

# THE FALCON

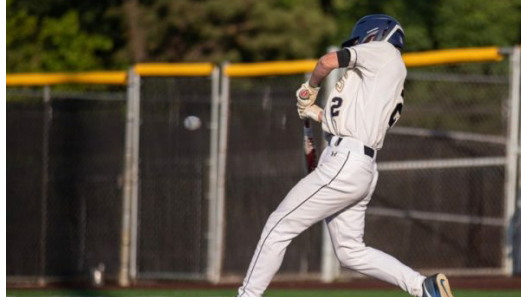
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# NEWS IN BRIEF

Senior Adam Clark represents Severna Park Falcons at the plate during the 2024 baseball season. Saturday, March 1 marks the first day of varsity baseball team tryouts. The players come motivated to bring home the State Championship title, but the team is not only about bringing home trophies; it also creates an atmosphere where coaches and players inspire each other. Photo taken by Kistin Williams



On Sunday, Feb. 4, the Grammy Awards ceremony took place, and musical artists were rewarded in categories like Album of the Year, Song of the Year and Best New Artist. Beyonce won Album of the Year for the first time with her album "Cowboy Carter" after being nominated four times before and losing to other albums. Graphic by CBS



The Stretch Your Wellness class, taught by health/physical education teacher Ms. Bell, will be offered as half a physical education credit for the '25-26 school year. The class, which is open to all students, will cover aspects of yoga and mindfulness such as "postures, breathing exercises, relaxation techniques, healthy diet and mindfulness principles," Bell said. Photo taken by Cassidy Ames



Scan the QR codes to read the full articles (left to right: "Batter Up," "The 67th Grammy Awards 2025" and "SPHS Introduces Yoga Class to Reduce Student Stress").



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Junior Clark Chasse mans the lighting board in the projection room during a dance recital on Oct. 4, 2023. "Over the past three years I have thoroughly enjoyed my experience with stage crew and greatly appreciate my leaders and fellow peers," senior Maggie Manis said. Photo taken by Ruby Howland

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# The Nintendo Switch 2 First Look Trailer

Eight years after the Switch's launch, its successor has been revealed.

Griffin Abrams | Staff Writer

The Nintendo Switch 2's first look trailer released on Jan. 16 with some long awaited new features, as well as the classic unique Nintendo design choices.

The console has updates but the name remains the same. "I think it's fitting because it's simple but it's not much different from the regular Switch so it's fitting that it's the Switch 2," freshman Ethan Hough said.

## Tech Specs

The Switch 2 Console itself has been scaled up, and that extra space has been revealed to have an extra USB-C port, allowing for charging or using the dock and accessories at the same time. One feature that was not expected to stay is the headphone jack, something absent on most next-gen consoles. Nintendo has also kept the upgraded kickstand from the Switch OLED. It has also been officially confirmed by Nintendo that the Switch 2 will be fully compatible with most original Switch games; however, there may be some exceptions for games with external requirements and other features, like Nintendo LABO.

The Switch 2 is rumored to have the processing power of a PS4. "[I think it will affect] how big the games can be and how complex, like there are some much bigger games that you can only run on like PC that I would love to see on Switch 2," freshman Marek Daccarett said.

One of the most controversial design choices Nintendo has made for the Switch 2 is changing the way the Joy-Cons attach to the console itself. Instead of using a slide rail

like the Switch, Nintendo has added a special port that the controllers snap on to, allowing for a more streamlined look similar to other modern handheld gaming devices, such as the Steam Deck or ROG Ally.

The trailer for the Nintendo Switch 2 shows the Switch 2's Joy-Cons working as mice. "I think it could be really cool as it can maybe connect to a keyboard and stuff so it can actually [work] as a Steam Deck," Hough said. Senior Elliott Earhart added, "I think this will be a huge step for Nintendo and consoles in general [because] I don't think there's, beyond certain attachments, ever been a set default Mouse for a console."

Although there is concern from fans that the clips the Joy-Cons use to attach to the Switch seem easy to break, Daccarett said, "The magnetic portion of the clip [on] the joy-con controllers seem pretty secure, but the little chip inside [will] get broken very easily, and Nintendo is going to have to offer free repairs again."

## Controllers

On the topic of Joy-Cons, the Switch 2's revision has been completely overhauled

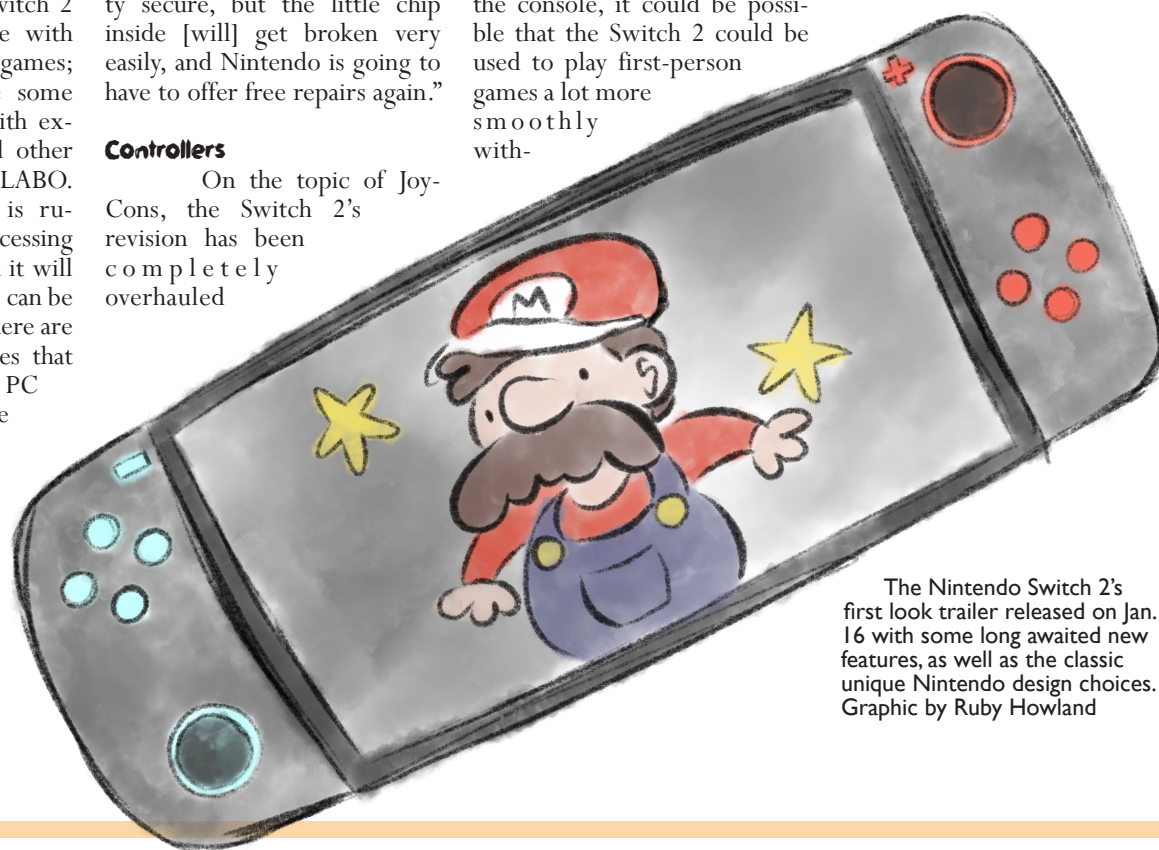
with a more elongated, ergonomic design, as well as a new button on the right controller and two more buttons on the side for each. The functionality of these buttons has not been officially stated by Nintendo yet, but that does not stop the community from speculating. Besides the functional changes, the color of the Joy-Cons have been changed to a simple black with some blue and red highlights, a lot less interesting than the colorful bright blue and red of the original Switch's. The community has speculated that there will be more color variations, but once again, nothing has been officially confirmed by Nintendo.

Of course, the Switch 2 wouldn't be a Nintendo console without their unique design choices. The trailer shows off the new IR sensor on the side of the controller and hinting that it can be used as a mouse. With the extra USB-C port on the console, it could be possible that the Switch 2 could be used to play first-person games a lot more smoothly with-

out aim assist or similar crutches used by other consoles when it comes to first-person games.

## Games

The only first-party game currently revealed for the Switch 2 is the next Mario Kart game, which currently does not have an official name, but can be assumed it will be named "Mario Kart 9," following the naming convention of previous games in the series. "Mario Kart 9" has also fallen into controversy for the changed character designs, stylized similar to "Super Mario Bros.," "Wonder" and "The Mario Movie,"



The Nintendo Switch 2's first look trailer released on Jan. 16 with some long awaited new features, as well as the classic unique Nintendo design choices. Graphic by Ruby Howland

# Every year, the junior class visits Title I schools and makes books for elementary school students.

Alethia Brown | Staff Writer

On Feb. 7 and 10, juniors visited Park Elementary School and Brooklyn Park Elementary School as part of the annual service learning project where students create books for buddies. These visits were the first part of the project, where students meet their assigned buddies and get to know them and their interests. “My favorite part was to bond with the kids and really get to know about their backgrounds, because it’s so much different in what they have to go through compared to here, Severna Park. I feel like we undermine how privileged we are and the education we have access to,” junior Rama Abushi said.

The main goal of the first visit is for the juniors to learn about their buddies. They receive questions to help them, but they also just spend time with the elementary schoolers. “Honestly, getting to meet my kid was really cool. He was super nice, and he was very excited to see me, which was also pretty cool,” junior Matthew Anguay said. “We played Blooket, and it is very hard to convince a first-grader to do math.”

After the first visit, the next step is for the students to write and illustrate their books, taking inspiration

from what they learned about their buddies. “My kid actually told me what to write about, because he’s really obsessed with Sonic and he likes Shadow, which is like the evil version of Sonic or something like that, and he actually drew me a picture, which was really nice. He’s really good at drawing. So yeah, he wants me to write a book about Shadow and Sonic and maybe like a superhero/villain story,” Abushi said.

Students will return to the elementary schools on March 31 and April 8 to present their buddies with the books. “I’m looking forward to see how happy they get when we bring them back the book the second time, I think that’ll be really fun to see if they like it,” junior Ozzy Jones said.

This project has been going on for many years, and it has changed in many ways. It was started by two English teachers: Monna Madron, who is now retired, and Sabra Hill. The project began with just Hill’s English 10 class going to Germantown Elementary School in Annapolis. After Hill switched from teaching tenth grade, Valerie Earhart took it over. Later, service learning was moved from tenth to eleventh grade. “At one point this project used to be a required service learning for the entire county. That’s

how big it got at one point, and that was probably 10, 15 years ago, for maybe like, two or three years, so every junior was doing it,” Earhart said. “So those were the years that we didn’t go to the Title I schools, we went to Severna Park Elementary, because you were supposed to go to the school that was closest to you and do service. But then the county felt like it was too expensive... so I went from Germantown to Severna Park, and then when the county stopped funding it, that’s when, about 15 years ago, I connected with Brooklyn Park and Park Elementary.”

Organizing the project takes hard work, including coordinating with the schools, scheduling buses and funding everything. “...it’s like a thousand moving parts. But I always have help, my teachers, my colleagues, who run the trip with me. I do a lot of the paperwork, but they’re the ones grading the books, you know, working with their kids one-on-one, making sure that the story is appropriate... we have to have buy-in from the entire department, because if I don’t, we’ll be back to me just taking my class. And then that’s only 80 kids I can affect, if only I am invested. But because over the years we’ve been able to invest all the English teachers, that’s 450 ele-

mentary kids we get to impact,” Earhart said.

Earhart has to work hard to make this project a success, but she has been blessed by the opportunity to see hope through it. “My favorite part is watching me feel transformed by how I feel about them. Me personally. And ultimately that’s what service is. Service is about transforming you... if you were to ask any of these high schoolers in April after we have given these books away, I think a lot of them would say, ‘It changed me. It changed how I viewed the world, it changed how I saw little kids.’ And I think that’s the whole purpose of service,” Earhart said. “Service is about giving of yourself, not with an expectation of return, and seeing something about you shift or change that you weren’t aware needed shifted or changed, and that’s what I really love about service.”

Students work on crafts and activities with their buddies on Feb. 7 at Park Elementary School. This was the first of two trips, where students got to know their buddies through interviews and activities. “Since Valentine’s Day is coming up, we helped make them their Valentine’s bags, like for the parties... so we made hearts for faces and we made little legs coming out and arms,” junior Rama Abushi said. Photo taken by Valerie Earhart

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# Preparing for the SAT

## Tips from SAT prep teachers at SPHS.

Elsa Webster | Editor-in-chief

As juniors are preparing to apply to colleges, they are also preparing to take the SAT, a test that can be used as a measure in college admittance. Though since COVID-19, many schools have become test optional.

"One thing that was interesting is that when we went away with it, we actually saw more students from traditional match backgrounds with those schools get accepted so we actually saw less economic diversity, less racial diversity, less ethnic diversity at schools than when we had the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) so that's interesting," English SAT and PSAT prep teacher Perry Moskowitz said.

Even with this change, for students with high enough scores that do submit, it can affect your chances. Most colleges recommend students to only submit scores if they fall within or above the average range of the school. This information can be found on a college's website or their common data set.

"Taking the SAT is important because it gives colleges a kind of universal metric that they can understand and compare students equally. And they make all sorts of considerations about where that student comes from and their environment and when they think about that relationship to the score, sometimes they can actually help people who wouldn't traditionally be good fits for the school to actually get on that college's radar and elevate them," Moskowitz said.

Juniors have already taken the Practice Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) twice, once their sophomore year and the other during the fall of their junior year. The PSAT is very similar to the SAT, with two sections each for English

and math. The main difference is the length of the test, with the SAT being longer than the PSAT. The PSAT also uses a lot of recycled questions from the SAT.

Preparing for the SAT can also be similar to how juniors have prepared for the PSAT when they took it. Classes at SPHS are taught for both the PSAT and the SAT in order to prepare students.

"Lots of practice. Lots of conversations about what the questions involve and how to answer as quickly as possible. Some tricks and things to look for. A lot of different strategies," math SAT and PSAT prep teacher Melanie Doucette said regarding how she prepares students for the test.

Preparing does come in other forms, however practicing test taking skills is only one factor contributing to how students perform on the test.

"Just have a goal. Basically, just make sure that they are ready to go and that they get a good night's sleep," Doucette said, "And I know that this sounds silly but a good night and something to eat, those basic needs are taken care of. And just trust that they are prepared and not to stress out about it because the calmer they're going to be the more clear-headed they're going to be, the better they're going to be."

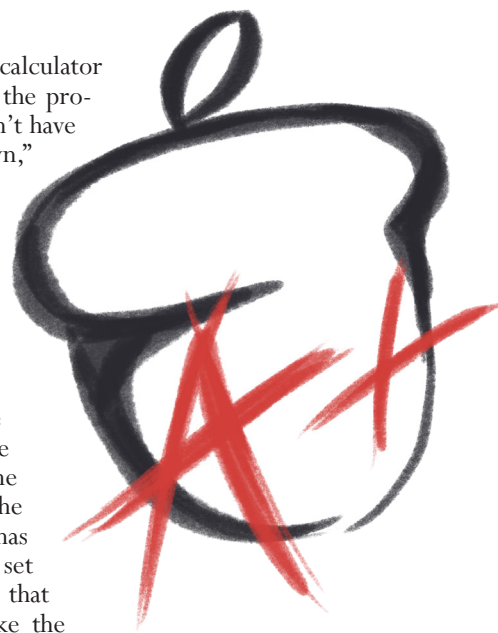
The test has made a shift in recent years. Current juniors will remember the SAT in its virtual form, the form in which they took the PSAT, but in previous years this was not the case. And with this change came new features.

"The virtual component makes it a little bit different and about 10 minutes shorter. It's significantly shorter than it used to be. There's two maths and two English. Both of the maths are calculator inter-

active and the calculator is embedded in the program so you don't have to bring your own," Doucette said.

SPHS sponsors the SAT by having a set day for the juniors so that they can take it before school and have adequate time to do so. But the College Board has multiple times set for the SAT so that students can take the test as many times as they want, and when they want, to an extent. Although these extra tests cost money, whereas the one taken at SPHS is paid for by the AACPS.

"It's not the end of the world, you can always retake it. It's just one measure of your intelligence. It's not necessarily always a great indicator of whether you're a brilliant English student or not, it's just a specific set of test taking skills and you can study and learn them, they're not hard to learn," Moskowitz said.



The SAT goes through the College Board, the site students use to access AP Classroom, scholarships and of course, the SAT. Current juniors have taken the PSAT twice so far, the shorter, practice SAT tests aimed at scholarship opportunities and improving SAT test taking strategies. Graphic by Ruby Howland

# HOLD ON TO EVERY AMAZING MOMENT

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# The Post-It Note Art Show

SPHS students' artwork will be displayed throughout the school.

Penny Dickerson | Staff Writer

The third annual Post-It Note Art Show is currently running, organized by SPHS's National Art Honor Society (NAHS).

The art show first ran in the 2022-23 school year, as NAHS wanted a way to spread art throughout the school following Covid. The adviser, Suzanne Dattelbaum, was inspired by similar art shows online and decided to introduce the idea to SPHS, as a way for students to be more creative. "There are many talented, creative, and imaginative students who may not be able to take an art class, who enjoy drawing, doodling, painting and creating and would like to share their ability with the school and community," Dattelbaum said.

The art show is open for everyone to participate and explore their artistic side. Junior Mia Smith, a vice president of NAHS, stresses the importance of letting everyone

express themselves and showcase their artwork, without the commitment of a big project.

"It allows for students to be creative without having to put a lot of effort into it, cuz it's just a post-it note," Smith said. "Even if you mess up, you can try again."

Junior Audrey Chen, co-president of NAHS, appreciates the active participation of so many students in the art show. "My favorite thing is to go around and see what everyone drew on their post-its, because everyone has different styles, they use different mediums, and it's really cool to see everyone being so diverse and still united in the art show," Chen said.

Post-its are only being accepted through the end of February, but the show will be running again next year for any students who wanted to participate and didn't get a chance to turn in their post-its in time. Even those who do not submit artwork to the show can enjoy



Post-it notes on display from previous years hang in the art hallway. The post it project have participants with all sorts of art backgrounds. Photo By: Penny Dickerson

it. Beginning in March, the post-its will be displayed throughout the school for everyone to admire. They will be up through the end of the school year.

"Every day I see students stop and look at the work, point at one or more of the post-it note artworks and have a conversation about the artwork with their friends," Dattelbaum said.

Overall, the show is

a great way for students to be creative and interact with art, whether or not they decided to submit a post-it or two. Smith encourages everyone to check out their fellow students' artwork. "After it's all put up, you can look at all of the different kinds of art that all of the students at the school made," Smith said. "It's very interesting and unique to every student."

## Artificial Intelligence

The future of AI is around the corner

Andre Boone Jr. | Staff Writer

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is here and is already generating a lot of opinions from teachers. There's been speculation that AI is making students less critical. By being able to ask chatGPT, a popular application used to generate prompts, to do academic coursework is definitely a concern for many teachers.

"Honestly, I'm really scared about AI," Mr. Moskowitz, English teacher at Severna Park said. "I think it has a lot of potential to transform our society. And I worry a lot about its impact on our ability to be creative and have original thought."

Some believe that AI is harmful for students. Joe Phillips, Avid teacher at Severna Park, believes that AI "will continue to disrupt industries." It is doing a disservice to students," Phillips said. "I think that so many jobs are going to rely just like they do on computers on the use or assistance of AI. By not teaching students how to use it responsibly, we're not preparing them for the future."

Although AI may be making students less critical, there's without a doubt that teachers need to acknowledge that it is the

future.

Mr. McDougal, social studies teacher said, "It's one of those as teachers we have to kind of embrace because it's coming whether we like it or not and there can be challenges with it, but overall, I think it's the new technology that we're all just going to have to learn."

Artificial Intelligence is going to change the way many professions operate, which in turn will make many students think differently about their current professions.

"I think it's just gonna and it's gonna change the way careers are," Julie Lowman, leader of E-Sports club and Math teacher said. "It's already changing the need for computer science majors, and copy editors and so there's a lot of careers that'll be replaced. But I hope it'll also generate a lot of new things that we haven't even thought of yet."

In order for students to use AI effectively, they need to know the true limitations of AI.

"I think students need to be taught the limitations of AI," Ms. Brandon-Reese, English teacher said. "I think students need to understand the rapidly evolving nature of AI and understand the

## High School seniors celebrating senior superlative winners.

Addison McLean | Staff Writer

The Senior Breakfast took place on Feb. 14 before school where the class of 2025 was able to congratulate and celebrate the senior superlative nominees and winners.

With 28 winning categories and two winners for each, a total of 56 seniors are winners of this year's senior superlatives. When asked what it felt like to be nominated, Logan Symmes, nominee of the most artistic award said, "To be honest I didn't really expect it, but I'm glad my peers think of me as artistic."

Senior Superlatives allow the class of 2025 to not only remember their high school time but to see how they have impressed themselves on their classmates. In addition to the most artistic award, Natalie Frank was nominated by her peers to most likely travel the world. Having visited over 20 countries, Frank is well known

on travel. "Last year I went to Ireland, so I went to Dublin and a bunch of cities there, and the year before that I went to Portugal. But my favorite place I've been is England."

Shep Kegley was another nominee for the most likely to travel the world award. Both students plan to continue their traveling after high school and a study abroad program is something that both students are highly interested in pursuing.

One of the sweetest winning categories is the high school sweethearts award. During high school, students are able to create memorable relationships both platonic and romantically. Seniors Juliana Vanech and Jake Sobocinski are one of the class' cutest couples and nominees of the high school sweethearts superlative. When asked if she held any importance in her nomination Vanech

said, "I'm happy to be nominated. It's nice to document your high school time and my parents were also winners of the high school sweethearts superlative so it would be cute to see."

With only a couple months left of the 2024-2025 school year, the class of 2025 is making their way to the end

of their high school career and doing class activities, such as the Senior Breakfast, allows the soon-to-be graduates to celebrate their last remaining moments as high-schoolers.



Seniors Ella McCarthy, Reagan Bennett, Elizabeth Rutkauskas and Natile Bowman sit together on Feb. 14 commemorating the first 100 days of senior year. Photo By: Kelley Halloran Cotton

ethical dilemmas that people, not just teachers, but people tend to have with it so that they can have a better understanding of why some people are so strongly against its use."

Although there's some limitations with using AI, it can still be used to supplement education.

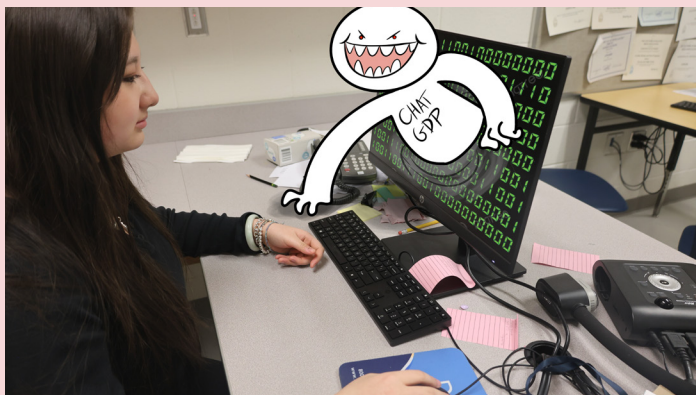
"I think AI can supplement education," Kristen Ritz, math teacher and coding club leader said. "AI can be used to find learning gaps and come up with exercises to help students in those learning gaps. I don't want it to take over the role of a teacher because I definitely think there's things that a teacher can do that a machine simply can't do. So the short answer is that I think it can be used to supplement teaching."

Additionally, there's some security concerns with the use of AI. "There's a lot of security threats out there," McDougal said. "You never know who's getting the information that you're putting out there when you're asking questions using AI or any other source of technology. So I think it's important that anything that we do use is vetted, by the county to make sure that it's not just appropriate but a safe resource."

There are some solutions that schools can take to make sure that AI can be accessed safely. "I think we have to make the district have contracts with AI institutions and groups that won't steal your data," Moskowitz said. "So that's one of the things with ChatGPT and it's kind of scary when students use it. It's like who,

who owns what just got made and like, where to do something?"

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Artificial Intelligence is upon us. Junior Josie Wong sits at a computer working on a assignment. Photo By: Katerina Day Graphic By: Ruby Howland



# Amped Up For Rock n' Roll

SPHS musicians discuss their anticipation for this year's chapter of Rock and Roll Revival.

Aileen Jeter | Features Editor

It's that time of year again. While some SPHS students may be training for their upcoming lacrosse season or studying for the SAT, others are busy rehearsing for what is arguably the most popular event of the school year — Severna Park's annual Rock and Roll Revival.

Each year, students from every grade spend weeks rehearsing for their auditions, all in hopes of getting a lucky spot in the show. "Rock and Roll is one of the most stressful times of the year for all of us," junior Syrenna McNutt said. "We put a lot of hard work into it...go through all these phases of being stressed out...but then when you find out you get in, it's just so fun."

McNutt, who has been an avid member of the theater program at SPHS since her freshman year, believes the magic of Rock and Roll Revival truly comes down to the people. "I just get excited to see my friends," McNutt said. "You're literally with them for weeks,

and I've made some of my best friends from Rock and Roll, for sure. It's just a very close community... even the directors, I feel like they're my friends."

Junior Jacob Young shared similar sentiments. "Everyone here is always so nice and welcoming," he said. "I got into the fall musical 'Catch Me If You Can' and made so many friends in that, and I've made so many more through Rock and Roll this year."

Although the show provides a huge sense of nirvana at the end, McNutt assures that it was not always so easy. "It's a giant time commitment," she said. "But I think it's just more so balancing school and Rock and Roll that makes it hard. If you're doing dance and a ton of other things, then it's gonna be a lot more work."

"It definitely can be very stressful," Young said. "That's why it's so important that we practice at home so we can make sure we are getting our numbers down and can put on the best show for people."

Not only do the cast members put in hours of work, so does the tech crew. Junior AJ Scott, who is entering her third year in the SPHS tech crew, insists the magic of the production is not just the performers, it's the producers as well.

"The directors design the set in tandem with a couple of the creative team members, which are students, to make sure it is feasible in our

time frame. We spend 13 hours a week at school building the set for probably two months. Obviously, we want to be able to give the directors the vision that they are looking for... so it can be very stressful when things go wrong," Scott said.

As expected though, in the end, the discipline from these students always pays off. Tickets begin to sell out in a number of hours, and the show has been praised for years in local newspapers, like "Capital Gazette" and "Severna Park Voice," for its raw talent, entertainment and authenticity. Even some of the community's most renowned students, like NBC's "The Voice" finalist Parijita Bastola, have participated in the production.

"It's all worth it," Scott said. "It's just amazing seeing the super rocky start — with people coming on stage, fixing things — to the final product at the end... It's beautiful to say, like, 'I was a part of that.'"

This year's theme for Rock and Roll Revival is "Heartbreak Hotel," so expect some classic love songs mixed with a bit of teenage angst. You can support the SPHS theater department through the Falcon Drama Boosters with donations online or in-person at the show. A large portion of the proceeds go toward a different charity every year, so stay tuned for this year's pick.

"What's not to like about it, am I right?" McNutt said. "Just expect to be blown away this year...we put all this hard work into it, and it really pays off."

Graphic by Ruby Howland

# Rock

**1. THE FIRST ROCK AND ROLL REVIVAL WAS HELD IN 1990 ON MARCH 23**

**2. FOR THE FIRST SHOW, TICKETS COST \$5, NOW THEY COST \$20**

**3. THE TITLE OF THE FIRST SHOW WAS ROCK AND ROLL IS HERE TO STAY, THIS WAS ALSO THE TITLE OF THE 1991 SHOW.**

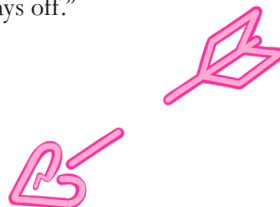
**4. RNR CELEBRATED ITS 10 ANNIVERSARY IN 1999**

**5. RNR CELEBRATED ITS 20TH YEAR IN 2009**

**8. ITS 30TH ANNIVERSARY WAS CELEBRATED IN 2019**



Students, parents, grandparents and even SPHS alumni are seen in the audience of Severna Park's Rock and Roll Revival each year. With the additional philanthropy the musicians advocate through the show, community members see no reason not to support the utterly talented, hard-working students and staff who put on the production. Graphic by Ruby Howland.

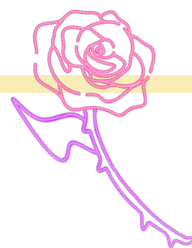




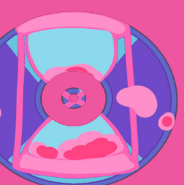
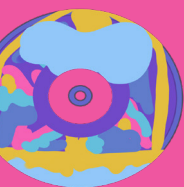
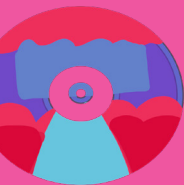
# Jameson Murray: Tech Profile

Student tech director shares his experience in RnR.

Elsa Webster | Editor-in-Chief



## L'N'Roll



**7. RNR HAS ONLY BEEN HELD VIRTUALLY ONCE, ROCK AND ROLL 32 WHICH WAS SEVERNA PARK HIGH SCHOOL'S VIRTUAL YEAR. THE THEME FOR THIS WAS BRITISH INVASION**

**8. SINCE ITS START, RNR HAS ALWAYS BEEN IN MARCH, TYPICALLY THE SECOND OR THIRD WEEK**

**9. THE SET FOR RNR 36, THIS YEAR, IS THE LARGEST RNR SET**

**10. THE POSTER FOR EVERY YEAR IS STUDENT DESIGNED, THIS YEAR IT WAS CREATED BY RUBY HOWLAND**

**Q:** Are you excited for your last R&R?

**A:** I'm very excited. This year I got to have more of an active role getting to pick the lights because the lighting engineer that we used to hire wasn't able to come back this year.

**Q:** What are you most excited for this year?

**A:** I think probably people's reactions to the set, because it's the largest set we've built by far.

**Q:** What are your responsibilities for tech?

**A:** So I am the student lighting director, so I oversee a team of four other students, and we are tasked with designing the lights, running the lights during the show, and then I communicate between my team and the directors if there's any disconnect, any notes, anything that the director wants to change.

**Q:** How is it seeing the show from up in lighting?

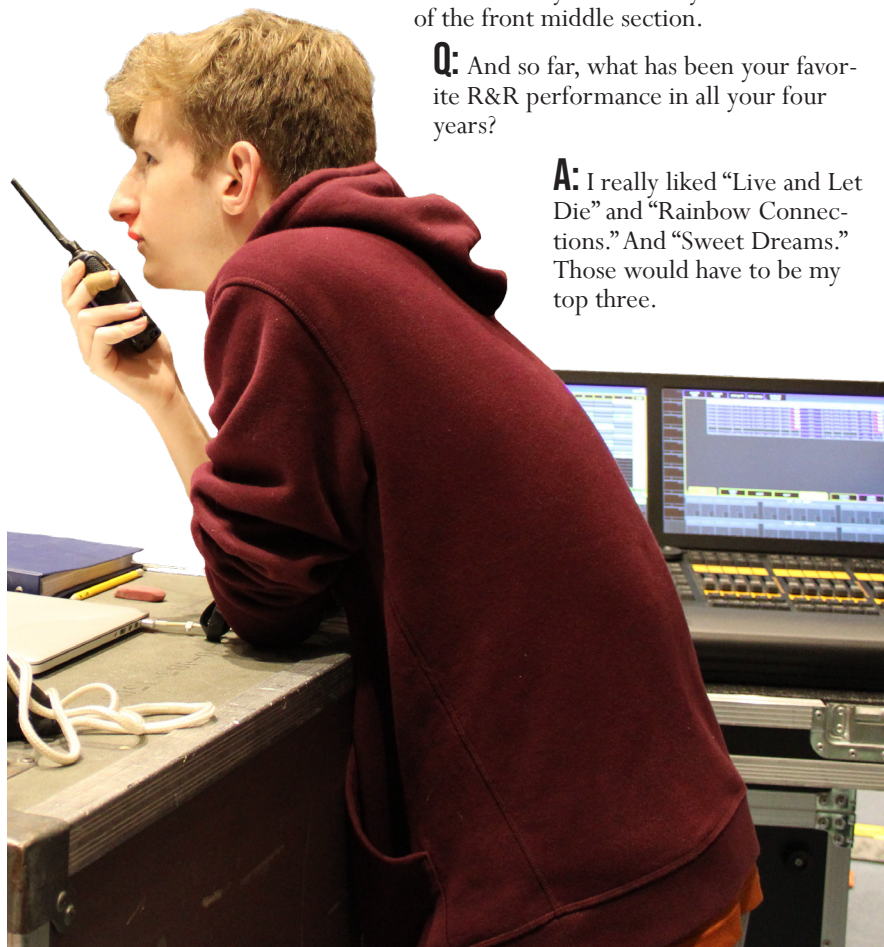
**A:** Honestly, it's a love-hate thing. I like it up there because I get to really do whatever, because no one can see me and no one can hear me. But at the same time, it sounds so different because we have small scale speakers up there because the glass is soundproof, so the sound quality is worse. But every now and then we will work with each other to let a few people go down and see a number in the house because it's just such a different vibe.

**Q:** And what are the best seats in the house?

**A:** I would say like last maybe three rows of the front middle section.

**Q:** And so far, what has been your favorite R&R performance in all your four years?

**A:** I really liked "Live and Let Die" and "Rainbow Connections." And "Sweet Dreams." Those would have to be my top three.



# Aavidum: I've Got Your Back

## New mental health club brought to SPHS.

Lily Feinman | Staff Writer

Aavidum is a new club at SPHS focused on mental health and suicide awareness.

Aavidum, meaning "I've got your back," was created by students in Lancaster, PA after their classmate died by suicide. Students and staff refused to be silent, and started an international club now being brought to SPHS by freshmen Paige Williams, Hayden Griffith, Victoria Spalding and Shania Naran.

The inspiration to start an Aavidum club came from a student council field trip to North County High School, where the first Aavidum club in Anne Arundel county was established.

"That was my introduction to Aavidum, and that basically opened my eyes to all the mental health issues with all the stories that were shared, so me and the other people I was working with on that field trip decided, that day actually, that we were going to try reaching out to start an Aavidum club," Spalding said.

According to the

CDC, suicide is the leading causes of death among people aged 10-34. In 2019, suicide was the 10th leading cause of death in the U.S., with 47,511 deaths overall. A study by the Anne Arundel County Department of health found that there were at least 76 suicide attempts by children ages 10-14 in Severna Park between the years of 2012 and 2016.

"Seeing how our community doesn't talk much about suicide prevention, I wanted to bring more awareness to it and our community and school," Griffith said. "I feel like Aavidum stands out from other clubs because of the tight community it creates being around the same people that support the same things as you."

Meeting on the second Friday of the month in Ms. Alcombright's room (249), they plan to do activities like coloring and making friendship bracelets, as well as having some interesting surprises.

"There is a surprise activity with a banana suit, so look out for that—I will be the one in the banana suit," Griffith said.

Williams added, "For our first meeting we're planning a bunch of simple things, the logo for Aavidum is a hand, and because Aavidum is a Latin phrase that means 'I've got your back' we're planning on painting t-shirts with it. We're also planning various service projects that we will keep a surprise."

A study conducted by Penn State concluded that Aavidum's curriculum improved mental health knowledge and help seeking, with staff identifying positive school culture impacts.

Williams said, "There has been movement in mental health, but we still need to talk about suicide because it is still a very touchy subject, and it is a bigger thing. In Pennsylvania there are clubs all over the state, in Maryland it's a growing thing. We need this to grow. Our school and so many other schools need it, because suicide should be preventable, and we need to make it preventable."

# 90 %

of public schools reported providing increased social and emotional supports for students in response to the coronavirus pandemic, and

# 78%

reported doing so for staff

*According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)*

In the last few years, public schools in America have been doing their best to combat the growing mental health crisis among the youth. Aavidum is a spectacular start to destroying the harmful stigmas surrounding mental health. Photo taken at the Aavidum presentation at North County High School. Photo from @nchs\_aavidum on Instagram.





# Thinking about Falcon 60

## What do students around SPHS think about Falcon 60?

Artin Tarpinian | Staff Writer

Falcon 60 is a new and interesting concept that administrators are now applying to SPHS students' lives. If you don't know, Falcon 60 is just like a regular Falcon Block. However, there are now two 30 minute blocks that are back to back. The Blue Block and the Gold Block always have teachers open to visit to get redos or makeup work finished. Many students have mixed opinions on this new idea. Some are excited for a change, some not so much. Regardless, Falcon 60 is the latest iteration in SPHS' schedule and students will have to adapt to these changes.

There are some mixed opinions on this new change. Junior Nick Di Pietro stated that this new Falcon Block has made some things more difficult to accomplish. For example, Di Pietro said that Falcon Blocks make redos "a bit more difficult." This is because some teachers are open during blocks that are set for him to eat lunch with his friends. By changing this routine to do makeups or redos it makes it near impossible to eat lunch and do the redos he needs to in a timely manner. However, there are still

some good parts about Falcon 60, such as the fact that the time extension "allows for students to get more work done," Dipietro said.

On the flip side, Di Pietro dislikes the fact that Falcon 60 "discourages you to eat lunch," as students who need more time for redos and makeups have to still come in multiple days a week to get all their work done. This was also a similar problem during Falcon 30 as students just never had enough time to finish all their work during one 30 minute period.

Some students have also thought of changing the schedule back to make Falcon Block 45 minutes again. Di Pietro voiced his opinion on this issue and stated how we should "revert the schedule back to what it was two years ago." A large number of students agree with this as they were able to finish all their work without having to worry about time. Clearly that extra 15 minutes helped out students with their time management.

Feedback from the whole of the student body is great. And hopefully the principal can take into consideration

all the tips and ideas from the students. Behind the scenes, Principal Johnson has already started to discuss some adjustments to the Falcon 60.

He has gotten good feedback, taking many of these comments and attempting to put them into action. For example, one idea that he has received is to create a brand new testing center. The center would be located on the first floor and "would allow students to get all their work done by using the full 60 minutes," Johnson said. This testing center would create a quiet space for students with large quizzes or assessments so they can finish the whole thing in one sitting instead of having to go to a teacher's room throughout the course of the week.

Principal Johnson is very hopeful of Falcon 60 and the impact it will have on the future of the school. By providing Falcon 60 it "allows [students] to see teachers for help, more time to do make-up work and homework, more time to be with friends, be with clubs and relieve school time stress." Principal Johnson's hope is to make Falcon 60 not only productive

and helpful, but also a time to have fun with friends and relieve stress and anxiety during the school day.

Hopefully the students and the staff can come to love Falcon 60 and change it for the better. Throughout the years, the hope is to evolve this time to allow for activities and extra time to do whatever it is students want to accomplish that given day.

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### OPEN BLUE BLOCK

MATH ~ MUSIC ~ SOCIAL ST. ~ TECH ED (CTE)

MATH	
Teacher	Room
Angerer	316
Bland	331
Cabalan	321
Doucette	313
Dugans	154
Erdely	318
Finan	330
Gotshall	325
Jang	328
Kintzley	319
Kraft	327
Lowman	315
McIntyre	329
Meadows	312
Ritz	311
Robertson	309
Sasse	314
Staisloff	310

MUSIC	
Teacher	Room
Kilby	192
Metcalfe	196

SOCIAL STUDIES	
Teacher	Room
Allam	222
Bryden	232
Derlink	148
Dunbar	336
Dziedzic	226
Goldberg	333
Haring	224
Hunter	231
Kandra	335
Kletter	230
McDougal	332
Poole	334

TECH ED (CTE)	
Teacher	Room
Barnstead	304
Bernstein	157
Cahoon	158
Colon	303
Lemmon	165
Mills	167
Slack	170
Smith	164
Ward	159

### OPEN GOLD BLOCK

ART ~ AVID ~ ENGLISH ~ FACS ~ SCIENCE ~ WORLD LANG

ART	
Teacher	Room
Dattelbaum	243
Fornadel	239
Wess	242

AVID	
Teacher	Room
Bertinatti	308
Phillips	307

ENGLISH	
Teacher	Room
Bowman	210
Brannon	209
Downey	207
Earhart	244
Fish	216
Fonte	205
Greenwood	223
Harrington	206
Hill	214
Jones	156
Marks	213
Mermod	220
Morris	204
Moskowitz	203
Parks	208

FACS	
Teacher	Room
Taylor	166/167
Clark	365

SCIENCE	
Teacher	Room
Box	348
Boyd	363
Charles	368
Clark	365
Cosh	364
Gorrick	340
Greenlee	341
Nulud	350
Potter	369
Sexton	354
Stahl	366
Witmer	346

WORLD LANGUAGES	
Teacher	Room
Bak	249
Fernandez-Sanchez	267
Panzer	258
Posada	266
Williams	256
Zhou	268

(Left) Blue Block schedule with teacher openings. The math, music, social studies and tech ed. classes are open during this block for students to do their work. (Right) Gold block schedule with teacher openings. The art, AVID, english, FACS, science and world language classes are open during this Falcon Block. Photos taken by Artin Tarpinian.

# Top Four Best Concert Venues in MD

Maryland has over 160 concert venues, these are the top four.

Ella Stoudt | Staff Writer

With over 160 concert venues, it is hard to pick just four. Live music has been in history since 1672, and continues to this day. Hearing music live is an unexplainable feeling, however, the wrong venue can make it hard to enjoy the music. With that being said, an honorable mention goes to Parris Underground in Severna Park MD; the venue features small artists around SP. The sound tech makes the music heard everywhere in the building, however, it is small and gets hot easily.

## The Anthem

The Anthem is a space where the layout is smart, the music is loud, the tech crew is amazing and the location is impeccable. That is why it comes in as #1. The anthem has three floors to make sure everyone can see the stage clearly. At The Anthem, the artists have freedom to choose what they like for their performance and staging. The tech crew makes sure that the performance goes exactly what they are thinking. The Anthem is right on the water so as soon as you walk out you get hit with an amazing view and a great photo opportunity.

Go to: [theanthemdc.com](http://theanthemdc.com)

## Merriweather Post Pavilion

The Merriweather Post Pavilion is an outside concert venue that is 40 acres big. It can fit 19,319 people making it the biggest venue on this list. The special elements in Merriweather include their seating, famous frozen margarita and their statues. Their seating consists of a lawn, sky lawn and sta-

dium; people can bring chairs and blankets so that they can sit on the lawn, meanwhile, the sky lawn and stadium has chairs. The sky lawn makes it able to see the stage from a closer upper level view. This venue is full of history; if you take a lap around the venue you will see all of the big bands that have performed at Merriweather, and you will see statues of art. However, Merriweather is only open during the nice months (April-Oct.).

Go to: [merriweathermusic.com](http://merriweathermusic.com)

## The Hamilton Live

The Hamilton Live is a very small venue with only 600 seats, making this the smallest venue on the list, however, despite being small, the venue has amazing food. You can get dinner and a show. Because the venue is small, that makes it so much more special and intimate. On a few occasions the performers may even stay after and talk to the audience. It is mostly smaller artists that perform there and tickets are very cheap. General admission starts at \$25.

Go to: [live.thehamiltondc.com](http://live.thehamiltondc.com)

## CFG Bank Arena

The CFG Bank Arena can fit 14,000 people, mostly big artists perform here. For example, Billie Eilish and Bon Jovi both performed there. This venue is inside and can get crowded fast. It has over 150 displays for visual content including strobe light, lasers and pyrotechnics. It has three levels so you can see the show everywhere. It is located in the heart of Baltimore and hosts 120+ shows annually including the hottest artists. The music gets loud with its Full-crum line array speaker systems



Sophomores Emma Silverman, Samantha Garvey and Claire Madeline going to see Lizzy McAlpine at The Anthem. McAlpine performed at the popular D.C. venue on June 12 as a part of her tour for her album "Older."

so make sure to bring earplugs.

Go to: [cfgbankarena.com](http://cfgbankarena.com)

The venues around the area are

already filling in their concert schedules for the season. Make sure to get your tickets before they sell out.





# Women's Wrestling in Maryland

Women's wrestling in Severna Park after a rise in popularity.

Katarina Day | Photo Editor

Women wrestlers have been pioneers in the sport at the high school level for only two decades. Starting in 2019, Maryland became one of the first states to endorse women's wrestling at the high school level. Only a handful of other states had led the way in previous years: California, Alaska and Hawaii to name a few.

In Maryland's locale just three years ago at Queen Anne's County High School in Centreville history was made with the first all-female wrestling team in Maryland. Recently other schools in Anne Arundel County have followed suit with their own additions to women's wrestling such as Northeast High School, Arundel High School and Crofton High School. Chesapeake High School recently debuted the first all female team in Anne Arundel County earlier in the season.

Severna Park is no stranger to the rise in female wrestling as well, with seniors Alex and Alanna Ad-

ams participating in their third year on the team.

When asked about the rise in popularity of women's wrestling Alex Adams said, "...there's been a lot more involvement just by word of mouth. It's hard to be the first one to take the step towards something new, but seeing other girls competing and having fun is really inspiring. A lot of schools have their own girls teams now, with full varsity line ups which is amazing. I hope Severna Park can get there one day."

Despite the rapid pace at which women's wrestling has reached popularity in Maryland, Severna Park still has one of the smallest coed ratios in the state with this year's team totaling 33 boys and two girls. Coaches Sam Ziff and Paul Kalafos, both Severna Park wrestling veterans with state championship wins during their high school careers, started coaching the team in 2022. Both Ziff and Kalafos, along with Severna Park High

School alumni Coach Trevor Bryden have expressed support for the rise of female wrestlers around the county, and hope that more women will express interest and join the team at Severna Park as well.

As for the success of female wrestlers around Anne Arundel County, the participation and skill level is a marvel. Talented wrestlers from around the county participate in the county championships which are the precursors to the regional championships, and the state championship following that. Last year in February, Alanna Adams secured the county title for the weight class of 135 against Crofton wrestler Breyon Thompson, securing her journey to regionals. Despite the spread of female wrestling teams, "...there's definitely a lack of resources and support for female wrestlers. Just finding people who care enough to give us as much time and energy as they do the guys," Alex Adams said.

Concerning the future of her involvement in wrestling, Alex Adams has no definite plans to wrestle as of right now. However, she has committed to Penn State and has researched the recently created female wrestling team there.

Senior Alana Adams in her wrestling match against Severn Run High School. The match ended with Severna Park 0 and Severn Run 3. Photo taken by Katarina Day



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# The New 2025 Lacrosse Season

The girls' and boys' lacrosse teams are ready for the start of the new 2025 lacrosse season.

Abby Lawhorne | Staff Writer

The former lacrosse state champions are locked and loaded, ready for a new 2025 season.

Both girls and boys lacrosse won their respective state championships in 2024. Last year the Severna Park boys' claimed their 8th straight state title with an 8-6 win over Towson in the 3A state championship game.

Senior Jack Fish said his personal goal for the 2025 season is to beat every team in the county, hoping to grasp another state title. Fish is excited to attend UMBC to play D1 lacrosse. He hopes to improve his skills by being able to practice with other teammates that are part of the UMBC team. Fish led the Falcons to the 3A state championship with 67 points on 50 goals and 17 assists. Fish says he is participating in a lot of off season workouts as well as attending Goalie Smith in his free time to perfect his shots.

Another player from the boys' lacrosse team is junior Tyler Lawhorne. Lawhorne says he has always been playing with a lacrosse stick since he was young and has always found playing sports enjoyable. He knew that if he put in the dedication and hard work he had potential. Lawhorne is excited for the new 2025 season and is ready to take down any competition in the Falcon's way. Lawhorne is a Severna Park Falcons midfielder and is preparing for the season by lifting weights, running and "hitting the wall everyday."

Shifting to the Severna Park girls' lacrosse team, they have a record setting 16 state titles, passing Mt. Hebron for the most in Maryland history.

Junior Maria Bragg said she wants to just have a successful season and hope-

fully be able to obtain another state title. On top of playing lacrosse, Bragg also is on the varsity basketball team. Bragg takes this opportunity of being part of the basketball team as a chance to participate in six days a week hard core practice. Bragg is excited to continue her lacrosse career at University of Florida to play D1 lacrosse after she graduates. Not only does Bragg play for the Severna Park Falcons as a midfielder, she also plays for a club team called M&D. Bragg has been playing lacrosse since she was as young as four or five years of age.

Another player from the girls lacrosse team is senior Maeve Byrne. Byrne is super excited for the new season. Some of her goals and team goals are tightening up defense, improving footwork and helping contribute to another state title.

After Byrne graduates, she is excited to attend Roanoke to play lacrosse. She plans to double major in biology and psychology, hoping to go into pharmacy as a profession. Byrne is so incredibly grateful that she has this opportunity to play alongside other amazingly talented players. Byrne plays for a club team called Integrity and for the Falcons she plays defense. She says both teams have been an amazing experience and really helped her grow as a player. Byrne has been playing lacrosse since she was in elementary school. She says lacrosse is a huge part of her life and can't wait to see where it takes her in college.

With both the girls and boys teams having strong returning players as well as new incoming players, they are ready to kickstart the season on a high note in early March with scrimmages and then moving into regular season games. Severna Park is scheduled to play rival



games against Broadneck and South River in April. The teams are hoping there will be student support at the games as the season gets underway. It will be exciting to watch both teams in action as they look to defend their state titles and continue the lacrosse tradition at Severna Park.

TOP: Varsity boys lacrosse team won the state championship 2024 with a score of 8 to 6 Towson. Photo taken by Quentin Angelo.

BOTTOM: Middle is blocked by defense for a goal during Varsity girls lacrosse championship game. Varsity won 12-6 Dulaney. Photo taken by Emma Rogers.

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# The Transfer Portal in College Athletics

## What is it and what it is doing in the NCAA?

Emerson Scott | Sports Editor

College-bound athletes today are facing more shifting in the NCAA rules and policies now than ever before. A primary topic of interest when it comes to new college athletic regulations is the transfer portal. The transfer portal has allowed players to get more than one chance to find the school that is the right fit, which for many college athletes is a blessing and a curse.

The transfer portal isn't a neon, sci-fi like, glowing passageway like its name might allude to. In reality, it is an online database which lists the names of players that have declared for the portal. It then allows players and coaches to legally contact each other and determine whether or not the school is the place for them athletically and academically. Additionally, the concept of the transfer portal isn't extremely new, but the ways that it has now evolved make it uncharted territory for the NCAA today.

The portal was first introduced in 2018, and it allowed for a one-time transfer opportunity, but with the limitation that the student-athlete must not compete for that academic year. But in 2022, that was altered when immediate playing opportunity was granted with a one-time transfer, but a second transfer would mean exclusion from competition for that academic year. Finally, in early 2024, the ability for unlimited and unrestricted transfers was adopted into the NCAA rule book.

On the high school level, these changes can be exciting as well as daunting for many. This is because alongside the changes with the portal also come changes in roster sizes across different sports and programs in the NCAA. This means that the world of college recruitment now includes transfer athletes and high school athletes

both competing for limited spots within a program.

Some Severna Park High School student athletes have optimistic feelings in regards to the portal; such as Gettysburg College lacrosse commit junior Brooke Klima and University of Florida lacrosse commit junior Maria Bragg.

Klima said, "It gives student athletes a new chance, if you aren't happy where you are it gives you a new perspective on where you can take your athletics and academics somewhere else."

While Bragg shared a similar view point, she also added, "I think it is a good opportunity for students, but only up to some point. I feel like transferring is a good and fresh start but I feel like you shouldn't be able to do it as many times as you want."

In order to transfer out of a program, the athlete must connect with the school's compliance officer and that person will then enter the athlete's name into the database. For coaches, once a player's name is in the database they are able to not only lean into high school recruits, but now can pull from the portal and even offer money to get that athlete to transfer there.

A prime example of what this change has created is the transfer of former University of Georgia quarterback Carson Beck to the University of Miami. This might sound just like any other transfer that is becoming more common practice. But what makes this so different is that Beck's transfer goes along with a deal that will bring him 3-4 million dollars from NIL (Name, Image, Likeness, it allows players to profit off of sales and items associated with them). The significance of this also comes with the fact that prior to the transfer, Beck had announced that he was declar-

ing for the NFL draft, but in under two weeks, Beck reversed this decision. Beck was able to make more money via use of the transfer portal than he possibly would have made as a first year quarterback in the NFL.

Instances like that along with new opportunities at the college level can mean a multitude of things in regards to what is to come. Although it seems as though the ground is starting to shake, it might just mean that the new realities within the NCAA rules are something that players will

learn to adapt to. But the thing that will always remain a constant in a collegiate setting is the will to change due to the love of the game.

**2020-2024 University of Georgia quarterback number 15 Carson Beck.** Beck saved a year of college athletic eligibility by redshirting for the 2020 football season. Beck now plans to use that eligibility at the University of Miami for the 2025 season and continue his college career and is expected to play in the NFL after his time at Miami. Photo taken by University of Georgia Athletics



# Women Athletes Recruited

Several female SPHS athletes have committed to play in college.

Rosie Melnychenko | Staff Writer

Women athletes committed to a variety of colleges this month to play sports at various NCAA division schools all over the country. At SPHS, senior Courtlynn Edwards, senior Maeve Byrne and junior Emerson Scott are some of the female athletes that have worked hard in their respective sports field to be recruited to play sports at the next level: college.

Edwards is a volleyball player who is going D2 at Fayetteville State.

"I was just doing a lot of sports growing up. I've always wanted to do sports just in college and my mom did sports in college so I wanted to do it too... I was shown it growing up and also my mom did the same sport. And so she

put me in it while I was growing up and I've just done it ever since," Edwards said.

Edwards is a middle blocker who has a supportive role and shows leadership.

"I feel like I am very confident of everyone, like I am a people pleaser and everyone loves me, so everyone knows what I expect from them and they do it well and if there is something off then I know how to go to that person," Edwards said.

Byrne is a lacrosse player who is going D3 at Roanoke College.

Byrne started playing at a young age and said "my mother played in college too and... when I was like literally a baby

would put me in her pack and play lacrosse with her friends so like, I was always around it as a kid."

Byrne continued, "As an athlete, probably like the ability to rationalize things... being an athlete is one of those like mentally tough things that you'll have to do and like, just being able to like, bounce back after something like hits you like, mentally in school or like in a friendship, definitely being an athlete has helped cause that's also like being able to play and get some of that steam off."

Scott plays soccer and is going D1 at Florida Atlantic University.

"I play soccer and I got started just by, you know, playing at a young age. My par-

ents got me into a lot of different things like dance, soccer... all these things. I think my sister and I were both kind of drawn to the sport and also having someone who's equally as passionate about it as you are, and it is super fun and I got to, you know, kind of grow up through this sport and I had to be something that I really enjoyed and was really passionate about," Scott said. "It builds a leader and I think that you have to be able to effectively communicate when playing a team sport. And I think that's made me a more effective leader and a more compassionate leader."

## Unified Bocce

What the program provides and what it is about.

Addie Murphy | Staff Writer

The unified sports program at SPHS has the main goal of inclusion through sports and fostering an environment where students with developmental or intellectual disabilities are able to be a part of a team and feel the benefits of what it means to play team sports. While all the sports are competitive, a stand out unified sport is bocce for Severna Park.

This is one of Severna Park's outstanding programs and attracts students from all grades. Bocce offers the right mix of competition and inclusion and embraces both skill and strategy. The program has plenty of opportunity for teamwork and strategy, making it perfect for students of diverse experiences. Severna Park's program became more than a sport, but a vibrant community where friends were made and

support was found both in winning and losing games. Emma Lawrence, a junior, has spent one year playing bocce.

"My favorite part of bocce was making new friends and getting to know everyone. It also is a fun and safe place for everybody to be competitive and want to win as a team," Lawrence said. Lawrence's experience shows the bigger goals of the program as a whole where it emphasizes inclusion, fun and building connections with everyone. It has also allowed her the opportunity to form friendships with students that she may not have met otherwise and shows that sports can not only be used for competitiveness, but also an avenue for unity and understanding.

"Bocce has taught me all about teamwork and that it's not only about the sport,

but it's about supporting each other and having each other's backs no matter what happens," junior Logan Jones said. This additionally shows that the organization is not just about winning, but it's about how the students support each other and make new connections. The benefits of the program go beyond just the sport. Students working in unified programs gain a range of skills including communication, leadership and collaboration.

The program is unique in that it breaks barriers between students with different backgrounds and abilities. Many life lessons can be learned in an environment that encourages everyone to express their voices and develop authentic connections. Students learn values such as teamwork, respect and embracing diversity while developing their athletic skills. Coaches, students and families come together to support ath-

letes which creates a sense of pride for everyone participating in the sport.

Both Lawrence's and Jones' experiences illustrate the organization of unified sports as a whole by fostering an environment where students of all abilities can thrive together in a supportive and caring community. The unified bocce program serves as a powerful reminder that sports can be about creating lasting friendships and a fun environment for everyone that can go far beyond the game.

Athletes on the Unified Bocce team pose together after their matches from spring 2024. Photo taken by Logan Jones



Middle: Senior Courtlynn Edwards is committed to Fayetteville State to play volleyball. Right: Senior Maeve Byrne is committed to Roanoke College to play lacrosse. Photos taken by Katarina Day

