

The Editor's Desk



3.15.21

Meet the Team:

- Hey my name is Bonnie. I love listening to music and reading online. I listen to music of different genres but now I am stuck on alternative music. My favorite things to give advice on are relationships (of any type), music, mental health, and dealing with emotions.
- Hi! My pen name is Snail. My hobbies include reading/ writing, watching shows, listening to music of many genres, and sometimes drawing. My favorite things to discuss are probably music, science, social issues, history, or the environment. Topics I can give advice on include school or managing stress.
- Hey my name is Liz. I love watching movies and shows. I also really enjoy cooking. Fun fact I'm currently learning French. You can ask me for any-type of advice. I am always down to help.
- Hi my name is Drake, and I'm passionate about music and all forms of self-improvement. I'd be more than happy to give advice on how to better manage your time, study for tests as well as advice on how to keep your spirits high during adversity. I'm also interested in political discussions on modern social issues, and the greater causes behind the issues we face today.
- Hey, this is Lele, I like to help others and learn and try new things. I would love to give you guys advice on school stress. I know during these times school has been feeling more of an option than an obligation and as days go on it might be more depressing causing more stress and I want to help you guys deal with that. Who knows maybe we can all try new ways of coping with this new normal together.
- Hey my name is Curly Pop. I like to listen to music watch shows and play on my Nintendo switch. I also am a very stubborn but caring friend. I am very quiet at first but once you get to know me, you'll probably be laughing most of the time. I love making people feel comfortable when around me!
- Hi all, my name is CDX and I love music and games. If you need any academic advice don't be afraid to reach out, I'm available as your aid!

The Phenomenon of Remote Learning and its Impact

By Jessica Abu, Editor in Chief

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, one's high school experience usually included early mornings, a commute, moving from class to class, and completing homework after school. The voices and laughter of students would fill classrooms. Teachers could see their students' faces, not just their Teams icons. Ms. Kass, one of Lincoln's art teachers, has an average twenty-five students per class. In a regular year, those students would travel in and out of her classroom at the sound of the bell.

There would be occasional assemblies, where students would hear from their guidance counselor, principal, and assistant principal about important issues. Besides organizing assemblies, Mr. Sayegh, the 10th-grade assistant principal, and other administrators conduct observations have meetings and other tasks.

Ms. Kass and Mr. Sayegh still fulfill the responsibilities that come with their positions, but it was not until March 2020 where the method used to complete these tasks would greatly shift. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, remote learning was introduced. Students now receive fully remote instruction or attend school depending on the cohort they are a part of. This model has been met with praise and criticism. Many appreciate the reduced commute to school. Others worry about the effects of reduced social interaction. Freshmen and sophomores wonder if they will be granted at least one fully "normal" year of high school. Juniors and seniors must face the impact of a pandemic on the college process. Seniors also lament the loss of typical senior year activities.

March 12, 2020, was the last day of fully in-person instruction for Lincoln High School. A feeling of uncertainty was held by many. Mr. Sayegh describes it as a "regular day" where "everybody was seeing the news". Soon, the focus of his and other staff consisted of preparing teachers with a "crash course of the technology [they'll] need to teach students remotely". Ms. Kass remembers it being a "nice day". She and her students were discussing a new art project. She "never thought that it would end so abruptly".

Fortunately, the online tools staff and students have been provided with have somewhat smoothed this process. Students now attend class by cohort or log onto class daily. Microsoft Teams has acted as a hub of student and staff activity. The video chat and call options are used for classes, and the chats provide a line of communication. To ensure her students are still learning, Ms. Kass incorporates a range of assignments in her courses. Students still do art projects, but they also learn from videos and BrainPOP activities. Mr. Sayegh and other administrative staff use programs such as Flipgrid or Nearpod.

Despite the help provided by these computer programs, fully connecting with the students has been a struggle. For Ms. Kass, "this year felt like it was [her] first year" of teaching, and she has been teaching for twenty-seven years. The number of students she sees in person has drastically reduced, and she describes her time used to teach as "divided" between online and in-person students. For Mr. Sayegh, it is sometimes harder to ensure consistent communication with students.

Fortunately, remote learning has not been exclusively difficult; there are some aspects of remote learning one can appreciate. Ms. Kass says that she "learned a lot more about how to use technology" and using Teams allows her to give "students feedback more immediately". Mr. Sayegh sees a great change in the future of education and believes that "as technology develops so should our education system". Both are eager to continue incorporating technology into their jobs in the future.

There is no doubt that it has been a hard year. When asked to provide advice for students, both staff members had similar messages prompting students to communicate. Mr. Sayegh encourages students to "reach out for help" from a trusted adult or friend. Ms. Kass also urges students to "interact" and "ask questions". Both are hopeful for the future and are excited for when more students can come in person. Although the world has been forever changed by COVID-19, many are optimistic that vaccine distribution, mask-wearing, and social distancing can cause some sense of normalcy to return.

The Editor's Desk would like to thank Ms. Kass and Mr. Sayegh for participating in this interview. We would also like to thank the teachers, administrators, and other staff members at Lincoln High School for working tirelessly to ensure we students are still efficiently learning and thriving.

NY Regents Exams Face Changes in the Midst of a Pandemic

By *Brendalee Torres*

From eighth grade, students are familiarized with and take the New York State Regents Examinations. The passing grade is a 65, and it is mandatory to pass at least five Regents exams to graduate high school. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, some ask how mandatory these exams are? Last year, high school students were excused from taking the 2020 exams. Having concerns regarding the stress already experienced from having to take classes online, students stormed to social media with petitions to cancel this year's Regents. Sophie Grosserode of the *Rockland/Westchester Journal News* in her article "New York state to propose giving four Regents exams in June, canceling six" shares with us that this might not be enough to cancel the standard testing. However, the way exams will be given out this year still faces some changes. In her article, Grosserodes talked to the Deputy Commissioner Dr. Kimberly Young Wilkins who is the Assistant Commissioner for Innovation and School Reform. Wilkins told her that if a "federal testing waiver" is not granted, "federal testing will be administered". After speaking to the Assistant Commissioner, Grosserode continued to write that not all exams will be given. Only four out of roughly ten Regents exams will be given in June. These exams included "Algebra I, English Language Arts, Living Environment, and Earth Science" says Dr. Kimberly Young Wilkins.

According to President Biden's education administration, even though the exams will be administered, these tests will not affect our eligibility to graduate. John Hildebran in an article in *Newsday* entitled, "New York school officials planning for four Regents exams in June", the author writes "President Joe Biden's administration has pressed for the resumption of nationwide testing, however, on grounds that score results will help inform the federal government on whether students are falling behind in their lessons." This plan gives the Regents exam a new purpose. The exam results will be used to gauge student performance in a pandemic. My question to the student body is this necessary? Since some students have already expressed issues, they have had learning online, are Regents exams still needed to determine student performance?

Music Recommendations

- Idontwannabeyouanymore- Billie Eilish
- Lo Vas A Olvidar- Billie Eilish & Rosaila
- Heartbreak Anniversary- Giveon
- VibeZ- Zayn
- Campus- Vampire Weekend
- Are You Bored Yet?- Clairo & Wallows
- Poetic Justice- Kendrick Lamar
- Pretty Little Fears- 6Black & J. Cole
- Right Where You Left Me- Taylor Swift
- Long Story Short- Taylor Swift

Show Recommendations

- Greys Anatomy
- The Vampire Diaries
- Tiny Pretty Things
- Avatar: The Last Airbender
- High School Musical: the series
- Anne with an E
- One Day at a Time
- Miraculous
- Naruto

Reminders:

- If you want any advice or just someone to talk to please fill out the form that your English/history teacher will have
- Every 2 weeks there is a new issue of the paper
- Follow us on Instagram for updates and polls (@theeditorsdesk)