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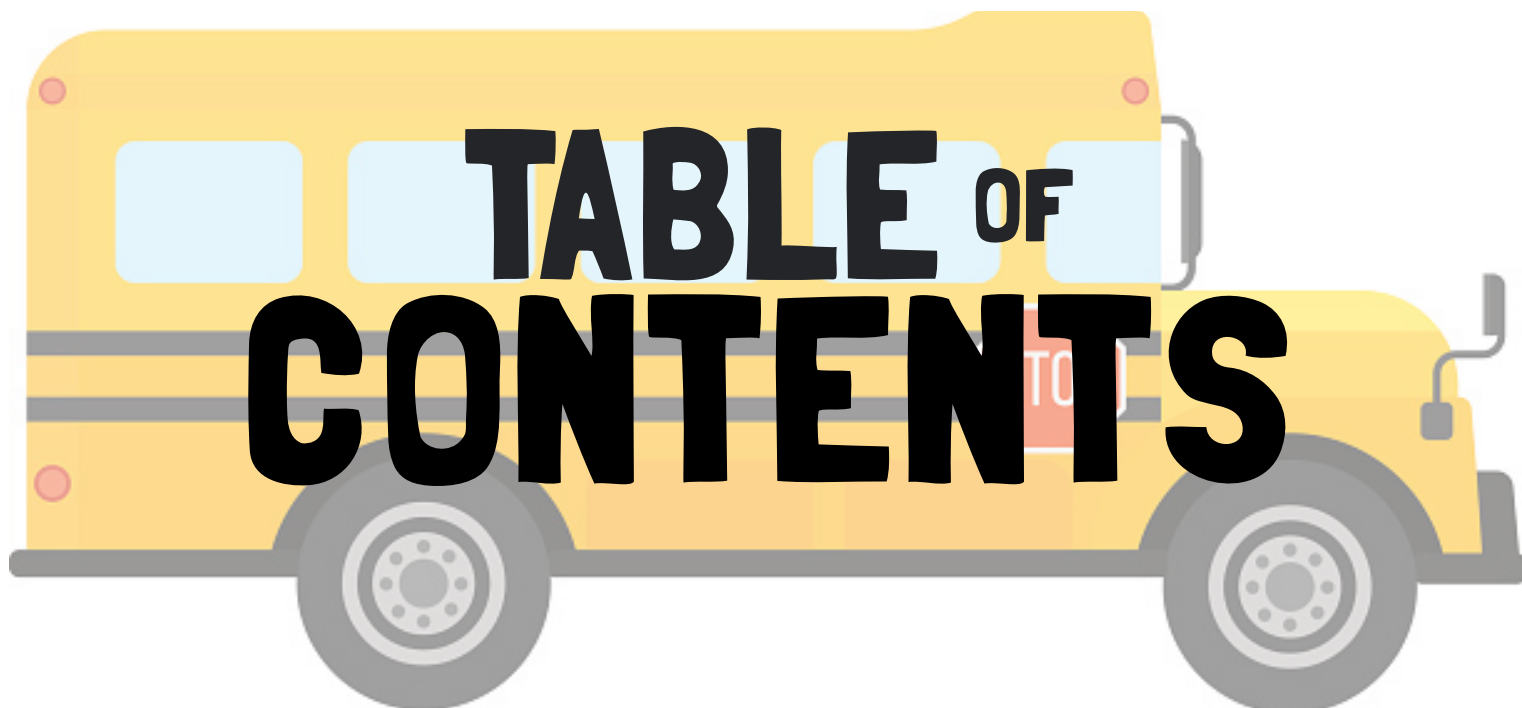
THE MORE THAT YOU

read

THE MORE THINGS YOU WILL

know

THE MORE THAT YOU

learn

THE MORE PLACES YOU'LL

go

DR. SEUSS

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ASIAN DIVERSITY IN MEDIA

Nikki Salazar

In August of 2018, Forbes announced that the highest-paid actress this past year was Scarlett Johannson. Those who say that Hollywood has a diversity problem with Asian actors and actresses are evidently misguided. Why else would an Asian be the most successful actress of 2018?

Asians have been whitewashed in the media for as long as we can remember. In the rare occasion where Asian characters are portrayed by Asian actors, the role is usually a stereotype. Anna May Wong, our very first Chinese-American movie star, eventually fled the scene after stating what every Asian-American actor fights to overcome. "I was so tired of the roles I had to play... There seems little for me in Hollywood." The film industry turns our actors away, and with our actors, our children.

Growing up as a young Asian girl in America, I found solace in *Rugrats*' Kimi Finster and *Codename: Kids Next Door*'s Kuki Sanban. As comforting as it was to have Asian girls to look up to, these characters still matched the stereotype of the small, obedient, perky East Asian girl. I could've used a role model that was strong and unapologetic. How was I to believe that Asian girls could be powerful if I had never seen one? Growing up, I could've used a character like *Ghost in the Shell*'s Motoko Kusanagi, but I watched as she was cast to Johannson. I could've used any female character in *Avatar: The Last Airbender*, but most—if not all—Asians could recognize the disaster of that remake. Nobody can imagine the amount of confusion I was under at nine years old, watching Katara, the clever, dynamic non-Eastern Asian girl that I saw myself in, with pale white skin. Those who don't have to imagine it had lived it, sitting with me in that theater and thinking those

very same thoughts.

The diversity in the media in the portrayal of Asians has been terribly lacking for years, and I won't act as if it's better today. Only a little over a year ago, Daniel Dae Kim and Grace Park announced their leave from *Hawaii Five-O* over the fact that they had main roles, yet were paid far less than their non-Asian costars. To make matters worse, *Hawaii Five-O* takes place in the most predominantly Asian area of the United States.

As pessimistic as Kim and Park's situation was, there's something bittersweet in the fact that they went through with their leave. Like Anna May Wong, a star of the 1920s, our stars of the modern day refuse to stand for the few and shameful options for Asian-Americans in television. This is the refusal that sparks movies such as *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* and *Crazy Rich Asians*. This is the refusal that

> "THE FILM INDUSTRY TURNS OUR ACTORS AWAY, AND WITH OUR ACTORS, OUR CHILDREN."

forces change.

My first mention of Johannson was obviously a joke, but it held truth. The most successful actress of 2018 is Lana Condor. The most successful actress of 2018 is Constance Wu. The most successful actress of 2018 is Awkwafina. How could they not be the most successful when they managed to thrive in the career that tries, even today, to push them away? The most successful actress of 2018 is Asian. And no, it's not Scarlett Johansson.

Modern Horror Movies
Terrifying or Terrible?

When it comes to horror movies, there is one thing that makes them truly enjoyable: terror. Terror is not just fear, but suspense. Horror movies with the right amount of terror make you feel for the characters on an emotional level and make you dread what lies around the next dark corner....

But who needs any of that? It's far easier to just throw in a few jumpscares to make the audience feel afraid and call it a day! Right?

This, unfortunately, seems to be the mentality which many modern horror movies are based off of. Recent films such as *The Nun*, *Slender Man*, and *Truth or Dare* simply don't seem to tap into their true potential. It should be noted that not *every* modern horror movie is terrible (as terrific films such as *A Quiet Place* have proven), but what is making a vast majority of them fall flat? The answer lies in the idea of terror and the way in which characters are developed t reach it.

If the audience doesn't care about the main characters in a horror movie, then why even bother calling it one? The audience *must* have some emotional connection to the characters so that when they are in danger, people are not necessarily rooting for them, but fearing for their lives as if their own were at stake. This is a fundamental building block of terror when it comes to horror movies. If the main characters are unlikable, annoying, or just plain stupid, the movie loses its gravity, and the audience is no longer fearing what comes next.

A perfect example of this is in the film *Annabelle*. On the surface, this film about a creepy doll seems terrifying at first, but when you start watching it, you see just how idiotic the plot ends up becoming. Perhaps the most frustrating moment of the film is when the main character (a mother) decides to keep the doll, which was already creepy enough to begin with, after a murderous member of a cult *literally slits their throat with the doll in their hands*. It's moments like these in horror movies that result in a real disconnect from the audience, leaving them baffled rather than terrified.

Additionally, some horror movies are simply a let-down since they're not nearly as scary as they're hyped to be in trailers or promotional material. When a company says their movie is scary, they need to deliver. One could argue that trailers are always exaggerated so that people

are inclined to go and see the movie, but what's inexcusable is when titular characters such as those in *The Nun* and *Slender Man* barely even make an appearance! When audiences expect a scary monster and are instead given mediocre plot development, it's no wonder that the essence of terror is ruined. In fact, it should be noted that not every horror movie even needs a scary monster or supernatural being to be considered terrifying. Movies such as *Misery* (based on the Stephen King novel) and *10 Cloverfield Lane* (minus the supernatural aspect) do an amazing job with this, relying on psychological wit and simple human emotions to keep audience members on the edges of their seats.

Finally, perhaps the biggest disappointment is the reliance on a particular horror movie trope that has plagued modern films for years. Some may even call it a parasite, infesting its way into practically any horror movie it can find. This, of course, is the shameful jumpscare. Not only are jumpscares lazy, but they've simply become too predictable. The long pause, musical buildup, and "character not realizing the evil creature is right behind them" clichés are expected by horror movie-goers. Modern films are riddled with them, making them lack any real substance and keeping them further and further away from that magic word: terror.

All in all, whether it's character disconnect, audience let-down, or jumpscares which require zero effort, it's clear that Hollywood has some serious recurring problems when it comes to bad horror movies. When will it learn to actually make movies thrilling and suspenseful rather than spooky and creepy? Thankfully, some directors and producers have gotten the idea, but others will simply have to keep going until they finally tap into the terror that makes a horror movie truly special. You might say that movies are there to make money, and it doesn't really matter how scary they are in the end, and you aren't wrong in thinking that. In fact, it's the sad truth. Will bad horror movies continue to do well at the box office, or will true terror and quality reign supreme? Only you can be the judge.

- Rocco Tropea

The Academy's Wi-Fi Problem Fixable or Jank Forever?

According to the father of information theory, Claude Shannon, *"There are four things we can't live without: air, water, food, and the internet."* Although he meant this as a joke, in recent years the internet has become a cornerstone to academia, media, and society in general. And the numbers reflect this. The average working individual spends around 3.4 hours a day on the internet, and the average Academy student spends around 24 hours a day on the internet. Because of the demand associated with accessing the internet, ISPs (internet service providers) and researchers have created a variety of communication standards that make it possible to connect to the world wide web. One such technology is Wi-Fi, something that all devices (including phones, laptops, and smartwatches) use on a day-to-day basis. But what exactly is WiFi, and, more importantly, why is the Wi-Fi at our school so inconsistent?

The term Wi-Fi actually stands for "Wireless Fidelity", and was created in 1991 at AT&T Bell Labs. Wi-Fi works by transmitting packets (or set amounts) of bits between a device and a Wi-Fi router. These packets contain instructions that tell your computer what to do when you click on a website link. These might include the images to display, the font of the text on the website, and any pop-up videos. Prior to Wi-Fi, these packets were sent over a wire connected between a device and a router. However, many people did not like Ethernet (as it is called), as it did not allow for mobility, and had a set range of operation. Wi-Fi, on the other hand, abandons the "archaic" wired connection of Ethernet in favor of electromagnetic radiatin. A Wi-Fi router emits radio waves in a radiating sphere away from its antennas, as does an electronic device with a Wi-Fi module. When the waves from a router meet the corresponding waves of the device, a connection is established, and data can be sent between them. Due to the wireless approach, Wi-Fi is not limited by factors such as cable length, and devices trying to access the internet are no longer tied down as they previously were.

However, Wi-Fi is not without its downfalls. Because it uses radio waves, it is subject to electromagnetic interference from a range of devices, including microwaves and toasters. Additionally, walls and barriers made of certain materials can completely block Wi-Fi signals, and signals may bounce around in a room a few times before being received, resulting in distorted and faulty signals. Furthermore, if too many devices connect to a single router, the router can become overloaded with requests, and it may shut down.

So why isn't the Wi-Fi at the Academy reliable, and why

doesn't it work consistently? Unfortunately, that can't be answered by by any of the reasons above. The school was built fairly recently, so it cannot contain materials that may block Wi-Fi signals. Also, the microwaves in the Commons aren't powerful enough to knock out an entire network, and I doubt the school only uses one router. The most sound hypothesis for the occasional lack of Wi-Fi could be a problem on the other side of the router: namely, the internet servers it connects to when retrieving data to send to other devices. Since these servers are centralized for the MCVTS school district, it would explain why when the Wi-Fi doesn't work, it doesn't work for the entire district.

Ultimately, it seems that the problem with the Academy's Wi-Fi lies not with the actual communication medium itself, but with another connection higher up on the internet chain. That's too bad, as it seems that it wouldn't be possible to easily remedy the issue. But it does show us that when the Wi-Fi stops working, we should immediately use our phone hotspots instead of fiddling around with Wi-Fi settings. Really, we should stop hating on the school Wi-Fi; we should hate on the district's internet servers. They're the real reason we can't get onto Google!

- Avinash Kumar

Technology is Yet to Transform Textbooks

As opposed to years ago, many schools are now adopting a system based on technology. They use many online programs as well as devices. Technology serves to act as a supplement and enhance a student's learning. In particular, the form of textbooks is changing from physical copies to books accessible online. Online textbooks are being used more frequently, but the idea has still not taken off compared to physical ones. Although there are benefits of e-textbooks, the advantages of physical textbooks tremendously outweigh them.

Students are likely to choose to use physical books rather than online books for many reasons. Some find it easier to retain information and learn concepts with tangible books. Countless studies have taken place and results have shown that retention is higher after reading from a hard copy rather than an e-textbook. Many people enjoy the sensory experience of reading a physical book which cannot be replaced. Running fingers through the pages gives a feeling that cannot be found online. Physical textbooks allow people to become deeply involved with the material. It is presented in an organized and easily understandable fashion. A student can even write notes or stick post-its in the books if needed. Textbooks are long-lasting, require no battery power, have phenomenal user interface, and have a high contrast display.

Teachers are trying to use books online so that they can save paper. However, there are many downsides to this. In order to access the textbook online, one must have a strong internet connection. Also, there is a possibility of errors occuring with logistics such as usernames and passwords. Then, students have to click multiple times to finally reach the desired page. Only seeing one or two pages at a time does not allow them to think of it as an actual book. It's difficult to continuously scroll up and down while simultaneously paying attention. Staring at a computer screen for long periods of time can strain a person's vision too. This causes students to lose focus on the actual concepts and information. Furthermore, students can be easily distracted while using an e-textbook as the internet is just one click away.
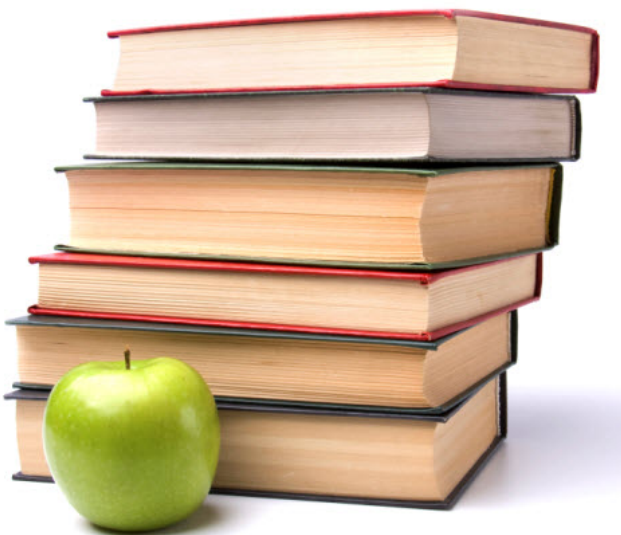
The online textbooks have not surpassed physical textbooks yet. However, online books still come with benefits. They are portable and can be read with any device. Some e-textbooks can even enlarge fonts and have interesting features like a built-in dictionary. This can help students discover a new style of learning which may help them. It depends on the choice of the person. In the future, they can very possibly replace physical textbooks. For now, though, physical textbooks remain more widely used.

- *Megan Santhumayor*

Netflix vs. An Old Friend

The renowned company of Netflix was once the king of its genre, introducing something new and innovative to the entertainment industry. Its throne remained unchallenged for years, as it allowed thousands of people to stream their favorite shows and introduced new, award-winning titles. Currently with over 130 million subscribers worldwide, Netflix has generated over $400 million in profit this year alone!

Though like any other business, Netflix would be much more profitable if it weren't for its many competitors. The streaming business model is a staple of our generation in terms of entertainment and won't be going anywhere anytime soon. Netflix, though revolutionary, is now part of a larger realm full of streaming services. With several stories to tell and licenses to buy, companies such as Hulu, HBO Now, and Sling TV have rose out of the shadow of Netflix's success. Even organizations such as Amazon and PlayStation have altered their paradigms to provide their own twist on the genre. Despite the appearance of these appealing services, Netflix is dreading what's to come next year. Its biggest and most threatening competitor is in the making from the ashes of a six-year friendship. Disney, the company us millennials love, has stared down into Netflix with no remorse saying, "You know what? *We can do it better.*"

That's right. In a couple of months full of excitement, Disney will be releasing its own streaming service that is aiming to be cheaper than Netflix. By the end of 2019, all Star Wars and Marvel content (excluding Netflix original series such as *Iron Fist* and *Daredevil*) will be removed from Netflix's library. Both past and future Pixar, Marvel,

Disney, and Lucasfilm titles will be published and expanded upon in this new Disney package! This decision was surprising to many to say the least, especially because Netflix and Disney shared a healthy business relationship. However, from a business perspective, why should Disney allow Netflix to generate millions of dollars in profit for *their* content when they could just do it themselves?

It may disappoint many of you that you'll have to pay for *another* service, but this is our childhood favorite company Disney, home to *The Incredibles, Finding Nemo,* and the extensive Marvel Cinematic Universe, which includes upcoming titles such as *Captain Marvel* and *Avengers 4*. On top of releasing the movies we love, Disney has announced that they will have several original series, including a few to expand upon the Star Wars and Marvel universes. The cumulation of these factors have already guaranteed Disney's new streaming service will be a hit in the entertainment market, but for all of the diehard Marvel fans among you, there is even more to be excited about...

Back in early 2018, Disney's CEO announced plans to acquire *21st Century Fox* on top of its extensive collection so far. As of now, it is still unconfirmed whether *Fox* content will be available on this new streaming service as the deal nears an end. However, if *Fox* titles appear on the service, it will include the beloved *X-Men* and *Fantastic Four* movies and shed light on the high possibility of a new and original series starring these characters. Although Deadpool will not be transferred over (due to its *R* rating), the addition of these characters add immense value to the program.

With the service due to release in Fall 2019, it is already safe to say that it will be extremely popular among young adults and teenagers around the world. It may be another service to pay for, but due to the popularity of the titles included, it may be time for all of us to move on from Netflix. The once unchallenged king may finally decline and become just another program part of the plethora of streaming services.

- Mehraaj Tawa

   September marks the beginning of a new school year, but for many others, it is one of the most eventful and action packed sport months of the year. As the MLB regular season is coming to a close, the NFL has started.

   Beginning with the MLB, as the 162 game regular season winds down, teams from the American League and National League are competing for the coveted 10 playoff spots (including the Wild Card spots). For those of you unfamiliar with the MLB and its playoff format, here is a quick explanation:

   There are 30 total teams in the MLB with 15 in the American League and 15 in the National League. Within each league, there are 3 divisions with 5 teams. The top teams (best record) of each division qualify for the playoffs. Of the remaining 12 teams in each league, the top two teams (once again determined by their records) qualify to play a one game tie-breaker known as the Wild Card game. The winner of these Wild Card games move onto their league's respective Divisional Series (ALDS/NLDS) and following that the League Championship (ALCS/NLCS). The winners of the best-of-7 championship serieses compete in the World Series which is played at the end of October.

Postseason format:
• Wild Card: 1-game playoff
• LDS: Best-of-5, 2-2-1 format
• LCS: Best-of-7, 2-3-2 format
• World Series: Best-of-7, 2-3-2 format

Here is a picture of the current MLB playoff picture as of September 24th:

   The favorite to win the World Series, according to Las Vegas, is the Boston Red Sox followed by the Chicago Cubs. The New York Yankees have the 5th best odds to win the World Series. As September winds down and October is around the corner, America's favorite pastime is heating up with Americans getting ready for some exciting MLB playoffs.

   Moving away from the diamond, with the NFL's first three weeks of the regular season complete, the league has been full of disappointments and

surprises. Quarterback Patrick Mahomes from the Kansas City Chiefs has lit the league on fire, throwing for nearly 900 yards and 13 Touchdowns in his first three games, a NFL record. The Cleveland Browns have also been a surprise, winning their first game in 635 days. With a 1-1-1 record, and 2018 NFL Draft Pick #1 Baker Mayfield at starting quarterback, Browns fans have hope for a successful season.

Moving to the NFC, the Tampa Bay Buccaneers have taken the top spot in the NFC South. Powered by quarterback Ryan "Fitzmagic" Fitzpatrick, they have taken the league by storm, proving they can be a formidable opponent. On the flip side of the league, the Oakland Raiders are still winless (0-3) which has come as a shock to many. For the Raiders, it seems as if their problems will not disappear. After trading away All-Pro defensive linebacker Khalil Mack, their defense has been non-existent, posing large questions for head coach Jon Gruden, who signed an NFL record 10 year, 100 million dollar contract.

Closer to home, New York Giants (1-2) and New York Jets (1-2) rookies Saquon Barkley (Running Back) and Sam Darnold (Quarterback) have shown signs promise and hope to lead their teams to the playoffs.

However, the NFL's biggest story may be its new "Roughing the Passer" penalty which is changing the game in a controversial way. In order to protect quarterbacks and passers from violent tackles, the NFL has now made it a penalty to "land on top of him [passers] with all or most of the defender's weight." This new rule has sparked a lot of debate throughout the NFL with players expressing their discontent. Most defensive players argue that when tackling a quarterback, it is impossible not to land without part of your body on top of him. In short, the NFL is asking defensive linemen and linebackers to defy the laws of gravity. This new rule has also garnered some discontent by passers themselves; Baltimore Ravens quarterback Joe Flacco was quoted, "Listen, this is football, man. We all sign up to get hit. We all sign up [knowing] you might get hurt...It's a violent sport. It's meant to be that way." Despite all the backlash with three weeks under the league's belt, the NFL has shown no sign of rescinding the new rule. In the league's defense, it is true that rules like this act as a precaution to protect players. But at what cost? This is a

question the league must answer in the coming months before it is too late.

(Green Bay Packers defensive linebacker Clay Matthews was called for "Roughing the Passer" on this play, a crucial turning point which eventually ended in a Green Bay loss)

- *Avaneen Pinninti*

WHAT'S NEW AT APPLE?

iPhone XS Max

Starting at $1099, the iPhone XS features a 6.5" display, an A12 Bionic chip, and a more secure form of Face ID. In addition to this, the phone has a battery which lasts up to 1.5 hours longer than the iPhone X. In terms of its appearance, the new phone is identical to last year's iPhone X and the same dual camera setup. This year, Apple announced that the new iPhone would allow users to create even more stunning portraits. The new Depth Control feature gives users the ability to adjust the depth of field after a shot is taken. Finally, one of the main changes Apple made with this phone is that the top bezel is much smaller in size compared to last year's phone, giving users even more screen space.
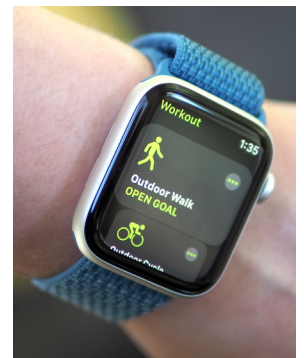
iPhone XS

The iPhone XS is nearly identical to the iPhone XS Max, except for the fact that it has a smaller screen size and lower battery life. The phone includes an OLED display, comes in a new gold color, and can withstand immersion in water up to one meter for up to 30 minutes. The phone includes the toughest glass ever used in a smartphone, and has been shown to be very durable.

Phone XR

The iPhone XR has often been thought of as the mix between last year's iPhone X and the iPhone 8. The phone starts at $749, and also comes in a variety of colors including blue, red, yellow, black, white, and orange. The phone only has one camera, on the back, which protrudes from the back of the phone. While the phone may be the perfect price for many, one of the greatest disappointments of the phone was that it featured an LCD screen with the same screen resolution as the iPhone 4. Regardless of this, many predict that this phone will be a hit, especially those who are not willing to spend as much on the iPhone XS and iPhone XS Max.

Apple Watch Series 4

Though it has a similar shape and structure compared to the Apple Watch Series 3, the Apple Watch Series 4 is slightly slimmer compared to last year's model. The watch has a more efficient design, and no longer has a bezel as well. One of the watch's most notable features is the built in electrocardiogram, which has been cleared by the FDA. The watch can also detect if you have a fall, and is able to make emergency calls for you as well. The watch starts at $400, and comes with a variety of bands as well.

- Roshan Patel

New Policies at the Academy

   As we start off the new year, we want to start off on the right foot. This 2018-2019 school year will be Mr. Jeffries' first full year as an administrator of the Academy. As he leads us on this year, it is important we take a few minutes to note some of the key points of our school's rule book. Most of the information is the same, but the following things should be highlighted:

1. **Excused Absences:**
   A. Includes: personal illness (with physician's note), required court appearance, death in the family, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, school sponsored activity (aka field trips), assigned home instruction, college visitation, religious observances, and administrative approval.
   B. It should be noted that family vacations do not count as excused absences (what a shame :/), and a total of 18 absences are permitted in a full year course with 9 absences allowed each semester.
   C. As I mentioned above, college visitation is now considered an excused absence (yay!). A maximum of three cumulative days will be counted as excused. A parent/guardian signed letter indicating the college and the date of visit must be submitted prior to the visit itself. After, verification in the form of a letter or email on the college/university letterhead including the date and reason for visitation is required.

2. **Make-Up Work**
    A. Excused Absences: This is no different than previous years. If you miss one day of school, you get one day to make it up. Miss two days, you get two days to make it up, etc.
    B. Unexcused Absences: In the past, teachers would have no requirement to allow students to make up work (including tests and quizzes) missed during an unexcused absence. However, now all tests, quizzes, and assignments should be made up on the day of the student's return. In other words, you have to make up assessments on the day you come back from vacation and hand in all homework the same day.

3. **Dress Code**
    A. Everyone besides the new freshman know of the dress code scenario at the end of the year last year. Fortunately, this year's dress code has been dedicated one full page of explanation in our agenda.
    B. "No dress code can be all-inclusive, the administration reserves the right to make the final decision on all attire." The school permits all clothing that is safe and not disruptive to the learning environment.
    C. Besides the usual no hats or sunglasses in school, clothing should not reveal chests and torsos.
    D. If the dress code is violated, the student will have to go the main office and will be asked to make an adjustment or change to their outfit. If this change is not feasible, parents will be called to bring appropriate clothes or bring their child home to change their clothes.

These are the key points noted in the student handbook. If you wish to know more, the handbook had been given to each student and you can review it as much as you like. Be aware of the school's conduct as you begin your year at the Academy. The last thing you want is to be surprised by a policy you didn't know existed. That's all, and I hope y'all have a wonderful year!!

- Adhya Khare

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