



The Tiger Chronicle

College Preparatory
Middle School

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Three Down, One to Go!

With only one quarter left in the school year, it is hard to believe that we are so close to watching our 8th graders head off to high school.

Watching how hard they worked on this edition of the Tiger Chronicle, it is clear they are getting into the right mindset for high school. For the entire third quarter, our student journalists had their heads down,



working diligently on their articles. Inside this edition, readers will learn all they need to know about sports, including information about the brand new baseball season, as well as the history of the Atlanta Falcons.

Once finished with the sport section, readers can travel locally to nearby high schools, or as far afield as Italy. Whatever the topic, please enjoy reading these original compositions from our 8th grade Tigers - each article represents an entire quarter of researching and writing and rewriting!

Earn Your Stripes!

Prepared-Respectful-Engaged-Professional

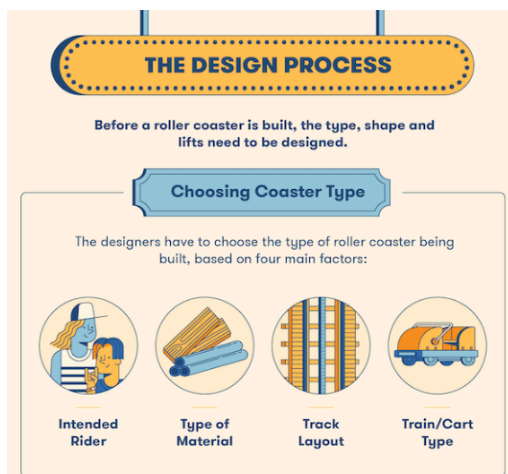
Thrills, Chills and Large Entrance Bills: Roller coasters and the engineering behind them.

Barrett J. & Henry A.

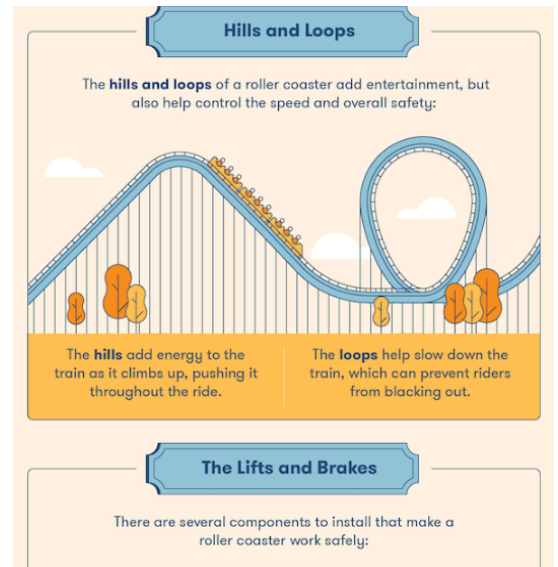
You walk down a long hallway and hear screaming in front of you. All of a sudden, you are locked into a tight-fitting chair restraining you from moving, placed on a steel framework, and can hear an audible “click” come out of the seat. You glance over, only to see that the people next in line are nervously watching you. All of a sudden, you are launched forward fast enough to make tears come out of your eyes, and you are flipped upside down and spun in vertical circles. No, this isn't a torture method, it's a roller coaster, and you... enjoyed it! A roller coaster is an experience that can be found at theme parks that aim to do a variety of things, including make the rider scream as they drop down a steep slope, go very fast, and overall provide a unique experience unlike anything else out there. Roller coasters can either be a more extreme ride, designed to make people scream and are intended for adults or teens, or can be a gentler ride intended for younger kids and their caretakers. A roller coaster needs multiple things and one of the most important things is thrill. Designers will strategically build the track so the ride is thrilling but also comfortable. They will add drops, loops, and many factors including a break run, which is a set of brakes to slow the roller coaster down at certain points, to make it thrilling and fun. Another thing roller coaster manufacturers will do to make a ride good is to strategically pick a material based on the ride. Roller coaster designers can use either steel or wood to create a ride or a mixture of the two. So pull down your lap bar and put on your restraints, because you're about to go on a heck of a ride!



The first thing parks and manufacturers figure out when they want to build a new ride or attraction is who the intended rider will be. As mentioned already, the intended rider of the rollercoaster informs the design, because who the rider will be the reason the ride is a terrifying ride with many loops for adults and teens, or a smaller and less intense ride for families and children. The second thing parks want to focus on is the theme of the roller coaster. Depending on where the coaster is placed in the park, it will have a different theme. Say Six Flags is building a new ride, if they put it in the DC world then the ride will be themed around a DC superhero. Parks can either make the queue well-themed and have the ride have no theme, have the ride have a theme but not the queue, or parks can do what Disney does, and add theming to both



the queue and on the ride. When adding a theme to the ride, the designer can create showrooms where the train will enter and watch a show with either visual effects, a screen, animatronics, or sound, statues, and buildings - anything to create an immersive feeling. The third thing that parks and manufacturers figure out is the material of the track. If the park wants a rougher experience with slightly banked turns and no loops they will pick wood. A wooden coaster is the oldest type of coaster ever made and it's a typical coaster but with limitations because the track is wood. A good example of this type of coaster is Ghost Rider at Knott's Berry Farm. If parks want a ride experience that is more smooth and can twist, turn, and flip more than parks will select a steel track. There is an exception though. In 2011, a roller coaster company named Rocky Mountain Construction (RMC) unveiled their newest type of roller coaster. It was a hybrid between a steel and wooden coaster so it could have the best of both worlds. RMC would revamp old wooden roller coasters that had little popularity and would give them the iron horse treatment and add many loops and elements that a wood roller coaster could never have and elements that a steel roller coaster could never have. Train and cart types can vary and can impact a rider's experience greatly. Parks and manufacturers will create fun rides and the train or cart type is a part of that. There are many different types of cart types and each one is built to thrill, comfort, and create an overall safe and fun experience. Part of the building experience is adding lift hills or launches and brakes to accelerate or make the train go faster or slow the train down. Finally, the construction will begin and this phase usually goes fast. The most difficult part of constructing a roller coaster is building the queue, building the station, and renovating an area to put the roller coaster.



According to Coasterpedia.net, almost every type of roller coaster in the world has to be one of these



models of roller coasters. One type is a “4th Dimension” coaster, which is a coaster where the rider spins vertically and goes upside down. An example of this would be X2 at Six Flags Magic Mountain. Another type of coaster is a “Bobsled” coaster, which is a type of coaster that emulates a bobsled but is on a wooden track. An example of this coaster is La Vibora at Six Flags over Texas. A third type of coaster is a “floorless” coaster, which is like a

standard coaster that sits four across but there is no floor to rest feet on. An example of this type of coaster would be *Scream* at Six Flags Magic Mountain. A very unique type of coaster is a motorbike coaster, which is a type of coaster that simulates the feeling of riding a horse, motorcycle, or something else that is ridden. A very cool example of a motorbike coaster is the *Tron Lightcycle Power Run* at Walt Disney's Magic Kingdom. A really exciting type of coaster is a "flying" coaster,



which is where the seats rotate back in the station so the rider is facing the ground, and then it emulates flying. An example of this type of coaster is *Tatsu* at Six Flags Magic Mountain (pictured left). A traditional type of coaster is a "Sit-Down" coaster, which is a classic model with loops, launches, and drops, which is shown in *New Revolution* at Six Flags Magic Mountain. A "Stand-Up" coaster is like a typical coaster but the rider is actually standing up the whole time! A great example of a Stand-Up coaster is *Riddler's Revenge* at Six Flags Magic Mountain. The next style of coaster is a "Diving" coaster, which is one that sits 6 across a row and has 3 rows. This type of coaster will take the rider very high up and then drop them 90 degrees. A terrifying example of this is the

Emperor at SeaWorld San Diego. A "shuttle" coaster is a very interesting roller coaster model that uses a launch and brakes to propel daring thrillseekers back and forth to gain speed until they are finally able to clear a big hill. An interesting example of this type of coaster is the *Electric Eel* at SeaWorld San Diego. A very unique style of coaster is a "spinning" coaster, which can spin freely during the ride. This is shown at the *Sierra Sidewinder* at Knott's Berry Farm. A wet ride can be had on a "water" coaster, which is a hybrid coaster where daring riders experience the water aspects and roller coaster aspects of a ride. A soaking example of this is *Journey to Atlantis* at SeaWorld San Diego. A huge type of roller coaster is a "Hyper" coaster, which is interesting because these coasters must be 200 feet tall or have a 200-foot drop. A terrifying example of this that only the bravest thrill seekers will ride is the *Magnum-XL 2000* at Cedar Point in Sandusky, Ohio. An even scarier type of roller coaster than a Hypercoaster is a "Giga" coaster. This ride is so scary because it has to be 300 to 399 feet tall, which means it's at least 100 feet taller than a Hyper. A huge and amazing example of a Giga coaster is *Fury 325* at Carowinds, which is a very interesting park because half of it is in North Carolina and the other half is in South Carolina! Finally, possibly one of the scariest roller coaster types in the world is a "Strata" coaster, which is so terrifying because it has to at least be 400 feet tall or have a 400-foot drop - which makes it the largest type of roller coaster in the world! An extreme example of a Strata coaster that even the most daring thrillseekers won't ride is *KingDa Ka* at Six Flags Great Adventure which is located in Jackson Township, New Jersey.

Some of the most notable roller coasters in America, according to thrillist.com, include *Mean Streak*, in Cedar Point; Sandusky, Ohio. This roller coaster is notable because it uses 1.7 million feet of pine wood to build this wooden monstrosity. Having a lot of wood isn't its only feature, it has the

sixth-largest drop of any wooden roller coaster. The next notable roller coaster on our list is, Lightning Rod, Dollywood; Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. The main drawing factor of this ride is that it's the fastest wooden roller coaster in the world and it's the only wooden roller coaster with a launch and one of the only roller coasters with a launched lift! The final coaster I'm going to mention right now is Fury 325, Carowinds; Charlotte North Carolina. The reason this ride is one of the most sought-after rides by roller coaster enthusiasts is because it is the tallest and fastest giga-coaster in the world and won Amusement Today's 2015 Golden Ticket award for best new ride. All of the roller coasters mentioned are very interesting, large, crazy or all three - and this puts them in amusement park history.

One record-breaking coaster is the TMNT: Shellraiser. This coaster is in the Mall of America in New Jersey. This ride has the steepest drop at 121.5 degrees which is the steepest in the world, not to mention this ride has a launch and many loops. If that is not the type of coaster for you, then maybe one of these other extreme rides is more your style? If you like speed coming from a fast launch

instead of a steep drop, then you will like Formula Rossa in Ferrari World Abu Dhabi. This coaster is the fastest roller coaster in the world, with a max speed of 149mph! This is faster than a cheetah, and also faster than most cars. Formula Rossa is so crazy that thrillseekers who dare to ride it are required to wear glasses just



to experience it! If you want a more tame experience then you will like Steel Dragon 2000 in Nagashima Spa land, Japan. The record Steel Dragon 2000 holds is that it is the longest coaster in the world with a run time of over 4 minutes, which is impressive because it does not count showrooms (an area where the theme of the ride unveils itself through a show with animatronics, sounds and a screen), and it runs at 95 mph. If you're more of an adrenaline junkie, then you will love KingDa Ka. KingDa Ka is the tallest roller coaster in the world reaching up to 456 ft tall and is located in Six Flags, New Jersey. The interesting thing about KingDa Ka is that it is the second fastest roller coaster in the world. Though all of these records are crazy and have insane angles, speeds, wild times, and heights, one roller coaster will open in October of 2024 at Six Flags Quiddiya, Saudi Arabia. This roller coaster will be the tallest at 650 ft high, 155 mph and the track will be 13,000 feet long. Falcon's flight will demolish almost all current records for roller coasters.

A very unique part of each amusement park is their unique water and dark rides. Many parks may have duplicates of the same coaster with minor changes, but no two dark rides or water rides are the

same. According to Wikipedia, a reliable online encyclopedia, a dark ride or a ghost train is defined as “an indoor amusement ride on which passengers aboard guided vehicles travel through specially lit scenes that typically contain animation, sound, music and special effects, and such exhibits include tunnels of love, scary themes, and interactive stories.” Dark rides will typically try to convey a theme to riders and immerse riders in a new world of fantasy. Dark rides will usually send riders through different rooms and send them through doors and have things lined up so two trains can't see each other. Designers will use forced perspective to make rooms look bigger and different than they are to create a better experience. The two main types of dark rides are shooter rides, like Buzz Lightyear Astro Blasters, where there are targets to shoot, and then the more traditional type like the Haunted Mansion where it goes through different showrooms. There is one rare type of dark ride where the train is a boat and it slowly goes through water. The most famous example of this is “It’s a Small World” at Disneyland. Again according to Wikipedia, a water ride is classified as “amusement rides that are set over water, and for instance, a log flume travels through a channel of water to move along its course.” Water rides are a good way to cool off during a hot day at a park and there are various different types of water rides. Some water rides will get the rider soaked and some will be like a dark ride and take the riders through a story. One water ride that will get you soaked is a bumper boat - while many parks don’t have these, they are very exciting and unique. Bumper boats are like your traditional bumper cars with a twist, and that is that you are on water and your boat has a water gun to soak other boats! Another type of water ride that will get you soaked is a log flume. A log flume is like a dark ride that has scenes but you're in logs and there are many drops throughout the ride. A great example of a log flume is Splash Mountain at Disneyland. A slightly more calming type of water ride is an old mill ride. An old mill is like a dark ride that has a boat being carried by water throughout different scenes. The old mill and river cave water rides are very similar. River



caves are almost the same as old mill rides but river caves have minor drops. A classic type of water ride is the river rapid ride (pictured left), which can either have a track where the water propels the raft or a free spinning ride where the water still spins the raft but it’s more loose. The next ride on my list is one of the most thrilling and soaking water rides. The chute ride is very simple, you go up a lift, turn, then go down a large and steep drop that soaks the people on the ride and the people near the ride. The final water ride on this list is kind of a hybrid of a roller coaster, dark ride, and water ride! The water coaster is unique, one park you're going down a

soaking drop, then you're in a showroom watching the theme unveil itself then you're riding an exhilarating roller coaster.

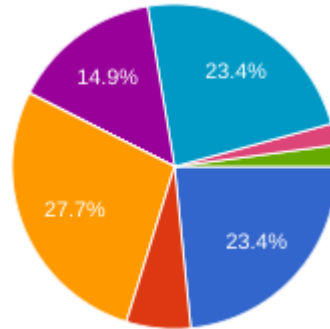
We conducted a survey of 8th grade students here at CPMS, and here are the best parks according to them. In third place, we have SeaWorld with 14.9% of the vote. In second place, we have a tie between Disneyland & Disney World (which our survey grouped as a single option) and Six Flags - each of these responses picked up 23.4% of the vote. Finally, in first place we have Knott's Berry Farm with 27.7% of the votes, so are students fans of Boysenberry? Well, let's find out, because our survey also asked students about the

top three reasons why students liked the park they chose. The third most common thing students told us they look for in an amusement park is a tie between the food of the park and the memories they have made at the park.

This is exemplified by 8th grade students like Giovannie Z. H., who

said that he liked Disneyland because "it has ... themes that take me back to when I was younger."

The second most common reason students like a theme park is the overall theme, whether that refers to something like the characters or the rides. A good example of this is how Hailey I. said that "Disneyland makes me happy to see all the lights and Disney characters everywhere." Finally, the most common thing that students look for in a theme park is the quality of the rides at the park. From another question, we can infer that students are fans of speed. This is supported by the fact that roughly 76% of students said that they were not afraid of roller coasters. We also asked why students felt safe on roller coasters, and credit must go to the logic of Evan G., who said that if the rides are open, then that must mean people haven't died on them. Can't argue with that! Another student to mention is Rory K. who said "I know they are safe and have been tested." In fact, most of the students who admitted some fear around roller coasters said that this fear varied from coaster to coaster, which we can infer means that most students like coasters more than they fear them. Some students though, like Mei Lan L. and Yousif A., are scared of most roller coasters, and had reasonable explanations around motion sickness and not enjoying loops or flips.



- Disneyland / Disney world
- Universal Studios (Hollywood or Orlando)
- Knott's Berry Farm
- Legoland (Any location)
- Sea World (Any location)
- Six Flags (Any location)
- Belmont Park
- Busch Gardens Williamsburg

The future of theme parks is already happening, according to travelchannel.com - a news website



focused on theme parks and unique experiences. Six Flags implemented (or tried to implement) VR headsets into their roller coasters. This created unique rides that can range from themes of a submarine deep in the sea to a comic book world. These rides failed because of high maintenance costs and incredibly high nausea rates due to a unique kind of intense motion sickness known as virtual reality sickness combined with standard dizziness from

coasters. Apparently nobody has to be too scared of losing the “old” coasters, as most of the coasters that were once VR have already been returned to the “old style” after about a year. We should also talk about the new theme parks that could be coming in 2024 or 2025, like Six Flags Quiddya, featuring Falcon’s Flight, which will be the fastest roller coaster in the world, coming in October 2024, and Epic Universe, Universal’s newest park, featuring both a Super Mario and How to Train Your Dragon world, coming in 2025. However, that doesn't even mention a new park to open in 2024, Mattel Adventure World, to feature two Hotwheels themed roller coasters. Not to forget about the possibility of a new expansion coming to Magic Kingdom in the summer of 2025. Some more very interesting news regarding the world of amusement parks is the launched log flume at SeaWorld in Antonio Texas. This launched log flume is the first of its kind and was made by Intamin. This log flume is fairly short but includes a launch, some minor theming, a vertical lift and the steepest drop on any log flume in the world. This log flume is named Catapult Falls and it is a very innovative log flume because during the launch you never leave the water. The future of roller coasters is looking very bright and the golden age of roller coasters is right around the corner. The advancements made in that field have been astonishing so far and there will be many more to come in the future.

Thank you for reading our article. Hopefully you learned a lot about the world of roller coasters.



Clothes Can Talk

Daniella Y.

Clothing and fashion are important aspects to students because of the positive impact clothing brings to people. The clothes individuals wear can express their personalities, culture, and social status. For example, clothing items can make someone feel good about themselves. Wearing an elegant dress might make the wearer feel like the belle of the ball; and wearing a fancy suit can evoke a feeling of coolness. Clothing is often used as a way for people to represent themselves to others; different clothing items can convey something about the wearer's values, uniqueness, or interests. An instance of this deeper meaning is when designs, colors, and patterns can preserve stories, unity, and cultural heritage - such as through traditional Indian fashion. For example, according to the Indian Women's Fashion blog, "Embracing diversity in Indian women's fashion goes beyond just clothing choices; it is a celebration of India's rich cultural heritage and an acknowledgment of its inclusive spirit." Traditional Indian fashion is represented through stories, unity, and cultural heritage with the use of their bright colors and their unique patterns on their dresses because of their reflective ethnicity and cultural traditions.



Clothing plays a powerful role in someone's character because the clothing someone wears has a symbolic meaning that plays a role in the social dynamics of someone's personal story. For instance, when a Muslim woman wears a hijab, it can show that she respects her religion by preserving her dignity and honor. But fashion is used for more than religious observation. The clothing choices of



any individual can show their moods and emotions. Namely, an individual wearing bright colors like reds, oranges, and yellows can indicate that the person wants to convey "energy and happiness," says an article posted on Mental Health America (one of the nation's leading community-based nonprofit organizations). On the other hand, an individual wearing cooler tones such as white, neutral colors, black, gray, and darker colors can evoke the idea that the individual has calm or maybe even sad emotions. We can infer that the colors a person wears can indicate their moods and emotions. Certain

cultures have strict clothing pieces or forms of clothes that are worn by religious individuals. Organized religion uses fashion as a sense of maintaining traditions and as a way of establishing identity for the individual's religion. Social status is expressed through clothing through the individual's career or an individual's money status. Styles that incorporate accessories such as shape, color, cut, pattern, and logo can indicate someone's wealth status. This article is discussing the importance of fashion because of its significant impact on so many people.



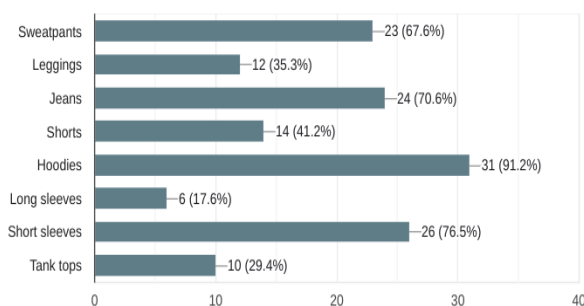
What about middle-school students? We are able to use clothing to express our identity, personality, and style on weekends, but when at school we have to wear the uniform. When students are outside of school, they can use their fashion to express themselves personally and intellectually when not in uniform. Fashion sense can be shown with the expression of different ideas, as expressed through clothing choices. To find out more about College Prep 8th graders and what they wear when

not in school, I surveyed students on their preferred clothing styles when they are able to make their own clothing choices to represent themselves. Categorizing the responses students sent me showed that a lot of students make similar fashion choices, mainly impacted by style trends around the world, with the help of their local culture that surrounds them. Local customs have a strong impact on style choices because of the culture, mannerisms, and popular clothing items from where we live. Generally speaking, the most popular clothing styles of the 8th grade could be categorized as comfortable, baggy, and trendy. The baggy look can be identified as streetwear, which originated in the 1990s as graphic tees, hoodies, sweatpants, baggy jeans, and big sneakers. In the 1990s, streetwear was inspired by hip-hop culture and also skater style - and that is still the case for streetwear today. These results from my survey show that the



4. What clothing item do you typically wear out of school?

34 responses



8th graders at College Prep like to be relaxed as well as in fashion when they are out of school.

The survey of the 8th grade students revealed that certain individuals have their own distinct styles that they enjoy wearing, and favorite clothing stores that they like shopping at. Students who have a favorite clothing store claim to choose that store mostly

because it has certain clothing pieces. The store's clothing pieces help students stand out from others to feel unique and not feel a part of a crowd. Other reasons students chose a favorite store include the store's ability to help students feel they belong to something, as well as how suitable the store's inventory of clothes is for certain events. Students may also have a favorite clothing store because the catalog of clothes at the store tend to fit well, which helps students have space to move comfortably in clothes. Some other reasons students provided for favorite clothing stores were up-to-date styles that give students the selective wear of new trends, and good prices that are suitable for the budget available to teens.

According to the survey results, the most popular clothing store among the 8th grade girls is Brandy Melville - which is a trend-setting, relevant, cool, clothing store; known for fast fashion. Personally, I think that Brandy Melville has a wide range of feminine clothes that fit right, look good, and feel good when wearing. Teenage girls at CPMS also like Pacsun, which is a clothing store "dedicated to an exclusive collection of relevant brands and styles inspired by young people," (according to Pacsun's own website). From my perspective, Pacsun is a great clothing store to shop from because of the casual clothing pieces they carry, the website that is so convenient to order clothes from, and how some of their clothing items are made out of eco-friendly material. These survey responses about favorite stores reveal that these College Prep girls enjoy purchasing clothes from popular stores that carry a lot of feminine clothing trends: bright colors, sparkly accents, and youthful designs.



As for the 8th grade boys, according to my survey their favorite clothing stores include Pro Club, Dickies, and Nike. Numerous people enjoy Pro Club because of their baggy size ranges. Dickies is also a favorite store that many 8th grade boys like, mostly because of their many jeans that are available - especially for school uniforms. Nike is also a well-liked clothing store by CPMS 8th grade boys, and the reasoning is mostly because of their comfortable and athletic clothing pieces. These survey responses about favorite clothing stores reveal that these Tigers are purchasing clothes from stores that include a wide variety of comfortable clothing pieces made out of high-quality materials. The responses also reveal that these brands are also popular because of the affordable trends carried. Students mainly like these clothing stores because of the wide selection of affordable clothing pieces that are applicable to a range of different styles. Essentially, people want to wear clothes that reveal their style.



College Prep students' clothing styles represent classic and trendy clothing styles that reflect a preference for timeless fashion choices. The choices students make about what to wear when we have a dress-down day indicate that students have different styles, but mainly prefer to wear baggy clothes. Ways that College Prep students' style is incorporated in their personal being is how they have freedom of dress. For example, “all people should be free to choose what and what not to wear,” says an Amnesty International website. People should have the ability to wear what they want to ensure that they have the right to express their personal beliefs and personal identity. The fashion that CPMS students incorporate in their daily lives impact who they are by letting them express

themselves when not in school. Clothes that students wear “not only reflect and express their identity but communicate with them on a deeper level” says a Times of India article. Students can use their clothes to express themselves by experimenting with different styles and different colors. Some 8th grade College Prep students choose styles that represent athleticism. For example, Grace B. has an athletic clothing style, letting the world know that she is sporty. CPMS students’ styles can also represent their emotions. For example, Henry A. claims that his clothing style can represent his moods. The colors 8th grade College Prep students wear can represent their personality.

For example, Hailey I. states that she mainly wears the color pink, which she hopes lets people know that she is a friendly person. The clothing that CPMS 8th grade students’ wear can represent where they buy their clothes from. For example, Natalie K. says that the clothes she wears can reveal what her favorite stores are.



HOW FASHION SHAPES IDENTITY: A JOURNEY OF SELF-EXPRESSION



Everyone has their own style and favorite clothes. CPMS 8th grade students' clothing choices can differ from other students in our school because each 8th grader has a different style compared to younger grades because they are more mature and ready for high school. The majority of CPMS 8th graders enjoy wearing baggy clothes. The baggy clothing trend has a history dating back to the 1990s that started to become popular from many hip-hop musicians in the 1990s.

Today, baggy clothes are worn for the balance of comfort and on-trend fashion styles. Oversized clothes leave a fashion statement, while people wearing baggy clothes still feel comfortable in their own choice of clothing. This can demonstrate that students like to wear comfortable clothes that are loose and airy. The majority of the 8th graders at our school who enjoy wearing baggy clothes are hoping to convey an image of themselves as relaxed and comfortable people. Baggy clothing represents a way of individuality, self-expression, and can also challenge traditional ideas of beauty by not putting in more effort than some clothing styles. People may prefer baggier clothes rather than tighter clothes because looser clothing allows people to cover up their body - whether that is for religion or insecurity or comfort, or any other reason.

All in all, students at College Prep should wear what they want that makes them feel confident about themselves.

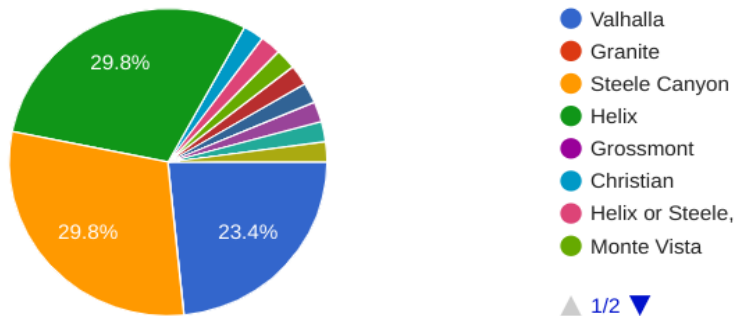


High School Decision-Making

Alaina Y. & Celine A. & Kelton J.

Are you sure the high school you're planning to attend is the right one for you? Our College Prep eighth graders are going to high school soon, and enrollment opportunities are coming up. It is crucial for rising ninth graders to find the best high school for them that will suit their needs. They will make their decision of where they will go by applying all of their knowledge acquired throughout the years. Find out more about the high schools in the area and take a closer look on what prospective students need to know.

According to Ms. Socorro (our indefatigable Office Manager, who keeps track of such things), the students who graduated from College Prep last year went on to attend one of eight different high schools. The information she provided for us is that 2% of students are now at Christian High School, 52% went to Steele Canyon, 26% had gone to Valhalla, 2% went to Granite Hills, 3% are now at Grossmont, 5% went to Monte Vista, 9% went to Helix, and 1% went out of state. We wondered if the current 8th grade are planning to make similar choices. To further understand what schools the current 8th graders plan on going to, we created a survey that was taken by half of the College Prep eighth grade class. From the responses, we have discovered that almost 30% are going



to Steele Canyon. The exact same amount of responses indicated a plan to go to Helix. The next most popular school in our responses was Valhalla, with about 24% choosing it. This adds up to over 80% of our responses going to just these three schools - wrapping up what are clearly the three most-popular schools for eighth graders this year. Of the remaining responses,

other schools chosen include Point Loma High School, which has two students going, and other high schools such as Grossmont, River Valley Charter School, and Our Lady of Peace - each of which having one student planning to attend. Overall, based on this information, you can see that the top three high schools chosen both last year and this year are Helix, Steele Canyon, and Valhalla.

Using the survey we created taken by half of the eighth grade, we can see that eighth grade students from CPMS are going to a variety of different high schools. For instance, Henry A. stated that he chose Helix because “The academics and clubs seem like they are well versed” and that he knows this school “will support” him.

Another student, Gia J., stated that she's going to Valhalla for numerous reasons, and included how her sister goes there currently, as well as how her parents went there when they were her age. She also took into consideration that it was close to where her grandparents live, and that “they have a good water polo team.” It



sure sounds like Gia has made the right choice for herself! Another current 8th grade student, Jayne B., included numerous things that had contributed to her decision about Steele Canyon, such as how she “will enjoy the large campus...and wearing my own choice of clothes again...which I’m a bit eager for.” She also includes that her decision was based on both academics and extracurriculars



because they have a “good volleyball and gymnastics team.” Another student, Layla H., described her choice to go to Point Loma High School because of how “close it is to (her house).” She also adds that her decision was based solely “on academics” due to Point Loma High School not having the sport that she plays. On the other hand, Rhys D. said his decision was between two schools, Grossmont and Helix, will be decided based on whether or not he wins the lottery to get into one of these

schools. Here, “winning the lottery” means that the student enrolls for the school, and they will pick names randomly to decide who will have the chance to attend the school. People who are not picked are put on a waiting list in case some students decide not to come to the school anymore. Rhys also let us know that he wants to go to Helix because he thinks it’s “a very good school” and will help him “get into college.” But when it comes to Grossmont, Rhys does like how “it is very close to” his house, and how his “sisters have said good things about it” - showing that some students are caught between two schools and still have to make the ultimate decision.

We decided to do some research to see if we could find information to help students who are still deciding. The California School Dashboard holds statistics of all the schools in the California area, so we used it for our data. We chose to narrow our research into five categories: the ELA Department, the Math Department, College Success, the Suspension rate, and the Graduation rate. On the website, each category is separated into 5 levels from highest to lowest: blue, green, yellow, orange, and red. The ELA and Math departments were measured based on student performance either on the Smarter Balanced Summative Assessment or the California Alternate Assessment.



First we looked at the data available to compare these schools academically. In 2023, Valhalla, Steele Canyon, and Helix’s ELA department was placed into the “blue” level. Valhalla with 56.5 points, Steele Canyon with 60 points, and Helix with 66.1 points above standard. Grossmont’s ELA department was placed in the “orange” level and Granite’s was placed in the “red” level. Grossmont with 8.6 points below standard and Granite with 61 points below standard. Based on this, we think that students who want to focus on ELA in high school should choose Helix High School.

Now, let's look at Math. The Valhalla Math department was in the "green" level as it is 49.7 points below standard. Steele's Math department was classified in the "green" level with 36.9 points below standard. At Helix, the Math department was sorted to the "green" level with 3.9 points above standard. In Math, Grossmont is in the "yellow" level with 85.8 points below standard. Granite's Math department was sorted to the "yellow" level with 107.5 points below standard. If an 8th grader wants to be the best mathematician they can be, it looks like they should take their high school journey to Helix High School.



We wondered if the public data can tell us anything about the school culture - about what kind of learning environment is provided. We learned that last year, 4.4% of the students at Valhalla were suspended. Additionally, out of the whole senior class, 86.9% of students received a diploma within four or five years of entering ninth grade and 83% made it into college. Out of Steele Canyon's graduates, 98.6% of students received a diploma within four or five years of entering ninth grade and 77% made it into college. On the other hand, across the entire school population, 3.7% of the students were suspended. When comparing all of Helix's 2023 graduates, 96.2% of students received a diploma within four or five years of entering ninth grade and 79% students made it into



college. Across the whole school, 2.4% of the students were suspended. As we looked at Grossmont's graduates, we discovered that 82.8% of students received a diploma within four or five years of entering ninth grade and 78% were accepted into college. Data of the entire school population shows that 5.5% of the students were suspended. In 2023, 87.7% of Granite's graduates received a diploma within four or five years of entering ninth grade and 67% of the students made it into college. Throughout the entire school population, 4.8% of the students were suspended. The fact that Christian Unified is a private school means they aren't placed in a district, so we were unable to gather data. If you want to learn more about this school, we encourage you to have your family contact the school directly. According to our analysis, this data concludes that Valhalla is the best place to be for students who want the highest chance of getting into college.

Amongst the eighth grade students at CPMS, the most popular schools are Valhalla, Steele Canyon, and Helix. We decided to look more closely at these three schools - using information sourced from the websites of each school. According to their website, Valhalla High School has many advantages, including the incredible teachers and staff, impressive students, community, excellent academic

programs, placement along with honor systems, and incredible visual and performing arts. There are many more pros, but now let's get into some of the good things Steele Canyon has to offer.

Moving forward, some favorable traits of Steele Canyon High School are that it's a charter school, and according to their website, Steele Canyon works to increase college and career readiness opportunities for all of their students. They also upgraded their Learning Management System (LMS) to help to provide students with opportunities online along with blended learning. They additionally continue to work in enhancing their new Career Technical Education (CTE) pathways.



According to El Monte Union High School District, this system is a sequence of two or more CTEs that revolve around the student's career interest and what they are planning to be in the future.



Helix High School provides an Academic Support Program where students are able to go to a tutor during the school day. Additionally, Helix has an EDGE Program (Explore, Develop, Gain, Earn) where students can take classes that relate to a pathway in which they want to take their future career.

Grossmont High School has many educational options that will help fit the needs of any student. IDEA Center High School is a school open to students of the Grossmont District. Through Project based learning, students are able to prepare for college and future careers. Also, REACH Academy is specialized in helping Special Education students with behavioral problems that need a contained environment at a separate center.

Granite Hills High School promotes their strengths on their official website as “exceptional academic program that continues to prepare students for the conditions they will face in college.” This school includes many excellent classes including Advanced Placement, Honors, and College Preparatory classes. This high school is the only one in the Grossmont Union High School District that offers the International Baccalaureate program, which is a program that (according to the IBO's official website) is a world-wide leader in global education that develops young people with many important characteristics so that these students can thrive with the help of IBO's resources and over time make a difference in our world.



To wrap it up, Christian Unified School is equipped with many good traits. According to the school's website, their overall mission is to facilitate “spiritual, academic, social, and physical growth.” Christian is also equipped with an excellent athletics program with Division 1, or top tier, sports programs. The school is fit to most with a flexible and productive

way of learning. Some unique things about Christian's teachings include a program called A.S.P.I.R.E. to help with tutoring and studying. It also provides students with a study hall to work with friends in a fun environment.

As you can see, all these high schools have so much to offer, and they all have the potential to push you to your academic limits.



Mad Over March

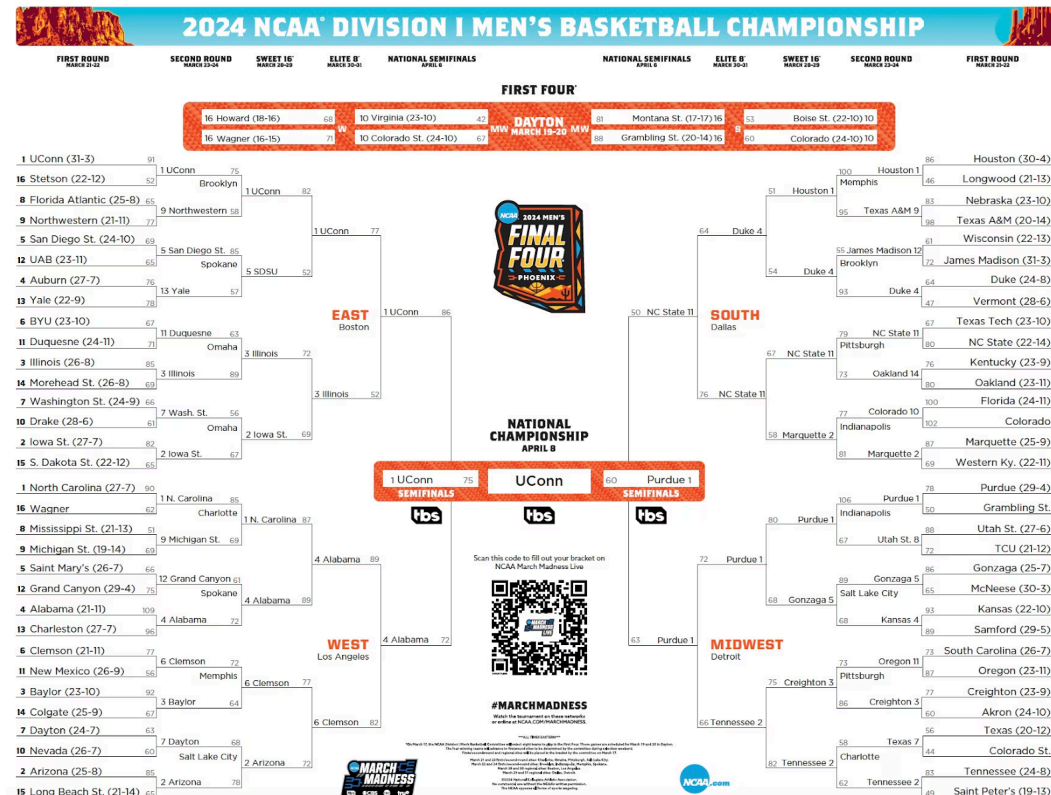
Alex S. & Ben R. & Ron R.

Have you ever noticed the many mad Americans during March? Well, each year this month is no time to be nice, because the team you were hoping would go all the way just lost! Once a year, every March, excited Americans tune in from all over the country to watch the March Madness tournament hosted by the NCAA. This year, many teams competed to win the championship, but only the University of Connecticut (otherwise known as UConn) was ultimately victorious. Every year, watching these intense games has excited many Americans across the country, and this year's exhilarating tournament was no different. Unfortunately, when only one team wins the tournament, that means 63 teams have to lose, leaving many Americans mad over March! Do you know the details of the March Madness experience?



March Madness is a college basketball tournament that consists of 64 teams that compete across 15 different arenas. This annual event unites the country in a single elimination tournament, which is broken up into seven rounds. Millions of people across the world tune in to watch the March Madness games - especially the rounds with famous names: the Sweet Sixteen, Elite Eight, Final Four. The final match is of course the National Championship. This trophy is highly valued by the college teams.

Each and every year, this tournament culturally impacts fans of basketball. The tournament led



people to bet on games with friends and co-workers using brackets. This cultural impact has even hit ESPN, who host a \$1 billion bracket prize every tournament. It is actually extremely rare to win this bracket prize. In fact, Larry Perkins, a well known sports writer on Quora claims that bracket predictors “have a greater chance of winning the lottery, getting struck by lightning..., and finding a diamond on the side of the road - all on the same day”

than they have at predicting a perfectly-correct bracket. We are sad to report that the NCAA confirms that “No one has gotten a verifiably perfect bracket in the history of the March Madness tournament.” We predict that no one will win for a very long time. Although winning the bracket would be a rare chance of winning a large sum of money, most people place simpler bets on their favorite teams winning individual games instead of trying to predict the entire tournament.

Before we get to this year’s tournament, let’s remember last year. The UConn Huskies won, and many of the players from last year's championship win have stayed with UConn, and so have their coaches. Since then, the team has played with confidence and aggressiveness. San Diego State excelled far past expectations last year, but unfortunately lost to UConn in the National Championship game. SDSU’s exciting progress in the tournament prompted many people - like our own Mrs. Mellinger - to travel across America to watch SDSU in their March Madness games when they played in states like Texas and New York.

Before this year’s tournament even began, we conducted a survey within the 8th grade CPMS students and staff that revealed their predictions about the upcoming March Madness tournament. Popular teams among the students and staff were UConn,

Purdue, and San Diego State. Out of those teams, SDSU was the most popular among the people who took the survey because they are our home team. One 8th grader, Andrew M., thought that Purdue might win because their center “is probably the number 1 center in college right now.” However, some people like Mrs. Mellinger acknowledged that “Connecticut, Purdue and Baylor have extremely strong teams this year.” Mrs. Mellinger is a good source because she travels to almost every Aztec game, and is very supportive of her favorite team. Other people, like Mr. Bensley predicted Arizona to win because the final is being played there and “the home-court advantage might be the edge they need.” Other teams predicted to win the tournament were Stanford, Kansas, and Brigham Young University. As the authors of the article, we were hoping for SDSU to win the tournament, but realistically we believed that the teams most likely to win were Texas and Kansas.



Many players in the run for March Madness played their hearts out hoping to earn a high spot in the tournament. Physical altercations went down in Texas, where players on opposing teams fought each other and fans even threw water bottles at the players. Many of the teams who competed in the tournament take these seasons and tournaments very seriously and would have done anything if it meant being able to hold up the March

Madness trophy at the end of the season. For example, on February 28th, the game between the Texas Longhorns and Texas Tech was delayed due to fighting between players, and players had to be escorted out of the stadium for their own safety!

March Madness was held in stadiums and arenas all over the country. Some stadiums are located in the northwest part of the country, like the UD Arena in Ohio, the PPG Paints Arena in Pennsylvania, the Spectrum Center in North Carolina, the Little Caesars Arena in Michigan, TD Garden in Massachusetts, the Gainbridge Fieldhouse in Indianapolis, Indiana, and the Barclays Center in New York. The stadium closest to us in San Diego was in Los Angeles at Crypto.com Arena, but a close second-nearest is the State Farm Stadium in Glendale, California. There are a lot fewer stadiums in the South than in the North. These stadiums include the FedExForum in Tennessee, the American Airlines Center in Texas, and the two prior mentioned stadiums in California. Out of all the stadiums featured in the March Madness tournament, our favorite is the Little Caesars Arena in Detroit.



First Round:

On March 21st, the first round began with a massive upset. The 14th seeded team Oakland somehow beat the 3rd seeded Kentucky in a bracket-busting result that was also the first time Oakland made it to the round of 32. Other crazy upsets were the 11th seeded team Duquesne beating the 6th seeded BYU, which was the team that 8th grader Rylan K. said he wanted to win. Even CPMS students were impacted by this unpredictable tournament!



Sweet Sixteen:

Of all the teams that advanced this round, the big surprise for most people was NC State. This 11th seeded team managed to pull a victory from the 2nd seeded team Marquette. Unfortunately, our own San Diego State Aztecs were eliminated from the tournament this round by UConn - the same team that beat SDSU the year before!

Elite Eight:

The Elite Eight was composed of the strongest eight teams that competed in the tournament. One of the unexpected teams who took a spot in this lineup was Clemson, who beat Arizona in a shocking upset game. That means Mr. Bensley's predicted winner was knocked out. NC State continued their upset win streak by beating the fourth-seeded team Duke.

Final Four:

The final four involved the strongest four teams left in the tournament. These games were held at State Farm Stadium. The winners of these games faced off in Glendale, Arizona. An unforeseen victor of one of these two games was Purdue, who pulled out a narrow win against NC State, followed by UConn winning against Alabama.

Championship game:

The team who won it all was UConn, they beat Purdue in the exciting National Championship. This exhilarating game was the first time two seven-foot tall players who were top scorers (Donovan Clingan and Zach Edey) have played each other in the National Championship since the game with Hakeem Olajuwon against Patrick Ewing in 1984. Most CPMS students had correctly guessed UConn would win.



Overall, this year's March Madness tournament has been an exciting month filled with upsets and enticing matchups. It was fun for both fans of men's and women's basketball and we can't wait for next year.

Tiger Chronicle Staff:

Henry A.	Barrett J.
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Italy

Jayne B. & Isabella S. & Arwen D.

When you hear about Italy, what do you think of? A lot of pasta dishes? A beautiful, spacious landscape? Well, you might be surprised by how much more expansive Italy is in its entirety than these first impressions that most people have. Some facts about Italy being the capital of Italy is Rome, and its official language is Italian. Most of the population are native speakers and about half of the population speaks a regional dialect. Other distinct spoken languages include Silicilian and Venetian. What about money? Well, Italians pay for things in Euros (one Euro equals 1.08 American Dollars). This indicates that the two countries' currencies are valued similarly. All of the magic that is modern-day Italy would not be possible without the very impressive history of Italy, which we will dive into now!



Italy started as the birthplace and center of the Roman Civilization in 753 B.C. The southern regions of Italy fell into anarchy in 476 A.D. and Italy became divided into multiple city-states and regional politics, which would not be resolved until the 18th century. When it did resolve, it was called the Risorgimento, which merged different states of the Italian peninsula. An estimate of when the Risorgimento began and ended is from 1815 to 1871, which was the end of Napoleonic rule and the



end of the Franco-Prussian war. Finally, in 1918 states within Italy united. According to Wikipedia, Italy “declared War on Germany” in 1916, which caused the death of “650,000 Italian soldiers.” According to Britannica, Italy won the war but with “950,000 wounded” in battle. The amount of casualties for Italy in this war against Germany was estimated at around 590,000 because of malnutrition, lack of proper nutrition, and food shortages. Throughout the history of Italy, there have been lots of major events that took place to create Italy today. Now, let’s investigate what the Northern half of Italy was doing while this happened.

Back when we were 7th graders in Ms. Coplan’s class, we covered the Renaissance. We recall from one of the lessons learned in Ms. Coplan's class viewing Renaissance museums in 3D, which we remember being a super fun activity. For example, we were able to view the Sistine Chapel, which is covered in Renaissance-era paintings. We learned that the Renaissance Period was a period of

creativity and classical ideas in Italy. According to the West Port Library, the Renaissance has been dubbed the “rebirth,” as it was the rebirth of many classical ideas.

Occurring from the 14th century to the 17th century, the Renaissance is most known for the evolving of art, especially famous paintings like the Mona Lisa, which is an incredibly beautiful piece of artwork created by Leonardo Di Vinci and is worth \$860 million. The four most well-known artists from the Renaissance period are Donatello, Raphael, Leonardo Di Vinci, and Michelangelo. The Renaissance was the rise of humanism, which means each man was, according to



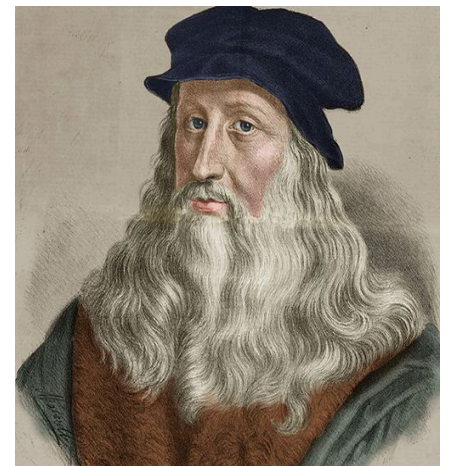
Britannica, “the center of his own universe.” The four main focuses of humanism are “dignity, unity, compatibility, and syncretism.” Syncretism mainly focuses on religion, and it means the fusion of religious beliefs. Because of syncretism, science, arts, and literature were blended together. This meant that scientific discoveries could influence art and literature could influence sciences, forming a balance.



For example, Leonardo Di Vinci would create art with very detailed anatomy, which is a blend of art and science. Filippo Brunelleschi blended mathematics and architecture. He was an architect, and was one of the first during the Renaissance to blend the two to make immense buildings and large domes. He even created the famous Duomo in Florence, and many other buildings in Italy. Speaking of architecture, Mr. Trench, a 5th grade history teacher, went to Italy in June of 2022 where he saw St. Peter’s Basilica and the Sistine Chapel. While there, he saw Renaissance Paintings dating back to 1485-1563.

According to National Geographic, St. Peter’s Basilica is a very holy site for Christians and Catholics, due to the fact it is the burial site of St. Peter. The Sistine Chapel is a site of religious activity, like a church and prayer site. It is also the place where a new pope is selected. Exploring

Italy reveals fingerprints from an important Renaissance family, the Medici. The family had integrated their bloodline into the royalty, primarily by Cosimo de Medici, born in 1389. He then rose to power and was a monarch his whole life. Cosimo died in 1464, and during his lifetime Lorenzo de Medici was born in 1449. He made himself known as Lorenzo the Magnificent and worked with people like Leonardo Da Vinci and Michelangelo. According to the History Channel, Giovanni Medici became Pope Leo X in 1512, and by devoting himself to “artistic patronage” and humanism, it was the “takeoff” for the Medici Family. They would go on to lead Italy many,



many times. Sourced from thecollector.com, a group of historians, the Renaissance was also a time of many inventions. Inventions from this time included clocks, eyeglasses, submarines, microscopes, printing presses, gunpowder, and a crucial invention: paper. In 1560, the pencil was also invented! The Renaissance made way for the rest of Italy to thrive and grow.

Even outside the Renaissance, lots of famous inventions came from Italy. For example, Guglielmo Marconi created a long distance radio. This was important because it made a great way for communication around Italy and other places. Alessandro Volta made a real battery, and it was



important because it created a way to use electricity. Bartolomeo Cristofori developed a modern piano that was used to make solos in music. The first item that had a quantified temperature was called the Thermoscope. The mercury barometer was made by Evangelista Torricelli. Andrea Amati was one of the many violin players who created violins. Luigi Bezzera and Desiderio Pavoni made the world's first single-shot espresso machine. Pellegrino Turri developed a functional typewriter with the motive to help the visually impaired. While Alexander Graham Bell is said to have created the first practical telephone, Antonio Meucci is the actual creator of this invention but unfortunately, he did not have enough money to renew his caveat. Venetian architect Domenico Fontana made the pile driver, which is important in construction that is used to move piles into soil for the foundations of buildings. Luca

Pacioli, a Renaissance Franciscan friar, published a book about mathematics with a description of double-entry book keeping that revolutionized accounting. One of the very famous inventions made in Italy is the Vespa, which was invented by Piaggio & Co. S.p.A of Pontedera, Italy. The Vespa is a luxurious brand of scooters famous for a reputation of quickly getting through congested traffic.



While these are all great inventions, there are still buildings and landmarks that were also produced in Italy, in which some of our CPMS staff have been to. When Mr. Trench went to Italy in June of 2022, he also saw the Pantheon, the Colosseum, St. Peter's Basilica, Sistine Chapel, and the Forum. Mr. Trench stayed at a hotel that was next to Basilica Papale Di Santa Maria Maggiore - which is a very famous church. Even though he was there for a few days, he still spent the day in Messina, Sicily, and Naxos Beach, which he says has "some of the cleanest, blue water I've ever seen." Throughout his time in Italy, Mr. Trench saw lots of incredible places, observed many objects, and tried many delicious foods. Another staff member that has traveled to Italy is Mr. Bensley, the 8th grade ELA teacher, who went there back in 2011. Mr. Bensley explains how the trip he had was mainly in Florence, but he was able to go to other places too, such as Rimini for some "beach relaxation" and Bologna for some amazing food. He also described visiting Cinque Terre for a couple days which is, according to Mr. Bensley, "all about walking amid beautiful surroundings." He even saw the Tower of Pisa when on his way to Florence - where he focused on art and architecture, and even took a tour of the Tuscan countryside! In

Florence, Mr. Bensley saw a very fascinating Da Vinci exhibition. He also saw the actual church that was attended by Dante, even if Mr. Bensley stumbled upon this on accident. Mr. Bensley told us about the monuments he saw, such as the Duomo in the heart of Florence, the beautiful art in the Uffizi museum, and some Renaissance paintings “by the masters.” Unfortunately, Mr. Bensley regrets not being able to see the actual statue of David. Mr. Bensley lists his most memorable experiences in Italy: walking the “once-in-a-lifetime destination” Cinque Terre, eating a delicious dish of ragu in Bologna, enjoying pizza by the beach in Rimini, and, again, finding places connected to Dante. Finally, Mr. Bensley ended his response to us by saying that he saw many Renaissance-related objects and that the Medici family “left their fingerprints all over Florence.”

Moving on to CPMS 8th grade student thoughts on Italy, one of our authors, Isabella, has been to Italy and seen the historical architecture. Some of her favorite monuments she saw were the Colosseum and the Trevi Fountain. A student with notable responses to our survey was Timothy V., who said he “visited Rome and saw the Colosseum” and also went to the “ruins of Pompeii.” Another student, Kelton J., explains that he has never been to Italy, but if so, he would “try as much food as I can” and visit “popular tourist attractions.” A similar response to Kelton’s answer came from Miah M., who says that even though she has not been to Italy, she “would like to go one day to learn about the culture and the places to visit.”

Italy's population today is 58,870,762 and is continuing to rise. Many tourists and people who visit, stay and live there due to cultural heritage. Some monuments that are very popular today are the Colosseum, Trevi Fountain, Pantheon, and Ruins of Pompeii. All of these are famous monuments because of the beauty and history it has. Many people love Italy for its diversity and the beautiful sites it holds. Italian food has made a reputation that influences other food cultures. Italy has awesome architecture, culture, and



history. Two of Italy's largest traditions are Ferragosto and Carnevale. Ferragosto is a feast of assumption, the day where Catholics believe that Mary ascended to heaven, and now is celebrated by going to the beach. Carnevale is 40 days before Easter, which is the day before Lent begins. There are many parades on Carnevale. Lent is a Christian holiday, where a person gives up something dear to them for 40 days, which is why Carnevale is 40 days before Easter. Some beliefs the people of Italy follow are that weddings on Friday are bad luck, Easter is extremely important, and Christmas is prolonged to the 6th of January and is where children are gifted with gifts. During holidays, fashion will most likely change. Popular clothes and brands used in Italy that are trending are Gucci, Fendi, Kirzia, and Prada. That being said, Italy holds all these customs and traditions that affect Italy today.

Soaring Falcons

Laith J. & Michael C. & Roman G.

Falcons Background Knowledge

American Football is a competitive sport that is entertaining for fans and players. In case you are not familiar with it, we will explain the game. Football is played with 11 defensive players and 11 offensive players, the defense's goal is to prevent the offense from scoring on the other end of the field. Football is played with four quarters, and whoever has scored the most points at the end of the fourth quarter wins. Everyone has their favorite team, but this article is just about one team: the Atlanta Falcons. The Falcons, being one of the teams that have not had the most wins, are usually the underdogs in many games. They have not had a great season in a while, but football is a game of ups and downs and the Falcons will have to get back into these next few seasons with more drive and dedication to make it to the playoffs. Although this team has had lots of criticism recently, they have had some stars on their team in the past. Let's take a look at some of the greats who were on the Falcons.

**ATLANTA
FALCONS**



Morten Anderson

Morten Anderson is a Hall of Fame kicker who played with the Atlanta Falcons for six years between from 1995 to 2000. As the kicker for the team, he made 40 field goals over 50 yards! He



made the Hall of Fame for breaking multiple records, including the record for most field goals from over 50 yards out, for any team. According to the Pro Football Hall of Fame website, "his forty field goals of 50 yards or longer were the most in NFL history at his retirement." Anderson was also a hard worker on and off the field, he encouraged his teammates and set an example for others. Most people would not take him seriously because Anderson was just a kicker, but he had a lot of heart and dedication. John Lester, previous quarterback for Michigan State (which is the college that Anderson attended) said that Anderson "was awesome. Kickers get portrayed as being different, odd or on the outside looking in, and he wasn't. He was just as great as the rest of us, and he wasn't afraid to mix it up. If anybody had issues, Morten had their back and everybody had his." Many people often refer to Morten Anderson as one of the best kickers in the NFL, and a lot of fans and players would agree.

Claude Humphrey

Humphrey, one of the best defensive linesmen, played with the Falcons for 10 years, which was more than half of his career. From 1968-1978, he played flawless defense for the Falcons. He had 122 sacks and was selected five times for the All Star game in the NFL. Atlanta was kind of struggling,

but once Humphrey came to Atlanta, they went to the Super Bowl a couple of times. Although the Falcons did not win those Super Bowls, Humphrey was still an important part of this success for the Falcons. Many people have said great things about Humphrey. One of his teammates, George Kunz, presented him as being a “very proud man. He took a lot of pride in what he did and in doing it right.” That was only a fraction of what was said about Claude Humphrey, who sadly died recently, in December 2022. Claude Humphrey is still remembered as one of the greatest defensive football players in NFL history.

Deion Sanders

We have saved the best for last. Deion Sanders (AKA: Prime Time) was a great wide receiver, and incredibly, he also played Major League Baseball! Sanders was a star for the Falcons for five years between 1989-1993. He played offense and defense. He became unstoppable on offense and people were scared to guard him. He had this mindset where no one could match him, and a lot of the time that turned out to be true. In his career, he had 53 interceptions on defense! He was selected 9 times for the All Star Game. Sanders was an animal on the field and whenever it was game time, he always was locked in and talked to nobody - showing the singular focus it takes to be the best. Also, Sanders was fast - really fast. Most of Deion’s touchdowns were when he was on defense because he intercepted lots of passes and no one could catch up to him. Even when he played baseball, he was so fast that he turned singles into doubles. Sanders was also confident in anything that he did. Whenever he said something, he would be true to his word. Sanders once said “If you look good, you feel good; if you feel good, you play good; if you play good, they pay good.” This is one of his best quotes, and it really helped to inspire other players on the Falcons. Little things like this is what made Sanders a team leader and an impactful player.



Today, Deion Sanders coaches for the Colorado Buffaloes Football team, and they have had a great season since Sanders started coaching. They used to be a team that always lost, but now they are an unbeatable team. Deion’s son, their quarterback, is really good.

Atlanta Falcons Current Stats

The Atlanta Falcons had some of the best player stats in the NFL 2023 season. Desmond Ridder, a player on the Falcons in 2023, was a hardworking player with good numbers this season: such as 2856 total yards gained in the season, showing he was a help to his team and his teammates. He has carried his team in yards! Drake London is a young player with a staggering number of yards. Bijan

Robinson was also a big help to his team in 2023 for the amount of yards earned in the season. His contributions to the team were good for a lot of things, like the way he did not start a lot of drama in the team. Overall, the team played pretty well some weeks, but the player who stands out was Jessie Bates III with the most tackles and the most interceptions! Personally, we would not want to run 1s with him! Bates grabbed a staggering 6 interceptions in one season - he was also overall a good player for the team.

Overall, the players were good for the Atlanta Falcons this year, but unfortunately, they did not make the playoffs and the team was going through a hard time because of the fight that happened between the players on social media because of a practice that did not go well for the Atlanta Falcons. The players were so mad that some players were not listening to the coach and some of the players were not showing up to practice to help the team, and the coach threatened to not put them in the next week's game. That is the same reason we think they didn't win many games: the coach was not helpful to the team. They did not tell the team to be friends again and to not fight online. The online fighting was showing the other teams a weakness.



The Atlanta Falcons 2016 Super Bowl Season

We wanted to know if our classmates remember how good the Falcons used to be. After surveying



the whole 8th grade, 77.8% were correct on the date of when the Atlanta Falcons made the Super Bowl. This shows that surprisingly, over three-quarters of the grade know about this important moment in Falcons history. For those who don't remember this glorious season, let us remind you exactly how Atlanta made it all the way to the Super Bowl. The Falcons 2016 season started off rocky to a 24-31 loss against their biggest division rivals: the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. In week 2, the Atlanta Falcons played against the Oakland Raiders and came out on

top 35-28. Not only was it a Falcons win, but Devonte Freeman recorded almost 100 yards in one game! The third week was as good as the second - the Falcons dominated the New Orleans Saints 45-32. Their record was 2-1, a good way to start the season.

Halfway throughout the Atlanta Falcons regular season, they had a record of 5 wins and 3 losses. They were also the number one seed in their division. The Atlanta Falcons were clearly the best team in their division with second place having the record of 3-5. These first 8 games of the season were not easy, Atlanta had to face previous Super Bowl teams, and the Falcons came out on top for both of the games. The next four games of the regular season were a rollercoaster of emotions with losing two games in a row to the Philadelphia Eagles and the Kansas City Chiefs. But fortunately, they won

two against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and the Arizona Cardinals - with Matt Ryan averaging 300 yards a game. These are MVP numbers! The last 5 games were amazing for the fans and the team. The Atlanta Falcons went 4-1 in their last 5 games, securing the second seed in the playoffs which means they had the second best record in the NFC. The Atlanta Falcons in their first round played the Seattle Seahawks, known for defense called “The Legion Of Boom.” Atlanta won 36-20: a high scoring game with Matt Ryan throwing for 340 yards. Each game Matt Ryan showed why he deserved to be a MVP.

The game next was the NFC Championship, so the winner would go to the Super Bowl! All of the Atlanta Falcons star players were going to have to put all their effort into this game. The Atlanta Falcons played the Green Bay Packers with their starting quarterback, former 2014 MVP Aaron Rodgers. The first half looked like an easy win with the score being 24-0, which put the Falcons in a great spot to win this game. The final score was a 21-44 Falcons victory! Matt Ryan and Julio Jones were a big piece in this season, and it all showed in the NFC Championship game with Matt Ryan had about 400 passing yards in one game and Julio Jones had 180! A week after the NFC Championship game, Matt Ryan was declared the 2016-2017 season MVP.

The Super Bowl was against the Patriots, inside the NRG stadium in Houston, Texas. All of their hard work came down to this single game. The first quarter of the Super Bowl was expected as the two amazing defenses didn't allow any points for either team with the score being 0-0. The second quarter was in the Falcon's favor going into the first half the score was 21-3 with Matt Ryan and Julio Jones having terrific games! The next quarter had both teams scoring points, but with Atlanta still having a huge 28-9 lead. The game was in their hands, but the two last quarters were not in the Falcon's favor. The fourth quarter being devastating, the New England Patriots scored 19 points to tie the game, sending it to overtime. Whoever won this coin toss was most likely to win because both offenses were playing amazingly. The rules of overtime include that whoever scores a touchdown first wins the whole game. The New England Patriots won the coin toss, and decided to receive the ball... and they scored. The New England patriots were 2016-2017 Super Bowl champions with Tom Brady being the Super Bowl MVP. The Falcons had to spend the



next season looking for revenge because of how embarrassingly they played in the most important game ever.

Falcons Superstar Julio Jones

To get the memories of that Super Bowl out of our mind, we are now going to focus on a favorite player: Julio Jones. He was drafted as a top prospect wide receiver, and ended up having a huge impact on the Falcons. Let's look into his story.

Julio's Childhood

Julio Jones, one of the best wide receivers in football, grew up in a rough neighborhood. Jones was faced with many challenges in his childhood and college years before making it to the NFL. According to Wikipedia, "His mother, Queen Marvin, raised him and his brother alone, since his father left him when Jones was just 5 years old." Julio was able to overcome this rough start - Wikipedia reveals that he went on to be "a star in high school and played football, basketball and track in his high school years. He was gaining recognition quickly." In 2008, Julio played his rookie year in college for Alabama's Crimson Tide. Nick Saban (Julio's college coach) referred to Jones as an "impact player and a fan favorite" and was also nicknamed "The waffle house" because he was always open. In only three years in College Julio had about 2,653 yards, which is the most yards any player had at Alabama.

Julio Jones and the Falcons

The reason Julio Jones did not do his last college years was because he decided to pursue his NFL career early, by making the All-Star Football Challenge. This was a big game with all of the best players from different colleges, so it helped Julio to get noticed.



In the 2011 NFL Draft, Julio Jones was drafted as the 6th pick in the draft to the Atlanta Falcons. The Atlanta Falcons had high expectations for him going into his rookie year, and boy did he prove that he deserved it. He had lots of yards going into the first 3 games, and by week 9 he scored his first two touchdowns in the NFL. He had many 100+ yard games during the season. Although Jones produced on the field, his teammates didn't do the same, so they ended up losing in the Wild Card round against the New York Giants.



Out of all of the teams that Julio played with, his best career with any team was with the Falcons. The fans absolutely loved him, and he was a star on the field - getting more than 800 yards almost every season with them! By scoring at least 5 touchdowns each season, Julio Jones was probably one of the best players who has ever played with the Atlanta Falcons, and the dedication and hard work he did to conquer his dreams is what makes him one of the best wide receivers in NFL history. In our opinion, the Falcons need to have someone like this on the team now. A player who is going to step up and be the leader for this team if they're going to win the Superbowl next year.

A New Quarterback for the Falcons!

During our survey for the Falcons, many 8th graders were concluding that the Falcons were not as good these past couple years. For example, students like Franco G. said that their quarterback is horrible, but we are happy to point out that the Atlanta Falcons signed Kirk Cousins over this offseason to replace Desmond Ridder. Kirk Cousins was released from the Minnesota Vikings with 4,547 yards in one season. He is going to be a great quarterback for the Falcons and a great team leader.

With some optimism towards Kirk Cousins, the Falcons new Quarterback, this next year for the Falcons is going to be fun, entertaining and competitive. Rise up Falcons!



Tweens Sabotaging Sephora

Nevaeh K. & Abigail M. & Siobhan R.

Imagine this... you're shopping with friends at Sephora, having a nice time looking for products you've been wanting, but only for the experience to be ruined by a bratty tween who is acting as if they own the store. The tween annoys your friends, interrupts everybody's peaceful shopping experience, and destroys the products you've been searching for.

Sephora, a cosmetics and hair products store, has been mentioned in many recent news reports claiming that tweens like this have been causing issues similar to the listed ones over cosmetics. Let's look at the foundation of how to fix the problem of tweens and maybe we will make-up some solutions!



It is known that tweens are wreaking havoc around Sephora. Many common examples of tween actions have been discussed on various news networks, all around the country. One article, posted by Fox News, includes descriptions of tweens making 'smoothies' of multiple products on other testers. For those who don't know, making a 'smoothie' is taking the product of different testers, mixing it with another tester, and breaking testers. Destroying a product a customer was looking for can disrupt their shopping experience and result in them feeling upset. Another example is harassing the customers and workers by yelling and demanding products, or unnecessarily insulting those who are simply trying to stop and de-escalate the problem in which the tweens had started. Additionally, tweens have been destroying packaged products by opening and using them, which usually results in the product not being bought and going to waste. Due to tween behavior, such as their reckless actions, shoppers' experiences have been disrupted and resulted in an unpleasant experience.

Some influences on tween actions are social media and parents supporting their tween kids, causing tweens to gain more of the need for the products that are being posted and bought. Being influenced by social media, tweens may feel as if they need to fit in, due to how the tweens are exposed to the wrong side of the internet that is not intended for them. As defense, USA Today, a newspaper



and news broadcasting company, mentions how “preteens are bombarded with influencer-sponsored advertisements and step-by-step tutorials for makeup and skincare products,” unlike any other generation before. In addition to that, tweens tend to “not want to be treated like kids,” despite how young they truly are. This results in parents following what their tween kid wants and buying more



products for them, adding onto their current addiction. Another paramount influence is how popular product reviewers express their positive opinions on Sephora products, further encouraging children to buy the products in videos. This is what has resulted in famous product brands like Drunk Elephant and Rare Beauty becoming favored brands that tweens love to buy. Popular influencers, such as Kim Kardashian, also play a part in cosmetic advertisements by owning their own makeup lines. One example of how tweens are being influenced comes from NBC: “Tweens are going wild in Sephora ... and parents are getting blamed,” which states, “Drunk Elephant was one of the most-requested skin care items on wish lists this December, due in no small part to popular content creators like Kim Kardashian’s daughter, North West, touting the products on TikTok.” This

information shows how social media is affecting the tweens view on makeup brands like Drunk Elephant. According to the results of our survey of the 8th grade, multiple CPMS students, such as Liana O. and Natalie N., agree that tweens “try to replicate the loud behavior influencers possess” as these young children “look up to them.” The parents of these tweens who are buying the products also seem to affect how these children act. When the parents buy, they add to the attachment of unnecessary products for the tweens. The parents keep letting them purchase the products they see online, eventually leading to kids being addicted to buying products and wanting more.



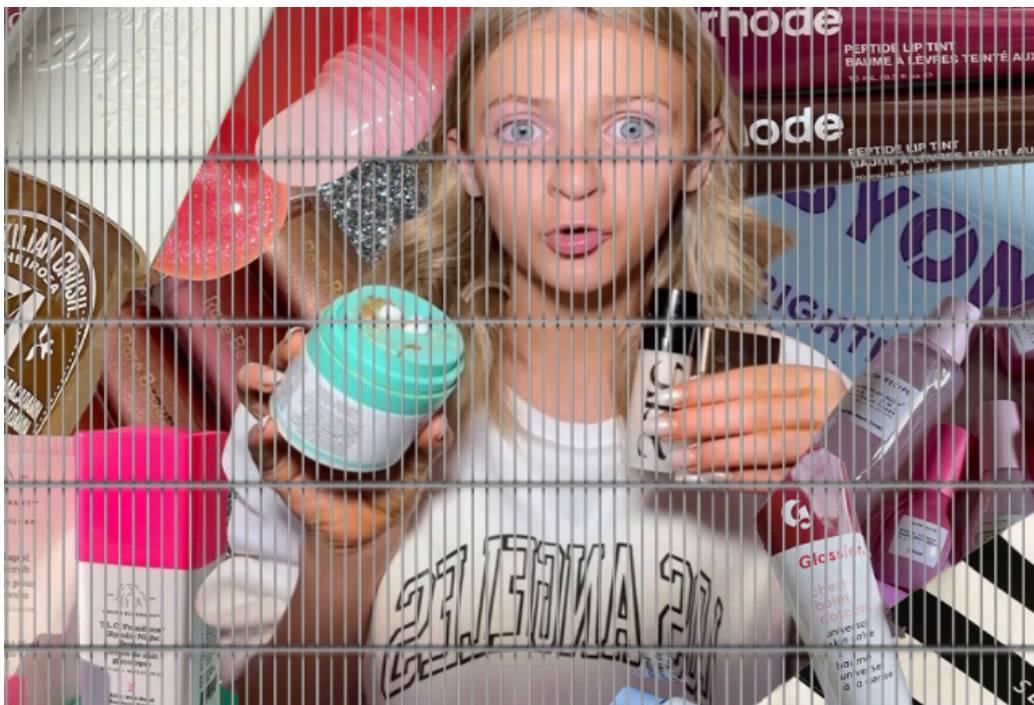
Some students have shared their opinions and experiences of the troublesome tweens and how the tweens have negatively affected their shopping experience, according to our survey. The CPMS 8th-grade students who replied, such as Celine A. and Alaina Y., reported being personally inconvenienced by misbehaving tweens at Sephora due to the “extra wait times in lines” and that they have witnessed tweens causing customers to become “annoyed.” Despite how many people believe the cause of tweens misbehaving is due to the lack of guardian supervision, the



issue seems to occur even with parents present. One author of this article (Emmalin T.) personally saw a girl “on the floor crying” due to her mother's refusal to buy a product she wanted. What Emmalin witnessed is a representation of how tweens can get fixated on the products and how they might act if they did not get the desired item. Emmalin also added that she and her friend could not enter certain aisles due to how the misbehaving girl was “always crowding that area” with her friends.

Another 8th grader, Hailey I., reported seeing a tween who “snatched” the last of a product Hailey was interested in buying, which affected her experience as it was supposed to be a gift for Hailey’s mother. Because of the tween's actions, Hailey wasn't able to get a gift for her mother and had to instead deal with the rudeness of the tween. All of these actions cause workers to feel overwhelmed by the new problem of tweens and their actions, which is evident as many people have posted about their negative experiences caused by the tweens on online platforms. It’s not unusual for people to share their issues publicly if they want to spread awareness, which is what most seem to be aiming for as they often share their ideas on how this problem may be resolved.

Many people have been speculating on how society can fix the problem of these troublesome tweens. One possible solution to this problem is that only the tweens who repeatedly cause issues, such as rude behavior and destroying products, get kicked out of that specific Sephora store. Individual stores can ban certain kids if those kids become a pain to deal with. Not all tweens are the cause of rampages in Sephora, so this would only target the trouble-makers. Only banning certain kids could help with not having misbehaving kids causing problems across the store, but Sephora could resort to other things before settling for measures as severe as this. A popular proposal has been having Sephora make it mandatory for tweens to be accompanied by a guardian when in the store. A column published in Deseret News, a major newspaper based in Utah, agrees with this idea: endorsing the idea to “require preteens to be accompanied by a parent.” This idea might work for some tweens, but as stated before in the previous paragraph, this issue seems to occur even with parents present. An idea we had that may help the store is to move the testers to the checkout, where customers must request to try the product, resulting in the store saving money on the testers. Of course, Sephora can’t indefinitely remove the testers because according to Sephora, it



could impact them financially when people return things for a full refund. These troublesome tweens have caused many issues that Sephora can not come up with a perfect solution for, but perhaps some of the ideas in this article can be combined to make an even greater situation where every shopper to be satisfied.

Schoolpass is Top of the Class

Yousif A. & Timothy V. & Aiden T.

With the introduction of new technology like AI capable of writing essays in seconds, new advances in medicine, better learning applications, along with more efficient phones and computers shaping the future... it was about time something was finally done about school dismissal! For years now, College Prep has used a dismissal system that involved staff members announcing the names of students being picked up - utilizing walkie-talkies to communicate with teachers in the classrooms where students were waiting. This required students to listen carefully for their names being announced (through the talking of their fellow students in some cases), which could sometimes be very difficult - irritating many students as well as staff members. This flawed system encouraged the directors at College Prep to search for an alternative; during this search, they found a better, automated system. This system is named SchoolPass and was founded by a man named Mark Ruiters, whose mission, as stated on the SchoolPass website, was to “address the inherent challenges and chaos of afternoon dismissal.” It is for these reasons that SchoolPass seemed like a perfect fit for College Prep, which led the directors to officially begin the use of the application starting January 2024. With the new implementation of this system, it is important for the Tiger community to understand why it was added, what it can do, and how it can be improved.



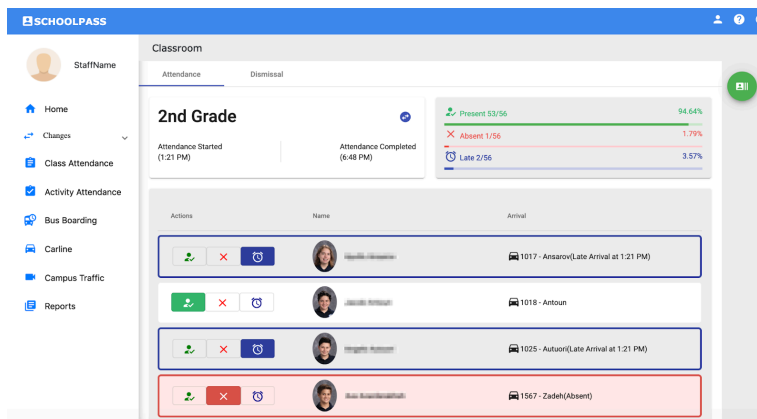
In the first few weeks of Schoolpass’s establishment, we surveyed the 8th-grade student body about their initial impressions of SchoolPass. Using data from the responses, we have concluded that the outdated dismissal process at College Prep Middle School will not be missed. The majority of students in our survey replied saying that the old dismissal process was “chaotic” and “very loud.” Many times, static made the radio difficult to understand, which could be extremely disruptive. A large flaw in the old system, that Gio Z.H. illustrated effectively in his response to our survey, was that “if people were not listening [well], they would not go down to the lot, which would hold up many cars.” Another major flaw in the old dismissal process was the reliance on staff having to be outside to call students down during the entirety of dismissal, which would often subject staff to “severe rain and other weather,” as Carsyn G. explained. Students weren't the only ones who were opposed to the old way dismissal was carried out, staff also believed that the previous system was outdated. During our interview with the school

directors, Mr. Mitch illustrated how staff working in the parking lot after school would become “frustrated” before SchoolPass was introduced. Students who were not paying attention missed their names on the radio, leading to, as Ms. Callaway explained, “cars waiting around.” All of this in turn made the parking lot much more crowded and slowed the flow of traffic. Ms. Callaway also brought light to another issue describing how staff members who usually helped during dismissal were “really good at memorizing parents and cars,” but if they were not available during dismissal, individuals who were not as familiar with the process were forced to call each student. This, of course, made dismissal even less efficient. These difficulties led the directors of College Prep to take action and make a change.



The two directors began their search for more efficient alternatives to afternoon dismissal via the Internet. Programs such as FetchKids, PikMyKid, Driveline, SchoolTron, and many more were potential candidates, but they found that SchoolPass would be the best fit for the CPMS community. Mr. Mitch, however, wanted to be sure that it would work well and asked other schools' opinions on the application. All of the schools they questioned, such as La Jolla Country Day, highly supported it.

Although SchoolPass seems like a great solution for the long-time issue of afternoon dismissal, does the community at College Prep feel the new system is working? Our survey included a question

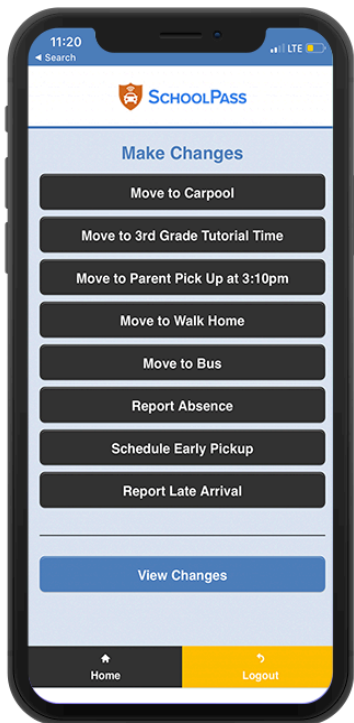


where students could express their parents' opinions on SchoolPass. Their responses gave us valuable information on how the Tiger community is adapting to the change. Arwen D. reported that her guardian was initially “annoyed that they had to install another app,” but now feels it is a great addition to the school. Gio Z. H. also responded stating that his mom believes that SchoolPass “is an efficient process.” Along with

Gio, many other students responded saying that their parents “love it,” describing it as “easy,” and “efficient.” After receiving responses indicating that most parents felt positively about SchoolPass, we moved on to surveying the 8th-grade student body about their opinions on the new dismissal system and the responses spoke for themselves. While some students believe SchoolPass may not benefit our school's dismissal much, many others argue that the early hiccups experienced by many are likely due to people adjusting to SchoolPass at CPMS, and will be resolved as parents and students become more accustomed to the app. However, the majority of the students are already in favor - like Jayne B. who believes that SchoolPass makes “much less noise and may be easier for the

teachers.” This is quite beneficial considering the daily stresses many teachers have to endure throughout the day.

Speaking of teachers, when staff first decided to integrate SchoolPass into CPMS, Mr. Mitch explained how “it was difficult at first to get things going and get the parents on board,” but now it’s “working beautifully.” ELA teacher Mr. Bensley also feels that SchoolPass “is a huge improvement on the old system,” and History teacher Mrs. Mellinger believes that it keeps students “alert and accountable for their rides.” Mrs. Mellinger is also confident that SchoolPass will “ensure students are going home with the correct people.” Both Science teacher Mrs. Spencer and Math teacher Mrs. Gregory are content with this new system too, noticing how their students are “working together to watch for each other as students are leaving,” which can make sure that students all make it out on time. Ms. Callaway is also proud of the parents and guardians who have successfully picked up their students through SchoolPass, and were “patient” as they “worked through any hiccups and... tech issues.” Overall, it is clear that looking past the inevitable issues as SchoolPass was first introduced, the community of College Prep are generally fans of the new dismissal system.



While the majority of our Tiger families and staff would agree that SchoolPass is a good addition to College Prep, and the early days of getting set up are behind us, we can decide on what can be improved in this new system. Julian K. believes that SchoolPass should “only notify you that your cars arrived if they are close to the front” in order to prevent a large crowd of students from forming at the front of the school. A solution to this problem, however, could be students spreading out below the stairs to prevent a crowd from forming once the bell rings. This would not only be beneficial in making the end of the day less chaotic, but it would also allow for more students to enter their cars because the cars will be forced to drive further down the driveway, creating fewer gaps in the pickup line. Additionally, Jayne B. believes that it would be more efficient if “the list was suited to each class’s 7th period instead of the whole grade.” This would make finding names on the list at the end of the day a much easier process for students and teachers. However, the reason this change has not been introduced is to do with tutorial. During this time, students do not stay in their seventh-period classes, so at the end of the day, it would be too time-consuming to customize the dismissal list to each room of students, as each 8th grader could be in any one of the classrooms.

Another point of SchoolPass that could be refined, Ms. Callaway feels, is if “there were less buttons on the app,” which she believes would make dismissal less complicated for parents. However, Mr. Mitch believes that these buttons could have a purpose in improving other aspects of our school in the future, such as “after-school club dismissal, early dismissal, and attendance.”

To conclude, it can be understood that while there are lots of great ideas that can push SchoolPass to be even more successful, the app is currently performing just fine. Otherwise, it can be quickly inferred that the addition of SchoolPass has made our dismissal much faster and has benefitted CPMS greatly.



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Major League Mania

Beckham B. & Gia J. & Joseph I.



Before you watch a MLB baseball game, this article lists things you should know about their 2024 season. If you are brand new to the sport, first you must know that baseball is just like some other sports. Each team has both offense and defense, but in baseball, these players compete one at a time instead of as a team. Each team has twenty-six to twenty-seven players. Nine of them are

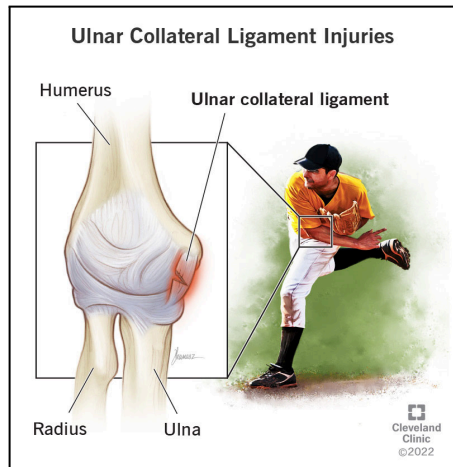
position players who will also hit in the line-up; there are five starting pitchers, and seven to eight relief pitchers. There are also five substitutes in case of injuries or suspensions. The game is broken up into nine innings that are divided into top and bottom halves - each of which lasts until the defense gets three outs. In order to get an out, the ball must be hit to the defense in which they would throw the ball to first, second, third, or home, depending on where the runner is. The defense could also catch the ball before it bounces, or the pitcher throws three strikes to the hitter. The Major League Baseball (MLB) is the most popular professional baseball league in the world because it is filled with the best players from all over. Now, let us take you out to the ball game!

Although the MLB has been an official league for about 121 years, the rules have changed over time. This new season sees a number of new rules that are in play. Most of the new rules are intended to make the games a lot more interesting for the players and the people watching. These new rules didn't change the game completely, but they definitely had an effect on the game play. Our opinions on the new rules are both positive and negative - except for the pitch clock, which we see as negative for both sides.

One big rule change for the upcoming season is that the pitching clock has gone from twenty seconds to eighteen seconds. You may be wondering how this change to the pitching clock rules can be a negative factor for both sides. Casual baseball viewers might think that two seconds is not a lot, but connoisseurs of the game know that those two seconds could be the difference between the defending team getting the third out of the inning, or the offensive team adding to their runs. One concern we have about this rule for the the batter is that he may not have enough time to get ready to swing for the incoming pitch. As a result, this batter is rushed to make a decision within a few seconds instead of having a little more time. Continuing on to the negative way this rule change affects the pitcher: the pitcher could get injured by being pressured into throwing the ball earlier instead of having a little more time getting ready. They could make an incorrect arm movement, which could lead to injuries like UCL



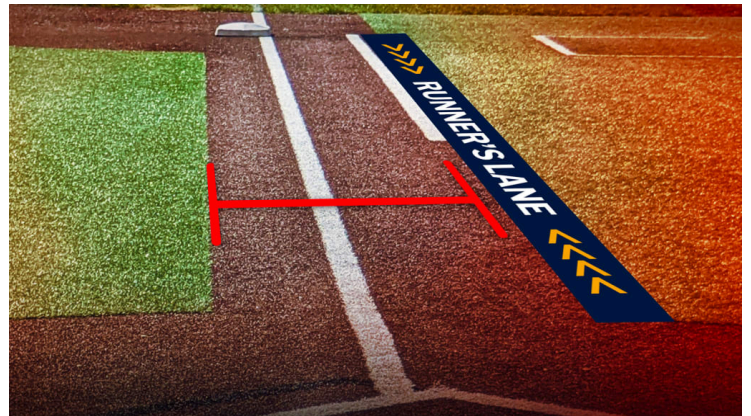
inflammation or even a UCL tear. Forbes - a magazine website focused on media, business, and sports - published an article mentioning that one of many pitchers in the last season who dislocated their elbow was MLB superstar, Shohei Ohtani. He needed Tommy John Surgery to help him heal



properly. According to the website of physiotherapy specialists the Cleveland Clinic, the Tommy John Surgery “is reconstruction of your ulnar collateral ligament (UCL) at the inside of your elbow.” Even though updating the pitch clock provides a more exciting experience for the viewer by speeding up the game, it jeopardizes the health of the pitcher and also gives the hitter less time to get ready for the next pitch. Since the start of the 2024 season, there have been many starting pitchers who have needed Tommy John Surgery, and they happen to be some of the best. Some of these players are 2020 American League Cy Young award winner Shane Bieber, as well as

the 2022 National League Rookie of the Year winner Spencer Strider. Also, star pitchers for the Miami Marlins Sandy Alcantara, who won the National League Cy Young award in 2022, and young star Eury Perez - who the Marlins were very careful with by not letting him go more than five to six innings throughout his career, even in the minor leagues. Because of these absurd numbers, the MLBPA, the strongest player union in all of major league sports, feels that the pitch clock is a “threat” to the game and should be removed entirely.

To add some positives into the game, the MLB have changed up the runner’s lane rule. According to the MLB website, they changed “the runner’s lane to include the dirt between the foul line and the infield grass.” This would be a positive for the offense because they have more room to run and the runner’s lane would still be outlined in chalk for the runners to not go far into the foul territory. This rule does not benefit the defense because they have to guard more of the field. Again, this rule makes the game more interesting for the viewer because it allows more exciting plays on the basepaths, such as stretching a single into a double. But not all of the runner’s rules are good. The runners now have to have two feet inside the line instead of just one. Before this, they were allowed to have one foot outside the line without it being an out, but now, if



the runner has one foot outside the line, it is an out. There is another rule for the hitters that states the batters could get more hits when they are on offense and this is a very big positive for them because they get more hits and more chances to get a home run. This rule would be more entertaining in the game because everybody loves high scoring games instead of pitching duels. If you want to know more about rule changes, we recommend the ESPN website, which has detailed information about them.

A trade or a free agency signing can change the upcoming season for a team and their future drastically. A single new player can lead a team to a deep playoff run or possibly a championship. This year, many teams have made additions that have set them up for the season and have made them exciting teams. Other teams just need a fresh start in which they go through a process called rebuilding in which they drop some of their best players for prospects, rookies, or draft picks. Some already successful teams just decided to play the 2024 season out with their former rosters.

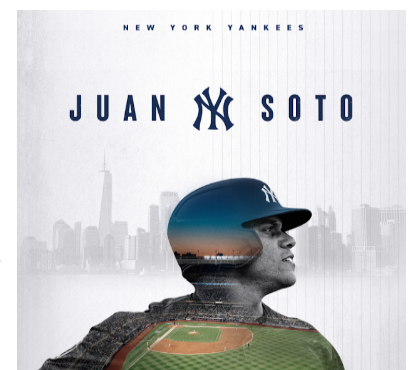
It is hard to talk about the offseason without talking about the Los Angeles Dodgers. The Dodgers have picked up Major League Baseball's biggest star, Shohei Ohtani. The skill that makes Ohtani so valuable is the ability to pitch and play designated hitter in the same game. According to Sports Illustrated and CBS, "He's the first person to do this successfully since Babe Ruth's 1919 season," which we think is an incredible feat. Due to his UCL injury, Ohtani will not pitch for another one or two years. Shohei was not the Dodgers' only big signing, they also acquired Japanese phenom Yoshinobu Yamamoto. As stated by Fan Arch, Yamamoto's "fastball can reach speeds of up to 100 miles per hour." Even though Yamamoto's first few starts on the mound have been rough, fans and the Dodgers organization still expect him to be a star. One last big signing for the Dodgers is Tyler Glasnow, a well-accomplished pitcher who has had amazing performances so far in 2024. Adding these star players to a team that already has Mookie Betts, Freddie Freeman, and Clayton Kershaw will likely result in league domination for the Dodgers. If this group can perform in the playoffs, we think they will form a dynasty for years to come.



The Baltimore Orioles will likely also be contenders in 2024 from their off-season moves. The O's sent Joey Ortiz and DL Hall to the Brewers in exchange for one of the league's best pitchers and the 2021 Cy Young Award winner, Corbin Burnes. Adding Corbin to a pitching staff that already has elite, young pitchers would be sure to create some nightmares for hitters. The O's best young player is catcher Adley

Rutschman who is only 26 years-old and is already one of the league's best catchers with an All-Star Game under his belt. With this powerful roster, the Orioles might surpass the 101 wins they acquired in the 2023 season.

One last team that has the potential for a great year in the upcoming season is the New York Yankees. The Yankees obtained one of the league's best hitters, Juan Soto, from the San Diego Padres in exchange for pitchers Michael King and Drew Thorpe. Soto is off to a hot start for New York, with a .333 batting average. In addition, New York also sent three pitchers to their rivals, the Boston Red Sox, in exchange for



outfielder Alex Verdugo. Aaron Judge is their best hitter, as shown by his American League record of 62 home runs in a single season. Like the Dodgers and Orioles, the Yankees have dominant starting pitchers featuring Carlos Rodon and 2023 American League Cy Young Award winner Gerrit Cole. After finishing the 2023 season with an 82-80 record, and missing their chance to play in October, the Yankees will most likely find their way back into the postseason this year. With the star players that each team has added, it will take something special to beat the Dodgers, O's, and Yankees, and matchups against them will definitely be frightening for other teams.



A breakout season is what any young player wants in their career. Breakout seasons are when a player hasn't been doing well in their first few years, but then has a sudden increase in player production, which is how many runs the player contributed to their team. Rookies and top prospects are most prone to having breakout seasons because they are new to the league and will only get better as time passes. An example of this is Luis

Robert Jr. of the Chicago White Sox in 2023, who entered his fourth year and made the All-Star team. If a player was meant to be good but fails to break out, they will be labeled as a bust - or a player that did not live up to expectations. A good example of this is Tim Beckham of the Minnesota Twins. In 2008 he was drafted first overall by the Tampa Bay Rays, but in 2019 he was designated for assignment (or DFAed) or released for his poor performance, by the Seattle Mariners, and then again by the Twins in 2022.

One player from last year that could potentially have their career takeoff is Fransisco Alvarez. According to MLB.com, Alvarez was ranked 3rd among the top 100 prospects in 2023, before his major league debut. In his first full year, he played about 120 games with 25 home runs and a not so great .209 batting average, which is how many hits he is projected to have in ten at bats. Even though Alvarez batted below average, he has shown us that he is more of a power hitter.

Even though hitters have the most memorable breakout seasons, pitchers can too. Orioles starting pitcher, Grayson Rodriguez, is a prime example of this. Rodriguez had a rough start to last year with a 7.35 earned run average, or ERA. The O's sent him down to the minor leagues where he could consolidate himself. After a one month stretch in the minors, the O's decided to call him back up to start against the LA dodgers. Even though he lost against the Dodgers, he won the next two games and dropped his ERA from 7.33 to 6.09. He ended up finishing the season with a



4.35 ERA and 129 strikeouts. Rodriguez finishing the year off strong is enough to say he will have a good 2024 season. Rodriguez is also already in the conversation to win the 2024 American League Cy Young, best pitcher of the year award.

This next player was ready for everything. Evan Carter of the Texas Rangers was a late call up who was brought from the minors to the majors in early September, 2023. He came out hot posting up a .300 batting average finishing up the year batting .306 with 5 home runs and 12 runs batted in, or



RBI's. The Rangers made it to the postseason and started Carter in left field. When playing against the Rays in the Wild Card, he batted .750 with a home run. In the next series, Carter did not do as well as in the last series against the Rays; but in the American League Championship Series, or ALCS, the Rangers played their rivals the Houston Astros. In the first game, Carter hit a double in his first at bat, then later in the game made a catch at the warning track, which the dirt just after the outfield grass. In the World Series, he also had some good hits, including some doubles, and yet another game-saving catch. Carter is still deemed a rookie and he is already the favorite for being the Rookie of the Year.

We have saved the best for last, the San Diego Padres! After making a great playoff run the year before, the Padres did not have the best season in 2023, but hopefully in 2024, the Padres will do much better. The Padres have made some good offseason moves that definitely improved the team like trading players for some new ones, drafting some good rookies, and hiring a new head coach!



Let's jump to the head coach first. After two years with the Padres and a trip to the National League Championship Series, coach Bob Melvin left San Diego to go to the San Francisco Giants. The Padres decided to hire former Cardinals head coach Mike Shildt, who led St. Louis to the playoffs several years in a row. The hiring of Shildt presents a fresh start for this Padres squad, and the San Diego offense is sure to start hitting the ball more, leading to scoring more runs.

Though Shildt is not a former player like most managers, he is one of the league's best and has extensive background knowledge of the game, as shown by his 2019 National League Manager of the Year Award from him leading the Cardinals to the NLCS.

Shildt will be coaching a fantastic group of players, many of which appear on MLB's Top 100, a list of who the MLB think are the best 100 baseball players in the league. Though Tatis is ranked 26th, two spots below Machado, he is the Padres' most valuable fielder. His 2024 National League Platinum Glove award speaks for itself. This prestigious award is only given



to the best defender in the National League. However, Machado is better offensively, with 30 home runs and 91 RBIs (Runs Batted In) in the 2023 season. According to several sources such as NBC and ESPN, Ha-Seong Kim and Xander Bogaerts are switching positions. Kim will play shortstop and Xander will play second, so we will see how well they play together this season. According to Korea JoongAng Daily, Kim posted career highs across the board, with a .260 batting average, 17 home runs, 140 hits, and 60 RBIs. Xander, despite having a down-year at the plate, still posted a .285 batting average with 19 homers and broke Bobby Brown's Padres' record of most consecutive games getting on base, which shows how good of a hitter he truly is.

The Padres also have a decent pitching staff. During the offseason, the team acquired two closing pitchers from Japan named Woo Suk Go and Yuki Matsui, which were both much needed after last year's subpar performance from the bullpen. Closing pitchers are important because they come in the later innings when their team is winning by a few runs. The team also acquired pitcher Michael King in the Juan Soto trade. King is a good addition because he doesn't allow many earned runs when on defense. The Padres have most of their pitching staff from last year including Joe Musgrove, Yu Darvish, and knuckle baller Matt Waldron, while also keeping above average bullpen pieces, or relief pitchers, such as Robert Suarez and Adrian Morejon. Lastly, Padres General Manager, AJ Preller, made a shocking trade for White Sox ace, Dylan Cease, just a week before the season was going to start.



They kicked off the season with a two game series against the Dodgers in Seoul, South Korea. After losing game one 5-2, the Padres offense thrived, scoring 15 runs in a 15-11 victory in game two. One of the Padres' most exciting games thus far was against the Chicago Cubs on April 8, on the 20th anniversary of San Diego's stadium, Petco Park. San Diego erased an 0-8 deficit to win 9-8, the highlight of the night being Fernando Tatis Jr.'s 2-run home run to put the Padres on top in the 8th inning. Some other key players in the comeback were Jake Cronenworth and Xander Bogaerts, both hitting their first homers of the season. As well as Robert Suarez striking out all three Chicago batters he faced in the ninth to seal the win.



Now that the baseball game is coming to an end, so has the article. We expect this MLB season to be one of the best in a while because of all the trades and signings made by different teams. Make sure to look out for the teams, players, and rules mentioned when you watch any games and trust me, you will see them. And as always, Go Padres!