

THE BRADFORD

WELLESLEY HIGH SCHOOL'S NEWS PUBLICATION SINCE 1944

Volume LXXXII, Issue 2 • 50 Rice Street, Wellesley, MA 02481 • March 2026



Photo by Owen Kilgore

“Working together is huge—making that extra pass for a better shot, supporting each other, and keeping a positive attitude throughout the season,” said captain Maria Gianarikas '27.

Girls' basketball lays up a younger lineup

By Stephanie Pan '28
Staff Writer

This winter, the girls' basketball team is entering the season with a noticeably smaller and younger roster than in past years. The team does not have any seniors, which is a rare situation on any team at the high school.

With only twenty players, the athletes are now split up into only two teams, varsity and junior varsity (JV), no longer having a freshman team.

JV basketball coach Ted Novio was surprised to see the significantly smaller participa-

tion.

“I've never really seen [the instance of] not a single senior,” said Novio, also serving as the varsity baseball coach.

The low turnout stems from a variety of factors.

“[Students] have a lot on their plates and to do everything can be difficult,” said head coach Glen Magpiong, “Playing basketball six days a week is challenging with school work, and maybe other outside activities.”

The team's typical schedule

consists of one-hour to two-hour practices every day, excluding Sundays, and gamedays on Tuesdays and Fridays. While their weekday practices end at 5:00 PM, home and away games start at 5:00 PM with JV, and the varsity games can stretch to 8:00 PM.

“They [probably] wanted senior winter free to hang out with friends,” said Penelope Casgar '28, a varsity returner.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

Custodian shortage hits the high school

By Katherine Xu '27
Editor-in-Chief

The high school is no exception to the nationwide shortage of custodians in schools. In recent years, the high school — and Wellesley Public Schools as a whole — has struggled to fill job openings for custodial staff.

“[The shortage] is something many schools and towns are currently experiencing,” said the town's Custodial Service Manager Nicholas Ponte. “This has been caused by a combination of retirements, a smaller applicant pool, and competition with other job opportunities.”

Some students have noticed changes in cleanliness at school.

“A couple classrooms have had issues for extended periods of time that have not gotten fixed,” said Linda Zhang '27. “I've noticed that the desks get cleaned less.”

The water fountains are another cause of students' concerns — the lights indicating filter effectiveness often shine yellow or red, making those who want green light water have to go to another floor.

“Sometimes I don't have time to fill up my water bottle on a different floor, so I have to go thirsty instead,” said Oscar Allan '27.

Indeed, it has been difficult for the custodial team to manage the shortage of workers.

“Existing custodians often take on extra responsibilities,” said Ponte. “Some non-essential

projects can be delayed.”

Night Custodial Supervisor Jay Scafidi agrees that some tasks are skipped on nights when the team is short-staffed.

“The building is about 280,000 square feet, and it's impossible to take care of every task when we are short 3 custodians every night,” Scafidi said. “Add in someone out sick or taking a vacation day [and] that leaves us even shorter.”

However, Ponte appreciates current custodians' adaptability.

“The custodial staff has done an amazing job stepping up and overcoming these challenges,” he said. “Beyond cleaning, they help maintain the building, set up for events, and often serve as familiar, trusted faces in the school community.”

And, Wellesley is not sitting by while these openings remain unfilled.

“The town is actively posting openings, spreading the word, and working to make these positions more visible and appealing,” said Ponte. “There is also a strong focus on highlighting the stability of these jobs and the important role custodians play in supporting the school community.”

Ultimately, the shortage of custodians is not localized to Wellesley, and it remains to be seen when and how the issue will be resolved.

New plastic reduction bylaw now in effect in Wellesley

By Lila Thornton '28
Staff Writer

On January 1, a new regulation was put into effect in Wellesley. Known as the “Skip the Stuff” bylaw, its purpose is to reduce plastic waste and promote sustainability throughout Wellesley. Instead of automatically receiving single-use sauce

packets and plastic cutlery, customers will now be required to ask an employee for these items. Although it was just recently put into effect, the bylaw was passed by Wellesley's Town Meeting in April of 2025.

“I'm aware that this is part

of Wellesley's longstanding effort to decrease waste. And it's a really important strategy for decreasing the amount of plastic waste,” said Ms. Regina Laroque, a Town Meeting member.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Photo courtesy of the Town of Wellesley

Posters like these are hung in many Wellesley establishments to let customers know of the policy change.

Stories for students, by students: a peek of what's inside

FEATURES



OPINIONS



ARTS



SPORTS



NEWS EDITOR | Kaya Charoensiddhi
For more NEWS, visit www.whsbradford.org

Plastic reduction bylaw (cont.)

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1
“The honest answer is this is only one very small step in the right direction. There’s a lot more that we need to be doing to decrease plastic waste.”

Although not involved in the passing of the bylaw itself, Larroque is an integral member of Sustainable Wellesley and promotes climate-friendly practices.

This bylaw states that all places categorized as Food Service Establishments in Wellesley must require customers to request all single-use items or place them on a service bench or table for customers to grab as needed. Establishments are not allowed to include utensils with takeout or delivery orders unless specifically instructed by the customer to do so. When using apps, consumers

must indicate or state specifically which types of single-use items they would like.

Additionally, single-use items cannot be bundled together to prevent customers from receiving items that they don’t actually need. For example, plastic utensils like forks, spoons, and knives can’t be wrapped together in a plastic pack.

This bylaw was first introduced to the town by Philippa Biggers and Lisa Gieger, two members of Sustainable Wellesley.

“We wanted [the bylaw] to go slowly and have it be something everyone could agree on, because it’s really pretty fundamental,” said Biggers. “Most people, frankly, are very relieved not to get the extra utensils.”

They were inspired by a similar bylaw that was passed in Newton,

which, in addition to the elements included in the Wellesley bylaw, includes a more thorough restriction of plastics, such as straws.

“One of the most exciting things for us was how receptive the town government and the town board were—not just the boards, but the people who work for this town were immediately understanding of the issue and wanted to do something about it,” said Biggers.

They presented to many boards—the DPW, the House Department, the Natural Resource Commission, and the Climate Action Board. Biggers started her mission in September of 2024 and finally got it passed by the town meeting seven months later.



561 billion disposable plastic utensils are used in the U.S. every year, resulting in 4.9 million tons of waste.

Changes to come to high school’s attendance procedure

By Evie Simon '27
Arts Editor

Photo courtesy of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education

District Name	District Code	Attendance Rate	Average # of Absences	Absent 10 or more days	Chronically Absent (10% or more)	Chronically Absent (20% or more)	Unexcused 9 days
Walpole	03070000	95.5	8.0	28.7	7.0	1.5	18.1
Waltham	03080000	93.4	11.2	40.7	18.8	5.5	34.9
Ware	03090000	93.1	11.7	47.2	22.0	4.5	19.9
Wareham	03100000	92.8	12.1	49.2	21.8	5.4	28.2
Warwick	03120000	89.0	18.0	87.5	53.1	3.1	0.0
Watertown	03140000	93.7	11.0	37.5	15.6	4.3	16.6
Wayland	03150000	95.6	7.9	28.1	7.8	1.2	1.4
Webster	03160000	92.0	13.4	53.8	27.3	7.8	22.7
Wellesley	03170000	95.1	8.7	30.8	9.6	2.4	5.2
Wellfleet	03180000	93.2	11.8	59.8	17.1	0.0	59.8
West Boylston	03220000	95.1	8.5	33.8	10.2	2.0	33.7
West Bridgewater	03230000	95.1	8.5	33.3	10.2	1.8	22.3
West Springfield	03220000	93.6	10.9	42.5	19.1	4.4	17.3
Westborough	03210000	94.3	9.8	38.5	15.2	3.3	13.5
Westfield	03250000	92.8	12.4	47.6	21.7	6.0	11.7
Westford	03260000	95.2	8.6	33.6	9.9	1.3	9.9
Westhampton	03270000	97.8	4.0	9.1	1.0	1.0	0.0
Weston	03300000	95.2	8.6	34.1	7.8	1.0	4.3
Westport	03310000	93.8	10.9	43.8	15.2	2.8	27.4

The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s 2024-25 End of Year Attendance Report shows a 95.1 percent attendance rate at the high school.

On June 18, the School Committee approved the attendance policy for the 2025 to 2026 school year. Though it contains no strict changes for this coming year, the enforcement of this policy will evolve.

Changes to policy had been precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic, which caused a rise in chronic absenteeism. According to the Department of Education, chronic absenteeism is defined as having missed fifteen or more days of school.

With around eleven percent of students deemed chronically absent in the 2022-23 year, the changes over the past two years have come from student data. The definition of “chronically absent” according to the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) is missing ten percent or more of any of the 180 days of school for any reason.

“I would say that our policy has actually not changed all that much, but our enforcement and our practices to re-engage students have evolved quite a bit,” said Mr. Colin Shattuck, one of the high school’s vice principals.

This enforcement includes sitting down with parents, giving more detentions, and for administration to constantly look at the current policy to adapt to student needs and communities of similar size and location.

Principal Dr. Jamie Chisum echoed a similar sentiment in terms of new plans for further attendance enforcement in this coming school year. This can include implementing stricter prevention of student participation in sports or performing arts extracurriculars if they had been marked absent for the day.

“The adjustment we’re making is enforcement of a rule that exists on the books, that we have

not been assiduous about enforcing,” said Chisum.

If students miss eleven class periods in the quarter, they run the risk of receiving an “N” grade (defined as no credit). One “N” in a year-long course results in 25 percent of credit from the class to be reduced. However, if extenuating circumstances have been articulated to the vice principal of a student’s house office, they may be able to maintain credit. This number is resoundingly less than the 18 days that would constitute the “chronically absent” marker.

Though the ‘N’ grade has no effect on a student’s grade point average, it can possibly negatively impact the graduation timeline.

Administration is planning on decreasing the number of class periods a student can miss in a quarter before they earn an ‘N’ grade from eleven to eight, if approved by the school committee.

This will decrease the amount of absences a student can have before receiving an ‘N’ grade from 44 absences to 32 absences over the year.

“That’s still a pretty generous number, but it’s a step in the right direction and I think it will impact attendance,” said Chisum.

The ‘N’ grade is just the final step in a long process of absences, however. Within our school system, there is a strong differentiation between the two main types of absences: excused and unexcused, which is also the focal point of the procedural changes this year.

The student handbook for the 2025-26 school year has defined an “excused absence” as one due to “illness or injury, bereavement, major religious observances, or other extraordinary family circumstances that have been approved by the school principal.”

In contrast, an “unexcused absence” has been deemed as “repetitive or chronic absence and/or tardiness due to illness or injury not documented by a doctor or other medical professional; truancy; family vacations; undocumented absences; or non-emergency family situations.”

According to the high school attendance procedure, there is a strong correlation between academic performance and attendance.

“We really value you being here, and we think that it’s meaningful to have that in-person engagement with your classmates and your teachers and this community. I know it may not show up in a grade, but there’s a lot of value in that in person engage-

ment,” said Shattuck.

Missing too much school intersects with Massachusetts General Law Chapter 76, Section 18 (“Dropout Prevention”) which states that there must be communication within a period of five days from the student’s tenth consecutive absence. School policy currently intervenes before the tenth consecutive absence by meeting with parents and guardians as well as utilizing the Bridge Program.

The Bridge Program helps students who have been out for an extended period of time from school due to emotional or medical reasons to reintegrate back into their classes slowly.

From the Bridge Program to meeting with faculty members, the school offers a multitude of options to eliminate falling attendance.

That being said, the high school will not require an action plan with parents or guardians until students have five or more unexcused absences. DESE only allows districts to excuse seven full days or fourteen half-days within a six-month period during the school year, around two quarters at the high school.

“We’re constantly going to be considering the ways in which we are promoting engagement for our students to be here and it requires partnership with families. It requires us finding the right balance between the expectation and the consequences from missing school. The biggest consequence for missing school is you’re missing learning,” said Shattuck.

for articles, podcasts, media, and more
look on whsbradford.org

FEATURES EDITORS | Josie Song and Grace Zhao
For more FEATURES, visit www.whsbradford.org

How the MBTA in Wellesley is improving and helping students

By Freddy Alexander '27
Staff Writer



Photo by Freddy Alexander

Trains from Riverside Station – which is just a five to ten minute drive from the high school – run all the way to Union Square, allowing for a quick and smooth ride into Boston.

Hidden by a facade of trees, buildings, and trenches, Wellesley is home to an ever-so-important resource to the town and Greater Boston as a whole. Each hour, one may hear the sharp toot of a horn belonging to the MBTA's aging fleet of locomotives that power the Commuter Rail.

Now more than ever, the Commuter Rail – alongside other MBTA services like the Green Line – is becoming a more preferable form of trans-

portation to and from Boston. Whether it's for work or just a day trip into Boston, the Commuter Rail – which has three stations in Wellesley – would ideally offer a greener, hassle-free transportation option.

Students at the high school have enjoyed the privilege of the Commuter Rail for many years. They have used it to see friends, travel to Boston, or even get to school.

Will Humphrey '27 enjoys the

convenience of the Commuter Rail in Wellesley. "I like it, yeah. It's a cheaper option, it gets me to where I want to go. It works great after school," said Humphrey.

For students who don't mind driving a few minutes, the Green Line is an alternative to the Commuter Rail; its frequent schedule allows students to be more flexible after school, rather than sticking to a traditional rail timetable, which is rigid.

Humphrey also added that he

"wish[es] there were improvements. One time [he] went on the Commuter Rail and it dropped [him] off at Framingham when it said it was going to Wellesley. Other than that issue, it's been good..."

In May of 2025, the MBTA board passed the fiscal 2026 to 2030 budget for the MBTA. The budget included welcome increases and budgets for multiple improvements, such as new, environmentally friendly passenger cars for the Commuter Rail.

Alongside those allocations, the Green Line is set to receive new CAF Type 10 vehicles sometime in 2027; these new vehicles will be more accessible, energy efficient, and quieter, according to CAF.

Residents of Wellesley may also enjoy new improvements to the three stations within the town. Nonetheless, both stations are presently somewhat bare, with little acknowledgement of accessibility. Specifically outlined in the budget are improvements to the rail infrastructure itself – which would reduce wait times – and accessibility modernization.

In the next five years, Boston's public transportation may develop from a world-class system to truly the best in the world. Students and parents can expect better service, modern trains, and modernization across the entire T and Commuter Rail system.



Photo courtesy of the MBTA 2027-2030 report.

Excerpt from the MBTA 2027-2030 budget and planning report; outlined is more than six billion dollars in budget allotment to rail-specific transit.

The year of the snake: how do students celebrate the Lunar New Year?

By Kaya Charoensiddhi '27
News Editor



Photo courtesy of Ayla Lin

Designed to look like ancient Chinese ingots, dumplings are an important Lunar New Year dish because they symbolize wealth and prosperity.

Each winter, families around the world welcome the Lunar New Year, a celebration that marks the first day of the lunar calendar. Also known as the Chinese New Year, the holiday is not just celebrated by those of Chinese heritage but across many

cultures, including Vietnamese and Korean communities.

The holiday's origins trace back to a thousand-year-old legend about the Nian, a mythical monster believed to terrorize villages at the start of each Lunar New Year. According to the leg-

end, the villagers discovered that the Nian feared loud noises and the color red, inspiring traditions such as fireworks and red decorations that continue to be an important part of Lunar New Year celebrations.

Today, the holiday marks a time where students can reconnect with family they may not see often.

"Chinese New Year is one of the few times when my entire family comes together," said Angela Zhang '27, an officer of the high school's Chinese Cultural Club.

Families will often use the Lunar New Year as an opportunity to practice beloved traditions. For Zhang's family, this includes watching Spring Festival Gala, a Lunar New Year broadcast featuring traditional dancing, singing, comedy, and opera.

Food is another central part of the holiday, with each dish symbolizing prosperity, longevity, or good luck. In Chinese culture, for example,

fish symbolize abundance and wealth, while noodles represent a long life. Similarly, Korean families will usually make Tteokguk, a rice cake soup that symbolizes renewal, success, and longevity.

"Foods like fish, noodles, and mandarins all represent something different, and my family always makes sure to bring some of each for our annual New Year's potluck," said Zhang.

Families will also practice the tradition of gifting red envelopes containing money. These envelopes are often gifted from older to younger family members as a symbol of good fortune and protection.

"During the Lunar New Year we visit my grandparents and pay our respects by bowing. Then, they sometimes return that respect by giving us money," said Lucy Lee '27.

Similar to New Year's Day, celebrated on January 1, the Lunar New Year also serves as an opportunity to reflect on the past and set new goals for the future.

"My family shares good wish-

es, prayers, and advice, especially my grandparents. We talk about how we think the year is going to go and set resolutions," said Lee.

For many students, however, the most important part about celebrating the Lunar New Year is the opportunity to connect with their cultural heritage.

"Traditional holidays like the Lunar New Year are really important because it offers this sense of connection that we lack in a country where we aren't surrounded by generations of family members," said Ayla Lin '26, another officer of the Chinese Culture Club.

Students describe the holiday as a meaningful reminder of their family and cultural identity.

"I guess for me, I'm more disconnected than, say, my cousins, because I don't speak much Korean while they do. The Lunar New Year is one of the few Korean traditions I have, and I value the chance to reconnect with my culture," said Lee.

ParentSquare rollout solidly meets expectations

By Katherine Xu '27
Editor-in-Chief

WPS Urgent Alert: WPS Closed on 2/24/2026 External Inbox x

Wellesley Public Schools via ParentSquare Mon, Feb 23, 5:24 PM (10 days ago)



Wellesley Public Schools

Wellesley Public Schools

Dear WPS Community,

The winter storm that arrived last night will continue to affect our area into this evening. After consulting with our Department of Public Works and other Town leaders, I don't believe we can safely open schools tomorrow, as we all continue to dig out from the storm. As such, the Wellesley Public Schools will remain closed for classes and all operations on Tuesday, February 24th, 2026. All WPS buildings will be closed throughout the day and all afternoon and evening activities are also canceled. Please continue to stay safe everyone!

Dr. David Lussier

Photo by Katherine Xu

Community members receive messages sent via ParentSquare in their email inboxes as well as on the website and app. However, these notifications can get cut off in recipients' inboxes, requiring them to open the app to read them in their entirety.

In June 2025, Wellesley Public Schools (WPS) introduced a new pathway for communication from schools to families: ParentSquare.

Under the new system, faculty can easily connect with parents, as household emails are automatically synchronized with their Powerschool accounts.

Before switching to ParentSquare, the district used SchoolMessenger, a similar app for communication that was primarily utilized by administrators. However, the technology team encountered issues with

SchoolMessenger's outdated user interface, inadequate translation tools, and a character limit for messages.

During the 2024-2025 school year, the district decided it was time for a change. Ms. Sharon Gray, WPS Director of Communications and Community Engagement, worked alongside members of the district technology department to select a new platform.

"We set up interviews with various companies, and we thought that ParentSquare had the right amount of functional-

ity and solved our problems," said Gray.

One of the main problems fixed by ParentSquare is language translation.

"One of the things over the years that we have become very mindful of is ensuring that our communications can be easily translated so any of our families can access them," said Gray. "We want to make sure all of the languages that our families might speak are accommodated, and we ran into big challenges [with translation] in SchoolMessenger."

Members of the administration have found particular success with ParentSquare's translation function.

"If I have to send an email...to families [for which] English isn't their primary language, I put it in ParentSquare and it automatically translates it," said Mr. Andrew Kelton, an assistant principal at the high school. "That's the function of ParentSquare I find the most beneficial."

For parents who speak English, the platform serves its purpose, but is not particularly different from other forms of communication.

"It's okay," said Cynthia Soohoo, mother of Lauryn

Soohoo '27. "I also get the emails so it's just redundant, but I do like that I can go on there and find old messages so I don't have to sift through my emails."

High school faculty expressed a desire for more training, however, that might lead to more utility with the platform. Although the technology office hosted optional information and training sessions for faculty at the beginning of the school year, many were unable to attend. As a result, some feel like they are not maximizing ParentSquare's potential.

"I need more training so I can understand the features beyond what I'm using it for," Kelton said. "I feel like I have a rudimentary understanding of all its functions."

From a teacher's perspective, Ms. Shannon O'Neill agrees. A Spanish teacher at the high school, she attended one of the training meetings hosted in September but wants to learn more.

"I'd probably be doing more with it if I had more training time," O'Neill said. "Next time they offer it, I'll do it again because there's probably more things I could be doing here."

To meet this demand, the technology department plans to

implement more faculty lessons as the year goes on.

Ms. Jackie Hoglund, the WPS Instructional Technology Specialist who held sessions for teachers, said, "I think the beginning of the year was so busy for everybody that some teachers managed to come to the trainings and others had too much else to do. We can definitely plan some [sessions] for the spring."

Hoglund has also met individually with some teachers to discuss how to use ParentSquare, while others have reached out to her over email.

To receive feedback from the community, Gray plans to conduct a district-wide survey between February and April break.

Ultimately, the integration of the platform into the district's communication systems has been relatively smooth so far. Gray and the technology team are still working to refine it, however.

"I am very interested to know if there's things that we could improve on," Gray said. "We know there's a lot of functionality in [ParentSquare] and we want people to feel comfortable with all the different things that they can do with it."

How do you know which college is right for you?

By Kaya Charoensiddhi '27
News Editor

For most seniors, the college conversation is unavoidable. Every fall, the high school's hallways buzz with questions about college essays, standardized testing, and acceptance rates, while social media floods with decision posts. Yet after months of applications and anticipation, students face an even bigger challenge: choosing the best-fit college.

For Neha Guruprasad '25, a freshman at Boston University, choosing the best-fit college meant knowing herself as a learner.

"While attending accepted students' tours, I realized that no college is perfect," said Guruprasad. "What I made sure to look out for most was what the college offered for my major and my interests."

As a computational biology major, a major not formally offered at many schools, Guruprasad conducted extensive research and found Boston University's biology and computer science programs to be particularly strong, making it a great fit for her career goals.

Guruprasad also emphasizes

the importance of looking beyond rankings and prestige when making a decision. She encourages students to think about the environment in which they thrive best.

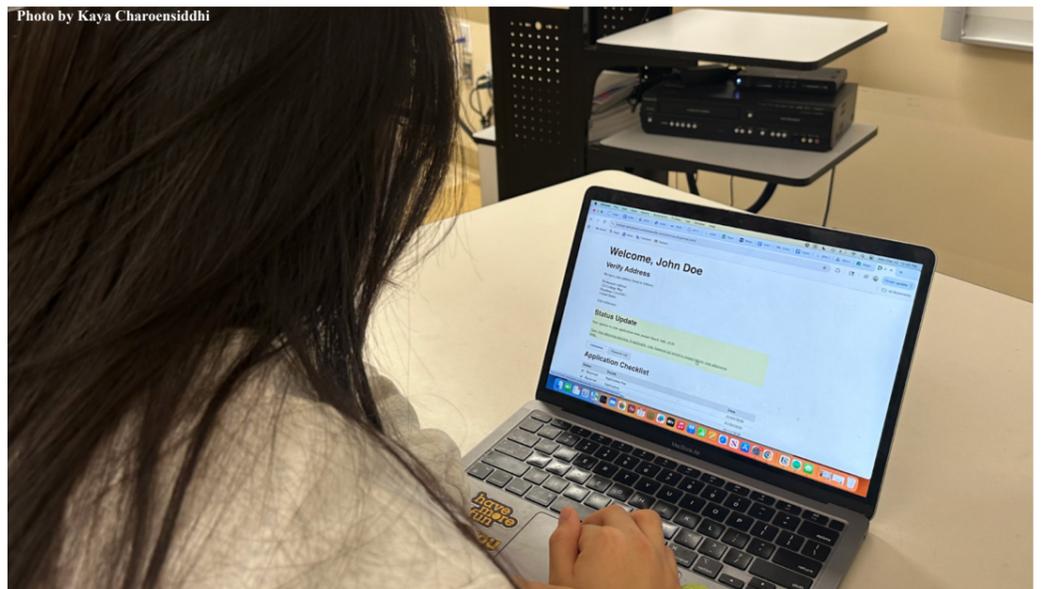
"If you are someone who thrives in a certain academic setting, that matters more than the name of the school," she said. "For me, I knew that I had to be in a city, and I thrive best in big lecture halls, which is why I found Boston University to be the best fit for me."

Ms. Margaret Walendin, the high school's director of counseling, also emphasizes the importance of reflecting on personal interests and values when choosing the best college.

"Students should be looking internally and saying, what do I care about? What do I like?... And then when you go see the colleges, you have to think, what is it that they have that matches with me and my goals and my future interests," said Walendin.

Walendin also stresses the importance of visiting campuses in person, as the physical experience of being on a school's cam-

Photo by Kaya Charoensiddhi



As college decisions begin to roll in, high school seniors begin to navigate the process of choosing where to enroll.

pus firsthand can help students better understand if the location, community, and overall environment are a good fit.

Sarah Long '25, now a freshman at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, said her college decision ultimately came down to balance.

"I wanted to attend a college where I could challenge myself

academically but still feel supported by my peers," Long said.

Long recalled how visiting the campus helped her better understand what daily life looked like beyond academics, which allowed her to make her decision.

"Once I stepped onto campus and talked to current students, it felt like a place where I could learn and grow without feeling

overwhelmed," she said.

As seniors begin to finalize their college decisions and prepare for a new chapter, it is important to remember that there is no universal "best" college. Instead, seniors should recognize that there are many pathways to success and that the best choice is one that aligns with their goals and values.

OPINIONS EDITOR | Jacey Weng
For more OPINIONS, visit www.whsbradford.org

THE BRADFORD

Editorial Board

Editors-in-Chief

Ayesha Kapoor
Sophia Pavano
Katherine Xu

News Editor

Kaya Charoensiddhi

Features Editors

Josie Song
Grace Zhao

Sports Editors

Solomon Jin

Opinions Editor

Jacey Weng

Arts Editor

Evie Simon

Staff Writers

Aura Sehdev
Lili Chase
Louisa Goldberg
Lila Thornton
Mia Wang
Lillian Stephens
Stephanie Pan
Saavedra Zwick
Ella Asfaw
Daniel Luo
Bella Behrend
Camden Chan
Freddy Alexander

Advisor

Alan Brazier

CONTACT THE BRADFORD:

Website:
www.whsbradford.org

Email Address:
bradfordstaff@gmail.com

Mailing Address:
c/o Alan Brazier
50 Rice Street
Wellesley, MA 02481

Phone:
781-446-6305

The Bradford welcomes letters to the editors. Please send your opinions by email and limit your submission to 200 words.

What's more essential than midterms?

By Evie Simon '27

Arts Editor

Twelve percent of your grade hangs in the balance. Slowly, it begins to tip over the edge of an extended cliff.

This, ladies and gentlemen, is an accurate representation of finals week - too much content in too little time. However, with the safety of a rope, midterms could be our saving grace from doom.

Many students desperately hang on to the hope that this measly twelve percent at the end of the year might push their grade up just enough from an A- to an A.

Yet, there is no meaningful reason that the end of the school year must be marked by students desperately trying to cram knowledge from September into their evolved June brains.

Beyond the disparity between what students are able to recall from the beginning of the year, having a dedicated midterms week would be a valuable addition to the high school's calendar because of the plethora of classes that already offer midterms.

In the week following December break, Advanced Placement United States History students sit down to take a midterm in the span of a single hour.

During the first week of February, Honors Biology students take a 100 point midyear exam consisting of forty multiple choice questions and one to two open response questions. This exam accounts for a third of their 'final' grade.

These teachers have the right idea, separating the year's information into two sections requires students to make sure they can account for everything they've learned while ensuring that the studying done in May and June for finals is on relevant material.

Yet, taking these large tests in a short span of time rather than being given the time and space of a dedicated week for midterms is negligent towards our student body.

According to the United States Department of Education, the value of midterms is backed by the "testing phenomenon," an idea that students recalling learned material through testing is more effective to long-term memory and learning than re-exposure ('cram' studying) or attempting to recall information from months prior.

The high school had midyears going as far into the early 2000s as 2005 and 2006 but the overwhelming majority of the student body and faculty when polled advocated against midterms week.

The structure of their midterms was incredibly different to how we deliver finals today. For example, every student would simultaneously take an English midyear and then a math midyear as opposed to the color block schedule the high school follows now.

This begs the question: could we adapt midyears to be more similar to our finals week?

My vote is irrevocably yes. The week preceding December break or the week marking the end of semester one could be much improved by our 8:30 to 1:30 days and a dedicated two hour block for each of our classes to mark an end to material from the beginning of the year.

A big concern when midyears were first phased out was finding a natural end point for each individual course's content.

Every class struggles to find a place to stop, but while honors biology teachers have simply

▲ Semester 1 Final

Review: Learning Goals slides

Study Guide 2026

Review stations

Kahoot links!

▲ Unit 5: Photosynthesis and Cellular Respiration

Notes

Notes: ATP

Notes: Photosynthesis

Notes: Cellular Respiration

Midterms provide a natural place to stop and reflect on work from the semester.

decided to leave quiz time for photosynthesis and cellular respiration to be on or after the final, chemistry teachers will just have multiple tests in the span of a few weeks.

The National Institute of Health claims that students scored significantly higher on midterms and subsequently finals than times when finals were the only opportunity to show student growth over the year.

The results could be stagger-

ing for student success.

When our midterms week is done, we'll all be able to take a deep breath and come back to school reinvigorated and ready for a new semester.

Without a doubt finals will always be a stressful time, but the benefits of reducing this anxiety by shortening the breadth of information students claim responsibility for is not only essential but absolutely necessary to student welfare as a whole.

Reviewing Wellesley's pizza scene, slice by slice

By Camden Chan '27

Staff Writer

Wellesley is host to a variety of cuisines ranging from sandwiches to Asian fusion; however, pizzerias are one of the most prolific categories of restaurants — there are numerous locally-owned pizza shops spanning from Washington Street down to Linden Square.

During my years living in Wellesley, I've been faced with a question: Where should I go

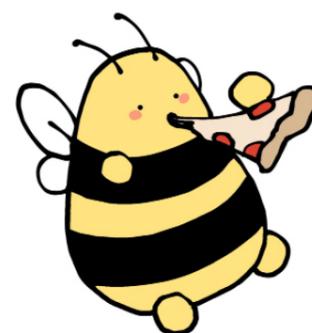
for pizza? With the variety that residents are provided, distinguishing between the different restaurants can be difficult. With this question in mind, I've set out to spotlight four of the pizza places that stood out to me.

FireBird Pizza, the first spot that I visited, is unique in that it opened in October of 2025. Firebird moved into the vacancy left by Deluxe Pizza, located a

block away from the high school at the intersection of Washington and Forest. Given its location, the restaurant offers a convenient spot for high school students and Wellesley residents alike.

The atmosphere inside Fire-Bird is noticeably different from the generic "pizza-place": neon signs and bright red walls fill the space as the kitchen is in plain

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8



Reporting by Josie Song '26
 Layout by Josie Song '26 and Katherine Xu '27

STUDEN

RAMONA MAROON '26



How would you describe your personal style?

R: I would say timeless, almost, but I also like to throw in some bold pieces. I tend to go simple and then pair it with a unique piece.

When did you first become interested in fashion?

R: I've always been obsessed with fashion. For my tenth birthday I threw a gala and the theme was black tie. I wore a huge gown. But, I've always loved it especially cause my mom is really big on fashion.



MAJA ZEI '27



What's your current favorite article of clothing?

M: I have a really nice chunky gray sweater from Zara. It's called a mom sweater, and it's the one I reach for the most [because] it's fun and interesting to look at. I also have a slouchy purse from my mom's closet. A nice bag makes me feel like I'm going somewhere with a purpose.

Who
 your
 M: Ot
 mom.
 and je

JACKSON WADE '27

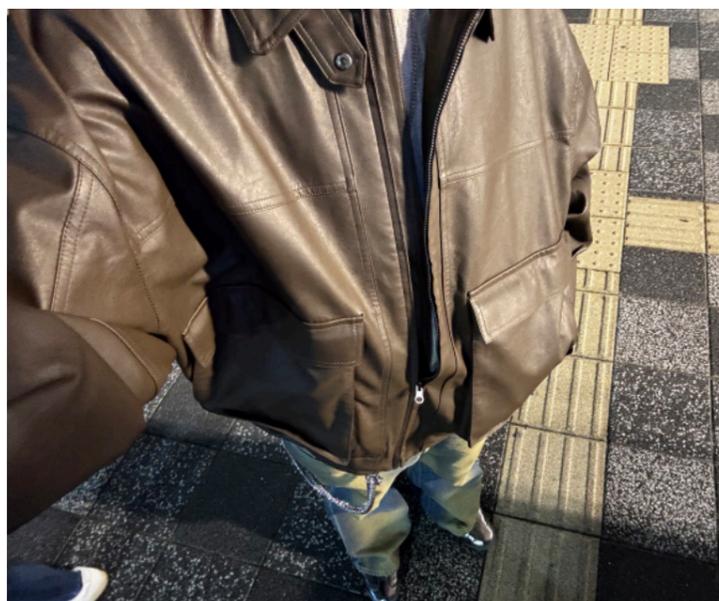


What do you look for when creating an outfit?

J: It's mostly my vibe and how I'm feeling that day. I prefer something a little bit more colorful here and there. But it's a lot more darker clothing, heavy blacks, grays, white. It's also patterns, furs, different elements of clothing that makes it more fun. Even though [my style] is way more monochrome, it's still fun to dress up.

How would you define your personal style?

J: I mix a lot of different styles. I include street fashion, [alternative] fashion, I just go crazy.



T STYLE

JASON JIANG '26

Who do you credit as your style inspiration?

Other than Pinterest, it's my mom. She wears a lot of sweaters and jeans. It's really nice.



Do you consider yourself a performative male?

J: Unfortunately, I believe so. But I just want to say that I liked this stuff before the performative male came about. I actually started listening to [Clairo] during the pandemic.



What sparked your interest in clothing/fashion?

J: I don't think there was one singular moment. I just like the confidence that comes with putting on what you feel best shows your personality.

BRIANNA YANG '28



How do you see your style evolving?

B: I think, at this school, not a lot of people dress super fun so I do feel a bit restrained. I do want to experiment more in the future, after I graduate. Hair wise, I want to try a lot of different things, something that isn't exactly the norm like a really short haircut or calico hair.



What is your favorite trend right now?

B: I've been kind of obsessed with polka dots and colored tights. I've also been really into stripes. It's a lot of patterns.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

view from the door. FireBird serves both pizza and various chicken products, but for the purpose of the review I only tried their pizza. My cheese slice cost \$5.35 — a bit expensive. The slice itself was unorthodox, being much wider than it was long. The taste of the slice was solid: it had a good balance of cheese and sauce, and the crust was crispy. Despite the higher price than some competitors, FireBird’s pizza is something I would definitely recommend.

The next restaurant I visited was North End Pizza, situated right off Washington near the Newton-Wellesley border. Having served slices for nearly twenty years, this pizzeria has been a fan-favorite of Wellesley residents. Upon entering the pizza shop, North End gives off a much more traditional vibe — you aren’t here for flashy lights, you’re here for the food. The restaurant has ample seating, and the lot behind the building had an abundance of parking spots to use.

My slice of plain cheese came out to \$3.29, the lowest price of the four restaurants. The pizza

was a bit crispier than FireBirds. The crust was a bit burnt for my liking, but the pizza itself wasn’t overly charred. Nevertheless, North End’s slice was very en-

Moving on to the next restaurant, Comella’s is a small chain with origins in Wellesley. It opened in 1988, and nearly forty years later this cozy pizza shop

Priced at \$3.75, their cheese square was chewy and a little doughier than most. The sauce was my favorite of the four slices that I tried. With their unique

Finally, the last place I visited was Old School Pizza. Located in a street-side venue, the restaurant is one of the most popular Wellesley pizzerias among Wellesley Public School students of all ages. On half days, it is common to find a line of students trailing out of the door as it is a 15 minute walk from the high school and readily accessible to Sprague and the Middle School

With a slice of cheese coming out to \$4.41, Old School is slightly more expensive than some of the other spots. Their pizza is notably more floppy than others; however, their sauce is strong, they give large slices, and the pizza is chewy and relatively thin. This pizza is my personal favorite, and is a must-try for any high school student looking for somewhere to eat after school.

With restaurants both new and old, Wellesley’s pizza scene is constantly evolving. While this review mentions a few of my personal favorite pizzerias in Wellesley, there are dozens more that I have yet to try. From the storied places like Comellas to the contemporary FireBird Pizza, there is certainly a slice of pizza in Wellesley for every person.



Photo by Camden Chan

The outside of FireBird Pizza, one of the locations that I visited.

joyable, having a distinct taste of herb and tomato. This is a great spot to satisfy your pizza craving: their price can’t be beat, and their flavorful pizza demonstrates why they have been open for so long.

continues to be a popular spot — and their pizza reflects this.

While Comella’s didn’t have the traditional triangle slices, their squares were a welcome change and tasted pretty good.

take on shape and their delicious sauce, Comella’s stands out for those who don’t like charred and crunchy pizza. If you are a fan of doughier pizzas, Comella’s is the spot that I would suggest.

SATIRE: Screen time reaches an all new high as students resort to unconventional methods

By Grace Zhao '27

Features Editor

For students at the high school, social media is considered their flocking ground. Many often average over ten hours a day on Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok (referred to by some parents as ‘TikkieTokkie’) and other social media platforms — phone ban be damned.

In the library and in classes, students have started using their computers and even their graphing calculators to access their daily dopamine hit without infringing on the school rules.

“I don’t care about the phone ban anymore,” said Drew Toig ’26, a particularly rebellious student. “I started using my MacBook to scroll, but when that wasn’t enough, I rewired my calculator to access my TikTok account so I could use it in calculus class without getting caught. I think what most administrators don’t understand about my social media usage is that I need it.”

In the library, where the phone ban is strictly enforced, some students have had their phones apprehended and placed in a mil-

itary-grade safe. Previous methods of phone storage — encasing the phones in ice, burying them underneath the floorboards of the high school, and hiding them on the ceiling of the locker rooms — have all been futile — either clawed open by the infuriated talons of students or outsmarted by their clever wiles.

“I yearn for my studious pupils to be half as arduous about their programs of study as their doom scroll sessions,” said Dr. Hopelisse van Stoodentse, one of the teachers of AP English Language and Composition. “This whole social media rumpus honestly feels like a terribly calamitous predicament!”

Some clubs and groups, namely Key Club, have resorted to creative and odd ways to combat rising screen times occurring in these academic spaces.

Without their phones, some students are so far gone that they’ve become capable of hallucinating their scrolling in class.

“I nearly failed my last test,” said Scoom Droller ’28, “but that was because I needed to hit my 24-hour dopamine mark. I just closed my eyes and thought of my Instagram feed to get a quick fix.”

Worried parents of students have tried to prevent the spread of this rampant social media usage through some unconventional techniques, but the social media itch seems to be spreading to

adults too.

“I’ve tried soaking my kids in a salt and pepper buttermilk concoction that supposedly hypnotizes the kids. I discovered this method on Facebook, and we like to call it marinating — and surprisingly, it works. At least, I thought it would, but then my kids figured out how to sneak out of our tub while I was distracted with scrolling on Facebook,” said parent Obsesseigh Witfonely, while on her phone. “I seriously don’t get how kids these days are always scrolling on that TikkieTokkie!”

The Key Club, a volunteer club for students, has opened a new event: helping parents and students addicted to their phones navigate their lives — with volunteer opportunities ranging from learning to walk down the stairs while scrolling, to spending “detox” days intended to increase attention spans. So far, the number of beneficiaries has reached the thousands.

Droller is one of the many students helped by the Key Club’s initiative, and it’s made a significant impact on his life.

“I can finally live again,” said Droller, with tears in his eyes. “I used to be so consumed by the need to scroll, but now I can finally do things competently. I knew I had to reach out to Key Club after the fifteenth time I fell down the stairs while looking at my phone, and it changed

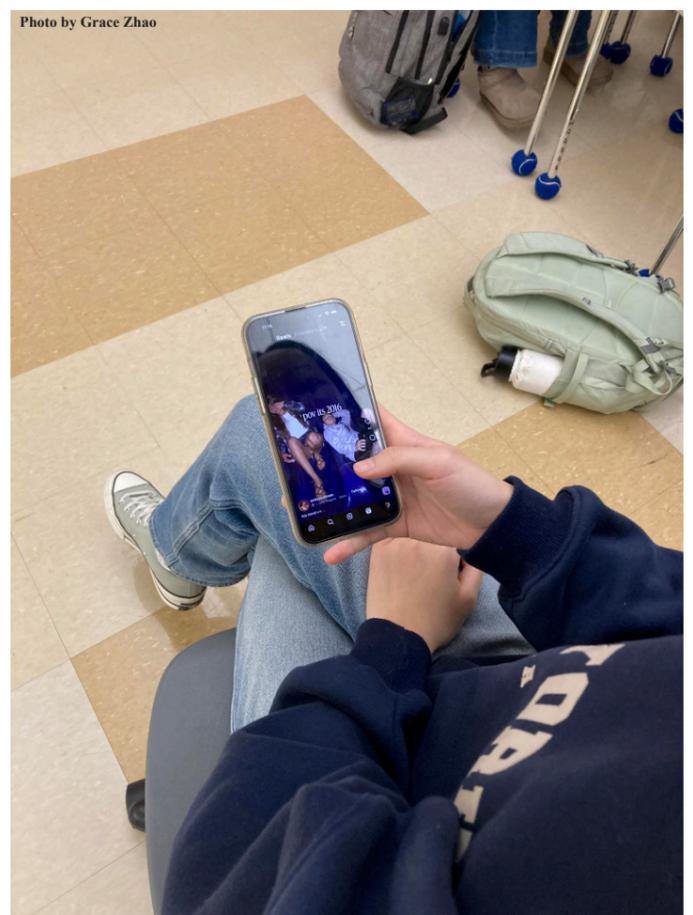


Photo by Grace Zhao

A student indulges in another 15 minute social media break.

my life!”

Toig shares similar sentiments about his past social media abuse and the impact Key Club has had. “I used to crave it so much — and I still do get the cravings, but now they’re controlled and maintained by the Key Club’s unique and special treatment,

which involves installing slides instead of stairs in houses and wearing giant concrete helmets that protect us from the radiation.” said Toig.

For members of the Key Club, helping people with this social media addiction has been a formative experience.

9h 27m

Photo by Grace Zhao



SPORTS EDITOR | Solomon Jin

For more SPORTS, visit www.whsbradford.org

Coach Jesse Davis makes way for new leadership in Wellesley football

By Josie Song '26

Features Editor



Photo courtesy of Jesse Davis

ADAM RICHINS PHOTOGRAPHY

“My approach to coaching is to constantly be open to learn new things and be self reflective,” said Davis.

After fourteen years as head coach of the high school’s varsity football program, Mr. Jesse Davis announced that he will be stepping down.

“...It is time for a new voice to lead the Raiders. I leave this role proud of the tradition we’ve grown and the Raider Pride we’ve strengthened,” said Davis in his official announcement post on Instagram.

However, Davis’ history with the program runs much deeper than his role as head coach. A Wellesley football alumnus himself, Davis was asked by his former coach, Bill Tracey, if

he would be willing to help out following his time in the Marine Corp.

Much like his former coach, Davis makes sure to maintain a close relationship with his players, often keeping contact with them after they graduate.

“It’s a lifelong connection and relationship that you’re going to have with Wellesley football,” said Matthew Leibman ’26, one of the team captains. “It’s more than just being coached and playing on a team.”

Davis facilitated these connections by ensuring that his players were familiar with him

on a personal level. He hosted barbecues, where he talked to players about their lives, making sure that he was up to date with player concerns.

Davis often relied on the captains to help communicate team concerns.

“We’re the branch,” said Leibman. “If he wants to talk to the players [or] get an opinion on something, that’s for us.”

Davis’ commitment to his players was also reflected in his approach to coaching.

“Coaching is just teaching in a different environment,” said Davis. “I was lucky enough to

have some amazing coaches to learn the game from and take pieces of their teaching style to adapt to my own style.”

Nonetheless, Davis himself is not exempt from learning on the job, adapting to what benefits both the team and the players.

“I used to be all about the ‘grind’. The amount of time worked equaled work well done,” said Davis. “I have learned over the years that that is not really effective coaching. Now I think I understand the law of diminishing returns better, especially when it comes to player health and recovery. The past couple

years we have really focused on recovery and speed work, and that has improved the program.”

This style proved to be effective, corroborated by both players on the team and assistant coaches.

“It’s intense and focused when it needs to be, while it also can be relaxed, which allows for the development of relationships between coaches and players. Always goal and detail-oriented,” said Mr. Chris Lewis, a varsity assistant coach.

While Davis is now less “about the grind”, he still requires players to be disciplined and take accountability for their actions, holding himself to the same expectations.

“He always goes by his standards,” said Leibman. “He’s a good role model for us.”

Beyond coaching them on the field, Davis taught players life lessons they can take with them after graduation and their exit from the program. He hosted training camps, summer workouts, and an annual team trip to Maine that aimed to foster bonds between the players.

“He puts us through adversity and makes us learn to lean on each other,” said Danny Collard ’26, another captain of the team. “I don’t think he realizes the impact he’s had.”

While Davis will step down as head coach, he will remain as a special educator at the high school. He hopes to continue coaching the team as well, but with a lesser role.

“While I am stepping away from my role as head coach, my commitment to the Wellesley community remains unchanged,” said Davis. “Once a Raider, always a Raider.”

OPINION: “Is it that deep?” — a look into President Trump’s phone call with the Olympians

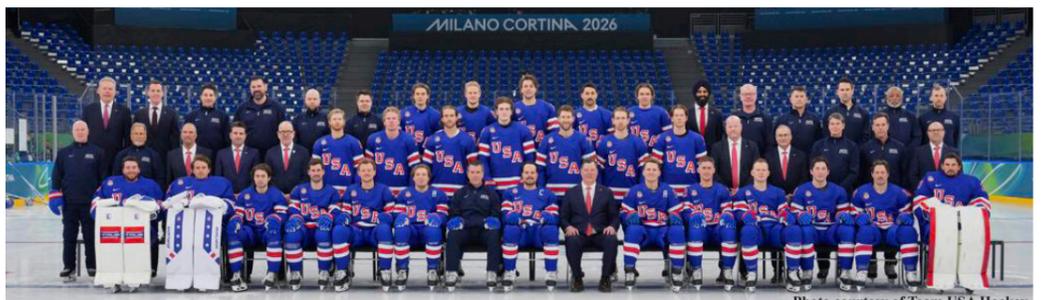
By Sophia Pavano ’26 and Ayesha Kapoor ’26

Editors-in-Chief

On Sunday February 22, President Donald Trump called the USA Olympic men’s ice hockey team to congratulate them on their gold medal win against Canada and to invite them to celebrate at the White House. He then made a sexist quip about having to invite the women’s hockey team, who also won gold, to which the men’s team laughed.

“I must tell you, we’re going to have to bring the women’s team, you do know that? [If I didn’t] I do believe I probably would be impeached,” said Trump.

Ever since, there has been intense online discourse about the moment. News outlets such as NBC News, USA Today, and The New York Times have all



The entire roster of the 2026 men’s Olympic hockey team.

Photo courtesy of Team USA Hockey

reported on the incident, and the clip has gone viral on social media. Across the internet, people have taken to comment sections to show their outrage towards the men's team.

"All people have to say is 'It isn't that deep.' This is the f--- -- president of the U.S. s----- on the female hockey team despite them literally doing better than the mens," commented user @ndudgwnak on a TikTok video.

Others are angry about the public's negative response to the video.

"Oh shut up. Both teams won gold. He made a joke about

inviting the women too — that's not 'putting the men first,' that's people actively looking to be offended," commented user @misscath40 on the same post.

When an act this blatantly disrespectful occurs, there should be no argument over its offensiveness. Labelling people's outrage as "people actively looking to be offended" invalidates all women. Sexism in athletics is an ongoing, corrosive issue that is constantly shoved in the faces of female athletes.

At the high school, students seem to be split three ways — the first two in clear support or

opposition to the team's reaction.

"It made me feel upset because the women achieved the exact same thing as the men's team. So, why is one a joke?" said Sydney Kim '26.

The third reaction seems to be indifference. When asked how the video made him feel, Arthas Goutham '26 said, "Why would I care about that? How does that apply to me? I am not the one who laughed."

But when male athletes are able to discredit even the topmost female athletes in the world, what does that teach the next generation of young men? When

professional athletes — many who are idolized by young boys — demonstrate that women don't need to be taken seriously, how will these boys internalize that lesson?

While the joke might seem harmless, it is coming from the president of the United States. And when people in such high positions act in such a way, it normalizes misogyny and creates a society where it is acceptable, and even encouraged, to dismiss women and their achievements — no matter how impressive those achievements may be.

So yes, it is that deep.

Girls' basketball (cont.)

Photo by Owen Kilgore



The team huddles during a timeout in their game against Milton High School.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Their basketball schedule impacts both winter and February vacation breaks, with required practices for varsity players.

"Although it's sometimes difficult to be motivated for practices over vacation, I know they're very important for our team," said Lila Thornton '28, a varsity player.

Moreover, students do not

only have to balance schoolwork and extracurriculars alongside this busy basketball schedule, but potentially, also other sports.

"I think some people have lost their love for the sport," said Maria Gianarikas '27, co-captain of the team.

Additionally, the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association, or MIAA, forbids student athletes from missing

high school practices or competitions in order to participate in non-school athletic events. This regulation, called the Bona Fide Team Members rule, penalizes the athletes who violate it with punishments ranging from missing a single tournament to suspensions across different sports seasons.

Gianarikas and Lily Andrews '27, the captains of the varsity

team, are also the only juniors. However, they have a positive outlook despite leading a younger team.

"It's honestly exciting to lead a young team because it means we get to spend two years with most likely pretty much the same [people]," Andrews said, "I believe this will allow us to develop our chemistry even more."



! Support Student Journalism !

Subscribe to Wellesley High School's student news publication, The Bradford, using the link on our website (whsbradford.org) or scan the QR code! Subscriptions play a crucial role in our organization and allow us to continue publishing articles. You can also help by purchasing our merchandise! Thank you in advance!



Winter Sports Scoreboard

Boys Alpine Skiing
2 State Championship
Qualifying Skiers

Girls Alpine Skiing
2nd in MIAA State
Championships

Boys Basketball
9-11

Girls Basketball
5-15

Boys Ice Hockey
10-11

Girls Ice Hockey
5-13-2

Boys Indoor Track
3-1

Girls Indoor Track
3-1

Boys Nordic Skiing
6th in MIAA Nordic
Ski Championships

Girls Nordic Skiing
10th in MIAA Nordic
Ski Championships

Boys Swim & Dive
1-3

Wrestling
3-4

ARTS EDITOR | Evie Simon
For more ARTS, visit www.whsbradford.org

Art history at the high school: literacy, community, and inspiration

By Jacey Weng '27
Opinions Editor



Photo by Josie Song

The Art History Club's gathering to appreciate the garden at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum.

In the midst of the high school's repertoire of core classes requiring equations, books, and hours sitting in a classroom, many students rarely have time to pursue their creativity. Every department offers electives, like creative writing or ceramics, but many students find their schedules too full to select courses they take interest in — art history, for instance.

Thus, students have taken to extracurricular clubs and classes. Dylan Kim '26 and Josie Song '26 lead the Art History Club under the advisement of Ms. Shayla Vines.

"We wanted to talk about artists we like, and also educate people on movements we like," Kim said. "I think being well

versed in art history is super important, just like understanding media."

The two leaders research and create presentations highlighting an artist every week for their Friday club meetings. They also encourage members to create presentations showcasing their interests: any creatives — John Singer Sargent, Caravaggio, and Basquiat to name a few — can be represented, no matter how niche or modern.

"It's a way of spreading your own passions and your own interests, and also educating other people," said Kim.

The non-curricular setting allows the freedom of choice, which helps expose members to a wide range of eras, styles,

and techniques. Students gain a better understanding of artistic traditions while honing their eyes to identify techniques and styles.

"I'm interested in learning about the things that I'm inspired by," said Aaron Swingle '27, a member of the Art History Club.

Additionally, Song and Kim invite members to attend a gathering at a local museum once every month. They decide the location with a poll, and often end the day with a group dinner.

"It's really cool for an artist like me," Swingle said. "Seeing new art is something I love, and especially with an artist I don't know, it's really cool to learn about what influenced their work, what their story is, and why they made their art in such a way."

Many students exhibited interest in art history, like Art History Club's ten active members, but the high school doesn't offer the course in-school. However, students can enroll in Virtual High School (VHS) AP Art History, an asynchronous course guided by Vines, who also teaches the metals courses at the high school. It has a rigid curriculum different from the club, but the experience differs from a typical course at the high school.

"VHS is open to kids all over the world. On Wednesday morning, I open up the next week of assignments in the next unit, which is typically moving on to another part of the world or another type of history or culture, and the students have until

the following Tuesday night to complete all the assignments and readings," said Vines.

It's an accessible way for students to explore different careers and subjects, being free of charge to the first 25 students to sign up through the high school. Moreover, since VHS enrolls students from all over the world, kids gain the opportunity to interact with cultures unique from their hometowns. Weekly online discussions reveal a range of perspectives stemming from locations with divergent histories.

Like art history itself, this course overcomes geographical and language barriers, but by connecting students through technology.

"There's more diversity in terms of cultural aspects, ways of thinking, patterns of topics that come up in the class," Vines said. "It's important to see how art has evolved and how art has contributed to history, how it contributes to the telling of a story of what's happened throughout time. And I think it is a great way to do so because it's visual."

The school can't support an in-person class as Vines is the only teacher certified to teach metals and art history. Licenses and new teachers take money and time that the school hasn't been willing to spend.

"If I was to teach both AP Art History for Wellesley High School and still do VHS AP Art History, one and the same for the most part, I would have to give up something else, which is going to hurt the metals program," Vines said.

However, there is no shortage of opportunities for students to explore and share their passions for art history in a group community.

"Join art history club!" said Kim.

OPINION: We need to take the "master" out of Ticketmaster

By Sophia Pavano '26
Editor-in-Chief

On May 6, 1994, Pearl Jam, one of the most popular alternative bands at the time, filed a complaint against Ticketmaster through the U.S. Department of Justice, arguing that the organization ran a "monopoly" over ticket transactions. The band also alleged that Ticketmaster

imposed unnecessary service fees and had connections with concert venues, further stripping artists of control over their ticket prices.

Now, 32 years later, Ticketmaster continues to infringe on the agency of concert-goers and artists. And as queues to purchase tickets last hours and prices con-

tinue to surge, it is evident that something needs to change.

A recent example of this issue can be seen within Taylor Swift's fanbase. In 2022, fans across the world attempted to buy tickets to The Eras Tour through the presale; for the majority of them, the process was far from easy, so

much so that Swift addressed the issue in an Instagram story.

"It's excruciating for me to just watch mistakes happen with no recourse....we asked [the ticket selling companies], multiple times, if they could handle this kind of demand and we were assured they could...it really

pisses me off that [fans] feel like they went through several bear attacks to get [tickets]," Swift said in her post.

And still, in the following year, Swift fans continued to be met with extreme delays and error messages, which Ticketmaster claimed were caused by bots.

Her fans were tired of it, so they fought for change.

In 2024, Minnesota state Representative Kelly Moller proposed the “Taylor Swift Bill”, which states that ticket sellers need to provide information about all fees, and cannot sell multiple copies of one ticket. Minnesota Governor Tim Walz signed the bill into law on May 7, 2024. However, the bill only applied to tickets purchased in Minnesota or for live events held in Minnesota.

This problem directly affects students at the high school who want to attend live events at a reasonable price, but are unable due to Ticketmaster and companies alike.

“As a concert enjoyer, I’ve noticed that it has become extremely difficult to buy tickets for these events. Either the tickets are super expensive, or by the time I get to the front of the queue, they are sold out,” said Caroline Norton ’26.

While browsing tickets for

Bruno Mar’s “The Romantic Tour” at Gillette Stadium on Ticketmaster, I noticed that seats on the highest floor, in the furthest row, cost \$373.75 before taxes. A price that most fans cannot pay.

Not only is it extremely expensive to purchase tickets, but it also causes some fans to skip out on the concert overall.

“For the Megan Maroney concert, the ticket prices as well as the queue line definitely deterred me from buying tickets,” said Serena Loo ’28.

As a result, there are often empty seats at live events, ones that artists and fans seem to have no control over.

For example, during Arcade Fire’s tour through North America in 2017, the band often played for half-empty venues, despite having sold-out shows.

If artists and fans do not have jurisdiction over who attends the concerts and how they do so, access to live music is completely put in jeopardy. Who are we as a



Photo by Sophia Pavano

“The secondary ticket market is an exploitative and unregulated space and we as an industry have a responsibility to protect people and our community,” said popular soul-pop artist Olivia Dean.

people if we can no longer share our passions and art with one

another due to the slight financial gains of outside sources?

We must continue working to change this dire issue.

February Artist of the Month

By Ella Asfaw ’27

Staff Writer

The art department highlights student artwork, spanning multiple types of media, each month. 2D artists of the month, Abby Brown ’26, and Charlotte Foley ’26 capture their growth and creativity through their artwork, which the school can now see in the lobby.

Charlotte Foley ’26

Foley has grown to appreciate the calming space that drawing and painting has brought to her.

“It builds a really important foundation that sets you up for freedom in art in the years after,” Foley said.

She likes to incorporate nostalgia into her pieces by using photographs from her childhood to base them on. She specifically likes to do this with elements



Photo by Charlotte Foley

Foley’s self-portrait “Timeless Play”.

of her pieces that people may not consider at first glance. Her recent self-portrait, “Timeless Play”, represents details of her childhood that made her happy.

“I have pearls on, but in the background I used finger painting because I was trying to show the messiness of childhood,” said Foley.

“Timeless Play” shows Foley smiling with butterflies in the background

“Over time, I’ve learned to use different colors to convey different things, and I think it makes my pieces look better,” said Foley.

While she is not planning on pursuing art professionally, she believes drawing and painting has brought her some of her best moments in high school.

“Art brings people together and allows them to share and hear each others stories. I think thats really important,” said Foley.

Abby Brown ’26

Brown never thought she would love drawing and painting so much. From taking her first introductory class in ninth grade, to now being an art intensive student, she has grown to appreciate immensely.

Brown likes to focus on people who have been kind and welcoming in her life as inspiration for her pieces. She works with pastel and charcoal mediums as well as watercolor and oil paint.

Her portrait of policeman Officer Wall at WHS was particularly meaningful to her.

“I really wanted to represent how he is such a friendly and welcoming person in school,” Brown said.

Brown continues to push herself in class, working with more difficult mediums when given the

chance. Light, specifically, adds depth to her pieces through layering and is a challenging element for her to paint.

“I’ve learned the importance of patience when I’m drawing and painting. I like to make sure everything is planned out and if I need to take a second to take a step and look at the entire piece instead of just working on one single spot at a time it really helps to picture the whole thing,” said Brown.

Brown appreciates the skills she has found in drawing and painting, as she believes she will apply them in her secondary education.

Brown plans to attend school for interior design. She gives credit to her time in drawing and painting that has made her a meticulous artist.



Photo by Charlotte Foley

“Birthday Wishes” shows Foley’s younger self blowing out candles, with the light of the candles working as a focal point.

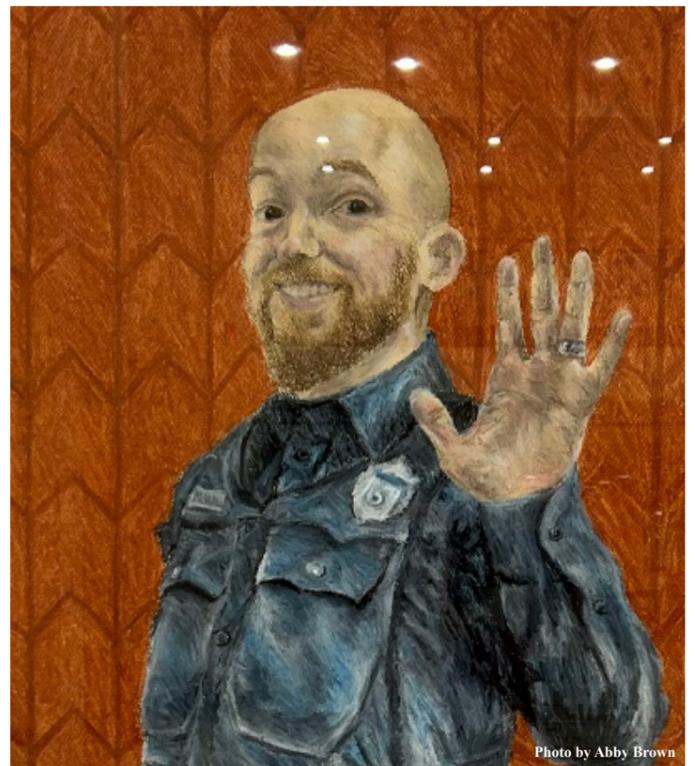


Photo by Abby Brown

Brown’s portrait, called “Officer Wall”, shows him smiling and waving, showing his inviting demeanor at WHS.