

MORNING HURDLES *Continued from page 1)*

It is a burden to wake up in the morning and think about spending our day with books and teachers.

We always think “one more minute, just one more minute” and we end up not wanting to get up at all. Why does school have to start so early in the morning? It deprives teenagers of the valuable sleep that we need daily.

We all have our unique morning routines that if side tracked, can make our whole day rough. One of the first things students do is shower and get dressed.

“I roll out of bed, roll on the shower, roll on my bike, Oh, and I get dressed somewhere in between,” stated Nick Wright-Bodine.

Sophomore Roman Kim who lives the way in South Brooklyn states, “I wake up at 5:00AM, shower, brush my teeth, wash my face, put on my contacts, put on my clothes, and then I grab something to eat while I walk two blocks to the subway.”

Junior Utak West who also lives in Brooklyn has to shower and get ready very early. He states that, “I have to look in the mirror and make sure I look fly.”

There are also certain responsibilities we need to take care of before arriving at school.

For instance, Robert Billena, senior, has to wake up his parents who refuse to listen to their own alarm. “I wake up, put my alarm on snooze, and wake up again to wake up my parents. After I get ready, I still have to wait 35 to 40 minutes for my parents to get ready to drive me to school.”

Moreover, Cody Randall, senior, explained, “I have to feed my three cats and give a proper good bye to each one of them.”

It is amazing that any of these students get to school before 9:00AM.

The time we walk through the doors of our school depends on what time we walk out of our home. Senior Julia Dimitrova leaves her house at 7:50AM and is still late claiming, “It was the Bx 10 bus’s fault.

Hence, what is the biggest morning hurdle students have to go over every day? Is it Nick’s long cross borough bike ride, Billena’s parental responsibilities, Roman Kim’s and Robert Gong’s long train rides or Utak West’s mirror approval?

The toughest hurdle to leap every morning is just the mere opening of our eyes before the sun rises, to start getting ready to go to the one place that makes us groan... ☹



How a dance should look (?)

HALLOWEEN DANCE A SUCCESS

by *Tiara Tosca*

The history of HSAS’s dances has been overly dramatized, and at times overwhelming to the student body, especially after past chaos and controversy.

The school’s most recent dance (when this article was first written) was the Halloween Masquerade on October 27th, 2006. The dance was the first themed dance in HSAS history and the student government had their work cut out. They spent hours before the dance decorating the Faculty Dining Room.

The desired effect was exactly as they had hoped – students were shocked that it was actually only \$6 and it looked festive, including scarecrows, pumpkins, and twigs, just to name a few.

The turnout was astonishing, including a wide range of students from all grades, dressed as everything from \$10 an hour escorts to fictional Marvel characters.

Among the best costumes of the evening were the giant *Stewie Griffin*, Adam Diker’s *Ali G*, and Jonathan Kim’s *Sora* from the Kingdom Heart. Teachers became a popular choice as well; Matt Joseph, freshmen, was the mini-Halibi and Samuel Kim was the

replica of Mr. Sacchini.

In addition, there were also Greek goddesses, witches, a Girl Scout, bumble bees, a Little Red Riding Hood, hippies, nurses, cow girls and Sara Yankovitz.

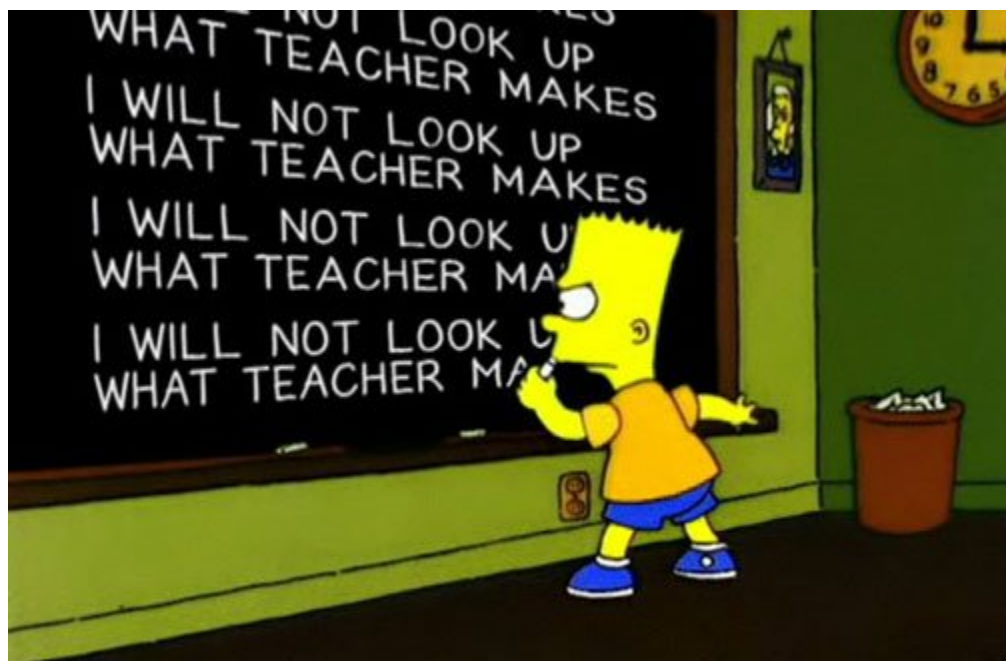
The DJ played varied music. He may not have interacted with the crowd and he may have played too much techno-70s flashback tracks, but at least people were moving around did not just sit and occupy space.

At one point everyone gathered in a circle and cheered each other on. Sonike Hendricks and Robert Billena even did back flips. Tamar Joseph break-danced and everyone else just laughed, either with them or at them.

The evening ended with the infamous Cha-Cha Slide. A crowd scrambled on to the dance floor and everyone moved in almost perfect unison.

The dance committee and teachers may have stressed a strict “No Grinding” policy, and for the most part there wasn’t that much grinding. But then again, it all depended on which side of the dance floor you happened to be on.

Overall, the dance was a success and may have been one of the best thus far. I think it is fair to say that another dance is highly anticipated. So ... when is the next one? ☹



Courtesy of: http://www.finlandforthought.net/wp-content/uploads/2007/05/simpsons_finland.jpg

HIGH SCHOOL DETENTION *by Janay Parker*

The first time we heard there was detention at the High School of American Studies we laughed and said, “You have got to be kidding me.”

Detention is defined as a punishment in which a student must remain confined for a short amount of time, usually during their lunch period or after school. At a specialized high school students are expected to be well behaved, respectful and mature. There should be no fighting, name calling or other characteristics of a regular New York City high school.

So what do we get detention for here at the High School of American Studies? Let’s try jay-

walking, snow ball fighting, “accidentally” forgetting your scheduled class, threatening others, being late and even for tossing baked ziti at a “friend”.

Before the installation of the traffic light in front of our school, we had to walk to the end of the block to cross legally. We did this every time we needed to exercise in PE class or when we needed to fill our bellies at the cafeteria.

So, many of us chose to cross in the middle of the block, or as our peace officers would say, “We would Jay Walk”.

At least half us remember having detention for jay-walking as first year students. Looking back, it was pretty funny and memorable. But,

back when we had to spend a hot summer day inside the building looking at Mr. Schulman’s shaved head, it was far from funny.

There is nothing worse than getting caught trying to cut class. Sean, Stephanie and I will never forget the day we were caught by officer Williams.

We thought we could make it to McDonalds on Kingbridge, but before we even stepped into the street we were caught. We had decided to go to the library, and claim that we had forgotten about our class. It didn’t work.

So, after we had walked all the way to the library, got caught, we then had to return to Mr.

Schulman’s office for an “interrogation”.

To Mr. Schulman’s credit, he attempted clever interrogation techniques to get us to trip on our stories. They didn’t work on us yet we were still caught and served a week of lunch detention staring at Mr. Schulman. We learned our lesson... almost.

None of us will ever forget the many reasons we had detention handed to us here at school. Yet, we will all refrain from telling these stories to our new college peers this coming fall. Compared to other high schools, especially in New York City, the reasons we’ve had detention are still well understood. ☹

YOUR FINGERTIPS...*(Continued from Page 1)*

The advantages are rather clear. Students can easily catch up with a lesson if they are forced to miss a class from sickness or an unavoidable event. This also allows students to think during class. Rather than simply letting the lesson die when the bell rings, students can actually make use of the internet to review clear notes and to see what the teacher believes to be important.

There are a large number of students and teachers that do agree with this idea in theory. In fact, when asked the majority of students believe their teachers should place their notes and homework online for students to access.

“If a student is absent, they will be able to keep up with the class,” said senior Kristen Wallace. Senior Alicia Ibrahim believes that cutting class would not increase because, “You cannot get the same information and understand from just looking at [the notes].”

Faculty members Ms. Villani and Mr. Sacchini agree that the value of the classroom experience is irreplaceable. They see HSAS students as smart enough to realize this and as a result will not miss class.

Senior Dave Balkran disagrees, stating “yes” when asked if he thought cutting would increase. He believes this is why we do not see more posting on the website.

Is this the only reason many teachers are refusing to post work and assignments online? Face it, our teachers are far from stupid and some do have lives outside of our tiny box of a school. More times than not it is too difficult to go out and place everything online. In some ideal situation, every teacher would do as Dr. Benmoussa does. There are teachers who believe this is a bad idea.

“The students should be more accountable. They have planners and can call a friend if they miss an assignment” says Mr. Mansdorf. He also shared that “the actual writing of notes in class encourages active learning.”

Mr. Sacchini has told his pre-calculus classes that he has plans to work on his Smartboard. However, when asked about why he has not gone ahead with this, he told *Common Sense* that the process of placing it online is difficult and still requires more work.

So here’s the deal. Yes, we all know it’s a great concept and in some sort of ideal world it would be perfect to use. In the end, there will always be students that will have their issues and they will cut or not bother to pay attention. At the same time, teachers have a lack of trust, which, while not without good reason, is a largely negative force. As long as these negatives continue, this idea cannot become a reality. ☞



(Picture Caption)

SENIOR TRIP WAS A BLAST !

by Joshua Hernandez

May 2005, the Class of 2007 goes on its sophomore trip to Washington DC. A select pack of students is banned that year from attending, but the remainder of the class has a fun and memorable time. A trip full of jokes and memories that have not faded away as they went on their senior trip on May 17th, 2007.

Knowing that their prom was a mere two weeks away, the entire class was determined to have an amazing time and managed to have that and much more.

I went on the trip planning to have a moderately good time without too many problems. The game plan was to stick to what appeared to be a “somewhat fun” itinerary and make due with whatever was provided to us on the trip by the great power, also known as Mr. Wong.

However, things took an oddly sharp turn for the best when the bus ride went on without a hitch.

“I was relaxing, I got to sleep, and I got to have a good time,” said Adonis Fanith.

These feelings were echoed through the actions of his fellow seniors as they dropped hip hop lyrics, took naps, and ate what they gathered at the pit stops taken along the way.

Upon arriving at the aquarium in Baltimore, MD Clelia Pena felt

“like everyone behind me was 10 years old” as we watched the dolphin show. The show was largely attended by children who did appear to be 10 years old.

Mr. Wong and Mr. Gilbert were sure to plan out a few more fun activities. We began with a tour of Baltimore with the highlight being our visit to Baltimore’s MoMA where we participated in a scavenger hunt.

“It was pretty fun and kept things interesting,” said Raphael Vidal of the scavenger hunt.

The first night concluded with a dinner cruise in Baltimore harbor where all seniors quickly found the dance floor. African dances, Hispanic duos, break dancers, and more all found their time to shine as the boat made its way through the Chesapeake waters.

The cruise’s end brought along the much anticipated night at the hotel. The guys and ladies were split and brought to their respective hotels, which were, oddly enough, a mere five minute drive from one another. They didn’t even waste gasoline pretending to drive farther by going in circles.

Once checked in we all went to our rooms, and while I cannot go and say what each room did, people had a good time.

At sunrise we were all eating breakfast and we were ready to go. Not to Fort McHenry perhaps but we were ready.

We discovered at the hotel that we would be headed to Six Flags for the entire day.

The trip proved to be a bonding experience for the seniors, bringing everyone together just before the prom.

The trip was most definitely one to remember and will have a lasting effect on our hearts, minds and *facebook* photos for some time to come.

A big THANKS to Mr. Wong and the senior government for putting together a great trip and an even bigger thanks to the senior class for making it better than any of us could have expected.



Moot Court Team Placed in top 4 in the City in 2006-07

ACTIVITIES TO SIGN UP FOR NOW!

CLUBS:

Key Club – All students interested in signing up for Key Club sponsored activities should seek out Ms. Rice for more details.

Moot Court – All students interested in participating in the HSAS Moot Court Team should seek out Ms. Peterson for more details.

Spanish Honor Society – All students interested in participating in the Spanish Honor Society should seek out Ms. Genao for more details.

VOLUNTEER NOW:

High School Fair(s) – All students interested in participating in and volunteering at the Citywide High School Fair at Brooklyn Tech should seek out Ms. Fiore for more details.

Prom Committee - All students interested in participating in this year’s Senior Prom should seek out Ms. Fiore for more details.

SPEAK ON THIS NOW:

This Issue of *Common Sense* has a new look and we want to hear from readers. Express your elation or discontent by dropping a message with a staff member of *Common Sense* or place comments in Mr. Elinson’s mail box located in the main office.