

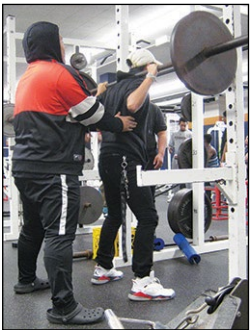


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COOPER OPENS DOORS TO INCOMING FRESHMEN



Photo by SHENG VANG

Mr. Herman encourages ninth graders to get involved in their new school by joining sports and activities.

By **NAIMA HUSSEN**
Quill staff writer

Mr. Herman, the head principal at Cooper High School, is excited to welcome the Class of 2026. Herman is entering his eighth year as principal at Cooper. One of his favorite things to do as head principal is to over-

see all the student activities happening throughout the school year such as football games and fine arts events. "I enjoy going to all the activities happening around the school year to watch our Hawks," Herman said. According to Herman, there are various

ways he supports incoming freshmen at Cooper. One of the things Herman does is communicate with families during a student's eighth grade year. "Doing this helps them learn about some of the amazing things we have going on here at Cooper," Herman said. Herman encourag-

es incoming students to attend the Great Cooper Community Get Together in the fall. "This helps freshmen get somewhat acclimated to the layout of the building," Herman said. One of the biggest challenges Herman sees freshmen facing is getting from one class to another and getting used to the layout of the building. "The circles are the hardest thing incoming freshmen have to figure out," Herman said. Additionally, Herman said that ninth graders sometimes struggle with the transition from middle school to high school. He said one big change from middle school to high school is that "classes matter from the very start of freshman year" because grades get posted on a transcript that will "follow students after high school."

Members of the Class of 2026 are about to start their four-year journey through high school

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Navigating building a challenge for ninth graders

Learning the quickest way through Cooper's three floors and four circles becomes easier for Hawks over time

By **DAMARIUS HAMILTON**
Quill staff writer

As a freshman coming from middle school into Cooper, it can be hard to locate all your classes. Most Cooper students find it easiest to start on the second floor to find their way around. The second floor is where most of the important rooms are located, including the lunch room; the main office; two circles where academic classes take place; the dance, choir, orchestra and band hallway; and the Media Center. One easy way to navigate around the second floor is to know that there are high room numbers and low room numbers in each hallway and in each circle. One side always has higher numbers and the other side always has lower numbers, which makes it easy to figure out if your class is in a given hallway or circle. On the second floor, the B2 circle has the English classrooms, while the C2 circle has the Media Center and some social studies classrooms. The only confusing second-floor area is the dance, choir, orchestra and band hallway. While that hallway has room numbers in the 250s, it is on the other side of the school from the B2 academic circle, which has room numbers in the 230s and 240s. The third floor is easier because it consists of one long hallway and two academic circles. Depending on whether your classroom number is high or low, that will help you know what circle to go to. The B3 circle has the science rooms, while the C3 circle has the social studies and math rooms. The first floor is definitely the most confusing floor because it's harder to find certain classes. While there is only one circle on this level, which includes the art, business and global language classrooms, there are plenty of other classrooms spread throughout the other long

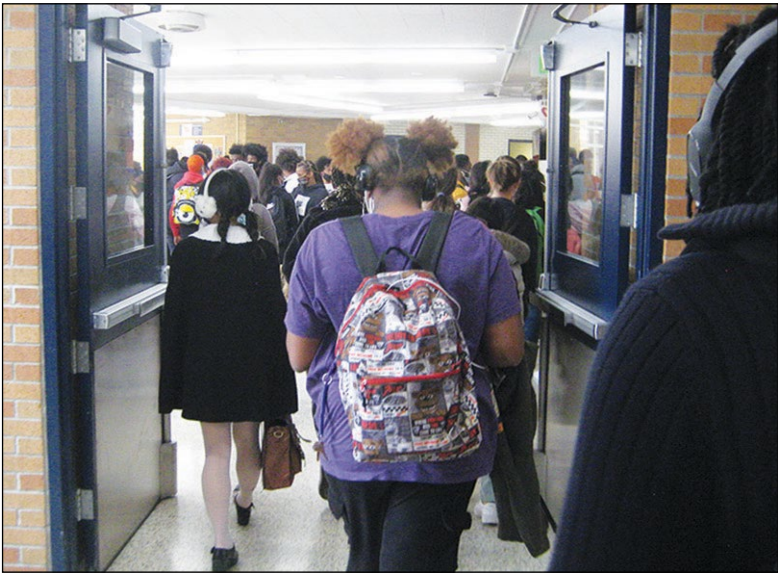


Photo by NOLAN ANDLER

Passing time can be overwhelming as one gets used to Cooper. hallways on this floor.

The easiest way to get around on the first floor is to look at the signs on the walls and follow their instructions. However, even with these guides, some first-floor classes are still hard to find. For example, the room for the clay class is hidden around a corner on the opposite side of the building from where the other art classes are held, so you can't actually see the room until you walk down the long hall to find it.

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Schoology plays central role in classroom learning

A majority of Cooper's teachers provide their lessons, collect student work through the computer-based system

By **SHENG VANG**
Quill staff writer

Students at Cooper use Schoology to work on class assignments, check grades and communicate with teachers. According to Noemi Gonzalez Ruiz (12), she uses Schoology on a daily basis because all of her work and assignments are posted there. She also uses Schoology to stay updated on school events and information. "[Schoology] made it easier for me to find and see my assignments and due dates and upcoming assignments," Gonzalez Ruiz said. "It's [also] good to see the updates." English teacher Ms. Murphy said almost all of her assignments are posted on Schoology for her students to work on. According to Murphy, the functions offered by

Schoology have made teaching and learning more convenient for both teachers and students. An example of this can be seen through the way Schoology works with Google Drive. "I post almost all my assignments through Schoology using the Google Drive Assignments function," Murphy said. "This allows me to create one document and Schoology will create copies for each student. This also allows me to check students' work as they progress. I can give instantaneous feedback on their documents or in person. Furthermore, Schoology allows me to organize all our units into folders and I can create patterns within the folders to make it easy for students to stay organized." Gonzalez Ruiz mentioned that another function on Schoology that has helped her stay organized throughout high school is the course tab. "Students can rearrange their classes

through the course tab and that can help students see their classes easier," Gonzalez Ruiz said. Another advantage of Schoology use mentioned by Social Studies teacher Mr. DiSalvi is that it helps "cut down on wasting paper" and has prevented him from "wasting time passing paper out." He also added that even when a student is absent, all work is posted on Schoology so students can access assignments even at home. Easy access at home also allows students to access their grade conveniently, which makes it easier for parents and students to ask questions regarding grades and assignments. Although Schoology may have many ad-

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AVID program guides students toward college

Hawks can be involved in this elective class all four years of high school

By BRIGHT DEKU
Quill staff writer

AVID is a program that helps students get academically prepared for college.

AVID, which stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination, is an elective class that students apply to join.

“We look for students who are in the academic middle-high range,” AVID coordinator Ms. Lieser said. “Many of our students will be the first in their family to go to and graduate from a four-year college. We are looking for students who are driven to be successful and are willing to put in the work to reach their goals.”

Lieser said AVID benefits students who take part in the program in many ways.

“Being a part of AVID helps to open doors of opportunity and experiences. Students learn about many different colleges and universities along with a variety of careers and job opportunities. We have guest speakers come in to speak about colleges, careers, summer programs and opportunities, and also life skills like budgets, writing a resume and interviewing skills,” Lieser said.

One key area in which AVID students get help relates to the process of attending college. Lieser said students spend time in AVID preparing for the ACT, completing college applications, filling out the FAFSA and applying for college scholarships.

“Some colleges offer scholarships for students who were in AVID in high school, which is an awesome benefit,” Lieser said.

Students in AVID also get chances to visit colleges they may want to attend.

“In AVID, we also go on college field trips to visit college campuses. Our goal is to get students on campuses twice a year, so by the time they are seniors, they will have visited six colleges with AVID and that will help them figure out what feels right to them,” Lieser said.

AVID also helps students when it comes to their high school experience. According to Lieser, there are a few activities that all AVID students take part in during a typical day in the class.

“The foundation of AVID is WICOR (writing, inquiry, collaboration and reading). In the AVID elective class, we do many things that cover WICOR in different ways. During a typical week, on Mondays and Wednesdays we cover the AVID curriculum, be it reading an article and participating in a Socratic Seminar, researching colleges, learning study tips, etc. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, it’s tutorial day. Students bring problems and questions from their other classes. Students work in small groups with AVID tutors to help each other out with their problems and questions. This is a huge inquiry process as the tutors don’t give out answers, but students collaborate and ask questions to come to solutions as a group. On Fridays, we have Fun Fridays with community building activities or guest speakers visit to share information with our students,” Lieser said.

In order to help students learn organizational skills, Lieser said AVID teachers require their classes to maintain a weekly planner and notes from their classes.

“We expect students to have a weekly planner in which they write down what they do for each of their classes and we check their planners every Monday. AVID teachers also check focused notes from the students’ other classes,” Lieser said.

One unique aspect of AVID is the role that Cooper graduates play in the program. Lieser said AVID alumni come back right before

AVID PROGRAM
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Fifth period gives Hawks flexibility

Cooper's Lunch and Learn system allows students a chance to eat, get academic assistance and relax



Photo by SHENG VANG

During academic days, students can get extra help from classroom teachers on assignments they missed or need to complete.

By ERIN CHUNN
Quill staff writer

Have you ever needed extra help with a class but have no time after school? Have you ever wanted a chance to do something fun during the school day like sing karaoke?

Both of these activities and many more are possible at Cooper thanks to Hawk Lunch and Learn (HLL), a program that gives students extra time during the lunch period to either receive academic help in the class of their choice or participate in a fun activity.

HLL happens Mondays, Tues-

days, Thursdays and Fridays during fifth period. Mondays and Thursdays are academic days, while Tuesdays and Fridays are leisure days. Before the sessions, you can choose which teacher you want to be with or event you want to take part in so you can get the most out of the time available.

“The goal of HLL is to strengthen relationships between students and staff, create meaningful interventions and provide our students with a measure of choice when it comes to their own learning,” Mr. Mahan, who coordinates the HLL program, said.

To sign up for HLL, Cooper

has a scheduling application called EdEfficiency. The website is chs.edf.school. Once you enter the address, you can sign into the system with Google. From there, you can choose your classes for the next two weeks.

For academic days, students can get help with a specific subject or teacher to work on assignments or complete retakes. Study hall sessions are also available. Since this is a support program, the class sizes are only about 15 students for personalized instruction.

“Beyond providing students with the ability to take an active role in their education, HLL is a time when freshmen can meet with their

teachers in a small and more intimate setting,” Mahan said.

For leisure days, there are dozens of activities around the school, including ping-pong, basketball in the gym and watching Disney movies. These days give ninth graders a chance to learn more about the school, meet staff members and get to know other students.

“HLL is an excellent opportunity for these freshmen to build positive relationships and have some fun in the process,” Mahan said.

“They may even find out something new about themselves as they explore engaging leisure activities with like-minded peers.”

Health office provides students with support

When sickness or injury strikes at school, students can get a pass to the health office for help

By DAMARIUS HAMILTON
Quill staff writer

Ninth grade students who are experiencing any health-related issues during the school day are able to get a pass to visit the Cooper health office.

“The health office is located in the Student Services area across the hall from the counselors,” Cooper nurse Ms. Kraft said.

There are several primary reasons why a student might need the services provided in the health office.

“Students can come in if they are not feeling well and need to go home, if they were injured at school or somewhere else and need bandages or ice, if they have chronic conditions that need to be managed in the health office like taking daily medications, if they need to talk about medical issues, if they need a COVID test, or if



Photo by SHENG VANG

Mr. Rosenblum and Ms. Kraft can assist Hawks with medical issues.

there is an acute medical need [related to] asthma, diabetes or injury,” Kraft said. “We really will see anyone and help them in whatever ways we can.”

While there are a wide range

of supports students can access in the health office, Kraft cautioned students that they cannot come to the office just to “lay down if they are not feeling well.” In a situation like that, a parent will be contacted

to pick that student up from school.

Additionally, Kraft said there are limitations to what the office can do when it comes to medication.

“We can’t prescribe medications,” Kraft said. “We don’t have pain meds [or] cough drops to give out unless students bring them in themselves.”

A typical day in the health office can vary for Kraft and her office assistant, Mr. Rosenblum.

“Typically, we see anywhere from 30-80 students, depending on the day,” Kraft said. “Otherwise, I work on special education evaluations, immunization compliance, third-party billing, medication orders and COVID tracking.”

As the new school year gets started, Kraft said she had some primary tips for how students can stay healthy.

“Get enough sleep, drink water and wash your hands,” she said.

Mental health is a key part of success in high school

Making some changes to how you approach your academic and personal lives can keep you in a good psychological state

By ERIN CHUNN
Quill staff writer

Mental health was often ignored in the past, but in recent generations, this issue is being studied, talked about and evaluated. That is because one’s mental health is directly correlated to one’s well being. Not taking care of your mental health can have detrimental consequences on your psyche.

Mental health issues affect people of all ages, races and genders. As an incoming ninth grader at Cooper, maintaining your mental health can be a struggle, especially if you don’t know where to start. However, there are some tips you can follow to stay healthy.

Affirm yourself

It is important to hold yourself in high regard, even when you

feel low. This brings self confidence. Affirming yourself is powerful because no one can uplift you like you can uplift yourself. Sometimes, the only thing truly holding you back might be your own negative mindset. Everything in your life connects back to you, therefore, you hold all the power.

Stay organized

Organization is essential to success. When your work area is a mess, your mind is a mess. To offset this, it is important to set some time aside every now and then to get organized. If you don’t feel like cleaning your whole area, at least pick up a little bit. A little bit of order goes a long way and can help you avoid the anxiety that can hurt your mental health.

Keep motivated

Motivation is often fleeting.

Even if you don’t feel like completing the full assignment at that moment, at least start it. By breaking things down into smaller parts, it may be easier for you to stay motivated and avoid stress.

Don’t overextend yourself

It’s important to understand yourself and how much work you can handle. Overloading yourself will only end in you crumbling under the pressure.

Allow yourself personal time

Whether it is spending your time alone in bed or out with your friends, you need time where you can enjoy yourself. Giving yourself a break from thinking about work or school is important for your mental health.

Practice self-care

It is important to do the

basics to take care of yourself because you’re worth it. Putting yourself first is imperative to maintaining positive mental health. Whether it’s hair care, setting a curfew so you get enough sleep or simply taking an extra long shower to wash away stress, self-care is an amazing way to relax and refocus your mind.

Final thoughts

It’s hard when your mental health is declining or not in a good place to start with. These tips are designed to help you keep a positive outlook on life and keep you engaged with activities that make you happy. If you feel your mental health is too far gone for these tips, please be sure to get the professional help you need in order to be successful.

IB classes raise academic bar for students

Hawks in their junior, senior years have the ability to take individual IB classes or go for the full IB diploma



Photo by MR. ZUCCOLA

The students who pursue the full IB diploma complete an Extended Essay, which is turned in during a ceremony in December of their senior year.

By NAIMA HUSSEN
Quill staff writer

Cooper has preparational programs for life after high school. One program that is helpful in getting students ready for college is the International Baccalaureate (IB) program. “The IB Diploma Program (DP) is an academically challenging and balanced program of education with final examinations that prepares students, aged 16 to 19, for success at university and life beyond,” IB Coordinator Ms. Christensen said. The IB program can help you

get college credit based on a series of tests you will take at the end of each course. Students in the program also have the option to graduate with a full IB diploma. “The DP not only prepares students for college and improves their academic skills, but it also prepares them for life in general. Public speaking, professionalism and college readiness are some of the things the DP can and will prepare students for in the real world,” Christensen said. The program also allows students to be more culturally aware

through the development of a second language and be able to engage with people in an increasingly globalized, rapidly changing world. Although IB doesn’t start until junior year, freshmen and sophomores still have a chance to get ready for taking part in those courses. “Almost all freshmen are involved in our IB Middle Years Program (MYP). The IBMYP is a rigorous curriculum framework, rather than a college-preparatory program. Students are exposed to many facets of IB philosophies and practices, [including] inquiry-based instruc-

tion, concept-based teaching and learning, international-mindedness and learner profile attributes,” Christensen said. Christensen said she enjoys the fact that students at Cooper have the opportunity to develop many skills such as thinking, communication, research and self-management through the IB program. If you are interested in finding out more about the IB program, you should contact Christensen at kari_christensen@rdale.org or Ms. Meyer, IB administrative assistant, at jodie_meyer@rdale.org.

Class of 2022 offers insights to Class of 2026

Making the most of academic, social opportunities helps Hawks enjoy high school

By JACK ATKINSON
Quill staff writer

Cooper’s 2022 graduates may be out of the building, but that does not mean their impact on the school has gone away. One area where their presence can still be felt is through the advice they share with incoming ninth graders in order to make their transition into high school as smooth as possible. As the following pieces of advice will reveal, there are many things students can do during their freshman year that will set them up for success during their time at Cooper. **Blessing Boateng:** Try your best. It is better to do what you can than nothing at all. You’ll at least be able to say you tried, and if trying your best wasn’t the best, do not be afraid to ask for help. It’s not bad to want to perfect your work. Lastly, everything counts. Be on time for class and be prepared as well.”

Emma Borisevich: “Don’t let other people stop you from having a positive experience. Build relationships with your teachers; they’re people, too. Know what work you need to do and always communicate with teachers when you need help.” **Tyler Bruns:** “Keep notes if possible.”

Travis Bruns: “If you can’t fly, run. If you can’t run, walk. If you can’t walk, crawl. Just keep trying.” **Saief Dahdal:** “Be good listeners and be respectful. Basically, keep your head down and keep your mouth shut.”

Tarnue David: “Swim against the current. Take time with your personal growth. Be content and enjoy the four years.”

Tatyanna Dean: “Keep your notes for your classes and make them legible. They do not need to be super neat but make sure you get the details down. Do not throw them away.”

Brian Espinoza: “Don’t be shy or scared to show who you are. We are all still figuring out who we are as people so you don’t have to be the only one that is in on this. Also, take chances in things at school because high school gives you many options of what to do and maybe you can even find new hobbies or even a possible career or future.” **Maddie Herbst:** “Don’t skip your classes. Make sure you are caught up with your work in your classes. Always make sure to ask your teachers for help.”

Jayden Hove: “You should enjoy every moment of your high school life. Don’t take things for granted.”

Jacquelyn Jackson: “Don’t worry about your friends at school. Make sure to stay on track. It’s okay to take a mental day from school but make sure that you know about the assignments you missed that day.”

Fatima Koroma: “Don’t stress out too much. All you have to do is your best. Give your 100 percent and the rest will fall in place.”

Alyce Madson: “Don’t fall behind on your work, especially before a test. Doing the work on time will help you be prepared for tests and do well on them.”

Celeste Nava: “Ask for help when you need it and don’t let your work pile up. Don’t be afraid to talk to new people and participate in school activities.”

Carlos Quintanilla: “It is never too early to keep a good GPA. Stay focused over the next four years.”

Claire Stromberg: “Freshman year grades matter. It’ll be the easiest year so focus on your grades to set up a strong cumulative GPA.”

Morgan Stromberg: “Challenge yourself, work as hard as you can and find things you love to do. School is a time for change and growth and it’s important to face those head on and always with a positive attitude.”

Chromebooks are central to learning experience

Proper care and maintenance for the devices helps freshmen avoid falling behind in their classes

By PHILIP ROBERT
Quill staff writer

Chromebooks are one of the technologies that help students learn in school. The only students who will need to check out new Chromebooks in the fall will be freshmen and those students who are new to Cooper. Media Specialist Mr. King and the rest of the Media Center staff check Chromebooks out to students during the school open house, which takes place the last week of August. “If they can’t be there for that, we will check out devices during the first week of school,” King said. Whether or not they are getting new Chromebooks in the fall, students in every grade have to pay for the device protection plan. King said this fee must be paid each year. Students should only use Chromebooks for school work. King recommends that students charge their devices every night and take them to school every day because most of a student’s schoolwork will have to be done on the Chromebooks. According to King, students should keep their Chromebooks in their cases whenever they aren’t using them. Also, he said students

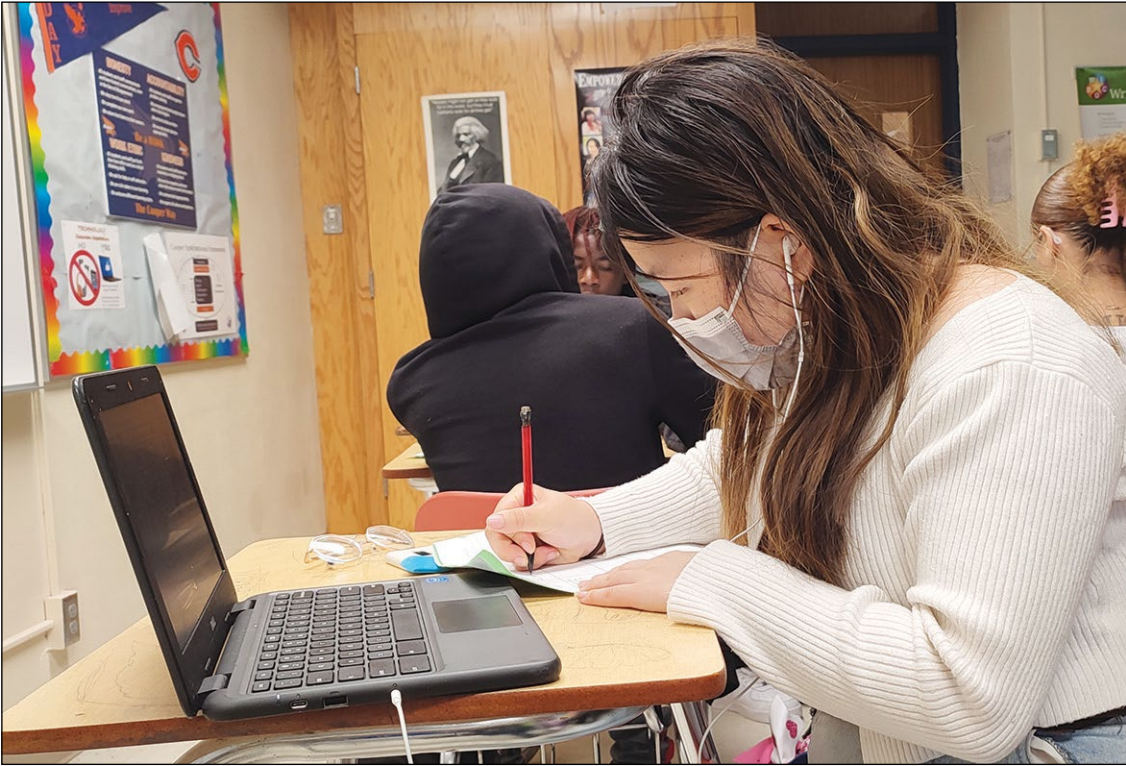


Photo by SHENG VANG

Most teachers assign and collect work digitally, which makes the laptops essential for student success. should avoid eating and drinking near their computers or putting them in the same bag as bottled liquids. King added that students should leave their Chromebook chargers at home. Since chargers don’t have bar codes, they can easily be lost or stolen. Finally, King advised students to be careful about letting other people access their Chromebooks. “They should never, ever let other students use their Chromebooks. If students have any problems with their devices, they should contact the Media Center staff right away. Don’t wait,” King said. Chromebook return happens at the end of each school year. Typically, teachers bring students down to the Media Center to drop off their Chromebooks. In the spring of 2023, King said it’s likely that students will keep their devices over the summer except for seniors and those who know they are leaving the district over the summer.

Punctuality plays an important role during ninth grade year

The good habits students develop related to showing up to class on time will benefit them throughout high school

By LUKE REKELA-JASPER
Quill staff writer

Cooper is once again starting the 2022-2023 school year with in-person learning. With both new freshmen and veteran students returning to the building, the importance of being on time to class is a concept many Cooper staff members strongly encourage students to prioritize. “Arriving on time is important so that you are able to get all of the instructions and directions for the day,” English teacher Ms. Obranovich said. “You’ll avoid

feeling lost or behind.” Obranovich said there are many impacts that being late will have on students academically. “Being late makes it harder to grasp what is happening in the class and what you should be doing. You don’t have to waste time getting caught up or asking questions that have already been covered and will have more time to work and progress,” she said. Obranovich recommends that students talk with their friends while walking to class rather than stopping in the halls and for students to be aware of where their

classes are in the building so that they can plan where they are going. Also emphasizing the importance of being to class on time is administrative intern Mr. Nelson. “Freshman year is a fresh start for students. Ninth graders have the ability to reinvent themselves, take on new challenges and start over. This all starts with going to class and getting there on time,” he said. Additionally, Nelson said students who are tardy may “put themselves in line for disciplinary action.” Furthermore, Nelson stated

that he and the administrative team at Cooper are focusing on building a disciplinary progression system that will motivate students to arrive to class on time. As for tips for freshmen on how to get to class on time, Nelson suggested that freshmen “leave their class as soon as possible, but if they need to speak with a previous teacher, get a pass to not be marked tardy.” Nelson recommends that students always check in with a teacher to receive a pass if they will potentially be out in the halls before or after passing time.

Ninth grade focus on credits, grades critical to future

Failed classes, poor grade point averages will cause students problems during senior year

By LLEWELLYN BOUTHIM
Quill staff writer

The transition from middle school to high school brings with it a new emphasis on the importance of earning class credits and strong grades. Ninth graders who do not pass a class will eventually need to make up the missed credit, which can make life more difficult later in high school. Additionally, failed classes have an impact on a student's grade point average (GPA), which can have future repercussions on a student's ability to get into college.

"It seems many freshmen often do not know the significance of credits and GPA at the beginning of their first year of high school," Cooper English teacher Ms. Prillwitz said. "They are used to middle school where credits and GPA are not consequential."

According to Cooper student counselor Ms. Burkholder, there are some frequent traits she sees in ninth graders who do not earn their credits.

"Most often, students are not attending a particular class on a regular basis, not making good use of their time while in class, have a distraction in the classroom taking their attention

"Some students get to their senior year and are not able to participate in the graduation ceremony with their peers and are not able to earn a diploma," Ms. Burkholder said. "This can be a very devastating blow to the student and the family."

away from the teacher or demonstrate behaviors that don't display an attitude of learning," she said. "In some cases, students have a difficult time learning the content. When this happens, students need to advocate for help and put in extra time to master the content to pass the class. Sometimes, students do not take these extra steps and end up failing the class as a result."

Failing a class during ninth grade will put students behind on the 46 credits they need to earn in order to graduate from Cooper. Burkholder said that falling behind in this way can have a severe impact on a student's senior year.

"Some students get to their senior year and are not able to participate in the graduation ceremony with their peers and are not able to earn a diploma," she said. "This can be a very devastating blow to the student and the family."

In order to avoid these future problems, Burkholder said it is important for freshmen to become more proactive about their educational experience.

"Students continuing into their sophomore, junior and senior years need to be an active participant in their graduation plan. Students should request an appointment with their counselor and review their credit status and what is needed to complete graduation requirements," Burkholder said.

One thing ninth graders can do to make up missed credits is attend summer school. Doing so right away will make it less likely that students will face any surprise credit shortage as they reach their senior year.

CREDITS, GRADES
continues on page 5

Media Center enhances student learning

In addition to providing access to classroom books and various publications, the room is a spot where Hawks can study



Photo by SHENG VANG

Students in the Media Center can make use of individual and group study areas during their open periods.

By LLEWELLYN BOUTHIM
Quill staff writer

Ninth grade students can check out fiction books, non-fiction books, graphic novels, manga and all of their classroom textbooks in the Media Center.

"We also have magazines and newspapers, but they don't circulate," Media Center Specialist Mr. King said.

The Media Center also main-

tains an extensive ebook and audiobook collection at rdale.mackinvia.com.

"We currently have over 3,000 titles there," King said. "Students can also use databases and other resources at rdale.libguides.com/chs. On top of all of that, we have digital subscriptions to the *Star Tribune* and the *Washington Post*."

The Media Center website includes spoken word poems,

lessons on avoiding fake news, ACT and study skills resources, databases, a link to the school's catalog and links to the MackinVia collection.

While the online resources are helpful, King said there are many reasons to visit the Media Center in person as well.

"You might visit the Media Center if you are doing research and need help finding sources or creating a works cited page.

Learning how to study is important in high school

Many incoming students have not developed proper study methods during their time in middle school

By ERIN CHUNN
Quill staff writer

Although academic success isn't solely based on studying, developing strong study habits as a ninth grader greatly improves one's chances of success. Knowing how to properly study in order to retain important information is a necessary life skill that can be used even if you aren't furthering your education after high school. While studying may seem tedious, committing to the practice is what builds the skill and makes it more routine. There are a number of tips all freshmen can use to improve their studying habits.

Take notes while studying

The process of writing down notes as you study helps instill the information you are learning. While it may be more work to read and write at the same time, it pays off during tests that rely on memorization. Remembering details is the key to success when you eventually need to show what you know on an exam.

Find people to study with

Although working in a group can be awkward at first, you will find there are great benefits to studying with multiple people. Collaborating with other people can help you learn different methods for solving problems and allow you to compare answers before facing an exam. These outside perspectives will only strengthen your understanding of a topic.

Seek out a tutor

While a study group is helpful, it may of even greater benefit to find a person who has some expertise in the topic you are studying to guide you through the preparation process for an exam. A person who knows the subject you are dealing with can help you understand the concepts that you most need to know.



Photo by SHENG VANG

Taking notes while studying can help students better retain the key information.

Try to stay focused

Focusing on something for a long period of time can be boring. However, doing so can help you develop discipline, which can be of long-term benefit to the work you do in school. Studying in a focused way over time can help you move the information you are learning from short-term to long-term memory.

Pick up refreshments

You can't focus on anything when you're hungry or thirsty. What is more, even if you're not particularly hungry or thirsty, having something to munch on or sip will keep you awake and alert. Whether it is gum, fruit snacks, water or juice, refreshments can help you maintain your focus on the task at hand.

Sleep when you are tired

Pulling an all-nighter to study for a test rarely leads to a good result. Therefore, you need to make sure you are taking naps or getting a full night of sleep. A well-rested mind is more likely to retain the information you need to do well in class.

Student council gives Hawks a chance to amplify their voices

Cooper students who are interested in getting involved in leadership opportunities can do so starting in freshman year

By MIMI OTU
Quill staff writer

One way students can get involved in their high school is through student council. Student council helps interested students develop leadership skills by organizing and implementing various school activities and initiatives. Additionally, student council helps represent the student body and its members work with the school administration on projects and policies.

"We are a leadership group

designed to amplify student voice," student council advisor Ms. Geise said.

Student council members have duties that must be completed. These duties include 15 hours of service per semester and attending weekly meetings held during fifth period on Wednesdays. There are also additional meetings to plan and prepare for activities.

"Student council has planned the walkout, the Black History Month Expo, Cocoa and Cram, the Student Summit and much

more," 2022 graduate and student council member Fatima Koroma said.

All students have the opportunity to get involved in student council.

"You must first apply to the council and then there is a vote. The top six candidates from each grade are chosen to represent their grade in the council," Geise said.

After the members of each grade level are elected to the student council, one person is selected to serve as the class president.

There are also other leadership positions on the council such as secretary, treasurer, public relations officers and vice president. Students can become an elected member or an un-elected member. Students can also assist with the events and activities hosted by the council. If a student doesn't make it into the council, Geise said they can always reapply the next year.

"Student council is a good way to give back to the community and you would benefit greatly from spending as many years involved as possible," Geise said.

AVID PROGRAM GUIDES STUDENTS TOWARD COLLEGE continued from page 2

winter break each year to be guest speakers for the current AVID students.

"It's one of my favorite days of the entire year. To see our students who have worked hard and learned a lot come back and share advice to our students who are in the middle of high school is incredible. Many of them share what's been hard about college and many

of them also tell students what they wish they did in high school or they are so glad they did in high school," Lieser said.

Another highlight of the AVID calendar is the spring time, which is when AVID seniors make their college-related choices.

"The spring is always fun as our seniors are making decisions on where to go to college, earning

scholarships and getting ready to go off in the world," Lieser said.

In addition to the academic aspects of her involvement with AVID, Lieser said she enjoys working with the AVID program for personal reasons as well.

"I love that the AVID teachers loop with their AVID classes, so they are together for four years. It's such a perk of the job. I love being

connected to my students and being there to help them with anything," Lieser said.

Lieser said that incoming ninth graders who want to get involved in the AVID program can find out more information through the AVID page on the district website at rdale.org. Students can also speak to their guidance counselors and Lieser.

HAWK values guide student behavior

Traits of honesty, accountability, work ethic and kindness are taught, reinforced, expected and rewarded for students who attend Cooper



Photo by SHENG VANG

Teachers who see students exhibit any of the expected behaviors can give them a HAWK ticket that is entered into a weekly drawing for prizes.

By MARIAH RILEY
Quill staff writer

Every school has a way of making sure new and veteran students follow certain rules. At Cooper, the primary behavior guidelines are contained in the “HAWK” acronym, which stands for honesty, accountability, work ethic and kindness. “The HAWK acronym was developed to reflect our building-wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) core values,” Assistant Principal Ms. Smith said. “The HAWK acronym supports student learning and behavior at Cooper through the use of clear, school-wide expectations.” Each of the letters in the acronym are designed to promote positive behaviors in all students. “Honesty” covers the idea that all students should tell the truth, especially in academic situations. Accountability deals with the idea that students should meet deadlines

that are given and be aware of how their actions and words effect themselves and others. Work ethic means that students should always try to do their best in school. Finally, kindness encourages all students in the building to show respect to one another and to staff members. “All of these should be traits we expect in ourselves and others,” social studies teacher Mr. DiSalvi said. “I think seeing it on posters and hearing it from school staff members frequently is a good preventive measure for when students have that itch to do something that they know is not appropriate.” There are many benefits to meeting the HAWK behavior expectations. Instead of students always being called out for do things the “wrong way,” students who display the HAWK values can receive HAWK tickets that make them eligible for a weekly prize

drawing. According to Smith, these prizes include tickets to school events, school supplies and gift certificates. Another benefit to following the HAWK guidelines is that it sets students up for success outside of school. “Students who regularly meet the HAWK values will continue to use them throughout their lives and may even spark positive changes in the world,” Mr. Nelson, an administrative intern, said. However, there are consequences for students who do not follow the HAWK rules. These consequences are determined based on the needs of the student and they can include parent meetings, conferences with grade-level Personal Learning Coaches, out-of-school suspensions or placement into alternative settings. However, Smith pointed out that many of these consequences tend to be a last resort. “Interventions are put into

place in an attempt to avoid the use of consequences,” she said. “The HAWK acronym looks like fairness and consistency when working with students. It also reflects kindness and understanding, providing students with interventions and love when support is needed.” When it comes to the ways in which HAWK expectations appear during the daily routine of school, incoming freshmen will notice that ninth grade teachers work that acronym into their classroom policies and procedures. “I always remind students what a HAWK looks like in my class anytime we are going to start a longer activity,” DiSalvi said. “I specifically define what honesty, accountability, work ethic and kindness is, ask my students if they are clear what that looks like in the activity, praise students who follow those expectations, and redirect students that don’t follow the expectations as necessary.”

NINTH GRADE FOCUS ON CREDITS, GRADES CRITICAL TO FUTURE continued from page 4

“Following through with the commitment to attend and successfully complete summer school is the best decision to recover missing credits,” Burkholder said. “Continuing to press on and pass all classes semester two is vitally important as well, as additional NCs will lead to more summer school and after-school credit recovery in the future.” When it comes to the classroom, Cooper math teacher Ms. Meredith said there are some common traits she sees in ninth graders who do not pass their classes. “Freshmen typically do not earn their credits because they lack participation in class. When students pay attention and participate in class, they almost always pass,” she said.

To offset these issues, Meredith said she tries different kinds of interventions with ninth graders to keep them on track. “In the past, I have encouraged students to redo formatives and summatives that are below 70 percent,” she said. “Of course, the school policy is such that students cannot retake unless all practices and formatives are submitted first. Keeping pace in class really helps students manage and master the material. Procrastination very often dooms good grades and steals good feelings of oneself.” Another type of intervention that often works with freshmen is teaching them about the importance of credits and GPAs. In fact, Prillwitz said she often devotes class time to these top-

ics. “With all my ninth grade classes, around the first mid-quarter, I take a day in class to explain the significance of credits and GPA and explain how to calculate GPA. I then have the students use their midquarter grades to calculate an in-process GPA and reflect on whether they are happy with that number and what they can do to improve it,” she said. According to Prillwitz, ninth graders who become more knowledgeable about credits and grades will experience more success and fewer surprises later in high school. “Too many juniors and seniors regret their lack of focus on academics their freshman year. If freshmen can earn all of their credits and have a high

GPA by the end of their first year of high school, then they have built a good foundation for themselves for the remainder of their high school experience,” she said. For freshmen who want to get off to a strong start in their classes so that credits and grades do not become an ongoing problem, Burkholder had some advice. “Have consistent attendance to school, show an attitude of learning, persevere when things get hard, advocate for help from your teachers and use your resources such as HLL, the Write Place and the Math Lounge when needed,” she said. “Stay positive and surround yourself with peers that are making good decisions about school, friendships and school involvement.”

Commentary

Now is the time for freshmen to focus on school

Upperclassmen often regret the academic moves they did, did not make in ninth grade

By AALIYAH HALL
Quill staff writer

As I start my senior year, I have been thinking back on my freshmen year and things I could have improved on. While there were many great moments for me during ninth grade, there also were moments that could have been better. Looking back, there are things I wish I knew and things I wish I focused on in ninth grade. Hopefully, I can share these insights with you so that your freshman experience can be as good as possible. Going into my freshman year, I thought the only things I needed to focus on were games, friends and my phone. One thing I now realize looking back is that my focus should have been on my school work and my mental health. I started off my freshman year in a rough head space that made me want to do things in the easiest way possible and avoid things that were associated with school. I now wish I pushed myself more and had an understanding of what it meant to balance school and personal activities. A second issue I wish I had focused on more in ninth grade is getting my school work done and doing so properly. When I did complete my work in ninth grade, I would often rush through it so I could return to having fun. I did not care if the answers were correct or not. Sometimes, I even felt like just looking at the work was too stressful, so I would push it aside until it was too late to hand it in. By the time I reached my junior year, I learned that it is more important to slow down and take the assignments seriously so you can actually understand the work and feel confident about what you’re turning in. Another thing I wish I knew during my freshman year is how important it is to be organized. During ninth grade, I would frequently lose, misplace or ruin my work because I was lazy and careless about where and how I kept items. This resulted in many occasions when my grades fell due to my lack of organization. As I got older, I started to take much better care of my assignments and found it was much easier to complete them when I had access to them and knew exactly what needed to be done. While I am proud of getting better about these three issues, I wish I had been stronger in these areas during ninth grade. In some ways, I’m glad I went through these challenges in my freshman year rather than later on in high school because it helped me become more mature and responsible. As I moved through my sophomore and junior years, my grades, my mental state and my ability to balance school and life became much better. While I have made mistakes throughout my time in high school, I hope the lessons I have learned can be of help to Cooper’s incoming ninth graders.

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NSPA

Hawks invited to audition for improv squad

Comedy troupe anticipates adding several new members in 2022-2023



Photo by LOGAN VOIGT

The improv team returned to in-person performances last school year.

By LUKE REKELA-JASPER
Quill staff writer

The Cooper improv team has continued to practice and perform at improv shows over the last two years despite issues related to the COVID-19 pandemic. They are now getting ready for the 2022-2023 performance season and hoping there are incoming ninth graders who want to try out for the group.

Improvisational theater, a.k.a. “improv,” is a form of comedic theater in which most or all the performances are unplanned or unscripted. Logan Voigt (12), one of the improv team’s captains, encourages any interested Cooper students to attend tryouts at the beginning of the school year.

“We will play a multitude of games to see how good everyone is at coming up with things on the spot,” he said.

Voigt said the best part of improv is all of the laughs and memories he has made during his time on the team.

“I’ve laughed harder than I thought I could at so many jokes and skits. Improv is a very entertaining and super-fun

Elliot Voigt (10), who joined the improv team his freshman year, said improv is a “great place to let out energy building up from boring classes.” In addition, he encourages any interested Cooper students who may attend improv auditions to “just say whatever comes to your mind.”

activity,” he said.

Cooper graduate Joseph Kubly, who joined the improv team during his senior year, said his biggest takeaway from his experience was honing his ability to “think on the fly.”

Kubly said there are a pair of reasons why he joined the improv team.

“I wanted to try new things and people kept telling me I’d be good at it,” he said.

Kubly’s advice to Cooper ninth graders who may be interested in auditioning for the improv team is to “always think of small ways you can improve your performance.”

Elliot Voigt (10), who joined the improv team his freshman year, said improv is a “great place to let out energy building up from boring classes.” In addition, he encourages any interested Cooper students who may attend improv auditions to “just say whatever comes to your mind so other people can build off of what you say or do” and to not be nervous.

The two main aspects Voigt said he is looking forward to the most for the upcoming season are more shows and participating in a variety of engaging improv games and skits.

Ninth graders should check the weekly announcements and the school bulletin boards in the fall for updated information about tryouts for the team.

Art classes help students think creatively

Courses in drawing, painting and photography are open to ninth graders who have room in their schedules



Photo by MYRA SINCHI

Students learn a series of fundamental concepts in beginner art classes such as Drawing I.

By SHENG VANG
Quill staff writer

Incoming freshmen at Cooper have the opportunity to get involved in three art courses: drawing, painting and photography.

For more traditional “paper and pencil” art, Drawing 1 is a great place to start. Drawing 1 focuses on getting the fundamentals down, such as drawing from observation. Throughout the semester, these basic skills build up to help students improve to intermediate-level abilities.

Similarly, Painting 1 is another option for first-year students that also focuses on basic

skills. The concepts learned in Painting 1 include drawing and painting from observation and a lot of skill-building. According to Ms. Mielke, the painting teacher, students in Painting 1 work on assignments like monochromatic still life, where “it’s all one color with different variations.”

Mielke added that Painting 2 is available to freshmen as well if they pass Painting 1 and sign up for Painting 2 for the second semester. She mentioned that Painting 2 is “definitely a harder version” of the first class. At the same time, she added that the class is “a lot more personalized to students’ interests.” In this class,

students will learn difficult concepts like reflective still life, in which the objects they paint are shiny and metallic or glass and transparent.

Another option offered to freshmen is Photography 1. Like the other two courses, Photography 1 also focuses on fundamentals. Students get the opportunity to learn about composition, photoshopping and editing techniques and demonstrate them in their projects.

Each week, the photography students get a different project to work on. Some projects will involve using ring lights and some will use color LEDs. The majority of

students’ photos are taken in class, but depending on the weather, sometimes Mr. Molitor, the photography teacher, will take his students outside to capture photos.

A typical day in any art class will consist of studio time. According to drawing and photography teacher Mr. Willicombe, there will be brief instructions at the beginning of the class when new topics are introduced. Molitor also added that class will involve time for organizing equipment and materials. In the photography class, for example, there will be time to set up lights to help create different scenes and poses. Additionally, Mielke said she puts on music in the background as students work and practice their painting techniques.

Regardless of what freshmen choose as their classes, Willicombe encourages them to get involved in art as it is “very beneficial” in the way that it allows students to “stretch [their] creativity and collaborate with students from different grades.”

Agreeing with Willicombe was Mielke, who said that “art classes are a safe way to become creative problem solvers and it is a good way for students to express themselves.”

Although these are the only art courses that freshmen can get involved in, more art options will be available for students to participate in as they move into the higher grades of school. Molitor said that taking art classes throughout one’s high school years can help students build life skills.

“Art classes really provide students the opportunity to accept that failure is part of the learning process, and once you start to embrace the fact that you are trying something and not expecting to be good at it, there’s a lot of learning that can happen in that. Not just in the contexts of photography or drawing or painting or ceramics, but in life, you have to be okay with not being perfect the first time. It gives you a lot of grace and patience for yourself,” Molitor said.

School literary magazine seeks contributions

Students can submit written work and art pieces to *Roundelay*, Cooper's annual publication

By TAJANNEA JENKINS
Quill staff writer

Roundelay is Cooper’s literary magazine. Students of all grades can contribute their art and writing to the publication, which is released at the end of the school year in May. Writing submissions might include poems, prose or short stories. Art submissions might include drawings, paintings or visual art.

“The term ‘roundelay’ refers to lyric poems that use a refrain, and a refrain is a line or phrase repeated at intervals in a poem. This line or phrase often reflects an important idea or topic to the poet,” English teacher and *Roundelay* advisor Ms. Murphy said. “As we turn to art and writing year after year, we find ourselves reflecting on important, and often difficult, ideas and topics in our own lives. While the words and brush strokes are different, common themes weave themselves throughout each issue of *Roundelay*: refrains of the human experience. Our students bravely share their hardships, their experiences and their lives. *Roundelay* is just a platform for their stories.”

During second semester, Murphy said that announcements will start going out to students seeking submission



Photo by SHENG VANG

A print version of *Roundelay* is released to students and staff every May.

to the magazine.

“When we are open for *Roundelay* submissions, an advertisement will be posted on Schoology and in the advisory announcements. The advertisement will give all students information on how to submit their art and writing to *Roundelay*. I usually give three options for submitting art and writing to *Roundelay*: submitting by email, submitting in person or submitting to the *Roundelay* Interest Survey,” Murphy said.

For students in all grades who are interested not just in submitting to the publication but putting it together as well, Murphy said there are ways to

get involved.

“The plan is to develop a Creative Writing and Publishing group for those interested in different aspects of *Roundelay*. We will meet during HLL and then move forward with the process,” she said.

In April, the group of students responsible for putting together the publication will meet to start assembling the submitted work.

“Once we have all the submissions, we read the individual pieces and we begin the process of discovering the ‘story,’ Murphy said. “There is always a pattern in the submissions, and so we find those patterns and decide how

the entire literary magazine should flow. This impacts the order of the published pieces. Once we know the order, we then work on giving each individual piece the attention it deserves: editing, layout and design.”

It is Murphy’s hope that *Roundelay* can continue to expand and evolve each year. In light of that, she encourages interested ninth graders to get involved with the publication.

“Students who love art and/or writing should absolutely be involved in *Roundelay*. Whether you are helping publish or submitting your work, *Roundelay* is a reflection of the art and writing community at Cooper High School. If students are considering publishing their work beyond high school, *Roundelay* allows the opportunity to practice. Moreover, it’s an opportunity to share your voice with the Cooper community. Your art and writing is important and deserves an audience,” she said.

To learn more about the content in *Roundelay*, ninth graders can take a look at the previous issues using the Cooper Library and Learning Commons: <https://rdale.libguides.com/CHS>. If you click on “books” and then scroll down, you will find the link to *Roundelay*.

Music programs available to incoming Hawks

Band, choir and orchestra groups give ninth graders a chance to develop as musicians during their high school years



Photo by BRIGHT DEKU

Band director Mr. Hahn (right) said he believes that music can "help shape young people" because it is "an important part of development."

By BRIGHT DEKU
Quill staff writer

Incoming ninth graders have three options for music classes: band, choir and orchestra. All three music programs are always in need of new members, no matter what level of previous experience a student might have. According to students and teachers alike, Cooper's freshman music classes are a great place for all interested students to learn to play music at a high school level.

Band

The primary group ninth grade band musicians will take part in is Freshman Band. However, band teacher Mr. Hahn said there are other groups in which ninth graders can take part, including Marching Band and Jazz Band.

"In Marching Band, we perform at parades and football games. We will be taking a trip to the Liberty Bowl in Memphis for 2022," Hahn said. "There is also Jazz II, our non-auditioned jazz band that teaches an introduction to jazz and improvisation, and Jazz I, our top jazz band. It's hard for a ninth grader to get into, but we've had about one a year."

According to Hahn, band students have a set routine they follow during each day of class.

"Just like with any activity that uses muscles, we start with warm-ups to get the lips working and reinforce fundamentals for all, including percussion. We then work on scales to help with learning new fingerings and expanding range. This is followed by group rhythm work on the Smartboard. At the end of warmups, we tune, and have nine minutes to work on each of our three musical selections," he said.

Hahn said he enjoys many aspects of working with ninth graders.

"I love helping and watching kids learn," he said. "Because this is their first year of having band every day, if I do my job well, the kids will show dramatic improvement and even impress themselves with what they now can do."

One Cooper musician who joined band starting in ninth grade is 2022 graduate Alex Kosloski. Over his time in high school, he took part in Freshman Band, Wind Ensemble, Jazz I and the Pit Orchestra.

"I've just enjoyed the people, meeting new ones, and seeing old ones move on to bigger and better things than high school," he said. "Playing has always been something that I've enjoyed, and I've realized that I want to do it as a career now, as either a performer or a teacher."

Whether or not a student has plans to be involved in music after high school, Hahn said taking

part in band has its benefits.

"I firmly believe in the power of music to help shape young people," he said. "I believe it's an important part of development. Often, freshmen have been in the same band class with their peers since sixth or even fifth grade. It's a continuation of that family. It also provides freshmen with the opportunity to meet and become friends with upperclassmen."

Choir

For incoming ninth graders who enjoy singing, Cooper also has a choir program directed by Ms. Rowan and Mr. Vidal. The choir class that all incoming freshmen go into is Freshman Choir, which requires no auditions. Rowan said she is excited to meet the incoming freshmen because she enjoys watching them progress over the years.

"I am looking forward to seeing new students that will be joining Cooper choirs because I can't wait to see on how they will grow throughout their next four years of high school," Rowan said.

ferred in high school," she said.

Over the years, Snapko took part in various choir- and music-related groups at Cooper.

"As a senior, I was involved in Concert Choir at Cooper. In the past, I have also been in Bel Canto Choir and Concert Band," she said.

Snapko cited two reasons why she has stayed involved in choir over the years.

"I love being able to have fun and sing next to my best friend," she said.

Orchestra

Ninth grade musicians who would like the opportunity to be involved in orchestra can join Freshman Orchestra, which is directed by Ms. Pflaum.

"Freshmen benefit from being in a music class because it is a wonderful way to get involved with the school community. Music is a way to express yourself and be creative, and music classes feel like a home to many students at school," Pflaum said.

When it comes to what a typical day in orchestra is like,

er in one group.

"One of my favorite aspects of working with Freshman Orchestra students is seeing how much they improve so quickly. I also enjoy really getting to know students when they're in ninth grade because orchestra is a class that you are involved in for four years of high school and it is important to build a positive community," Pflaum said.

In addition to Freshman Orchestra, musicians can eventual get involved in Philharmonic Orchestra, which is for students in grades 10-12, and Symphony Orchestra, which is an auditioned orchestra for students in grades 10-12. One student who took part in Philharmonic Orchestra is 2022 graduate Christopher Pinzon-Medina. Pinzon-Medina said he first joined orchestra because "classical music has been an interest since [he] was younger." He said he has enjoyed the community aspect of his time in music.

"I have very much enjoyed being part of such a welcoming and caring community," he said. "Not only have I met so many



Photo by BRIGHT DEKU

After starting in Freshman Choir, Cooper singers can take part in a variety of specialty groups.

The next level of choir is Varsity Choir, which consists of students in grades 10-12. Additionally, there is Bel Canto, which is an all-soprano-and-alto choir group for grades 10-12, and Concert Choir, which is for singers in grades 10-12. There are also specialty choir groups such as Chamber Singers, which is made up of upperclassmen who want to take their singing to the next level.

Clare Snapko, a 2022 graduate who sang in various Cooper choir groups, said she was glad she joined choir during her freshman year.

"I have been singing in a choir ever since it was first of-

Pflaum said there are several routines that are key to success in class.

"During a typical day in orchestra, students have a setup and tuning routine, followed by technique instruction and music rehearsal," Pflaum said. "One of the biggest differences between middle school and high school orchestra is that in high school, we spend most of our time rehearsing music for concerts. All of the skills students work hard on building in middle school are put into action."

Pflaum said that freshmen tend to improve quickly in their orchestra class because the whole ensemble gets to practice togeth-

amazing and talented people, but the experiences that come with it have been absolutely incredible."

Given its impact on students like Pinzon-Medina, Pflaum encourages ninth graders to join a music class and to continue with music classes even after their freshman year.

"My biggest piece of advice to incoming freshmen is to continue with your music classes," Pflaum said. "Sticking with orchestra in high school can open up so many opportunities. Music classes are also a place where many students find they build lifelong friendships, and there is a lot of value to being a member of a music community."

SCHOOLGY

continued from page 1

vantages, getting used to the platform can be challenging. Murphy said using Schoology can be difficult and it will take time for new students to get used to the format and functions, especially because each teacher will organize their Schoology course differently. However, she encourages incoming freshmen to be patient with the platform and become familiar with Schoology early as it can help them navigate through their first year in high school and keep them on track.

"When using Schoology for the first time, be patient with yourself. If it is frustrating and overwhelming, don't give up on using Schoology. The more familiar freshmen are with Schoology, the easier it is for students to stay organized, to find important information about school events and deadlines, to keep up with current work and much more," Murphy said.

In addition, DiSalvi pointed out that another challenge is for students to remember to bring their Chromebooks. Although he doesn't mind making paper copies of assignments, DiSalvi said that if someone forgets to bring their Chromebook, they are missing out on all of the benefits that Schoology provides.

"If there is one thing I could emphasize to freshmen it is this: bring your Chromebooks," DiSalvi said.

NAVIGATING

continued from page 1

Similarly, the weight room is tucked away on the first floor behind the main gym near the back entrance to the school. Tracking down this room might be confusing to some incoming freshmen.

Also on the first floor is the hallway with the family and consumer science classrooms and the AVID classroom. This area can be hard to find because the hallway is right next to the main gym and it always looks empty, which makes it easy to pass by.

Another location that people always struggle to find is the community gym. This gym, which is located on the far north side of the building on the first floor, is connected to the main building of Cooper by only one hallway and there are very few signs saying where it is.

The best advice for ninth graders who get lost is to always ask for help. Asking for help will allow you to get to your class instead of wasting time in the hallways not knowing where to go. It also helps if you get to know the hall monitors because they can walk you to class or just tell you how to get there.

FRESHMEN

continued from page 1

special community here at Cooper," Herman said. "A part of that is emphasizing tolerance of others, acceptance of diverse ideas and making the school a place where students can find their voice."

According to Herman, he hears from many students and staff members that Cooper feels like a "big family," which is something he is proud of. He said that freshmen contribute to this culture by taking risks, getting involved and being open to new ideas.

Additionally, Herman said there are many leadership opportunities, challenging courses and new experiences along the way to graduation that every incoming student will encounter. Herman emphasized that joining a school activity will help ninth graders face these challenges and learn how to overcome them.

"I strongly encourage students to get involved in something such as a sport, theater, music or one of the several clubs," Herman said. "There is something for everyone here at Cooper."

Freshmen learn about fitness in ninth grade gym

Required class teaches students about maintaining their physical health



Photo by BRIGHT DEKU

Mr. Palm instructs his students before starting a class activity.

By DEVIN GRAY
Quill staff writer

Physical health is important to all people. Even more vital is for people to make sure they are building good physical health habits at a young age. That is why Cooper requires ninth grade students to take a physical education class.

According to Ms. Schaffer, a ninth grade physical education teacher, the students in Physical Education 9 will experience instruction, skill development and participation in team and individual sports, including basketball, football and volleyball. Students also will develop knowledge of the rules, skills, safety awareness and sportsmanship related to these and other sports.

While the physical benefits of the class are obvious, Schaffer said the intellectual, emotional and social development that happens in physical education classes is also key.

“Students will learn about the health-related components of physical fitness and how to apply them to their lives,” Schaffer said.

In addition to the time spent playing various sports, ninth

“I love the opportunity to give ninth graders a space to move, to build friendships and to learn about their teamwork and communication abilities,” Physical Education 9 teacher Ms. Schaffer said.

graders will spend one day each unit in the physical education classroom where they will be introduced by Schaffer or physical education teacher Mr. Palm to the health-related components of fitness, goal setting and nutrition through lectures and video. Another two days each unit are devoted to improving the students’ overall level of fitness through cardiovascular endurance, muscle strength, muscle endurance and flexibility training. Students will also spend time in class designing and implementing their own life-long fitness plan.

A typical day in the physical education class follows a simple pattern. Class starts with a warm up, a stretch routine and an explanation of that day’s activities, which Schaffer said can vary from review of concepts to sports tournaments among the students.

Schaffer said she enjoys her job as a ninth grade physical education instructor.

“I love the opportunity to give ninth graders a space to move, to build friendships and to learn about their teamwork and communication abilities,” Schaffer said.

More importantly, Schaffer said the benefits of the class are immense for students. Schaffer pointed out that physical movement during the day is critical and this class provides that movement time for ninth graders “while helping students learn leadership and cooperation, along with generally caring for your health.”

Fall sports teams set sights on new players

From football to volleyball, the wide variety of athletic options means there are many ways for freshmen to get involved



Photo by NOLAN ANDLER

The Hawks football team made a historic run through the playoffs in 2021, securing the team's first state tournament appearance since 1996.

By ANDREW HAGGE
Quill staff writer

Most athletes are ready to get out and show what they have after an entire summer away from school, which is one thing that makes the fall sports season fun. During every fall season, teams are looking for more students to join their programs. With recent drops in athlete numbers across the athletics department due to the pandemic, freshmen are key to growing fall sports rosters and bringing excitement to the teams.

The following fall activities are a great way for incoming freshmen to stay healthy and active while enjoying something they love to do with their new Cooper peers. Fall sports are a great way for ninth graders to meet students in other grades who can help them connect with their new school.

Boys and Girls Cross Country

After seeing four seniors graduate in 2022, the boys and girls cross country teams are eager for new runners who enjoy a fun atmosphere to get involved. Boys head coach Mr. Zuccola said that both squads want to “recruit new athletes to set us up for future success.”

According to Zuccola, cross country practices usually begin with a warm-up run and stretching. Afterward, the athletes take part in that day’s running workout.

Cross country meets consist of a middle school race, a JV race and a varsity race. The middle school race is half of the normal 5K (3.1 mile) distance that both the varsity and JV runners take part in. The varsity race has the seven fastest runners from each school participating, while the JV race consists of everyone else.

“The cross country team is a great community of student athletes who know how to work hard and have fun,” Zuccola said.

Football

The 2021-2022 Hawks football team had great success as they made it all the way to the state tournament. This was the first time since head coach Mr. Howard took over that they made it all the way to state.

Along the way to state, the team enjoyed another milestone by beating Armstrong twice in two showdowns between the schools. Looking toward the 2022-2023 season, team member and 2022 graduate AJ Wodtke said “they are going to use

their time to get even better.”

According to Wodtke, football practices are around “three hours long during the school year” and consist of game scenario work. Wodtke said practices are important because football games are “mentally draining” and quite physical. However, Wodtke said the payoff is on game night.

“Friday night lights is an experience like no other,” he said.

Wodtke said freshmen should come out for the team because football gives you “a second family.”

“All players and coaches build a connection as they get you into shape,” Wodtke said.

Boys Soccer

The 2022-2023 boys soccer squad is looking to get “better and better” coming into the new season, according to 2022 graduate and team captain Jayden Hove.

Hove said that a typical practice involves splitting up into the individual team levels and working with those coaches. Meanwhile, soccer matches start with a warmup and a “team talk” before the games begin.

Hove explained that the team is looking to expand and improve its roster size with new incoming players from all grades during the new season. However, he said it is especially important for ninth graders to get involved with soccer.

“Freshmen get to know more people at Cooper while getting closer with their teammates as they improve together,” Hove said.

Girls Soccer

While the 2021-2022 girls soccer team did not have a winning record, 2022 graduate and team member Alyce Madson said it was a fun season consisting of team bonding and athletic growth. One community-building event Madson enjoyed was a pizza party with tie-dying and movies, while one match she enjoyed was on senior night.

“We won our game on senior night, which showed how strong of a team we were,” Madson said.

Heading into the 2022-2023 season, Madson said the Hawks will be joining Armstrong to have a “bigger, stronger program” than before. That is why now is a good time for ninth graders to get involved.

“It’s like a family,” she said. “I’ve made best friends through soccer.”

Soccer practices usually involve a warm up followed by

various drills and game-specific activities.

“We work hard but have an encouraging environment,” Madson said.

Adapted Soccer

Head coach Mr. DeMorett said that freshmen who join the adapted soccer team will benefit from the sense of community the players develop.

“Everyone fits and belongs,” he said. “It’s a chance to meet new friends and be active a couple days a week.”

DeMorett pointed out that the team only had one senior graduate in 2022, so the new season will be an opportunity to improve the team’s skill level and increase the team’s roster size.

“We won a handful of games last year and hope to win even more with new players,” he added.

Adapted soccer practices begin with stretching, after which they run drills and play a scrimmage game. Actual matches have “two, 20-minute halves with time stoppages every five minutes to sub players in,” DeMorett said. He explained that the rules for adapted soccer are exactly the same as traditional soccer except that “goalies cannot punt the ball” during play.

DeMorett said the team would “appreciate having new players” to get more athletes involved in the game.

Girls Swimming

The big highlight of the 2021-2022 girls swimming season was when two swimmers placed in the top 16 in their events on the first day of sections, which meant they went back for the second day to contend for medals.

“The team will definitely be younger and there will be a new head coach,” 2022 graduate and team captain Morgan Stromberg said.

The swimmers usually start practice after school at 3 p.m. with a warm up, after which they work on their main set of the day. Once they have completed their main set, Stromberg said they “do either a smaller set, a game or work on technique.” At the end of practice, they head into a cool-down swim.

Swim meets start with a warmup at the pool they are competing at, after which the team has a short meeting. Stromberg said this meeting is usually helpful because “swimming is a very tough sport.”

For ninth graders considering taking part in swimming,

Stromberg said it is a “beneficial” sport that gave her many “lasting relationships.”

“It also taught me a lot of discipline,” she said.

Girls Tennis

Team member Katlin Doan (12) said her favorite moment of the 2021-2022 season came during their last match.

“We took pictures and talked about the relationships we built on the team,” she said.

The positive end to last season is giving Doan and her teammates something to look forward to as they move into 2022-2023.

“We are pushing for more team bonding and more girls to join,” Doan said.

Tennis practices consist of captain-led warmups and drills. Sometimes, the squad will end practice by playing a game. During their actual matches, the players will face off against their opponents following meetings with their coaches.

“Before every match, our coaches encourage us,” Doan said.

According to Doan, incoming freshmen will benefit from joining tennis because it will help them “build a community” as they transition into high school.

“It’s nice to make friends you will see during and after school,” Doan said.

Volleyball

The Hawks volleyball team is a program on the rise. According to LaMya Holmes, a 2022 graduate and team captain, the highlight of 2021-2022 was when the varsity squad won four sets to one against the team from Richfield.

“Everyone did amazing that game,” Holmes said.

Holmes believe the 2022-2023 squad should be as good if not better than last season’s team.

“All they need to do is work together to be the best version of themselves,” she said.

Most volleyball practices focus on serving and receiving the ball to set up passes. Meanwhile, competitions are a chance to show off what the team has been working on in practice and have “a lot of fun,” Holmes said.

When it comes to ninth graders who are thinking about taking part in volleyball, Holmes said there are many benefits to doing so.

“It will build strength and endurance,” Holmes said. “You will also get close to your teammates right away.”

Winter teams look to stay competitive

Incoming ninth graders have many programs to join if they are interested in playing a winter sport this year



Photo by MS. HOFFMAN

The boys and girls Nordic skiing team enjoyed a large increase in its roster size during the '21-'22 season.

By DAMARIUS HAMILTON
Quill staff writer

Winter is a time when some students like to hibernate until the weather improves. However, for Hawks who want to be involved in sports, there are a number of indoor and outdoor athletic options to stay in shape during the cold months. No matter what sport you might be interested in, there are spots open for ninth graders to get involved.

Boys Basketball

The Hawks hoops team is looking forward to greater success during the 2022-2023 season.

"The season looks bright for my '22-'23 boys," 2022 graduate and team member Prince Appiah said. "They will surprise a lot of people."

Although the 2021-2022 team fell short of its postseason goals, Appiah said there were some definite highlights to the season.

"Being able to see the fans come and support and show love was great," he said. "I also liked seeing my teammates working hard and getting better."

For new athletes coming out for the basketball team this year, Appiah said to be ready for practices in which players "go hard on each other to see everyone get better."

"We work on our defensive sets and also plays," he said. "We also work a lot on free throws."

Appiah said there are many benefits to joining basketball for the younger athletes who want to take part.

"You will gain the life lesson that things aren't given to you; you have to earn it," he said.

Girls Basketball

The girls basketball team faced some challenging competition during the 2021-2022 season, but that adversity helped the members of the team connect with one another over the course of the winter.

"A big highlight was the bond I made with the team and how fun it was," 2022 graduate and team member Josephine Igherighe said.

As the team looks toward the 2022-2023 season, Igherighe said that the players will need to keep focused on building upon their strengths.

"They need to be the best they can be and improve," she said.

A normal day of girls basketball practice will involve stretches, warm-ups, practicing layups and taking part in shooting drills. Players also go over plays, practice defense, play five-on-five games and compete against the coaches.

"It is fun doing shooting competitions to see who makes the most shots," Igherighe said.

Igherighe encourages interested ninth graders to try out for the team, which currently includes a number of younger athletes.

"Your teammates will be people you can count on and go to for anything," she said.

Boys Swimming

The swim team is looking to expand its numbers in 2022-2023 after having many seniors graduate over

the last three seasons.

"We would like to recruit as many new athletes as possible this year," team captain Logan Voigt (12) said. "I'm really looking forward to all that we will achieve this year."

Voigt's excitement about the new season comes from the success of the Hawks swimmers in 2021-2022. The team's improvement over the course of the season peaked at sections, which nearly led to a state appearance.

"One of the highlights this last season was seeing all of our new swimmers improve so much and also all of our really fast times at sections. We were really close to going to state so we are going into next season with a lot of determination," Voigt said.

Helping the team achieve its state goals comes through the day-to-day work they do in practice. Voigt said the swimmers take part in a wide range of activities, including "dryland workouts, stretching, kicking, pulling, racing, drills, starts, finishes, turns and swimming."

"There are so many different things we've done over the years and every practice is different," he said.

One aspect of swimming Voigt said is important is that they welcome athletes of all skill levels to join the team, including people who are just learning how to swim.

"Swimming is a full body exercise and it's all about personal achievement. When you race, the only person you have to beat is yourself. You can always get better no matter where you are at, so you can watch your progress throughout the season," he said.

Boys Hockey

The Armstrong-Cooper boys hockey team was 7-16-3 during the 2021-2022 season. Head coach Mr. Charleston said he hopes the team will continue striving for success in the years to come.

"Building on our experiences from the last few seasons, we hope to advance farther in the postseason," he said.

The team typically plays 25 regular season games with three scrimmages a year. There is also the possibility of three section games and three state games.

"We carry two teams, a varsity team that practices from 3:45-5:15 p.m. and a JV team from 5:30-6:45 p.m. every day," Charleston said.

According to Charleston, ninth graders who are interested in eventually joining the upperclassmen on the team are encouraged to get involved in the district youth hockey program.

"Freshmen typically play youth hockey at Armstrong-Cooper Youth Hockey Program. The JV and varsity team usually consists of 10th-12th graders with a few exceptions of talent and birth year," Charleston said.

Girls Hockey

Much like the boys hockey team, the girls hockey team consists of students from Cooper and Armstrong. Team member and 2022 graduate Emma Launderville said the 2021-2022 season was enjoyable.

"Our seasons are always hectic and very fun," she said. "We usually have at least one game a week and a few tournaments throughout the year. We started a few new traditions this year and planned more activities."

Heading into the new season, Launderville said that the younger players on the team have what it takes to help the squad remain competitive.

"Even with a couple big talents graduating this year, I believe that our 2022-2023 team will still be pretty strong and still be able to win some games. Regardless of their skill, I know that those players will make it a fun and eventful season," she said.

During hockey practices, players split into their varsity and JV groups and work on a variety of skills and drills.

"Throughout practice, we usually focus on one aspect but there is likely some variation so that we aren't doing the same thing the entire hour and half," Launderville said.

Launderville said that new Cooper students should consider joining hockey, no matter what their skill level might be.

"There's many different aspects to hockey and it's super fun to learn. Hockey is a very active and physical sport and very entertaining. The environment is always energy-filled and there's always something going on," she said.

Nordic Skiing

Head coach Ms. Hoffman said the 2021-2022 team saw enormous growth, a trend she hopes will continue into the new season.

"We had a huge number of students, especially freshmen, come out for the Nordic team. Highlights included having more boys come out for Nordic, a new tradition of the Cooper Nordic Crazy Costume Competition and adding sprint races to the line up," she said.

During Nordic practices, the team works out at Cooper or at a local ski trail.

"There will be groups divided up by experience level so that all members of the ski team can feel included and improve their skills," Hoffman said.

Nordic ski meets typically consist of a 5K (3.1 mile) race in the skate or classical format.

"These races take place around the Twin Cities area. It's a chilly sport to spectate, but you stay plenty warm competing," Hoffman said.

Incoming freshmen who are interested in Nordic are encouraged to get involved because it is "a great way to learn a new, lifelong sport in a low-pressure environment," according to Hoffman. She added that equipment is provided for students for the year, which makes the sport accessible for all athletes.

"It's a really fun, inclusive group of students. Our returners and captains are ready to welcome more people to the Cooper Nordic family," Hoffman said.

Wrestling

The 2021-2022 wrestling team enjoyed a growth in its roster that

head coach Mr. Stanton hopes will continue in the new season.

"We had 10 new wrestlers that have never wrestled before learn a new sport and become successful," Stanton said. "We had veteran wrestlers place higher in sections and individual tournaments than they had previously."

Stanton explained that the wrestling team is always looking for new members given the way the sport operates. In wrestling, there are 14 weight classes ranging from 106 to 285 pounds.

"It is difficult for our team to win team competitions because we do not fill enough weight classes. We have talented, tough wrestlers, but we need many more," Stanton said.

During wrestling practice, the team works on strength, conditioning and the technical aspects of wrestling. During wrestling matches, the competing teams cycle through each weight class on the way to determining the winner.

Stanton encourages incoming ninth graders to join the wrestling squad because it is a sport that teaches many life lessons.

"Wrestling can teach you many things about yourself. It can help you gain strength and agility. Wrestling helps you learn discipline. There are great coaches and teammates that you can build lifelong friendships with," Stanton said.

Dance Team

Head coach Ms. Braden said the 2021-2022 dance team had a great season during which its members danced at the fall pepfest, hosted the winter Jack of Hearts dance, bonded at competitions and took part in team dress-up days. As they look toward the 2022-2023 season, she said there is one main thing to be excited about.

"We are joining a new conference with schools at our level for a more even competition," she said.

Preparations for the 2022-2023 season will start right before winter break.

"We typically practice four days a week to prepare for competitions. We have two-hour practices in which we split half jazz and half high kick. We will do a warm up consisting of conditioning and stretching and a cool down at the end of practice, too," Braden said.

During the competition segment of the season, the team will take part in two meets during the school week at which they will compete against other schools in a specific style of dance. Additionally, there are at least three weekend competitions that will see the team competing in jazz and high kick dance.

"It is super fun to watch the other teams compete, too," Braden said.

Braden said that incoming ninth graders should get involved in dance because it is a good way "to meet new people, join a community and make new friends."

"It is always a big change going into a new school, so it helps to have familiar faces around," she said. "We are like family and truly enjoy spending our winter season together."

Adapted Hockey

The adapted hockey team is anticipating a successful 2022-2023 based on the good work the team put in last year.

"For this season, we are looking great," head coach Mr. Fleming said. "We have some very strong seniors that are returning and we have a young goalie that is developing very quickly. We have our sights set on a state tournament run this year."

The fact that the team pulls players from several different school districts means that their practice time is limited.

"When we do practice, we run drills and scrimmage to make sure that the kids know what to do in game situations," Fleming said.

As he looks toward the upcoming season, Fleming said the squad will face several tough opponents.

"St. Cloud has won the state tournament, so obviously they are a tough team. Other teams that are traditionally top competition for us are North Suburban, Maple Grove and Anoka," Fleming said.

Weight room helps Hawks get in shape

Mr. Nelson guides students on their journey to better strength and conditioning



Photo by SHENG VANG

Students have access to the room right after the school day ends.

By DEVIN GRAY
Quill staff writer

The Cooper weight room is a place where students can uplift not only their spirits, but their bodies as well. As a place to better one's physical health, the weight room is accessible to students during an after-school program five days a week.

According to Administrative Intern Mr. Nelson, who oversees the after-school weight room program, the facilities are available from 3:30-5 p.m. Monday-Friday. The room is located on the first floor near the gym and the back entrance to the school.

Nelson said the purpose of the weight room program is to have students "learn about fitness" while simultaneously giving them a safe environment to work out.

Students have many reasons for lifting weights in the after-school weight room program. While some students are getting more fit for school sports programs, others are simply trying to improve their

"If people want help, I can give them specific workouts to try," Mr. Nelson said. "I don't force anyone to do anything they don't want to but I do try and challenge kids to do what their body can do, not what their brain thinks they can do."

physical health. However, Nelson pointed out that this isn't a social gathering spot.

"Students that are not working out or using the facilities will be asked to leave," he said.

Participating students must arrive by 3:35 p.m., and everyone is welcome, as long as expectations are followed.

Nelson is not new to the weight room program. As he now enters his fifth year as a weight room coach, Nelson has plenty of experience under his belt to help newcomers and returning veterans with their gains. In fact, Nelson lifted weights all throughout his high school and college days thanks to his participation in high school and college football.

"I started lifting weights as a freshman in high school for football. I trained through college and studied kinesiology in college, too," he said.

All in all, the weight room is a great place to become more fit. Nelson added that the weight room program is "a great way for a student to find out who they are as a person."

"If people want help, I can give them specific workouts to try," Nelson said. "I don't force anyone to do anything they don't want to but I do try and challenge kids to do what their body can do, not what their brain thinks they can do. I look at weightlifting as, 'You have to be safe,' not, 'How much can you lift?'"

Spring squads hope to recruit ninth graders

The large number of senior athletes who graduated last spring means that all Cooper sports teams have open spots to fill



Photo by MS. SCHUELKE

Members of the Hawks boys track squad saw individual success at the Metro West Conference Championship Meet in 2022.

By NOLAN ANDLER
Quill staff writer

When March comes around and it starts getting warmer outside, the sports that Cooper offers in the spring season can let you go outside, compete and make friendships. The spring season is also a great time for fall and winter athletes to keep in shape for their sports in the coming school year. All of the following Hawks squads are looking to grow their rosters with the incoming ninth graders starting at Cooper this year.

Boys and Girls Track

The 2021-2022 season for the boys and girls track teams saw positive results.

“We have seen some successes in our sprint events, especially the 100, 200 and 400. We also have some exceptionally competitive athletes in the long jump,” assistant coach Mr. Zuccola said. “Our standout athlete at the end of the season was definitely Jaxon Howard (12), who went to state in the shot and discus events.”

Zuccola’s outlook for the 2022-2023 season is positive as the team will focus on developing its younger athletes.

“Our team’s primary focus this year is on continuing to develop the young talent we already have and recruiting new athletes to join the team,” he said.

A typical day of practice for track starts with a warm-up run, plyometrics and group stretching. After that is finished, the athletes break up with their specific event coaches for that day’s workout.

A typical track meet lasts several hours and is comprised of many different events.

“A track meet traditionally begins with field events such as shot, disc, high jump, pole vault, long jump and triple jump getting underway before the running events begin. There are then 12 running events that take place as the field events continue concurrently. Most athletes compete in at least two and as many four events total,” Zuccola said.

For ninth graders considering track as a sport, Zuccola said it can teach you healthy habits.

“Track is a sport that can teach athletes about lifelong fitness and healthy living,” he said.

Baseball

Another sport to join in the spring is baseball. The baseball team has had a good amount of success during the 2021-2022 season, which saw the squad holding its own against other schools in the conference.

“Our team highlight was beating Kennedy 3-2,” 2022 graduate and team captain Hayden Tourtelotte said.

According to Tourtelotte, he loves the potential the team has for the 2022-2023 season, which will see Cooper in

a new conference.

“We have improved a lot this year and I believe our future is bright,” he said.

Baseball practice involves a consistent focus on fundamentals of the game.

“Practice includes warmups, long toss, fielding drills and a lot of hitting,” Tourtelotte said.

According to Tourtelotte, the baseball team plays seven-inning games against other teams in the conference.

Tourtelotte encourages incoming ninth graders to try out for the baseball squad.

“Baseball is a great way to challenge yourself and grow mentally,” he said.

Softball

A popular spring sport for girls to join is softball. Captain and 2022 graduate Morgan Stromberg said the 2021-2022 season saw the team’s roster expand.

p.m. and we were at the fields around 3-3:15 p.m. to warm up and get ready for the game,” Stromberg said.

Given all of the younger players on the team, Stromberg said it is a great time for incoming freshmen to come out for softball.

“I think freshmen would benefit from this sport because it teaches community and teamwork and the people you meet will be your friends all through high school,” she said.

Girls Lacrosse

The 2021-2022 girls lacrosse season saw the team playing hard despite its small roster.

“A highlight was our major comeback in our game with Columbia Heights that saw us taking and holding the lead with a minute left,” head coach Ms. Gelhar said.

Gelhar’s outlook for 2022-2023 is optimistic, especially if the team can recruit new players to replace the graduating seniors.



Photo by MARK BLOOM

The girls lacrosse team looks to add ninth graders this spring to replace 2022’s graduating seniors.

“I enjoyed how large our team was this year. I also think a highlight was the defense both teams played with and the amount of new players,” she said.

Stromberg’s outlook for 2022-2023 is positive, especially in light of the large number of young players taking part in the sport.

“The team is definitely going to be young, but hopefully, if all the players return, we will have a very large team and a strong program,” she said.

According to Stromberg, a typical day of softball practice consists of hitting and fielding drills.

“Practices this year started at 2:45 p.m. and ended around 5:30 p.m. We did hitting and fielding drills and worked on team building,” she said.

On game days, the team usually reports to the field at 3 p.m.

“Most games started around 4:30

“We have a lot of seniors this year, so there will be a lot of spots to fill,” she said.

Gelhar added that the team’s spirit continues to be strong despite playing against some pretty tough teams from neighboring high schools.

“We do what we can do to hold them down,” she said.

According to Gelhar, a normal practice day involves a focus on the fundamentals of lacrosse.

“Practice involves working on fundamentals: ground balls, passing, footwork, game play,” she said.

Gelhar encourages interested ninth graders to consider lacrosse as a possible spring sport.

“Lacrosse is a unique sport that will help keep you in shape. The group is always welcoming to new players and supportive throughout the season.

There are 12 people on the field at a time, so everyone gets a lot of game time and playing opportunities,” she said.

Boys Lacrosse

The boys lacrosse squad had a solid 2021-2022 season that saw the team hold its own in close matches against tough schools. Travis Bruns, a team captain and 2022 graduate, said the highlight of season was a 10-5 victory over Irondale.

“Winning our first real game in years was a big moment,” Bruns said.

Bruns said his outlook for 2022-2023 is upbeat. The team has many returning players and the experience of beating Irondale will give the squad momentum heading into the future.

“I guarantee we will be winning more games,” he said.

According to Bruns, a typical day in practice follows an established routine.

“We lap the field and do passing

drills from 3-3:30 p.m. We then do skills training from 3:30-4 p.m. and a scrimmage or line drilling from 4-5 p.m.,” he said.

Bruns said a lacrosse game consists of four, 12-minute quarters and a five-minute halftime.

For ninth graders considering a spring sport, Bruns said lacrosse is a good option.

“Lacrosse is a fun, competitive family and it lets you play the fastest game on two feet,” he said.

Boys Tennis

The boys tennis team made up for its small roster in 2021-2022 with a competitive spirit. In fact, the team managed to put together a win despite its limited number of players.

“The highlight of 2022 is when we won our scrimmage against Brook-

lyn Center,” team captain and 2022 graduate Bruno Coelho Carvalho said.

Looking toward the 2022-2023 season, Coelho Carvalho said there will be only three returning players, which means it will be important for them to recruit.

Tennis practice starts right after school with warmups, followed by skills development.

“We usually start by warming up a little bit and then our coach tells us what the plan will be for the day. Sometimes, he asks if we want to work on something specific, too,” Coelho Carvalho said.

Due to the limited number of players, all of the matches in the 2021-2022 season were scrimmages against other local schools.

“When we got there, the other team was usually playing and warming up. The coaches would introduce us and we would start to warm up with them. The players who were going to play against each other would warm up together. After some time, we would start the match. Everyone had a lot of fun and it was a good way to get more experience,” Coelho Carvalho said.

Coelho Carvalho encourages freshmen to come out for tennis, even if they have no prior experience.

“Tennis is an amazing sport. If you have a court, rackets, balls and another person you can play with, you are all set. You don’t need a lot of people as you would in other sports. Sometimes you can also play alone if you have a wall. It can be a bit hard in the beginning, but after you get the basics, it is really enjoyable and fun to play,” Coelho Carvalho said.

Girls Golf

Girls golf head coach Mr. Oscarson said that the highlight of the 2021-2022 season was seeing his three new team members get better over time.

“I really enjoyed having three girls this year who were all pretty new to the sport. I really enjoyed watching them not only improve their skills and better their understanding of the game, but also have a good time with their friends while doing it,” he said.

Oscarson’s hope for the 2022-2023 season is to get some new players to join his returning golfers.

“I am hoping that all of the girls who played this year return and we will continue to grow our team,” Oscarson said.

Cooper golfers compete based on their skill level, so most matches in 2021-2022 took place at the junior varsity level. However, Oscarson is hopeful to expand on that in 2022-2023.

“We may include a few varsity meets in our schedule,” he said.

For practice, the team goes to either the driving range or plays at a local course.

“We play at a local course such as New Hope, Centerbrook, Brookview or Eagle Lake. We practice Monday through Friday, with Fridays being optional,” he said.

Boys Golf

Head coach Mr. Fitze said the 2021-2022 boys golf squad saw a modest increase in its size, which led to a positive season.

“We’ve had more golfers compete in varsity meets than we have had in the past few seasons,” he said. “They are a cohesive bunch, and they do a fantastic job of coaching each other up.”

Contributing to the growth in the team’s numbers was a large group of underclassmen, which means the team will have a large group of golfers return for 2022-2023.

“This also helps us recruit new golfers to the team,” Fitze added.

A practice for the boys golf team consists of a warm up and stretching. The team then splits into two so coaches can instruct in smaller groups.

“Towards the end of practice, golfers work on areas of their game that they choose: putting, chipping irons or off the tee,” Fitze said.

During competitions, golfers play a different number of holes depending on whether or not they qualify as varsity. While varsity players take part in a full, 18-hole match, the JV team members play a nine-hole match.

No matter what their skill level might be, Fitze encourages Cooper ninth graders to join the team in 2022-2023.

“The team is extremely welcoming and work well together with each other and new golfers,” Fitze said.