

Head of School Picnic: New Tradition Welcomes Students Back

ANDY GAO
& SARAH SUN

Students populated Head of School (HOS) Raynard Kington’s backyard, heading to the photobooth or grabbing dessert from the ice cream truck. In the past week, students from each grade were invited to attend the first-ever HOS Picnic at Phelps House.

The picnics were held on separate days for each grade, each an opportunity to enjoy food, music, and relax with their friends. Kington discussed his takeaways from the picnics, elaborating on his wish for students to see Phelps House and congregate with their peers at the beginning of the school year.

“For some time, I thought it was a missed opportunity that so many students get through several years on cam-

pus without ever going to Phelps, without even knowing what Phelps [House] was. That’s one thought that I’d been mulling over some time... We’d been thinking about how we can build community on campus. I suggested that we start off the year with a new tradition of [giving] every student the opportunity to come to Phelps,” said Kington.

Kington continued, “We didn’t want it to be a structured program, so I didn’t make any comments. We decided to have a DJ every night and a photo booth... The desire was to not have a highly structured dinner, that it be more relaxed. Students [could] interact with each other, eat together, and connect with me, but almost secondary with me. It was more just being as a community together.”

Sophie Liang ’26, an attendee at the Senior picnic, enjoyed the opportunity to

see and talk to peers in her grade before graduation.

“It was nice seeing all of the people in our grade in one place. It was interesting because it’s at the beginning of the year; especially as Seniors, we’re making more of an effort to see the people in our grade... Sometimes other events that involve the whole class are more structured, like class meetings. Even though you’re seeing everybody, it’s much less enjoyable. Having a more relaxed way to engage with everybody in a more chill setting is always nice,” said Liang.

Among the food available at the picnic were barbecue chicken, tofu and pork sandwiches, mac and cheese, and an ice cream truck. Adelyne Liu ’28 recommended that due to the large scale of each grade, having a wider variety of food and activities would have better accommodated students.

“One thing I would add is [that] a lot of my friends have dietary restrictions, but there was only one vegetarian option, which was the BBQ tofu. Everyone else could eat mac and cheese, but some people can’t eat cheese, so that’s one big thing. Second thing, they should add more games, because the only games I saw were spike ball and cornhole. Even though those were really fun, I don’t think they had enough variety. I don’t think they had enough of the games

Continued on A5, Column 1

Students Discuss Potential Food Delivery Restrictions



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY K. MA/THE PHILLIPIAN

ADELYNE LIU

Students have been discussing the potential formation of a task force to consider restrictions on food deliveries to campus. *The Phillipian* reached out to several Deans and administrators who declined to comment on the possibility, and no formal announcement of a task force has been made.

Many students shared how food delivery apps like DoorDash have become an important part of their routine. To Angelina Vincent ’26, delivery services are a matter of convenience. In particular, Vincent highlighted how many students rely on DoorDash during the colder months when walking to Paresky Commons (Paresky) or downtown for a meal can be diffi-

cult.

“In the fall and spring, nobody really orders because the weather’s nice and you can go downtown with your friends. But in the winter, it’s really cold and people don’t want to take the time to walk to [Paresky]. The food is also generally the worst during the winter, and so DoorDash is the most used in the winter,” said Vincent.

For Natalie Giancola ’28, access to food delivery is essential during demanding academic weeks. She noted that for students with specific dietary needs, food delivery provides access to meals that Paresky may not always accommodate, highlighting

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Academic Changes

Standardizing the 6: Academic Council Sets 94% as Suggested Threshold

JEANNE
KOSCIUSKO-MORIZET

Starting the 2025-2026 school year, the Academic Council suggested standardizing the 6 threshold at 94 percent, part of a broader effort to bring consistency to Andover’s grading practices, which range from percentages to mastery-based systems to the 0-6 scale itself. This Fall, academic departments have each decided how to take those suggestions into account differently, but with a recurring idea of bringing consistency in grading policies across sections of the same course.

The decision was made by the Academic Council, a group comprised of department chairs and other school leaders who make decisions about matters relating to the academic program. A draft of the plan was shared with instructors in an email sent last June, including grading conversion suggestions and a rubric with detailed descriptions of what work qualifies for 0-6. Caroline Odden, the Dean of Studies, explained what prompted the change.

“This is a suggested scale, and it is understood that instructors may use a different conversion for a variety of pedagogical reasons. However, many instructors, course groups, and departments have welcomed this guidance and adopted this conversion (some were already using it). It is worth noting, as well, that plenty of courses don’t use percentages at all in their grading,” wrote Odden in an email to *The Phillipian*.

Odden continued, “In re-

cent years, both students and faculty have voiced concerns that different courses have different ways of converting from percentages to the 0-6 scale. At times, these inconsistencies were becoming a distraction from learning. This common approach was established to take some of the mystery out of the conversion and help students refocus their attention on the learning process.”

One of the guiding principles behind the change was consistency across sections, particularly in diploma requirement courses. Christopher Jones, the interim Chair of the History and Social Science Department, has asked teachers to adopt the same scale so students receive comparable evaluations regardless of who teaches their section, one of the main objectives being that all students in the same course have a “shared experience.”

“We also want consistency across, especially, diploma requirement courses. If someone is in history in one section and they’re getting grades, they mean something similar to someone else who’s in a different class and with a different teacher. Those grades ought to reflect something similar when they go on a transcript so that someone reading the transcript has a sense of the quality of the students work...We want a degree of consolidation, of reliability, and transparency in our diploma requirement courses,” said Jones.

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Artificial Intelligence Concerns Prompt Surge in In-Class Writing Assessments

NICCOLO LEE-SUK

In response to increased usage of Artificial Intelligence (AI) across educational institutions, many teachers across Andover’s humanities departments have elected to implement more in-class writing assessments. These assessments have replaced take-home assignments and essays in an effort to encourage individual thought and prevent academic misconduct.

Some students are tempted by the convenience of AI platforms, which, after being fed a prompt, can generate a complete written work in a matter of seconds. In-class writing assignments poten-

tially minimize the usage of AI and gauge the true voices and knowledge of students. Christopher Jones, Chair of the Department of History and Social Science, discussed the merits of in-class writing within and beyond the context of AI.

“[In-class writing] allows students to grapple with problems or with their own thoughts and ideas and represent them without worrying too much about formality or the polish of an out-of-class paper. There can be an authenticity and honesty to that kind of writing...[AI is] essentially a mechanism for regurgitation of other people’s thoughts. It will never replace the fact that our central pedagogical mission is to get students to think for themselves,

to express themselves clearly, to feel confident in their own voice, to have their own ideas, to challenge prevailing ideas,” said Jones.

Jones continued, “What we, individually as teachers, and what we’ve talked about as a department, [was] the ways in which we can ensure getting good, authentic student work [without] the kind of muddle that artificial intelligence websites like ChatGPT and others present in terms of doing out-of-class work. Because those websites and those chatbots are

Continued on A5, Column 1

Japanese Temporarily Removed From 2+1 Language Pathway

STAFF REPORT

Many returning students expressed their frustration as they learned that this year they could not take Japanese 100 as part of the 2+1 language pathway. The decision was driven by various reasons, including high demand for the course and priority for new students, according to Caroline Odden, Dean of Studies.

As described in Andover’s official Course of Study, the 2+1 language pathway is an alternative path to completing the world language diploma requirement. Students take one language to the 200-level and another language to the 100-level. The latter language must be listed as “less com-

monly taught” in the Course of Study, namely Chinese, German, Ancient Greek, Japanese, and Russian.

This year, the switch to Japanese was not permitted for students interested in the 2+1 path. Odden explained that Japanese was a particularly popular course this year, leading the office to prioritize new students when making language placements.

“In scheduling students into language classes, we prioritize new students, making every effort to ensure they are able to take their first-choice language. This year, some languages were particularly popular during the scheduling process, and back in the spring we predicted that we would not be able to satisfy all requests for returning students. We therefore asked re-

turning students who wanted to change languages to provide an alternate language choice,” wrote Odden in an email to *The Phillipian*.

She added, “demand for Japanese was particularly high, and, for staffing reasons, it did not make sense to open another section of Japanese 100. Therefore, we made the decision not to place students following the 2+1 pathway into Japanese 100 this year.”

Jaewon Choi ’28 petitioned to switch from Latin 200 to Japanese 100 last January and was initially approved for the 2+1 option. However, he was instead switched to Chinese

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Commentary, A2

The Importance of Classics

In her article, “The Problem With Romanticizing Old, Harmful Literature”, Emma Hong ’28 discusses the importance of providing critical framing when teaching classics in high schools.

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When Students Fly...

Say that again and we’ll subpoena you!

Sports, B1

Flag Football is Here.

Read about Andover’s newest student-driven sport that is breaking barriers.

Arts, B6

The Class of ’26 Showcase Senior Backpacks

Read about the “Senior Backpack” trend, where seniors are trading in their regular bags for miniature, youthful ones to celebrate their last year of high school.

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Editorial

Knives Out

Feeding over 1,100 students and countless staff members each day is far from easy. As far as variety, volume, and quality of food, Paresky Commons (Commons) generally succeeds in delivering filling meals to fuel students throughout the day. In recent years, it has also increasingly expanded its menu to accommodate allergies and other dietary restrictions. Yet, with Commons serving three meals a day, weekly munches on Wednesday evenings, and access to restaurants in downtown Andover, why do students seek external food options so often?

The main frustration is timing. In particular, the 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. dinner window does not always line up with demanding student schedules. For students with late club meetings or 6:20 p.m. music rehearsals, it is common to skip dinner. Instead, students resort to ordering food or snacking on food in their dorms, running contrary to Commons’ efforts to nourish students. Furthermore, dinner starts and ends relatively early, leaving many hungry during evening study hours and activities. Though the Grill in Susie’s serves late-night fast food items, such as burgers and quesadillas, its items are expensive and only available at limited hours every week.

The mealtime problem grows particularly noticeable when we consider athletes. Students who attend evening practices or away games often arrive on campus after Commons has closed and miss dinner. Andover provides alternative meals — ham and cheese sandwiches, bags of chips, or a Susie’s food voucher. However, these options are not enough to meet the demanding diets of athletes, who need plenty of carbs, proteins, and fats to support their strenuous workouts.

In terms of food variety, there are plenty of healthy options at Commons, including the salad bar at lunch and dinner or the omelet and yogurt stations in the morning. At the same time, unhealthy options abound. Dessert options — delicious but filled with sugar — are offered almost every day, as are fried items like chicken nuggets or French fries. Of course, there is always a place for sweet treats and fried foods, especially to serve as an escape from the stress of schoolwork. A menu filled with unhealthy food options, though enticing, indirectly encourages students to adopt an unhealthy diet in their daily lives. Andover students are still kids and navigating the newfound freedom that comes with boarding school life. Commons should support this transition to independence by promoting healthier foods on main entree stations.

We understand that it is not easy for Commons to extend or change meal hours. However, we suggest making small changes, such as keeping more grab-and-go, wholesome snacks available after Commons closes for the night. A simple array of fresh fruit (like the apples, bananas, and oranges that Commons offers in the day) could go a long way. We appreciate chips and candy, but Commons should keep us energized throughout the day with healthier snacks as well.

This Editorial represents the opinions of *The Phillipian*, vol. CXLVIII.

The Problem With Romanticizing Old, Harmful Literature

EMMA HONG



High school English classrooms frequently celebrate the “timeless” value of old classics, yet many of those same works carry values that are anything but timeless. To this day, old classics are included in many high school programs and syllabi across the nation — including Andover, where we are taught. This is obviously for good reason: classics are masterfully written, explore universal human experiences, and offer insights into a society’s contemporary morals and social expectations. However, while learning about the classics comes with its advantages, many carry outdated and harmful values within their texts. Introducing these books through a more modern lens and warnings gives students the opportunity to identify how some classics conflict with modern values on problematic views on race, class, gender, etc. Not doing so risks normalizing these outdated

perspectives by presenting them as unquestioned cornerstones of literature. This lack of critical framing can unintentionally reinforce oppressive ideas and signal to students that these problematic perspectives still hold merit within our modern society. For example, Shakespeare’s plays are a common presence in high school and collegiate English classes and are lauded as the pinnacle of literary achievement. However, his plays are filled with harmful stereotypes against everyone who was considered an “outsider” in Elizabethan England, primarily Jews, Black people, Muslims, and women. The character Othello in “Othello” — a play about a Moorish general who is manipulated into his own demise — for example, is largely shaped by racial stereotypes tied to his identity as a black man, por-

trayed often as a violent threat. If this text were taught without sufficient understanding of the inaccuracy of this representation, students may accidentally internalize these stereotypes. I remember when my friend of color back home in Iowa read “Othello” in their ninth grade English class, they called me one day irked because of how the class discussion was so focused on the beauty of Shakespeare’s language that there was no space to unpack the racial dynamics. I was struck by how easily the stereotypes in “Othello” could have gone unquestioned if students weren’t encouraged to think critically about classics. Another example is “The Great Gatsby” by F. Scott Fitzgerald, a quintessential American classic, which glorifies wealth and privilege while objectifying and discarding the central

women of the book, Myrtle and Daisy. These characters serve primarily as symbols of male desire and ambition, boiling down to an obsession with elite, white, upper-class lives that marginalize everyone else. Teaching texts like these with a critical lens is necessary. Works such as the ones mentioned above — “Othello, The Great Gatsby” — should be taught with context. One way that teachers can accomplish this is by comparing and contrasting classics with modern critical analyses OR literary criticism from authors of marginalized communities. Through this, students are given both sides of the story and a more complete understanding of the topics discussed in classics. Additionally, they can have encouraging, enlightening discussions about the historical contexts that may have shaped these works, analyzing and deconstructing the racism, sexism, and classism that underpin them. Such discussion can create a space that opposes these harmful values, forming leeway for dialogue and important growth. Many of these texts are classics for a reason — their storytelling, literary craft, and exploration of the human experience remain an integral aspect of the field of English. Classics often grapple with universal questions — identity, love, loss, power, and justice — that continue to resonate today. By analyzing these compellingly written texts through a modern lens, students can appreciate

their literary brilliance while critically engaging with the harmful stereotypes they contain. This dual approach allows students to recognize bias, question authority, and explore alternative perspectives while still appreciating the rich opportunities it provides for learning, discussion, and critical reflection. These classics, with their harmful values as well as their compelling writing, can serve as useful tools for critical engagement in the classroom. However, it is indubitable that because of how much time has passed since they were published, they include certain harmful constructions and stereotypes such as rigid gender roles, racial prejudices, and colonialist or classist views. It is critical that classrooms and educational systems make sure to teach these classics through a modern lens of context, guiding students to both appreciate their literary merits and critically analyze the social and cultural assumptions embedded within them. This allows students to appreciate their literary value while understanding that some of the views presented are outdated and wrong — even if the works remain valuable and sophisticated examples of literature.

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Why Am I So Afraid to be Alone?

IAN KIM



Whenever an event pops up on The Weekender, my mind immediately shifts to “who will I go with,” rather than “what will I do there.” In every footstep alone, I feel a tremble of vulnerability wash over me, as the quiet awkwardness creeps into all my senses. During class meetings or All School Meeting (ASM), I desperately look for familiar faces to sit next to, afraid of the sensation of being alone. When I can’t find friends sitting at Paresky Commons, my heartbeat rises, looking around for one person, one table, where I could be comfortable. Solitude became synonymous with terror, and friendships served as a road away from the emotion I so much feared. The feeling intruded every solitary moment of my days, even as I lay down in my room in the afternoons or went to bed early on weekends. Being around other people now was the only way for me to run away from the daunting void of being lonely.

I used to hyperanalyze, processing each response emotionally and carefully, questioning the nuance of a simple text or hypothesizing why my friend wouldn’t wave back when I said

“hi.” Did he not see me, or was he ignoring me? My fear of loneliness turned into a longing for being “wanted,” which led to a sustained discomfort I couldn’t shake myself out of. I saw my friends as my family here at school, and depended on them emotionally for my problems, concerns, and all my thoughts. But I quickly grew exhausted, as I towed the line between friendship and attachment. So that’s how these rules were made: to overcome the only way I knew how to live here.

My fear of loneliness turned into a longing for being “wanted,” which led to a sustained discomfort I couldn’t shake myself out of.

Be empathetic, but don’t be hypersensitive. One of the reasons I became so close to my friends now was because I found an empathetic side of them and I found a side of me that wanted to be empathetic for them. We called each other during late nights, questioning why we were overwhelmed with work already in the second week and talking about everything from instagram brain rot to giving study tips and relationship advice. The ability to connect with someone emotionally proved valuable to maintaining myself again and again. But once those friends became a big part of life, and once it became a daily routine to yell their name across the lawn, I fell into the trap of hypersensitivity.

Friendships are not emotionally linear, but I treated them like they were, always getting better the more time I spent with my friends. Of course there were ups

and downs, and of course emotions weren’t static and changed all the time, but my hypersensitivity prevented me from acknowledging the fact that there are variables to friendships that I don’t have control over.

Believe that you are valued, because you are. Andover is a place of independence and freedom, and it may often seem like you would easily detach from your community unless you make constant efforts to belong. But I hope this rule reminds you that this community needs you in a thousand different ways, whether it is explicitly expressed or not. You are needed as a companion in the lunch line, a study buddy during study hours, or just a friend there for another friend during crunch times. It may feel as if, at many times, I am not needed in this community to keep it running, but let’s remind ourselves of our impact. I’ve found it simple but greatly rewarding to believe, many times without evidence or proof, that people here respect and value me. Once you begin to think that way, it may be much easier to see the brighter side of each interaction, to find value in yourself in others at the start, and find value in yourself. My circle of influence turned out to be much larger than what I thought it would be, and this realization calmed my fear of being constantly with someone. Believing in your value will help you believe in yourself and stay confident, even when you can’t see it directly.

Lastly, quoting one of the most powerful lines in any movie I’ve watched, “It’s not your fault.” When Sean Maguire said this to Will in “Good Will Hunting,” it referred to Will’s childhood trauma and abuse that built him the defensive persona that he carried with him. In the context of Andover, this phrase resonates more. It’s not your fault



CARINA PAIK/ THE PHILLIPIAN

that you may feel like you choose to isolate yourself because you feel burned out, and it’s not your fault you may think you can’t find time for your friends. It isn’t your fault when some days you just find yourself unable to smile and happen to give more irritated responses instead of warm ones. It’s not your fault that you might feel out of place. I want to tell my old self’s uncertain ear that it’s alright to feel anything and everything and that all feelings deserve at least a bit of my attention and care.

Believing in your value will help you believe in yourself and stay confident, even when you can’t see it directly.

To feel at home at a place we call home away from our homes is always a challenge. In an independent and rigorous environ-

ment such as this, it can be easy to question yourself and feel scared to be alone. Me not being able to stand being alone wasn’t just a thirst for belonging but a symptom of self-doubt. We must tell ourselves, through all the busy work and meetings, that we hold undeniable and unignorable value in this community, and that our circle of influence is always bigger than what we recognize it to be. It’s not always your fault: many factors that make you dissatisfied with who you are are often out of your control. Let’s embrace being alone: sit alone at dinner, study alone, walk alone to class, and be proud of it. Whatever being alone may entail and be our own Sean Maguire, telling ourselves: “it’s not always your fault.”

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Andover’s AI Abomination

MATTHEW WEI



Last year’s State of the Academy (SOTA) shows that 70 percent of Andover students use AI, with 44 percent of students using it multiple times a week. However, Andover remains rather apprehensive of AI use in classrooms, with many teachers advising students to resort to avoidance of AI unless specifically instructed. Andover’s fear of actively incorporating AI use into school curriculum barricades the school from equipping the students with ethical, productive usages of AI.

Andover serves to equip its students with creative and critical knowledge that they can refer to later in their careers. In order to best equip students, Andover must embrace AI for students to flourish once they’re out in the “real world.” AI is increasingly becoming a critical tool in increasing productivity, with 66 percent of executives requiring AI skills for new hires in 2024. Moreover, according to the World Economic Forum, AI usage for American workers has doubled in the past two years. Instead of fearing the potential consequences of new technology, we should actively experiment with a pro-AI educational approach among students and teachers, which would uphold

our school values of creativity, trust, and integrity when done the right way.

Looking at similar educational institutions to Andover, we see that Choate incorporates AI into its curriculum that benefits both students and teachers by creating two groups: The Generative AI Steering Committee (which manages AI strategies in the resources, policies, and vision within their academic curriculum) and The Generative AI Collaborative Group (which focuses on AI in Choate’s business and administrative areas). Meanwhile, we’re not offering machine learning Computer Science courses, stomping AI out like a spider. But what if instead of a spider, we’re destroying Spider-Man? After attending various meetings with CEO’s, associate professors, and post-grads, I’ve received a consensus that AI is an amazing expedient in completing various tasks, such as managing tedious datasets, generating kick-off points for projects, detecting fraud, or optimizing crop yields. Other high schools, both public and private, teach AI literacy courses and show upfront transparency about how AI is changing the world.

In order to best equip its students, Andover must embrace AI for students to flourish once they’re out in the “real world.”

Not only are high schools around the globe utilizing and progressing with their new-found tools, but various colleges are also leading the way with the new learning mechanism. To name a few, Harvard devel-

oped an AI Pedagogy Project to help students and faculty use, analyze, and control AI. They have created assignments and courses that incorporate AI into both college majors and everyday life, covering: distinguishing AI versus human writing or using AI to expedite mundane tasks. Stanford maintains an AI playground to explore and pound on the outer limits of machine learning. Andover has the necessary resources to build a solid foundation that can eventually turn the AI stigma around so that students are propelled in the right direction.

But why are so many schools incorporating artificial intelligence? Students sometimes run into a rare phenomenon that schools might not always address. It’s called, “Not understanding everything.” Students might not be able to articulate what they need help with (they don’t know exactly where or what they’re struggling with), they could feel that they need an answer now, or they think that their resources aren’t adequate. Narrowing down to Andover, specifically, tutoring ses-



GEMMA PARK/ THE PHILLIPIAN

sions aren’t frequent enough to always be there for the student or might conflict with extra-curriculars. Even when the students seek help from their

Trying to stifle AI stigmatizes the internet, spellcheck, and other devices that ultimately speed up tedious tasks.

teachers, they often find themselves fighting to ask questions due to the limited availability of the teacher and time of conference periods. Chatbots, such as Chat-GPT or gemini, can instantly simplify confusing concepts and correct wrong trails of thinking before they become heavy, ingrained deadweights. They can also adapt to various languages, contexts, and practice questions for tests. When low on practice questions or trying to focus on a specific concept, AI gives you individu-

alized practice towards your language, skill level, and depth of explanation. AI has so many possibilities to streamline efficiency with grading, class scheduling, and managing student records, and other tedious tasks, so it’s a win-win for everybody.

AI literacy should be acknowledged and taught, but even though a few of our courses have started to put that in their descriptions, rarely is the “correct” or “productive” usage of AI ever mentioned in these courses. Trying to stifle AI stigmatizes the internet, spellcheck, and other devices that ultimately speed up tedious tasks. Open-minded students who come to Andover to spearhead a future of unforeseen technology and advancement see AI as a tool to carve their key to success.

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The Thinnest iPhone With Even Thinner Value

KONNOR FORTINI



A. LEE / THE PHILLIPIAN

After the countless jokes at last week’s All-School Meeting (ASM), it seems taboo to talk about phones. Still, I press on. On September 9, Apple launched its latest lineup of new phones: the iPhone 17, the iPhone 17 Pro, the iPhone 17 Pro Max, and the iPhone Air. One of the new launches, the iPhone Air, is 5.6 millimeters and weighs 165 grams, by far the lightest iPhone made. But it is hard to appreciate this newfound slenderness when it is accompanied by a multitude of drawbacks, especially considering its price of nearly a thousand dollars, the same as last year’s Pro Phone. In their pursuit of creating the thinnest phone possible, Apple has sacrificed key features of the iPhone that consumers actually value.

One of the many shortcomings of the iPhone Air is its battery capacity, which is significantly smaller than that of older, cheaper iPhone models. Due to this, the iPhone Air not only stores less energy but also requires more frequent charging. The iPhone Air also has a USB-C 2, rather than USB-C 3, an upgrade that came in the equally priced iPhone 16 Pro

of the year prior. This lower-caliber port supports slow charging, slow data speeds, and offers limited support for the thousands of other devices. Additionally, the iPhone Air features a worse camera system than the 200 dollars-cheaper base iPhone 17, with a singular primary camera equal to the one on the iPhone 17 and the absence of an ultrawide camera. In their pursuit of creating the thinnest phone possible, they’ve sacrificed key features of the iPhone that consumers actually value. Now, if consumers were solely searching for the thinnest and lightest phone possible, then this would not be as problematic. However, a poll reported by “Business Insider” shows that this is not the case: about 73 percent of respondents stated that they would prefer a thicker phone if it came with a longer battery life. Therefore, while this move may be successful in gaining initial attraction, due to the iPhone Air’s functional shortcomings, it is unlikely that such attention will be sustained.

In their pursuit of creating the thinnest iPhone possible, they’ve sacrificed key features of the iPhone that consumers actually value.

Yet, what may seem like a complete drawback to the new iPhone launch could serve as an advantage for Apple. The decoy effect is a psychological phenomenon in which a third, less attrac-

tive option is offered to make the target option seem much more appealing. This is a tactic employed in numerous markets. A typical example is movie theater popcorn: by providing the medium size at only a slightly cheaper price than the large, customers are more likely to be enticed to buy the larger popcorn. Following the same logic, the iPhone Air could potentially have the same effect as the medium-sized popcorn for the other iPhone 17s through its terrible value and exorbitant price. This is not the first time such an effect has benefited Apple: In fact, a 2025 study published in Research in Management and Accounting found that Apple had used the “decoy effect during the launch of the iPhone by positioning the Pro as the ‘decoy’ for the Pro Max.” They found that by creating the Pro to be of worse quality and a higher price, it acted as the decoy, significantly attracting consumers to the iPhone 14 Pro Max. Understanding this effect encourages us to make informed decisions about our purchases.

The iPhone Air, though

marketed as a premium offering with its sleek and smooth design, may not be the high-quality phone that many customers are looking for. It may, instead, be part of a larger marketing ploy to indirectly convince consum-

This could lead to a landscape where innovation takes a backseat, potentially stalling advancements in smartphones due to a sole focus on profitability.

ers to buy the other iPhone 17 models released. Apple has observed that minor, incremental upgrades do not drive sales, and they employ this strategy to maintain their profits, a strategy that other phone companies are likely to follow. This could lead to a landscape where innovation takes a backseat, potentially stalling advancements

in smartphones due to a sole focus on profitability. In the end, it will be interesting to observe how markets respond to this latest offering. Even I, as a self-proclaimed “Apple glazer,” or someone who usually praises the company, cannot justify the creation of this device in terms of customer practicality and utility. The question of “will consumers embrace the iPhone Air for its sleek design, or will they lean towards models that provide more practical features for a similar, or lower, price” is the one we await to see unfold. Only time will tell, but one thing is for certain: the pursuit of sleekness in technology should not come at the expense of functionality and practicality, especially with an increase in cost.

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MIA WALKER / THE PHILLIPIAN



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HOS Munches and “Cooking with Kington” will Continue

Continued from A1, Column 3

for everyone to play, because we had to line up to play,” said Liu.

According to Kington, the picnics were intended to give each grade an opportunity to reconnect with peers. Robert Kong ’27, however, said he had anticipated more direct interaction with Kington.

“Something that was disappointing was that it was advertised as a munch with the HOS, but Dr. Kington did not interact much with the students. At least for the time I was there, he was mainly in the corner talking with the other staff,” said Kong.

Looking ahead, Kington plans to hold regular events aimed to foster connections between himself and the stu-

dent body, as well as among students. According to Kington, HOS munches will return, held monthly instead of biweekly as they were last year. Additionally, he plans to revive his “Cooking with Kington” series.

“In the past we had the opportunity for students to cook things with me. It varies somewhat over time. Initially, Peter [Daniolos] and I cooked dueling pizzas and another time it was a group of Chinese students who had a couple of recipes. They brought their own and taught me. Another time, we grilled for an Andover/Exeter game... Sometimes it’s in my house, sometimes in the dining [hall], it varies,” said Kington.

Note: Adelyne Liu ’28 is a News Staff Writer for The Phillipian

Students and Faculty Express Optimism About In Class Writing

Continued from A1, Column 5

so readily available, and so many students, from the data we have, are using them... Teachers are turning towards doing things in-class when they know that they can get an accurate sample of a student’s real voice, what they’re doing, what they’re thinking, and how they interact with a historical question.”

Though many students have reported an increase of in-class writings, the Andover faculty’s exploration of the role of AI in the classroom is not new. Odden outlined some of the steps faculty members have taken to better adapt their curriculums to the presence of Artificial Intelligence.

“Our faculty has been discussing the impact of artificial intelligence on teaching and learning regularly since ChatGPT was introduced in November 2022. Instructors have engaged in departmental conversations, participated in faculty led workshops, joined sessions with outside facilitators, and attended off-campus conferences on this topic. Instructors of subjects that focus on reading and writing have been particularly engaged in conversations about the impact of A.I.,” wrote Odden in an email to *The Phillipian*.

Kiran Bhardwaj, Chair of the Department of Philosophy and Religious Studies, voiced her thoughts on how in-class writings may impact a student’s workload. Bhardwaj noted that though in-class writings may take away time from in-class instruction, they also allow her to view her students’ working processes and reduce the pressure on them to do outside work.

“To be honest, I do feel the tension between opening up time for class discussion that is now going to be taken up by in-class assessments. But there are some reasonable goods. I’m hoping that my students are going to have a bit of ease for out-of-class work if we’re doing a lot of in-class

assessments, which would be a good as well as more genuinely being able to see what my students are doing as they work, because that will more effectively allow me to support them,” said Bhardwaj.

Subsequently, the increase of in-class writings has prompted many students to adjust their expectations and writing methods. For Satabhisha Sarkar ’27, that isn’t necessarily a bad thing. Sarkar noted that the relative inexperience of many students with in-class writings may be contributing to worry. However, she added that there is reason to be optimistic.

“I’m not opposed to in-class writing, because it’s a way for me to challenge myself as a writer and get my ideas expressed well. I don’t have to stress about [my piece] after the class period’s over, [and] I don’t have to keep worrying about editing it and making it the best version it can be, because at some point, you just have to stop editing... Some of the resistance that students are voicing towards in-class writing comes from the fact that we’re so used to having out-of-class writing. We’re very familiar with being able to work on things for a longer time,” said Sarkar.

Leon Calleja, Chair of the English Department, noted that frequent AI usage can hinder students from absorbing material from class and demonstrating their thinking, but also has an impact on their ability to process information.

“Some studies that are showing you how [AI] impacts the cognitive abilities of students and even just using it and then coming back to writing, even if you don’t want to use it, you’re slower at writing. If you’re slower in writing you’re a slower thinker. That’s not always a bad thing... I encourage the English class to be slow readers as well, but they need to be the ones doing the reading. There’s one thing when you’re doing things slowly because you’re deliberating. There’s another thing where you just can’t process,” said Calleja.

A Look at Food Deliveries at Andover

Continued from A1, Column 5

that a task force would need to consider a broad range of student experiences. Giancola also acknowledged that one reason for implementing a policy could be campus safety.

“Last year, I had a really busy schedule because I was, at one point in the winter, participating in three different theatre shows, leaving me no time to get dinner because [Paresky] closes at seven p.m. During those times, I would use DoorDash a lot to order my dinner late at night. [Administrators] need to pay attention to the different perspectives of students and the different experiences that they might have. For example, their dietary needs, their busy schedules... They should consult more students when mak-

ing these policies, to ensure that they’re creating the fairest policy possible to actually address the problem without neglecting the students’ lives at Andover,” said Giancola.

Giancola continued, “I understand where the policy is coming from in terms of campus safety and restricting the drivers that are driving down campus roads later at night... They don’t want so many drivers going around campus as people who aren’t a part of the [Andover] community. Driving late at night, especially to dorms that are in the center of campus, such as Bartlet [Hall] and Foxcroft [Hall], they have to go down Great Quad Road, which also doubles as a sidewalk. It’s a safety issue.”

Taking into account the new cell phone policy’s aim to foster connection, Bill Ke ’27 noted that a food delivery restriction might be implemented with a similar goal.

“With the phone policy presented, the school is doing things that improve the environment. I understand where they’re coming from and the argument that removing access to [food delivery services] will help people become more social and actually eat in [Paresky] with their friends,” said Ke.

Department Chairs Further Explain Grading at Andover

Continued from A1, Column 2

At the same time, Jones noted that flexibility remains important for electives, where teachers design different kinds of assessments and projects that reflect varied subject matter and teaching approaches.

“There’s going to be variation, especially in electives... We imagine an elective program where teachers are doing different kinds of assessments and different projects with different content. Someone might be thinking about teaching and evaluating the history of fashion in a completely different way than someone is doing the history of the modern Middle East, or my class on freedom,” said Jones.

The emphasis on consistency is also shaping conversations in other departments. Heidi Wall, Assistant Chair of the Department of Mathematics, Statistics, and Computer Science, explained that instructors are encouraged to employ the same grading practices across sections of the same course. Rather than relying solely on percentages, the department is working toward common understandings of what constitutes different levels of work on the 0–6 scale.

“Some instructors do still grade on a percentage scale, but other instructors are using a 0–6 scale. What we’re trying to do is have some more consistency among course groups so that there’s a common understanding of what it means to earn a 6, a 5, a 4, a 3, and so on. ...We’re also encouraging course groups to have those conversations and to try to come to some consensus within those course groups about the qualities of work that we’re looking for that represent 6-level thinking and understanding,” said Wall.

Wall added that the department plans to create a rubric with detailed descriptions for each point on the 0–6 grading scale, similar to the framework shared by the Dean of Studies,

but tailored specifically to math and computer science.

“Part of what came out of the Dean of Studies office is descriptions that correspond to 0 to 6. We’re hoping to take those descriptions and make them more specific to the math department and the qualities of the work that we’re looking for in our students for each of those levels...We want to come up with more of a common understanding that the percentage is a separate thing. [The scale and description] would be for our students to have a better understanding of what that grade means,” said Wall.

In the English department, all teachers who use percentages will now apply 94 as the cutoff for a 6. According to Leon Calleja, the English department Chair, beyond that requirement, instructors can continue using the grading method they prefer, whether percentages, the 6-point scale, or rubrics. He explained that the change mainly serves to make grades easier to interpret and consistent across classes, but it is unlikely to significantly affect outcomes, since English teachers tend to grade with an idea of what a “6” represents rather than by strict numerical thresholds.

“A couple of years ago, we decided as a department that teachers who grade on a percentage basis all use the same scale. In the past, for one teacher, a 93 would count as a 6, but for another teacher, you’d have to get a 94 within the English department, even though it was done with the same ideas in mind... I’ve told my instructors that if they use percentages, they should use the 94 scale... Some still do a scale out of 6. Some do rubrics that are not percentage-based,” said Calleja.

Beyond internal consistency, the College Counseling Office (CCO) is also considering how these changes may be interpreted by colleges. Sean Logan, the Dean of the CCO, explained that the school has experience contextualizing transcripts with explanatory notes, especially since the pandemic, when grading practices

were disrupted. He shared that if grades were to be lower this term and in the future, it would be communicated to colleges to ensure they can evaluate students within Andover’s context.

“It’s definitely our job to communicate any sort of changes within our curriculum and within our grading systems to colleges. This suggestion of where these grades land, my sense is that we’re not going to see big changes. People may be concerned if we see at the end of the first term that the number of sixes and fives was cut in half. We would certainly be messaging that out to colleges as those grades went out the door... We would also be pretty proactive with at least the top 50, top 60, top 70 schools where kids apply to make sure that they talk with our rep directly,” said Logan.

While the new 94 cutoff aims to bring more consistency in grading, it is handled differently by each department. Olivia Isacson ’26 described her experience as confusing, though she tries to keep the focus on her own effort rather than the numbers.

“It’s even more confusing and stressful, because all departments are doing it differently and have different grading practices...I also feel like the grading system is already very strict and very intense. It’s hard to understand...Because I want to make the best of my Andover experiences, I don’t think so much about the grading scale. I think more about the effort I put in, so even if it is a little stressful and confusing, I try to view it like a formality,” said Isacson.

Odden noted that the 94-for-a-6 suggestion is only one step in what is likely to be a longer process of institutional reflection on grading.

“Institutional discussions about grading are ongoing, and I do expect that we will make other adjustments in the future. We will make changes carefully and methodically, and always with the goal of encouraging robust student learning,” wrote Odden.

Continued from A1, Column 5

100 with minimal explanation.

“Japanese is still classified as a lesser taught language, but what I’ve heard is they’re not going to switch people into Japanese because of other reasons. My uncle’s a fluent speaker of Japanese, [and] my mother’s a fluent speaker of Japanese, so I had very legitimate reasons to switch that even Dr. Isaza-Bishop approved... The entire pathway

for Japanese 100 being shut off is truly a disappointment because I thought that the main objective of this language department was to give students a choice,” said Choi.

Katherine Feng ’27 expressed that the school could offer a more flexible solution rather than barring students entirely.

“It’s a little unfair. A student wanting to learn another language is completely normal, even if some people do think that it’s easier... They should make a rule that they should hear out the students first and why they want to switch into that class before they just say you can’t do it,”

said Feng.

Teruyo Shimazu, Instructor in Japanese, clarified doubts about the reasoning behind Japanese 100’s removal from the 2+1 language pathway. She offered a solution for making the limitation less restrictive and beneficial for both her and the scheduling office.

“I understand why this feels disappointing to some. The limitation is not about Japanese being ‘easy’ but rather about enrollment capacity and school policy. The Academy has chosen to prioritize students who are brand new to the program. If any restrictions [are] to be admin-

istered, I would say, 2+1/1+2 option is allowed only to returning lowers [and] not offered to returning Uppers and Seniors. This will actually make my life so much easier in terms of designing the lessons [to be] more focused on young learners and hence more cognitively/developmentally suitable,” wrote Shimazu in an email to *The Phillipian*.

Reflecting on his experience of being unable to take Japanese, Choi suggested that the Dean of Studies Office could have announced this potential limitation in advance. In doing so, Choi noted that the school could avoid confusion and uncertainty

about course capacity.

“It took me so many different meetings to even get a slightly vague hint of the reason why Japanese 100 was not an option. I’ve asked the department chair for Japanese, [but] they didn’t know, and they said it was a decision [by] the Dean of Studies. The Dean of Studies could clarify their intentions [to students], because Japanese is a very preferred language for so many 2+1 applicants. Transparency is the first thing... I don’t think this response was appropriate at all with all the precedents and the values that this academic community should reflect,” said Choi.

Students Share Opinions on the Temporary Removal of Japanese 2+1 Option

10 Questions with Allen Scheier

REPORTING BY KAI OBATA

Allen Scheier is an Adjunct Instructor in Mathematics. Before coming to Andover, he spent more than 40 years teaching in public schools across Lawrence, Massachusetts, and also taught as an Adjunct Professor at Bentley University and Southern New Hampshire University. Scheier enjoys golfing, reading, gardening, and travelling in his spare time.

How did you become interested in teaching mathematics?

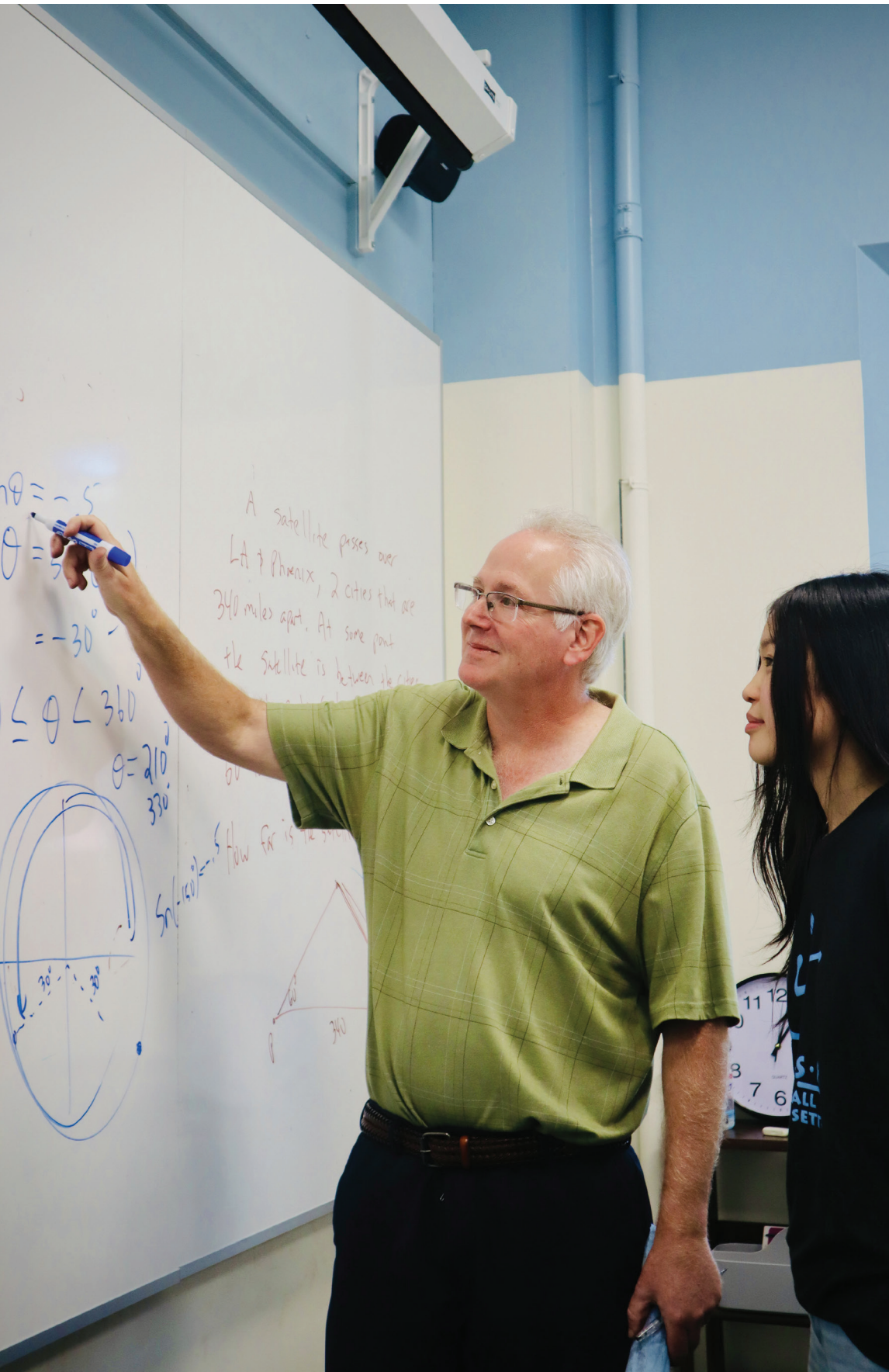
I was an engineering major in college, and I realized halfway through that I didn't really like it very much. I had taken a summer job working at a camp, and I found out I liked working with kids and that I could get a master's degree and become certified to teach in one year. So, after finishing my degree in engineering, I went right back to school, got a Master's in education, started teaching, and realized that I loved teaching and have been doing it ever since.

You've taught a diverse range of people, from public schools to university. How do you adapt your teaching style to suit different age groups or academic levels?

Kids are kids in general. I taught in Lawrence for many years, which is one of the poorest communities in Massachusetts and has one of the most dysfunctional school systems in Massachusetts. There are a whole lot of problems associated with that... But kids are still kids. Everybody deals with a lot of the same stuff growing up, the same insecurities, the same challenges, the same emotions. So if you try to reach out to kids, get to know them, be positive, encourage them [and] be supportive, whatever teaching style I choose to use works.

You've published a study that aimed to find how students' perception of school influenced their educational, developmental, and work experiences. What prompted you to research this?

After teaching for a few years, I decided I wanted to learn more about education and schools, and I was teaching in a vocational school in Lawrence at the time...I went back and got a doctorate in education, in policy and administrative studies, essentially, because at the time, I wasn't sure if I was going to continue teaching or if I wanted to teach college or run a school. I was more interested in education as a whole. Since I worked at a vocational school at the time, I was very interested in how students chose a career path, why they chose it, and whether or not they were actually using what they were learning in the vocational school...I discovered that most of the kids who went there were actually happy they went there because they found it very engaging. Vocational education engages students who may not necessarily be that engaged by academics.



E. LIU/THE PHILLIPIAN

How has your experience in vocational education shaped your philosophy in teaching?

I've learned is that one of the things that young people struggle with the most is trying to decide what they want to be when they grow up. I, for one, did that. I didn't decide I wanted to be a teacher until I actually tried being a teacher. When I was in high school, I never imagined I'd become a teacher, so understanding that teenagers, high school students, have a lot on their minds, and one of the things they have on their minds is, "What am I going to be when I grow up?", and understanding that everybody goes through that dilemma, and people change their minds all the time, and that's okay and normal... Learning about how people decide on what they want to be when they grow up and the struggles they go through is important. I'm very happy I did that and happy I worked at a vocational school. It gave me a very different perspective, just like working in a public school, and working here is giving me a different perspective.

If you weren't a teacher or professor, what other career could you see yourself in?

I don't think I could see myself in another career. I can tell you that when I was in college, I was studying engineering, and specifically I studied nuclear engineering. What I was really interested in was solar power back then. I was interested in actually how we produce energy. This is 40 years ago now. We'd been coming out of an energy crisis, and there was a lot of talk about alternative energy. So I was really interested in alternative energy, at that time. I also considered going to law school. I considered going to study governmental policy. I looked at the Kennedy School at Harvard and Tufts and they had a program in environmental policy. So that was sort of the alternative, which was using my engineering background in some way to advocate for alternative energy sources, but I'm very happy with the choice I made.

What has been one of the biggest challenges you've faced in your teaching career, and how did you try to overcome it?

In teaching in an urban environment, kids come to school with a lot of baggage sometimes. I've had a number of students who have children at home or who are going to have children. I've had children whose family members are in jail. I've had students who are homeless. Teaching in an urban environment is very different, and if you're going to be effective, you have to become a social worker sometimes. You have to recognize that sometimes things going on outside the classroom are more important than whatever you're trying to teach...That's one of the reasons why I came here when I was a visiting scholar, which was important to me. There is a difference between teaching a student who comes from an urban environment and from a suburban environment. One of the reasons I came here then was to educate the math department a little bit about what some of those differences are. Knowing that does help me as a teacher.

Are there any lessons students have taught you during your career?

Many lessons. I'm constantly learning from them. It's constant from learning the latest slang terms and technology. Again, my students know far more about ChatGPT and AI than I do. In fact, I have still never used it. In learning about people, I believe that it's important as a teacher to connect with my students, to get to know them, and for them to get to know me, for me to be approachable so that they know that I support them. I'm constantly learning about them and about what they're bringing into the classroom and their challenges. Teaching to me is not just about the subject you teach. It's about the students.

What's a hobby or a skill you're passionate about?

I've like to play golf as I've gotten older. I used to play tennis and basketball, but I find that in golf, I'm far less likely to hurt myself. I like to read. I like to garden. I like to travel. What I'm really passionate about is teaching. Like I said, I wouldn't be here if I didn't love doing it. I love teaching here. I've loved teaching in my other jobs too, but I do love teaching here, and I will continue to do it as long as they want me to do it, and as long as I feel like I can do it and be effective.

You mentioned you like to read. What's your favorite book?

I probably have three favorite books. One is "The Phantom Tollbooth," which is more of a children's book, but I love it. There's a book called "Illusions," and there's a book called "The Fountainhead," which is somewhat controversial these days. it's a long story, but it's still one of my favorite books.

What is one piece of advice or wisdom you would give to students?

Things are never as important as you think they are at the present time. People worry. People here especially are very worried about their grades. A year after you leave here, nobody's going to care. You're not going to care anymore how you did whether you got that 5, that 6 or that 4 in [MTH320]. At the moment, it seems like it's very important in the big picture. It's never as important as you think it is.

First All School Meeting Celebrates New Students and Graduating Class of 2026

IAN S. KIM
& MADELEINE YANG

Persistent “26” chants for the Senior class of 2026 reverberated throughout the Cochran Chapel as Andover held its annual first All School Meeting (ASM) ceremony. Celebrating the start of the 2025-2026 school year, the ASM featured opening remarks from Head of School Dr. Raynard Kington, Susan Esty, Assistant Head of School for Residential Life and Dean of Students, and Gracie Azia-bor ’26 and Philip Meng ’26, Andover 2025-2026 Student Body Co-Presidents.

Chanting the graduation year for the Senior class is a much anticipated tradition during the first ASM of the year. David Porto ’26 is one Senior who reflected on the transition from being an observer of the tradition to taking part in it. Entering his last year at Andover, Porto reflected on the words of Sebastian Lemberger ’25, one of last year’s Senior remarks speakers.

“It was pretty crazy. Being the people that cheer, doing the hand sign, and having all the jokes during the speeches about 26 was totally a full circle moment. Last year it was 25, so that was pretty iconic, and I felt pretty crazy to be in that position. [I] want to emphasize the same things that previous speakers have said, like Sebastian Lemberger’s ’25 Senior remarks. It was really powerful and as you’re [entering] the Andover community, [it’s important] to try new things and experiment. That’s really important and it can really define your Andover journey,” said Porto.

Flagbearing is another notable aspect of Andover’s first ASM ceremonies. The first to enter the chapel, students represent their home countries by carrying the flags of their home countries, propping them in a circle on stage. Dean Vaitos ’27 commented on the flagbearing, noting that the various flags increased the sense of community within the school.

“I found the flag bearing ceremony in the beginning to be really interesting as it always is every year. I really like to see all of the flags. I think it brings the community together... It’s really interesting to see all the flags of every single country where people are from, because if you don’t know someone, you can still see their flag and you can recognize where they’re from. Also, even if you’re not an international student, if you’re from that culture, you can still identify with a flag,” said Vaitos.

As an incoming freshman, for Eileen Zhu ’29, the first ASM was a completely new experience. Expecting the ASM to be primarily informational, she was surprised by the intensity and energy during the event.

“I felt very excited. My heart was beating really fast, especially when the drums started. [It was] really exciting. I don’t know how to start, but it was a little bit nerve wracking, too. I mean, getting to see all these really talented people sitting in one building, all together. I also was really impressed by the class of ’26’s cheers. They were very loud and I think it’s great that they’re very enthusiastic. They all felt really close to their class,” said Zhu.

Following faculty speeches, two student representa-



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY K. MA/THE PHILLIPIAN

tives from the New International Student Orientation (NISO) took to the stage. One of which was Melissa de Souza ’28, a new lower from Brazil, who described the impact of her experience in becoming a presenter and addressing the student body.

“[My friends] thought this would be a good opportunity to bring representation from Brazil and from Latino countries to the meeting... I would have the opportunity to be on the stage with the group presidents, the school faculty and all the important people

at school. [My speech] came a lot from my heart and what I felt at the time. We come from such different places, and we’re going to have cultural shocks,” said de Souza.

Johannes Hotze ’26, a new Senior and the other member of the NISO representation, recounted how he felt about immersing himself in the Andover community for the first time, as well as the impact of the NISO program.

“I thought, why not take this opportunity to speak in public and get to know more people through that? It’s also

an honor. I thought about what I felt when I came here — this overwhelming new country and all the new people. Being proud of being in this big important community. The world partners and during NISO, the people we get to know and the bonds we create, even before school starts so that we always know people in everyday life we can talk to,” said Hotze.

Stacks to Remain at Andover

ADELYNE LIU
& NICCOLO LEE-SUK

With new dorms projected to be built on the Graves Hall field in the coming years, discussions have surfaced among students regarding the future of stacks. Stacking is a housing option on campus that allows groups of four to twelve Upperclassmen to apply to live together in designated dormitories.

Students have wondered if the stacking system will eventually be phased out and all students will live in larger dorms. Head of School Dr. Raynard Kington clarified that Andover currently has no plans to remove stacks. In future construction projects, however, smaller dorms would be prioritized for re-

placement.

“Two things got conflated. As a part of thinking about building new dorms, one of the rationales was the relatively high cost of operating lots of small dorms... If we build new dorms, they will be larger, within the framework of our size. The dorms they would replace with the highest priority would be the small dorms. But that doesn’t mean that stacking wouldn’t occur, and it doesn’t mean that stacks only go into small dorms,” said Kington.

Kington continued, “With a clear intention to move away from smaller dorms and depending on how the new dorms are designed, there would be opportunities to stack in a wing or on a floor or in a way that would address that issue of giving students an opportunity to self-group and live together... The earli-

est that we had said construction might begin would be 2030. We’re five years away from that. We have to secure funding and design, [so] there’s steps between here and there.”

For many students, stacks are an integral part of their Andover experience and often viewed as an upperclassmen privilege. Paige Terry ’27, who currently lives in Carter House, mentioned that stacks allow students to form closer relationships, highlighting the difference in community between larger dorms and stacks.

“In your Upperclassmen years, you tend to slow down, because unless you’re a new Upper, you have your friends, you know who you are... At least in big dorms, people tend to get cliquey, especially towards the end of the year, which is normal. Within a

stack, however, you really get to know these people well, so [you] solidify things like that. You might not have as many people or friends in your dorm, but quality over quantity,” said Terry.

As students get to choose who they stack with, Anny Wang ’26, who is stacking in Smith House, emphasized that stacks provide benefits that can be hard to find in larger dorms. She highlighted the safe spaces and more private settings that stacks create.

“Stacks [are] a safe space for people to express their identities with people who they really trust. It’s more about privacy and expression, whereas, in a bigger dorm, you get more exposure to more people... People can feel insecure because of the lack of safe space,” said Wang.

Tyler Tran ’26, a resident

of Andover Cottage, described the process of split-stacking, in which two friend groups can live in a larger stack together. He commented that living in a stack helped him grow closer to more people.

“Most of the people from [the other] part of the split stack, I barely knew. I never talked to them. But now, we’re best friends. Every day, I’ll see them in [Paresky] Commons, and we’ll sit together. We’ll have great conversations [even though] two years ago, I wouldn’t even bat my eye at them... I already thought before that dorm life itself is the best part about Andover. In my Lower year, I [was] like, ‘Man, I love dorm life.’ But stacking is like adding chocolate sauce onto my chocolate brownie,” said Tran.

Write for News!!!

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Phall Phallacies

C.L.O.W.N. v. Andover

Konnor F.

The famed horse from Enumclaw, Washington was just one of the many attractions at Andover's fyre carnival. The carnival attracted anybody from Freshmen, to other Freshmen, to Seniors who could only be described as "waiting for marriage," and they milled around the four attractions for hours. However, following the impaling of a student on the top of Sam Phil after being flung while riding the mechanical bull, the Coalition of Litigants Outraged With Nonsense (C.L.O.W.N.) has come together to launch a class action lawsuit against Andover.

Count I: Mechanical Bull Endangerment: The bull, an extra in the film Brokeback Mountain has also decided to join the lawsuit, saying it felt violated by what the school told him was an "easy bullj*b". He was also very upset about certain riders attempting to mount him "upside down." The culprits were spotted walking around a little funny the next day with milk mustaches.

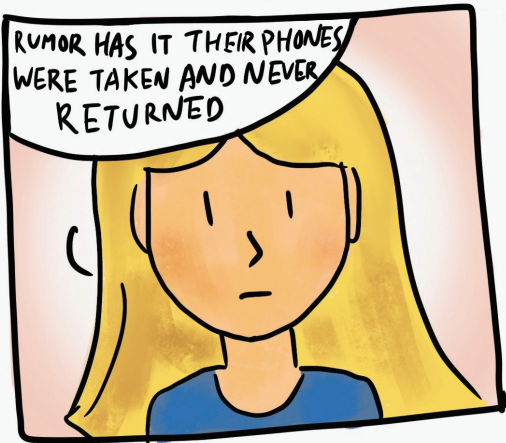
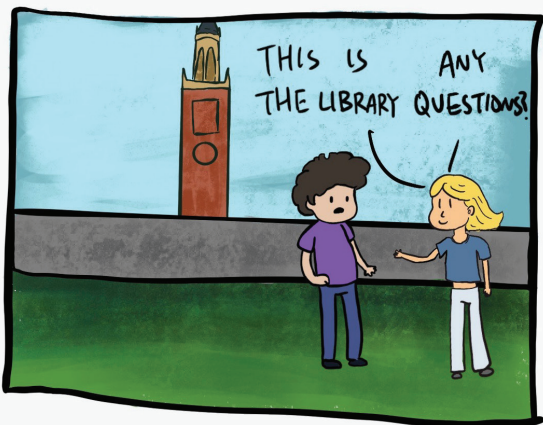
Count II: Unlawful Bouncy Castle Confinement: Students were trapped in the "Cobb castle" with disgraced former Andover teachers. Following that, they had to stand under a miniature basketball hoop and allow teaching fellows to "posterize" them. Only then were they allowed to escape the castle via a long, oily slide (the Bull had visited the slide).

Count III: Seven Students were knocked into Andover Football playing condition after getting their thick heads rocked by the spinning rod machine. The school was quick to remind the community that "safety is our number one priority" before clarifying that they will review all "carnavalesque practices" and potentially limit them to chosen students, signaling them with a sticker on their BlueCard.

With the lawsuit pending, questions swirl about whether the beloved school carnival will ever return. Some propose replacing dangerous rides with "low-impact attractions" such as Scrabble tournaments, supervised knitting circles. Others argue that risk is simply "part of the Andover experience" and going "All In." Just don't let the Bull hear that.

Week's Top Headlines

- *Andover Quarterback Set to Miss Weeks of Play Because of Hangnail on Right Pinky*
- *After Leaving ABC, Jimmy Kimmel Joined the Eighth Page Where He Continues to Write High-Quality Liberal Humor*
- *Statistics Students Predict How Many Land Acknowledgements it Will Take to Return Andover to its Rightful Owners (Casinos)*
- *Borden Office Faces Pushback After P.G. Complains About Getting Paid 32 Cents Off the Dollar for Life Guarding Gig*
- *PAPS Immediately Offers to Cooperate With the Feds After Being Offered Free Ice Cream*



NATHAN WU/THE PHILLIPIAN

OVERHEARD ON THE PATHS

"Say Gex, how about a room visit?"

"Sorry kids, hamburger helper for dinner tonight. Daddy lost all his money on hawk tuah coin."

"Pulled out the writing utensil in history 300 like I'm boutta sign the Declaration of Independence, call me Benjamin Franklin."

"Reverse racism is reverse bad."

"I LOVE COTTAGE PEMBERTON."

"Put your Mini Pekka in the back."

"Call me Lewis and Clark, the way I'm bouta explore her uncharted territory."

Common Room Misadventure by Grace Chen

As Andover begins another cycle of begging for money, the Administration invites back Alumni—who are supposed to be rich by now—to campus. The generous souls who choose to come, the few and the brave Goldman Sachs Investment Banker lacrosse players, begin returning to campus, searching for nostalgia and the baggie they hid for their five year reunion.

These Alumni walked the campus once again, reminiscing the hours of phone calls and class games held on those paths. After that, they hit up the dormitories for old times' sake. As soon as the door opened, the familiar smell of hard socks, EOS lotion, and Sharpies hit, wafting in the air like toxic gas. Huddled in the back, a group of Freshman debated in a circle, enveloping the master debater and shooting loads of important factual information back and forth. The Alumni felt inspired to impart some of their own wisdom.

Moving into the kitchen, the Alumni were confused to hear the rhythmic sweeping of brooms. Until the Bartlet boy broke into song! Suddenly, an ensemble of young students began singing, the superior, "Annie" (2014) version of "It's a hard knock life." Students cleaned dishes with sudden jubilation. With a sponge from A-house, making sure that everything was squeaky clean!

Once the dishes were clean to the House Master's liking, the children twirled their ways to the basement stairs. Is that a sweatshop? Taking away that underground wrestling league was so not Ferda. Although the Alumni felt offended by the hit to their masculinity, they did admire the drive of the students. After all, tariffs admittedly had led some to ponder the prospect of child labor and the price to pay for the "Made in America" tag.

One Alumnus promised he would donate a little extra this year to support such patriotism, exclaiming, "More Ice Cream trucks for the Children!"



The Phillippian SPORTS

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*ribbit ! ribbit ! ribbit !
ribbit ! ribbit !
ribbit !*

From Idea to Kickoff: Students Drive New Flag Football Team

DAVID SIAHAAN

Flag football is one of the fastest-growing and largest youth sports, with over 2.4 million kids playing across the nation and a growth of 63 percent over the past four years. Set to debut as an Olympic sport in 2028 with heavy backing from the National Football League (NFL), the sport’s rapid growth has been fueled by a diverse range of players. At Andover, student initiative has made flag football an official sport, giving non-male-identifying students the opportunity to play.

Shiloh Robinson ’27, who led the initiative to make flag football a sport, decided on the idea after playing in her youth. After playing JV Football last year, she hoped to find a space where non-male-identifying students could play football.

“Last year, my [Lower] year, I did JV Football. I had a lot of fun with that. I have played flag football in previous years. I only played football because [Andover] didn’t have flag football. I wanted a space where girls could play football as well. I had a meeting with [Director of Athletics] Ms. [Lisa] Joel. Over the summer, she sent me an email asking about it, and said that it would be an option. We talked about it, we had the idea, and Ms. Joel made it happen,” said Robinson.

Although she played a role in making flag football a sport, Joel stressed that Robinson’s initiative was crucial. She also noted Head Coach Karen Kennedy’s influence on the program as its first coach.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY K.MA/THE PHILLIPIAN

Shiloh Robinson ’27, a member of JV Football last year, led the creating of Andover’s newest Life Sport, flag football.

Joel said, “Flag football is a sport across the nation that is growing quickly in popularity. We have had a few students, notably Shiloh, stepping forward to inquire about how it might be possible to have it as an offering at Andover. If it weren’t for the students, it might not have been possible, or at least not as fast. Especially if it weren’t for her appointments and gathering other students who are interested. In addition, Coach Kennedy was so eager to sup-

port this initiative for girls in the school to move forward at this moment in time.”

Even with the enthusiasm surrounding the new sport, the team encountered challenges. Chloe Nichols ’27 pointed out the obstacles they faced when recruiting new students. Additionally, Nichols detailed how many players on the team had never played football before.

“They didn’t have it as an offering for students to choose in the spring, so in the beginning, it was on the board

this fall and there were only two people. We reached out to everyone. If we knew anyone was interested, we reached out. Andover Athletics also posted it on their Instagram, and Andover’s main page also posted it... It was really word of mouth and through Instagram,” said Nichols.

Nichols continued, “Everyone came from a place of learning. No one is a star player. Everyone is learning and helping each other. A lot of people are more understanding of the beginning stages of

catching and throwing a ball. It is really inclusive, with people trying to help each other and grow, supporting each other through play and warmups.”

As flag football grows in popularity, the team hopes to play as a competitive team in the near future. Robinson echoed the team’s desire to create a league and play against teams in New England.

Robinson said, “I really hope that this can grow as an interscholastic sport... I really hope that other schools will play, and we can play. I live in North Carolina, and many schools have teams, so they have a really great league going. I hope to do the same here in Massachusetts.”

Joel echoed Robinson, noting that she hopes that Andover’s flag football team will inspire other schools to create teams and will be the catalyst for a New England Preparatory Athletic Council (NEPSAC) flag football league.

“I thought, let’s do it, let’s spread the word, how can we get kids involved, and other schools will follow our lead. We have planted a seed that is going to grow beyond Phillips Academy. It will grow in NEPSAC. While many sports start small, I am going to bet that when Shiloh comes back for reunions, it won’t only grow in Andover but in New England. She is going to be that first chapter of NEPSAC flag football’s story,” said Joel.

Girls Soccer Secures Back to Back Wins Against Rivers and Middlesex

EVA JACKSON

SATURDAY 9/13	
Andover	8
Rivers	4
WEDNESDAY 9/17	
Andover	6
Middlesex	0

Girls Soccer (3-0) has opened the season with energy with 20 goals in just three games, an impressive early feat. The team has performed with high intensity, dominating formidable opponents.

Cedar Halsey-Leckerling ’28 applauded the team’s teamwork in its early games, despite the team welcoming many new players this season. Everyone also practiced intensely and cohesively that connected each teammate.

“The team performed really well, especially since it was only our second official game playing together. Everybody’s effort in practice has really translated in our games and I think everyone is connecting really well together,” said Halsey-Leckerling.

Nina Oswanski ’28 highlighted that the team has started the season off on the right foot, improving their energy and excitement as the team has had success against tough teams.

“It was only our second

game, so I’m not really sure what the rest of the season’s gonna look like, but we’re having a really great start to the season, and we lost to Rivers last year. Beating them by this much this year just gives us a lot of hope and confidence,” said Oswanski.

Not only does the team’s success give it confidence early in the season, but it also has raised the intensity in the level of energy. Isabel Park ’28 described how the early dominance in the season has caused them to become intimidating opponents.

“It’s really raised the intensity and the energy, excitement for playoffs, and obviously still the league. Other teams are also seeing that you’ve put 20 in the back of the net already, three games in, they’re pressing a lot like lower. So we’re definitely a team to look out for,” said Park.

Oswanski recalled a crucial moment that defined the energy for the rest of the game when the team was scored on by Rivers. Despite being scored on, the team maintained composure and stayed focused.

“One of my favorite moments was probably when we got scored on at the beginning of the second half. We were able to keep our heads up and we were able to come back really fast from that,” said Oswanski.

Throughout the team’s dominance over its opponents, goals were scored from all types of positions. Halsey-Leckerling shouted out her teammate Emily Decker ’26, a defender who scored twice against Rivers.



A.BAETEN-RUFFO/THE PHILLIPIAN

Sarah Powers ’26 dribbles around opponents in 8-4 victory against Rivers, a team that defeated Girls Soccer last year.

“I’d like to shout out Emily Decker on scoring two great goals. It’s not super common for outside backs to score once, not to mention twice. Decker did a great job joining the attack and getting up and down the field,” said Halsey-Leckerling.

Although the offense played a critical role in defeating opponents, the defense also contributed heavily. Park emphasized the work of Lily Loughlean ’27, whose defense skills shined through her confidence, earning her a team title.

“Our Man of the Match, Lily Loughlean, our center back. She’s so composed. Like you would think she was playing soccer for her whole life. She’s insane,” said Park.

According to Park, the team still has things it could

improve, which it is aware of. Park commented on some aspects that practice has been focused on.

“We’re switching the ball around a lot more. We keep taking in new feedback and improving, which is good. I mean obviously the score stays high. So goal scoring wise, that’s not a problem. There’s smaller things we could tweak in preparation for bigger games, such as Loomis [Chaffee] this Saturday, because those teams are gonna be a lot more technical and more like the ‘better competition’ of our league. So we’re pretty excited for that,” said Park.

Beyond the technical components of soccer, the team also understands the importance of using the midfield in controlling offensive pres-

sure. While the team has a strong offensive presence in its games, Park revealed how the team is constantly working to effectively use the midfield in practice.

“Since Saturday, we’ve worked on playing through the middle a lot more, which I do think has improved, and just overall connecting through the middle. We’ve done a lot of drills [that work on] passing it through the middle before taking that shot. Just trying to improve our midfield a little more,” said Park.

Girls Soccer will face off against Loomis this Saturday, September 20.

GIRLS SOCCER

Co-Captain Emily Decker '26 Drives Girls Soccer's Positivity

ALEX GODSEY

Girls Soccer Co-Captain Emily Decker '26 began playing soccer at a young age, starting with recreational play, then moving to club competition, and finally playing for her school team. However, a standard to match has always been her older brother—who is three years older than herself. Growing up, and throughout the course of her soccer journey, Decker has always pushed herself.

A childhood of restless improvement kindled Decker's competitive spirit and resulted in her intense and hardworking mentality. She brings that to her captainship of the team, striving to lead by example and be an uplifting leader.

"It's super important to, every single day, bring my best self, to always set an example at practice, and make sure I'm one of the hardest working people — if not the hardest — and just always giving 100 percent effort in



***Phillips Academy
Football
Home Game
Opener***

***featuring
Gabby Kawooya '27
&
Nana Dampley '27
singing the
National Anthem***

***Game Day
Black Out!***

***Big Blue vs Williston
Phelps Field 5PM
Saturday, September 20, 2025***

Rough Start for Boys Soccer with Flashes of Promise

XAVIER HOWELL

SATURDAY 9/13	
Andover	0
Belmont	2
MONDAY 9/15	
Andover	1
BB&N	3
WEDNESDAY 9/17	
Andover	0
Milton	3

Boys Soccer has had a disappointing start to the season, playing strong teams like Milton and Noble and Greenough (Nobles). Despite the unfortunate results, the team continues to work hard and improve every day with captains Kai Myles ’27, Edrian Vargas ’27, and Liam Vitti ’26 spearheading the effort.

Milton was one of the toughest matchups this season. Following a 1-1 draw last year, the team looked toward a good game.

“[We knew Milton was a strong team] and we knew that we couldn’t afford to give them any free chances, so [we built] on what we learned from previous games we went in with a great attitude and positivity. The bench was getting really hyped up, which was great. [We] held them scoreless for the first 20 minutes, until we conceded a really lucky goal from a cross-in. They scored two more later on, but through all

of that, we didn’t stop trying, and we kept creating chances up front,” said Awa

Aviad Awa ’28 gave a specific run-down of the team’s last few games, especially as its match against Buckingham Browne & Nichols School (BB&N) on September 6 had been rescheduled due to a previous weather delay. Additionally, he elaborated on how the team’s chemistry has grown.

“[Against BB&N], we played the two halves on separate days. So, after the first half, we came into the second half with a new formation and positive energy, and we held BB&N to zero goals. [Against Belmont Hill], we conceded some unfortunate goals in the first half, but going into the second half, we were way more positive and motivated, and we held Belmont Hill to two goals from the first half. We had some really good chances that we just couldn’t convert. Overall, between

those two games, chemistry definitely went up, and we were more fluid,” said Awa.

Myles spoke briefly about the standouts of the last three games, expectations for the rest of the season, and how the team’s morale has stayed high despite the trials that the team is currently facing.

“Jaeden Morgan made sure the team always knew what was going on and communicated very well. We did well to keep our shape and did our best to stay positive throughout it all. The games didn’t go our way, but we have to try our best to keep going,” said Myles.

Myles also talked about his vision for the rest of the season. He explained how the team is maintaining its perseverance through a challenging beginning of the season.

“The rest of the season will be a lot more manageable, considering we played five of the best teams in the [New England Preparato-

ry Athletic Council] in our first five games. We’ll definitely find our way around. We need to stick together as a team throughout all of the hardships that we’re going through,” said Myles.

Wyatt Orraca-Cecil ’28 spoke about the team’s chemistry on and off the field and how being together is a big part of overcoming the adversity that the season has thrown at them.

“Especially recently, it’s been really coming together. The rest of the season will be very successful. As a team, we are coming together very nicely, and we are getting past the final stretch of tough opponents,” said Orraca-Cecil.

Boys Soccer looks ahead with resilience and positivity as they look to play against Loomis Chaffee at home on Friday, September 19.

Girls Field Hockey Extends Win Streak by Three Wins

STAFF REPORT

SATURDAY 9/13	
Andover	8
Dexter Southfield	1
TUESDAY 9/16	
Andover	6
Brooks	0
WEDNESDAY 9/17	
Andover	5
Lawrence	0

Field Hockey (3-0) had an impressive week, facing off against Dexter Southfield for its regular season opener, Brooks School, and Lawrence Academy. Coming out with large wins, they have beaten their opponents in dominant fashion, only letting in one goal this season.

Head Coach Kate Dolan responded in an email to *The Phillipian* about the excellent way the team has showcased their skills across the field, especially through their passing, finishing and defending.

“In the two games that we have played, the team has shown they are talented passers, adept finishers,



A.BAETEN-RUFFO/THE PHILLIPIAN

Lucy Parker ’26 fights for the ball against Dexter Southfield opponent in first of three consecutive wins for Field Hockey.

strong defenders, and most importantly, tremendous teammates. The team blends speed, intelligence, experience, athleticism, skill, and enthusiasm and it’s incredible to think the level of play they will reach with more time together,” said Dolan.

Cat Powers ’28 commented also on the impressive passing throughout their games, especially noting on how the team has been able to utilise their passes to allow for goal and defense opportunities.

“Our passing really has stood out in the games. The team was able to convert twice in a row by using smart

passes and letting the ball do the work down the field to allow goal conversions,” said Powers.

Reflecting back on the game against Lawrence Academy, Powers emphasizes how the energy of the team was crucial to their victory, especially hoping to strengthen their chemistry as a team throughout the continuing weeks.

“During the third quarter, when the energy picked up, we started to score more. Post our halftime talk everyone was energized and ready to go back into ready to go. For the continuing week, we have

really been working on our structure as a team and our communication,” said Powers.

Kimberley Duplessis ’27 noted the team’s impressive spirit throughout the games, even if they had a strong lead. She especially emphasized on the team’s ability to work the field, and gave an insight on the corner work they hope to work into future practices.

“Our teamwork really stood out when we continued to produce and score during the last quarters, even though we were winning by a couple of goals. I think our team really did well with passing, we

connect very well together. We are going to work on our compete level and production on corners,” said Duplessis

Powers reflected back on the team’s impressive win against Brooks, highlighting [Co-Captain] Hannah Herlihy ’26 for her leadership especially throughout the corners, helping everyone keep calm and organized.

“At least for me I went in during the fourth quarter of the game against Brooks. Brooks had really turned up the heat and were able to get a couple of penalty corners against us. It was all a bit stressful and I thank one of our captains Hannah for keeping everyone calm and organized during the corners,” said Powers.

When asked about what the team hopes to improve on, Dolan replied that the team hopes to continue to improve and make progress, both individually and as a team. Especially, she praises the team’s efforts throughout the past few games.

“Our goal is to continue to improve and make progress, individually and collectively this season. The girls share a commitment to giving their best, improving, staying positive, and each other. They are fun to watch, to coach, and be around and I hope our community will turn out and watch them when they play at home,” said Dolan.

Field Hockey will face Loomis Chaffee Saturday, September 20.

Football Falls to Hotchkiss But Shows Promise

ALEX GODSEY

SATURDAY 9/13	
Andover	8
Dexter Southfield	1

On Saturday, Football (0-1) lost to Hotchkiss in a close battle, showing flashes of great play. The team’s defense had many tough stops and was a constant force, while the offense persevered and played physically in the run game.

Coming out with a strong opening drive, running back Ben Kazlouski ’28 elaborated on how everything moved smoothly.

“Our very first drive of the game was absolutely excellent. We were connecting on a lot of our passes, our blocking was going very well, and our running backs were getting downhill. Ultimately, at the end of the first drive, we scored a basically unguarded touchdown to #18, William Mascena [’27],” said Kazlouski.

With early success on the offensive side of the ball, Co-Captain Scott Carmichael ’27 noted that the defense matched that energy. The team’s consistency and resilience held Hotchkiss to just 12 points.

“We stopped multiple different drives ... [Our team] played great defense, put a lot of pressure on the quarterback, stopped the run game, and minimized explosive

plays. For the most part, the defense just really did their job in every aspect,” said Carmichael.

Carmichael also praised the leadership of Brockton Feinberg ’26 and Richard Indresano ’26, whose communication and control helped make the defense so effective.

“Brockton Feinberg and Richard Indresano, the two middle linebackers, did a great job of communicating and being the quarterback of the defense, reading the players and countering them effectively on defense, communicating what the offense was doing, and then putting players in place to stop that before the ball snapped,” said Carmichael.

A play that exemplified the great defensive performances was on a drive where Hotch-

kiss had all the momentum, pushing the ball down the field. Despite this, according to Nick Marini ’28, the team rallied and held strong, turning an expected seven-point scoring chance into a three-point field goal. This stop kept Andover within striking distance.

“There was one possession where Hotchkiss was very close to scoring. They were probably about on the ten-yard-line and we stopped them, and forced them to kick a field goal. That was definitely huge for us,” said Marini.

Moving forward, Carmichael believes that the team can work on pairing its already strong running game with an improved passing game. He also attributes the team’s loss to the lack of team

chemistry and seeks to ameliorate that communication.

“The offense needs to be more cohesive. We did a great job running the ball, but if you run the ball a lot, the defense will eventually stop [our plays]. We need to be able to run and pass the ball, find our balance, we need to mesh better. As a team, the quarterback and the offensive line need to work together better. All this is very doable. It’s a new team with a lot of new players, and because of this, sometimes chemistry is a little faulty,” said Carmichael.

Football, looking to bounce back under the lights, will play Williston Northampton on Saturday, September 20.

Boys Water Polo Breezes Past Loomis and Hopkins, Falls Short in Close Game against Exeter

AVIAD AWA

SATURDAY 9/13	
Andover	10
Loomis	1
SATURDAY 9/13	
Andover	16
Hopkins	7
WEDNESDAY 9/17	
Andover	10
Exeter	13

Boys Water Polo (2-1) started their season off with two strong games against Hopkins and Loomis Chaffee (Loomis), unfortunately falling short against Phillips Exeter Academy (Exeter). It was a bounceback start for the team

as last year, their record had been less than ideal. Lincoln Tomlinson '27 shared some of the excitement the team had going into their season opener against Loomis.

“We were all really looking forward to it. We'd been waiting a long time to play real water polo, and we came out aggressive. We were great — taking shots, since everyone's a shooter, and we were working well as a team. You see a lot of other teams in the league with just one or two players trying to run everything, but we have everyone contributing on offense and defense,” said Tomlinson.

Tomlinson highlighted the details of practice leading up to the first three games, emphasizing team chemistry and in-game scenarios.

“About a week before the games, we established the basics, proper passing form, proper shooting form, all that good stuff. We stopped focusing on fundamentals and really moved into practicing offense and defense. We worked on improving team chemistry, passing the ball around, seeing who's good at passing back and forth with



A.BAETEN-RUFFO/THE PHILLIPIAN

Lincoln Tomlinson '27 prepares to score in the team's dominant victory over Hopkins.

whom, and figuring out who's best in each position,” said Tomlinson.

Both games on Saturday were dominant performances for the team. Brandon Xu '26 highlighted Victor Hillier '28 as the clear standout player, but Co-Captain Oliver Stabach '26 and Hugo Appen '27 also contributed to the game.

“We kind of started slow in the first quarter. Offensively, we were just rushing things a little bit. We made some bad passes, and we couldn't really find our groove. But later on, we started to find our rhythm,

and I think it was Oliver, [who] gave us our first goal. After that, we just ran away with the game,” said Xu.

Exeter has historically been an exciting matchup, especially the first annual matchup before A/E day. Hillier and Appen once again led the team against an Exeter squad that had lost quite a few Seniors.

“It was a very back and forth game. Exeter went up 2-0 early, like in two minutes, but we started to claw our way back. We kept on trading goals back and forth, and

obviously, we ultimately lost 13-10. I think we should have won though. It was very possible. Exeter aren't as strong as they were in previous years, and we really just played very well,” said Co-Captain Ethan Zhu '26.

Xu spoke more about the flexibility of the team's playstyle, something they wish to develop more on. The team has half a week until their next matchup against Deerfield and a month and a half until the rematch against Exeter.

“We're trying to be more flexible on offense and adapting to opponents on defense. We want to be able to adapt to whatever defences might give us. Sometimes, that's passing around and finding efficient shots, and sometimes that's just trying to overload their defense with more shots. On defense, we're pretty good, but we can always improve on being more aware of our surroundings,” said Xu.

Boys Water Polo looks to bounce back at home against Deerfield on Saturday, September 20.

Girls Volleyball Falls Against Taft and Hotchkiss In an Intense Double-Header

EVA JACKSON

SATURDAY 9/13	
Andover	2
Taft	3
SATURDAY 9/13	
Andover	0
Hotchkiss	3

Girls Volleyball (0-3) faced off in its first double header of the season against Taft and Hotchkiss. Despite strong efforts throughout the Taft match, especially its close score in the fifth and final

set, the team fell short in a lengthy two-hour game. In a three-set match, the team also lost to Hotchkiss.

According to Danielle Han '28, the three-hour Connecticut-bound drive caused both physical and mental exhaustion for the players. However, the team remained hopeful for the matches ahead and looked forward to competing against Taft and Hotchkiss.

“This past Saturday, we had a double-header at Taft. It was a long drive. The drive threw us off. It was extremely long, and people were getting car sick. It took a long time to adjust. We lost both games, which was pretty unfortunate because we went into the game thinking that we could have won against Taft,” said Han.

Despite the defeats, the team held composure after the long bus ride and throughout its close competition.

Alexis Arias '28 highlighted the team's cohesive effort, especially in the first match, which allowed for a strong fight against its opponents.

“Our first game went to five sets. We played really well. It was really tough competition, and, ultimately, the team was really good. We held our own, but we lost in the end. Then, during the second game, we were all really tired. We had just played a two-hour game, and then we had to play another game. Unfortunately, we did lose in three sets,” said Arias.

Arias added onto her previous point, emphasizing the team's resilience and determination as they approached the double-header. Despite the tough competition, team members strived to maintain a positive mindset going into the games.

“We played the best that we played all season, espe-

cially in the first game. We went in with a very positive mindset. We knew that it was tough competition, but we were going to try to win this one,” said Arias.

The team pushed Taft to the wire, losing by just two points in a tiebreaking fifth set. Selene Xu '27 commented on the high energy and spirits of the team.

“Against Taft, we lost two to three, and in the last set, we lost by two points. It was a well-fought game, and the atmosphere was great. It was fun and tiring at the same time. We tried our hardest and practiced a lot last week. We unfortunately lost both, but overall, we played well together,” said Xu.

Xu added that the team kept its spirits high through excitement and energy, allowing the team to rebuild momentum as players prepared for each point. Xu noted that,

even when the team was often losing, everyone managed to keep a positive mindset.

“I have some favorite moments, but whenever the team was really hype, we had energy throughout. Even when we were down five points, we had great energy, and we were always cheering for each other and high-fiving each other. That was really great, and I really enjoyed every second of that, and it really brought our spirits up, even though our opponents weren't as excited as we were, despite them being in the lead. I was really happy about that, and it was really fun.”

Girls Volleyball looks forward to facing off against Loomis Chaffee at home on Saturday, September 20.

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Share your ideas, get guidance: All grant applicants **MUST** schedule a brief meeting with AAF community liaison Christina Landolt (clandolt@andover.edu) OR attend a Conference Period drop-in session to chat with her about their ideas.

APPLY SOON! Deadline is Monday, November 3

Questions? Please email Ms. Landolt or AAF coordinator Belinda Traub (btraub@andover.edu). Start dreaming today!

LEARN MORE!

DREAMS & DONUTS
Monday, September 15
7–8 p.m. in the OWHL
Meet Ms. Landolt and recent student grant recipients, learn more about how to get funding, and enjoy cider and donuts.

DROP-IN INFO SESSIONS
Stop by Paresky, lower left, during these Wednesday Conference Periods:
September 17
October 1
October 15
October 29



Scan for AAF grant application and examples of past projects.

Arts & Leisure

The Phillipian Co.

Shoulder to Shoulder: The Class of '26 Showcases Senior Backpacks Full of Memories

BELLINA ZHOU '26
(FAR LEFT)

CHARLIZE SOW

AEVA CLEARE '26 (FAR RIGHT)

“I have a Lightning McQueen backpack that I’m very proud of. It has four wheels on the side and little mini pockets. A lot of my friends decided to do [Senior backpacks] over the summer, and we helped each other find backpacks that [either] fit our childhood favorites or matched our current aesthetics. Cars was one of my favorite movies growing up. My dad is a car guy, so I was exposed to cars pretty early. Now I’m a big Formula One fan, so it just felt right to get a Cars backpack. I really hope more people will participate in the tradition. A lot of people joined in this year, but I wish more had kept wearing them. I’ve committed to wearing mine all year. Part of it depends on convenience. I was lucky to find one that isn’t too hard to use, so I plan to stick with it until graduation, [especially because] it’s a lot of fun to bond over getting cute kid backpacks for Senior year.”

MERCAN DRAMAN '26

“[My backpack] has six Disney princesses on it, with flowers and butterflies. It’s pink and a little sparkly... I knew I wanted to get either a Peppa Pig one or a Disney Princess one, because those were the two things I was obsessed with when I was younger. I like that it adds a little pink to my outfits. Even if I’m wearing a groutfit or just sweats and a hoodie, it makes my day feel a little more fun and cute. It’s also the perfect size, and I can keep everything in it. [This tradition is] a good way to reminisce about when you were younger. In elementary school I had a really boring black backpack, so it’s nice to relive that time, but as a Senior. You don’t think it’s cringe anymore, it just feels fun.”

In their final year at Andover, Seniors have opted to trade in sleek, practical bags for something far more fun: miniature backpacks designed for little kids. Dubbed “Senior Backpacks,” these bags are covered in glitter, cartoon characters, and bold colors. For some Seniors, these bags are a chance to indulge in resurfaced childhood memories; for others, they are a wholesome, lighthearted way to mark the end of high school and bond with friends amidst a busy year.



DYLAN SIEGEL '26 (FAR RIGHT)

“[My backpack is] a Cookie Monster backpack. It’s blue, with little cookies all over it, and it says ‘savage’ in two places... When I was little, my mom would always make my sister and me chocolate chip cookies after school, and we really loved Cookie Monster. I wanted to incorporate that memory of my childhood into my Senior backpack to amplify the reminiscing element of the tradition. I think it’s a fun tradition. It makes being a Senior feel a little more special to kick off the year. I also think it fosters reflection about who we’ve grown into. I just turned 18, and Senior year is when you branch into adulthood. Having the backpack encourages reflection about your childhood and what growing up has meant over the years.”



“My backpack was from second grade, with rainbow cats and magenta straps. Magenta was my favorite color then, and cats are still my favorite animal... It reflects my personality with the bright colors. I see myself as bubbly and upbeat, so it makes sense... I asked my friend group a few times if we were doing Senior backpacks, and they said no. Then on the day of, they all had them [because] they Door-Dashed them at 10:30 [p.m.] the night before. It gives a sense of unity, like the Senior shirts. It’s very ‘We’re All In This Together,’ High School Musical style. We’re all going into our last first day of grade school, so it’s a callback to our first days of school, when you had fun backpacks.”

PHIA CUTLER '26

“[My backpack] is a Spider-Man face, and when you hit it, it lights up. On the straps, it has another picture of Spider-Man and it says ‘W crawler’ on it. Spider-Man is definitely my favorite superhero, and the backpack makes me feel nostalgic of the times I [watched] the Spider-Man movies. On the first day when everyone was wearing theirs, it was really fun to see everyone’s [bags] and take pictures. As the first week went on, people stopped wearing them, but my friends and I still have our kid backpacks, so we can always find each other on the paths. [Sometimes they] will even come up to me on the path and hit my backpack to light it up. It’s always fun because I never know who it is behind me until I figure it out... People should stick with [Senior backpacks] throughout the year. I’m trying to wear my backpack as long as I can until it breaks.”

Boba & Bonding: New Gong cha Open in Downtown Andover

BOSON BAI &
DANIEL LIU

As students stepped onto campus, they were introduced to fresh new eateries in Andover downtown. Among them was Gong cha, an international bubble tea chain, which quickly became a hotspot for students looking for familiar flavors, a place to socialize, and even a new way to celebrate milestones.

Meara Wang '26, an employee at the Andover Gong cha, has eagerly anticipated the store's opening. She noted the versatility of the shop, observing crowds from a variety of age groups and locations. Enjoying perks such as free drinks, Wang spoke highly of the restaurant's broad appeal.

“Honestly, I just thought, ‘Finally!’ when I heard Gong cha was opening. It felt long overdue because so many Andover students, and people in town in general, love boba. I’ve noticed that a lot of students treat it as a hangout spot now, just chilling and enjoying bubble tea together. We don’t have many options like that, so it fills a social niche we’ve been missing. I’ve seen all kinds of people come through. There are middle schoolers from Doherty [Middle School] who love it because it’s within walking distance, and they’re into the sweeter drinks. I also see older people stop by, especially in the evening when they’re out for a walk. I wouldn’t say it’s just for Andover students. There’s something on the menu for everyone,” said Wang.

The shop timed its opening

perfectly with the start of school, drawing immediate crowds through its first-week promotions. Many students such as Benjamin Park '29 were already familiar with the Gong cha brand prior to the Andover location, flocking to the store with curiosity.

“In Korea, where I used to live, I used to have a lot of Gong cha, so now I’m glad I can have the same stuff I used to have. It was surprising because I heard there were a lot of stores like Dunkin’ Donuts or some ice cream shops, but I never knew Gong cha was coming there. I think it will be popular, not only for students who used to have Gong cha before, but also for students who have never tried it or are willing to try it. Because of [its] proximity to downtown and also because news spreads pretty fast in this school, students are going to quickly know that there are new stores downtown,” said Park.

For others, the appeal of Gong cha began with the buy-one-get-one-free opening-week deal. Ian Kim '28 recalled stopping by with friends and finding the shop already packed despite an ordering system designed for speed.

“I tried it last Friday after school with some friends, and when we walked in, the place was packed, which made sense because there was a lot of excitement. The way you order is convenient, you just go to the kiosk and quickly pick what you want. It did take a while because of the crowd, but I was satisfied with the experience. Bubble tea is already a big trend, and the buy-one-get-one deal when they first opened was definitely an extra incentive



K. MA/THE PHILLIPIAN

Gong cha is among a handful of new restaurants in downtown Andover.

to check it out,” said Kim.

The influx in crowds and popularity, however, have also meant challenges. Forrest Wang '29 pointed out long lines, mix-ups, and an understaffed team on busy weekends.

“At one point, I went with around ten people over the weekend, and there were only two people working on drinks and one at the counter. Everything took a long time, and a lot of people were getting impatient. Some drinks weren’t made correctly. For example, I ordered ice in my milk tea but didn’t get any, so it was half

warm. I don’t blame the workers, though. It just shows the place needs more staff to keep up,” said Wang.

Despite these issues, Gong cha is still holding strong as Andover’s hottest new social spot. Wang added that the store has already become central to how he and others connect outside of campus.

“Going downtown with friends is a staple. I’ve met a lot of new people that way. For example, yesterday, I went downtown with a bunch of people I hadn’t really met before. It helped me meet new people and strengthen

friendships with the ones I already had. A spot like Gong cha makes that easier,” said Wang.

Beyond Gong cha, restaurants like Nan’s Kitchen and Coco Kong have also expanded the Andover downtown dining scene. The increased variety has given students new ways to mark special occasions, break routine, or find time to bond with peers.

For many, these openings mean more than just food. They embody choice, atmosphere, and a broader sense of community in downtown Andover.

Arts & Leisure

The Phillipian Co.

All it’s Chalked Up to Be: Drawing on Cluster Pride

ELIZABETH QIN & HAYLEY FAN

SAMANTHA GONG ’28

“The concept of our chalk art was to replicate casino night because we host casino night every year and that’s a WQS (West Quad South) thing. We made a ginormous roulette board outside of Taylor and Johnson in the circle there, and then we also put a stack of cards and poker chips there too. Finally, we put the letters WQS in cards. I’ve always liked art, and chalk art was a way I could participate in Cluster Olympics. I decided that this was the best way I can be active in the community. It took us six and a half hours to make the piece, and because it took so long, we got to talk to each other and communicate. The dedication and time commitment for our concept shows that we are one strong cluster. The best cluster!”

Where the sidewalk ends, the chalk art begins. Not long ago, Cluster Olympics invited Andover’s artists to transform ordinary campus grounds into beautiful art pieces, each representing a different cluster. This year, students brought their chalk creations to life, setting the stage for some intense competition—and we have the photos to prove it. This year’s chalk art not only showcased each cluster’s creativity and pride, but also captured the collaborative spirit and community that define the Cluster Olympics.



ANYA CASEY ’28

ALYSSA SCHOONMAKER ’26

“We drew a series of musical instruments complimented by the Pine Knoll [Cluster] skyline and foliage with the words ‘Rock ‘n’ Roll Knoll’ in a fun font. We were really stumped at the start with a lack of ideas. Last year we had done a sort of pun with “plenty of fish in the big blue sea” so we were desperately trying to think of Knoll-related puns. I blurted “Rock ‘n’ Roll Knoll,” – the first thing that came into my mind — almost as a joke, but slowly we all realized the potential. Not only is it a fun little pun, but the music reminds me of the Night on the Knoll event and all the fun performances that happen on the Knoll stage! The skyline and grass also show some of the beauty of our little corner of campus. With the vivacious energy and cluster spirit here at Pine Knoll, every day feels like a rock ‘n’ roll concert!”

“We drew key elements of West Quad North (WQN) such as the bonfire and s’mores, Churchill house, and a portrait for Dean [Kit] Leckerling [Dean of West Quad North Cluster], with plenty of fireworks and stars. The purpose of the chalk art was to represent West Quad North pride. The artwork says “Best Quad North” in support of WQN winning the Cluster Olympics, [and we drew] all of the things we and other people love about this cluster. Being new to the cluster this year, I drew it based off all the s’mores after cluster dinner last Friday and the leadership meetings around Dean Leck’s fireplace. Doing the art was just a fun experience all around. It was so nice to meet [Juniors] and get to know them while relaxing and drawing.”

LOTW: Nevada Charity ’26 Defines “Grandma Streetwear” with Playful Accessories and Bold Colors

DANIEL LIU

Nevada Charity ’26 describes her personal aesthetic as “grandma streetwear,” a term a friend once used to describe her outfits that she has since proudly adopted. She paired blue Lucky Brand jeans and a red shirt with a New York City subway coin passed down from her mom, with a short-sleeved white cardigan, buttoned like a vest. She completed the look with lime green Onitsuka Tigers, pearls, and a thrifted bag she named Cindy. Mixing vintage staples with colorful accessories, the outfit stands out as one of her all-time favorites, and an expression of the playful side of her style.

Charity believes that fashion is built around bright accents and intentional details. When curating daily outfits, she prioritizes what kind of energy she wants to carry into her day, using statement pieces to shape her presence.

“I’m really drawn to bright colors and accessories like funky belts, chunky jewelry, or even glasses. I like wearing different pairs of glasses or doing my hair a certain way to fit a vibe for an outfit. If my outfit lacks a little bit of color, I try to make it up with texture. I’ll put on my jewelry last, I’ll play with my hair to see how I want to style it, and I’ll grab one of my bags and then head out to class — hopefully not too late,” said

Charity.

Much of that inspiration comes from her parents, whose creativity and long-built wardrobes have shaped her approach to fashion. She often points to her mom as a role model for intentional experimentation, while her dad’s collections of shoes and hats continue to impress her.

“My mom’s style is way better than mine. I get a lot of my cool pieces from her, and I take inspiration from how she experiments. She loves colors and patterns, and I definitely got that from her. My dad’s shoe and hat collections also inspire me. He’s spent so long collecting them, and every time I go home I’m just like, ‘wow,’ he really has great style,” said Charity.

For Charity, fashion represents more than just clothing. It is both a source of confidence and a space for freedom in her daily life.

“Fashion gives me confidence and lets me be creative in a way that’s accessible. I wear clothes every day, and I like to have fun with them. Fashion is freeing. When everything else feels up in the air, I know I still get to pick my outfits every morning,” said Charity.

Charity’s view on outfit repeating has evolved. What once seemed lazy now feels like a way to celebrate the pieces she loves the most, giving them new life through different combinations and constant creativity.

“I used to think outfit repeating was lazy, but then I



I. PADMAWAR/THE PHILLIPIAN

For Nevada Charity ’26, fashion is a source of confidence and freedom in her daily life.

heard a quote that said, ‘An outfit isn’t great unless you repeat it.’ That stuck with me. I wouldn’t say I repeat outfits exactly, but I recycle pieces a lot. I’ll wear the same pants twice in a week or the same shoes multiple times. I think it’s important to wear what you love,” said Charity.

Lucien Sinclair ’28, a friend of Charity, admires her creativity most in how she makes everyday pieces feel unique. He described her as someone who can effortlessly throw together an outfit that looks

intentional and stylish.

“She has these capri jeans I think are really fire, and her ballet flats are a staple. Those are probably my favorite pieces of hers because they’re the most out there, and I’m pretty sure she thrifted them herself, so they also have a story to tell,” said Sinclair.

Fashion has remained a constant in Charity’s life, and the process of playing with new aesthetics will always be central. Whether or not she pursues a career in fashion, she sees it as a lifelong out-

let for self-expression, often drawing inspiration from the people around her, and the world she moves through.

“I’m not sure if I’ll pursue fashion professionally, but I definitely want to keep experimenting and growing. I get inspiration from everyone and everything, and I want to keep that going. Maybe someday I’ll do something career-related in fashion, but for now I just love it and want everyone to enjoy it however they can,” said Charity.

Arts & Leisure

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The 2025 VMAs Red Carpet: Best and Worst Dressed Stars

CHARLIZE SOW

The 2025 VMAs weren’t just a celebration of the year’s biggest music artists, but also a showcase of bold fashion choices and shifting trends. From classic Hollywood glamour to the rising office-siren aesthetic, the red carpet became an avenue for stars to cement their place in both music and style. Unlike the restrained elegance of the Oscars or the Grammys, the VMAs thrive on risk-taking and headline-making moments, with artists using their looks as statements as much as their performances. Over the years, the show has become a cultural time capsule, reflecting what people are listening to, wearing, talking about, and even debating the next morning. In 2025, that tradition continued.

BEST DRESSED:

Katseye:

Fresh off their Gap Denim campaign, Katseye made a natural entrance with simple yet glamorous looks. Dressed in Dolce & Gabbana, each member showcased their individual style while sticking to a collective palette of black, silver, and pink. Lara Raj selected a daring corset bodysuit with bejeweled heels, while Megan Skiendiel leaned into her pink highlights with a matching bodycon dress and a fur coat with black and white accents. As for Manon Bannerman and Sophia Laforteza, they kept it sharp, nodding to the viral “office sirens” trend, one with a pinstripe blazer minidress and the other with a buttoned black dress. Daniela Avanzini opted for full red-carpet glamour in a low-cut dazzling silver dress styled with black gloves, heels, and a statement-piece necklace. Lastly, Yoonchae Jeong stunned with a classic mini black dress, knee-high boots, and laced black gloves. Together, they struck the balance that few groups achieve: individual expression within a shared vision. It comes as no surprise this global girl group swept both the fashion scene and VMA awards, winning “PUSH Performance of The Year.”

Tate McRae:

Tate McRae delivered one of the night’s most dynamic looks in a custom sheer white gown designed by Ludovic de Saint Sernin. The floor-length dress featured cut-outs at the waist and a pleated bra top, creating an ethereal, yet modern look. The sheer skirt revealed her white low-rise shorts and satin heels, a risky but deliberate styling choice that added a new dimension to the look. McRae wore her hair in classic, soft waves with a simple middle-part and kept her makeup fresh and sunkissed. By resisting the urge to over-accessorize, she let the gown remain the focus.

Sabrina Carpenter:

Sabrina Carpenter has a history of iconic, timeless looks, but she may have just delivered her strongest red carpet moment yet. Channeling classic Hollywood glamour, Sabrina Carpenter wore a red, floor-length Valentino gown. The dress featured floral sequin embellishments throughout and sheer panels that kept the look modern. The decision to pair it with a purple boa and Tiffany & Co. rings prevented the outfit from feeling predictable, while her bronzed makeup and loose curls tied it back to Old Hollywood. Carpenter’s look stood out not because it was the boldest outfit of the night, but because every element, from the sequins to the accessories, all came together in a polished, cohesive manner.

WORST DRESSED:

Chance The Rapper:

While many artists used the carpet as a stage to show off their unique fashion choices, Chance the Rapper went in the opposite direction. His baggy fit, backpack, and signature hat felt casual to the point of disconnect with the overall red carpet vibe. Instead of reading as relaxed or streetwear-inspired, the oversized proportions drowned his frame, giving the outfit a sloppy quality that undercut the setting. Whether it was intentional or not, the look seemed more suited for a day out than a high-profile music event.

Rebecca Black:

Rebecca Black’s outfit, featuring a white laced maxi-skirt with a grey fur top and brown fur heels, had potential in its components but fell short in cohesion. While each piece could have worked on its own, the various textures seemed to compete with one other and left the look feeling disjointed. The outfit did her no favors either, as the loose skirt and heavy top created a silhouette that felt weighed down. Her updo with fringe bangs and polished makeup showed effort, but the styling couldn’t rescue a look that ultimately lacked a unifying direction.

Megan Stalter:

Megan Stalter embraced a bakery-inspired look that featured a Dunkin’ Donuts coffee cup mini-purse, a tiered cake dress, and a chef’s hat. While the concept was creative and memorable, it clashed with the occasion. The voluminous dress made the outfit feel bulky rather than imaginative. The look came across more like a costume than award-show fashion. Stalter’s concept overshadowed her presence, making her seem like a prop in her own red carpet moment.



CARINA PAIK/THE PHILLIPIAN

Horses, Hay Rides, and High Expectations: Fall Festival Sparks Mixed Reactions from Students

AUTUMN XIA & BENJAMIN PARK

With horses trotting across the green, students flipping mid-air on the trampolines, and a line of hungry students waiting for mozzarella sticks, the annual Fall Festival once again transformed the Flagstaff Courtyard into a bustling scene. This past Saturday, students gathered to unwind, connect, and experience one of the first Weekender events of the school year. For many new students, the festival was a thrilling introduction to campus life, while returning students viewed it with much more critical eyes.

For new Lower Jason Cai ’28, the event provided both relief and perspective. He described the festival as a welcome break from academics and an important space for connection.

“I wanted to escape from studying in Pan Athletic Center for three hours. The ponies were enthralling. I love seeing them prance through the green fields of Andover. This acts as a proper third place, similar to a café or lounge space in a city, where residents might meet and interact casually for the goal of human interaction. There’s bubbling excitement forcing through everyone’s veins here,” said Cai.

First-year students were struck by the energy of the evening and the novelty of the activities. Many highlighted the caricature draw-

ings, hay rides, and trampolines as unique parts of the night.

“I thought it’d be fun, and it seemed like a nice event where everyone gathered. I think getting the drawings done, and though I haven’t done it yet, the trampoline stuff [is fun]. I like how they got horses for horseback riding. This event is different because it stays up later, and has activities you normally wouldn’t have on campus. It’s really hyper and exciting,” said Anabelle Zhang ’29.

Returning students approached the festival with higher expectations, often comparing it to last year’s event. While some activities were still entertaining, the atmosphere felt different to some.

“Last year, it was a fun experience, so I came hoping it would be as hype and fun as last year. I had high expectations. Right now, the energy’s low. It’s mostly people standing in lines. It’s kind of a passive event, and we want it to be active,” said Maya Tomlinson ’28.

Other students thought logistical issues contributed to the quieter vibe. Delays in set up, long lines, underwhelming music choices left some wishing for improvements.

“It doesn’t have the same vibe as last year. It was less organized compared to other student gatherings, and there could have been more thought. If they had more lights, people would be more awake, and the music would be chill, but maybe too chill. Too calming. Too soothing. I was dis-



C. ZHOU/THE PHILLIPIAN

Emma Hong ’28 and Carolyn Cao ’28 get caricatures drawn of them.

appointed the ice cream truck didn’t get here until 9:00 p.m., when the weekend said 8:00 p.m., and they were setting up until 9:00 p.m.,” said L Young ’27.

However, not all returners were critical, and some praised the Fall Festival for creating memorable experiences. Activities such as the bungee trampoline stood out as a rare occasion, as they are not often seen at high school events.

“I did the bungee jumping.

That was a lot of fun. I don’t think many other high schools can say they let their students bungee jump on a random Saturday evening. Everyone is laughing, we’re joking. I think it’s a good sense of community,” said Anoushka Pandey ’28.

Despite differing perspectives, most agreed that the Fall Festival created valuable opportunities to bond outside dorms and classrooms. For many, it served as a

reminder of Andover’s community values and the importance of shared spaces.

“I think adding to what I said, it’s to provide a third space where people interact casually for the goal of interaction, not for an accomplishment. That encourages student bonding and meeting new people,” said Cai.

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