” he said incredulously. Then, “I suggested continuing to serve herbal tea and decaf because those don’t contain caffeine. And I was told no, with no reason cited. It made no sense.”

The Bromfield cafeteria has been in violation of the regulations for quite some time. “This was the first auditor that pushed it,” Chef Paul described. “Other auditors were more flexible with their evaluations. They saw that we were serving excellent food, they saw

that our customers were eating [well], and they understood the balance. This woman did not. She was very strict.” During this audit in early February, the cafeteria was fined, which had never happened in the past. As Chef Paul put it, “We belong to the Federal School Lunch Program. In order to belong to that organization, we sometimes have to follow things we don’t particularly agree with.”



REGULATIONS ctd.

Federal audits like these are supposed to happen once every four years, but Chef Paul has been through three of them in the last two years. According to the government, it's just how audits come up. But Chef Paul thinks otherwise. He said, "Do you know the expression, 'the squeaky wheel gets the grease'? We do things a little differently in Harvard, and sometimes people don't like that."

Aside from these two new changes in the cafeteria, the cafeteria has its hardest time dealing with the federal menu planning regulations. The USDA wants all school lunch menus planned a month ahead and completely analyzed for nutritional content. However, Chef Paul brought up, "We're a very creative kitchen. Especially in the season, I might only have two or three days to know what the best produce is, what the best fish is, what the best prices are. We base our menu on the market..." The menu at Bromfield is "spontaneous," as he called it. "Their regulations do not allow for a creative kitchen."

Nutritional guidelines have always been a sore spot for Chef Paul. As he sees it, these federal requirements were put into place to address an overarching obesity problem in the US. "The nutrient-dense foods... that we provide for our

community are adapted; this is what we should be feeding you because you're active. You're well-educated kids. So they have a one-size-fits-all and it doesn't fit our community, in my opinion."

As another example, Chef Paul cited soy milk, which was added as a product this winter after proving to be the popular drink among high school students in senior Allie Hunter's senior project. "We are not allowed to carry soy milk," Paul stated. "It doesn't fit into the nutritional guidelines. But, we carry it anyways because that's what you guys wanted."

At the end of the day, Chef Paul understands the situation: "We're caught between the needs of our community and the desires of our students with a government entity that's a thousand miles away and doesn't know our community. It's a small town against big government. But, it is what it is."

What frustrates Chef Paul the most is not the regulations themselves, it is the mentality behind it. "The assumption is that students, young adults, don't know what's good for you," he asserted. "And I hate that attitude because I know differently. Not everybody makes good decisions but generally, when it comes to food, our students know what they're doing. You're educated. You are healthy, you're strong, we see it every day. It is frustrating."

Bruning enters a new position at the Main Office

by Jordan Hoover

On Dec 20, 2019, former teacher Ms. Gayle Bruning replaced retired principal's secretary Ms. Cindy Waite in the Bromfield Main Office.

Ms. Bruning held many different positions within Bromfield before joining the Main Office as the principal's secretary. In 2001, Bruning was hired to run the computer lab and teach 7th grade Comptech (computer technology). During this time, the Bromfield School was only open for 7th to 12th graders. A few years later when Bromfield incorporated the 6th grade, she began teaching 6th and 7th computer technology and was a teaching assistant for Special Ed. She also supported the 8th grade. Eventually, Bruning aided the rest of the grades.

Bruning is looking forward to her new responsibilities in the office, such as the school's purchasing process. The school budget typically runs from July 1st to June 30th the following year, and usually, most of the budget gets decided. The secretaries at the front desk are responsible for

purchasing supplies and textbooks, as well as purchase requests from teachers.

Bruning shares her excitement for her new position: "I think it's going to be very, very interesting," Bruning says. "I like finance... So this puts me more back into the business because I'll be dealing with the budget and the ordering. So it'd be more my line of work... I'm really intrigued to get more [of a] dive into that."

In Bruning's new position, she faces new obstacles as she adjusts to the job. Bromfield uses a software system called Munis for orders. Bruning describes the software as "not very user-friendly" which has been "the biggest challenge" for her. Since processing orders through Munis is a complex ordeal, it is easy to make mistakes. Bruning describes her initial experience with it: "[For] the first time I didn't remember to release the batch, so [the money] couldn't be approved. So then [the teachers] couldn't get paid, but I put them in to get paid [even though] they hadn't been approved. But nobody had really told me that I

BRUNING continued

needed it.” Eventually, the problem was “cleared up”, Bruning concludes.

One change that Bruning faces is her new schedule: “The biggest adjustment for me in this new position is that I will now work year-round. So while everyone gets to enjoy a snow day or “water” day, I will be at work.” Another change is seeing her students less often: “All I can say [is that] I miss the kids, but everybody keeps popping in and talking to me.” She

also misses doing activities such as setting up for Challenge Day where she used to set up a Play-Doh station.

Despite these adjustments, Bruning is enjoying the new experience: “One of the best parts of my new job is being able to greet everyone, as I feel I am an outgoing and friendly person,” she said. “I enjoy everyone that I work with, both adults and definitely the students.”

Time for a change?

Bromfield community debates passing period length and bells

by Maible Daly

According to the Massachusetts Department of Education, middle and high schools must complete a minimum of 990 hours of structured learning time each school year. Passing periods are not included in this time constraint. This timing rule has sparked conversation surrounding what could be done to give students the time they need in between classes.

Overall, high school students who were interviewed about this topic had favorable views on the prospect of a longer passing period. When asked if the current passing period is long enough, senior Fiona Nash noted, “Many highschoolers have classes in the middle school wing and three minutes is often not enough time to get from one class to another, especially if students have to stop at their lockers.”

Nash further noted that “teachers expect students to use the restroom in between classes instead of during class, so to really accommodate this request, students need a longer passing period.”

Ms. Doherty agreed with the view that passing periods are not long enough, noting that the time allotted in between classes is “a quick turnaround.” She empathized with students from her personal experience with passing period length, explaining, “In the past, when I have had to change [class]rooms... it was clear to me that it is not enough time.” Having said this, she nonetheless noted that “However much time we give, people will tend to take a minute or two longer. I feel like no matter how much time you give people — not students — people, they naturally expand to the outer limits of it and then go longer.”



Mr. Murphy shared, “I think the passing period is too short. I’d rather have a passing period and have people wash their hands or use the bathroom or do whatever they do that’s legitimate rather than taking the time out of the class.”

Underlying the lack of sufficient time to do needed tasks in between periods is an acknowledgment of teachers’ response to tardiness. Students can be penalized for lateness without special circumstances, even if they are tardy after using the bathroom or being let out of the previous class late.

For female students, this penalty is especially relevant. An anonymous student commented on the feeling of walking into class late while on her period: “[One time], I had to deal with the feminine issues and was late to class and the teacher [said] that shouldn’t take that much time, but I didn’t want to flat out say in front of the whole class that I was on [my period].”

One way other schools deal with punctuality is implementing bells in between classes. When teachers and students were interviewed on this topic, there were a variety of opinions surrounding whether or not bells would be a viable solution for Bromfield.

Murphy noted that “we’ve never had bells here in between periods....I like it better without bells. Bells make it seem more like a prison.” He discussed how bells would make school seem “too institutionalized,” and further explained that “the teacher is an equal partner in the student’s learning, and having a regimented bell system I think interferes with that and makes it feel more impersonal.”

Doherty agreed. She recalled visiting a former Bromfield teacher at her new school in Texas, and

remembered that the bells at this school were “quite jarring.” However, she has contemplated whether Bromfield needs bells “so that people are not dismissing **PASSING PERIOD continued**

kids early and they are not dismissing them late.” She also voiced her appreciation for the flexibility of being able to take another thirty seconds or so to finish a thought at the end of a class. She did comment that if bells were implemented, a “tone” or “buzz” would be preferred “as opposed to a harsh, institutionalized bell sound.”

To get some context as to what life with bells and longer passing periods would look like, Infanta

Antony, a junior at Westborough High School, was interviewed about her experience with four-minute passing periods and bells on either end. Antony appreciated the length of her passing period, though in a big school district, even four minutes tends to be an inadequate amount of time. She also commented on the benefits of bells on either end of the passing period, saying that “I like knowing when the class ends... and when the next class starts.” To this end, Antony says “I think bells in between periods [are] very helpful in my school community at least, signifying a solid start point to a class so kids know they should be in class now.”

Bromfield counselors clarify intents for *Angst*

by Hannah Chiou

Following the showing of the film *Angst* in October, many students were left with questions and concerns. Many of these concerns were expressed in last issue’s article, “*Angst* Falls Short.” However, the article only voiced the opinions and ideas of the students and left out the perspective of the administration and Counseling Department who planned the movie in the first place. It is therefore necessary to include and give voice to their view as well.

Mrs. Reale explained that the original purpose of *Angst* was not necessarily to educate, as some people thought and criticized; rather, the film offered a more lightweight overview of anxiety. Rather, *Angst*’s designed purpose was to bring the Bromfield community together to bring awareness to the issue of anxiety and mental health, and most importantly “open the doors of communication.” Unfortunately, there was a discrepancy between students’ perceived purpose for the film versus its intended purpose.

Mrs. Reale and Mrs. Lamere both expressed that though students’ reactions were overwhelmingly negative, they expected this reaction and believe that *Angst* was successful nonetheless. As Mrs. Reale explained, “One of the problems with such a large target audience is that everyone has a varied level of knowledge about it [anxiety]... The hope was that once everyone saw, we had some common shared



knowledge.” The film succeeded in that students were brought together and began discussions about mental health, anxiety, and how these related to Bromfield.

Angst was chosen as a method of outreach after a parent who works in another district where the film was also shown suggested the film to the Counseling Department. Based on the feedback received from other districts, the Counseling Department created this outreach, including showing the film, providing discussion questions, and planning follow up discussions.

As for the future, the conversation around mental health is not expected to stop. Mrs. Reale and Mrs. Lamere explained that many more “behind the scenes” projects surrounding mental health are continuing to happen, such as

Challenge Day for the 8th graders, Lifelines in 10th grade health classes, wellness classes, and SOS (Signs of Suicide) with both middle and high schoolers. Because *Angst* was shown to everyone, Mrs. Lamere stated that many students may think the film was only one of the steps that was taken. However, there are various overlooked projects related to mental health in each grade. These outreaches were designed to be combined with *Angst* in a way that may not have been explicit to students.

Several mental health-related outreaches are planned for the future, such as the NAN Project, as well as Project 84, both campaigns educating about mental

health, for the middle school grades. The counseling department is also working with Ms. Russell, Bromfield's Health and Wellness teacher, with her

ANGST continued

Personal Safety Class. Additionally, Bromfield students enjoyed the annual Refresh Day in February. The

counseling department would like to remind students that they are open to any suggestions for further steps involving mental health. As Mrs. Reale put it, there is no better way for students to give feedback than to let the counseling department know.

EDITORIALS

Big Brother seeps into modern society

by Athena Wang

Scrutinizing surveillance, pathetically constructed illusions of freedom, news from only one source: George Orwell's dystopia in his novel 1984 seems a far cry from our society now. It certainly is, considering we have freedom of speech, freedom of thought, and more. At the same time, perhaps 1984 isn't so removed from our society today.

For those who have not read 1984, Orwell comments upon many issues within society. It takes place in Oceania, a conglomeration of North and South America, Greenland, and Great Britain under an authoritarian government ruled by a man dubbed "Big Brother". Following a man named Winston—an allusion to Winston Churchill—Orwell paints a dreary picture of a society completely controlled by the government. Through Winston, the reader observes this dystopia where every street and home is closely monitored and recorded, where supposed traitors and political opponents are executed without fail, and, above all, where reality itself is an illusion.

One major theme, introduced with Winston's career, exemplifies the power information holds. Winston's job functions as an unorthodox historian. Rather than preserving history, he alters it to the government's desires—simply speaking, he edits old records to erase entire identities and outdated information. Alone, Winston's job seems mundane and unrealistic; his job certainly wouldn't exist today in the United States. The meaning behind his job remains relevant.



What is the key to Winston's job, the key to linking his world and ours? It's the complete control of information. Of course, information is free today, no? If so, the alteration of information is every bit as free as the distribution of information itself. We the people control information; for example, we may contribute to sites such as Wikipedia, and those feeling generous enough can host sites such as Khan Academy. At the

same time, this enables people to spread false facts. This leads to crises such as the anti-vaxxer movement, one characterized by emotional anecdotes and a distrust in both the government and medical industry.

Information is so readily accessible now, yet misinformation seeps into almost every subject. With rumors of people eating bats and contracting the coronavirus, claims that laxative tea will promote healthy weight loss, information exists in a peculiar state nowadays. 1984 demonstrates how people can weaponize information, just as people do today. Just as the government in Orwell's novel alters reality itself through controlling information and "editing" the past, people today can spread lies and panic farther and faster than ever before.

It is absolutely crucial, if not vital, that people understand how to look at their world through a critical lens. 1984 presents a world where people accept whatever information they receive without a second thought. Orwell's messages remain timeless, relevant; they remain crucial as we continue to live in a world where both information and misinformation run rampant and unchecked.

Is homeroom obsolete?

by Anya Buchovecky

How do you spend your five minutes of homeroom? Most spend that short amount of time scrambling to finish up an assignment, catching up with friends, gathering their thoughts before the day starts,

or listening to the announcements. However, why are you marked tardy to homeroom when it holds no significance and does not impact your learning?

HOMEROOM continued

I believe that despite the few benefits of homeroom, it is unnecessary and should be removed from our schedule.

Bromfield is an anomaly, since it is the only school in the area that has a homeroom period before the day starts. Nashoba Valley Regional High School, Acton Boxborough Regional High School, Groton Dunstable Regional High School, Ayer Shirley Regional High School, Littleton High School, Maynard High School, and Leominster High School all do not have homeroom.

Removing homeroom would allow students to sleep in an extra eight minutes or have a more leisurely morning because of the added time. With a later start time, more students would likely show up on time to their first period class. Furthermore, with the talk of changing school start times, removing homeroom would help the school day end earlier. Classes could start a mere eight minutes earlier without homeroom, and thus classes would end eight minutes earlier as well.

Sophomore Sophie Bartram agrees that homeroom is a waste of time, since “half the time teachers forget to take attendance and [students] just sit there for no reason.” Bartram also reiterates the point I made previously that “the time used for homeroom should be used instead for students to get a few more minutes of sleep.”

Some may argue that homeroom is necessary because it is when the morning announcements are made and attendance is taken. However, morning announcements are always rushed and hard to understand, whether it be because students are talking

over the announcements or the speaker is quiet. Daily announcements sent via email would have none of the previously stated issues and would be an easy adjustment if homeroom were eliminated. Also, attendance taken during homeroom is pointless, because there is no consequence to being late to homeroom besides the tick mark on your transcript. Furthermore, learning is not missed by being late to or absent from homeroom, yet being on time to your first period class. Attendance is already taken during every class, so removing homeroom would not change how attendance is done.

Removing homeroom would most likely result in Bromfield having a similar schedule to Acton Boxborough Regional High School (A-B). At A-B there is a five-minute warning bell before the start of first period at 8 a.m, and attendance is taken during the first period class. Their third period is three minutes longer than the other periods so that announcements can be made. In addition to these in-class announcements, every day students are sent a morning email with the day’s announcements. A-B sophomore, Audrey Maxwell, likes the no homeroom schedule because it “allows [students] to transition directly into our day without unnecessary delay.”

Ultimately, it is the administration and school committee’s decision. I urge the administration and School Committee to consider the removal of homeroom from the daily schedule. Since the school committee is considering changing the school start time and making other changes to the school schedule in the coming year(s), I ask that they consider this additional change: remove homeroom.

The case for key cards at Bromfield

by Anya Buchovecky

Why is there no method of school security after 3 p.m.? During the school day, Ms. Holmes or Ms. Bruning has to manually open the doors for visitors, making sure that no one suspicious enters the school. However, after 3 p.m. the front door remains unlocked; anyone and everyone can enter the school and roam the halls.

I strongly believe that some method of security should be implemented for after school hours, since many students remain in the school after the front office staff leaves. I do not believe that leaving the front doors unlocked until at least 7:00 p.m., allowing strangers to walk in and out, is necessarily safe.

The lack of after school security was highlighted by a strange interaction I had with a man while waiting for a ride in the school lobby after rowing practice. This man entered the building for the first time, carrying a big box full of papers, and headed downstairs into the 6th grade wing. He struggled a little bit with opening the door, but he got the door to open after a couple of seconds. He must have exited the building through the 6th grade wing, because he reappeared at the front door without passing through the main lobby to exit. This time, he was carrying a TV screen, and was clearly struggling with the door. He

KEY CARDS continued

got the door part way open before it shut on him, but after a second try he had entered the school. I looked up while he was struggling to see if my ride had arrived, but this man thought that I should've jumped up and opened the door for him, and he was not hesitant to make that clear. Still holding the TV in his arms, he stood in the lobby and aggressively questioned me on why I hadn't opened the door for him after watching him struggle with it. Thankfully, before I could say anything, two custodians stood up for me. They told him that it was not my job to open the door for him and that he needed to leave me alone. This incident made me realize the importance of security, but most importantly, knowing who is entering the school and why. Had I known that he was going to work on the Harvard Cable TV, coach a basketball game, or watch his child play a sport, I would have felt more comfortable helping him and worse for not opening the door. However, not knowing why this man should be in the school made me feel that much more uncomfortable when he confronted me about the door.

Bruce Lyons, a nighttime custodian at Bromfield, stated that "there is security in place 24/7 via cameras and motion sensors all around the school, and these systems are linked to the police department." Although these cameras are in place, suspicious people are still able to enter the school and roam the halls between 3 p.m. and when the school is locked for the night. Also, these cameras are not capable of stopping unwanted interactions with strangers from happening. The only way to keep everyone comfortable and safe in

the afterschool hours is a method of security that requires a key swipe or something similar to enter.



A key swipe system would be the most feasible solution to this issue. The keys would be school IDs, since both teachers and students receive these at the beginning of each school year. A swipe pad would be located on all the doors, and when you swipe your card, your entrance into the school would be recorded for safety reasons.

While Bromfield is a safe and welcoming space, I believe that more can be done to ensure student safety in the after school hours. I know my encounter was only one incident, but after sitting on the bench in the main lobby for extended periods of time between the hours of 4:30 p.m. and 6 p.m. waiting to be picked up after sports practice and watching countless strangers enter our school, I feel that it would be beneficial to institute a key swipe system to enter the school after 3 p.m.

ENTERTAINMENT

1917: Redefining what it means to make a war film

Warning: Spoilers Ahead

by Timur Sahin

Walking away with three academy awards at this year's Oscars, "1917," directed by Sam Mendes, was undeniably a big hit in theaters. Losing to Bong-Joon Ho's "Parasite" for Best Picture was certainly a shocker to everyone. What made it so good? What made me see it three times in the span of a month? Here, I will dive into why "1917" was simply a pure work of genius.

"1917" had aspects of films like "Saving Private Ryan," "Dunkirk," and "All Quiet on the Western Front." But what makes it stand out from all the other war movies is that it brings audiences closest to the horrors of combat. Sam Mendes stated in an NPR interview that he made his film as a homage to his grandfather, Alfred H. Mendes, who fought in the First World War as a part of the British army and was assigned to deliver a message across no man's land. The plot of the movie was constructed around this story; two soldiers, Lance Corporal Blake (played by Dean Charles Chapman) and Lance Corporal William Schofield (played by George Mackay) are ordered to deliver a message across no man's land from their post in Northern France to another front line to stop a battalion of 1,600 soldiers from entering a German trap. Through their journey, Blake and Schofield go through countless hardships and painful journeys that are difficult to watch but keep you engaged nonetheless. The main characters cannot seem to take a full breather—they're racing against the clock. Mendes said in one interview with Hollywood Reporter, "I had this thought: 'Why don't we lock the audience into the men's experiences in a way that feels completely unbroken, in a movie that resembles a ticking-clock thriller in which we experience every second passing in real-time?'" "1917" will get your heart beating and your fingernails gnawed down as its suspense, tension, and looming sense of threat never go away. This certainly is

not Mendes' first thriller or drama—his classics like "American Beauty" (1999), "Skyfall" (2012), and "Road to Perdition" (2002) are considered Mendes's greatest films with, of course, "1917" earning the top spot.

What's most discussed by critics of "1917" is its "one-shot" illusion. This means that the movie looks like it has no cuts. However, this is pretty impossible for such a big scale movie, so Mendes used small moments—like a slight coverup of the camera— to make a cut. Yet seeing the movie in theaters, the cinematography looks seamless and very convincing. This technique has not been used in a lot of films, but this is definitely not the first time. Movies like "BirdMan," "Russian Ark," and "Rope" have all employed the "one-shot" illusion—and for plausible reasons as well. These pictures immerse audiences into scenes, as the camera swiftly moves and turns, giving the effect of being a whole separate character in the film. In addition, it gives filmmakers the opportunity to show off their skills and win over critics (and maybe The Academy if you're lucky enough!). "1917" set the precedent for war movies to come as it shows just how immersive and enthralling one can be by using the right techniques.

Of course, the film would not be the same without its actors. Dean Charles Chapman and George Mackay fit their roles in "1917" perfectly. Their sense of friendship and trust make the film heart wrenching and gutting—their emotion almost seeps through the screen. Mendes completely shifted the dynamic of casts in films by using two unknowns with more well-known actors like Benedict Cumberbatch, Richard Madden, and Colin Firth as minor characters. Chapman and Mackay will undoubtedly see a skyrocket in their acting careers! Speaking of casting, Mendes cast his baby daughter for his movie. Her role was an abandoned



"1917" movie poster.
Photo from imdb.com

child adopted by a young French woman who is trapped in a burning French town, Écouste, that has been

1917 ctd.

overtaken by the Germans. Mendes described in an interview that it was hard for him to film the scene with his daughter in it, as seeing her in a helpless situation was heartbreaking even though it was entirely fake.

The plot became a sort of reality for the cast and crew; during an interview with Kelly Clarkson, Chapman and Mackay explained how they had to prepare for shooting four months in advance, which included mastering crawling and practically swimming in mud-ridden fields of Glasgow, Scotland. The preparation and dedication of the cast and crew made the movie fluid and flawless—like the movie was meant to be.

One of the major criticisms of this movie is that it portrays the Germans in a bad light (as traitors, brutes, drunkards, etc.). This is similar to “Jojo Rabbit,” directed by Taika Waititi, and its use of satire in portraying the Germans as eccentric and brainwashed, but in a humorous way. Mendes responded to criticisms by saying, “These two soldiers in the film could be Germans. It’s not about how the British are great, the Germans are bad. When he meets a German the lad is as young and frightened as he is. It’s about the

experience of war rather than a political statement.” This idea is demonstrated through the main character, Schofield. Schofield is a strong and persistent soldier, who audiences learn traded his medal of honor for a bottle of wine. His partner, Blake, is curious and clueless as to why he would do such a thing and is overall dumbfounded at his indifference to letters from his family as well as to the admiration of serving in the war. Through Schofield’s scary adventure, he demonstrates that a medal is really just “some piece of tin.” Wartime should really not be seen as an opportunity to gain honor—it is a nightmarish reality that hundreds and thousands of men and women had to live through. Refusing to open letters indicates that Schofield does not want to accept that he may or may not return back home someday; it is as General Mackenzie, played by Benedict Cumberbatch, says at the end of the film: “Hope is a dangerous thing.”

“1917” is truly one of Sam Mendes’s boldest productions yet—it’s to no surprise it won awards for Best Cinematography, Best Visual Effects, and Best Sound Mixing. It’s action-packed, fluid, moving, and crafted to perfection. It holds the audience in tightly and doesn’t let go for two hours—and certainly won’t leave anyone’s mind for days. I highly recommend viewing this film if you haven’t already—it truly isn’t one to miss.

Parasite cleverly portrays a cynical view about society

by Jackie Walker

The gripping drama that recently made Oscar history by claiming four awards, has become a hot topic for more than just its cinematic delights. As reflected by the title, “Parasite” infects your thoughts and the time spent contemplating the significance of the film. The wealth of substance in the award-winning picture will have your head spinning with questions. Nonetheless, this movie is more than worth your time because it includes current issues such as economic inequality and sexism found its way in the script.

Thanks to the 2020 Oscar awards, “Parasite” continues on its path as an international hit. It received four Academy Awards including Best Picture, International Feature Film, Directing, and Writing (Original Screenplay) under the critically acclaimed South Korean director,

Bong Joon-ho. It was also nominated for Best Film Editing and Best Production Design. Furthermore, it went unprecedented as the first non-English motion picture to win Best Picture and the first South Korean movie to be nominated for International Feature Film.

In the first half, the movie captures its audience with comedic elements and good old drama. However, it doesn’t last as the characters endure an intense climax and bittersweet conclusion. The story is told through the eyes of the young protagonist, Kim Ki-woo, played by Choi Woo-shik, who lives with his family of four that suffer at the bottom of South Korea’s large socioeconomic gap. His father, Kim Ki-taek, played by Sang Kang-ho, is a common collaborator with Bong. The Kims are a family working



“Parasite” movie poster.
Photo from mymodernmet.com

together in odd jobs, simply trying to survive with enough food in their small and filthy

PARASITE continued

semi-basement of a home. When meeting up with a better-off friend, Ki-woo receives a rare opportunity to work under the extremely wealthy family, the Parks. By various means, the rest of the Kims are hired unbeknownst by the rich family. Although they enjoy their comfy life for a little while, Bong's film does not end well. In fact, it's classified as a tragedy topped off with a bounty of dark humor.

"Parasite" does not shy away from a lasting impression on its audience. Days after I left the theatre, I was still thinking about the thrilling drama ridden with metaphors and political themes. In his typical style, some are rather obvious while others may take days of pondering, but rest assured, it's all part of the enjoyment. Bong even pokes fun at this in the movie by repeatedly using the line, "it's so metaphorical!"

Most of the metaphors and motifs essentially boil down to a comparison of the two extreme ends of the wealth gap. The widening gap and increasing poverty are accentuated by Bong's use of stairs which emphasize the levels of society through stunning visuals and beautiful architecture. In one long transition, the audience sees prolonged shots focused on the Kims fleeing down numerous cases of stairs, further distancing them from the filthy rich Parks.

Another motif, the scholar's rock, negatively impacts the Kims. However, it is misleading, at first appearing to represent hope. The significance has been highly speculated and some viable explanations seem to be greed, shortcuts, and self-inflicted pressure.

In terms of themes, the burden of the most apparent, greed, is shared among both families. However, due to the difference in their socioeconomic standings, this leads them down very different paths. Other themes portrayed through South Korean culture such as the role of family, sexism, reality versus imagination, and westernization are used to further contrast the Kims and Parks.

But the digging doesn't stop there; the title doesn't give away as much of the movie as some may think. It begs the question: Who is the parasite of whom? Unfortunately, the answer becomes less apparent throughout the movie. By the end, it may almost seem like everyone is the parasite of each other in a morally grey loop.

Although the characters and situations could be described as melodramatic at times, Bong is credited for his raw view and accurate portrayal of deeply political issues and ethical problems of today. Being based on his poor college life, *Parasite* is a bit of an outlier. During his youth, South Korea's early democratic intentions provoked a lot of political unrest. In 1987, the sixth and final system began and continues to this day as a liberal democracy.

Overall, the weight of this carefully planned out movie and the amazing work done by the production crew definitely paid off with well-earned Oscars and global recognition. Personally, pondering and decoding made the movie more interesting and effectively emphasizes the significance of the themes.

News trivia: Highlights of 2020 so far. . .

by Jackie Walker

1. What is the name of the pandemic?
2. In which city will the 2021 Olympics be held?
3. What is the title of the first foreign film to win the "Best Picture" Oscar award?
4. According to the Chinese Zodiac, 2020 is the year of what animal?
5. What are the first names of the two singers who headlined the Super Bowl halftime show?
6. What is the title of the new installment of the comedy film about two guys that will be released in August?
7. In which month will the 19th amendment celebrate its 100 year anniversary?
8. Which country is devastated by bushfires starting in January and still continuing today?
9. Which 17-year old Swedish girl started the Fridays for Future climate movement?
10. What is the name of the Iranian major general that was killed by a US drone?
11. Which Filipino mountain erupted after nearly half a century of inactivity?
12. Which basketball star won 5 championships, played for the L.A. Lakers, and passed away in a helicopter crash?
13. What broken object at Bromfield caused a day off from school?

14. What was the name of this year's High School production that competed in the Drama Fest?

- ANSWERS
1. Coronavirus / COVID-19
 2. Tokyo
 3. Parasite
 4. Rat
 5. Jennifer and Shakira
 6. Bill and Ted
 7. August
 8. Australia
 9. Greta Thunberg
 10. Qasem Soleimani
 11. Taal
 12. Kobe Bryant
 13. Fire Hydrant
 14. Bob's Date

PHOTOS

Boys' basketball

Bromfield vs. Tahanto

Jan. 29th, 2020



*Sophomore Jaden Ndjigue faces an opponent one-on-one.
Photo by Annie Segaloff*

*Senior Will Squire winds up to take a shot.
Photo by Annie Segaloff*



*Senior Dylan Ashe fends off an opponent while opening up for a pass.
Photo by Annie Segaloff*

Girls' basketball

Bromfield vs. Newton North

Jan. 23rd, 2020



*Senior Kellie Sundeen skillfully dribbles around a defender.
Photo by Annie Segaloff*

*Senior Vimbayi Vera smiles while talking with teammates.
Photo by Annie Segaloff*



*Sophomore Madison Hood speeds past her opponents and goes for a layup.
Photo by Annie Segaloff*

Indoor track

*Junior Jordan Colon pushes through as he rounds the corner.
Photo by Annie Segaloff*



*Senior Olivia Noyes keeps a positive attitude mid-race.
Photo by Annie Segaloff*

*Junior Helena Justicz concentrates as she prepares for a relay.
Photo by Annie Segaloff*



Science Fair

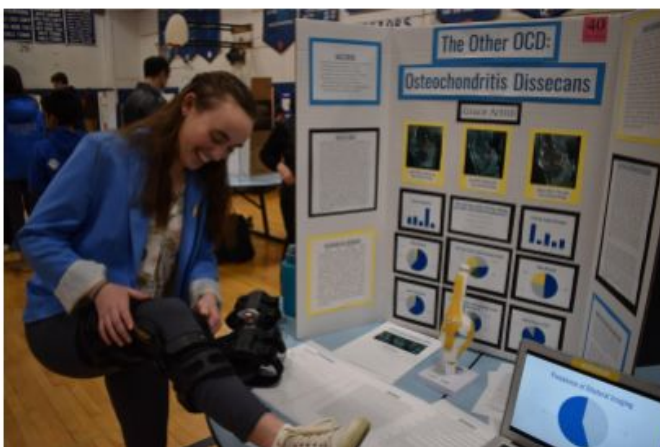
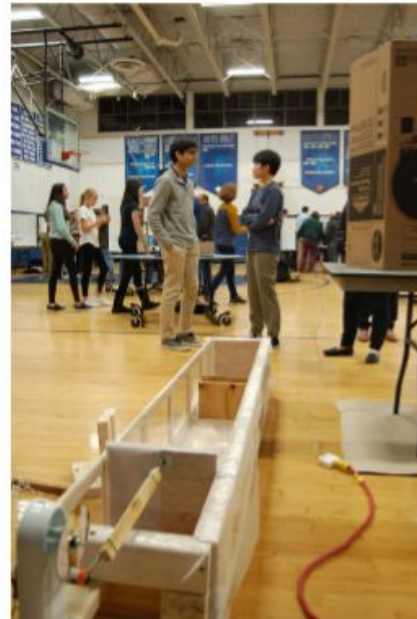


Senior Allie Hunter presents her project to an audience of curious community members.

Photo by Anya Buchovecky

Junior Ziyad Ali and sophomore Sophia Zhou discuss the impressive contraption in front of them.

Photo by Anya Buchovecky



Senior Grace Actons adjusts her leg brace between presentations.

Photo by Anya Buchovecky

Refresh day



*Senior Allie Hunter enjoys a moment with a new friend.
Photo by Annie Segaloff*

*Junior Dharma Cooper takes a minute to appreciate her succulent.
Photo by Annie Segaloff*



*Junior Arjun Khurana intensely focuses on painting his plant pot.
Photo by Annie Segaloff*