



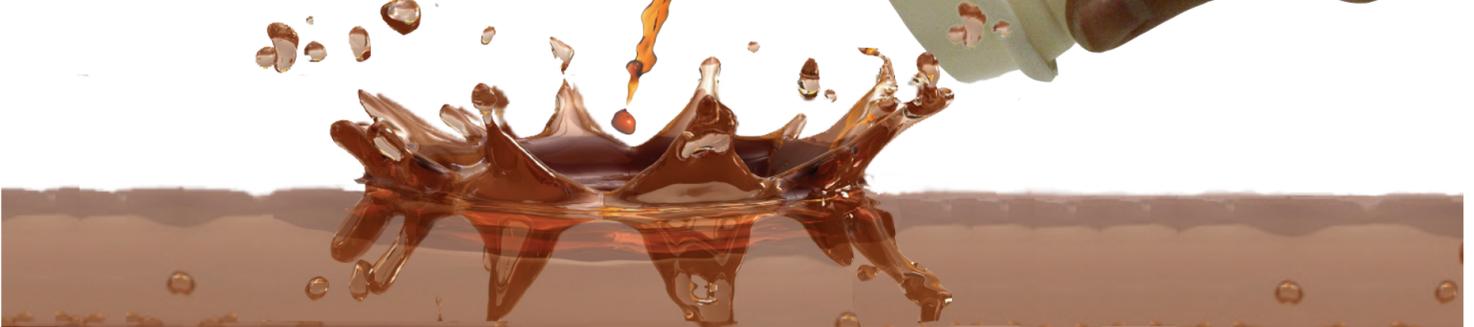
## FANDOM

Take a glimpse into the lives of those who are obsessed and eternally in love with musicians One Direction, Ed Sheeran and Justin Bieber in this in-depth feature.

PAGE 7

# A Caffeinated Existence

Some students use it to get them through the day – but adverse health effects and dependency can result.



By Melissa Healey  
STAFF REPORTER

Didlyceride, sodium bicarbonate and soy lecithin – three ingredients in that trendy Starbucks cup. These ingredients, hard to pronounce but easy to miss, are found in the caramel sauce in any Starbucks drink.

For senior Savannah Ransome, her Starbucks coffee gets her through the day.

“My mom can basically drink a whole pot by herself in the morning. I grew up to the smell of coffee each and every day,” Ransome said. “It was only a matter of time before I started drinking it. It became a regular affair over spring break junior year. It was the time I had to start studying for AP tests and needed that extra boost.”

Coffee became an essential part of her life. Without her three to four cups every day, she began to feel the side effects. She noticed it during a school trip.

“Well, we were so busy I didn’t have a chance to drink coffee one morning, and the people in charge wouldn’t let (me) leave the meeting area to go buy coffee. I was literally on edge all day,” Ransome said. “I was even sassier than I usually am and was a complete mess without the caffeine. I was tired and going through the begin-

ning stages of ‘withdrawal.’ I didn’t end up getting my coffee until about 4:30 in the afternoon. It was literal relief for me and for those around me.”

Environmental teacher Chris Skowronski has noticed teenagers often trying to replace sleep with caffeine.

“Too much caffeine can affect sleep. So you get on that cycle that you’re not sleeping properly, so you may need medication to help you sleep,” Skowronski said. “Then you need caffeine to help you stay awake, and that’s just a horrible cycle.”

Skowronski finds that a common problem with highly caffeinated drinks, or energy drinks, is that there are no regulations, which means anybody can buy it.

“I think there should be a certain age where people should be allowed to drink that. Is that 16? Is that 18? I don’t know,” Skowronski said. “I don’t like the idea of middle school kids drinking it. That’s wrong, I think. For them, how did they get that? That goes back to the parents, but if you’re an adult and you’re 18 years old, you have that freedom.”

Like Skowronski, many students have also noticed people’s dependency on caffeine. In science teacher Susan Speirs’ Applied Medical Research classes, students will research this topic a little more.

“In Applied Med, students explore many interesting units and one of them is the pathophysiology of the cardiovascular system,” Speirs said. “As part of each unit, students complete a lab inquiry project. Teams get to decide what kind of question they are interested in exploring related to the topics.”

The students took two different people, one who constantly drinks caffeine and one who hardly drinks any. Then they proceeded to expose each of the students to the same amount of caffeine and examined their reactions.

“The thought is that over time you see that caffeine increases the heart rate, makes it go faster. So a normal average is 70 beats a minute,” Speirs said. “Those who are the ‘users’ actually think their heart rate goes to a new normal. Like if your normal was at 70, your new normal is now 80. You’re used to it over and over again that it increases your heart rate. Stress kind of works that way. Some people never get back to their initial level, it just gets higher and higher.”

Contributing: Taylor White

SEE INFOGRAPHIC PAGE 6

## END OF THIRD QUARTER

Friday, April 12.

## MINI COLLEGE NIGHT

Tuesday, April 16 at 7:30 p.m. in the cafeteria.

## CLASS OF 2013 ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Monday, April 22 at 6 p.m. in the cafeteria and Cooper’s Square.

## HALF-DAY

Tuesday, April 23, 10:55 a.m. dismissal.

## BOYS LACROSSE

Saturday, April 13 at 2 p.m. against Liggett.

## GIRLS LACROSSE

Saturday, April 13 at 10:30 a.m. against Regina at home.

## BOYS GOLF

Thursday, April 18 at 3 p.m. against South at Lochmoor.

## IDEAS

“AT THE TIME, I WAS NAIVE AND THOUGHT THAT MENTAL ILLNESS WAS THE EQUIVALENT TO BEING AN ABSOLUTE PSYCHOPATH. HOW COULD I POSSIBLY HAVE A MENTAL ILLNESS?”

PAGE 9



## Teachers, District hammer out new contract

By Kim Cusmano & Anna Hopkins  
EDITOR & INTERN

After 30 meetings over three months, seven negotiating representatives for the Grosse Pointe Education Association (GPEA) and seven more for the District hammered out a new contract for teachers that took effect on March 25.

“The old contract forced pay cuts across all staffing groups, as school expenses have increased while funding and the student population have decreased,” math teacher Greg Johnson said. “This contract allows for a sharing of both changes to the budget via cuts and continued reduction in compensation to offset deficit spending.”

In spite of the teacher salary cuts and increasing expenses linked to the budget shortfall, the School Board’s biggest concern is to continue improving education.

“(The School Board) did, however, vote 6-0 to approve the contract and many of them spoke of the shared sacrifices needed to maintain the excellent level of education provided to students in Grosse Pointe,” Johnson said. “They also wished that schools weren’t underfunded so they could invest more into the classroom.”

The School Board believes the changes to the contract will help make improvements in education.

“The ... School Board recognizes that changes in compensation for all employees, including teachers, are difficult,” Assistant Superintendent Jon Dean said. “The Board of Education believes that the recent changes to the contract preserve our financial good standing while simultaneously improving learning outcomes for students.”

The teachers in the District, while most were not directly negotiating, had some say. At the end of the process, the contract went to the teachers who voted whether to ratify it or not. They needed a simple majority to ratify. The vote ended with 62% in favor of the new con-

## By the numbers

30 meetings over 3 months

March 25

new contract took effect

62% of teachers voted in favor (305-161)

Board voted 6-0 in favor

7 & 7

GPEA & Board negotiators

tract (according to the Grosse Pointe Patch), which will last through 2017.

“Everyday, teachers are not involved in that bargaining process. They (the representatives) negotiate in good faith for us, and then they bring out the contract that we wrote ‘yes’ or ‘no’ on,” social studies teacher Bridget Cooley said.

Teachers and School Board members on the negotiating team were bargained to remedy the budget deficit.

“Michigan is dealing with a major budget shortfall, and Grosse Pointe is not immune from the realities of budget issues,” Cooley said. “So when it goes to renegotiate the contract, they have to look to savings because we’re not making as much money. This is where some of the contract issues came from.”

The new contract has many changes that will affect both students and teachers. Some of the changes include teacher compensation, staff meeting time, high school conferences, changes in the high school calendar and tutorial duties.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## Dartmouth decision spurs debate over AP classes’ value

By Jordan Radke & Anu Subramaniam  
EDITOR & STAFF REPORTER

AP tests are rolling around and, if the trends of growth continue, more students at North and nationwide will be taking them than last year. However, these test scores may not get them anywhere, at least not at Dartmouth University, which has ended granting course credit for AP or IB exams, starting with their Class of 2018. The decision has highlighted the contention surrounding AP classes and the role they play in preparing students for college.

“The feedback I’ve gotten from most kids that have taken my AP class is that they are either better or equivalent to students in the college who have taken the equivalent class,” AP Calculus teacher Greg Johnson said. “I believe that the College Board curriculum and the curriculum we teach here in class does prepare kids for the next level, not just the class itself, but the next level beyond that.”

A 2008 study funded by The College Board found AP classes to be a strong indicator of college success, in terms of GPA, credit hours earned and whether or not students graduated within four years. Even after controlling for pre-existing achievement and economic gaps, they found students who took AP courses saw more success in college.

Still, research findings on the topic vary, and the study has been criticized for being paid for by The College Board, which runs the AP program. Even a former student is quick to point out that college success may not be a product of high school AP experience.

“AP courses are a good intro into college classes, but how well you do or how many you take doesn’t reflect how well you do in college,” Brett Slajus, a Class of 2012 alumnus and University of Michigan Spanish and Microbiology major, wrote in an email.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

## FIVE MINUTES WITH

## Long-term substitute Rachel Butler

By Colleen Reveley  
STAFF REPORTER

New long-term Spanish substitute teacher Rachel Butler caught the "travel bug" in Puerto Rico. She has had it since the summer before her sophomore year of high school and has never been cured. She has been to 10 countries so far and hopes to make it many more.

"It was a school Spanish trip. My Spanish teacher created this field trip, basically. We had a lot of chaperones, probably more chaperones than students, actually. I went with my parents and my sister, who was in a different grade, but it was a lot of fun," Butler said.

The six weeks she spent studying abroad in Spain completely submerged her in a new culture and created a passion for teaching the language.

"(In) Spain, the food is phenomenal, the weather was great, and the people there were super friendly. It's just such an experience to help you grow as a person when you speak another language," Butler said. "You kind of muddle your way through it and make so many mistakes, and you just get over it and have wonderful experiences, and you meet such great people."

Butler says her travel experiences have opened her up to culture on a more global scale.

"You have to know nuances about the culture that maybe you are not familiar with. (Traveling) widens your horizon and gives you a better global understanding of everyone," Butler said. "You see how differently people do things, but then you realize that if you are in New York, you are going to see a mom fighting with her teenage daughter, and if you are in Spain, you are going to see the same thing."

"Everyone is the same. These people are similar all across the world. That's such a great thing to figure out naturally, organically, through traveling."



Rachel Butler switched from student teaching at South to long-term subbing three classes at North and one class at Parcels.

**What is your favorite food?**

I love spaghetti. I really love cookies. I know that may not be a food, but I love cookies.

**What is your favorite Spanish food?**

Las papas fritas. A lot of people are going to say churros ... That wasn't for me. I just loved the french fries my madre would make. They were really bad for you, but so good.

**What's your favorite movie?**

That's so difficult. I really love *North and South*, which is from 2005. It's a BBC adaptation because I love British television.

**Do you ever plan or want to move to Spain?**

I seriously considered staying there and postponing my degree ... and teaching English. I definitely want to go back, but I don't know for how long. Maybe just a trip or to live.

**Do you have any siblings?**

I have an older sister. She is two and a half years older than I am. She is going to law school next year. She has a masters from Oxford University and a degree from MSU.

## Effects of AP classes on college success debated

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Indeed, a 2009 study published in Southern Economic Journal corroborated the College Board's finding that AP classes are predictive of college success, but doubted that "AP participation imparts a positive causal impact on college performance for the typical student." In other words they accepted the correlation, but argued the causation.

Once taking into account the other academic and demographic characteristics of students, the high-achieving, motivated students do better in college anyway. So, the murkiness among studies may

stem from the fact that student ability and motivation are difficult to quantify.

Still, Slajus found these were the skills he harbored taking AP courses in high school. Though The College Board touts the classes as "college-level," their real benefit may be college-preparatory.

"When you have multiple tests or papers due around the same time, or extracurricular things of importance, you know how to pick and choose which to do first," Slajus said. "Also, it helped me to develop a 'suck it up, get work done' mentality, where you just grind through a lot of work in one sitting."

Dartmouth announced its decision to stop offering course credit for AP classes after a study by the psychology department found that, among incoming students, 90% who had earned a 5 on the AP exam failed a Dartmouth-issued Psych 1 equivalency test; though Dartmouth stressed afterward the experiment wasn't "undertaken to be a general statement about the value of AP courses."

Even if the exam scores will no longer earn Dartmouth credit, AP Psychology

teacher Jennifer Weisbrodt speaks to their value.

"The AP Psychology exam scores generally reflect that amount of effort the student has put forth in the class. Students that see the course as applicable to their personal lives, participate, read and ask questions tend to do extremely well," she said. "I believe this holds true in college as well."

"So yes, doing well in this course is not due to some 'innate' ability, but rather effort. It all really goes back to the nature vs. nurture debate. In this case, I believe nurture outweighs nature."

Slajus argues it is this "nurture" (i.e., challenging yourself with multiple, rigorous classes), not the AP classes themselves, that breeds success in college.

"Taking multiple ones at the same time lets you develop better task-management skills and prioritizing skills," he said. "It definitely does matter, I wouldn't have the work ethic I have if I took standard classes."

High school performance, at least in terms of GPA and standardized-test scores, predicts college success fairly well. To the extent that the correlation between in-class and AP exam performance is readily visible at North, the link between AP exam and college success is apparent.

"Very, very little have I ever been surprised (with AP test results). A majority of my students are consistent through the year, and the AP test score is a reflection of their scores throughout the year," Johnson said. "I think there is a pretty good correlation in my class with how they do in class versus how they do on the AP test versus how they will continue to do in college."

Contributing: Emma Ockerman

## Teacher contracts

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

One of the "more emotional changes," according to Cooley, is the altered policy about teacher sick days.

"Teachers used to have unlimited sick leaves, and now that changed to a much smaller window. So, basically for the next two years, teachers get 12 paydays where they can take sick or family leave days, which is a big change from unlimited sick days," Cooley said.

Maternity leave was also another issue in the contract. Cooley had a child in April.

"For a lot of people, they're worried if there was a serious illness in the family or if they became seriously ill or (are on) maternity leave. That's all definitely changing now. (My maternity leave) is not affected this year. The contract, when it is ratified, takes effect in March, the provisions about sick leave or maternity leave - they don't take effect until the (next) fall."

The calendar for high schools has also been revised. The half-days in October,

November, December and April have been eliminated. In their place, there will be two days of no school for students in December and April. Grades will now be given in tutorials, and four parent-teacher conferences will be held throughout the year.

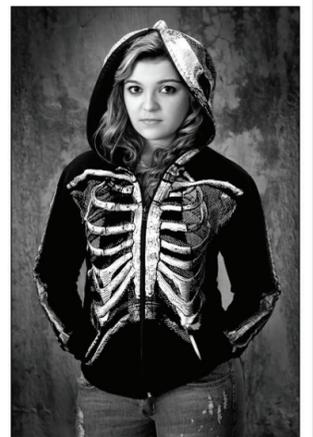
Social studies teacher Dan Quinn thinks the elimination of half-days will positively affect teachers and students.

"Professional development for teachers is essential to making our school a professional learning community," Quinn said. "Moving to full-day professional development from half-days allows teachers more time to work together and practice what they learned."

Quinn also believes that the elimination of half-days won't have any "distinct difference" for students, and that the contract will not instantly affect teachers or students.

"The immediate impact will not be felt today or tomorrow, but because of the contract and less money coming in from the state of Michigan, there will likely be some form of cuts," Quinn said. "The teachers have agreed to take a pay cut in order to maintain current services."

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