

LGHS should support all school programs uniformly

by Neil Lugovoy
National Editor

One of the advantages of attending a high school as diverse as Los Gatos is the wide variety of activities, clubs, and sports available for students to engage in. Unfortunately, the administration at the high school has not always been willing to support every after school activity in the same way.

There are many clubs, teams, and activities at the high school that have enthusiastic student followings but require more support from the high school to succeed and grow. This lack of support leaves students frustrated and suffocates great programs. Additionally, other schools have more extensive versions of the same programs, and this leaves students wanting more.

One example is the speech and debate team at Los Gatos. This program requires an educated coaching staff to guide students through the formalities and nuances of debate. It also needs logistical organization to put together a wealth of evidence, make policy cases, and get students and judges to competitions. This year, the administration found a head coach after the season had already started, and has not even put up an advertisement for an assistant coach, despite requests from the captains of the team. This puts the burden of that organizational work onto the students and discourages new members.

Other schools such as Bellarmine, Evergreen, and Leland have much bigger programs with well-maintained websites, organized schedules, and fully staffed management. When the programs are more organized with the help of the administration, the students can focus on improving their forensic skills and putting time into actually debating.

Additionally, the Model UN program receives little attention or aid from the administration, despite the fact that other schools have much more comprehensive programs. At Cerritos High School, the MUN team has its own website, matching sweaters, two coaches, a summer program, a high school Model UN conference, a middle school conference, and a conference within its own program. At Los Gatos High School, this program is completely organized and run by two students. They have to coordinate travel arrangements to

conferences as far away as Irvine. This program fills a key role since there are no international relations or diplomacy classes offered at the high school, but it does not have the help it needs.

Similarly, certain sports teams lack support from the administration. For example, the cheer team has been national champions for the past four years but is not even featured on the athletics page on the school website, and its accomplishments are rarely mentioned by school administration. Furthermore, the baseball team had to raise 30,000 dollars without any school funding or help in order to refurbish its outdated field two years ago, just before the school decided to install turf on all fields.

Field hockey is ranked sixth in the nation by Maxpreps and won CCS in 2013 and 2014, yet it is rarely featured on the announcements. The field hockey field is not tended to by anyone at the school; instead, the head coach has to paint and prepare it himself

every lunch. Field quality is not just a matter of preference but is also a safety concern. As team captain **Hayden Manseau** describes, when the field is not tended to, injuries are more likely and it creates "divots and the ball will pop up and hit us in the face." The medical staff is not even present during field hockey games, and recently, when Manseau received a concussion during a game, the athletic trainer was at the football practice instead. Manseau did not receive immediate medical attention and had to go to the emergency room.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, the football program is consistently recognized by the administration and has ten paid coaches, its own website, and a constant stream of funding. The football bleachers and field have both been

rebuilt in the last four years.

To be clear, the football program is by no means in the wrong. It is an excellently run and publicized program that many people at the school enjoy watching or participating in. That level of support is the standard that we should hold our other programs at the school to. The school is clearly able to organize and support a team without requiring students or a single coach to run the entire thing, so why can't it do so for other programs?

While many students like to watch the football team and many people play on it, that is not reason enough to neglect other programs. LGHS has over 1,800 students, but only 186 boys play on the football team. That means that ten percent of the student body directly benefits from this special attention. Other people want their programs to be supported, and many football players are involved in other activities as well. The school's job is not to cater to a specific group of people but rather to provide opportunities to everyone in the school.

It is true that the football team makes a considerable amount of money off of ticket sales, but that does not mean that the administration can't help other programs in non-monetary ways such as recognizing them and helping them find coaches. The school should care little about profits; it is a public institution, so its goal is not to make money but to benefit the public. Its investors are the taxpayers in the area that send their children to the school, and a small portion of those students benefit from this preferential support for the football program.

It is also true that the administration is in a period of transition now that Mr. Autrey has left, but this is the perfect time for it to pivot towards a new outlook. This is an opportunity

for Ms. Grasty and the rest of the administration to improve the school by providing students with a variety of organized and well-funded programs that they can participate in, instead of just a few.

High school should be a place where students can experiment with different avenues of study and work to find what they like to do, and the administration should support that by nurturing other programs at the school.



NOVEMBER 2015

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|--------|---------|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 School Site Council 7-8pm | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 Veterans Day (No School) | 12 CASA Meeting 8:30 am | 13 Football v. Mt. View 7pm | 14 |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 Blood Drive | 19 Fall Play Performance 7:30pm | 20 Fall Play Performance 7:30pm | 21 Fall Play Performance 7:30pm |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 Thanksgiving Break | 26 Thanksgiving Break | 27 Thanksgiving Break | 28 |
| 29 | 30 | | | | | |



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