

Seniors Heat Up the Stage at Senior Luau

By REHANSA KULATILLEKE

The school year commenced with Senior Luau in the quad on September 4th, 2024, where students had the chance to celebrate their last year at Cypress. Seniors gathered around the quad with their friends, watched performances, ate food, and took pictures—all organized by ASB. The show included dances by fire dancers and even a surprise performance by some of the seniors attending. Students began arriving at school at 6 PM wearing tropical attire and were greeted by the ASB students who were passing out leis for the seniors to wear, along with some well-designed photo setups. Senior, **Alicia Villegas** said, “The more difficult part was the decorations...how we wanted the vibe to look, how senior luau looks—that matters in the back of the pictures.”

After guests were welcomed, students had the chance to play games such as cornhole and to stop by the

photobooths. Around 6:30 PM, dinner was served. The food included white rice served with teriyaki chicken, meatballs with a special sauce on top, salad, and fresh watermelon. Students even had the chance to enjoy a cup of shaved ice with a variety of flavors of their choice either before or after dinner had been served.

Once dinner had concluded, seniors all headed to the quad where they watched the enthralling performances from Hawaiian cultures. The live music and cheers from the graceful dances echoed throughout the school. The most-anticipated performance of the night was—the fire dances. Seniors sat at the edge of their seats as the dancer spun around the torch and battled the fire. Students cheered as the night heated up. The suspense was piqued when the dancer’s tongue touched the fire. The night came to an end and the performers gave

their last performance, with volunteers from the crowd who attempted to dance. Students played a game of “Simon Says” while incorporating the Hawaiian dances that were performed upstage.

The evening ended at around 8:30 PM, when students eventually had to part ways

with their friends. Although the night might have ended too soon for some, it was the first of many senior events that seniors will remember long after high school.



Seniors volunteered to hula on stage at Senior Luau. (photo by Rehanza Kulatilleke)



Students were offered the dinner provided by the school, along with Kona Ice. (photo by Rehanza Kulatilleke)



Students showed up with Hawaiian attire and were given leis. (photo by Rehanza Kulatilleke)



Seniors watched as the performers showed off different parts of their culture. (photo by Rehanza Kulatilleke)

Join the Fun: Club Rush Brings Life to Campus

By REINA TAKAGI and ADAM HAWARI



Emily Whiting, adviser of Best Buddies club, helps create a better environment for Cypress High School.

Cypress High School’s Club Rush brought excitement to campus. Through August 26-28, student-run booths lined up next to the pool, and their peers had the opportunity to sign up for any club that caught their interest. If a student wants to create their own club, they would need to see Ms. Malone in the activities office.

Cypress High’s Key Club is “shinin’ with service,” getting

ready to be involved in the community. Junior **Crystal Tran**, President of Key Club, “Felt like [the club] was a good way to get involved within the community as well as statewide...” Tran explained, “I wanted more people exposed and aware of community events.” Key Club meets in Room 204, on the first and third Wednesday of each month.

Tuesdays in the theater, the GSA club is getting ready to

spread more awareness about their community at school. Senior **Tyler Hernandez**, President of GSA, wants new students to be welcomed with respect and open arms. Hernandez explained that hospitality will be a big emphasis in the club as it’s better to “chill and lend an ear.” The fear of intolerance in the club is inevitable. But, Hernandez hopes new members can be accepting of differences.

Advisor **Emily Whiting’s** commitment to the Best Buddies club helps build Cypress High School’s inclusion with neurotypical and disabled students. For those with difficulties with socializing, the club allows them to, “have fun and build high school memories.” Best Buddies club also has a side of activism, as school environments sometimes lack awareness of those with disabilities.

Amanda Lu, one of Cypress High School’s counselors, believes that clubs help with school, career, and social aspects. Academically, clubs offer more insight on fields students are interested in. Lu also explained that outside of school and work, clubs are there to foster interest. Whether it is a hobby or something they are passionate about, it is a good way for students to be engaged, learn, and meet other students.

Lu has seen positive impacts from clubs on campus. “[Clubs] open up a lot of doors so that [students] feel close to the community and have ties to campus. That engagement can help boost overall morale.” Lu’s advice for students is to “be unapologetically you.” She wants everybody to know that they have potential, and wants students to step out of

their comfort zone, explore, and try new things—because “oftentimes you’ll find that the thing you least expect may have the biggest effect on you.” The annual tradition of Cypress High School’s club rush truly revealed how many opportunities are available for engagement, passion, and leadership.



Students are excited to visit Cypress High School’s Voltage Unlimited Choir.



Cypress High School’s Kababayan at Kaibigan club brings excitement to club rush. (photo by Grace Kim)

Students Have Options With Independent Studies

By CARLY PEDROZA



Independent Studies teacher Ms. Romo enjoys helping students to accomplish their goals. (photo by Carly Pedroza)

Independent studies is a program many schools offer for students who may not be able to attend a regular day-to-day school schedule, but still want to obtain their A-G high school diploma or just their high school diploma. It is a great alternative for those who may not be able to perform well, socially or academically with others.

There may be students who struggle with learning while being surrounded by others, as well as not being able to be in a social environment without feeling overwhelmed. Independent studies gives students the opportunity to still receive their high school diplomas and their A-G. This program allows students to come in, when needed, with the requirements of going at least once a week to a separate classroom and having one-on-one time with a teacher. **Nelly Rojas**, a student of the Cy-

press High School independent studies program says “I really enjoy independent studies, I find it way easier to complete classes and relieves the stress of having so many teachers.”

Independent study allows students to do everything a normal in-person high school student can do, including AP classes, dual enrollment and current enrollment. Although students are able to work at home and at their own pace, there are certain requirements in order to stay in the program, such as having no lower than a C- after completing a class unit, turning in at least two units per week, and checking in with your teacher at least once a week. If you fail to do so, there may be consequences such as being removed from the course. Independent Studies teacher **Greg Chastain** said, “If it starts becoming a problem with not coming in,

we will do something called an academic intervention where we call the parents, the counselor and the principal and we will have a Google Meet and try to figure out why this is happening.”

If a student completes all of their classes for the school year, they are able to move on to the next year’s courses, usually towards the end of the semester. Even though teachers don’t recommend this, it’s always a possibility for the students. In certain situations with seniors, if they are to finish all of their courses before graduation, they are able to “graduate” early. With this, the students are still able to participate in the graduation ceremony and walk the stage with their school if they would like. The only difference is their diploma will say “independent studies.” Although this program is great for students, teachers and stu-

dents are advised that this may be the last year independent studies will be an option. Because this may be the last year, many applicants were denied entry into the program at Cypress. Only students with extreme circumstances were. Allowed to enroll. With that, if independent studies get taken away from the schools, they will offer alternate programs options for the students such as Independent Learning Center (ILC) or Cambridge Virtual Academy.

The ILC is a program where the students are required to attend every day for at least four hours. They have their own tutors as well as their own psychologist and social workers. As well as they are on registrar’s. With the Cambridge Virtual Academy everything is completely online. Students will have six classes as well as six different teachers, and many of the teachers will hold their classes after school while some will do it during the school day.

Although the students and teachers are advised that this might be the last year students and teachers have expressed their concerns for taking the class away, not only will the teachers need to adjust to teaching bigger classes, teachers may even be transferred to different schools. The students will have to adjust and adapt to having to attend regular classes at school every day.

New School Year, New Counselor

By JAYSON KAI LINAYAO

Mrs. Ayla Wunder just arrived at Cypress High School! She is the school counselor for the class of 2028. This is her fourth school year being a counselor, but this is her first year at Cypress High School. Previously, she was a counselor at Lexington Junior High School.

Mrs. Wunder helps students succeed academically, personally, and helps with their long-term goals. So, if you need help with those topics, Wunder would be happy to help. You can find her outside the counseling office during lunch or you can ask to meet with her inside the counseling office.



New ninth grade counselor Mrs. Wunder is very familiar with the freshmen because of her previous position at Lexington. (photo by Ayla Wunder)

Wunder previously worked in an industry that she did not like. “I didn’t like the values, I didn’t like the kind of scheduling my life would have,” She said. Wunder then became a substitute teacher and thought that she wanted to be a teacher, then she found herself liking to talk to the kids about things outside of subjects like math and science. “My favorite part about being a counselor here is getting to know students and watching them grow and become adults,” she said.

Wunder enjoys reading, cooking, and playing with her daughter. Don’t forget to be kind and welcoming to Wunder, and make sure she has a good time at Cypress High School.

Cypress Welcomes Mr. Bidwell for the 2024-2025 School Year!

By AMY PARK

This year, **Matthew Bidwell** joins Cypress High School as the new teacher for the Aerospace Engineering course and the Green Energy course. Bidwell previously taught at South Junior High School, where he taught biology, woodshop, and robotics.

Bidwell graduated from Chapman University and majored in biological sciences. Bidwell teaches the Green Energy Course because it speaks to his passion about keeping the environment clean instead of harming it and causing pollution, climate change, and any other harm that can come to our environment. Something that Bidwell does in order to contribute to that good change to our environment, is go on trips to Mexico with his family to do beach clean ups. “My family goes to Mexico for adventures, but while we’re there we do these beach clean ups, because a lot of the beaches we go to are very remote, so the trash that’s there has traveled millions of miles in the ocean, so while were there we wanted to leave it clean than how we found it.” Every year, Bidwell tries to do these beach clean ups in Mexico, and he ends up collecting two truckloads of trash. Mostly he’ll see bottles of soda, fishing nets, and any other commercial fishing equipment that has turned into debris.

dents is that high school students are better at advocating for themselves and much more responsible, which has made him feel better about letting students here handle tools that may be dangerous and try new hands-on activities that allow them to use their creativity. Lastly, Bidwell wants to strive for a better and sustainable recycling system that students can establish and push to be worked on, “I would like to help students to establish a more sustainable recycling system, one that’s student driven because it doesn’t work if it comes from the teachers.” Bidwell has observed that our current recycling system is not well maintained even though we have many recycling bins in our school, all the trash that is in the regular trash bins and the recycling bins goes in the same place, which defeats the purpose of even having a recycling system. So with that information in mind, Bidwell believes that in order to really change the recycling system in Cypress, the students need that ambition to make the environment better so the students can implement that new sustainable recycling system, instead of staff trying to bring this change.



Mr. Bidwell’s hobbies include outdoor activities like hiking. (photo by Amy Park)

Besides teaching about his passion, Bidwell loves to go on adventures and do outdoor activities with his family and friends when there are any chances for him to go and do those things he loves. He says that the things that he loves to do most are camping, scuba diving, and hiking, anything that has to do with the outdoors and the water is something that he loves to do with his family.

As a new teacher in Cypress High school Bidwell says “I am really excited to be in Cypress, so far my students have been fantastic, and I’m happy to be here.” Bidwell is looking to make a fun and informative class that will bring the creativity and ambition out of students in Cypress High School.

Bidwell recognized that one of the most refreshing things that makes high school students different from junior high stu-

New Korean Class Launches at Cypress High, Led by Dedicated Teacher

By GRACE KIM & DEBORAH SON



Mrs. Kim and her students made japchae and kimchi pancakes to celebrate Chuseok. (photo by Sonia Kim) 추석을 맞이해 학생들이 김치전과 잡채를 만들었다. (photo by Sonia Kim)



Inside Mrs. Sonia’s Korean Class: A Love for Korean Culture and Her Students

The new Korean 1 class has been established with the help of a few dedicated high school students at Cypress High School for the 2024-2025 school year. Mrs. **Sonia Kim**, the new Korean teacher, is responsible for 74 students.

Kim has been working in the Anaheim Union High School District for the past three years. She holds credentials to teach both Art and Korean. During her first year with AUHSD, she taught Art and Korean at Walker Junior High School, and this year, she is teaching Korean at Cypress High School and Oxford Academy. She loves teaching Korean to students, recognizing the growing demand to learn about Korean culture and language due to the popularity of K-dramas, K-beauty, and K-food. When

she learned about the opportunity to teach Korean at Cypress High School, she applied immediately. “I’m like a pioneer at Cypress High School because I get to design and establish the Korean program as the school’s first Korean teacher. I’m looking forward to it, and I hope this program will continue to grow in the coming years, with more students taking Korean.”

Kim’s teaching experience has been mostly in art, teaching Korean has been an adjustment. “When I first started teaching Korean two to three years ago, I stayed up every night making slides for the students. I didn’t want to be underprepared, so I continuously prepared myself before class. But this year I feel confident and comfortable teaching Korean at Cypress High School,” she said. Her

main goal is to teach students to be familiar with Korean culture, not just the language itself.

As Korean teacher, she wants to teach her students how to read, write, and speak Korean. She wants to encourage them to practice speaking Korean as much as possible, without letting the focus on grammar make them feel intimidated or afraid of learning the language.

The respectfulness and kindness of students at Cypress High School have been something Kim noticed. “I love all the Cypress High School staff I’ve met. The admins are great and the principal is so willing and kind; she’s so supportive of this program. I hope the program continues and that more students enroll in the coming years!”

소니아 김 선생님이 전해주는 한국어반 이야기

한국어반을 설립하기 위한 사이프러스 고등학교 학생들의 노력에 열매를 맺었다. 그 결과 2024-25학년도에 2개의 한국어 1 클래스가 공식적으로 개설이 되었다. 74명의 학생들이 한국어 1 클래스에 등록을 하면서 사이프러스 고등학교는 소니아 김 선생님을 한국어 교육담당 선생님이 임명했다.

올 때에는 슬라이드를 다 만들 때까지 매일 밤을 지새웠다고 이야기했다. 하지만 힘겹게 노력한 2년을 지나면서 올해 사이프러스 고등학교에서의 적응은 수월해졌다고 말했다. 현재는 중학생이 아닌 고등학생을 초점을 둔 커리큘럼을 다시 재구성하고 있다고 말했다. 선생님에 덧붙여 “즐거움 공부 환경을 만들면 학생들이 두려움을 떨쳐버리고 한국어를 배우고 싶어 할 것이다.”라고 말씀했다.

애너하임 교육구에 입사한 지 3년째인 소니아 김 선생님은 지난 2년 동안 한국어와 미술을 가르쳐 왔다. AUHSD에서 근무한 첫 해에는 워커 중학교에서 한국어, 옥스포드 아카데미에서 미술을 가르치셨다. 올해에는 한국어에 집중하여 사이프러스 고등학교와 옥스포드 아카데미에서 한국어 선생님이 되었다.

현재 학교 생활을 매우 만족해 하는 소니아 김 선생님은 한국어 프로그램에 대한 사이프러스 고등학교의 교직원들과 담당자들의 도움과 적극적인 지지에 감사를 표했다. 아직은 많은 학생들을 만나보지는 못했지만, 현재 가르치고 있는 한국어반 학생들의 예의 바름과 친절함이 너무 사랑스럽고 멋지다고 말했다. 한국어가 없었던 학교에 한국을 알릴 수 있는 반이 생겨 기쁘다는 소니아 김 선생님은 “가르치는 매순간이 즐거우며 앞으로 한국어반 프로그램이 지속되고 확장되어 많은 학생들이 한국어를 알아 갈 수 있다면 좋겠다”는 소망을 말했다.

Former Teacher is New Assistant Principal

By BETTY LANGRINE



Mrs. Choi the new 9th grade Assistant Principal. (photo by Betty Langrine)

Cypress High School’s new 9th grade assistant principal **Lauren Choi** loves how friendly all the staff and students are. Before coming to Cypress Mrs.

Choi worked at Loara High School and Lexington Junior High as an Assistant Principal. “I never thought I’d be an Assistant Principal,” Mrs.

Choi said. Choi was previously a teacher and taught ELD, English, and AP Psychology. The job is be mentally taxing, but Mrs. Choi makes sure to always give her best. “The biggest challenge about the job is balancing giving my best at work and being the best mother and wife, and finding time to work on my mental health,” Mrs. Choi said. Choi’s journey in education has been driven by a deep-seated belief in the potential of every student. Her role as an Assistant Principal allows her to engage with students on a personal level, offering guidance and support that extends beyond the classroom.

For Mrs. Choi, the biggest hurdle lies in managing and balancing the amount of responsibilities that come with her

position. From administrative tasks to addressing student concerns, the demands are constant and varied. Yet, she approaches each day with determination to be the best in her role while ensuring that no student feels overlooked. “I was lucky enough to work with Mrs. Choi a few years ago at Lexington, and was very grateful and excited to hear I’d be teaming up with her again here at Cypress. She works hard to help students become successful participants in campus culture and nurture skills that will carry them toward success beyond school,” said Ayla Wunder. As Choi continues to navigate the complexities of her position, her passion for education and her belief in the potential of every student shine through.



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4 Cypress Marching Band is like Sound in Motion

By JAYDEN KAY LINAYAO



Drum Major Ryan Vo leading the band in the national anthem. (photo by Jayden Kay Linayao)

Now, our Marching Band is back, and playing louder than ever. It's been four years since the world went into lockdown, and Cypress High's Sound in Motion struggled to make a comeback when it came time to march in person again. "We are the closest we've been to our pre-COVID size," **James Quirion**, Cypress High School Band Director

said. "It's not like they were at a different, higher level of achievement before we shut down, but there has definitely been a learning curve to being in a live band again." Quirion believes that between the students' "enthusiasm to play and dedication in building skills," there is not much of a difference between the shutdown and where they have grown to be today.

Beside the struggles Sound in Motion has gone through these past four years, another stressor strikes the band. During marching season, there is a time in the beginning of the school year where they learn both the music for football games and the sets for their field competition season. During stressful times like these, Drum Ma-

ing is because it gives him "a reason to wake up in the morning," and if it weren't for band, he would become "one of those high schoolers who couldn't care enough." Though being a member of Sound in Motion may sound like a difficult task, each "band kid" has their own unique story of why they joined, but more importantly, why they stayed. "It's another feeling of productivity once you come home from a football game or a field competition," **Jeffrey Shim**, Band President explains. "It is a genuinely unique experience because of the memories that come with it."

There are many leadership positions that help Sound in Motion thrive, including Drum Majors, Section Leaders, and Band President. "A lot of responsibilities fall onto the Drum Majors." **Julian Lopez**, Drum Major, explained. "Even if you're not doing the physical activities of all of the stretches and the marching, you're the reason why everyone else does." Being a leader takes a lot of strength, mentally and physically, but for Section Leader **Ghaleb Samawi**, he finds that his reason to keep march-

ing is because it gives him "a reason to wake up in the morning," and if it weren't for band, he would become "one of those high schoolers who couldn't care enough."

Though being a member of Sound in Motion may sound like a difficult task, each "band kid" has their own unique story of why they joined, but more importantly, why they stayed. "It's another feeling of productivity once you come home from a football game or a field competition," **Jeffrey Shim**, Band President explains. "It is a genuinely unique experience because of the memories that come with it."



Cypress High School Sound in Motion playing for the crowd during halftime. (photo by Jayden Kay Linayao)

AUHSD Teachers Instructed To Use eKadence

By TONY RODRIGUEZ

The district's decision to move from Aeries to eKadence gradebook has produced mixed feelings from teachers, with some liking

the transition to eKadence and its interactive features and others finding it less intuitive compared to Aeries. While the shift is meant to increase communication between students, parents, and teachers, some teachers are finding it quite difficult to use and some are still adjusting to the change.

Mrs. Chang, the graphics communications teacher who has used Aeries for years, expressed anxiety about switching to eKadence as the main grading system. She said, explaining that the process of grading assignments feels less efficient. However, she noted/explained that eKadence's comment feature, which allows students and teachers to communicate directly on assignments, is a positive improvement that she likes. "It just needs some tweaks to be more user-friendly," she concluded.

Photo teacher **Chris Johnson**, said the transition has been slow and challenging. "Learning something new is tough, "but if this is the direction we're heading, then that's what we're headed to." Where he explains "I just want us to use one system and make it work great." Despite the mixed feelings from teachers, Assistant Superintendent **Dr. Jaron Fried**, who guided/ad-

vocated for the district transition, is confident about the decision. According to Dr. Fried, eKadence is designed to be more interactive, providing real-time feedback to students and better communication with parents. "It's more supportive for students, parents, and teachers," he said, adding that the platform's AI tool, "Scrappy," acts as a personalized tutor in subjects like math science etc.

Fried also explained that the decision to switch towards eKadence was to track use of the 5 Cs—critical thinking, communication, collaboration, creativity, and character. eKadence can track how each student is using, these important skills that students will need when entering/ applying for a job in the future. "eKadence helps measure these abilities/skills and will benefit students in the long run," he stated.

The transition to eKadence has been in the works for three years, with 95% of the district's teachers now using the platform. To help with the adjustment, the district provided a five-week grace period, along with ed tech coaches and instructional videos for the staff. Dr. Fried acknowledged that the transition has been difficult for some teachers but emphasized that support is available. "It's a work in progress," he said, noting that while there have been challenges, the overall feedback from the teachers and staff has been positive. The district is also working closely

with families to help them use eKadence and understand how to use it. "Parents can still check grades on Aeries, but they won't get the same interaction they would with eKadence," Fried said, explaining that the new platform offers modules and tools to engage more actively with student progress.

While the transition to eKadence as the primary grading tool is still continuing and growing, Dr. Fried is optimistic about its potential to improve communication and enhance learning experiences across the district.



Assistant Superintendent Dr. Jaron Fried says that eKadence has a lot of potential. (photo by Tony Rodriguez)



Mr. Johnson said the transition to eKadence has been slow. (photo by Tony Rodriguez)

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Should Cell Phones Be Banned?: Students And Staff Weigh In On The Controversy

By BRYANA BENNETT (CON) & YOSHI VAZQUEZ MORENO (PRO)



Despite a proposed California law, most students don't want a cell phone ban at school. (photo by Yoshi Vazquez Moreno) California governor Gavin Newsom is trying to pass Assembly Bill 3216, which grants schools the authority to be as strict as they want with cell phone use. The ban has a broad range from not allowing students to have their cell phones on school property to teacher's choice. On June 18, 2024, Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) in a 5-2 vote decided to develop a cell phone ban, which bans all use of cell phones during school hours and requires phones be kept in student lockers. Although it isn't currently a mandate, it's an option that some school districts like LAUSD are deciding to implement.

Distractions: Pro

A big issue students will have when it comes to having phones at hand, whether it be in their pockets or backpacks, the urge and impulse to use it will always be there. Students' attention gets diverted from their classwork whenever a phone goes off or someone is even called in order to take the phone to the office. There is no reason to be receiving calls or notifications in the middle of precious instruction time, especially at the risk of other students getting distracted from their own world. Not to mention, music is another contributing factor because students will be half focused on whatever the teacher says.

Mrs. Bird, CHS Librarian, said "I think that it's a huge distraction, it's the go-to device. I definitely think it has to be monitored, something needs to change with the cellphones. I think you guys all just lose focus." A device is a huge distraction to students, especially in school settings, as it becomes the primary focus for unnecessary messaging, music, videos, and even Facetime during class when you're supposed to be "locked in" and learning.

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One of the main reasons that cell phones are used in school is as a re-

source. Many teachers have students use their phones for in class activities. **Mrs. Brunet**, the AP Environmental Science and Chemistry teacher at Cypress High School, stated that, "As a science teacher, I utilize the technology in labs, looking things up, scanning QR codes, and taking polls and surveys." Additionally, many platforms used for school are online based. Therefore, it would be unrealistic to completely ban phone use in school. "Work and school in general is done on our iPads, computers, and other devices like phones that have to do with technology," said Junior, **Sonny DeForrest**.

When asked about how phones are used by students in school Senior, **Hadi Al Rashdi** stated that, "A person can be immature and use it the wrong way. While another person can be mature about it and use it to gain the success they need for their education." Overall, it's left up to the students to decide to get off their phones while in school and focus or to give in to distraction. "If you're on the phone and don't absorb the lesson, then that's your fault for choosing to be on your phone, and you lose your academic experience," said Junior Lucas Fong.

Emergency Use: Pro

Something to be taken into consideration when it comes to cell phone usage is emergencies. Parents express concern for students, whether it be a family emergency or not. If a parent wants to tell their student about something that occurred privately, the office can always call up the student and provide moral support if it's needed. When asking the front office secretary, **Mrs. Amador**, about the use of phones for emergencies, she said, "Let's say there is a real emergency. Now, you're in class, you don't know what to do, and then all your peers are looking at you. And there's no actual support because the teacher doesn't even know what's going on with you, versus if they were to just

call the office and we go and get you, we'll put you in the office. You can have some privacy because you're kind of acting weird." Having phones on a student solely for "family purposes" wouldn't benefit the student for the most part, mentally, that is.

Knowing that no one can help you, or that no one is around to comfort you, can bring a sense of hopelessness and loneliness to a student. Especially when the attention is on them in a moment of discomfort and vulnerability, it can really impact a student's mental health, further affecting performance in school and how one acts around their peers.

Con

A concern brought up by parents and students is the potential restraint the ban will put on communication. Many parents calling or texting their children to inform them that they dropped off food or who is picking them up after school. If the phone ban goes through, all personal messages between parents and students would have to go through the school office. Which may cause a strain on the school's office and a delay on information.

If phones are completely banned from school property, there will be another level of danger for students. "The original argument for having phones in school was for safety purposes." **Mrs. Russell**, a chemistry teacher from Cypress High School, said. Some students that walk home are scared of the potential danger of not being able to communicate with parents could put them in. Fong's opinion on the topic is, "It's a safety thing. I walk home every day. If I don't have my phone and someone attacks me or I get hurt. I wouldn't have any way to contact my parents." Cypress High School has had previous issues with a man driving on Valley View trying to get female students into his car. These issues directly affect the school, making

the need for cell phones even more evident. In case of a current issue, like school shootings, parents are worried that students not having access to their phones could put them in more danger. Some students are just as worried as parents, and want to be able to communicate with their parents in case of an emergency at school. In response, DeForrest said, "If there were to be a school shooting, considering we are in America and that is something that happens, phones would be needed and very important." During an emergency, students and parents may not want a boundary put on cell phone use. Things like school shootings leave students with the desire to be able to call their parents, and parents want to be able to communicate with their child.

Social Media/Mental Health Concern: Pro

A big issue with having phones during class that the ban can fix has to do with social media. Social media is a core issue when it comes to student's mental health and image. While the teachers do their jobs, students can be distracted. A world of fake news and unhealthy standards, with one wrong move you could get doxxed or worse.

Some students have their own phone service and data, holding the ability to check for notifications, likes, and reports all during class if they really wanted to. It negatively impacts anyone online as a whole, because it shows us all these people with everything we could want or wish for in places we would want to go to. All of this that we see online simply adds the underlying feeling of jealousy and insecurity about our own lives. It lingers in the mind and impacts our activity. Bird also mentioned that insecurities deeply come into play. Body image and beauty standards, for both guys and girls, is occasionally emphasized online, everyone showing off what the desired look is. In turn, students keep that in the back of their heads and they let it consume their every thought, not even focusing on what is important or needed from them.

Con

A problem the ban is hoping to address is social media's negative impact on mental health. Many students are able to control the need to check their phones. This concept of maturity and personal responsibility is applied to how social media is used. People seem to forget the difference between cell phones and social media. Al Rashidi

commented that, "A cell phone can be used as a tool; social media can be used as a weapon." This evident difference between phones and social media demonstrates why students need to hold themselves accountable. "Phones can be a distraction if you are not responsible." DeForrest said.

Many students don't use social media during the school day. Mainly because they can't access social media on school Wi-Fi, which has blockers set in to prevent students from using social media. Many students are also busy with school and clubs. "I don't think banning it only at school is going to help with social media at all," said Fong. Most students' time spent on social media is outside of school, so banning phones from school wouldn't affect time spent on social media.

Closing Argument: Pro

Cell phones are not needed during schools and the ban will benefit students and teachers alike. School issued Chromebooks are already beneficial for students to do research and navigate online for tools and information during class without needing phones. Social media is a big issue that can be stopped with the ban, halting all usage of social media during school hours to focus on studies and work. Parents should call the office if anything, emergency or not, to communicate with their student, because there truly is no reason to be chatting during school, when the main priority should be learning. Overall, the ban can benefit everyone it's aimed towards.

Con

Cell phones are used as a valued resource in school. This tool is utilized by teachers and students to make the most of the time students spend in class. A secondary issue the ban hopes to address is social media's impact on students. However, students spend minimal time on social media while in school. And, parents and students want to be able to stay in contact in case of any emergency.



Students and teachers hold different stances on the use of technological devices like cellphones. (photo by YR Media)

September Celebration

By TYLER HERNANDEZ



6 Sports

Cross-Country Team Sets Sights on CIF

By YAZEED ALBADARIN

In only two meets this season so far, Cypress Cross-Country has been working hard.

Coach **Matthew Tweed** reflected on the team's progress, stating, "This has been by far our best off-season, in terms of intensity, participation, and mileage. It's been really good on both the boys and girls sides." He also discussed the boys team's annual Mammoth trip, where they spent eight days training at an altitude of 8,000 feet. "It's a chance for the boys to bond, set goals, and train with minimal distractions. We run twice a day, and we also include fitness classes. My goal is not only for the kids to be talented runners but to help them find other ways to stay fit throughout their lives, whether it's cycling, yoga, or boot camp." Looking ahead, shared his hopes for the season. "We're in the new Century Conference, and we want to finish in the top three to qualify



Cypress Cross-Country runners huddle up for motivation before the race starts. (picture by P.C. Jonathon Rodriguez)

for CIF. We have a lot of goals as a varsity team, but as a program overall, we've been able to increase our numbers. We have 60 athletes this year, including many freshmen and sophomores, so we're excited not just about the present but also the future." Tweed emphasized the importance of building a lasting culture of excellence. "We want the new athletes to understand what we're trying to accomplish and seamlessly integrate into the program, continuing the tradition we've built."

Team captain **Jonathan Rodriguez** reflected on last year, saying, "One of the biggest things about our last season was that we were a young team. We didn't have any seniors, just a bunch of new guys. So, when it came to finals, we lagged a little. But during the off-season, we had the chance to recognize where we failed and started working on it early, so we're mentally prepared." He added, "Our team did well last year, but we fell short at finals. A lot of the guys didn't know what to expect at the varsity level, espe-

cially being so young—how fast to start, how slow to go at certain points. One of the biggest challenges for me last year was taking on a leadership role at a young age. But those before me showed me that a captain isn't just someone who tells others what to do; they have to be there all the time, working the hardest." Rodriguez also shared how the team balances hard work with relaxation, mentioning trips to the pool and a sports club where they play ping pong, pool, and basketball. He explained that training at altitude took time to adapt to, making even simple things like walking up stairs more difficult.

The team had their first test on Saturday, September 7th at the Pat Hadly Invitational with Sophomore runner **Aaron Garcia** winning his heat with a time of 9:41.2 over three kilometers. A 5th place for Sophomore **Kristina Buttner** followed by

Freshman **Samantha Treadway** taking 6th place on her debut. Junior **Isaiah Garma** explained his pre-race routine "I get there 1.5 hours before I relax for 25 minutes and go to the restroom about an hour before the race, around 45 minutes before I race I do stretching, a 2-mile warm up and some extra drills to get the blood flowing... Usually, as a team we huddle up to get motivation." Garma was able to get 4th with **Nathan Rodriguez** rounding up the top 10. Senior **William Masanja** was able to get 8th followed by team captain Jonathan Rodriguez taking 13th place.

With a strong off-season behind them, the cross-country team is feeling confident as they head into the 2024-2025 season. Their focus goes beyond just qualifying for CIF—they're building a supportive, hard-working team culture that will carry them through this season and beyond. After learning from last year's challenges and putting in the work, the team is ready to take on whatever comes next.

Water Polo Working Hard With New Coach Armstrong

By ANTONIO SANDOVAL



Boys Water Polo rejected numerous shots by El Modena. (photo by Antonio Sandoval)

The Cypress High School Boys Water Polo team (10-9) has improved thanks to their attitude, hard-working skills, and to their Water Polo-passionate coach Jim Armstrong. Armstrong is asking for full commitment for his boys but he knows they can do it. "There's some growing pains but they are working hard," he said. Armstrong has a great passion for the game, he wants them to do well and gets fired up while teaching. Seeing his team come together and becoming better with his leadership and their hard work is thrilling to him.

Armstrong has a history with Water Polo. He played water polo freshman year at Cypress College and was very passionate about the sport, but injuries



This year's team is already showing improvement. (picture by Ian Tennimon)

halted his career. He was able to get back into being involved with water polo by becoming a coach when he was 20, and that's what hes' been ever since.

Junior **Andrew Helm** is ready to win. He joined water polo (1-0 in league) because he liked to swim, and he enjoyed the water polo camp. He likes all of his teammates, he says they are really fun to play with and he's excited to grow with them as a team. He's very excited to play his first year on varsity, but his goal is to win CIF. And, he believes that all people should try sports or any other extra-curricular activity. "You should join a sport or a different extra-curricular activity. They are a lot of fun and you get a lot of friends doing them."

Senior **Ian Tennimon** is a goalie and started playing Water Polo when he was eight years old because was influenced to join by his close cousin who played Water Polo for Cypress. Andrew's excited for Senior Night, league games, and just generally getting better at the sport. He says his teammates are hard workers though they still have a lot to learn, but he feels like they are heading in the right direction. He has nothing but praise for his coach, Armstrong who got them "on the track to become a professional team." The team still has a lot of work to do to get into the playoffs but Tennimon believes they can make it.

Overall, this team can conquer anything with their hard work and great attitude.

7

Breaking Boundaries: The Rise of Girls Flag Football

By MIFRAH BAWANY



Cypress High School Girls Flag Football team breaks into the county rankings after going 2-0 at the Rams Jamboree. (photo by Danny Kruger)

With the sun high overhead, Cypress High's girls' varsity flag football team electrified the field by winning their first game of the season against Los Alamitos High School with a score of 14-0. They have also defeated Ramona High School (20-0) and Esperanza High School (20-13). With each touchdown and strategic play, Cypress High showcased their talent and proved that their flag football program is a force to be reckoned with this season.

Coach **Danny Kruger**, has been instrumental in the program's development. With over 2 years of experience coaching Cypress High School Girls Flag Football, Kruger brings passion and technical knowledge to the field. One of Kruger's

three goals for this season is winning the league: "The second goal is to win CIF, and the third goal is to make sure everybody is having fun," he said. Kruger's favorite part of the team is watching the friendships that grow. Kruger wants the girls to improve on "Being there on time," he said. His emphasis on character-building and mentorship has inspired the players to give their best effort on and off the field.

The team has played thrilling matches in recent weeks, each showcasing their growing skill and team bonding. In their game against El Toro High, the girls triumphed with a final score of 12-6, following that, in their most recent match, the team won with a dominant performance on Sep 16,

2024, against El Dorado with a score of 33-14. Senior **Priscilla Otero**, running back and corner, is excited to play at Cypress as a part of the Flag Football team. Otero's ultimate goal for the team is to rank higher, "Right now we are 19th in the nation, it will be awesome if we are 10th in the nation or higher, I think we can get there," she said. Otero's favorite thing about the sport is the community and the tournaments they get to go to. "Join Flag football, it is very welcoming," Otero said.

With growing interest in girls' flag football, there's excitement for the future. Girls Flag Football is having an amazing season this year working with each other to make their way to league finals.



Danny Kruger is the coach for Cypress High School girls Flag Football Varsity team. (photo by Mifrah Bawany)



Senior Priscilla Otero plays running back and corner. (photo by Mifrah Bawany)

Girls Golf Starts Season Strong With Coach Metry

By MINNEL VEGA



Band life is the best life! (Photo by Belle Paccione)

The Cypress High School Girls Golf team started the season strong with a record of 4-1. The girls played in their 7th tournament of this school year on September 5. This year the golf team will be playing in a new league called Century Conference.

Every year the girls on the team have a goal they want to achieve during the season. Four-year team member **Tania Maheshwari** shared that one of her goals this year is "to end off strong...and support those still going to play. Ultimately, my goal is to win

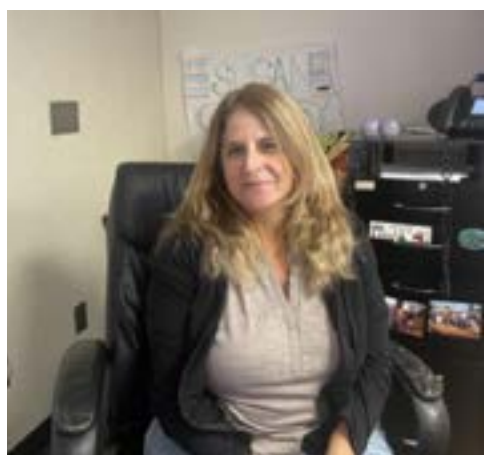
the league and I just want everyone to have a great time and year." Coach **Dana Ursich** says her goal this year is to "have [the players] improve on certain shots, use different clubs, and get kids out there who haven't played before."

All teams have strengths they have gained over the years. However, for a team to succeed, teammates need to have a good relationship with each other. Coach **Susan Metry** shared that the team has "built a very strong community around each other." Metry continued, Just like any sport when you don't perform well, it sometimes can get in your head. So, the focus is just to stay positive and let those bad days go."

With the golf course being off the Cypress campus, students need to put extra time into getting to practice. Coach Ursich said, "They have to have a ride from their parents because it's not on campus and we

play at the Navy Golf Course down the street and some courses for matches are 40 to 45 minutes away."

The most challenging opponents the girls golf team will play this year are Troy and Yorba Linda High School. But with a lot of practice this year, and with their coaches' support, the team can win and make it into the final round of the league.



Coach Metry is entering her second year as Varsity golf coach. (photo by Minnel Vega)

Preventative Measures Stabilize the Foreseeable Future for AUHSD Teachers

By ZOE CHUNG



Protests, like this one in front of Lexington Jr. High, were organized all over the Anaheim Union High School District. (photo by Kristy Takacs)

Following the sudden uncertainty of layoffs during the school year of 2023-2024, teachers and students in the Anaheim Union High School District (AUHSD) have combined their efforts to protect the education system.

During March, high school students attending Cypress High School formed a united front to protect the teachers working in the district from losing their jobs. Students and teachers both participated in the Anaheim Secondary Teacher Association (ASTA) rallies, which were held at Kennedy High School, Walker Junior High School, Cypress High School, Oxford Academy, Ball Junior High School, Anaheim High School, Orangeview Junior High School, Western High School, Magnolia High School, Brookhurst Junior High School, Dale Junior High School, Loara High School, and South Junior High School. These rallies were organized to show support for the AUHSD teachers and reduce the number of Reduction in Force (RIF) notices, which rose to the astounding number of 119, before being reduced to zero. However, “temporary” teachers who have worked for too short of a period of time to be guaranteed permanence

and stability have been laid off. **Geoff Morganstern**, the president of ASTA, met with a number of students from the district to share



Students rallied one morning in the spring at Cypress High School to bring attention to the layoff crisis. (photo by Rehansa Kulatilleke)

An attendee of this meeting, Cypress junior **Gavin Kim**, shared the preventative measures which would be taken, as well as the solutions that were devised to take the past as a learning experience. Kim helped organize the efforts to protect the AUHSD teachers on behalf of Cypress High School students.

The total cost to keep the teachers is estimated at \$2.5 million annually, rather than the previously discussed \$54 million per year. When asked to expand on this, Morganstern said the \$2.5 million is the cost of carrying the 17 teachers from last year. According to Morganstern, 107 of the 119 positions which received the RIF notices have been “elim-

inated through retirements and new position[s] for next year, so there won’t be a need to carry over any teachers beyond the need for staffing under the current contract.”

As for the preventative measures that might be taken to limit the possibility of any

the Board of Trustees plan to hold meetings more frequently to stay on top of any issues in advance before they become too unmanageable. Despite the chaos of the last few months, there have been no significant changes when it comes to community feedback. However, there are still places where the community can submit their feedback, including the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP), as well as through communities in schools. “The district and all the employee associations are meeting monthly on the Budget Stabilization Committee to work toward a financially stable district with no layoffs of any employee group.”

Based on current statistics and solutions, AUHSD teachers in most departments can feel secure in their occupations for approximately three years into the future. There is a school bond, known as the “Measure K,” which will be passed in November. Morganstern asserts that this “will also help since it would relieve pressure on the general budget for construction and maintenance costs.” The district may come up with more solutions during those three years which could help teachers feel safer in their positions without the threat of layoffs looming over them through budgeting issues.

“surprise” layoffs in the future, the district has laid out an initial three-year plan that was created after the layoffs were rescinded, as a way to budget out the short term. This three-year budget was created by the district to offset rescinding the RIF notices. To Kim’s understanding, the union and