



LIFE

Students prepare spirit week showcases and stairwells for their classes Friday, Sept. 27.

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New legislation updates guidelines for student athletes regarding concussions

By Audrey Kam
ASSISTANT EDITOR

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) defines a concussion as “a type of traumatic brain injury, or TBI, caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head that can change the way your brain normally works.” For sophomore Justin Kusch, the definition doesn’t quite describe the experience.

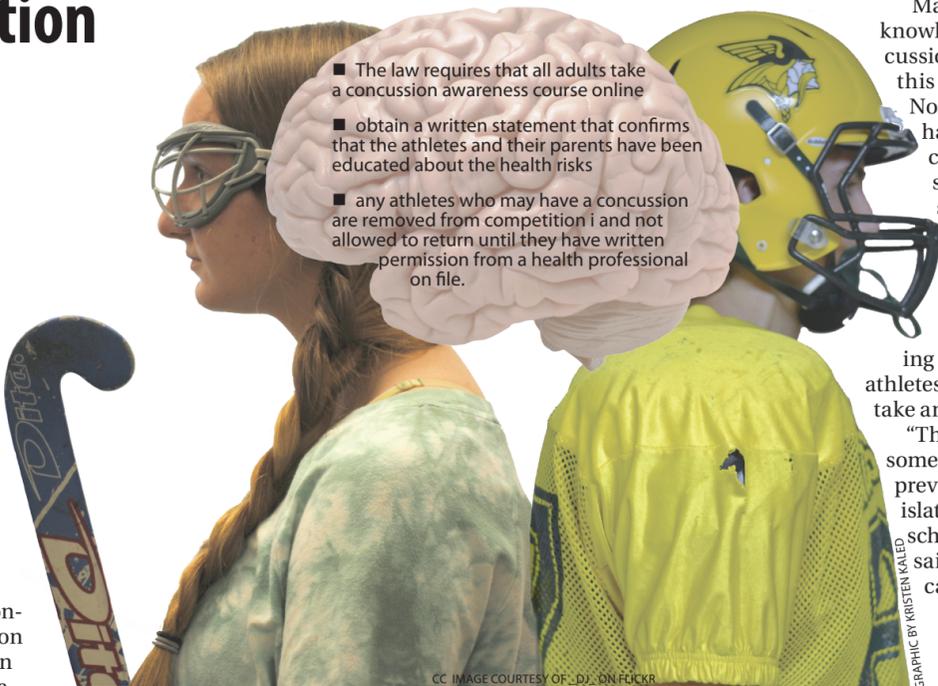
“Dizzy, painful, uh, hard to concentrate. I mean I never really passed out, and I had like a lot of headaches and migraines that kinda came afterwards,” Kusch said. “I never really got those a whole lot before my concussions. So like, the months after my three concussions in hockey, I would get migraines, like, three or four times a week.”

On June 30, Michigan became the 39th state to “enact a law that regulates sports concussions and return to athletic activity” (MDCH, www.michigan.gov). Even though concussions have always been a problem in high-contact and projectile sports, the new state legislation has everyone talking about them again, including athletic director Ben Bandfield.

Bandfield says that much of the standards and procedures remain the same for North.

“It was basically ... each school handled it the same way. The athletic trainer for each school kind of worked with concussions,” Bandfield said. “If you had one, there’s a certain time you would sit out, but it wasn’t anything that was all-encompassing and saying, ‘This is exactly how we’re going to put things into place to make people more knowledgeable.’”

- The law requires that all adults take a concussion awareness course online
- obtain a written statement that confirms that the athletes and their parents have been educated about the health risks
- any athletes who may have a concussion are removed from competition and not allowed to return until they have written permission from a health professional on file.



CC IMAGE COURTESY OF DJ ON FLICKR

Making everyone more knowledgeable about concussions is exactly what this new law may achieve.

Not only do the coaches have to take online concussion courses, but students must also do some reading and have a written affidavit on file that confirms they have read and kept the material.

In addition to reading about concussions, athletes in these sports must take an “impact test.”

“The impact test was something we were doing previously. Before the legislation changed, not every school did it,” Bandfield said. “We provide what’s called ‘impact tests’ for freshmen and juniors to get their baseline ... so if they were to get a concussion, we could

go back and see what their score was at the previous test.”

At the time Kusch was playing, no impact tests were administered.

“Playing hockey, you know, you get your bell rung a lot. And I remember quite a few times, I never ... I never got a concussion, I don’t think,” Kusch said. “But I remember, you know, being really dizzy, not really knowing what to do. I mean, I get hit and then just kind of go back to the bench to sit down and just like kind of not go back on because, you know, I’m in a lot of pain.”

Not only does the impact test give healthcare professionals and coaches a comparison point to determine whether or not a student has a concussion, but now they are used to determine when it is safe for a student to return to play. If a student returns to competition too soon, the brain may still be healing, and they are put at a greater risk of getting a second concussion.

To access acknowledgement forms visit:
www.mhsaa.com/schools/healthsafetyresources.aspx

Contributing: Josie Riley, Alex Batts & Luke Sturgill

HOMECOMING PARADE & FOOTBALL GAME
Today at 5:30 p.m. Parade begins at Monteith parking lot, ends at North. Game starts at 7 p.m.

SAT TESTING
Saturday, Oct. 5 at 8 a.m. at North

HOMECOMING DANCE
Saturday, Oct. 5 at 7:30 p.m. in North gym

NORTH/SOUTH FOOTBALL GAME
Friday, Oct. 11 at 7 p.m. at South

FRESHMAN SOCIAL STUDIES MEAP
Wednesday Oct. 16 in the cafeteria

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES
Wednesday and Thursday, Oct. 16 and 17 at North

IDEAS
“ IN REALITY, THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS NORMAL. SO IS THERE REALLY SUCH A THING AS A HIPSTER? ”

PAGE 3



Social media site LinkedIn makes efforts to allow students 14 and higher to join the site and build their personal digital footprints. Students and teachers debate whether or not this is appropriate.

By Melina Glusac

IDEAS EDITOR

All it took was a few clicks. “When I started using Facebook, it was instantaneous, the difference between how I was before and how I was after,” said senior Lizzie Marck of her participation in social media.

In this day and age, it’s impossible not to be surrounded by glistening iPhones, Twitter and Facebook. It might not be apparent at the moment, but every post on a site is contributing to a “digital footprint,” an accumulation of one’s activity on the World Wide Web.

LinkedIn, a social media site specializing in professional networking, is trying its best to keep up with the ever-changing pace of social media. Their latest effort was a controversial one: Changing their minimum age of enrollment to 14.

A little background on LinkedIn – the dwindling site launched in 2003 and has since been used by those in the workforce to post jobs, review resumes, help potential employees hunt for jobs and connect those looking for business opportunities.

By targeting a younger demographic, LinkedIn hopes to aid students in getting into college and applying for jobs, subsequently contributing to hefty digital footprints for all.

“I don’t know what kind of employers are going to look at a 14-year-old’s LinkedIn and be like, ‘Yes, I want to hire this 14-year-old.’”

Danielle Haggerty
2012 NORTH ALUMNA

What kind of 14-year-old would be partaking in such tasks is a mystery to Michigan State University student and North alumna Danielle Haggerty.

“When you’re young, and you have a Twitter like me, I was obsessed with Justin Bieber. That’s the reason I got a Twitter, like so I could somehow get in contact with him. But if you do stuff – stupid stuff – you’re young. You don’t really realize what you’re doing,” Haggerty said. “I don’t know what kind of employers are going to look at a 14-year-old’s LinkedIn and be like ‘Yes, I want to hire this 14-year-old.’”

Haggerty, in fact, has built up quite a Web presence herself. With over 700 followers on Twitter, and an array of noteworthy ones like MSU’s publication

The Black Sheep, she is a firm believer in creating a solid footprint.

“It can be beneficial because you can put a bunch of stuff on LinkedIn, and that will lead you to future employers,” Haggerty said.

Similarly, social studies teacher Sean McCarroll is a proponent of technology and encourages his students to get their foot in the door – carefully.

“A strong digital presence and a responsible digital presence (is important) because people need to realize that every time you click hit, send or publish – anything like that – it’s permanent and anybody can see it,” McCarroll said. “That’s going to be really important; especially things like LinkedIn are going to be more relevant in our society, and people need to know what is and is not acceptable and use it properly.”

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PSAT offers scholarship opportunities

By Anu Subramaniam & Erica Lizza
WEB MANAGER & STAFF REPORTER

Unlike most high school juniors, North Class of 2013 alumna Kamala Kanneganti took the Preliminary SAT (PSAT) with a clear goal in mind: qualifying for the National Merit Scholarship Competition. Kanneganti took the test as practice her freshman and sophomore years.

“I think my biggest accomplishment to date was winning this award,” Kanneganti said. “It helped give me an edge for college, and many colleges sent me letters for full rides.”

The PSAT is similar in format to the SAT. Both standardized tests measure proficiency in three areas: critical reading, math and writing skills. The tests are also similarly scored: the SAT is scored out of 2400, 800 for each category, and the PSAT is scored out of 240, 80 for each category. Students must score within the top 3% of PSAT test takers in their state to qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Competition.

“Here at North, we usually have two to six National Merit Scholar finalists every year, depending on where the cutoff is,” counselor Milissa Pierce said.

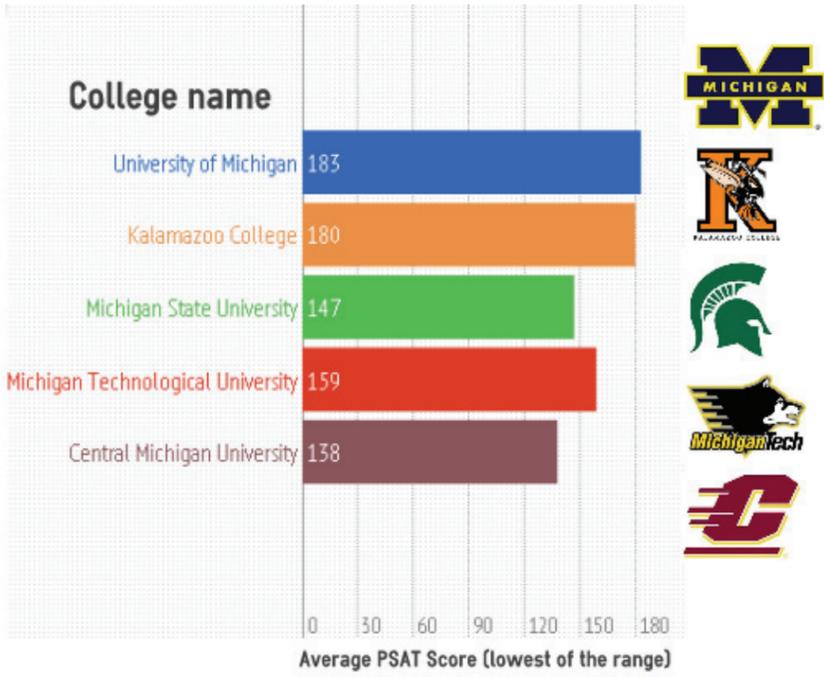
The cutoff score changes each year depending on how many students take the test and how they score.

“If they qualify for the test, they then have to fill out an application with their academic achievements, and the school will send their transcripts. Some people will be recognized for qualifying, but will not end up being finalists,” Pierce said.

“The PSAT is not mandatory for juniors, but it is recommended that they do take the test for practice for the SAT and ACT. It is even recommended that they take it sophomore year,” Pierce said.

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EMMA PUGLIA

Average PSAT score of popular Michigan colleges

PSAT scholarships

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Kanneganti, who started preparing for the test the summer before her freshman year, said that the practice definitely helped her achieve a 207 on the test.

"The hardest part for me was usually the vocab-orientated questions. I was not too good at retaining vocabulary, but in the end, there were only a few problems that studying didn't help with," Kanneganti said.

As a reward for her score, Kanneganti was offered a full ride to Wayne State University which included room and board and money to buy a laptop. She didn't even have to apply for admission.

In addition to providing students with National Merit Scholarship opportunities, the PSAT also lets students choose to be recruited by colleges if they check a box on the test form. By checking the box, student's PSAT scores will be submitted to colleges who will contact them if interested.

Because PSAT results do not appear on college applications, they cannot negatively affect one's application.

"Although a good test score is not the end all be all, it is a good indication of academic success," Pierce said.

Sophomore Nicole Stein had prior knowledge of the benefits of taking the PSAT as practice and decided to register for the test this year.

"I decided to take the PSAT so I can start preparing for the ACT and SAT. I want to have experience taking the test before it actually counts," Stein said.

Stein plans on also taking it during her junior year in hopes of qualifying for the National Merit Scholar award.

"Being a National Merit Semifinalist or Commended student will get you noticed," Pierce said. "It is not necessarily an entrance into the college of your choice. You must also have a strong cumulative GPA and a strong overall application."

Digital footprint

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Like Haggerty, McCarroll is hesitant about the number 14. However, he has no reservations about high schoolers or college-goers joining the network.

"I think it helped more once I was in college, having the digital footprint," McCarroll said. "Now I'm trying to help incorporate that more in my classes, so it can help kids make those transitions into college or into the workplace."

Despite this zeal, there are people resisting the temptation of technology. Senior Lizzie Marck was raised to believe in real-life footprints.

"Mostly, we just wanted to try to delay it as much as possible so that we have more FaceTime. They have more thinking time and downtime and face time - experiencing life as it's happening and being a part of it instead of always looking at a phone," Lizzie's mother, Jennifer Marck, said.

Now for Lizzie, living without a web presence is her chosen norm.

"At first, it was because my mom didn't like the idea of cellphones and texting. But now, it's more of like, it's my choice," Lizzie said. "My mom offered to get me a cell phone, but I feel like it would just be a waste of time. And I've noticed that when I use technology, I write less, and I do a lot less thinking, and I get distracted easily. So I just thought it would be for the best."

Lizzie sees a slight disadvantage in living with only one type of footprint, though.

"I know I miss out on a lot of stuff because I am not that connected. So I guess it's just a trade-off."

Contributing: Olivia Asimakis & Yena Berhane

District requests tech bond approval from voters

The technology bond proposition was an effort started in the 2012-2013 school year by the school district to persuade voters to approve the sale of bonds which raise money to buy technology for the school system. The plan is still developing, and no formal proposals have been approved for the November 2013 ballot yet.

"I do (think it will help) because I see firsthand exactly how frustrating it is for students to accomplish some things that they need to accomplish with the use of technology," Librarian Karen Villegas said. "Kids mostly say they get frustrated and say, 'Ah, I'll just do it at home' when there are issues."

The proposed requests include updating all kinds of technology - from computers to air conditioners to security sys-

tems. In order to make sure they're not wasting money, they must perform a life-time analysis of the new technology and make long-term predictions for the technology that will be needed in the future.

"It's a hard thing to do because you're projecting what something's gonna look like before it's ever invented, just like when we work with students on their skills, we're trying to train you for jobs that don't exist yet, so it's complex," Villegas said.

Villegas prefers neither technological nor traditional learning, as long as the students learn.

"To me it's not about the stuff. To me, it's about the thinking," Villegas said. "To me, the technology enhances what it is we're trying to do, which is really: teach kids to be good critical thinkers and good citizens, and, you know, have a process that they can use to reason through the problems...that they'll have in the future."

By Mallika Kanneganti

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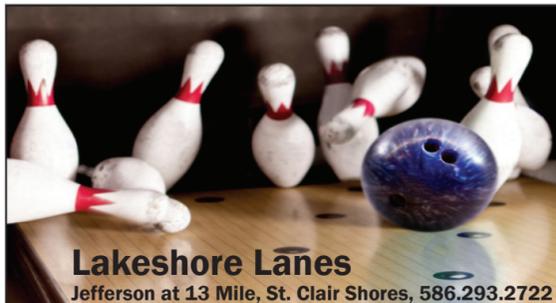
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