

THE BROWN AND GOLD

“The Official Newspaper of HHS”



SCHEDULES AND SECLUSION AT HHS

BY BRIAN HANIDES

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Some students will despise starting a new school year every year new schedule or not. Others will give the new schedule a try: how will you know if you don't try it open-mindedly? Give it a chance, or else it will definitely stink. There are even some students who enjoy the beginning of a new school year in all of its new school supply smelling glory. However, there's one thing that goes for just about everyone: If the school doesn't do its job in setting things up to meet the basic needs of the students, then the year is certainly going to begin with a rocky start. That's the thing that a lot of students feel the school doesn't quite understand. To us, schedules are, or at least were, seen as that concrete basic need that just can't go wrong. Essentially, our schedule is our life at school. Without it, we have no point in being here, nor do we have anything to do. So when the schedules were the worst they've ever been at the beginning of this year, followed by hectic changes to them in the first place, chaos was inevitable.

The story is one we've all heard just about a thousand times; yet no one I asked had ever received a straight answer from anyone in guidance. Would it be better if we had a reason? Of course not, the schedules would still have been botched. Wouldn't it be nice, though, if we could have had a reason as to why we had to sit in guidance every day for the first three weeks of school to get a schedule made? I sat in guidance the first day for two and a half hours. I used to fear missing a class on the first day, but there was no question about the fact that this year, not a single teacher thought of it as odd. When all is said and done, I left guidance begrudgingly with electives I didn't even want, as many of us did. I still don't have electives for second semester, and there are plenty in my position and even worse.

How closely does this relate to the new "Freshmen Academy" is what I want to know. I know not a single freshman who had a schedule botched in any way, shape, or form. Mission accomplished? They did say they wanted to help the Freshmen, right? I don't think they are. There's nothing good that comes out of isolating the Freshmen. You aren't easing them into the high school experience; you're keeping them in middle school for another year in a different building! So let's say in your opinion, the changes benefit the Freshmen far more than they hurt them. Okay, that's great. What about the rest of us?

It used to be seniority that controlled elective choices, yet somehow now as a Junior I have not a single elective I signed up for. It's not just about electives, either. Plenty of upperclassmen had mixed academics as well! Three sciences with a bit of English and math during the same period does not sound like organization and fair tradeoff to me. All of this pain in my back to help the Freshmen?

Freshman year is torturous. Freshmen are physically and mentally bombarded by upperclassmen. By segregating the Freshmen, the process of integration with upperclassmen is simply delayed. We learned what it was like to be in high school. Is that what Sophomore year is for now? The growth of the beloved Freshmen is being stunted by keeping them so held up to one area. Freshman year, for those of us who actually experienced a Freshman year, was a largely enjoyable, or at least a worthy, quest to adapt to high school. It is one step closer to being an adult, if you will. Cutting off Freshman year for the class of 2015 is like detonating an essential bridge in development, and it certainly isn't doing any good for the rest of us who are simply trying to crawl over the next bridge to the rest of our lives. Any organization I see in a university will be culture shock to say the least.

A CONVERSATION WITH PRINCIPAL

BY PRISCILLA MARTIN

The Principal of our school, Mr. Nangle sat down with me to do an interview. He has been married for 43 years, has 2 daughters and 2 grandchildren, and a Labrador retriever named Cassie.

Priscilla: Was there a teacher that stood out and motivated you to become a principal?

Mr. Nangle: My 8th grade teacher named Dennis Sweeney, motivated me to become a student of history and also to get into administration.

Priscilla: What motivated you to become an educator?

Mr. Nangle: I've always liked helping students and watching them progress through life- there is nothing greater than explaining a concept to a student and seeing them understand it. It's like in a cartoon when a light bulb comes over their heads.

Priscilla: Have you ever been principal before? If so where and for how long?

Mr. Nangle: First time being principal, since 2006. A curriculum supervisor for Social Studies & World History and would fill in for Vice Principal for the high school and middle school levels.

Priscilla: What do you think of the Freshman Academy?

Mr. Nangle: I like the Freshman Academy- 5 years ago we started a small learning community and freshman seminar is the gradual transmission into the learning process.

Priscilla: What do you believe is Haverhill High School's greatest strength?

Mr. Nangle: I really believe the students at Haverhill High is the schools greatest strength. Socially, academically, and educationally. We have a great group of students.

Priscilla: What do you believe is Haverhill High's greatest weakness is?

Mr. Nangle: I don't think we have any. But the community doesn't realize what HHS has to offer to its students.

Priscilla: What do you hope to accomplish as principal?

Mr. Nangle: One of the biggest challenges is the freshmen academy and the integration of special needs students into inclusion programs.

Priscilla: What is your position on the issue of cyber bullying? And how would you deal with it?

Mr. Nangle: Cyber bullying is treated as any other form of bullying & harassment, a 3- step process.

1. Student is spoken to
2. Parents are called
3. Becomes police issue

Q- What do you like about the cafeteria food?

A- It's wholesome, and fits federal guidelines. Though I am not a fan of the chicken, I think the staff does a great job feeding 1800 students.

Priscilla: Do you speak more than one language?

A- No, I have trouble with English.

Mr. Nangle: Are there any activities that you would like to add to the extracurricular list- what would they be?

A- At HHS we have 18 athletic sports and close to 30 clubs and organizations, I would like to see every student get involved in at least 1 afterschool activity.

Priscilla: What do you like overall about Haverhill High school?

Mr. Nangle: I think the students at Haverhill High School are some of the best in the Merrimack Valley, our scores on MCAS, SAT's, etc; are as good as anyone's around, as with any school our size, there is that one element of the population that don't feel attached to the school, that is one of the focuses as educators, we have to work on.

Priscilla: What's your favorite movie?

Mr. Nangle: My favorite movie is "Money Ball"

Priscilla: What do you like to do in your spare time?

Mr. Nangle: I like to putter around the house, and do anything my wife tells me.

Priscilla: If you could have dinner with anyone (dead or alive) who would it be and why?

Mr. Nangle: I would love to have dinner with my father, he has taught me so much in life.

Priscilla: What sports or activities did you like to do growing up?

Mr. Nangle: I played baseball, basketball and football growing up in Lowell for the high school team

MEET ATHLETIC DIRECTOR

BY JULIA CENSULLO

Being thrust into the position of athletic director at a school as large as Haverhill High is a task that is considered daunting on its own. However, Tim O'Brien took on the job mid-school year. He has brought nothing but positive change to our humble home.

Julia: How do you like HHS so far?

Mr. O'Brien: I love it here! The people are unbelievable, the school spirit is amazing, and both the faculty and students are welcoming and helpful.

Julia: Do you think the user fee changes help the situation in athletics?

Mr. O'Brien: The user fee change helps for sure. The changes help coaches programs in general by increasing participation, and it certainly helps in the long run with recruiting and such. So it seems things on the games schedules have been mixed up a bit.

Julia: What's with the different teams that Haverhill has in their schedules this year?

Mr. O'Brien: Well, we dropped some of the teams in the Merrimack conference in a general decision by all of us. The relief from those game schedules help a lot though, as we can play new teams and teams we've never faced before, which can help the team develop as a whole.

*"There's definitely
a world of
potential here."*

Julia: What do you think of the other sports teams here?

Mr. O'Brien: Last spring the boys volleyball team was, of course, incredible, and I think it's great that the community here completely recognized and embraced the success. The student athletes were most definitely motivated by this excitement as well.

Julia: Where were you before you came to Haverhill High School?

Mr. O'Brien: Well I've been in the system for 11 years. I was at Saint Leo University for 5 years and then I came to Merrimack college and have been in this system for the past couple of years.

Julia: Do you see any tangible differences between the teams?

Mr. O'Brien: It's better here, but don't tell the other schools! The sports teams are clearly hungry for success and it shows in their dedication. When we can finally fulfill their wants, there's a lot of excitement.

Julia: What's essentially new this year?

Mr. O'Brien: We're going to be starting a new student athlete advisory council, in which student athletes from each sport will represent their teams, and they won't just be captains. All sorts of ranks on the team will be participating on the council. The mixed crowds will all speak together and have a few goals: to have a communication from students to the administration, it will serve as community service for the athletes, and the school spirit starts with students becoming leaders.

Julia: There are so many new things around the campus, do you think the players feel a sense of ownership?

Mr. O'Brien: It feels like the new gym almost brings a new sense of pride to the players as well.

Julia: Do you think the teams are all families?

Mr. O'Brien: Most definitely, and the council can help with that, too. The different sports teams see each other's games. They can celebrate each other's accomplishments and be congratulatory towards each other and not just their own teams. And of course, being a student athlete is a HUGE commitment!

Julia: Can teachers bring their children to games?

Mr. O'Brien: We want to make the stadium a family thing and a good environment to bring your children to. We always welcome families and a Saturday afternoon game is scheduled specifically for this, as late night games can be a lot for kids.

Julia: With the user fees gone, are there more people playing?

Mr. O'Brien: Yes, the sports rosters have increased and should continue to. The lack of user fees should encourage not only students who usually wouldn't to play a sport, but it also encourages student athletes already active to play more than one sport, something which was usually too expensive in the past. It's helped the football team for sure, doubling the roster to almost 110 now.

Julia: The football team used to wear their jerseys to school, but they don't anymore. Why is that?

Mr. O'Brien: I don't know, there's really no particular reason.

It's all up the program to decide things like that. We've switched things up a lot lately. The side we warm up on, the bench side, et cetera.

Julia: Where do you see the sports at HHS going?

Mr. O'Brien: There's definitely a world of potential here. We're working towards completely eliminating user fees, but better jobs of interacting with students needs to be done in middle school. It's hard to teach a kid a sport in high school, so they need to start young, which gives it a whole community approach. People here sometimes feel deprived with the transfers of talented players. This relates back to the younger trainee concept. People need to start earlier, they need to not only be an athlete but be a HILLIE. OUR talent.

Julia: Do you think the player's recognize school spirit?

Mr. O'Brien: Yeah, and they completely appreciate it. The boy's volleyball team told us that the spirit made a big difference, as they can completely feel it. When the crowd is cheering, they're feeling it and are inspired to do better from it. It's great that even when some players make trip ups or a player performs a great maneuver, they don't beat themselves up but they congratulate the others and motivate each other.

Julia: Last question: To you, what is a Hillie?

Mr. O'Brien: A Hillie is any person with a passion for the Haverhill community. Whether they live here, any sense or pride in Haverhill makes them a Hillie. The sports teams are like the front porch of the community, representing us on the outside.

AN INTERVIEW WITH MR. BROWN

BY LEXI BALEVRE

Lexi: Did you go to college or a different school before HHS? If so, where?

Mr. Brown: Yes. I went to grad school at The University OF New Hampshire and majored on zoology. I didn't teach at a different school before coming here.

Lexi: what was your reaction after your first day at HHS?

Mr. Brown: I was positive. The first day was very exciting for me, although it was a bit unorganized, the staff and my students were nice to me and made me feel very welcome.

Lexi: Did you find this experience to be overwhelming or still do?

Mr. Brown: It wasn't overwhelming, but I did feel that it was a new challenge for me. All of this is new and I interpreted it to be a new step in my career and life.

Lexi: Now that the students and faculty have been accustomed to the school year, do you enjoy teaching at HHS?

Mr. Brown: Most definitely. I love to teach now. I feel that the best thing I can give to my students is my knowledge that I recently learned in college. It's a great feeling.

Lexi: If you were to meet with upcoming new teachers, what would your advice be?

Mr. Brown: My main advice would be to stay positive. For me, that is the best way to go through school days. Also, to look for the best in your students. All students are different, but it is key to look at the best in them because every student has potential to succeed.

ELECTIVE SUGGESTIONS

BY TYLER CHARLESWORTH

At Haverhill High School, we have an extensive list of electives students can participate in. Here are some suggestions for ideas for new electives. These suggestions were made by members of the student body.

The first suggestion on the list is an Astrology class. This class would be for upper-class men (seeing how introduction to Astronomy is a senior class). This class and introduction to Astronomy could spark interests of students who have no knowledge of this field while also giving a head start for students who were interested in this field prior to taking this class.

The next suggestion is a Botany class. Since Haverhill High already has Zoology it would be good for students to also learn about plant life and learn a new and different branch of Biology. This class would be available for all student classes.

Another suggestion is extra History classes for specific time periods such as WWI, WWII, Vietnam, and Victorian Era Studies. These are classes open for people who want to learn more about these time eras that aren't covered very well in the curriculum. |

The last suggestion is Foreign Culture Studies. This class would be open for all grades. This class would give insight to the culture and customs of foreign countries.