

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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...It doesn't make sense that only 130 students will utilize the \$5,718 that has been given to the Environmental Science classes in the third trimester. With all of the budget cuts, the money should be used to clubs and other groups within the district that will affect most of the students. STUGO could use the money to replace the Seroogy Bar sales. This would help STUGO to continue what they do to help the community. STUGO could use the \$5,718 and another \$450 that went to a support education class to help the community. That would total to \$6,168 that Mason could use to help STUGO keep going. This could take out some of the deficit left by the Senate Bill 210 and help to keep activities and clubs going in the future.

Cameron Forsythe, freshman

Dear Editor,

No more bake sales? I think this is taking a good idea too far. Senate Bill 210 says that you can't sell unhealthy food during school, meaning no more bake sales or hot dogs at Mason High School. I think the schools should be teaching students more about making healthy choices, not just eliminating all unhealthy food during school. They should be teaching that you should only eat sweets in moderation. Even if students can't get sweets at school, they will just go home and eat whatever they want. They should be focusing on exercise too, not just getting rid of unhealthy food.

Without having bake sales or Seroogy bars to sell, I think it will make it a lot harder to do fundraising for the school, because I don't think as many people will buy fruits and vegetables at school. It will affect other causes too, because you might not raise as much money for the causes you are trying to help, like Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. You could get creative with what to sell, but it might not sell as well as a bake sale or hot dogs might.

Taylor Wood, freshman

Dear Editor,

It's cold. And the bus stop still is a long way away. It seems even longer with the budget cuts that have started this year, and we students have noticed. But I believe the deduction of bus stops per neighborhood is one of the major impacts to those of us who don't drive yet, ...Sure, this deduction probably only impacts freshman and sophomores here at the high school but then, it also impacts MMS and MI students as well. Yes, the budgets have been cut, but there are other things they could fix other than dedicating the number of bus stops. I'm sure that no one is very fond or happy with getting up even earlier than they have been. Winter seems to last forever, and having to walk ten minutes to the nearest bus stop will be irritable, so I don't think that of the things they cut or deduct, they should deduct bus stops.

Avery Heffron, freshman

Cracking the ACT code

Students create coping mechanisms to get through standard college admittance exams

Ashley Calvani | Staff Writer

Standardized tests required for admittance to college are important to-do's on the checklists of upperclassmen, and a heavy weight on their minds, too, according to senior Sarah Sohn.

With students' futures relying on how well they perform on these tests, Sohn said it's no surprise that leading up to the tests, the pressure to do well can cripple even the sturdiest young scholars. There are, however, things that can be done to ease the pressure and help students perform well on the ACT.

According to Mason High School junior John Deaton, who received an ACT Composite score of 34, maintaining a positive perspective and having a confident attitude are key components of doing well. Getting extra practice doesn't hurt either Deaton said.

"My mom bought this online [program] with practice problems," Deaton said. "It's all about exactly what's on the ACT. There are so many [websites] out there [with practice programs to choose from]."

Carol Lehman, MHS science teacher, also teaches strategies to the science portion of the ACT at prepReady, an ACT preparation course.

"No matter what test prep you go to, [for] the math and the English [portions of the ACT], you can't be taught the content in a matter of four weeks; it's impossible, but what you can do is teach the kids strategies to succeed."

According to Lehman, one way to apply these strategies is to practice. Lehman said the best practice resource in her opinion for students is the book made by ACT*, called, "The Real ACT Guide."

Sohn, who scored a perfect 36 on the ACT, supports Lehman's opinion: she used the same book to practice on her own. According to Sohn, she improved her score from her first attempt by focusing, during the summer, for one week on the areas she had found troublesome. She said pacing herself was her biggest issue, and by practicing in the book and using a timer, she was able to better manage her pacing the next time she took the ACT in June.

According to Lehman, especially in the science portion of the ACT, which students generally score the lowest on, pacing is biggest problem all students face.

"You want to work quickly," Lehman said. "The biggest problem with the science ACT is kids don't finish. They're not working optimally."

Ann Delehanty-Koenig, Guidance Department Chair at Kings High School and founder of Futures on Fire, a college admissions advising and ACT prep company, said the key to fixing the problem of pacing is becoming familiar with the test.

"A lot of [the key to success] is about understanding how the test is designed and really taking yourself through practice problems, whether you buy a book, go take a class, [or] go online," Delehanty-Koenig said. "I always say to kids, 'You wouldn't travel to Europe without a map.' The ACT is the same way: if you're going into it totally cold, it's like going to a foreign country without a map."

According to Delehanty-Koenig, in order to reap the benefits from practicing, a student must dive into their results, too.

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