



# Nor'easter



## “Nothing Beats Failure But a Try”

### A Tribute to Ms. Erica “Nikki” Davis: Greatly Loved, Deeply Missed.

By Destiny Visenor and Emily Jones  
Nor'Easter Staff Writers



On Sunday September 5th, 2022, Northeast High School lost an influential member of both our school and the community - Ms. Erica Davis, who was loved by many people and will forever be missed.

Ms. Davis was a very complex woman with nothing but love for any and everyone. She was born October 20, 1966, and passed away at age 56 on September 4, 2022. She was the daughter of Rita and Monroe Davis and mother to her only child Eric Davis. She had two grandchildren, Elijah and Aurora. Ms. Davis was born and raised in St Petersburg, FL along with her 11 other siblings. She attended Pinellas Park High School and then pursued a bachelor's degree from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga where she played college basketball. After college she came back to Florida and began working in various careers before her tenure with the Pinellas County School Board. Ms. Davis has held positions at several local schools including John Hopkins Middle, Lakewood High, Dunedin High, and Northeast High. She has not only been a resource and behavioral officer, but she also spent time lending her expertise to the basketball and basketball cheer teams. Whether it was coaching, playing, or just being with the team, basketball was always one of Ms. Davis's passions. Another was modeling. Over the past several years Ms. Davis worked for

many different modeling agencies, the most recent was MUA. This specific agency worked with body positive models and Ms. Davis was a leader in the local industry. She attended events and modeled with many girls of all different sizes.

Ms. Davis was a Christian woman who professed her life to Christ at early age. She attended church at Mount Zion Progressive Missionary Baptist and City on a Hill churches where she loved working and praising the lord. Anyone met her or was in her presence has said she was the star. In her memorials, her friends and family have described her as, “a loving and caring person, devoted mother and friend” who, “was always thinking of others first.” “To know her was to love her.”

At Northeast, she was very close friends with Ms. Joe, Ms. Mary, and Ms. Gerhart. They all consider Ms. Davis to be a fantastic person, someone who always made the best out of every situation. According to Mama Joe, “She impacted the school tremendously. She would light up a room when she walked in. Her stature was very tall, she was very fashionable. She always had a special scarf or sunflower, and she was very outgoing.”

“She definitely had a presence,” said Ms. Gerhart. Many said she was always noticed. Not only for how tall and beautiful she was but how she pre-

sented herself to others and put herself out there. Ms. Gerhart met Ms. Davis a few years back but became very close with her in 2020 during the pandemic. To keep each other company and keep their spirits up during hard times, they decided to FaceTime or call, for hours on end. “We never missed one phone call with each other” said Ms. Gerhart.

Ms. Mary said she and Ms. Davis “were friends for about three and a half years.” “She was a good person, ... very sarcastic, always in a good mood, and always there for everyone who was there for her.” She said Ms. Davis helped anyone and everyone who wanted to be helped. She was a sweet, loving individual who always tried to be respectful and kind.

Students repeated the same descriptions of Ms. Davis. Sophomore Laila Green said that she was “always able to help whenever you needed help.” She reinforced that Ms. Davis was a very bubbly person and made people's day every morning with just a smile. “The school lost a very big source of happiness when losing Ms. Davis.”

Ms. Joe could tell her friend wasn't feeling well. Ms. Davis never had a bad day, but the week before her passing she wasn't her same, bubbly self. When Ms. Joe got the call telling her Ms. Davis passed, she was broken.

It's no surprise that her

son, Eric Davis, had an inseparable bond with his mother. He is the spitting image of her. “She was very goofy. Anyone who met her first time around, they loved her. My Mom would take on the role of any person who someone was missing in their own life. She was stern; well-respected.” Over the phone, he described his mother the way so many of her friends had, saying she was the “life of the party and always the center of attention. She was always there for everyone if they were there for her” and she “always came into people's lives at the right time.” Eric's favorite thing to do with his mom was to movie hop, and afterwards to hit their favorite restaurant, Carrabba's, or go around and walk downtown just talking.

“My mom had this thing she would always say to me – Nothing beats failure but a try.” That is how we can honor the memory of Ms. Erica “Nikki” Davis as a Viking, by always giving our best effort.

The Northeast Basketball program will host a memorial game to honor Coach Davis on Jan 17th, 2023 Jan 17th, 4:30 PM-6:00 PM. It'll be played before the JV/V boys game vs Dunedin.

Note from the Faculty, Staff, Students, and Community of Northeast High School: A fund has been established on campus to design and install a memorial on campus in memory of Ms. Davis. Anyone interested in making a charitable donation can do so by dropping off or mailing donations to:

Northeast High School  
Erica Davis Memorial Donations  
5500 16th Street North  
St. Petersburg, FL 33703

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Student Life                             | 2-5   |
| Homecoming Candids                       | 6-7   |
| Entertainment                            | 8-9   |
| Sudoku                                   | 8     |
| Cryptoquote<br>Brain Games<br>Horoscopes | 9     |
| Education                                | 10-11 |

# Life is a Circus: How Students Juggle Their Day-To-Day

By: Olivia Cook and Marko Butina, *Staff Writers*

High school is a time for students to discover what they are passionate about and what they would like to do after graduation, whether it is college, a trade, a job, or just living life. This means that countless students juggle jobs, sports, and other extracurricular activities while exploring what they want to do. But activity leads to a cluttered schedule. Time management is an issue many teens face with seven classes, a stack of assignments, and activities that are done outside of school. Procrastination is the number one obstacle students must learn to navigate.

How do they cope with the many tasks that they face in a day? Senior Elizabeth Daley, who holds many different leadership rolls in the arts department, is the team manager of the swim team, as well as being a member of NHS, was asked about how she deals with all her duties. She said “At times it can be stressful, but with a specific schedule laid out and keeping track of events and meetings, it’s easier.” Also, some advice she has for other students is “Take a deep breath and get the daunting tasks out of the way first...Take it one step at a time and keep a calendar so you don’t miss anything!”

Junior Destin “Tugboat” Orozco, who participates in Football, Lacrosse, Pep Club, SGA, and Hi-Y Club, said “I dedicate specific times of the day to what-

ever activity I have that day.” But as anyone would suspect, problems can occur when trying to stay organized. Destin said that a main problem is “I have to cancel plans with people to make time and sometimes they get mad at me.” When trying to make time to complete all the things, plans may be canceled and events missed because in high school everyone is trying to get their life together so they can have more fun in the future.

Sophomore Michael Norris, who is on the Wrestling team, HEMA, and works on cars, says “I just look at the clock. If I have something to do, I’ll usually write a time to finish up at.”, but he says some problems are “I sometimes have to get rid of the fun hobbies of the day for physical training or homework” which is worth it in the long run, because getting the required jobs done before you have fun, can make it more fun.

Below are some helpful tips and tricks to overcoming the challenges of a busy life:

1. Set Goals: Setting a goal can be anything, big or small, that you can accomplish. Whether or not it’s taking an hour to sit down and do homework, or cutting down on your relaxing time, it’ll help in the long term of finishing work.
2. Make Note of Deadlines: We all have seven classes each day and everyday teachers give out assignments, test, projects, etc.

So, we can all feel stressed, but writing down all the deadlines and due dates could make it easier to decide what to do first.

3. Create a Schedule: Putting down all things you must do in your planner, your calendar app, or just some sort of physical copy of it, it can be helpful to make sure you aren’t going off the track you laid out. Also, writing it all down just doesn’t have to be all work and school, you can preplan relaxing time, time with friends, or any other hobby you like, so you truly don’t get off track.

4. Leverage Technology: Lots of apps have been made available to us to use for keeping track of activities. As well as a simple timer, calendar, and reminder app can be used to help.

5. Ask for Help: While we are still in school, we are offered many resources, such as coaches, teachers, counselors, parents, and friends to help us out with anything that they can. Don’t be afraid to ask, because if you don’t then you might swallow more than you can chew, which could lead to serious stress issues and falling behind.

6. Reward Yourself: Don’t forget that even if you are chalked full of tasks, to make sure you aren’t going to spread yourself too thin. The best part about completing anything is the reward after, you make sure that you give yourself a little credit!

# The Importance of Mental Health Days

By Brooke McCarthy and Dani Brunner, *Staff Writers*

18.8% of high school students have reported considering suicide in the past year. 24.1% female and 46.8% LGBTQ+ have the most thoughts of self-harm due to all of the pressure and stress coming from school. Overall, 8.9% of high school students have actually tried to commit suicide. Overscheduling, pressure, and depression from classes are a huge part of stress in teens.

The time of year stress and depression effects students the most is April, May, and June, which is when the exams are scheduled. FAST testing occurs three times during the school year. In students’ opinion, FAST testing is more stressful than the FSA because there are more testing dates. Having mental health days could improve a student’s motivation and decrease thoughts of self-harm. Students and faculty at Northeast High School agree that mental health days are a necessity for students. Mental health days need to be spread out in a well manner because the possibility of missing test days could stress students out even more.

According to Anthony Turner, “they should definitely be an option for students because it is necessary for some that are in the wrong state of mind, to try and get them back on track to focus on

school.” Turner believes that having these days as options would be very beneficial for students because they can give them the day they need to relax and do things they enjoy. It will help them unwind and get their focus elsewhere in order to return to the right mental state.

Giving students mental health days makes teaching and learning more effective because they will grasp concepts faster and retain them more if they have less chronic stress.

We asked teacher, Mr. Havelka, what sort of changes he noticed in students when they came back from holiday breaks. He responded, “students typically come back from break well rested and better ready to work, they are refreshed. Leading up to the break students get bogged down and tired.” Mr. Havelka sees dramatic changes and believes that the holiday breaks students get are much needed.

All things considered; mental health days can be very important for students. These two believe school causes stress and having these days can help distress and get them on track in school and life. “Good mental health helps us to enjoy and appreciate the people and environment around us more fully.” – John Mendoza

# Coaches Affect Athletes’ Passion for Sport

By Shelby Stirk, *Junior Editor*, and Maia Stroemich, *Staff Writer*

To love a sport, there must be a solid foundation. The team’s foundation all starts with the coach. Every time an athlete enters the court or field, their coach has an impact on his/her attitude and abilities, therefore it’s critical that they have a good one. We interviewed some student athletes and coaches to see what their opinions were.

According to olympic.org a great coach is positive, supportive, goal-oriented, knowledgeable, and a clear communicator. These qualities align well with what most athletes are looking for in a coach. Positiveness seems to be a trend throughout people’s opinions about coaches and what makes a good, successful coach.

In order to gain some insight into what student athletes’ thoughts are, we asked them questions about their coaches over the years. We asked what they looked for in a coach: Aubrey Blackburn, a former volleyball player for Northeast, said “Someone who has a lot of experience and someone

who can connect well with the girls”. Emily Bennet, a soccer player and cheerleader, said “good attitude as well as good corrections,” are what she looks for in a coach. This further proves that athletes value coaches with an optimistic view on things.

We also individually interviewed coaches to learn more about their methods to keep their athletes engaged; we asked what they recommend to other coaches to help keep their players involved with their sport. The JV volleyball coach for Northeast High School, Coach Bohl, recommends to, “Always celebrate the good stuff and don’t always rip on them for the bad stuff.” Coach Minasian, the Football offensive coordinator keeps his players passionate by, “Being real with them and caring...you get the most out of your players when they feel like you care.” It appears that coaches appreciate positivity and believe that it inspires their athletes.

Athletes seem to agree with this since nine of the



student athletes we spoke with in our interviews mentioned positivity and how it is important in sports.

We asked athletes how their relationship with their sport affects their mental health on and off the court or field. Brody Butler, who plays football, baseball, swimming, and wrestling said he thinks “you have to have a close relationship but not too close, so they don’t pick favorites”, Conner Weldon also thinks “if you don’t have a good rela-

tionship with your coach, you’re not going to have fun”. We also asked coaches what they do to build a positive relationship with their players. Coach Minasian likes to promote happy relationships by keeping his players on track he said, “I try to help them become better men”. Coach Bohl mentioned “getting to know them outside of sports”, which she believes brings her closer to her athletes. Athletes and coaches both believe a happy relation-

ship between one another is important within sports and the success of student athletes.

Overall, it appears that coaches’ attitudes, teaching techniques, and general thoughtfulness for their players have an obvious impact on athletes’ passion for their sport. Therefore, it’s important that coaches focus on not only their coaching techniques but how to do it in a way to keep kids engaged.



# Aftermath of Hurricane Ian

By Grejsi Kumaraku

Hurricane throttled the coast of Florida at beginning of the school year. Compared to some of the most dangerous hurricanes to have ever hit Florida, Ian devastated livelihoods and shook-up Floridians’ daily routines. Now recorded as the second deadliest storm since Katrina, Ian set the death toll at 101 lives when it made landfall as a cat 4 on September 28.

After the storm, those affected were devastated. Homes were damaged and destroyed, cities left in shambles, schools shut down to become shelters for those in need of

evacuating. To help cities rebuild and those in need of access to aid and scarce resources, The American Red Cross, a leading organization has helped combat various hardships, provided food, shelter, and comfort. Floridians can lend a hand by visiting redcross.org, or by donating to one of the many organizations that each grant hope and a better tomorrow for those in need.

The aftermath also left notable devastation on schools for the impacted; strong wreckage has left some campuses closed

indefinitely, leaving scads in a state of worry as to when their students will be able to resume schooling again. Recovery operations and reconstruction have already been the primary focus since the storm, but multiple schools struck by the eye of the storm are unsure as to when will they be able to reopen. Residents of the area are still assessing damage. Staff and students are left without homes or power unable to return to a sense of normalcy.

When schools shut down and shutter off the disruption for children worsens. The effects also

deepen for those in lower income housing and financial hardship, as this strongly dampens the recovery speed. The most common resort for such disturbances, as learned from the evident Covid-19 era is online learning. Although researchers stated, the option is not sustainable as a long term or permanent solution, but it will be a method of staying integrated while building back.

Classrooms have been completely drowned in water, roofs ripped apart, and exterior buildings are in shambles. These schools are just looking for a way

to keep their people engaged and able with the least effect on the student’s welfare as possible. Hurricane Katrina caused a close off for 6 months, leading to a devastating drop in test scores, a fall in academics, and a disadvantage for the coming year. Many fear a repeat.

Bouncing back after the throttle. The recovery from the storm will cost roughly \$50 billion dollars, making history as one of the most devastating hurricanes to have hit the mainland U.S.

# Thank You, Teachers

By Kacey Whaley and Samantha Brooks, *Staff Writers*

Northeast High school teachers deserve recognition and appreciation for not only being incredible teachers, but also great role models for students. The teachers at Northeast create a positive environment for students, motivating them to work harder and become successful.

A few students would like to share how grateful they are for their teachers. For example, freshman Ella Deviny stated, “Mr. Diaz encourages me to be a better student and to get all

of my work done because his classroom has positive energy.”

Teachers deserve appreciation because not only do they do an incredible job teaching, but they also are here for students mentally.

Junior at Northeast, Kristen Sondregger, specifically thanked Ms. Holder, Kristen said Ms. Holder has always been there for to help me with my academics, but even aside from schoolwork, she has always been there for me mentally and emotionally.”

Students at Northeast High School have provided reasoning as to why these teachers deserve a special thank you.

Sophomore Mason Fuston said, “Mr. Stone has taught me how to responsibly manage my work, and by doing this, I was able to obtain my certifications in the IT academy.”

Teachers at Northeast guide kids to become successful by creating a positive High school experience for them



# Threat Involving Racial Slur Takes Northeast by Surprise

By Devin Godfrey and Brooke Linton, *Staff Writers*

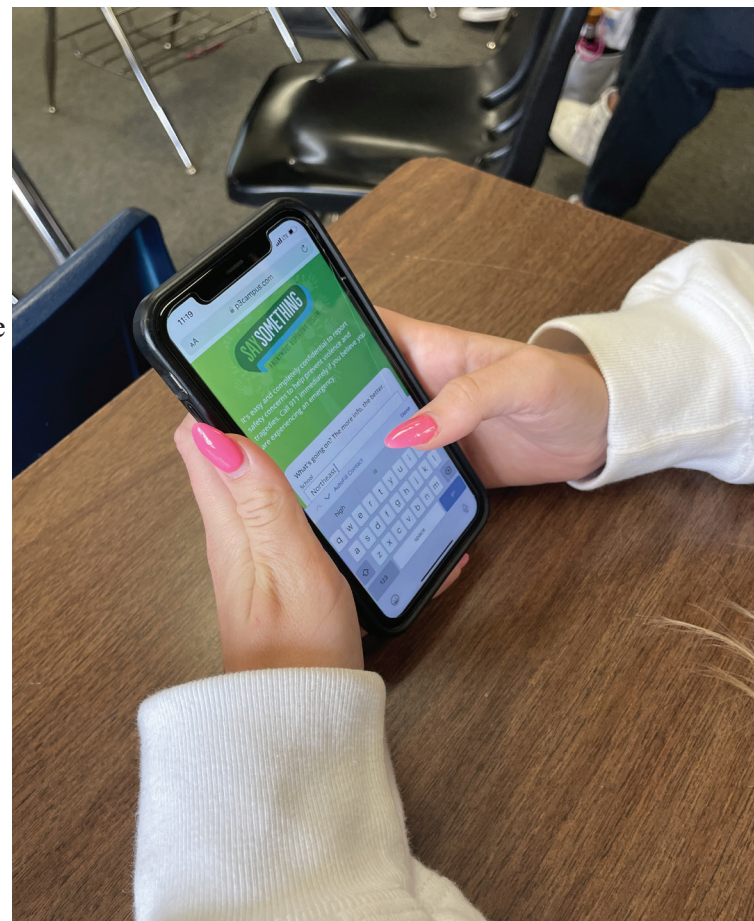
On October 6th, a threat that included a racial slur was posted in the building 17 boys' bathroom. One student, Dia'mante' Payne, took a picture of the message, posted it on social media, and it spread like wildfire. We sat down and talked with him to dissect his actions and discover the reasoning behind why he shared it.

When asked to give a run-down of his thought process, Payne said, "I don't want my health or anyone else's to be in danger, so why not post it? I wanted to make sure everyone was safe. It was mostly to protect other people." As soon as his post went up, kids from all around the county began screenshotting it and sending it around. Within the hour, almost everyone in the school was aware of the dilemma.

Instances like this demonstrate the importance of the "See Something, Say

Something" app. Notifying authority figures and informing them of the problem in a timely manner should be the number one priority rather than having to essentially play a game of telephone.

Very minimal information was provided about the threat which caused families to worry. Parents had to decide if they wanted to take the risk and send their kids to attend school the next day or have them stay home to play it safe. In an interview with Principal Michael Hernandez, he illustrated the reactions of



those involved and revealed some insightful information on what was happening behind the scenes. Hernandez stated that "parents were already panicking" and that he had received many messages as soon as the threat had leaked, asking for details

such as who the person was and if they were reprimanded. He tried to respond individually to each parent's complaint, ensuring them that there were safety protocols in place for scenarios like this and that their children were protected, "We have beefed up security, and there is also un-uniformed security. They are patrolling the campus undercover."

However, Hernandez expressed that according to the Pinellas County Schools privacy code, which is based on the Federal Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), the faculty was not at liberty to reveal any specifics:

"I'm not allowed to give all the details. Some of it is confidential to the specific student. It can be frustrating. . . I work to share as much as I can, but to also then ensure safety protocol." So, while he ensured the students' protection, the atmosphere around the campus was tense and the question still foremost in everyone's mind was: "Will it be enough?"

After speaking with student Jae'lyn Johnson-Brown, she highlighted the dismal tone that consumed the school, "... we were all kind of scared of what could or would happen. Almost everyone was gone... the teachers wouldn't even let us out in the halls." Teachers were extremely wary and took precautions to make sure that students were safe. If these safety measures stay in place, scenarios like this in the future will be shut down just as efficiently.

# Teen Consequences

By Amaya Lees, *Staff Writer*

Young adults in our community are engaging in activities they know are dangerous but still decide to pursue - drugs, alcohol, and smoking - despite the consequences. They let curiosity get the best of them, and do not think of the repercussions and the impact it may have as far as mental health, health complications, behavioral issues, and addictions. By examining teenagers after using such substances researchers see the consequences of smoking and drinking.

They usually do not notice the early signs of impactful risks and the after effect it has on mental health. Sometimes a parent or guardian is the first to see a difference behavior. One is that use can cause "depressed teenagers to be more prone to impulsive suicidal behavior" according to Caroline Miller in

her article "Mental Health Disorders and Teen Substance Use." Junior Jaelynn Johnson-Brown she feels that "teens shouldn't be drinking nor smoking consistently because it creates bad habits." These habits form and can be noticed as "difficulty holding back or controlling emotions", "impulsive behaviors", and "inadequate planning" says the staff at Partnership teen development. The partnership team continues their argument with facts describing how the prefrontal lobe is in control and explains that this is "why teens are so driven by emotion, excitement and short-term reward."

Senior Sam Ofei says there doesn't seem to be much reason for increasing drug use other than a desire to fit in. "I feel like people bandwagon what other

people are doing, blindly, despite the consequences in order to get a temporary feeling of happiness."

Addictions can carry onto the late stages of adolescence; three quarters of adults now regret smoking as teenagers because of their addiction. Moreover, Caroline Miller mentions the fact teens are most likely to get addicted early on because "In the adolescent brain, pathways between regions are still developing."

Senior Emilia Zenelaj said "smoking and drinking early on makes them feel as though if they do it once and get it out the way, they will not do it again. But then it is a constant thing, and it is not easy to get over."

To reduce the likelihood of normalizing such a huge issue, people should start taking these topics more seriously.

# Trends of 2022

By: Alize Lamoureux and Jada Moten, *Staff Writers*

As time progresses over time so do its trends. Social media like TikTok, Instagram influence our trends, especially fashion. Trend forecasting using social media analysis allows fashion brands to unlock their potential for commercial and creative success.

Teenagers are consistently inspired by influencers. Today kids throughout middle and high school begin to look for their fashion sense online. Some things people wear now might be weird and crazy in the future, but fashion is the way for people to express themselves.

Northeast High School Junior, Leila Pharsikaysone, who is known for her style, shops at thrift stores, Pacsun, and some online stores like Yesstyle and AliExpress. "I'm mostly inspired by Pinterest and Instagram which I looked for Acubi," Pharsikaysone said. (Acubi is subversive Korean street wear). While shopping she typically tries to find pieces that are unique but also simple needs in the closet, which helps her to mix and match with different items for multiple outfits. Usually, she buys her tank tops from Aeropostale because they are very easy to mix

with diverse types of styles.

Junior, Devin Godfrey is another student that influences fashion trends at NEHI. He shops at thrift stores like Sunshine and Goodwill and gets inspiration from Tiktok and Instagram. A must have in his closet are accessories like crystals and necklaces which can add a lot to an outfit. Typically, Godfrey looks for baggy clothes and sweaters, especially graphic shirts. One of his favorite looks is layering clothes like a big undershirt with shirt over with baggy jeans.

Student Tre'veon Cameron is known for his sneakers, said that "some places I usually buy from are Footlocker, SNKRS app and Sneaker Conventions." One of Cameron's favorite pairs are his Jordan 4's red thunders.

Science teacher, Ms. Reno always has different hairstyles throughout the school year. "Finding a hairstylist is the most difficult thing," Reno said. Her favorite style is Bob, around 10 inches brown.

There is some variety where people buy their clothes, such as thrifting or designer stores. Thrifting became popular during quarantine of 2020. Younger teens find it so

affordable because it helps them develop a good outfit at a cheap price. Not only is thrifting a good bargain but you are helping reduce waste unlike fast fashion. Furthermore, you can even find designer items for cheaper prices!

Whereas other people will call higher brands fashion. People will spend hundreds, even thousands, on an item of clothing. Buying luxury goods will make a person feel unique from the others, even stand out in which many people desire that. A basic tee and jeans while having designer shoes was a common outfit among Northeast students. While they had a more common outfit, the shoes made them stand out from the rest.

Fashion means something different for each person and that is reflected in our school. You can see the multiple styles reflected throughout campus, there are many different definitions of fashions. Having the ability to express themselves is fundamental for 2022. As fashion trends change, it's important for most students to stand out and express themselves.

# Student Stress

By: Kaleigh King and Charlotte Shaw, *Staff Writers*

80% of US students experience stress High School. Pressure can vary between scholars. And the many roles students fill affect their stress levels. Some students are athletes, employees, or both; some may be the ordinary student.

Athletes, whether students play football, soccer, volleyball, lacrosse, tennis, baseball, swimming, cheer, basketball, bowling, or track, all experience stress. Being an athlete causes strain on student's mental health, physical health, and ability to stay on top of school work. It can be hard to deal with tight schedules, including practices, games, team meals, and academic deadlines. Derrick Brantley, a sophomore who plays football at Northeast High School as a defensive end, struggles with the pressure of school and football. He struggles to balance the "12-13 hours of practice a week". When asked if he deals with stress, he responded with "all the time." However, there are resources and teachers to help athletes struggling with academics. This is one of the school's ways of assisting athletes in managing their overwhelming schedules. Zachary Minasian is the offensive coordinator for the varsity football team and a teacher who teaches three different subjects as of right now, ESE (exceptional student education), MMI PE, and AICE English general paper. Minasian currently only has two student-athletes in one of the classes he teaches, but he tutors athletes who need help during the school day and even after school. Minasian says that "due to their tough schedule because of practice, games and all the other things that go into being an athlete, they seek him out to help them with their academic work." It's important for students who are athletes to have some sort of outlet to maintain their stress levels. Thankfully Northeast offers many different outlets to help those athletes.

Many students can deal with the stress of being athletes, employees, and students. Ripley Brown is a sophomore who owns a business doing hair in her free time. She tends to work upwards of "9 or 10 hours a week". Brown also plays varsity volleyball at Northeast as a middle and outside while also playing for a club, AAU South Saint Pete Storm. Brown explains how she can choose when she works so that it doesn't affect her schedule as much. However, many scholars don't have that flexibility. But she does state that "with school and volleyball, it is stressful because some days I don't get home from practice until 10 pm, and I have to go to sleep at a good time to wake up at 5 am the following morning" Nonetheless, students find ways to balance school, sports and work effectively to keep their mental health stable.

Near 30% of high school students are employed. Depending on where scholars work, students could work 20+ hours a week. Some work to help their families, and others do it for extra money. For example, Richard Lane, a sophomore who works around 20 hours a week at Papa John's, uses the money he earns to pay his phone bill, which is 130\$ every month, then uses the extra money as pocket money. When asked how Lane deals with stress, he replies, "I don't. I struggle with balancing work and school because it's a lot of responsibility for being a 16-year-old." In addition, Lane expresses that he has difficulty staying on top of his school work while keeping a manageable night routine since he works primarily at night.

All kinds of students experience stress at many different altitudes and find other ways to manage it. Whether that is attending tutoring to help with academic tension, scheduling days off for work if students have the chance, or having a mental break day which could be watching shows, hanging out with friends/family, etc. Every student deal with some stress, no matter the situation they're put in.

# The Most Dangerous Part of School is Getting There

## Safe driving as high school students and how to keep yourself safe on the road

By Claryssa Maciel, *Staff Writer*

When you are behind the wheel of a car, whether alone or with your friends, driving safely should always be your top concern. As teenagers we are more distracted than ever, so it is crucial to know the basics of safe driving and practice them every time you're on the road. Driving is primarily a thinking task, and you have a lot of things to think about when you're behind the wheel: road conditions, your speed and position, observing traffic laws, etc. Staying focused on driving and only driving is critical to safe driving.

### 5 Secrets To Becoming a Safe Driver:

1. Taking a Driver's Education Course: We offer drivers ed courses here at Northeast High! It can be taken as a semester course and can also help you save

money on insurance. Driver Education is designed to assure that the student will be a capable driver who is able to demonstrate a working knowledge of rules, regulations, procedures of operating a motor vehicle, and other responsibilities associated with the driving privilege. A student currently in Northeast High's drivers ed class said "I don't want to put myself or anyone else in danger and driving is one of the most important skills to learn." 2. Filtering Out Distractions: A distraction is any activity that diverts attention from the task of driving. Driving deserves your full attention — stay focused on the driving task. STAY OFF YOUR PHONE. Driving takes a lot of mental capacity, it uses quick thinking, alert vision, and of course your limbs. Using your phone limits your ability to do all 3 of these.

Drivers Are Safe Drivers: Be considerate of others but look out for yourself. Do not assume another driver is going to move out of the way or allow you to merge. Assume that drivers will run through red lights or stop signs and be prepared to react. Plan your movements anticipating the worst-case scenario. 4. Keep Your Speed at a Reasonable Level: Staying aware of your surroundings, stopping and following distance, can prevent collisions. Posted speed limits apply to ideal conditions. It's your responsibility to ensure that your speed matches conditions. In addition, higher speeds make controlling your vehicle that much more difficult if things go wrong. To maintain control of your vehicle, you must control your speed.

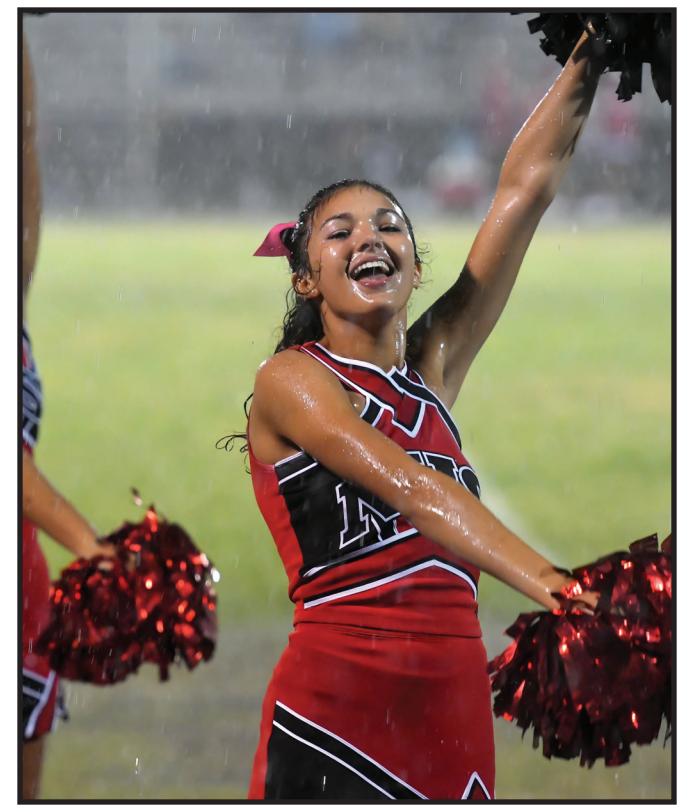
5. Tell Passengers to Limit Distractions: As teenagers being on the road with our friends is one of the perks



of getting your licenses. Once you get your license, you're welcome to drive one non-family passenger under 20 for the first 6 months and then up to 3 passengers under 20 for the second 6 months. In taking this responsibility of being able to drive you and your friends around, you want to make sure you have them take some passenger responsibility as well.

This past year has resulted in multiple car collisions two involving

students who were Vikings. While neither Viking was driving, tragedies on the road remind us all how fragile life is. We urge students to understand that a vehicle is not a toy, it can destroy lives in a matter of moments. Taking a driver's education course, limiting distractions, and being a defensive driver can protect not only you on the road, but can save the lives of others.



# A Kingdom Without a King

By Tony Ibresovic, Staff Writer

The passing of Chadwick Boseman in August of 2020 due to colon cancer was sudden and unexpected. His battle against colon cancer was kept completely secret until his passing. The actor's passing left fans of his character, Black Panther, wondering what holds. The character plays a crucial role in the Marvel universe and its future, which means the issue must be addressed. Marvel was then faced with a choice, either they recast the King of Wakanda and attempt to live up to Chadwick's amazing performance, or they take the mantle of Black Panther and pass it onto another character in the universe.

After two years of waiting, we have finally gotten our answer in Black Panther: Wakanda Forever. The movie opens with Shuri, T'Challa's sister, eagerly trying to save her brother from a deadly illness. Despite Shuri's best efforts, she was unable to save her brother due to the destruction of the heart-shaped

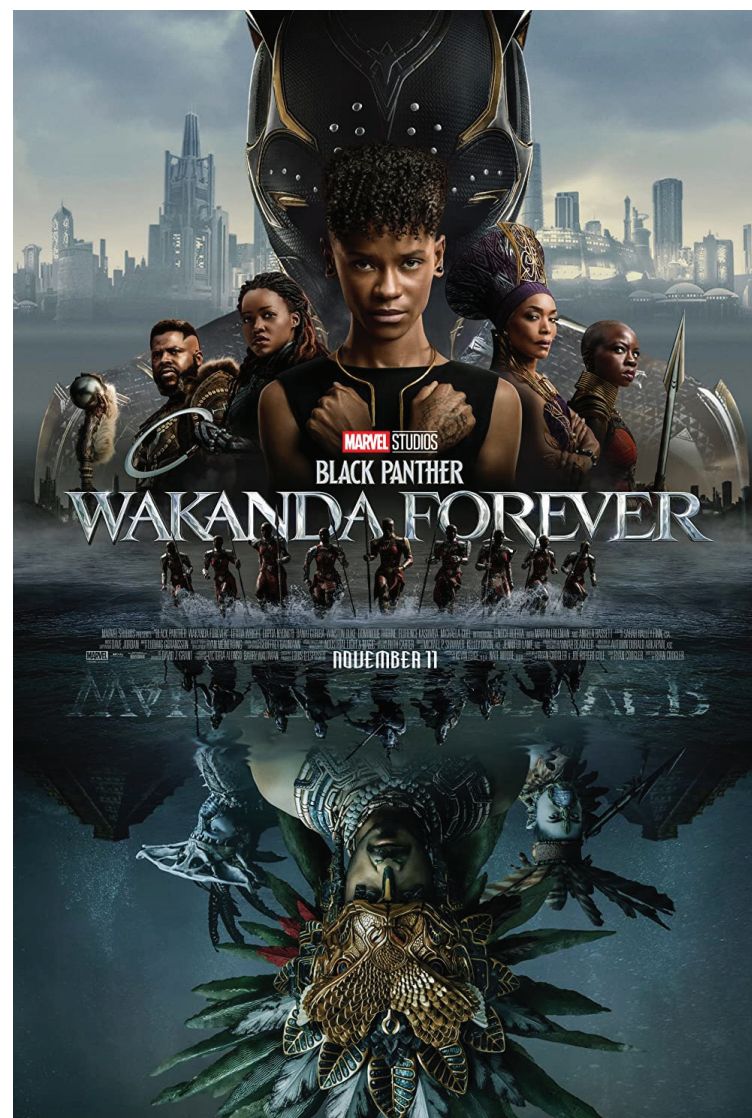
herbs from the last movie. After a short and sweet funeral scene for T'Challa, Marvel presents us with a tribute where Boseman exclusively features in the iconic Marvel introduction sequence. These first couple of minutes addresses the actor's death and tells us that Black Panther will not be recast, while also setting up a few plot points of the movie.

Throughout the movie Shuri blames herself for not being able to save her brother despite doing everything she possibly could. In passing Shuri mentions how her brother "suffered in silence," telling us that he most likely kept his illness a secret just as Chadwick did. The fact that T'Challa kept his illness secret adds to the why Shuri blames herself because her knowing would have given her more time to create a cure which could have saved her brother. Even after a year of his passing Shuri is still unable to come to terms with his death.

Shuri is finally able to come to terms with T'Chal-

la's death after the invasion of her city. The urgency of the situation calls for the protector of Wakanda, forcing Shuri to finally create a synthetic heart-shaped herb allowing herself to become the Black Panther. In the ritual she is taken to the Ancestral Plane where she is met with Killmonger, the villain of the previous movie. Killmonger explains to Shuri that she "chose him" because she is on a path of revenge. Shuri denies this and states that she "is not like him" and she is "not like her brother" basically saying that she will not make the mistakes of T'Challa or Killmonger. Shuri becoming the Black Panther wasn't surprising, but some students think that "M'baku would have been good fit" (Wendell Beall, 10th grader) for the mantle. However, students also think that Shuri deserves the mantle of the Black Panther since "she works hard to help Wakanda and brought back the heart shaped herb" (Jasmine Lutz, 10th grader)

In the end Shuri was



able to suppress her urges for vengeance and prove her worthiness of the mantle. In total the movie is an amazing and heartfelt tribute to Chadwick Boseman throughout the entire movie, you can really feel the impact of his death through the whole film with the constant stress on

Wakanda and the absence of its protector. Shuri being able to protect her kingdom and keep the peace without walking the path of vengeance proves she is worthy of the Mantle of the Black Panther. M'Baku said it best, "The Black Panther Lives!"

displayed a collection of "white lives matter" attire to mock the Black Lives Matter movement.

Not long after, his acts escalated with an antisemitic social media rant that began with him accusing rapper Sean Combs of being controlled by Jewish people. He continued by tweeting "I'm a bit sleepy tonight but when I wake up in going [redacted] on Jewish people..." This led to his ban from Twitter and Instagram, but was not the end of the hate. Afterwards, an antisemitic white supremacist group, Goyim Defense League, felt inspired to hang banners reading "Kanye is right about the Jews" and "vax the Jews" across California.

Consequently, Kanye was dropped from his partnership with Adidas and Balenciaga, causing him to lose 2 billion dollars. There is speculation as to why Kanye is acting in this manner. Some blame his actions on his (rumored) bipolar disorder. According to those in his inner circle, he has made the choice to not medicate due to the strain it puts on his creativity and career. Bipolar

disorder is a mental illness that can cause intense mood swings ranging between depressive lows and manic highs. There are mixed opinions as to the correlation between his possible diagnosis and his outbursts. But bipolar disorder is not an excuse for hatefulness; just as much hate can be sent through any neuro-normative person. Others believe that the two cannot be separated, bipolar disorder is directly causing his impulses and hate speech. Bipolar disorder is not the only key affecting factor here. In March of 2022 Kanye divorced from Kim Kardashian. The messy divorce may have affected Kanye's mental health as Kanye has also gone on a six month social rampage focusing on Kim.

In the past his actions may have been excused, but not this time. Truly, there is no acceptable reason as to why Kanye is promoting racism and displaying such reprehensible public behaviors. Plenty of other outlets are available to him to help his character and career. As Kanye worsens, his career falls apart.

# Manga Comes to the Big Screen

By Simon Mora, Staff Writer

This year, the long running manga and anime series *One Piece* has gained popularity, and has woven itself not only into Japanese culture but Western culture as well.

The manga was first published in the Shonen Jump magazine in 1997, and began airing on television in 1999. Since then, it has steadily grown in popularity, releasing thousands of episodes and over 10 movies. A live action series

is also being developed by Netflix.

This past October, Times Square in New York City was completely taken over with advertisements for the upcoming release of *One Piece: Film Red*. Thousands of fans gathered to marvel at the sight.

"I saw it all over social media" Junior Elijah Hahn shares. "5 years ago I wouldn't even think that would be possible." *Film Red* earned \$4.7 million

opening weekend in North America, outselling Black Adam on its first day.

This is not surprising, since in recent years anime has become much more mainstream in Western culture. Hundreds of anime conventions are held every year, and one was even held a few months ago in St. Pete.



## Puzzles

### Christmas Carols Cryptogram

Here is a list of 18 Christmas carols whose titles have all been written in the same crypt code. Can you figure out what the titles are? (Hint: replace the letter P with a C.)

1. Q PQOR WYY VR JWFNSJBY
2. AFYRUN UFTSN, SQYV UFTSN
3. IRPZ NSR SWYYA DFNS MQBTSA QJ SQYVV
4. SWXZ! NSR WUTRYA AFUT
5. NSR JFXAN OQRY
6. DR DFAS VQB W ORXXV PSXFANOWA
7. FN PWOR BLQU NSR OFIUFTSN PYRWX
8. F'Ø IXRWOFUT QJ W DSNR PSXFANOWA
9. WDWV FU NSR OWUTRX
10. AWUNW PYWBA FA PQOFUT NQ NQDU
11. AFYERX MRYYA
12. YFNMYR IXBOORX MQV
13. TQI XNAN VR ORXXV TRUNYRORU
14. XBIQYLS NSR XRI UQARI XRFUIRRX
15. F AWD ØØØØV ZFAAFUT AWUNW PYWBA
16. KFUTYR MRYYA



On April Fool's Day, your teenaged son replaces the salt in three of your four salt shakers with sugar. But he also leaves messages on each.

If only one of these inscriptions is true, which shaker still contains salt?

## New Year, New You?

### What Do The Stars Have in Store For You.

According to Tarot.com, here are the predictions for the year.

**Aries** - 2023 has your name written all over it, Ram. The first half of the year might bring you the luck you've been longing for. When life moves at a snail's pace, it likely stifles your Aries drive. Fortunately, that won't be an issue this go-round.

**Taurus** - Any seeds that you plant in 2023 have the potential to grow big, Taurus -- possibly so big that you'll look back and think, "Now that was the year I made it." It's likely that you're breaking on through to the other side of inertia and laziness, and you've never been more ready to decadently enjoy the fruits of your labors.

**Gemini** - Your worldview may change quite radically this year, Gemini. It's time to get super serious about the mark you want to make on the planet as far as your career goes. With Saturn moving into your 10th House of Professional Prowess and powerful Pluto altering the landscape of your 9th House of Philosophy, it's important to make sure your work feels enriching and meaningful. Toiling away at something mundane just for a paycheck won't cut it any longer.

**Cancer** - 2023 may be the year your career starts taking off for the stratosphere, Cancer. Friends, colleagues, and online followers may play an outsized role in making it all happen, so don't hesitate to rely on them when you need guidance, a brainstorming sesh, or a shoul-

der to cry on.

**Leo** - We all know you just want to be loved, Leo. Well, relationships continue to loom large for you in 2023, growing deeper, more complex, and transformative across the board. Both personal and professional partnerships should look very different by the time the year ends, and you'll know yourself a whole lot better. Relationships are your mirror more than ever before, and they'll help you know when and where drama is truly appropriate.

**Virgo** - Pack your bags, Virgo, because 2023 is all about reigniting your adventurous spirit. It's time you get serious about the broader direction of your life as you allow yourself to expand your impact on the world. Both your mind and your passport are about to get a lot of use.

**Libra** - No one needs to tell you that relationships are a big deal, Libra, but in 2023, they really take center stage. As they play an outsized role in your life, you'll need to figure out how to make time for both love and your workaday world.

**Scorpio** - You're pushing through the cosmic birth canal and reemerging as a brand new you in 2023, Scorpio. With utterly profound, can't-go-back-again change happening in key areas of your birth chart, you get to be the proverbial skin-shedder you were born to be this year. There's a strong focus on relationships, from personal to professional and from casual to serious.

**Sagittarius** - Your curi-

osity is usually insatiable, Sagittarius, but in 2023, it's pumped up a notch. Get ready to learn more than you have in a long time. As the zodiac's quintessential student, you're embarking on a spiritual journey into the heart of your own personal history, and while all of this intellectual stimulation may keep you intrigued, your work life could get wildly busy.

**Capricorn** - It may feel like you've been in an intense cosmic crucible for the past decade, Capricorn. Don't worry -- this is the year you break free to the other side. Your return to the runway comes courtesy of Pluto finally leaving your sign for the first time in what feels like forever. This is a big deal! On top of that, Saturn is on the move into new territory, handing you the microphone and helping you get your message out in powerful ways.

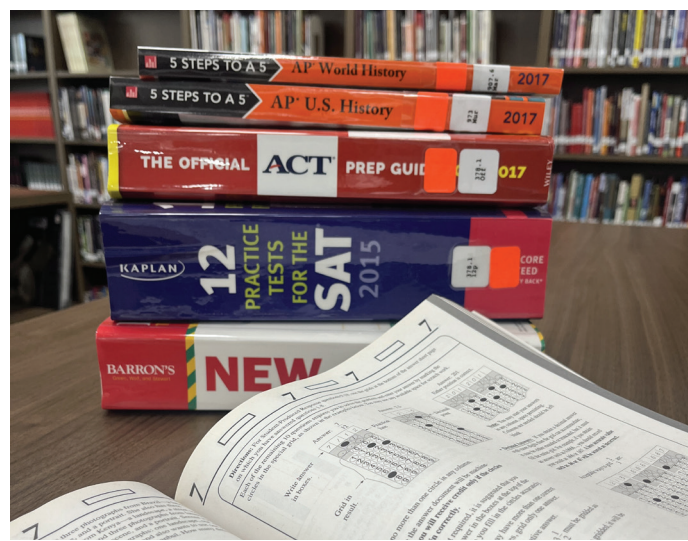
**Aquarius** - You're a living and breathing revolution this year, Aquarius. With Pluto moving into your very own sign for the first and only time this century, you're likely ready to let your freak flag fly in the very best way. Saturn, on the other hand, is leaving your sign, making even more space for freedom. It's time to next level every element of your life.

**Pisces** - Teaching and learning are your main themes this year -- just as trusting your intuition becomes more important than ever before. 2023 strengthens your resolve, shows you your innate power, and helps you build necessary boundaries.

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|   |   |   | 1 |   |   | 2 | 6 |
| 5 | 9 |   | 4 |   |   |   |   |
|   |   |   | 2 | 3 |   | 7 | 5 |
|   |   |   |   |   |   | 1 | 7 |
| 9 |   | 7 |   |   |   | 3 | 2 |
| 2 |   | 8 |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | 3 | 9 |   | 1 | 2 |   |   |
|   |   |   |   |   | 4 | 1 | 9 |
| 1 | 7 |   |   | 8 |   |   |   |

## How to Play Sudoku

1. Each row must contain the numbers 1-9 exactly once each
2. Each column must contain the numbers 1-9 exactly once each
3. Each 3x3 box must contain the numbers 1-9 exactly once each
4. Do not repeat any numbers



## Is Junior Year as Bad as People Say?

By Aliyah Tenney, *Staff Writer*

Compared to freshman and sophomore year, most upcoming juniors are told that this year will be the worst. But is that really the case? I took the time over a couple of weeks to speak to my fellow classmates of 2024. The conversations with my peers brought me to the realization that many of us are struggling with the same things.

I started by asking what the hardest part of Junior year has been so far. Most responded with the same “staying on top of assignments” and “balancing schoolwork and social life”. But what are the easiest and most joyful memories of junior year? Sydney Bagley said that “so far, Homecoming Week was probably my favorite part of the year”. Raean-

na Cody believes that it’s “seeing my friends and the laughs that we share has made my year”.

As with any school, year there are many ups and downs of junior year. The importance that follows through into senior year is tremendous. This is the time to look into your future after graduation, whether it’s going to college, trade school, or even straight into a career. Students feel the pressure of real life and having to make adult decisions while focusing on school and balancing social life.

One of the biggest stressors for 11th grade scholars is the time and preparation for the SAT and ACT. Many classmates studied for hours, just hoping to get an adequate

score for these crucial tests. The SAT contains 3 sections: Reading, Writing and Math. All these sections will be graded differently, then combined to make a final score out of 1600. According to recent Florida statistics the average score is 993. Most colleges in Florida require around 980-1250. Students find themselves trying to fit into the standards of their dream colleges and most students procrastinate causing more aggravation to college applicants.

All things considered; junior year can lead students to fall into a hole in life but it’s also a core time period for them to learn how to manage time, support themselves and begin to balance the many situations they may face.

## Dressing for Dress Code

By McKenna Arapi, *Editor*

One of the biggest ways students can show off their personality at school is through what they wear. However, a school’s dress code can make standing out or showing off style difficult. One of the major highlights coming back to campus this fall was a more relaxed dress policy. What hasn’t been communicated correctly to students is why the dress code is so strict.

Schools not only teach students Calculus and AICE Gen Paper; they also must prepare students for the real world. Students don’t realize how dress code relates to the preparation for the future.

Once students graduate and are thrown into the deep end of the real world, they must navigate college, jobs and being an adult all at once. The school system tries to prepare students as much as they can, so that we are equipped for what is to come. This includes

how to dress professionally and according to our future endeavors.

Another major issue that affects the dress code is school safety. Concerns about violence on property has led administrators around the country to tightened up student dress codes in an attempt to reduce the risk of violence, and to create a positive, productive learning environment. It has also been proven that having a sense of uniform or dress code, can prevent issues in discipline, improve attendance, as well as achievement. According to the National School Boards Association, 41% of schools responding to a survey used dress code policies as one strategy to address school violence. This study examined student handbooks for evidence that schools consider the dress code as one strategy to address the physical and psychological security of the school pop-

ulation.

The American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences conducted an analysis that examined high school code of conducts to determine if school administrators consider dress codes as a strategy to address the objective and mental security of students. After analyzing over 80 online handbooks the researchers discovered 84% of dress codes related to safety.

However, the dress code can be very restricting and sometimes seen as biased by the students. Another student that helped the change in policies, Lily Bates said “we understand why the dress code is what it is, but we wanted to make a change”. So last year, a group of female students and history teacher, Mrs. Dudley worked with the school board to adjust the dress code to being more relaxed. Shelby Glenn and Lilly Bates were a major

help in the efforts to change the dress code. Rules were adjusted to allow leggings, rips on pants up to mid-thigh, etc.

The change in dress code was received well, changes like leggings and the change in pant length allowed students the freedom to



## New, Ninth, United

by Kendall Martin, *Staff Writer*

“Once a Viking, always a Viking!” is the first thing a freshman hears as they enter the halls of Northeast High School. This motto sheds light on a quality that a new high school student should embrace immediately to have success and that is “unity”. It can be very difficult to transition from middle school to high school, in fact, it is sometimes downright scary.

Adapting to a new schedule, learning your way around campus, observing people who already have connections and friendships, meeting a new group of teachers, and settling into a newfound world is a lot. Have no fear, there are several different activities a 9th grader can join to help make the shift smoother. Get involved in various clubs, after-school sports, or organizations lends a sense of belonging, discovery, and pride. Taking the time to make an agenda or a detailed schedule is also something that can lead to success. We checked in with a few freshmen to see how the year has gone so far.

How did entering high school change the way you do things, or your sched-

ule? “I would say it’s a lot more work and takes a lot more of my time. But I’m learning how to adjust to high school and the way it works” - Lauren Chipman

How has being in high school affected you personally compared to middle school? “I feel that high school affected me personally compared to middle school because I feel more motivated since it’s a new beginning and I also get to meet new people and connect with them.” - Bea Rodriguez

Do you feel a sense of belonging now, compared to the first day of school? “Surprisingly yes, I already feel like I have amazing friends to depend on, and I feel much more relaxed than the first day. Compared to my expectations, my freshman year has gone much better than I expected.” - Phoebe Robinson

What are you looking forward to in your next year of high school? “Next year, I’m excited to meet new people and excited to continue playing basketball and moving on to new classes” - Jocelyn Bruner

## Overcrowded Classrooms Make Learning Difficult

By Addy Sylvester, *Editor*

In the 2022-2023 school year, Northeast High School has reached its max of students in two out of the four grade levels. Both the freshmen and junior class has reached its limit of students.

Northeast has gained around 200 students since the 2019-2020 school year. Northeast ended the 2021-2022 school year with just over 1500 students. We began the 2022-2023 school year, As of the date of publication, there are 1758 students.

Instances such as skipping, and few behavioral problems have increased because of the number of students that have entered the school. Because more students want attention and act out to gain attention, behavior has become worse in some underclassmen classrooms.

“Skipping is crazy. there’s always a ton of kids in the hallways, and always some during the periods,” Math teacher Stephani Bohl said.

Many classes in the school are well over their usual amount. Some have anywhere from three to seven students over population per class.

“I’m supposed to have 25 [students] in algebra and I have a class of 30 and 27...it’s easier to teach a smaller group,” Bohl said.

It’s been shown that it’s better for both the teacher’s experience and the student’s learning to have smaller numbers of

students in one classroom.

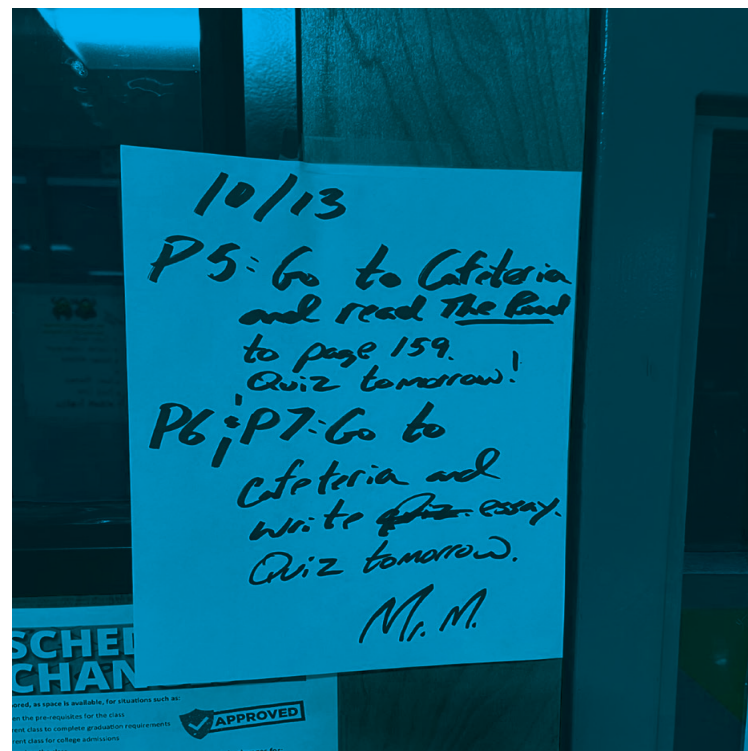
An expert from Fremont University describes those smaller classrooms with a population of 20 students or fewer results in more individual attention, increased participation, and better communication between the instructor and students.

Not only do students learn better in smaller classroom settings, but students also tend to behave better in smaller classrooms. Elisa Carbone explains that “Students behave in large classes in ways they never would in small classes.”

While some students came for academies or sports, some just came because they wanted to move schools. Transferring schools can mean a fresh start for students or even being in a new environment.

“I transferred because my brother was transferring and I had to drive him to school,” Senior Savina Do said.

Having more students come to Northeast has increased behavioral problems, such as skipping and disrespect. But because the district allows classrooms in core subjects and average of up to 30 students, while elective classrooms are not capped. Getting smaller classrooms is out of the picture. Northeast also has no more space in the campus to create smaller classrooms with more teachers.



## The Banning of Books in Florida and How It Affects Our Education

By Lashell Roberts and Kaitlyn Early, *Staff Writers*

Florida Legislation has recently banned 204 books from school curriculums and seven school districts have adopted a strict stance in support of this ban. These books talk about subjects including racism, religion, LGBTQ+ representation, sex education, and even mental health and teen struggles.

We interviewed both students and teachers to hear their perspectives on the state limits to what students can be taught.

Mrs. Menne an AVID and history teacher said “I am against them, and I feel like it is detrimental to students’ educations and their growth into being adults. It has a negative impact because it discourages us, it discourages you students from thinking freely and from having the ability to synthesize diverse information and analyze different points of view. It censors your view of history”

Mr. Havelka second-

ed the sentiment saying “Book bans in general are never a good idea because it prevents knowledge” Mr. H felt that the book bans “limits the knowledge that’s out there for students.” He did say though that it is important to consider “the age appropriateness of any of the material.”

Students’ seemed to agree for the most part when we asked about their awareness of this legislation.

Kyla Foor said, “This could have an impact on me because if we are in world history and we are learning about religion, and they can’t teach it to us we will just be clueless and sex ed is important to keep kids safe...Yes, this could impact me later in life because if [I] don’t learn about certain things it’ll just be...bleh”

Jack Fenton agreed saying “I feel like this could affect my educa-

tion, because then I’ll feel uncultured. How To Kill a Mockingbird is a book that is affected by the bans. It has great themes in it that everyone should be able to read and experience for themselves”

Jasmine Lutz agreed that the limitations on certain books being taught in schools could negatively influence her education. “This could affect people later in life because people will be uneducated and won’t understand the struggles that others have gone through. It could make them become narrow minded about the world.”

The push to have schools not include specific themes and subjects could be detrimental to student’s education. Both students and teachers believe that this is a bad idea and could have a negative impact on students today and later in their lives.

## Teacher Shortages

By: Calista Hull, *Staff Writer*

A student is heading to the next class ready to learn, but there is paper sign on the door that reads, “REPORT TO THE CAFETERIA”. Once the student sees this, they immediately know they will learn nothing for the full period. Instead they will sit in the cafe getting little done.

The purpose of school is to learn and when teachers are constantly out, students are unable to get that experience. Most classrooms are full - having more students than chairs in the room. A major question that many of us wonder is, how are we able to solve the issue of teacher shortage?

Raising teacher pay is an existing solution. This can increase the chances someone would want to become a teacher. For a position that carries such an impact, they need a higher pay than they are given. There has been an increase in teacher starter pay, but not the overall pay for all

teachers. Governor Ron DeSantis budgeted for salary increases for new teachers. “The average starting salary for a teacher in Florida was \$40,000 (26th in the nation), and with today’s funding, it will now be at least \$47,000 (9th in the nation).” The starting pay was able to raise by \$7,000 in an attempt to find people to fill open positions as a teacher according to

Currently, when teachers are out there are limited substitutes able to watch over class. The students most often get sent to the cafeteria to sit with multiple other classes with no teacher. No work gets done. Either no assignments are given, or the students do not have access to electronics where the work would be. Morgan Haggerty, said, “I don’t like going to the café when a teacher is out and from experience, nothing productive gets done there.”

Linking attendance or performance to teacher pay could be effective in keeping teachers and getting new ones so students are able to learn.

In order to keep all the current experienced teachers, they need to raise every teachers pay, not just starting pay. It would be even more effective if the federal government were to take this information and attempt at helping the raise of teacher pay for the whole country.

Impacted student Sarah Jairam states, “When a teacher is away, the students don’t learn anything.” Students at school need teachers in order to complete school.

# Band of Brothers

The Northeast High Boys Basketball team tipped off against the Pinellas Park Patriots on Monday, December 6th on their home court. Not only did both JV and Varsity win their games, but they won the hearts of the crowd as well.

Students, teachers, and families who attended the game were introduced to the new coaching staff through the actions and attitudes of their players. Head Varsity Coach Jason “Jay” Murray, formerly the JV coach, moved into the position at the end of last season leaving the JV Head Coach spot to be filled by Haron “Duke” Sharrod. Duke is a NEHI grad and a former player for The East. They both had big shoes to fill with the departure of Coach Tyler Baynard who helped to form the reputation of the team into what it is now.

This legacy of coaching has grown a team of young men who have developed impressive communication skills and who’s supportive

of each other is easy to see. As the JV team ran down the court, they called out to each other, not just plays but also cheers for shots made or missed.

The JV team is anchored by sophomore PG/SG Noah Rodriquez, a multi-sport athlete. Noah is a leader who puts teammates before himself. He is also hard working off the court leading the team in GPA. He is a sharpshooter outside the 3 point line. In the game against the Patriots, he was assisted by standout players Julian Soria and Jaiel Soto. The team plays a fast paced, up-tempo, full court press and pass the ball unselfishly while hyping each other’s shots.

The Varsity team is just as skilled with Captains DJ Evans and De’ Angelo Owens at the helm. SF/SG Evans drove to the rim scoring 12 points to tie with Armani Walker for most points scored. Followed by LJ Ruiz with 10 points. Owens fans oo’ed and ah’ed at his multiple dunks.

But this star of many



basketball games is utility player James “Big Country” Brooks. James took the court at two minutes to the half and his teammates set him up to shoot from the outside. With the crowd chanting his name, Brooks sent one sailing at the buzzer to sink for three.

James joined the team under Coach Baynard who’s self-defined role as a coach was to create a more inclusive environment. “It’s just something that is miss-

ing in the world. It’s catching up out there, but in here I want students to know that no matter their differences in the classroom, they are just as able on the court.” Coach Baynard’s desire to be the change is continued under Coach Jay.

In James’ words “it feels great to be part of the team. Amazing. It takes time, hard work. I’m out there every day practicing.” James is looking forward to continuing his basketball

career for the Vikings as a senior next year.

Sophomore Guard LJ Ruiz is proud to be a part of the team. “It feels great to be a part of something that matters.”

Win or lose on the court, the NEHI basketball program as a whole is definitely making changes that influence school culture.

## The Big Three

By Jase Amaral, Staff Writer

Most people in the United States of America, have celebrated at least one of these holidays, Christmas, Halloween, or Thanksgiving. Most of them have many questions about the holidays like where they originated, which one people celebrate more, and which one is the best out of all of them?

Thanksgiving is a holiday that takes place on November 24th and is primarily celebrated by the United States but there are some other countries that celebrate it too. Thanksgiving originally started when the Plymouth colonists shared a feast with the local tribe, Wampanoag. Since then, the holiday was celebrated by many states and colonies, but it wasn’t until 1863 that Thanksgiving became an official holiday thanks to Abraham Lincoln. When asking Chase Harper why he ranked Thanksgiving last he said, “Thanksgiving hits the least between the rest of the holidays.” According to Chase, Thanksgiving doesn’t nec-

essarily have any cons, but the pros of the holiday get outshined by the other two. Nearly 91% of Americans celebrate Thanksgiving every year, with the majority staying at home to celebrate the holiday.

Halloween happens every year on the 31st of October is celebrated by some countries around the world with most not celebrating the holiday due to their religious beliefs. While it isn’t exactly clear when or how Halloween started, it is widely believed that it originated from ancient Celtic festivals where people would dress up to ward off ghosts. 9th grade student, Devan Moore who ranked Halloween last on his list stated that “Halloween has fallen off since Covid.” Since the holiday is the most social between the three Covid has caused it to experience a decline in participation. Halloween still isn’t an official holiday even though it is widely celebrated in the U.S. It is estimated that 70% of Americans celebrate Hal-

loween in some sort of way by leaving out candy or hosting or going to parties.

Christmas takes place on the 25th of December every year and is celebrated by many countries around the world. There’s no exact date when it first started, but the first recorded date was AD 336. What most people will say is that Christmas celebrates the birthday of Jesus, but its first celebrations done by the Romans was worshipping the Sun God. Student Armando Garner who had Christmas 1st on his list said, “Christmas is something you’ll look forward to for the whole year.” To this student and many others Christmas is the holiday with the most hype behind it because it comes with a 2 week break from school and gifts that kids may have wanted all year. According to a report taken in 2019, 93% of Americans celebrate Christmas every year with a percentage of them celebrating till the 5th of January.

Now, when it comes to

popularity around the world Thanksgiving is in last place by far with only a few countries celebrating it and Christmas is in first place with almost every country in the world celebrating it. This changes if we are just going by the United States then Thanksgiving would be 2nd place with 91% of people celebrating it, and Halloween in last with only 70% of people celebrating it. Instead of measuring the numbers let us compare; The holiday with the most detailed and informative origin is Thanksgiving as its first celebration is documented and has an exact date with the other holidays not having any documentations of their first celebration. Secondly, if it comes down to popularity contests Thanksgiving would win with 81% of Americans voting for it, Christmas in 2nd with 77%, and Halloween with 65% of Americans voting for it in a popularity contest. While, that survey is valid I think it would be fair to conduct a local one on campus.

When asking Northeast students how’d they rank the holidays Christmas had the most votes for the best holiday for the reasons of presents, family, and parties. Then, Thanksgiving came in 2nd because of family and food. Finally, we have Halloween which came in last with the majority of people disliking it due to it being the least hype, boring, and unrewarding. When putting everything together it is revealed that Christmas would be the best holiday out of the 3 due to it being the most widely celebrated, and the most popular among the local community. Then, we have Thanksgiving coming in 2nd due to it being the 2nd most celebrated and the most popular in the United States. Finally, we have Halloween coming in last with the least amount of people celebrating it and being the least popular among the local community and general community.