

The Buccaneer

RBR's Student Newspaper

They're Baaaack!

Marking Period 4 Sees Jump in In-person Student Attendance

As COVID restrictions changed, RBR students learning virtually were given the option of returning to school in person at the beginning of marking period 4. As of April 28, roughly 200 previously virtual students have returned back for in-person learning.

According to Mr. Clark, RBR now has about 750 students attending in-person learning, which is approximately 59% of the entire student body. Given COVID safety guidelines, about 820 students are eligible to return.

Our *Buccaneer* spring survey indicated that students chose to return to in-person learning for a variety of reasons (see chart below). In addition, a substantial majority of students said that they were happy that they returned.

For more details and student responses, see page 2.

Marking period 4 survey: 149 respondents

Grade 9 overall survey: 155

Grade 10 overall survey: 122

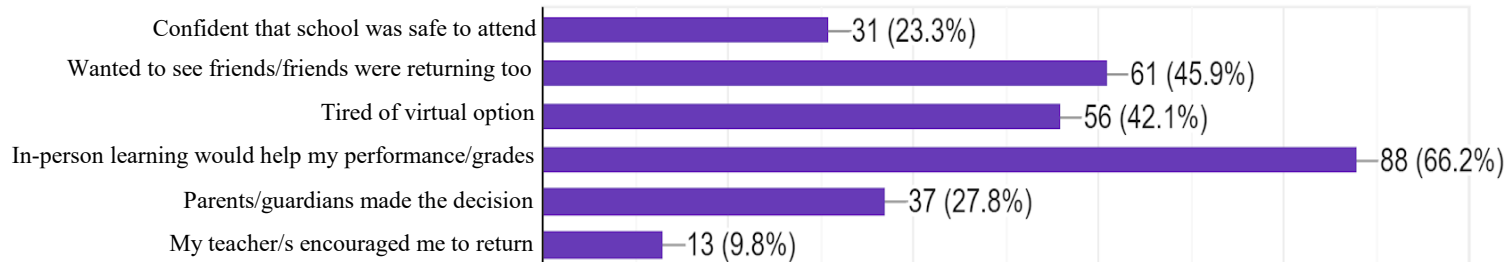
Grade 11 overall survey: 120

Grade 12 overall survey: 183



If you have just returned to in-person attendance in marking period 4, why did you decide to return to school?

Choose the top two reasons only.



Return of the Native

How I went back to school, and why YOU should (have) too!

By Cooper Strauss

To be honest, I did not want to go back to school. Originally, I went "all-virtual" around December 15th, at the height of both the second COVID wave and the college application process. There were so many things to be stressed out about, and I decided school would not be one of them. The plan was just to take a breather, finish the second marking period at home, and be back for the start of the third. But when marking period 3 did roll around, I thought well, maybe let's just wait for the fourth. Skip to early April: I had committed to college, gotten vaccinated, and run out of excuses. I had to go back to school...

April 12th, 2021:

6:30 AM-- Time to get up for school

6:45 AM-- Now, it's really time to get up for school

7:00 AM-- Struggling to swallow my breakfast: part fear, part dread

7:35 AM-- Time to leave the house: uh-oh

7:47 AM-- Pull into the parking lot

7:48 AM-- Maybe I'm not ready for this

7:48:30 AM-- I'm definitely not ready for this

7:48:49 AM-- OK, here's the plan. I'll go to block 1, then I'll say I don't feel well, go to the nurse, go home. I'll tell my parents I couldn't do it.

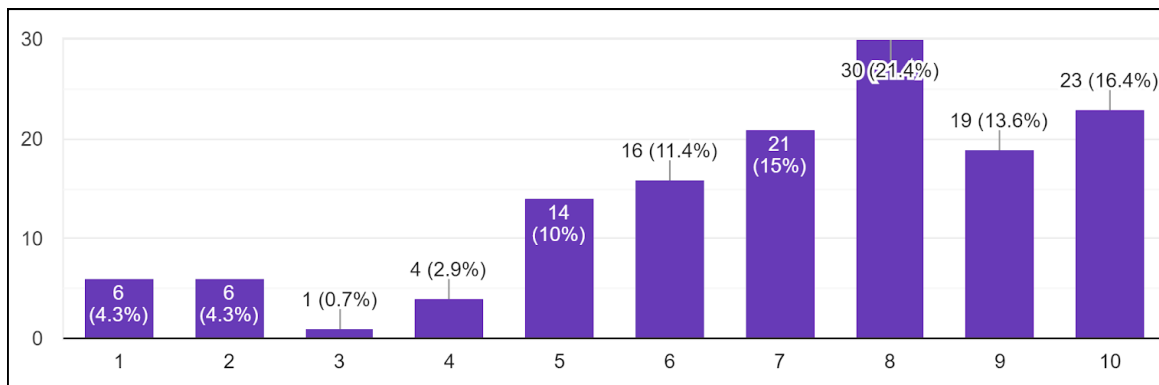
7:49 AM-- See a friend in the parking lot; wave

7:51 AM-- Walk into school with said friend; get my temperature taken

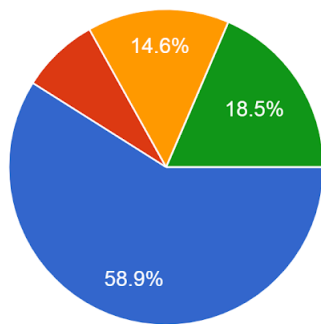
7:53 AM-- Enter my 1A class

Please see *Why YOU should return*, p. 3

On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being extremely unhappy and 10 being extremely happy, how do you feel about your return to in-person school? (all grades)

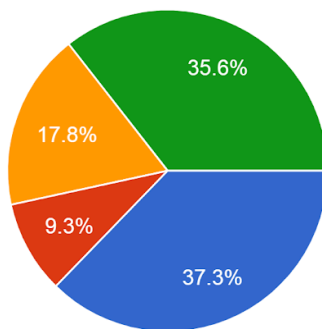
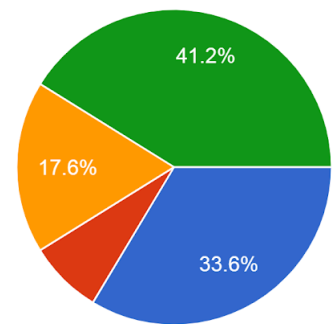


Where are we now?



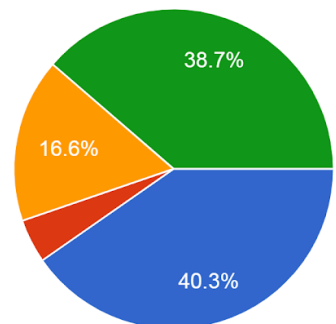
9th grade

11th grade



10th grade

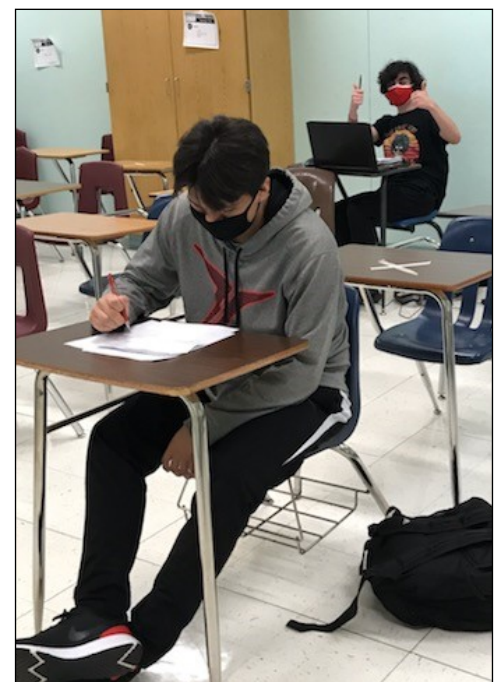
12th grade



- I have been attending school in person all year
- I began the year virtually but returned before MP4
- I returned in person for MP 4
- I am still all-virtual



Welcome Back, Bucs!



Why YOU should return, from p. 1

7:55 AM-- Still feeling pretty uncomfortable

8:32 AM-- I'm OK

10:17 AM-- You know what, it is nice to be back

12:16 PM: Hey Siri, how long until 6:30 tomorrow?

My return to school was not glamorous. Really, more than anything else, it was hard. Transitioning from waking up at 7:50, rolling out of bed, throwing on a hat and joining a Meet at 8, to showering, driving, and being in the building at 7:45 was tough.

Even the little things, public bathrooms, a walk up to the kitchen, or fighting the urge to pick-up-my phone during class --things I had been doing for the past three years-- now felt strange. But, it was so worth it. Face(mask) to face(mask) interaction with other students, and, more importantly, the teachers, is fantastic. I would find myself sitting back and just being overcome with a sense of happiness to be in school (something I never thought I would write). Everything felt, most of all, normal. I had avoided going to school for so long because, in my mind, it caused stress. Yet, from three months at home, I learned it does the opposite. By getting back to a familiar routine, even in unfamiliar times, I felt more comfortable (after the first day jitters, of course). It broke up the monotony of pandemic life and offered a nostalgic glimpse into the real world I missed so much.

For those of you who are in the same position, I urge you to come back if you can. I know how you feel and I understand your apprehension. I won't lie, those first couple of days are going to be difficult. There will be times, early on, when you don't want to be there. But, I assure you, it is the right decision. And you'll come to that conclusion too—even when the bell rings at 9:05, when you remember your Chromebook's dead, when some freshmen gets a little too close to you in the hallway, or when you really have to pee and you see the entire sophomore class milling around aimlessly in the Commons bathroom.

Right: Mr. Stoia in his hey-day as a Buccaneer basketball player. Note: another RBR teacher appears in background.
Can you identify him?



“Red Bank Regional is like my second home”

By Amy Serrano

Two and a half months ago, Red Bank Regional welcomed a new athletic director, Michael Stoia. He is a 2003 graduate of Monmouth University with a double major in education and history. He also had the opportunity to play football at Monmouth. His first job was obtained in Freehold Township as a history teacher, but he also coached three sports: football, baseball, and softball. He said “I do care about [both] male and female sports, I’m not a stereotypical football coach/AD. I have coached softball for the last four years and varsity women’s basketball for the past 8 years.” He has been coaching multiple seasons and teaching history for the past 18 years.

He added, “One of the knock downs of becoming an athletic director, they say, is that it’s a very time consuming job, but I have already coached three sports for many years - that was a time consuming job as well, but at least this position is slightly different. When I was coaching I would have to go to the games back and forth whereas [now] I am just in control of what is happening here; I don’t have to get on a bus unless it is a tournament. But you need to have time management skills, because every day there is a unique situation.” He stated that the unique thing about his job is the constant planning and the constant changes of the schedules, which is why it is important to stay organized.

Mr. Stoia has another, older link to his new professional home: he graduated from RBR in 1999. Here, he played three sports: football, basketball and baseball. Curiously, he also wrote for the newspaper for two years, where he wrote for the sports section. He was also part of student government and STS. He did his student teaching at RBR as well.

Mr. Stoia admitted that he felt a great connection with RBR because his mother, Bonnie Stoia, was an English teacher here for 40 years. Mrs. Stoia taught in both the old Red Bank High School, which is now Red Bank Middle School, and in the current building. She retired 10 years ago. Finally, most of his family members, including his wife, Meghan, attended Red Bank Regional. He added that the classrooms are quite different from how they were when he was a student, stating that he liked those [open space] classrooms, but he is still happy to see any improvements that the school is doing for students. One example he gave was the athletics room, stating, “The gym floors are relatively new, the gym bleachers are new, the weight rooms, even the lights on the football field, it is not only the academic side but the athletic side that has changed. The school does a very good job of improving the facilities, which is nice for students because hopefully kids take pride in the building, the athletic fields and the classrooms.”

To sum up, Mr. Stoia said his favorite hobby is “being my kids’ free Uber,” as he needs to take them to their athletic events. Out of his three children, two play baseball, basketball, soccer and lacrosse. The next guess is that they may or may not be future Buccaneers—they are between 2-7 years old—but they are already loving Red Bank Regional.

RBR(eading)

Check out some good reads!

By Molly Jain

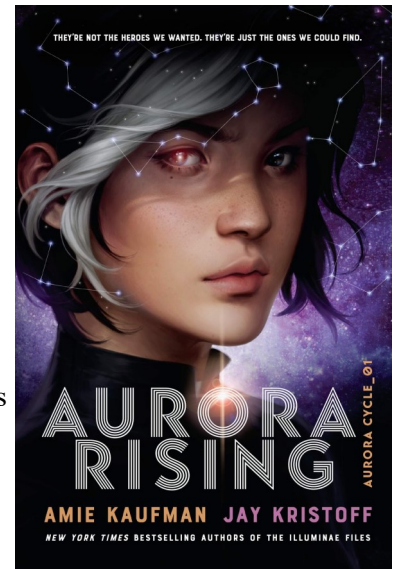
Aurora Rising by Amie Kaufman and Jay Kristoff

Genre: Science Fiction

People who would like this book: Fans of *Star Wars*, *Star Trek*, *Guardians of the Galaxy*, and really any space adventure book or movie will enjoy this YA space opera. Fans of any kind of adventure book will also love the exciting, fast-paced action of this book. There are also aspects of mystery, romance, drama, and even a little bit of horror, so if you like space, misfits, age-old mysteries, witty humor, etc, in any genre, you'll definitely like this book.

Summary: Tyler was supposed to have a crew of the best students at Aurora Academy when he graduated. Instead, after saving the mysterious, lone survivor of a space expedition from 200 years earlier, a girl named Aurora (Auri for short), he's left with all the misfits of the school (plus his twin sister and best friend). Despite their differences, the squad is forced to come together quickly when Auri starts having visions and developing strange powers. It becomes clear soon that these sudden powers and premonitions are part of something much bigger, sending Tyler's group of misfits on an epic (and dangerous) adventure.

The book definitely reminded me a lot of *Guardians of the Galaxy* or *Solo*; a band of misfits is grudgingly thrown together into some strangely huge and possibly ancient conflict, and chaotic, clever, and thrilling adventure ensues. This book brings all of the charm and eclecticism of those movies, and more. The galaxy as it's presented in the book is diverse and really interesting, and there are a lot of unique, cool details and worldbuilding to create this space-set world. Auri's perspective allows readers to see the wonder of this suddenly very broad galaxy from a perspective like their own, while the other narrators (who represent several other species) expand the diversity and normalcy of all these differences. Speaking of merging viewpoints, this book was written by two authors, but the entire book felt very cohesive, and I think having two people contribute to the book improved the epic, cinematic quality. The book was well-written, handling its rotating narrators and packed plot, along with its fun and unique tone, with satisfying grace. (I won't spoil it, but there's also a chapter towards the end that messes with the writing, perspective, and basically every aspect of how the book had been written thus far to make an unforgettable chapter).



Another part I loved about this book was the unique tone and voice from all the characters and the book overall. The narration was very casual in some places, at times to almost extreme amounts, but instead of feeling forced or awkward, it actually creates a unique and fun tone for the whole book. But the book also packs a lot of emotional punch, both through unexpected plot twists and slowly-unveiled backstories for all the characters. The story is told with several of the characters narrating, and each one of them has a distinct voice that gives so much personality to them. I loved every one of the characters in the book. Every one of them was incredibly fleshed out, from their personality traits and the slang they use to their talents and hobbies. The relationships between the characters are also well-written, and both make the plot more exciting and the characters even more authentic.

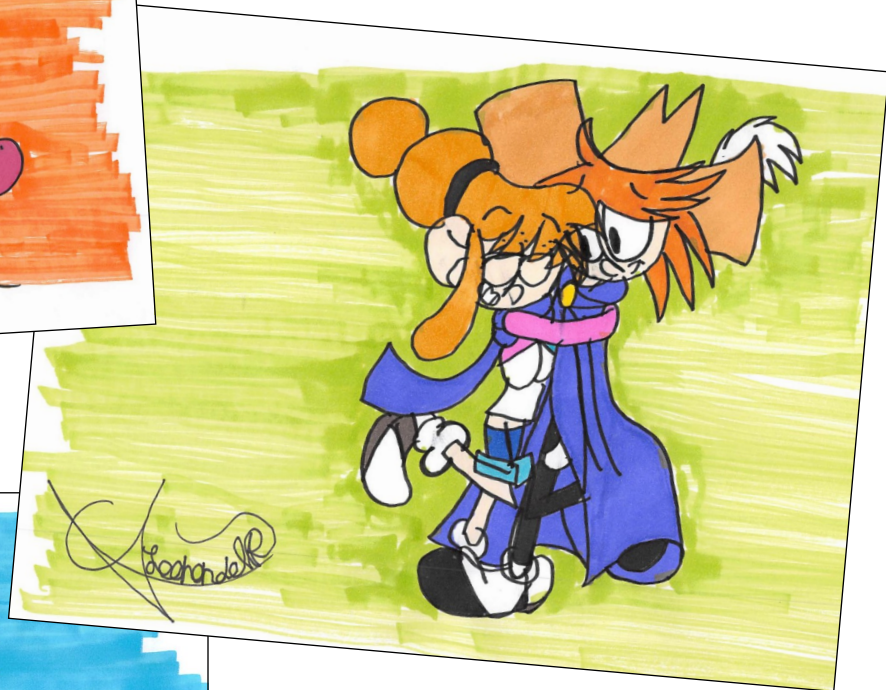
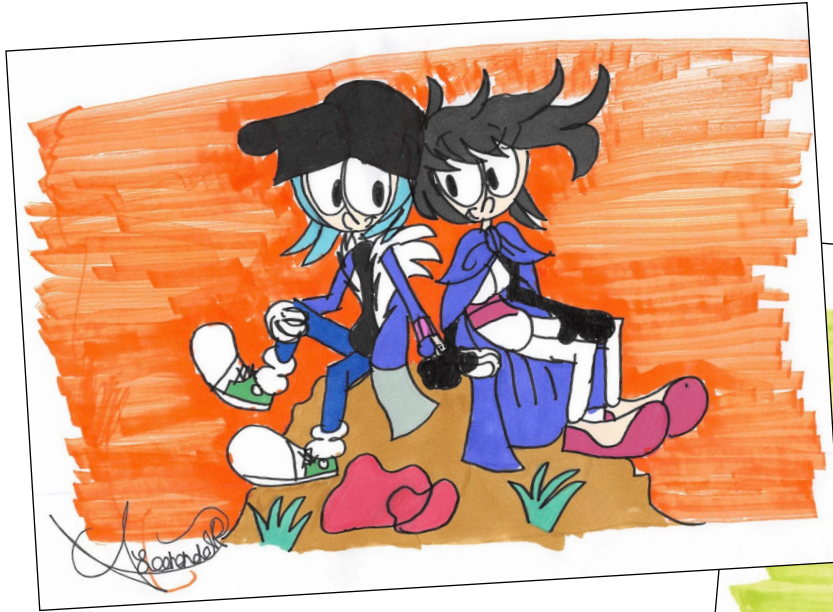
Honestly, it took me a few chapters to really get into this book because of the distinct tone. However, as soon as you start to understand the characters and voice it becomes really fun, and once the adventure and mystery starts kicking in you will not be able to put it down. I ended up absolutely loving it by the end. The book feels like an entire TV show in itself, encompassing so many exciting moments and a conclusion that absolutely stole my breath. This is one of those books that I may have picked up because of the fun concept and cool cover, but it's stayed in my brain as one of the most cinematic, exciting, and unique books I've read in a long time.

Looking for a great book? Check out the library for even more fantastic reads!

Have a book recommendations or a review? Submit it to the RBR newspaper! cdorn@rbrhs.org

Now in Spectacular Technicolor (maybe)!

If you've picked up one of the five editions of this paper that's printed these drawings in color, **YOU WIN!** Please find Ms. Dorn (in room 205 or the English office [room 200]) to claim your prize!



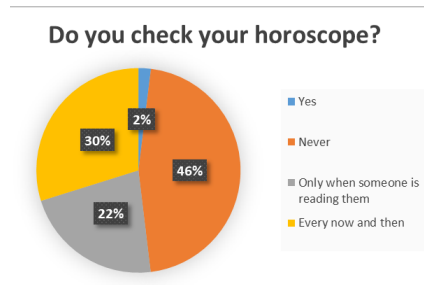
Used with permission from the artist,
Leo Morales-Pitalua



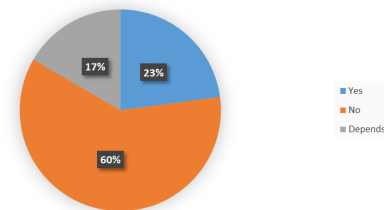
Zodiac Lovers?

Results from our spring survey

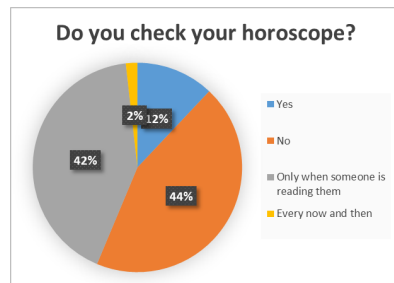
9th grade



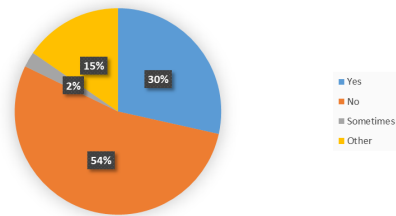
Do you believe our zodiac/stars affect our lives?



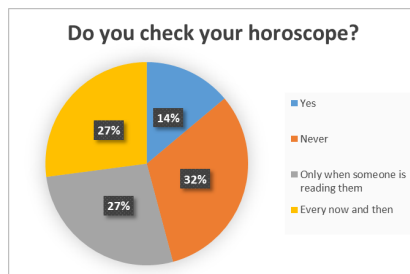
10th grade



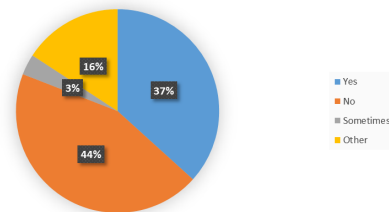
Do you believe our zodiac/stars affect our lives?



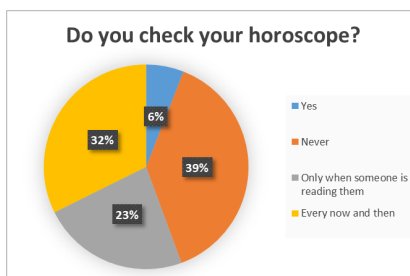
11th grade



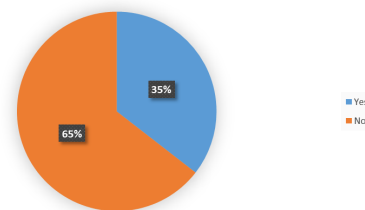
Do you believe our zodiac/stars affect our lives?



12th grade



Do you believe our zodiac/stars affect our lives?



Review: Long Gone Gulch!

By Leo Morales-Pitalua

LONG GONE GULCH! is a cartoon that is just like the classic Disney, Warner brothers and MGM cartoons of the 1940's. It is created and directed by Disney and Warner animators Tara Billinger and Zach Bellissimo. So what is this Long Gone Gulch? It's about two sheriffs, Rawhide and Snag, in a fantasy old western world with mythical creatures. They go around, stop bad guys, and work for the mayor, who is a jackal.

So what else is great about this short? Visually it's beautiful. Great animation, nice and fluid, and polished nice backgrounds (well, what do you expect from a Disney

animator?). The characters are very colorful and fun as well. Rawhide, one of the sheriffs, has great personality. She is a sheriff who wants to continue her father's legacy and tries to carry on where he left off and be the sheriff of that town. Snag is another sheriff and Rawhide's friend. The other side characters are a shark, Sasquatch, cactus and a Native American girl, BW.

This 20-minute short is available now on YouTube. Go watch this because anyone will like this. It's just like a Warner brothers cartoon.

Zodiac Lovers, Look out for Mercury in Retrograde

By Julianna Vockroth

From May 29 to June 22, Mercury will be in retrograde for the second time in 2021. This fast-moving planet controls communication, technology, and travel for the zodiacs. It governs what we say to others and how we interpret what others say to us, rightfully fitting for Mercury, named after the messenger god in Roman mythology. The word “retrograde” comes from the Latin, meaning “a backward step.” Appropriately, this means there will be confusion surrounding communication during this celestial event. Each of the twelve signs of the zodiac process this occurrence a little differently, and hopefully find a positive in it.

Starting with the sign Aries, people born from March 21 to April 19, this generally stubborn sign will get even more stubborn. Most will begin to feel a sense of restlessness and become fed up with unsatisfying people in their life. Luckily, this creates an opportunity to make new friends that line up with your expectations.

Next, we have Taurus, people born April 20 to May 20. The retrograde will be a time of strain on communications. Instead of starting any new endeavors, try to focus on perfecting current projects.

For Gemini, May 21 to June 20, take this time to listen to others and try not to be too quick in passing judgment. Spend some time thinking about your beliefs, spiritual and political, and evaluate if they line up with the person you are now.

Cancers, June 21 to July 22, will feel a lack of inspiration in social interactions. Instead, take time to evaluate more intimate relationships, both romantic and platonic, to spot and fix imbalances. Try not to jump quickly into making major decisions or starting a new, lengthy project during this celestial occurrence.

For Leo, those born July 23 through August 22, this will be an important time for your relationships with your best friend, a significant other, or enemies. These will become very relevant, but wait until the retrograde ends before making any drastic changes. During this time, you should reevaluate and analyze these relationships. This may also be a time of confusion, so take a step back.

Virgos, born between August 23 through September 22, are usually the most organized sign. However, you might realize that you need to make some changes to your schedule. Take time to clean up, establish healthy habits, and focus on your mental health. There may be some misunderstandings in professional relationships (teachers or bosses), so try your best to be patient with this communication.

If you're a Libra, born between September 23 and October 22, you're in luck. This retrograde should be easy for you, and your creativity will be especially active. Even if you aren't the artistic type, try to have fun and relieve stress through creative endeavors, even if that just means

singing in the shower. Try not to make any changes during this time.

Next, Scorpios: people born between October 23 and November 21. This is a great time to redecorate. Channel your creativity to rearrange or redecorate a personal space, like your room. Also, try to reconnect with people you live with: start asking your parents or siblings more questions about their lives. These relationships will be very beneficial in the near future. But of course, in true retrograde fashion, be cautious of the objects you use on a daily basis: watch out for broken appliances.

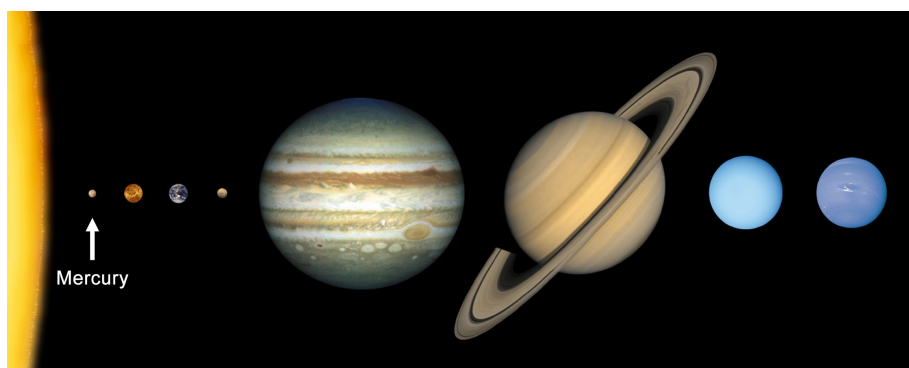
Sagittarius signs, those born between November 22 to December 21, you're usually very open about your opinions, which isn't a bad thing. However, be careful not to react too quickly to any texts you receive and send. If disagreements do occur, they should be solved very quickly with diplomacy and open communication.

Capricorns, born between December 22 and January 19, you're the luckiest sign during the retrograde! This is a great time to solve any problems that may have occurred before the retrograde and form new relationships that will be very beneficial in the future. Just be careful with impulse buying, especially if you've been saving up for a big purchase.

If you're an Aquarius, born between January 20 and February 18, you'll be feeling this retrograde the most. That's okay, you just have to try to listen more. This will be a hard time for you to express your feelings, leading to misunderstandings. If you listen to the ideas of those around you, you may learn something very valuable.

Pisces, the final sign, is the sign of those born within February 19 and March 20. You probably have a tendency to internalize. If you have something to do, you probably go off by yourself and come up with a peaceful plan to get it done. That's good, especially because you'll have a lot on your plate this retrograde. Former projects, friends, and professional relationships might come back to you, meaning you'll need to prioritize. Meditation will be very helpful during this time.

Even though all signs will be impacted, each to different degrees, have confidence in yourself and know that you're not alone in this time.



In case you forgot where Mercury is

Student-run Group Advocates Equality

RBR Young Feminists Start Strong

By Jackie Rogers

What is Feminism? Who is a Feminist? Why care about Feminism? From protests in Ancient Greece, to the Seneca Falls Convention, to the #MeToo movement, feminism has been prevalent all over the world. In essence, it is the belief that men and women are equal. It is the belief that women should be socially, politically, and economically equal. A few months ago, sophomore Eden Stein had the idea to start a Feminism club at RBR. Over the past weeks, the group has grown and many people have become involved. Feminism has become a topic of

debate and discussion, especially in the past few years, so for interested participants, this club could not have come at a more ideal time. With groups such as this often comes

the question of who can be a feminist. Supporting feminism or calling oneself a feminist is not limited to women; a feminist is anyone who believes in equality. Even today, as women all over the world have made great strides toward equality in significant areas, there is still a gap between men and women. Women still face discrimination and prejudice every day. However, feminism helps to bridge the gap, and women have seen more equality in pay, suffrage, and education.

The RBR Young Feminists group offers a platform for students to voice concerns for equality and take action against inequality. There have only been a few meetings, but the club is gaining notoriety and will be a force for great change.

I had the pleasure of asking Eden some questions about the group and she offered some insight into what got her to take the initiative to start this group. :

Q: Why did you want to start RBR Young Feminists?

A: The first time I noticed that it can be extra difficult being female was when I was in middle school. There were some boys in my class who liked to make loud, sexist comments and

and made inappropriate sounds on the daily. It started to really bother me, so I told my teacher. The teacher didn't believe me. She asked the boys about it, and they denied it and complained about getting in trouble." The next day, they continued doing the same things anyway. That event started to make me passionate about standing up for girls and respecting others. Since then, I've learned about the need to win economic equality and getting a U.S. Constitutional amendment that will guarantee equal rights for women, champion reproductive freedom and other women's health issues, oppose racism, fight bigotry against the LGBTQIA community, and end violence against women.

Q: What hopes do you have for RBR Young Feminists?

A: I hope that this group is a safe place for anyone who wants to talk about issues important to them. I also hope that we do projects that help our school and local community. We have some great ideas so far for educating and building awareness about our bodies, illnesses, and self-defense classes so far, and that is just after one meeting!

Q: How did you start this club?

A: Once I had the idea of starting this club, I reached out to Ms. Barry, whom I had as a leader of a group when I was in elementary school called Girls' Leadership. I knew that she was interested in helping girls grow to be the very best versions of themselves they could be. She said that she was willing to help start this interest group, and she recruited two interns from The Source, Brenda and Ashleigh, to also help out. Once we got things rolling, I created the logo, started some Instagram posts, and the four of us started recruiting members. My goal was to have 10 people sign up, and instead around 90 people joined the Google Classroom. My mind was blown by the response! I could not have been so successful without the help from Ms. Barry and the interns. It's not too late to join us if you are interested.

Join the group's Classroom page using code 2xzkp2c and/or follow them on Instagram @rbryoungfeminists for more information.



In school and out:

Mask up,



Paging Doctor Valencia...

By Maria Rigopoulis

Nothing says summer like sun, sand, and surgery. That last part will come into play for junior Angel Valencia as she participates in the Congress of Future Medical Leaders, part of a program run by Bottega University and the National Academy of Future Physicians.

According to the Academy's website, "The purpose of the Congress is to honor, inspire, motivate, and direct those top students in our country and help them stay true to their dreams. The lifetime friendships made with future colleagues and the opportunity to network with medical professionals can give Congress Delegates a competitive edge and greater focus as they begin their journey into a career in medicine. Most importantly, after the Congress Delegates will enter the Academy's free mentoring program, which will provide a path, plan, and resources to help them reach their goals." Over a weekend in late June, Valencia will attend virtual workshops and forums designed to inspire future doctors and guide them onto the path of pursuing a medical degree.

Doctors, scientists and medical students from universities like Harvard and MIT will discuss their careers and specialties; students will get tips and assistance regarding college applications and financial aid; and leadership training will help students "build confidence, improve study skills, maximize time management, ramp up listening and speaking skills, increase likability and fine-tune negotiating and problem-solving abilities," according to the organization's website.

Read on for Angel's perspective on the program and her participation in it.

Q: What started your interest in medicine / what made you want to pursue a career in it?

A: I always wanted to practice medicine in some way, because when my brother and I would play and get hurt I was always running to the rescue with my (fake) medical kit. In 6th grade, I was introduced to *Grey's Anatomy*, and since then I have watched [the entire series] eight times fully though and have actually written down all the surgeries performed or mentioned in the show. It's insane, but medicine just lets me de-stress, and I feel so good when I help someone feel better.

Q: How did you hear about this program, and how did you go about applying?

A: I heard certain things about this program from scholarships I looked up online. It was said to be difficult to enter and you had to meet requirements like having at least a 3.5 GPA and higher level classes under your belt. I indicated to the College Board that I wanted to pursue a career in the medical field and someone in the program got my name. They saw all my credits and they accepted me.

Q: What are some things you are going to participate in? Which are you most excited about?

A: One thing I am extremely excited to participate in is surgeries. We have full days that go from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., including watching surgeries and having the ability to ask questions to the surgeon who is doing the operation.

Q: How do you feel this program will set you apart from other students pursuing careers in medicine in college and beyond?

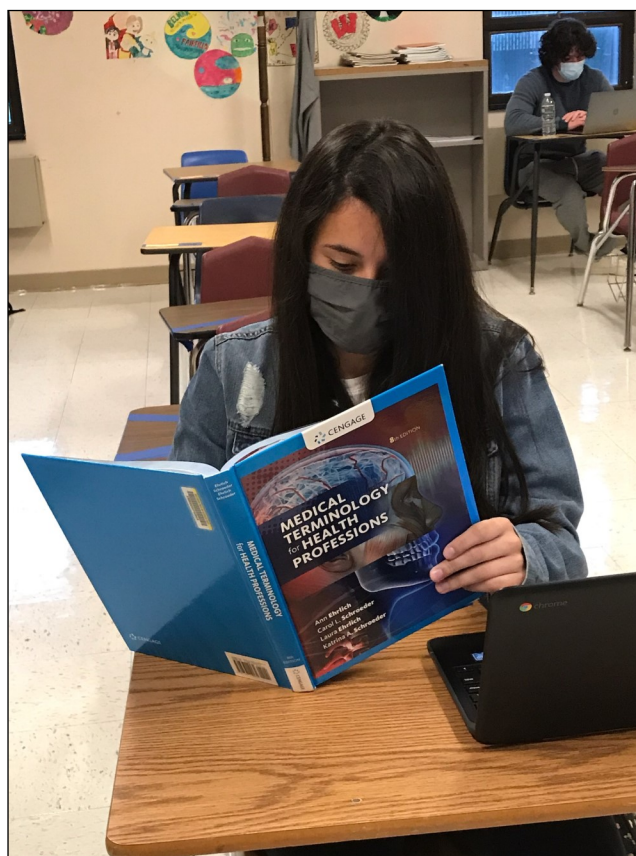
A: It may set me apart from others because they do email me a lot of information about the medical field already and they personalize it to the field I want to go in. I am really interested in being a surgeon for the heart muscle. The Academy sends me websites and articles that I could research and learn from. Also, the surgeries that will be presented are about different organs, which means there will be one for the heart.

Q: What career do you want to pursue? If you don't know exactly what you want to do, what are some of your options?

A: I would love to be a cardiothoracic surgeon or a trauma doctor. I was thinking about the military medical field, but I'm not totally sure on that option. I also want to be an actress on Broadway, which is totally different from anything medical.

Q: If you decide to get college credits from this program, does this transfer to any college? What college are you hoping to attend, or what are some on your list?

A: I would earn one college credit from this program, and if it cannot transfer to a college I want, I will get a full refund from the program but keep the certification for doing the courses. Colleges I want to go to include John Hopkins and Julliard (very hard colleges to get into sadly) and they offer very different career paths. Both are my passions, so it has been a challenge to choose.



Junior Angel Valencia will bolster her med school dreams this summer at the Congress of Future Medical Leaders

Opinion: Through Blue-Colored Glasses

Studying the male gaze in modern film

By Rowan Martin

From the very start of young girls' lives, we are taught to be the Snow Whites and Sleeping Beautys, waiting for a prince to think we are attractive enough to rescue. This problem only grows as we age, and the films we watch mature as a result. From *Transformers* to *The Wolf of Wall Street*, viewers are made accustomed to the objectification and demoralization of women to nothing but a commodity for men.

Many tactics are used by male directors to feed into what is known as the "male gaze." Strategic, long shots ascend figures, giving the male audience time to appreciate the woman's physique. Directors use conveniently placed shots of features, front and back, not to add to plot or story but to appease the heterosexual male fantasy. Directors selectively frame and portray female characters in dehumanizing ways. A woman in a dangerous, scary situation? Give her the classic "deer-in-the-headlights look" to show she's just waiting for a big, strong man to save her (Anderson). Make her passive and pretty to keep the men interested.

Not only is the sexualization being done behind the camera and by the audience, the male gaze is often justified by characters on screen. When the male audience sees the male protagonists ogle at women only for their body, it will be seen as acceptable behavior. It also makes the female audience believe that men will want you only when you are physically attractive and submissive. It becomes even more disturbing when you remember the long history of sexual assault and harassment in this industry.

It is nearly impossible to discuss male gaze without mentioning Laura Mulvey. A feminist film analyst, she created the modern definition of male gaze. She explains the male gaze as "constructed for the pleasure of the male viewer, which is deeply rooted in patriarchal ideologies and discourses" (Sampson). She wrote an essay, "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema," further elaborating on male gaze and its effects in 1975. This issue has been prevalent for decades, yet it continues today. To fix this issue, we must work to bring change.

Through the decades, Hollywood has grown to be a more diverse place, yet of the top 100 highest grossing directors, only 1 is a woman, among 99 men. While this dramatic difference is terrible in itself, it has serious implications on the film industry. Without representation in positions like director, writer, and producer being filled by women, movies reflect the lack of female perspectives.

When female directors enter the mix, they are able to portray women in a more respectful way. For the production of *Harley Quinn: Birds of Prey*, Cathy Yan stepped in as director and provided her own portrayal of Harley Quinn and her team. One scene in particular includes an already degradingly sexual scene for its character. Through Yan's directing, "[they made] sure [they] were protecting [their] female actors, even in a scene that was about humiliation" (Anderson). This shows that a talented director is able to direct controversial scenes while letting the scene itself speak for its significance.

Yan doesn't need to humiliate her actresses to have an effective moment. Along with other choices made by Yan throughout the film, she empowered Margot Robbie's character instead of letting her be the piece of eye candy she was in the male-directed *Suicide Squad*.

Some argue that objectification can be good, especially in a romantic relationship. Even when arguing for male gaze, they discredit their own argument by bringing up a study proving "men who frequently objectify their partner's bodies by excessively focusing on their appearance are more likely to... [sexually coerce], both in general and through violence and manipulation" (Singal). There is an important difference between appreciating a partner in an intimate relationship and the continued objectification of women for just existing in a film.

Despite its deep roots in film history, it is still possible to limit the grip male gaze has on the majority of media. As previously mentioned, the more non-male directors succeed in the film industry, the better said industry will become. Other female directors like Liz Garbus, Janicza Bravo, Eliza Hittman, and Kitty Green are gaining popularity and using their platform to lift women and

contest the male gaze. Having a large, diverse cast of women is also a good way to narrate the female perspective. Passing the Bechdel Test, a baseline for women's screen time, can be a good start for a movie. While not every production that passes is progressive, and not everything that fails is sexist, it ensures female characters have the bare minimum of representation.

Film is such a strong force that throughout history, leaders have used it to indoctrinate their people and spread propaganda. While I am not arguing that appealing to the male gaze is propaganda, I am acknowledging the indisputable influence it has on viewers. In less extreme examples, movies are often seen to set "fashion trends" and cause people to pick up "figures of speech" from popular movie lines (Morris). Hollywood always finds little (and sometimes much larger) ways to impact society, and this example is not any different. Constant exposure to female exploitation through the media, especially when it is viewed as perfectly acceptable, will only increase misogyny in the real world. Once you allow women to succeed in the film industry, they can help make steps to eliminate the presence of the male gaze on the big screen and in real life.



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Photo Majors Capture State, National Honors

This spring, the RBR Photo Majors participated in the 17th annual print competition for Ocean County Camera Club. New Jersey competition is judged in early-March each year. These images were judged against hundreds of other entrants from all over New Jersey. Four of RBR's photo majors advanced to the next level of competition.

After the NJ competition, the photos went on to the national competition of the Photographic Society of America for judging, going up against high school students from all over the country.

Junior Madelyn McManus's photo, "Evening at the Inlet," was awarded a third place prize in the landscape/waterscape category. "I was really surprised and excited by my award," McManus said. "I can't wait to compete again next year, because this competition is always really fun!" In addition, Georgia Landree's and Hannah Stark's photos were displayed at the Photographic Society's National show based on merit.

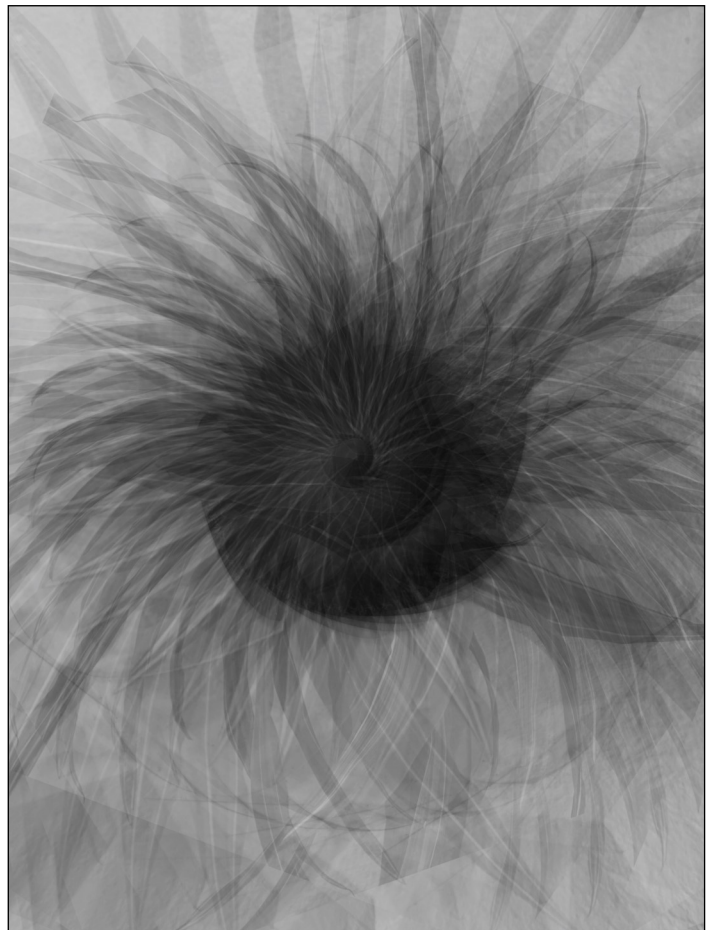
Congratulations to all RBR entrants and winners!



Right: "Citali" by Heidi Jacinto

Below left: "Crystalline Color" by Georgia Landree

Below right: "Dark Circulation" by Eleanor Phillips





Above: “Evening at the Inlet” by
Maddy McManus

Right: “Sign of the Times” by
Hannah Stark





**Welcome Back,
(more) Bucs!**



The Buccaneer

Red Bank Regional's Student Newspaper

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Opinion: Past Solutions Don't Solve Modern Problems

It's time to let go

Written by Kayla Sarcomo

"THUGS!" they yelled. It was the only word that could cross my mind, the teargas finally getting to me, even though I was in the back of the crowd. Yelling, screaming, and loud shouts filled the air, the voices of those who were currently being arrested for protesting. The protest was peaceful at first, then law enforcement came out. The gas clouded my vision, my eyes swelling and tearing, stinging with both fear and anger. There were already dozens of officers watching us march down the street; why were they wearing such heavy uniforms and carrying military grade guns? Why was no one doing anything about it? We were in such a small community, a population of less than 9,000; why were so many police eyeing us?

Over-policing has been a prominent problem in low income communities with a larger population of people of color. Due to the stereotype that people of color are more violent than white people, it is extremely common to see more policing in a black community than you would in a majority white one. In the article "Protesters: Poorer communities of color are over-policed; research agrees, and offers alternatives," president of the Community Service Society of New York David R. Jones noted that when he joined the board a few years ago, he was told by transit police officials that "93 percent of the arrests were of black and brown people."

Black communities have to deal with over-policing, which in turn means that they have a higher rate of incarceration than people in white communities. In twelve states across the country, more than 50% of the prison population is black, with Maryland at a high of 72%. With the greater population of white people in America, it seems logical that there would be a higher number of white people incarcerated if they were being arrested at the same rate as black people. Articles 2 and 26 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, explain how regardless of your race, the law enforcement system should treat everyone equally.

The prison system and the criminal justice system in general are extremely corrupt and still base their actions on ways that were used in the past. The 13th amendment of the Constitution states that slavery is prohibited unless someone has been convicted of a crime. In this amendment it states, "Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction." As there is over-policing in mostly black populated areas, it's like slavery all over again. This time, however, it's covered up by labeling subjects a "criminals"-- whether or not

they're guilty of any crime.

The origin of how policing is done today can be traced back to a system called "Slave Patrol." The Criminal Justice Fact Sheet by the NAACP says, "The earliest formal slave patrol was created in the Carolinas in the early 1700s, with the following mission: to establish a system of terror in response to slave uprisings with the capacity to pursue, apprehend, and return runaway slaves to their owners, including the use of excessive force to control and produce desired slave behavior." After the 13th amendment passed, these slave patrols were exchanged for militia-style groups who had the power to control the rights of freed slaves. While these ways of policing are no longer here, there has been no real reform of the way policing is done.

In the current system, there is also a higher percentage of people of color getting checked for drugs compared to white people. The article "The Drug War, Mass Incarceration, and Race" by the Drug Policy Alliance states, "Black people comprise 13 percent of the U.S. population and are consistently documented by the U.S. government to use drugs at similar rates to people of other races. But Black people comprise 30 percent of those arrested for drug law violations – and nearly 40 percent of those incarcerated in state or federal prison for drug law violations."

While the law enforcement and justice systems are supposed to protect us, they seem to have just become a new way to silence the voices of people of color. We have to do better in how our policing is done and in what ways we can reform the system in general. With over-policing, higher incarcerations depending on race, the remnants of slavery embedded in the system, the little reform of old ways of policing, and the criminalization of drugs, there are so many things that can be examined to fix this issue that no one seems to talk about. Our country could have a great criminal justice system if we would simply stop trying to solve modern problems with past solutions.



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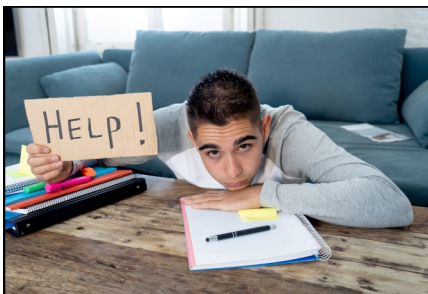
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Opinion: How the system is working against us

By Aurora Rosas-Azcatl

If a person were to rent out their broken, hundred year-old house but every tenant has complained that it needs to be modernized, or at the very least, fixed so that it's livable, the logical thing to do would be to make some renovations, right? Well, the school system doesn't seem to agree.

Despite these troubling times, the stress and level of difficulty of classes for students only seems to have increased. Not only do students have less class time to process, understand, and retain the information taught, but the way the information is



given has taken on a format most had been unfamiliar with until now. One would think that with this change, something else would change too in order to be more accommodating towards students.

And yet schools refuse to give such accommodation, and the system has remained relatively the same throughout its centuries of use. The flaws in the school system need to change.

When a school's only concern is placing high in terms of graduation rates and test scores, the pressure and worries students feel go unrecognized. A prime example of this are programs for gifted children, where students are taught at a young age that they're smarter than everyone else. When children are placed on these pedestals at young ages, they might not pick up good study habits that general students would have since they've never felt the same difficulty understanding topics. And due to this supposed "maturity," teachers often do not assist them since they believe they're capable enough to do work by themselves, which only adds to the burdens placed upon them.

Effects of being pushed to maturity at a young age is explained in a study run by Cambridge University. Their article "The Relationship Between Social-Emotional Difficulties and Underachievement of Gifted Students" identifies some of the most common effects of these high expectations: procrastination, lesser social skills, self deprecation, difficulty asking others for help, difficulty enjoying something they're not immediately good at, perfectionism, and burnout. Any of these combined can make gifted students incredibly vulnerable to self-destruction. The school system doesn't exactly rank high in terms of regard for students' mental health.

The comparison of the "more" and "less" accomplished doesn't just harm gifted students, it also harms those in general education. In these children, who are frequently compared to others, probable effects are overwhelming stress, an inferiority complex, insomnia, social anxiety, unwarranted hatred towards others, as well as withdrawal from family and people their age. When children are constantly compared to someone of "more capability" they are more likely to feel insignificant and less motivated to do their best because there will always be someone ahead of them. The pushing of these roles

onto young minds is only harmful to their growth and development since they're likely to either fall into the roles they're given or push themselves until they break.

These experiences in the school system aren't coincidences; they're a display of the effects of a system where grades are prioritized over student well being rather than actually learning the material. Instead of teaching students that mental and physical health are important, they are taught that their worth is determined by how high their grades are, sometimes even ridiculed and criticized when they try taking care of themselves. So, when you grew up with that mentality, it's difficult to escape it, but it is possible.

What makes things even worse is that humans aren't even supposed to be awake for 16 hours straight, let alone sit still for half of that time. Until sometime around the 1920's, people globally would refer to something "first sleep" and "second sleep". Sixteen years worth of research published by Roger Ekrich in his book, *At Day's Close: Night in Times Past*, includes around 500 references of these segmented sleep patterns that mention it as if common knowledge. In other research titled "Letter of Recommendation: Segmented Sleep," author Jesse Barron unintentionally self-experimented segmented sleep, which illustrated that good comes when your body isn't forced into an unaccommodating schedule.

To combat all the negatives, a way to improve school life is giving the students some kind of outlet. Stress and anxiety can affect a person's mental state in many ways, especially in the classroom, and studies have shown that even something simple such as allowing students to listen to their own music can increase their productivity.

Another simple answer: fidget toys. Not only are fidget toys accommodating to the neurodivergent community, widespread use in the classroom can normalize them when having one might have otherwise been seen as bizarre. It also doesn't have to be anything huge at first, something simple like a squeeze toy or even just a soft plushie. Just the reassurance of something soft or squeezable can be comforting for students when digesting difficult topics. Even using something like small fidget toys that could work in an occupational setting could definitely help against the rising levels of stress and anxiety amongst youth in America.

All in all, the school system pushes students too far every which way, but whether the solution is an outlet like fidgets or something else, the school system needs to change.

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Spring!

allergies	track	robins
May	prom	breeze
pollen	picnics	garden
sunshine	trees	biking
happiness	blooms	Earth Day
freedom	warm	puddle
finals	shorts	
SATs	Memorial Day	
AP exams	primavera	
baseball	printemps	
lacrosse	rain	
tennis	daffodils	
softball	dandelions	

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