

## Will ‘Snow Days’ Cease to Exist?

By Matthew Watson

If you were to ask a student how they would be spending their day off from school due to snow, a typical answer would consist of activities such as playing in the snow with friends and family, bingeing shows or movies on Netflix, and overall relaxing from the daily trials and tribulations of school.

However, many school districts in states such as Maine, Ohio, and New Hampshire are implementing ways for students of all grades to stay productive and keep up with their work, even in the event of school being closed due to inclement or hazardous weather.

“Schools around Camden, Maine, will replace two snow days per year with so-called Remote School Days, when students will complete coursework at home using internet-connected devices,” stated in an Edutopia article by Tom Berger.

In New Hampshire and Ohio, younger students get “blizzard bags” which “include a full day of assignments, which are either sent home ahead of time or accessed online from home,” according to an article from the New Hampshire Public Radio.

While strategies such as these are definitely helpful with maintaining the 180



Image Credit: Vermont Public Radio

days of class time required in many states such as Maryland, parents and students alike still have issues with the idea of snow days being used as a substitute for instructional days.

“Trying to help my kindergartener, second-grader, fourth-grader do assignments while also meeting my work deadlines was simply impossible,” complained mother Melissa Matthews in a Washington Post letter to the editor.

“I think it’s a good idea, as a way to stop from taking days off our break or having to add days at the end of the year,”

remarked junior Sydale John Ayi. “But not everyone is connected to the internet, so that might not help them.”

For high school students, problems can arise from the lack of an actual teacher to aid with the lesson, especially if it’s an honors or AP course. Furthermore, not having a reliable device—or a reliable internet connection—to do work would also prove to be a major problem.

“Even though [instruction on snow days] could help the students who take advantage of this time and study, there are students who don’t find it easy to study all

by themselves,” said senior Enrique Hernandez. “You could say that some students learn [better] in an active environment with a teacher to depend on instead of [just] searching up how to do something.”

In this time and age where school assignments can be easily accessed through “E-Learning” applications such as Google Classroom and more locally, MCPS Classroom, the idea of snow days primarily being used for learning new material from home may be closer than perceived.

“While it is good to keep students’ minds in gear and ready for the next school day, I feel there is the population of students who could not benefit from this,” noted Hernandez. “After all, searching up answers isn’t a new concept.”



clipartxtras.com

## Sabor Latino Wins for GHS

By Emily Lainez

Sabor Latino, the Latin Dance team, won first place at the 19th Annual MCPS Latin Dance Team Competition at Strathmore on November 19, 2018. However, Sabor Latino’s win isn’t just the team’s victory, it’s also a win for everyone at GHS.

Sabor Latino had been preparing for competition since soon after tryouts were held in September of this school year. They had to compete in eight different categories at competition. The team managed to get first place in all of the dancing categories except for Cha-Cha and Bachata, which they earned third place.

“We won first place and it was amazing! I had so much fun even though it was so stressful at times. We usually would practice every day and we would stay late but it’s so fun, you end up getting so close with everyone on the team,” said Erika Ramirez-Aguilar, a sophomore dancer for

Sabor Latino.

Sabor Latino’s first performance after their victory at the competition was in a charity event on December 28, 2018 which was held at Haydee’s Restaurant at Washington, D.C. The charity event was set up to help raise money for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals.

The win at November’s competition got everyone talking. Students who are involved or friends with dancers, as well as those who are just fans, were all excited about the team’s win.

Meggie Olade, a Sabor Latino fan and sophomore, expressed, “Sabor Latino’s win shows how passionate everyone on the team was since everyone put in effort which led to their victory at competition. Also, their win shows how even though GHS is perceived to have a bad reputation, things like their win starts to show how false that image is about our school.”



Photo Credit: gburgsaborlatino

World News - page 6



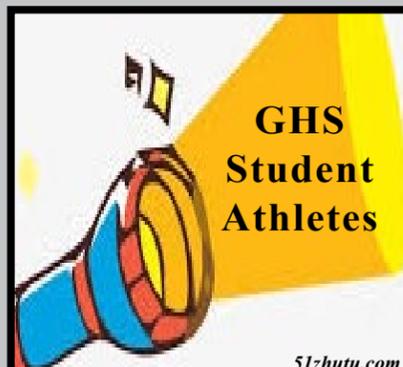
www.shutterstock.com

2018 Recap! - pages 4-5



Lollanaloza

\*Athlete Spotlight\* - page 8



51zhutu.com

Entertainment - page 7



store.dts.co.th

# Perception Vs. Reality: Bias Towards Athletes?

By Tyler Sylvester Contributing Editor: Andrea Paredes Rodriguez

Many people will agree that GHS is a school very focused on athletics. It is perceived that student athletes receive advantages in the classroom and through program funding more than students involved in art programs, but is this really true?

Despite perception, this bias toward student athletes, primarily in the classroom, is hard to prove, because the student athletes receiving extensions and favoritism are benefiting academically. Admitting to this benefit could get them in trouble or get their teachers in trouble.

"I've noticed that when I have a concert for chorus, most of my teachers don't want to give me at least a day extension for the work I couldn't do," commented one anonymous student. "But since I'm also on the team, teachers know when I have a game, so they easily give me an extension up to a week."

One football player said, "My counselor let me switch my classes because I'm a student athlete."

While many other students were fighting to change their classes at the start of the year, and it took weeks for their schedules to change, this athlete's classes were changed within a day.

GHS Principal Mr. Cary Dimmick is aware of this perception, but urges students to challenge the perception and advocate when they see something they believe is unfair happening.

"My feeling is that if a student has witnessed [academic advantages] they need to address it, because that's favoritism and that's bias, and we can't have that," continued Dimmick. "I can't imagine that happening, because our counselors have been very strict about moving anyone's classes, let alone athletes'."

Several sports coaches were asked to be interviewed. All declined with one specifically stating there is no bias whatsoever. It should also be noted that the bias applies to only some teams and not all—and every athlete that was interviewed wanted to remain anonymous for fear of either being chastised by their teammates or kicked off of their team entirely.

Overall, the majority of students interviewed for this story believe there is a bias at GHS and agree to the school's focus on athletics. Students reported the perception of a financial bias which grants sports and athletes an advantage, while holding the arts and academic programs back.

It's the funding which has been a complicated sticking point for arts programs.

Students in art programs don't care much about the academic differences, but more about the recognition and financial support they receive. Art students want the school and community to notice the amount of work they put into everything and support their programs with funding to help them grow.

Underfunding for art programs is something that students have to deal with constantly, however, Principal Dimmick wants to make it clear to students that "all programs—even art programs—get money from the county to maintain instruments; pianos, strings, etc. If they need more money, it's up to them to raise it, because the school cannot fund every single club."

The reality is that most students aren't aware of how funding for school programs

work and simply accept the reality which they perceive.

"The only candy sales that I've ever seen are from the band," said junior Rachel Allen, attesting to the perception of how programs are funded. "Even in journalism, we have to raise our own money. I've never seen a student athlete ask anyone if they wanted to donate money."

"Anything that's held in a stadium we have to charge for," said Dimmick. "Football, soccer, lacrosse, all have to be charged a state mandated cost. All that money comes back to the school, not to the teams. The money sponsors the teams based on the size, [for example,] football gets more money because they have eighty-five kids on the team."

It's clear that underfunding is a big deal for arts programs, because that's what they have to live through. Some believe that the underfunding is caused by being undervalued.

"What really makes a difference for funding is the fan base. For sports, it's well established and everyone knows about it and goes to the games. For arts, it's still growing and being discovered by some. It's not always a matter of intentional underfunding; it's more one of not knowing how to fund us," said Ms. Sidney Lequirque, the AP Music Theory teacher.

Mrs. Michelle Katz, the dark room photography teacher, spoke in front of the Board of Education last school year to request further funding for all arts programs.

"There is a student culture bias towards favoring athletics, but not for arts. It's more glorious to wear a football uniform versus an 'I Love Photography' shirt," Mrs. Katz explained. "A lot of it has to do with the student culture and the school culture in general. Most of it has to do with the levels of glory that is perceived, for example if someone were to earn an award for their work in art that wouldn't necessarily go on Trojan News the next morning."

Students participating in the fall or spring theater productions are familiar with fundraising, as well. Drama, along with music and photography, are arts programs typically in need of significant funding and support.

"Theatre has to work with small sets constantly, we need to be funded a lot more than we are now because these plays are expensive," commented sophomore Natalie Aburto. "We have to do a lot of fundraising throughout the whole year. Last year for 'Hairspray' we did the promposals, the candy grams, etc..."

The perceived bias towards student athletes at GHS is nothing new. Current ESOL and English teacher, and 2009 GHS graduate, Mrs. Sylvia Granados-Maready was involved in arts programs as a high school student. Along with her friends in drama, she perceived the school's athletic focus and can attest to the perception of this bias.

However, Mrs. Granados-Maready feels this perception has been around long enough and that it's time for change.

"It's time for everyone to rise up and say, 'we're drummers, we're artists, we're painters, we're photographers, and we're actors.' It's time for them to be visible and be recognized, because Gaithersburg is a renaissance school and it should be recognized as one."



The Trojan Times staff writer Tyler Sylvester plays Pete with co-star Isabel Lamporte as Ginette

# The Drama Community Succeeds with Fall Play

By Maddie Weyman

The fall play, *Almost, Maine*, told nine love stories of a few of the citizens in a small New England town. The love stories spanned from emotional reuniting, to an intense engagement, and to best friends, quite literally, falling in love in *Almost*, a fictional town in Maine.

"To be honest, I don't really like plays," said junior Megan Fogle described shyly. "But I really liked this play because it's all individual different scenes. So everybody gets to focus and put all of their effort into that one scene."

Fogle plays one half of the best-friends-couple, Shelly, a girl who is hanging out with her bestie Deena, describing a date that she had been on which was a bad experience. The two eventually realize that they actually love each other and start falling in love.

The drama department is a growing expansion of students who all have a love for the theater.

"GHS drama is just a giant community," Fogle said. "We are always there for another. Once you're on stage with everyone you just forget about what is going on outside of it."

The play was loved amongst the drama department, but even more loved by the

students who saw the play.

Sophomore Tayietu Gebretsadic, saw the play on the second night and described it as "magical."

"Each story was interesting to watch because they were all so different, but tied together in some way or another," Gebretsadic explained. "I really enjoyed how they used the same actors for different stories. It allowed those actors to show their skills."

Gebretsadic, who was in last year's spring musical, knew how much time and effort was put in by the cast and crew.

"They definitely worked hard for this play because there were a lot of lines!" Gebretsadic explained. "There was a lot to be said so they had to show their emotion a lot. Which is something that is not easy to do."

Although the audience seemed smaller than in past productions, the club made up all money spent in the first night. Those who bought tickets enjoyed the show and supporting the student actors.

"It's fun to see all your teachers and friends there," Fogle explained. "To be able to perform for the people you love, is just really special and makes it all worth it."



Photo Credit: Nilda Keres & Yearbook Staff



# High Marks for Gburg's Cleanliness

By Tyler Sylvester

GHS has been noted to be among the cleanest schools in the county. That cleanliness has been attributed to the hard-working members of the maintenance and building services staff and the steps they take to ensure Gaithersburg remains clean.

"When I go to other schools, there's trash everywhere and they just feel dirty," sophomore Amaya Taylor said. "Whereas here the windows are always clean, the floors are always waxed, and...the school just feels polished and well maintained."

In a recent building assessment, the continued diligence and thoroughness of the maintenance staff did not go unnoticed.

"We have an extremely dedicated staff here at Gaithersburg, a staff that takes pride in the work they do here. They treat the building as if it were their own home...Mr. Mobley and Mr. Park do a great job of managing their staff and not one thing is overlooked. The windows are clean, the floors are waxed and polished, [and] the trash is always emptied," said Business Administrator Ms. Patricia Donner.

The head of the maintenance staff, Mr. Mobley, had similar things to say about

the work they do at the school.

"We have staff that is dedicated to serving the students and the community of



Gaithersburg High School; they come into work each day and go around with their carts and complete each task and assignment with perfection, they work as a team and they take pride in the work that they do here," said Mr. Mobley.

In addition to teamwork, GHS building services staff are also working responsibly, following protocols and thinking green.

"They use environmentally friendly cleaning fluids pre-approved by the county—you can barely smell them and they don't cause any sort of health issues—and they do a great job at keeping the building clean... My people are all given gloves to protect them from anything potentially hazardous, be it blood or some other liq-

uid of sorts, [and] they are provided with the necessary tools and equipment to keep them and the rest of the community safe," Mr. Mobley explains.

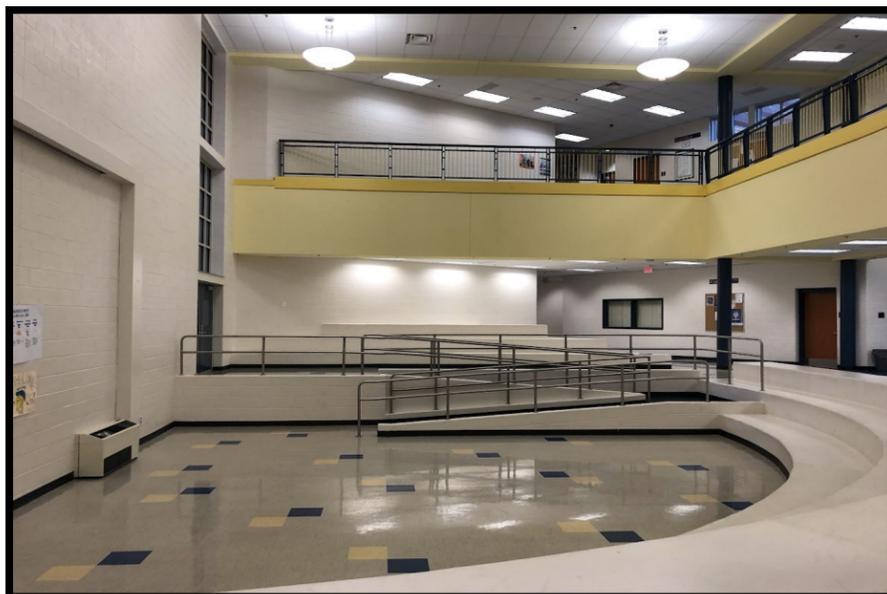
All students interviewed had the common feeling that their experience at GHS are improved by the maintenance staff, but that the students either aren't doing enough or could be doing more on their part to keep our school as clean as can be.

"I do notice that the school is cleaner than other schools in the county, and when I go to other schools, I do see a lot of food left on the ground and trash lying around

everywhere," noted junior Julia Schnitzer.

While Schnitzer appreciates the work of GHS building services, she also believes there's more work students could be doing. It's clear that Mr. Mobley and his team have pride in the school and the work they do, perhaps Schnitzer believes students could do the same.

"Here, I think the students rely too much on the janitorial staff, like they leave their [stuff] lying around after lunch and the school [would] really be a lot cleaner if people just picked up their [stuff], you know?"



A clean school is a happy school! The gym hallway and Pit look neat and clean thanks to GHS Building Services staff! Photo Credit: Alexandra Lam

# MCPS Policy Encourages Political Activism

By Evan Handy

In recent years, student political interest has seen a massive increase. According to a survey conducted by Kaplan Test Prep, 76 percent of future college students have expressed an increased interest in human rights, politics, and activism. Yet, despite this trend, students still lacked any sanctioned method of participation until September of last year.

"The district's proposal is considered to be one of very few in the country that would formally let students take an excused day off to join marches, lead protests, lobby leaders, campaign for candidates or otherwise partake in civic action," said The Washington Post's Joe Heim.

This arose after the student walk-out protests following the Parkland shooting. Due to the potential dangers of an unsupervised mass exodus from school grounds, GHS Principal Cary Dimmick believes this resolution is a step in the right direction.

"Einstein had almost the entire school leave — 2000 students hitting the street," said Principal Dimmick. "All those kids walking down Georgia Avenue, and what didn't make the press is that two students were hit by a car. Now, they were fine, but the system's perspective is that we want to

provide safe alternatives."

The bill allows for up to three excused absences during the three weeks prior to an election to participate in sanctioned political activity. While this may not seem



GHS students protest after the 2016 U.S. Presidential Election.

Photo Credit: Allison Shelley & The Trojan Times

like much, it still carries quite an impact.

Prior to the resolution, if a student were to participate in a campaign or other political event, any resulting absence from school would be unexcused. This could carry significant negative consequences for any fledgling political activist and potentially dissuade them from further

participation.

"The lack of an excused absence is hard," said Tyler Sylvester, a sophomore who worked for the Ben Jealous campaign. "I was working down in Silver

Spring at the time and it was difficult running back and forth between school and work. If I was absent more outside of my campaign work I definitely would have been negatively impacted."

Montgomery County is one of only a few school districts in the United States

that has taken action to enable student participation, and in an era of political apathy, many find this very important.

"I think this is extremely useful and important in keeping students politically active," said Mr. Justin Ostry, a Maryland BAR certified lawyer and NSL teacher at GHS. "Many students feel like they don't have a say and have to wait until they're 18 or in college, at which point they might not have the time to be as active."

Even though the current measures limit student activity to three times per election, there is the potential for further revision, multiplying its future impact.

"I like the fact that MCPS adopted this proposal," said Principal Dimmick. "It's always nice to see such a large system as this listen to student feedback and act on it. My hope is that they consider the many interpretations of political activism and continue to revise this."

Whatever a student's political stance may be, either right or left, one cannot deny that this benefits all students, as a whole.

"Now you can be a student and be a part of the political process," said Mr. Ostry. "And now that it's excused, the responsibility is on you to act."

## THE TROJAN TIMES STAFF

**Editor-in-Chief**  
Matthew Watson

**Chief Layout Editor**  
Fernanda Damaso Garcia

**News Editors**  
Evan Handy  
Rachel Allen  
Andrea Paredes Rodriguez

**Staff Writers**  
Emily Lainez  
Alexandra Lam  
Tyler Sylvester  
Madeline Weyman

**Graphics and Layout**  
Harolyn Caamano De La Rosa  
Melody Russman

**Advisor:**  
Mrs. Patrice Belotte



Follow us on...  
@TimesTrojan



@The\_Trojan\_Times

# What made headlines in 2018?

## GHS Notable Moments

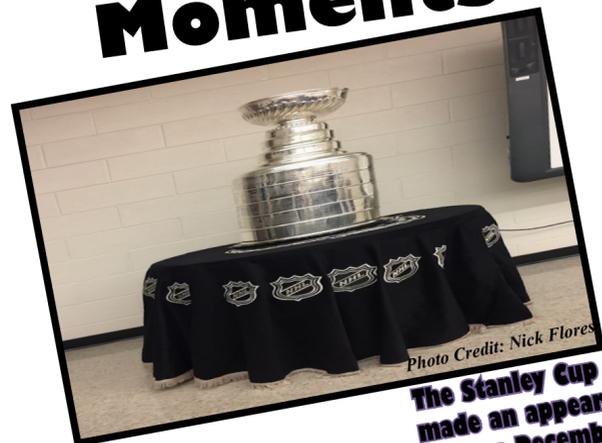


Photo Credit: Nick Flores

The Stanley Cup made an appearance at GHS on December 12, 2018 at the B.R.O.T.H.E.R.S club.



Gaithersburg High School mcpsmd.org



Photo Credit: Cheezburger.com

## Laughs of the Year



Photo Credit: CNN

BBFs for Life: "Kanye" and "Trump" on SNL.



Photo Credit: YouTube

YouTube Rewind made history by becoming the most disliked video on the site with 15 million dislikes!

## Controversial News

Following multiple school shootings, "March for our lives" was a student-lead protest supporting stricter gun laws and gun prevention measures. This march took place in Washington, D.C. on March 24, 2018.



Photo Credit: Vanity Fair



Photo Credit: Assocation for Psychological Science



Photo Credit: Euronews Migrant Caravan

## Movies!



Disney's "Ralph Breaks the Internet" was released November 21, 2018. his movie was a sequel to "Wreck-It-Ralph" from 2012, this time Ralph travels through the World Wide Web.



All Movie Posters from imdb.com



Image Credit: The Whole Story- Solutions Journalism Network

The Me Too movement, more commonly known as "#metoo" started in 2017 but became very popular in 2018. The Me Too movement is a movement against sexual harassment and sexual assault. The more women who came forward, the more people were motivated to voice their experiences that they unfortunately went through.

## World News



Photo Credit: Royal Thai Navy

After surviving ten days in a cave; 12 boys Thai boys and their soccer coach were finally rescued. When this team was exploring Northern Thai caves, a cave they were in began to flood and the boys and coach became trapped.

California's wildfires devastated countless towns and homes in 2018.



Photo Credit: San Francisco Chronicle



Photo Credit: scroll.in.com

The Fifa World Cup, France takes the win!



Photo Credit: The Independent

The Royal Wedding, Prince Harry and Meghan Markle, May 19, 2018

# Drink Responsibly: Use Metal Straws

By Rachel Allen

Something so tiny and seemingly innocuous could be slowly degrading Earth and animals from existence. The culprit: plastic straws. Plastic straws made headlines in 2018, from restaurants only supplying straws upon request, to reusable straws on keychains. This topic has become highly debatable and is all over the internet.

The necessity of straws is part of the debate. National Geographic Magazine did a feature on this issue and explained, "Except for people with medical needs, straws are not needed to consume beverages or water."

There is one continuous question when discussing plastic straws which drives this debate, "Does using plastic straws really harm the environment THAT much?"

On August 10 of 2015, a video filmed by marine biologist Christine Figgner was released to the public. The video shows a sea turtle with a plastic straw which was about 10-12 centimeters inside the turtle's nostril. This video went viral and opened up people's eyes to the danger of plastic straws have on sea life.

"I feel disappointed and sad that animals are harmed by human choices," stated junior Kimberly Paliza. "Something that could have been avoided brought harm to this animal."

People across the world were very emotional when this video was released. Humanity was clearly to blame.

"It should be shown to more people," freshman Ashton Smith said, referring to the video.

Removing plastic straws from one's lifestyle would be best for the environment. "However, if people would rather consume their drink with a straw; they should use a reusable straw," suggested junior Andrea Paredes.

"Alternatives have been suggested, like metal straws. [Metal] straws do not bend, break and are reusable," commented junior Madison McKenzie.

Reusable straws are increasingly being pushed throughout the country, being made more affordable and convenient. Now consumers can carry reusable straws on a keychain, buy them in stores, and order packs of them online. Once a reusable straw is purchased, you can wash them and reuse it over and over again.

"It's worth it to buy metal straws in order to save the environment," affirmed junior Lilian Jaco.

Along with retailers selling reusable straws, restaurants are taking actions as well. Popular places where straws are used daily have now begun to ban plastic straws. American Airlines have banned plastic straws and stir sticks onboard flights and in lounges. But, the most notable example being Starbucks, who announced their change in straw policy in July of 2018.

"Starbucks will stop using disposable plastic straws by 2020, eliminating more than one billion straws a year... Instead, Starbucks, which has more than 28,000 stores worldwide, will use recyclable, strawless lids on most of its iced drinks," reported The New York Times.

A handful of restaurants in Montgomery County now only give plastic straws upon request in hopes to do their part in reduction of harmful consumer waste.

"I feel like that's a good start but they should switch over to reusable straws," said junior Kimberly Paliza.

"We want to encourage people to stop using plastic straws for good. If we don't act now, by the year 2050 there will be

more plastic in the ocean than fish," explained on the "For A Strawless Ocean" website.

"[Plastic straws] are an issue that stems from all kinds of plastic pollution," said McKenzie.

Over 500 million plastic straws are used on a daily basis worldwide. Even if they are disposed of correctly, plastic straws still end up in oceans and unwanted places.

Wired magazine provided an example of this in a recent feature. "Between the hand and the garbage can, some slurpers' straws just miss the connection. And then again, when the trash bag gets removed and put in a bin. Maybe the bag tears on its way into the big bin. Maybe a rat rips a hole because it smelled some half-eaten Taco Bell."

"It's good that people are trying to ban and limit plastic straws. They end up in places we don't want them, like the ocean," stated science teacher Mrs. Rinder Guraya.

Taxing may also be an action that could help enforce use of reusable straws locally. Montgomery County has had success in adapting policies which lead to positive change. Since 2012, "All retail establishments in Montgomery County who provide customers a plastic or paper carryout bag at the point of sale are required to charge 5 cents per bag," stated the Department of Environmental Protection Agency.

Since doing so, it's become commonplace in for consumers to bring their own bags when shopping, thus reducing waste.

Banning plastic straws in schools could be a huge start to a change in society. If from a young age students learn that plastic straws are not a necessity, they could make a true impact. Schools in Salem, Massachusetts are already on board with this trend as Superintendent Margarita Ruiz has banned use of plastic straws in school cafeterias.

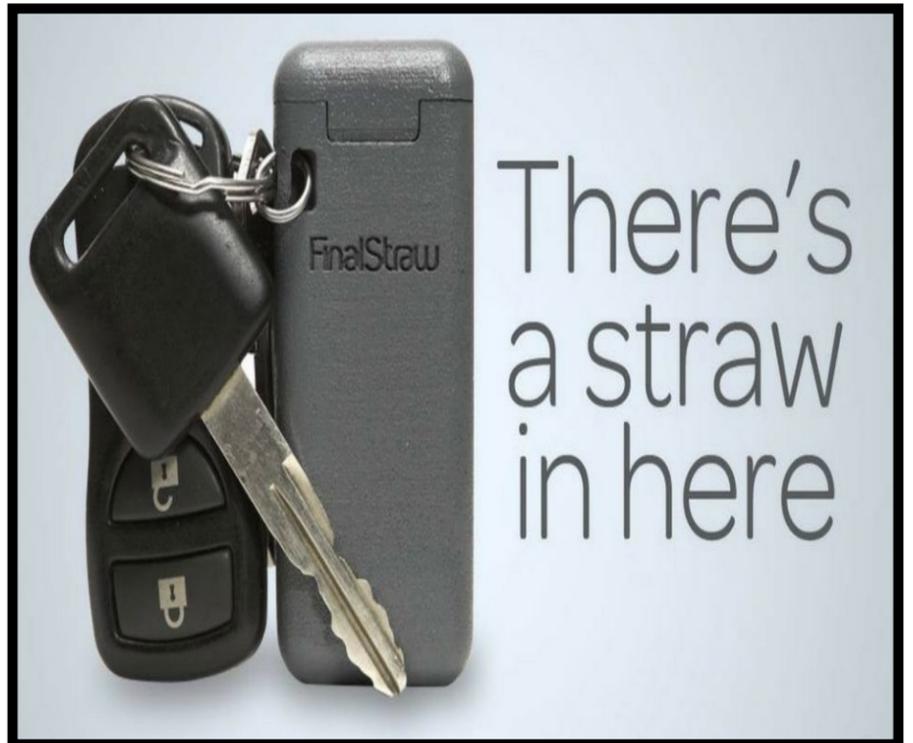
"Part of our work as educators is preparing our students for the future, for lives as contributing adults," Ruiz said in an interview with Salem News. "When you look at our mission statement, we want students who are locally engaged, locally connected and fully prepared in this society. As we're moving into the 21st century, you have to be well-connected to the environment to have a respect for the environment, and work with the environment to get the resources you need."

"It should at least start somewhere, like school," McKenzie stated. "Make reusable straws part of the school system, so others can catch on."

To spread awareness of the harm of plastic straws, February 23 has become "National Skip the Straw Day." The day is meant to promote responsibility in humans, who are morally responsible for trying to save species. By doing such a simple act and using reusable straws, humanity could help save the endangered Sea Turtles and other animals worldwide.

"If we all take the pledge to refuse single-use plastic straws we will see a significant decrease in the number of straws found during coastal cleanups," stated the Strawless Ocean website.

"For people who think plastic straws don't cause harm, they're playing themselves," said McKenzie. "For a true change in oceans and the environment, people need to come together and put a stop to the use of plastic straws."



Final Straw's mission is to reduce plastic straw use by providing consumers with another option. For about \$25 consumers can keep a reusable straw on a keychain. [www.finalstraw.com](http://www.finalstraw.com)

## Ways to Reduce Plastic Pollution from the National Resources Defense Council

### 1. Stop using single-use plastics!

Plastic bags, plastic wrap, plasticware, straws, coffee cup tops, and anything plastic which needs to be thrown away after one use.



[www.bargreen.com](http://www.bargreen.com)

### 2. Stop buying water in plastic bottles!

Try a reusable bottle instead!



[www.inhabitat.com](http://www.inhabitat.com)

### 3. Stop using products which contain microbeads!

Those little plastic scrubbers in face or body scrubs, along with other beauty products. Try natural scrubs or products instead!

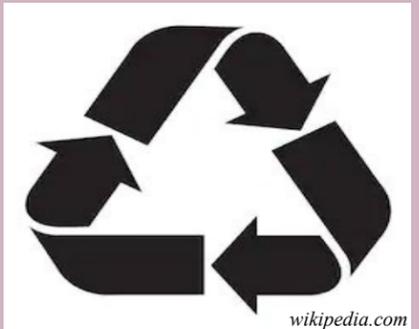
### 4. Just cook!

When you order take-out, most food comes in plastic-single-use-containers with plastic cutlery and small containers. Save money and cook at home, instead!

### 5. RECYCLE!

Don't just throw everything into one trash can!

Separate paper, plastics, metals, and other materials in the right recycling bin!



[wikipedia.com](http://wikipedia.com)

### 6. Buy in bulk!

Costco, BJ's, and Sam's Club are onto something! Consider the amount of packaging on one big supply of a product versus the packaging on individual products.

### 7. Advocate!

Put pressure on manufacturers to change to environmentally-friendly packaging and resources by writing letters or emails, posting on product-based message boards, or support Change.org petitions.

### 8. ACT!

Everytime you see a piece of trash, pick it up and dispose of it correctly!



[www.cleanoutexpress.com](http://www.cleanoutexpress.com)

# ‘Bohemian Rhapsody’ Defies Hollywood Critics

By Emily Lainez

“Bohemian Rhapsody” was released November 2, 2018 and is currently the highest-grossing biopic of all time, bringing in globally \$608.7 million, according to billboard.com. Despite all the negative reviews Hollywood movie critics have made, students at GHS feel the reviews are wrong and aren’t an accurate depiction of the movie itself.

Many of Hollywood’s movie critics have given “Bohemian Rhapsody” negative reviews. In an article by The Washington Post it referred to the movie as an “often laughably clichéd biopic of Queen.”

The New York Times even said that “Bohemian Rhapsody” is “A baroque blend of gibberish, mysticism and melodrama, the film seems engineered to be as unmemorable as possible.”

“The plot of the movie was so interesting. The way [Rami Malek] captured the audience was astonishing. I don’t get why the critics said it was a bad movie when it’s one of the best movies I’ve ever seen,” expressed sophomore Ganavi Shanthamurthy.

Despite all of the negativity from the critics “Bohemian Rhapsody” took the place of “Straight Outta Compton” as the highest grossing biopic.

The movie won two Golden Globes for best motion picture-drama and best actor

performance-drama for Rami Malek’s role of Freddie Mercury. Malek also received two Screen Actors Guild Award nominations, outstanding performance by a male actor in a leading role and outstanding performance by a cast in a motion picture.

The movie is currently nominated for five Oscar categories including best picture, best leading actor for Malek, best sound mixing, best film editing, and best sound editing.

In addition, Malek received a breakthrough actor award at the Palm Springs International Film Festival gala on January 3, 2019.

All of the success of “Bohemian Rhapsody” has contributed to the song of the same name to become the most streamed song from the twentieth century reports CNN.

“We are so proud to represent Queen and are thrilled to see the song still inspiring new fans around the world more than four decades after its release,” stated Lucian Grainge CEO of Universal Music Group who represents Queen stated in an article from CNN.

“The critics were so wrong about ‘Bohemian Rhapsody’. Rami Malek and everyone else in the movie were so great. Rami Malek deserves all the recognition he got for the movie if not more,” voiced junior Naayah Bailey.

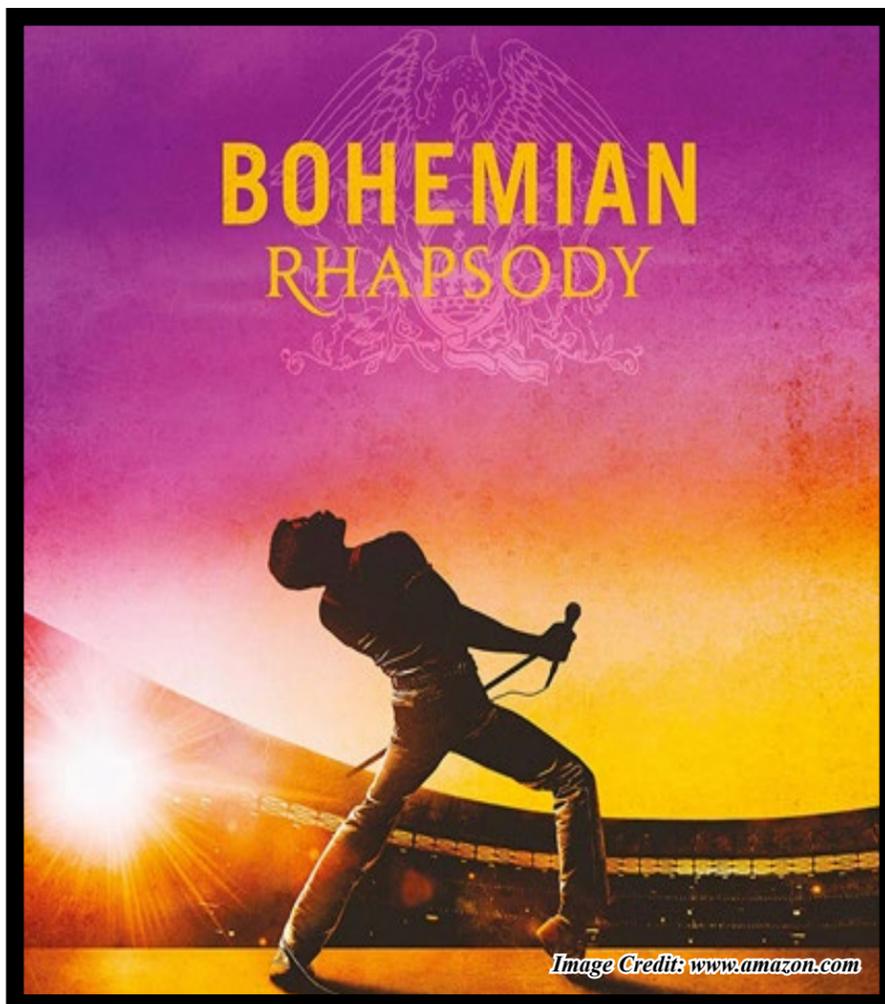


Image Credit: www.amazon.com

# AirPods: Do You Need To Buy Them?

By Alexandra Lam

The popularity of Apple’s AirPods have made consumers decide whether or not they should purchase this product. Although, some question if the high cost or the tendency of being misplaced even makes the AirPods worth the money. However, others can concur that they are indeed worth the \$159.

Senior Eric Hoang, junior Olivia Boughton, and freshman Ben Boughton can all agree that they would recommend this product to others, but do so with some reservations.

“I like their sound quality and how I can do anything while also listening to music. The super-fast auto connect is really nice and its battery life is good,” explained Hoang.

Many people including Hoang like the AirPods for their convenience of fast con-

nection and battery life. These features out of the many make this product attractive for buyers.

The primary reason why people choose to buy the AirPods is the claim of the hassle of using regular earphones. For example, the long cord could easily get tangled or the cord can get caught onto things while in use.

“I hate the cords on the earbuds hanging down and getting in the way,” said Olivia Boughton.

Although these users believe AirPods are worth the money, there were downsides as well.

“I don’t like how fast they run out of battery,” said Ben Boughton.

Some users like Ben Boughton complained that the AirPods five hour battery life is insufficient, has only a one-size fits

all size option, and its lack of being waterproof or water resistant.

However, while the AirPods have been the most wanted product this past holiday season, they are not the first and only wireless headphones to exist. Alternatives such as the Bose SoundSport Wireless Headphones or the Jaybird Run Wireless Headphones exist at lower costs. But AirPods users still believe they are worth the investment because their key feature is one which Bose and Jaybird are missing.

“I think because some other ‘wireless’ headphones like some Beats are connected by a wire that hang down your neck. Also, most tend to be shaped weirdly and not shaped like the actual ear bud,” explained Olivia Boughton.

“I personally think they’re well worth the cost,” Olivia Boughton reaffirmed.



Image Credit: www.apple.com

Gaithersburg High School

## GHS Gives Clothing Store



Do you need clothes, coats, shoes, or other personal items?



Come to the GHS Gives Store to select items you need free of charge!

1. Scan this QR code
2. Fill out the form
3. You will receive a pass for the store!



Looking for a rewarding elective?!

Work on a publication!

Sign up for an English Elective and see your name in print!

### Journalism

-Become a writer, photographer, or layout editor for The Trojan Times!

### Yearbook

-Capture the memories that will last a lifetime!

### Creative Writing

-Fiction, Poetry, Memoir--have fun mastering your writing skills in every genre and see your work in the annual Literary Magazine!

# Student Athlete Spotlight

## Jordan Hawkins



Sophomore Jordan Hawkins shoots the ball during one of his basketball games

**How do your other teammates push you to do better?**

My other teammates push me to do better every day in practices because they know what they expect out of me, they know what I can do, [and] they just want the best for me.

**Describe your personal goals as an athlete. How about team goals?**

My personal goal is going to college to play basketball that [would] be short term. Long term, I hope to make it to the NBA. My team goals this year are to win regional championships again [and] hopefully win the state

**How does your coach inspire you to play better?**

He inspires me by [making me] remember what my goal is, [making me] remember what our team goal is, and [making me] remember what I am trying

**What life lessons have you learned from playing basketball?**

I learned that you have to be patient and work hard to become better at anything in life.

**What words of advice do you have for upcoming athletes?**

To work hard, don't let people get in your ear, just keep working hard.



Photo Credit: Mike Clark

Jordan Hawkins is blocking a shot from the opposite team during a game.

**How do you take constructive criticism to play better?**

I take the criticism because I know that the person giving me criticism wants the best for me.

## Michelle Kamara

Compiled by Alexandra Lam

**Why do you love track and field?**

When I'm running, I feel like I'm in my own space. I don't have to worry about school, I don't have to worry about my grades, [about] anything else. I just have to focus, I'm just in my own world running.

**How do you overcome mental challenges that you have to deal with?**

I'm still learning to be confident because I always doubt myself, but over the years, I've learned to just go out and run. There's people all over looking at you [and] believing in you and that really pushes me to want to make them proud and to give them

**How do your other teammates push you to do better?**

They talk to me, they believe in me, [and] they've never doubted me ever. Every time I set a goal for myself, they always there to push me and inspire me to do better and inspire me to set personal records.

**What words of advice do you have for upcoming athletes?**

It takes motivation [and] courage because indoor track is not easy. We go outside every day and dedication is the biggest part. You have to be dedicated, you have to come ready to compete with yourself, not with your peers. [You] compete together against other [schools], you don't compete against your



Photo Credit: mocorunning.com

Senior Michelle Kamara, third from left, in action and running during a race.

**How do you take constructive criticism to do better?**

I actually like when people criticize me because honestly, if people are not honest with you, you're not going to do better. When people are honest with me, I take it. Say whatever you want, I'll take it because at the end of the day, I know they just want the best for me. I don't take criticism as something bad because criticism just makes you better.

**What makes you want to be a part of this team? What makes this team so special?**

We're special because we all love each other, we all love to play basketball, [and] we love basketball; it's fun to be around.

# Winter Sports Photo Gallery



Photo Credit: Mrs. Nilda Keres

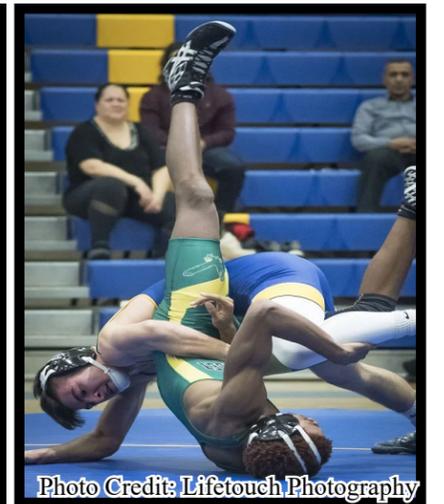


Photo Credit: Lifetouch Photography



Photo Credit: Lifetouch Photography

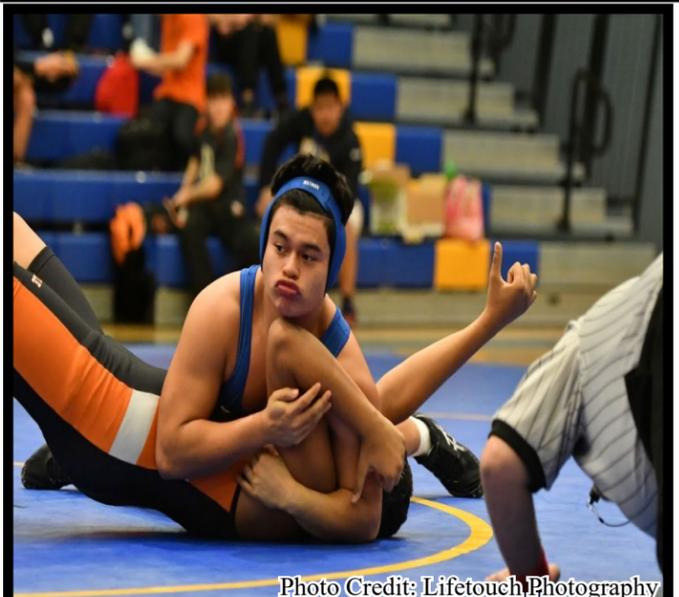


Photo Credit: Lifetouch Photography



Photo Credit: Mrs. Nilda Keres

