

# the Talon



## PRINCIPAL JOHNSON TAKES LEAVE TO COMPETE ON NAILED IT!

SPHS Principal Johnson, announces his extended leave after being chosen to participate on the hit baking competition "Nailed It!" sparking reactions among students.

**MORE ON PAGE 6**

## SENIOR WEEK OFFICIALLY BANNED

Ocean City is officially off limits to all graduating seniors as of 2026. The total ban is making its way throughout all AACPS schools.

**MORE ON PAGE 10**

## LACROSSE DEVASTATION

A new policy destroying Severna Park's chances at a lacrosse state championship has been implemented.

**MORE ON PAGE 11**

Cover caption: Principal Johnson preparing for his competition on Netflix's "Nailed It!" representing SPHS with his blue and gold.

Graphic by Angie Callahan and

Photo by Sofia Cingolani

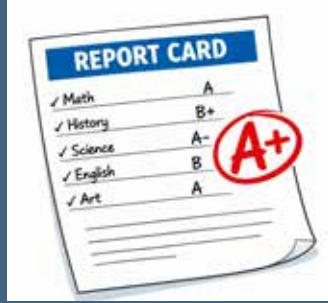
*April 1, 2026*

# NEWS IN BRIEF

## Grading Deadlines

Kaey Nguyen | Staff Writer

Starting next school year, Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) has implemented a new policy requiring teachers to return graded assignments within a set deadline. The rule is intended to help students receive feedback faster and better track their academic progress throughout the quarter. School officials say the policy was created after students and families expressed concerns about long waits for grades to appear in online gradebooks. By creating a clear timeline for grading, administrators hope students will have a better understanding of how they are performing in each class.



With the new grading deadline policy, assignments are now expected to be returned within a few days instead of weeks. School officials say the change will help students receive feedback faster and stay more informed about their academic progress. Photo courtesy of Kasey Nguyen.

## Bathroom Policy

Ella Fretwell | Staff Writer

Following several reports of vandalism in the first floor boys bathroom by the cafeteria, the administration is limiting the number of bathrooms open to all students. This means that only one girls bathroom and one boys bathroom will be open on the second floor, and the rest will close until further notice. In addition, the open bathrooms will have staff members outside signing people in and monitoring at all times. The staff will also continue to keep the ten minute or less rule for each student.



Bathroom policies are going back into place for all students after a harmful vandalism in the boys bathroom. These changes will take effect as soon as students get back from spring break. Photo by Ella Fretwell

## Laptops Missing

Artin Tarpinian | Staff Writer

The switch to laptops for AACPS students, which only happened weeks ago, has been changed back to chromebooks. The Board of Education had received reports of laptop vandalism around schools across the county and decided to recall the laptops.



Students last year short circuited their school chromebooks, causing many schools to recall them for safety and monetary reasons. Photo by Mrs. Earhart

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

News In Brief	2
Survaliences System on School Laptops	3
SPHS Students Sent to Other Schools	4
2026 Upcoming Winter Formal	5
Prncpal Johnson to Compete on "Nailed It!"	6-7
Mr. Dunbar Fired from SPHS	8
Backpacks Banned, Lockers Mandatory	9
Senior Week: Is Officially Banned	10
Lacrosse Devastation	11
Equestrian Sports are Coming to SPHS	12

## STAFF

EDITOR IN CHIEF: ELSA WEBSTER

NEWS EDITOR: ANDRE BOONE JR.

FEATURES EDITOR: RIONNAH O'CONNOR

LIFESTYLE EDITOR: ANYA DIGGS

OPINIONS EDITOR: JOLENE ROBERTSON

SPORTS PRINT EDITOR: EMERSON SCOTT

SPORTS ONLINE EDITOR: NICOL CHOVANEC

COPY EDITOR: ELIZABETH ST. ANDRIE

SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGER: ELLA STOUTT

GRAPHICS EDITOR: ANGIE CALLAHAM

STAFF WRITERS: ANNA ANDERSON, JAY CAMERON, HAL COSLER,

ELLA FRETWELL, KASEY NGUYEN, JOE CAFFIERO, KENDALL BISHOP,

RACHAEL BLIZZARD, LONDON SCHWARTZ, NOELLE BERES, ROBIN

ERDMAN, SOFIA CINGOLANI, ARTIN TARPINIAN, BRODY JOHNSON,

DIEGO ARITA GUERRA

ADVISER: VALERIE EARHART

**WHO WE ARE** The Talon is the principle news publication and public forum of Severna Park High School, which is located on 60 Robinson Road, Severna Park, Maryland 21146. Phone: 410-544-0900

**ASSOCIATIONS** The Talon is a member of the Columbia Scholastic Press Association and Quill & Scroll International Journalism Association. It has won Gold and Silver Medals from CSPA.

**DISTRIBUTION** Staff members typically distribute 200 papers to the student body. Magazines are available to pick up in the hallways, the main office and throughout the English department. Subscribers may pay \$50 to have the publication mailed to their home. PDF copies of The Talon are found under Past Print at [www.sptalon.com](http://www.sptalon.com).

**OPINIONS** Views expressed in The Talon do not reflect those of the Severna Park High School administration or the Anne Arundel County Public School Board of Education. Signed columns or reviews represent only the opinion of the author.

**EDITORIALS** The Talon's editorials will reflect a consensus of the members of the student editorial board. The subjects of the editorials will be determined by the editorial board. The editorial board, which consists of the staff's student editors, will determine the content, including all unsigned editorials. Editorial ideas may be submitted to the editorial board by all members of the staff. Editorials should be sent to [thesptalon@gmail.com](mailto:thesptalon@gmail.com) or dropped off in the publication lab, 229, during school hours. No material will be published for which there is evidence that the author is using the paper for inappropriate personal gain.

**ADVERTISING** Any student, parent, staff member or organization will be allowed to purchase ads. Non-students, businesses or any person not currently attending or related to an attending student may purchase ads, but the publication asks that those ads be business-related ads or be used to congratulate student or school successes. No ads will be placed in any publication until payment is made. Any business wishing to advertise in The Talon must meet district guidelines for obscene or offensive material. All copy or art will be judged by these standards. Any ad found to be in violation must be changed or it will not be published. The publication reserves the right to refuse any ad that is libelous, illegal, obscene, irresponsible, inappropriate or in poor taste. The publication also reserves the right to edit any ad before publication to ensure the standards and quality of the product. The publication may limit the number of type styles offered to ad customers and set guidelines for format and style. The publication reserves the right to edit all submitted copy or photographs.

**BYLINES** All articles, graphics, photos, art, columns, pages, reviews, and other material creatively conceived, with the exception of staff editorials, mug shots and cut-outs will be bylined with the producer's name. All bylined writers will be held accountable for their work. When more than one person has contributed creatively to a piece of work, any person who has contributed to the work must be bylined as a producer.

# SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM ON SCHOOL LAPTOPS

## How AACPS plans to mitigate distraction.

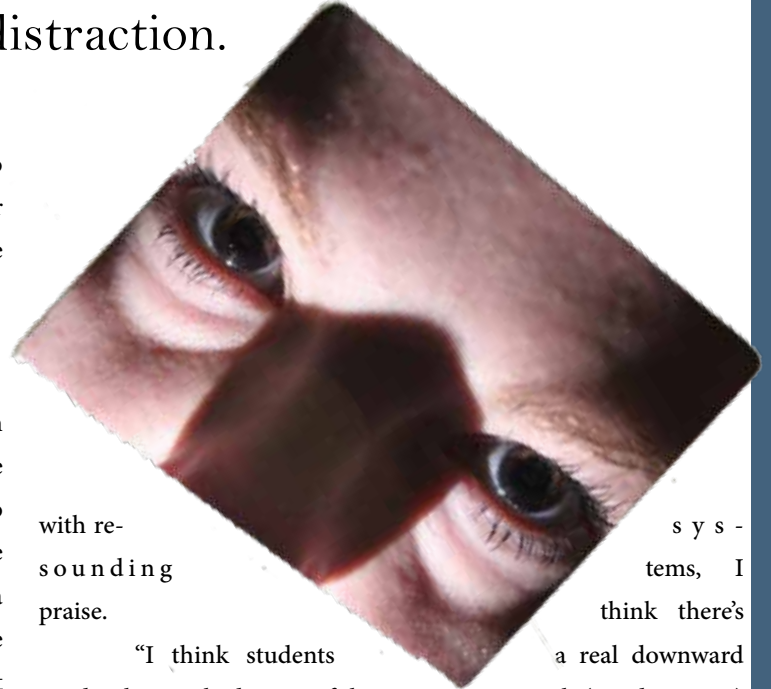
Hal Cosler | Staff Writer

With concerns of students not paying attention in class and the noticeable lack of security cameras in the classrooms, Anne Arundel County Public school system is implementing a new observation system where parents are now able to actively observe their children. Using the school laptop cameras, parents can ensure students are active, using a new security system known as “Big Mother.”

Multiple teachers and parents have voiced complaints over the past school years that with the rise of short form social media content, it’s harder now than ever to keep kids engaged in class. However, with the newly announced surveillance system, parents have the

opportunity at any time to simply log in through their specialized app and observe their students’ participation in a learning environment through the school issued laptops. If any deviation from the scheduled time the student is required to give to the instructor is apparent, the parent has the chance to offer a light “correction” and unmute a mic to inform their student the value of a public education that’s being offered to them and perhaps offer further repercussions such as taking away their phone or the teacher giving them a temporary expulsion.

When discussing the topic of increasing student awareness, teachers met it



with resounding praise.

“I think students need to be watched 100% of the time. Otherwise, they’re gonna step out of line, and we need to be there to crush them back in, as if they were a bug,” English teacher Ms. Hill said, a strong proponent of education for everyone, whether they want it or not.

Even a substantial number of students have voiced their praise of the announced system, recognizing the benefit it serves overall to the school with its innovation.

“I believe that students have a right to privacy, and if my actions and my behavior is being constantly analyzed and scrutinized by my parents and teachers, and even automated

systems, I think there’s a real downward spiral (good service) that could happen here. We could have AI watching and grading student behavior,” senior Evan Crockett said with his full approval.

Though still waiting on its implementation, with this approval more ideas have been flowing from the advising body of AACPS. Such as giving teachers access to cameras at students’ homes, installing security checkpoints in school and many other systems to inspire the work ethic that students have a responsibility to uphold. But for now though, students can be comfortably assured that “Big Mother” is watching them.



*A major policy update to Anne Arundel County Public schools, students will be surveyed from their laptops to assure obedience in classrooms. “Well, fear is a great motivator. I do believe that the motivation given to us by that fear is not worth the cost because it teaches students that we should give up our free will to the institution, senior Evan Crockett said, a proud supporter of the new system. With this, schools expect a near 200% retention rate of classrooms, along with the manageable amount of 500% more complaints from already disgruntled students. Photo by Hal Cosler*

# SPHS STUDENTS SENT TO OTHER SCHOOLS

Due to the black widow infestation, students will be sent to other schools in the county for the 2026-2027 school year.

Elsa Webster | Editor-in-Chief

Going into the 2026-2027 school year, all students will be forced to attend neighboring high schools following a black widow infestation at the high school. The six high schools Severna Park students will attend in the upcoming school year are Broadneck High School, Annapolis High School, Severn Run High School, Old Mill High School, Chesapeake High School and Glen Bernie High School. Students will attend is based on the student's address. A comprehensive list informing students where they will be attending is set to release June 1. The initial report projects the extermination will take roughly six months, beginning in early June and concluding in late November, although it may take up to a year.

While this news came

as a shock to many, it was not unexpected for the students who have been affected by the spider's infiltration of the school.

"I am just absolutely petrified," junior Hannah Wintermyer said. "I don't know how to handle this infestation. Like, coming to school every day is just a struggle. When I walk through the doors, I mean, they're just under my feet. I can't focus in class. I really hate spiders. They're all on the walls. I had to walk through webs in the bathroom."

While it is not feasible to switch students over to neighboring schools during this school year, the administration is working feverishly to protect students from this continuing threat.

Black widow spiders were originally found in the



The rough outline sent out by the school's administration about where students in the Severna Park district will be sent for high school for the 2026-2027 school year. While the infestation has been causing growing panic amongst families in the area, the administration warns people to "Be realistic" and that the exterminators will be thorough during the planned six month extermination. "We need to check all corners of every classroom and closet, and we're going floor by floor," Business Manager Anna Duvall said. Photo by Elsa Webster

courtyard by the school's administration in early March. At first they were not deemed a threat. However, as numbers grew and the severity worsened, something had to be done. As such, the high school administration is working with the administrations of everyone involved to ensure a smooth transition for the upcoming school year.

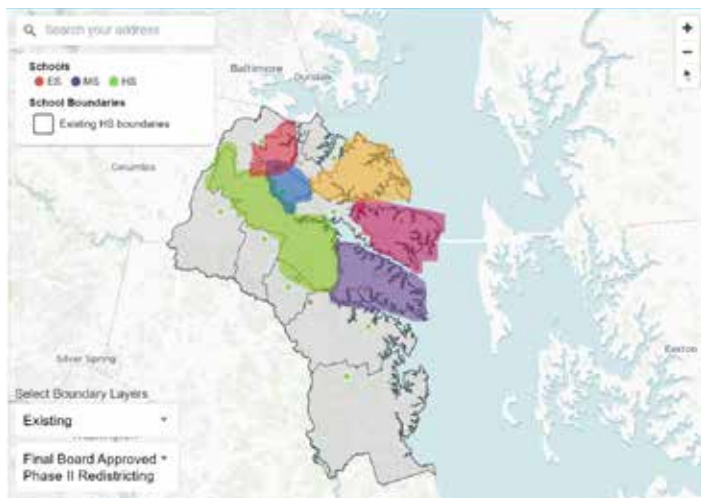
"Well, nobody else wants it in their school, so they want to make sure that we're out of our school quickly and efficiently so we can get back in. And not overcrowd their schools," SPHS business man-

ager Anna Duvall said regarding the transition.

For now, faculty, staff and students are advised to be cautious when entering bathrooms, small classrooms, the courtyards, large classrooms, the auditorium, the cafeteria, supply closets, offices and any other areas that the spiders may occupy.

All those in the building were also informed of the warning signs of a black widow bite. According to the Cleveland Clinic, symptoms of a

Story Continued on Page 8-9  
"SPHS Students Sent to Other Schools"



# 2026 UPCOMING WINTER FORMAL

The once outdated tradition is being revived as SGA begins preparations to make the “Snowball Dance of ’26” memorable.

London Schwartz | Staff Writer

Severna Park High School is holding a winter formal during the 2026-2027 school year for the first time since 1985. Students have been buzzing with excitement all around the school. Some have been researching the perfect winter formal dress styles.

“I’m thinking about the dress Elsa wears at the end of Frozen, when she’s, like, the ice queen,” junior Libby Mules said.

The event will take place Dec. 19, 2026, as in past school years. Turnout is expected to be overwhelming as school advertisements are made, and support surrounding the topic increases. Tickets will be on sale starting December, 14 and will be sold by grade, similar to the homecoming ticket sale process. Similar to years before, the winter formal will be dubbed the “Snowball Dance of 26.” Although previous years included slower, possibly outdated, jazz music, The Snowball Dance will put a spin on this new tradition by including music by Laufey and Olivia Dean and later transi-

tion to upbeat music genres as the night goes on. SGA has begun preparations to ensure that the revival of this tradition continues for years to come. Student officers are also working hard to make this dance worth their while.

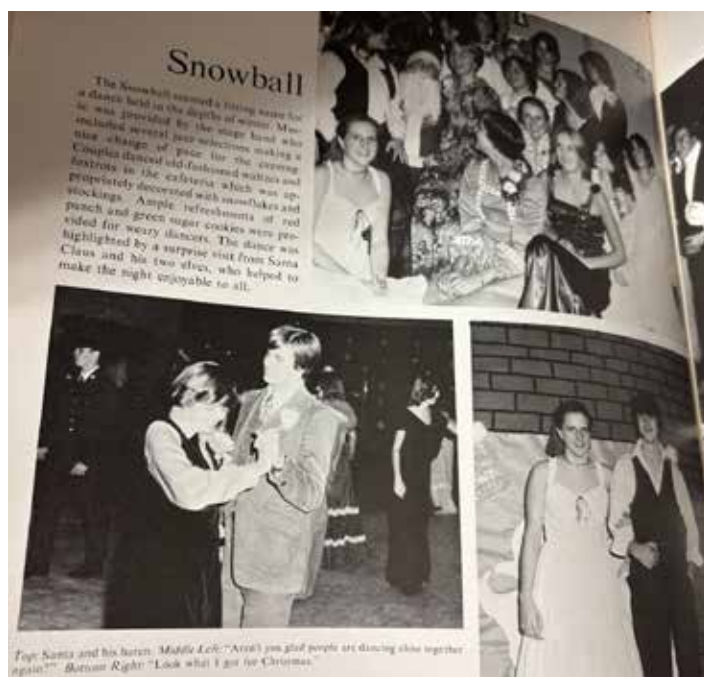
“We’re doing a lot of organizational stuff, taking inventory of what we already have, and then coming up with designs for what we want the dance to sort of look like. We’re also doing fundraisers to collect money for food, drinks and just decorations to make it even more beautiful and fun,” Minah Dieujuste, Treasurer of the Class of 2027, said.

The theme is still being finalized; however, the current ideas in the running include: Winter Wonderland, Starry Night, Golden Gala and Cocoa Cotillion. There are currently 13 votes for Cocoa Cotillion, 12 for Winter Wonderland, 10 for Starry Night, and six for Golden Gala. Thematic dresses and suits will be expected in accordance with the chosen theme. Brown, auburn, chestnut and other earthy tones

will be on trend for the Cocoa Cotillion; emerald green, baby blue, iridescent pearl and similar cool-toned couture is required for Winter Wonderland. For Starry Night, deep shades of purple, navy blue, black and of course all things shimmer are recommended; gold accents and fits will be showcased in accordance with the Golden Gala theme.

SGA is planning to rent a retro photo booth, similar to homecoming but more aesthetic with black and white prints. After multiple requests for a punch bowl, the dance

coordinators have reached out to Rutabaga Juicery & Eats in Annapolis to provide individually packaged fresh-pressed juices. Individually packaged sugar cookies are also being provided through the generosity of our local Starbucks. Be on the lookout for updates on the Snowball Dance of 2026 when the new school year begins.



Top: Santa and his team. Middle Left: “Aren’t you glad people are dancing alone together again?” Bottom Right: “Look what I got for Christmas.”

Photo of an old Severna Park High School yearbook. The yearbook entry includes details on the annual “Snowball” dance that was discontinued in 1985. The pictured caption covers the types of refreshments provided, music played and different dances which the students took part in. This style of school dance is making a return following the next school year. Photo by London Schwartz

# FROM HALLWAYS TO CAKE PANS: PRINCIPAL JOHNSON

School Principal Mr. Johnson announces his leave to participate on the hit baking competition “Nailed It!”

Sofia Cingolani | Staff Writer

Students were shocked the morning of April 1 when it was announced that Principal Johnson will be taking an extended leave from the school after being selected to compete on the popular baking competition “Nailed It!” According to the announcement, Johnson will travel to Los Angeles later this month to film an episode after producers allegedly discovered his “hidden baking talent.”

School officials say the

opportunity was too good to pass up, even if it meant temporarily trading morning announcements for mixing bowls and measuring cups.

While the news may have caught many students off guard, others said they could actually imagine their principal competing on a fast-paced baking show where cakes often collapse, frosting goes everywhere and contestants race against the clock. Sophomore Zac Hester said he thinks Johnson’s personality might make him a surprisingly good contestant.

“Mr Johnson is always helping us and offering support in different ways. I feel like if his cake collapses on national TV he’ll somehow turn it into a life lesson,” Hester said.

Directors from Netflix have already shared a short but sweet message from Mr. John-

son how their principal handles the pressure of baking under strict time limits, especially on a show where the results don’t always look like the original. Junior Brennan Karney says she plans on watching the episode with friends once it airs.

“I’ve watched ‘Nailed

“So I wanted to start off super simple, as I’m growing as a chef, right? So my first demonstration was boiling water. It was tricky at first but I really got that water bubbling after about 10-15 minutes. I think that really set me up.”

Principal Johnson



son to his students from during his audition process.

“My hope is that when you see someone who started out by attempting to boil water and was a little nervous about doing that, and I progress all the way to being like a master cake builder on the show, you can see that even though you might not be able to do something at the start, with some hard work and perseverance, you can be successful in the end,” Johnson said.

Other students said they are mostly excited to see

It’ before, and the desserts almost never look right,” Karney said. “If Mr. Johnson ends up presenting something that looks nothing like the picture, I’m sure the whole school will still cheer for him.”

Some students also joked that Johnson’s experience running a high school might actually prepare him for the chaos of a televised baking competition.

Senior Sol

# JOHNSON TO COMPETE ON "NAILED IT!"

Principal Johnson presents his cake in the "Nailed It" kitchen. The cake has a color scheme of blue and gold, supporting SPSHS with its school colors. Graphics by Angie Callaham Photo by Sofia Cingolani

“My second one is when I made a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. I was very meticulous. I know baking is all about precise measurements so I've been visiting a lot of science classes, watching the kids take precise measurements in those courses so I can make sure I put the exact, appropriate amount of chunky peanut butter and strawberry jelly on my sandwich. I think that really won over the judges.”

Principal Johnson



Cingolani said the show might not be that different from a normal school day.

“Running a school full of teenagers already requires patience, creativity and the ability to deal with unexpected disasters,” Cingolani said. “Baking a complicated cake in two hours honestly might be easier.”

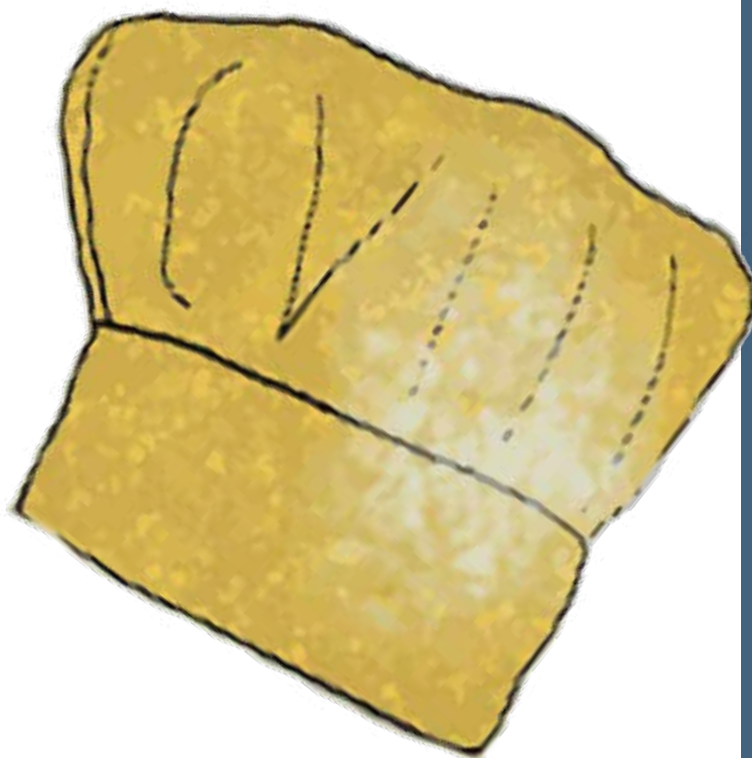
Johnson said preparing for this competition has already been quite the challenge, but he's sure his school background will come in handy.



“Baking requires a lot of supervision. I'm constantly supervising students, so when I'm baking in the kitchen I treat it like I'm doing transition. I'm watching my cake, making sure it's not doing anything inappropriate as it bakes. When it's almost time to be up, I make sure to yell, 'Less than two minutes till baking is done!' I just yell that out in my kitchen. Nobody's there to hear it, but hopefully the cake hears it. I also talk about 'It's important to be on time to your baking timer!' So I try to encourage the cake to finish appropriately and make sure it's done when it's supposed to,” Johnson said.

Although students say they'll miss seeing Johnson in the halls for the time being, many are excited to see how their principal performs in the kitchen.

“If Mr. Johnson actually wins 'Nailed It!' the least he



“In my last demonstration, I wanted to get into more actual baking, so I made a 3-layer cake. Unfortunately, it kind of caved in and sunk inside, but what it created was a cool little volcanic mountain-looking cake, and I think the judges really liked that, and so they went with me, and I'm really excited to compete.”

Principal Johnson



can do is bring back the trophy -- and then maybe some cake -- back for the whole school” sophomore Anna Anderson said.



# MR. DUNBAR FIRED FROM SPHS

Beloved teacher Mr. Dunbar will be unable to finish out the school year after several warnings he failed to heed.

Anya Diggs | Lifestyle Editor

Last school year, Social Studies teacher Timothy Dunbar announced he would retire from teaching after the 2025-2026 school year. However, after recent complaints and continuous failure to take attendance, Dunbar was asked to leave in the middle of fourth quarter. He has been teaching at the high school for over 40 years and has even taught many parents of current students. Regardless, in his last few years of teaching, he has neglected his responsibilities such as taking attendance, causing his dismissal.

In response to Dunbar's failure to comply with school rules, he had received a half hearted response since he was planning on retiring anyway.

"What are they going to do, fire me?" Dunbar said.

Unfortunately, it seems that he spoke too soon and will no longer be leaving the school through retirement.

"We're gonna miss him so much," social studies teacher, department chair and close coworker to Dunbar, Sarah Poole said, "He is such an integral part of our team, but attendance is a legal document, and you can get fired for this kind of thing. So we're sad to see him go, but hopefully it's a

warning to other teachers that you have to take care of attendance."

Among students, it's common knowledge how treasured Dunbar is as a teacher at the school. Even if someone did not have him as a teacher, they still say hello to him in the hallway and he greets them with the same enthusiasm as always. Although junior Sarah Baressi never had him as a teacher, she always loves passing by in the hallway.

"You can always go up to him and have really good, real conversations. I just love how he talks to students as people," Baressi said.

Naturally, current students will also miss Dunbar, but also have some insight on possible reasons for an early end to his teaching career.

"He's a very valuable teacher, it's a real loss for this school. But sometimes he seems more focused on my personal athletic achievements than my academic ones," junior and cross-country runner Josie Kamas said.

"It's just time for him to go. He has way too many favorites and it is clear who they are," sophomore Eliya Erbe said.

However, there is a general consensus at SPHS that

Mr. Dunbar after hearing the news that he is being fired from teaching. This sudden change, however, hasn't come unwarranted, multiple students have reported about Dunbar's tendencies to stray from the curriculum. "You know, he's just always rambling, always getting off topic." junior Zach Zelechowski said. Photo by Anya Diggs



Dunbar will be missed and many students wish he could have left on his own terms and stayed until the end of the year.

"It is sad to see Mr. Dunbar go," junior Zachary

Zelechowski said, "He's been around for so long, as long as the school's been here. I don't know what's going to happen without him."

Story Continued from page 4 "SPHS Students Sent to Other Schools"

black widow bite include a sharp pin-prick sensation when bit followed by severe, bodywide muscle pain and cramping, stiffness, trouble breathing, nausea or vomiting, excessive sweating and headaches, although symptoms can progress.

"I heard my friend got bit, and she's been in the

hospital at Hopkins for the past week, and we're not sure if she's gonna make it," Wintermyer said. "We need to get out of here. Fast. I mean, it's horrendous, really."

There is a silver-lining, however, for teachers. SPHS teachers will all receive three and a half months of paid vacation while the building is being

# BACKPACKS BANNED, LOCKERS MANDATORY

## A new policy requires all students to put backpacks in lockers.

Kendall Bishop | Staff Writer



*Though lockers are placed in the halls, they have never been mandatory for the student body. But with the backpack ban being put in place, students are now required to place bags and extra materials in lockers, junior Rachael Blizzard said, "Putting things in lockers would change how I have to get to class every day." This now forces students to change hallway patterns and daily routines between classes to accommodate the new change. Photo by Kendall Bishop*

The ban against backpacks has raised great attention around SPHS and is the main conversation amongst students.

Teachers and administrators say requiring the use of lockers would help improve safety within hallways and classrooms and address health safety concerns.

"Vaping becomes such a concern in the school that it

would be the biggest thing... too many illegal activities," ASL teacher Heather Williams said.

Having backpacks in lockers will increase the health and safety of students who engage in those activities and can keep the teachers' minds more at ease. Implementing this new policy is meant to omit the secrecy of vaping devices throughout learning instruc-

exterminated. Starting in late August when the school session would normally begin and continuing through late November, teachers will be compensated for their time missing the classroom.

"I am so looking forward to this six month vacation because this will give me the perfect opportunity to start my new homestead in Alaska," math teacher Anne McIntyre

said regarding her plans during the extended teacher summer. "So I'll get started in the summer. There'll be plenty of daylight. I'll get my cabin built, I'll get my wood prepped for the winter and I'm just really looking forward to living off the grid."

These teachers are not disappointed with their time off, though the extended time off means not being able to be

tion time and improve safety in school environments. This would allow students to be more engaged and focused in classrooms without having distractions impacting them.

Students, however, feel that banning backpacks would cause more stress as they would have to plan, make new stops and travel differently to class, which can be difficult in a short passing period.

"I think banning backpacks would be bad because it's how everyone would carry everything, and in middle school, when we had to use our lockers, it was very stressful because we had to go to our lockers between classes, which would make us late," junior Jolene Robertson said.

This opinion reflects what other students are thinking; this new change might cause more harm than good. In addition, students fear that they

will forget materials in lockers since they won't be able to have all of their stuff in hand at all times.

"I wouldn't want backpacks to be banned because carrying my backpack around allows my supplies to be more accessible to me when I need something for the day," junior Erin O'Connor said. Allowing students to keep their backpacks all day will reduce stress that students feel could easily be avoided.

Though students have differing opinions on the change, banning backpacks and requiring the use of lockers will help maintain a safer space in hallways and classrooms and keep health and safety concerns at bay. As this new policy is to be set in place, students and teachers will have to change and adjust to see how it impacts daily routines.

back in school with their students.

"Hmm. Nah." McIntyre said about whether or not she was upset about not going back to the high school in August.

Though the transition will be for the good for the safety of students and staff, there are still ongoing questions to be answered. The problem of fall sports is still left unanswered,

transcript inquiries have been flooding the counseling center and transportation crisis have yet to be fixed. With all this, the school's administration promises updates from AACPS Chief Communications Officer Bob Mosier in the upcoming months to provide some clarity to Severna Park families.

# SENIOR WEEK IS OFFICIALLY BANNED

Ocean City is off limits to all graduating seniors and is making its way to all schools in AACPS.

Nicol Chovanec | Online Sports Editor

On March 6, Principal Johnson made it official: seniors will not be going to senior week this year. Speculation about why Principal Johnson has placed this ban has been circulating the school. Finally, questions were answered.

Senior week has been held at Ocean City, Maryland, for at least four decades. It has become a tradition for post-graduation seniors, and now that tradition is about to end because of Principal Johnson.

"I am adamantly against senior week. I never got to have a senior week when I was a senior; it's a ban against all seniors enjoying the beach after graduation," Johnson said.

Johnson did not touch on any safety issues regarding seniors in Ocean City; the only hazard Johnson discussed was the frustration that sand in between toes creates for many people.

Johnson believes that this ban is a good thing because it resolves his jealousy around the idea of his students enjoying a senior week he never had the opportunity to enjoy, while also avoiding the discomfort sand in between toes.

This senior week ban is not temporary; it will impact every graduating class. "As



long as I am principal of a high school, I will be trying to stop senior week for all students. It is my mission in life: end senior weeks," Johnson said.

Seniors in Anne Arundel County are facing the wrath of Principal Johnson's decision. Principal Johnson has gained the trust of all principals in Anne Arundel County, and now is using these connections to convince other schools to implement a senior week ban in their school as well.

"I am going to pitch to all of the principals to end senior week across AACPS. And after I get it banned in Anne Arundel County, I'll start on the surrounding countries as well," Johnson said.

Johnson has made it very clear that this senior week ban is not going to be taken lightly. This ban will remain in AACPS forever unless it is lifted by someone else in the future. Johnson has created an oppor-

*"Maybe they can figure out how to have some fun at Sandy Point Beach" Principal Johnson said in response to the senior week ban placed on seniors in AACPS. Ocean City, MD has been made off limits to seniors during any and all senior week dates. A potential Bay Bridge closure is in the works. Graphic by Nicol Chovanec*

tunity for seniors to earn their senior week back.

"If they can create a time machine to help me go back to 1999, when I graduated high school, and help me have a fun senior week. I will end my mission to ban senior week," Johnson said.

There is no way around this ban because Johnson and his team are working on closing the Chesapeake Bay Bridge during all possible senior week dates. No one will have access to the bridge during this time.

If there happens to be a location switch for senior week, Johnson is already ahead of the game. He is ready to contact any other principal's in surrounding states to get them on board with the ban.

"The first step will be Maryland, and then I'll have to kind of expand my mission nationwide," Johnson said.

Seniors will have to enjoy their senior week at Sandy Point Beach this year.

**GO TO  
WWW.SPTALON.COM  
FOR ONLINE CONTENT  
AND COVERAGE**



# LACROSSE DEVASTATION

A new policy destroying Severna Park's chances at a lacrosse state championship has been implemented.

Rionnah O'Connor | Features and Online Editor

Students have been shocked to their core by the new "dynasty" policy created by Maryland Public Secondary Schools Athletic Association, (MPSSAA). According to the MPSSAA, Severna Park High School has created an "unbeatable" lacrosse program with an unfair advantage in skill level. To help balance out this inequality, a policy limiting the number of consecutive years a school is allowed to win state championships was created. Schools are now limited to 10 years of consecutive wins. Since the lacrosse team finished out their 2025 season with their eighth state championship in a row, barring the gap from Covid's impact in 2020, this rule directly eliminates Severna Park's state progression.

For underclassmen

and juniors, there's still an opportunity to earn another championship ring, but for seniors who were looking forward to ending their high school careers with a bang, the season has been cast over with a gloomy shadow. With all the questions of equality, students are left wondering: where is the consideration for Severna Park players' blood, sweat and tears?

"We just find it unfair compared to the seniors in the past that have been able to make it to the championship," senior Cole Cavanaugh said.

Over the past decade, senior year has been an extremely special time for lacrosse players, who participate in traditions like shaving and bleaching their hair after the state championship. These tra-

ditions passed down from year to year have become a part of the culture that's ingrained in students' blood. While winning is not guaranteed, not having the ability to try has been a devastating blow.

Many students had yet to hear about this new regulation until senior captains Cole Cavanaugh and Duke Sealey announced the policy via Talon's Instagram, expressing their anger and disappointment. They asked for students to continue supporting them throughout the season, even though they will not be eligible to make it past the county championship. They hope that the student section will continue to be as full as ever.

"Can't do anything about it so we're just going to try and ask for your help," Sealey said.

While students initially expressed their anger towards Principal Johnson, he assured them that he was just as frustrated with the situation

as the student body. Since the decision was made by MPSSAA, individual principals and teachers don't have a say in the final ruling. However, administrators are trying their best to fight for the team's right to compete.

The lacrosse team serves as a major representation of pride for the school and town as a whole. This dynasty rule may seem like a small ripple in the pond, but to faculty and students, this regulation is a slap in the face to players who have worked hard and been dedicated to the program.

"If I had a theme song it would be Win, Win, Win, no matter what, so it's really disappointing to hear that the lacrosse team won't be able to carry the torch and go for their 10th straight championship," Principal Johnson said.

New updates will be addressed as they're reported by MPSSAA, as students keep their fingers crossed that this injustice will be rectified.



Senior lacrosse captains Duke Sealey and Cole Cavanaugh describe a new "Dynasty" policy created by MPSSAA. Both players express their emotions towards the new policy and describe how they're feeling about the season to come. While disappointed, the boys will continue to put their best feet forward throughout the upcoming season. Photo by Rionnah O'Connor

**WHAT ARE YOU MOST EXCITED TO SEE IN THE YEARBOOK**



# EQUESTRIAN SPORTS ARE COMING TO SPHS

SPHS will add equestrian sports to its spring roster.

Elizabeth St. Andrie | Copy Editor

There will be a new addition to the spring sports roster for the 2026-27 school year: equestrian sports, coached by long-term substitute Chris Marks.

Equestrian sports - which have existed since the Olympics in ancient Greece, according to the Olympic Games' official website - can involve many different events. The ones that SPHS will be focusing on will be dressage, eventing and jumping - the three equestrian events in the Summer Olympics.

According to the Olympics' website, dressage is a competition involving guiding horses through routines made up of precise moves. It is

scored by how well the horses perform the routines. Jumping, as its name implies, involves riders guiding their horses over a series of obstacles which they must jump, with penalties for not clearing them. As for eventing, it is a combination of jumping and dressage and has a cross-country riding school.

The school will provide horses for the athletes, and during the offseason, they are welcome to stable their horses at the school. To house the horses, the school is planning to build a stable near the sports fields, with groundbreaking scheduled for May. The stable is projected to be complete before tryouts begin.

Horse feed and equip-

ment will be covered through the school's budget, but athletes must purchase their own tack and uniforms in the school's colors. If athletes wish to ride their own horse instead of one provided by the school, they may do so as well.

During the spring season, the horses will be stabled at the horse farm on Gibson Island, which is where practices and competitions will be held. Dates and times are still being finalized, but tryouts will be held as soon as the team is given the final green light, according to Marks.

Marks said that for his coaching style, he took inspiration from Snoop Dogg's performance at the 2024 Paris Olympics. "I'm looking forward to having the team be

very successful...I'm hoping I could duplicate what he did on that horse with our team here," Marks said.

As more schools in the area add equestrian sports, competitions will include more teams. As of the publication of this article, Crofton, Broadneck and North County high schools are planning to add teams.

"I've always had a passion for horse racing, and I think the fact that we're getting an equestrian team here is amazing," Marks said. "Mostly my expertise is teaching the horses to run around a track, so jumping over stuff is a little bit challenging, but I think I can get the job done."

A stable will soon be built in this field to house the athletes' horses for the new equestrian sports team at SPHS. Construction for the stable is scheduled to start in May of this year, and is projected to finish before tryouts begin. "I'm looking forward to having the team be very successful as what I saw last year (at) the 2024 Paris Olympics," long-term substitute Chris Marks, who will coach the team said. Photo by Elizabeth St. Andre.

