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Making Abundant Changes in the MAC

STORY AND GRAPHICS: REESE KIZY, WEB EDITOR

The media center holds memories of laughter between friends, study sessions the hour before a test, and gazes out the courtyard windows to see the geese. With the rebranding of the media center into the McAuley Academic Center, the Mercy community will continue to have the space to make more memories like these. But in a new light.

The McAuley Academic center, or the MAC, is a place of academic discovery and it is also a study space. It is shared with AMES, and library staff have desired for the name to fit the more communal atmosphere. While the media center is where people were supposed to be respectful and focus on their studies, “people would constantly mistreat it,” Mrs. Missy Kreucher, Mercy’s library director, said.

However, she expresses lots of excitement that the changes to the media center have changed the students’

actions and attitudes toward it. “The student body has reacted very well to the changes,” Kreucher said. “I think the dynamic in the media center has not changed too much and everything has been going smoothly.”

However, some students disagree. “Sometimes I miss being able to come here with friends,” senior Katie Schwab said. “It feels like it’s harder,

or more disruptive, to study in groups because of how quiet it is.” Although the media center has gone through many changes, students and Mrs. Kreucher remain optimistic that it is a place of independent study and a place intended to be very quiet.

“It is probably for the best that these changes were made to the MAC because last year

sometimes it would get a little out of control,” Schwab said.

“I like how it is really quiet in here,” freshman Scarlett Zebari said. “But I talk to my friends more in the lobby and the caf.”

No matter which way you look at it, the MAC is fresh and new, as are many of the things at school this year, including student behavior.

“In my opinion, students are showing more self-awareness for their actions which is a very good thing,” Kreucher said.

“The start to the year has been quiet and I have been very pleased by the lack of food in comparison to last year.”

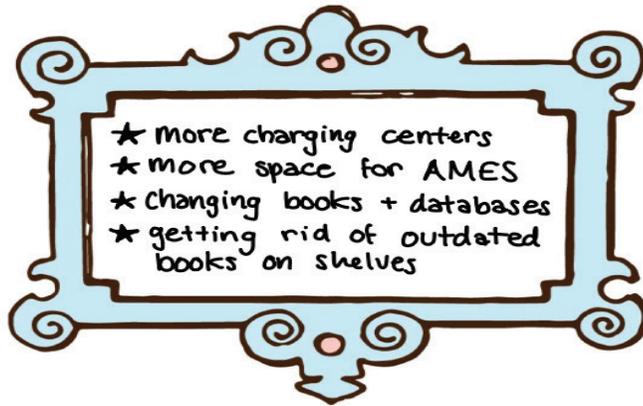
Kreucher shares more about the decision to change the name.

“Since libraries everywhere began being called media centers in the 1970s, I thought with the changes being made, a new name would fit. The MAC is supposed to be a more current label for the space as many other educational institutes have been creating more current

names too,” Kreucher said. “My hope was to elevate the space, since it wasn’t as in the 21st century.”

She goes on to explain that there has been a large “weeding” in the media center. This is when librarians clean out the book selection. With the online database on the website, along with the very outdated books on the shelves, she hopes to keep only current books and ones students will actually read. Also, she wants to “beef-up” the fiction section. In a more renovated state, she holds the MAC to the standard of deserving the name of Catherine McAuley.

“I wanted to invoke the founder in the name because I thought the fact that she had a mission to educate women would be a nice way to recognize what students do in this space,” Kreucher said. “I know students can continue to honor the space and I hope they will.”



New school year brings new AP classes

Mercy has gained two AP classes starting in the 2024-25 school year. As a second AP course is added for English, the department holds all AP courses offered by College board. Also, the Social Studies department gains an AP, now offering five.

In the English department, AP English Language and Composition is offered to juniors. The course is highly sought, as it is the #1 most popular AP exam for all grades and the #1 most popular AP class for 11th grade, according to the AP Central College Board website.

“The focus of the class is on both reading and writing, even though the name puts a focus on writing and composition,” AP lang teacher Mrs. Kristen Hames said. “I often tell students a huge focus is to read like a writer. That’s because we mainly look at how writers put their work together and the choices they make, then we use those skills when we write our own pieces.”

She explains that the class is structured in three main areas of focus including rhetorical analysis, synthesis, and argumentation.

“There is only non-fiction study, so we often look at speeches or articles to analyze,” Hames said.

Also, she stresses there is a stark difference between AP English Literature and Composition (taught

by Mrs. Herold), and AP English Language and Composition. AP Literature is solely a dive into fiction writing, while AP Language only covers non-fiction.

“I think the class is important because it enhances writing skills and lots of critical thinking,” Hames said. “It is definitely a challenging class because it involves reading in a different way which is new for many students.”

For its impact on Mercy, “the class is important for the balance of the English department, since many of the offerings are based around literature. It is also great for a start to studying law or business because it develops many of those skills,” Hames said.

For juniors in the class, “it is very interesting for exploring rhetorical skills and other things that are very new,” AP Lang student Abby Bores said. “I think it is an important class because it definitely develops my skills of reading like a writer. Mrs. Hames has done a great job with it so far and I’m excited for the rest of the class.”

Secondly, in the Social Studies department, AP African American Studies has been added to the curriculum. Taught by Mrs. Traci Smith, “the class dives into studies about people from the African diaspora, starting from prehistory, all the way up to contemporary times,” Smith said. “It is interdisciplinary, so it has to do with culture, art, literature, data sets,

social science, government, geography and more.”

She explains that the class could be in a humanities section because it covers human rights often, especially in learning about the triangular trade and slavery.

According to the AP Central website, the class in its most recent and best revisions can be officially offered starting this school year, and “its offering here is super important because Black history is American history, and since we have had to fight to get it in mainstream curriculum, as a school that has a core value of being a voice for dignity and respect, I think teaching African American history falls perfectly in line with our mission and our values,” Smith said.

Studying interdisciplinarily and at an AP level is bound to be challenging, but “for students and myself, learning about ancient Africa is very new and there are so many aspects to it. For example, African history from B.C.E. all the way up until the 1300s is only Unit 1,” Smith said. “Although the course is very challenging, it is important for the Mercy community because it shows students another American voice.”

The logistics of the class are very complex as the AP exam includes document based questions, short answer questions, multiple choice questions, an oral presentation and impromptu

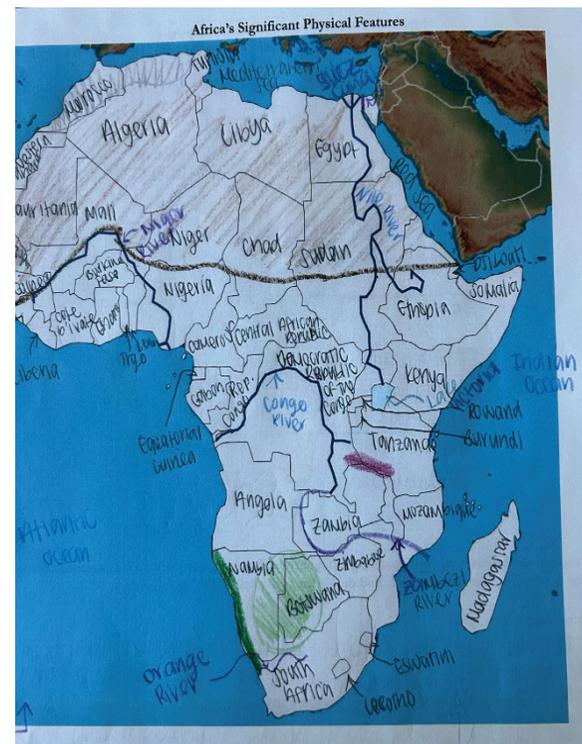
defensive questions based on their presentation. This year, the course is only offered to seniors, but next year it will extend to all upperclasswomen.

“I chose to take the class because we don’t go too deep into African history in our usual history classes, so I wanted to learn more,” senior Nyaela Hakim said. “My favorite part

of the class is collaborating with my friends and I love it so far because it teaches important things about history outside Euro-centric views.”

Both AP classes hold lots of potential for Mercy students and the Mercy community as a whole.

“I’m very excited for the rest of the year,” Hakim said.



Senior Jada Roberts draws and labels a map of Africa as part of her AP African American Studies class.

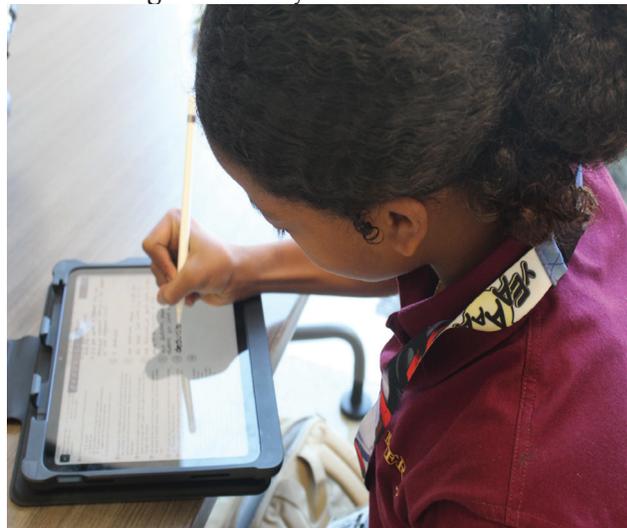
“This activity was for Unit 1, which covers all the African empires, the diaspora, and African geography,” Roberts said. Photo courtesy of Jada Roberts

Freshmen step into high school life

STORY, PHOTO AND GRAPHICS: **ANEESA SYED**

As the 2024-2025 Mercy school year commences, it ushers in many firsts, not only for faculty, academic programs, and students, but particularly freshman.

For freshman, high school can be many things: stressful, exciting, or an opportunity to try new things. We asked the class of 2028 if and how middle school was different from their current experience at Mercy. For some, it was no different—same agenda, still in uniform, same driving distance. Lots of girls attended catholic middle and elementary schools. For others, the thought of attending an entirely different school was not



Freshman Cameron Sanders completes her homework.

only nerve racking, but even exciting.

Mercy gave them an opportunity to become more independent and develop their time management skills while balancing all of their classes and extracurriculars.

“This is a first for how the school day actually flows and the day is more independent,” freshman Camille Yeluoshan said. No one tells you what to do and you have your own time. You get to divide up your time and you’re in control of it, I actually enjoy my time at school.”

Something most girls never had before coming to Mercy were iPads. They have significantly improved their ability to stay organized and productive, allowing them to easily access assignments and grades through Schoology and Powerschool.

“I really like having the iPads here because it makes me feel organized knowing that I’m not scrambling for papers anywhere, they’re all just in my iPad,” freshmen Mehreen Shaik says.

We may be known for our academic courses,

but our off hours come out on top as the most popular. Even as a freshman myself, I remember bragging to my friends about our free time off in school. It helped me to meet more people, hang out with friends, get food, and stay on top of classes with the additional time I had.

Staying on top of classes is another thing: the sudden transition from middle school to high school doesn’t just hold a social aspect; the academics become far more relevant and demanding...but this still poses the question: is it okay to lay back your freshman year?

“I had a lot of people tell me that freshman year was the easiest and that you could kind of chill, but that didn’t mean that I could just slack off. I think that each grade is just as important when colleges look at you and you just have to balance it.” junior Ainsley Henderson says.

Balance. That’s the challenge the freshmen must face with the new classes, clubs, and extracurriculars heading their way. Each grade, service hour, and sport counts. For starters, Mercy Club Expo Day gave them the perfect opportunity to open their horizon amongst a wide variety of various clubs. A new and rising club that gained lots of attraction was the South Asian Student Association, led by juniors Aniba Raza and Chandu Konera.

“I have been doing Bollywood dance and performances since I was four years old, so creating an opportunity for the freshman in performing at the Ethnic Bazaar is just amazing,” Chandu says.

As the freshmen broaden their horizons, many are drawn to the allure of the Performing Arts Department at here at Mercy.

“I joined acting and the theater department to try something new, and I realized how big and popular it is here. I love my acting class and it really helped me to meet new girls from all different grades,” freshman Leah Moser says.

It’s true; core classes such as algebra, history, or english are only underclassmen or upperclassmen, but the theater department is home to girls from all grade levels.

“I think the performing arts department itself is naturally inclusive and the community as a whole does a good job, Performing Arts Department Chair Mrs. Shelley Bajorek said. “It’s all equal footing for each grade and I think we all come together really well.”

Another big part of high school life for freshmen is the school spirit, and many are already anticipating popular events like Homecoming and Spirit Week, which is approaching. These activities help them feel more connected to the school community and give them a sense of pride and belonging.

Homecoming is another topic that you might hear about in the hallways. It’s an entire process: picking out a dress, finding your people, taking pictures, and the freshmen are more than eager to attend their first high school formal event. Like this, they now have the ability to attend special events throughout the year such as bonfires, senior nights, fundraisers, and so much more.

“I remember when I was a freshman and I was really excited about spirit week and dressing up,” junior Hannah Heizman said. “I think that homecoming was also another really popular event amongst our class because we never really got to do that in eighth grade so it was really cool picking out a dress and going out with my friends for the first time at homecoming. I just know the freshmen are really excited about it this year.”

“It’s different than my middle school, but in a good way,” freshman Mehreen Shaik said. “I’m really excited to see what’s to come!”

What’s something new to you at Mercy?

2028

“All the free time!” –Felicity Jackson

“Having a language teacher that actually teaches the language.” –Colleen Shaw

“Acting!!” –Leah Moser

“Wearing uniform.” –Rosemary Stork

A local guide to pumpkin spice lattes

STORY, PHOTO AND GRAPHICS: **ZAARA AHMED, COPY EDITOR**

As leaves start changing colors and temperatures begin to drop, pumpkin spice lattes make their anticipated comeback into cafes everywhere. A quality pumpkin spice latte is hard to come by—a good PSL has to be the perfect balance of espresso, sweetness, and pumpkin spice, no exceptions allowed.

Finding the perfect PSL is a challenging task, which is exactly why I'm here to help. I've visited the following local cafes with the sole purpose of finding the best PSL so that you don't have to.

Cafe #1: Farmhouse Coffee & Ice Cream:

Farmhouse Coffee & Ice Cream is located on 12 Mile Rd between Orchard Lake and Middlebelt Rds, making it a short three minute drive away from Mercy. Upon first look, the small cafe doesn't seem like much, however, the atmosphere inside is a whole different story. The cafe was quiet, the perfect temperature of warm, and filled with the aroma of coffee beans and freshly brewed espresso.

Although the cafe itself was peaceful, I couldn't help but notice the lack of seating options, which took away from the overall experience. Adding a few more tables or creating a better layout would make a big difference.

The menu is extensive, ranging from sandwiches to ice cream. They serve a variety of fall drinks, such as a spiced apple chai, a caramel apple latte, and a s'mores mocha. The most popular drink on their fall menu goes without saying: the pumpkin delight latte (their take on a PSL).

To make the pumpkin delight latte, they combine espresso, milk, house-made pumpkin syrup, and pumpkin purée. I ordered a hot pumpkin delight latte with whipped cream and pumpkin pie spice—the perfect fall indulgence. Upon first sip, I tasted the authentic pumpkin flavor. It was apparent that they didn't use artificial pumpkin flavoring but instead real pumpkin purée. The pumpkin taste was subtle yet distinct, complementing the espresso and milk.

The one and only critic that I have is regarding the temperature of the coffee. I felt as if the latte was served warm instead of hot, which was a disappointment. If the latte were to be made slightly hotter, it would truly be an amazing, well-rounded PSL.

Farmhouse PSL rating: 4/5



Cafe #2: Sweet Brew Café:

Sweet Brew Cafe is located in downtown Northville, specifically on West Main St. The exterior of the cafe looks very inviting and the interior is fair-

ly large while still maintaining that warm, cozy feel. There were many seating options, both outdoors and indoors, which I particularly liked in comparison to Farmhouse Coffee & Ice Cream.

The first thing I noticed when I walked in was the considerable list of syrups they have to offer. They have nearly 40 different syrups, including unique flavors such as cookie dough, cake batter and cheesecake. As for their fall menu, they are currently offering pumpkin spice lattes and amaretto cherry lattes. The barista informed me that they are looking to further expand their fall menu in weeks to come.

I ordered a hot pumpkin spice latte and, unfortunately, was greeted with disappointment. Upon taking my first sip, I couldn't even taste the pumpkin, only milk. As I continued drinking, the pumpkin flavor slowly started making an appearance. Even so, the pumpkin tasted somewhat artificial and unauthentic. The espresso, milk, and pumpkin just didn't flow together at all, a major let down.

One of the few positive remarks I have is that the latte was served at the perfect temperature. It was steaming hot, making it perfect for cool fall days. Additionally, the service was stellar. The barista was ready to take my order as soon as I walked in and my PSL took all of one minute to make.

Overall, I would not recommend this cafe to anyone looking for a good PSL. However, I would recommend this cafe to anyone who needs a new study location or someone who is interested in trying anything else from their extensive menu.

Sweet Brew Cafe PSL rating: 2/5



Cafe #3: Tuscan Cafe:

Tuscan Cafe is located in downtown Northville on East Main St. The cafe lies in the heart of downtown Northville, making it the perfect place to stop by for a PSL. The outside of the cafe is very charming and inviting. The doors were left wide open, which made it accessible to people walking on the streets to grab a quick coffee.

The inside of the cafe was very lively and energetic. Although the enthusiasm of the place was a good quality, I wouldn't recommend this cafe to anyone who wants a quiet place to study. To be honest, it felt more like a restaurant rather than a cafe.

As for their menu, the only fall drink they are currently offering is a pumpkin spice latte. I hope that they make an effort to expand their fall menu since it only consists of one thing. I ordered a hot pumpkin spice latte and was left shocked.

I wouldn't be exaggerating if I said that this PSL

was the best one I've ever had. The pumpkin flavor tasted so authentic and combined so wonderfully with the milk and espresso. The proportions of espresso, milk, and pumpkin was absolute perfection. The latte truly had the perfect amount of sweetness and just enough pumpkin flavoring. The espresso was rich and complemented the creamy milk. Not only was the taste amazing, but it also came out at the exact perfect temperature. If you are looking for the perfect fall PSL, please do yourself a favor and visit Tuscan Cafe.

Tuscan Cafe PSL rating: 5/5



Spirit Week: What to wear

STORY AND GRAPHICS: **MEGAN SULLIVAN, DESIGN EDITOR**

Spirit Week is a long-standing tradition at Mercy. With different themed days each week, Mercy girls eagerly countdown the Homecoming dance. By dressing up, a student can earn their grade spirit points, and students are encouraged to go all out with their costumes as long as they stay within the school guidelines. However, as the excitement amps up and spirit week draws near, the inevitable question arises: "What should I wear?"

Don't stress, we've got you covered.

Monday:

The theme for Monday is Generations Day. If you are a junior, sophomore, or freshman, this means you dress any age between 1-18. With a onesie, pacifier and teddy bear, you can be a baby, or wear clothes with your favorite childhood TV show on it and some pigtails, to be a toddler.

If you are a senior, you dress any age between 19-100. This means you could rock office attire and be middle-aged. You can rep your favorite college gear and be a twenty year old. Or, you can put on a grey wig and sweater and be a senior citizen.

Tuesday:

For this day, each student is tasked with dressing up as their favorite Disney character. This could be Minnie Mouse, Tinkerbell, or your favorite Disney Princess. For this theme, think outside of the box. You could dress up as a character from the Disney Channel, or from a Disney franchise like "Star Wars." Anything Disney is free reign.

Wednesday:

Wednesday is Make A Difference Day, a Mercy tradition where students do acts of service. For this day, students are told to wear their Mercy spirit shirts and their choice of pants. Although there is no theme, you can still have fun with your outfit. Students will be rewarded points for their grade by wearing yellow if they are underclassmen and maroon if they are upperclassmen.

Thursday:

Inspired by the Disney classic "Teen Beach Movie", Thursday's theme is Teen Beach Day. Throwing on some pastel colors, shades, and some sandals, students can show their inner surfer. To accessorize, grab a beach ball, goggles, or a lei.

To go the biker route, students can wear leather jackets, red clothes, bandanas, and boots. For an added element draw on some fake tattoos or slick your hair back.

Friday:

As is the Mercy tradition, on Friday students wear their class color as they compete in field day events. Don't be afraid to go all out with hair dye, face make-up, and even colorful tutus.

Monday

Generations Day

Dress as an under 18 year old or adult

Baby



Middle Aged



Elderly



Tuesday

Disney Day

Dress as your favorite Disney character

Minnie Mouse



Cruella DeVille



Tinker Bell



Thursday

Teen Beach Day

Dress as a Biker or a Surfer

Surfer



Biker



Friday

Class Colors Day

Dress in the color of your grade

Freshmen



Senior



Review: Mercy girls' favorite albums

STORY, PHOTO AND GRAPHICS: **ISA PORTILLO, SENIOR REPORTER**

Newsprint asked Mercy students what their favorite albums were. Here are their selections (and our reviews!):

Freshman: Marlo Schlieve

GUTS

by Olivia Rodrigo



9/10

GUTS is a brutally honest look at the experiences of the American teenager—loud and rebellious one moment, and quiet and introspective the next. Olivia Rodrigo’s lyrics mix fun pop-punk and teenage angst to create a painfully relatable album. A well-balanced mix of ballads and louder jams that I wouldn’t recommend putting on shuffle (unless you want to go from rocking out to crying) makes Rodrigo’s album feel authentic to the complicated emotions of teenage angst.

Sophomore: Adrianna Lumaj



7/10

Brandon Lake combines pop and alt rock beats with inspiring lyrics and good vibes, leaving behind a well-balanced album with a God-praising message. The drums and guitar work make for a varied listening experience, from soft and quiet to dramatic and reverent. With a wide variety of religious jams to work with, COAT OF MANY COLORS is a well-rounded album with praise in each note.

COAT OF MANY
COLORS
by Brandon Lake

Junior: Camryn Alexander



Views
by Drake

7.5/10

Drake’s Views is an album full of lyrics about love and success, intermixed with hip-hop beats and impressive guest vocals. Each song tells its own story about Drake’s career or relationships or climb to the top. Drake’s bars have their highs and lows, but the star of the show is the beats, which range from fast and catchy to slow and relaxed. This variety makes the album great for casual listening, and in songs like “Weston Road Flows” and “Too Good”, the slower beats show the best of Drake’s hip-hop style. Whether for background noise or general listening, Views is a pretty good album.

Senior: Sophie Derkevorkian



Great American
Bar Scene
by Zach Bryan

9.5/10

Great American Bar Scene is an album full of love—for home, for family, and for friends new and old. The acoustic guitar and Zach Bryan’s smooth vocals create a sense of nostalgia in songs that hold their charm no matter how many times you play them. The songs range from the country style “American Nights” to the deeper gothic “Oak Island” and the softer “Bass Boat”, creating a warm, full album that is perfect for study music or blasting in the car.

Was adviser merging the right move?

STORY AND GRAPHICS: **MEGAN SULLIVAN, DESIGN EDITOR AND TESS O'DONNELL, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

Adviser groups are a staple of the Mercy High School experience. Giving each student a small, supportive community to lean on each day of their four years at Mercy, the adviser group is more than a home room—it is a part of Mercy's culture. However, as times change, Mercy changes as well as evident in the major restructuring introduced to the adviser system this year. Each adviser group was combined with another taking the then 46 adviser groups with an average of around eleven students to 23 adviser groups with an average of nearly 22 students. With every student and staff member being impacted by the switch, opinions on this decision vary widely:

Merged advisers divide students

By: Megan Sullivan

Starting as a random grouping of students, the four years spent with your adviser turns you into a family, connecting students of various grade levels, interests, and activities.

These statements couldn't be more true for Mercy junior Grace Kim who found herself extremely close with the students of her previous adviser group of the past two years. Within this group, she found unlikely companionship in those the year above her who welcomed her to Mercy as a scared freshman.

"My old advisor group, we were really close to each other," Kim said. "We would always talk to each other, and always help each other with our classes."

However, in changes made to the adviser system, not all groups survived—much like Kim's.

Although the majority of groups simply combined with another, some were dispersed the into various groups around the school. This fractures the previous connections made and overrides the intended notions of adviser groups—to allow students to create lasting friendships.

"I was close with my seniors and my freshman at the time because that's what advisers do, bring you together despite what grade you're in," Kim said. "It was kinda sad for everyone".

However, the continuation of some of these bonds has created issues within the new adviser groups as well. While the purpose of the combination of advisers was to encourage new connections, this has not been the result.

When entering a large group of people, we tend to gravitate towards those we know. As a result, within the new adviser groups have emerged many smaller groupings of students who knew each other before, likely students of one grade or one previous adviser.

"The seniors who knew each other are sticking together, and so are the new freshmen," Sophomore Campbell Shore

said. "I do think everybody who was an old adviser is just staying with each other or not really going with anyone else because they don't know anyone else."

"Yeah its good that were all in the same room, but we dont talk with other people." Senior Sara Samulak said. "We just sit at the tables we used to sit at with the same people."

Although big groups allow more students to meet, many think the groups have grown too large. While in the past the smaller groups of ten to twelve girls created a closer bond between students, groups of 20 students make group dis-

cussion nearly impossible. As a result, reaching out to new students can be almost harder within the new adviser system.

"I feel like they are so big now that I don't talk to anybody else," Shore said, "especially since I'm now a sophomore and I already know people, and then upperclassman already know people from their adviser, so it's really hard to connect with everybody."

With bigger groups causing lower engagement and the division of relationships, merged advisers do more harm than good.

Merged advisers unify students

By: Tess O'Donnell

The 2024-2025 school year at Mercy High School has already brought with it big changes: super advisers. These merged advisers are a combination of two existing advisers into one much larger group. While many students were quick to judge the adviser merge, the positives of the combining are invaluable to the students.

Firstly, with the combination of adviser groups, students are given more choices of people to form connections with. Although everyone at Mercy is great, not all personalities are compatible and if a student finds themselves in an adviser

"It's nice that there are more people to talk to with the merged advisers," Maya Zarow, junior, said.

In addition to more student connections, the adviser merging also gives students a chance to interact daily with another staff member in the building.

"All our staff members are wonderful, sometimes students just connect differently with different staff members so that widens the scope as well, so instead of maybe one adult you two adults now that students have more opportunity to forge relationships with," Principal Patricia Sattler said.

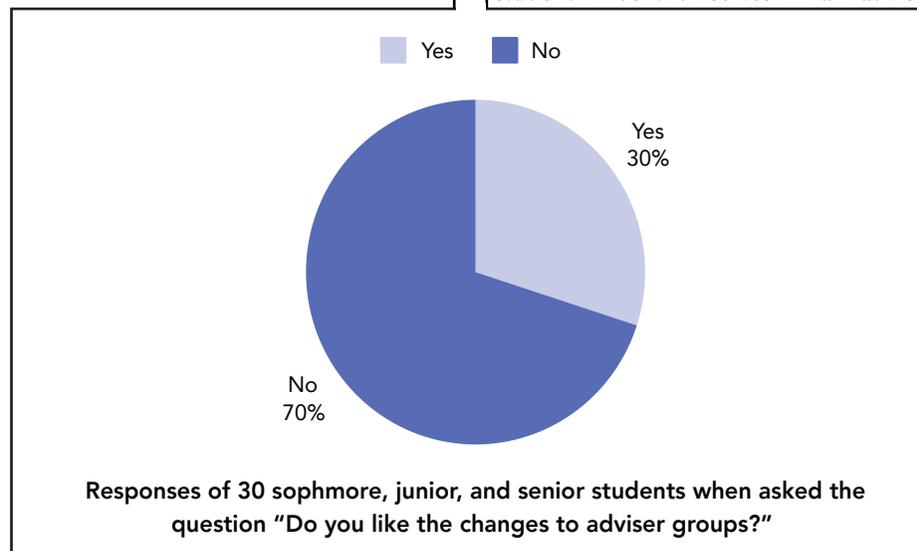
Additionally, adviser group merging greatly benefits the freshman class. Link Crew, a program within Mercy that specializes in helping freshmen transition to high school, was a key part of identifying the growing stress that smaller adviser groups put onto ninth graders. As less ninth graders enrolled and larger classes graduated, adviser groups were becoming increasingly smaller with fewer underclassmen. Now, more ninth graders are put into a group and there are more opportunities for ninth graders to form friendships with different people.

"When you have one more person to talk to, it's a lot more stressful than one in a group of six, where your voice can be put in there but you don't have to carry the conversation," McGavin said.

This influx of voices and personalities is hoped to help ninth graders, and other students, create an environment and group that they look forward to going to everyday.

"I get to meet more freshmen and I get the chance to talk more," Sam Francis, sophomore, said.

While change is always hard, and small adviser groups are all students at Mercy have known, when the benefits are looked at, super groups have the potential to make Mercy the richest community it has ever been.



group that doesn't have the capability to form friendships they are looking for, then adviser group time could quickly turn into a lonely part of the day.

"It seemed like there were a lot of good reasons to give kids more possibilities of students in their grade that they could socialize with when merging adviser groups," Associate Principal of Academic Affairs at Mercy Ms. Colleen McMaster said.

Now that the groups are larger, there are more chances to connect with different people, giving students an opportunity to make new friends and meet their people.

Art students step up to the AP level

STORY: **STELLA COE, JUNIOR REPORTER**

Walking into S2, an array of pottery, metal work, paintings, drawings and sketching cover the art room. All these pieces you can see are still being finished and critiqued by the artists who made them, who always strive for perfection and excellence in their work. But who are the artists of these pieces? Mercy High School's AP 2-D Art and Design class senior students.

"I really like the class and am enjoying working." AP 2-D Art and Design student Penelope Livermore, said. "I like art so this is my jam, I'm just doing what I love in the studio."

Penelope decided to take AP 2-D Art and Design after completing ceramics, drawing, intermediate drawing, and painting. On the other hand some students are less experienced but can still succeed:

"I didn't really take an art class, I took film and animation though." AP 2-D Art and Design student Bryce Costa said. "It didn't count as a prerequisite, but I showed I could draw quite well, so I was allowed to do AP 2-D Art and Design."

AP 2-D Art and Design specializes in any kind of art 2D related, like painting and photography, compared to AP drawing that solely focuses on drawing, meaning these students need to be prepared for the class rigor.

"So far the work doesn't seem difficult but the grading is extremely difficult," Costa said.

The class is laid out to benefit the students' limited time to complete their art portfolio. The bulk of a students' portfolio is their sustain investigation; A research thesis they create during the semester that

they add their artistic pieces to. Each piece includes a written explanation on its message and connection to the thesis. On top of this, their portfolio also includes selective works, which can be unrelated to the thesis, but exemplify the students craftsmanship.

"Craftsmanship includes skills you're really good at." Livermore said. "Let's say you're good at shading, you want to show off that skill."

Mrs. Susan Smith, art department and AP 2-D Art and Design teacher, builds off this idea in the everyday classroom.

"I would say once we're into a project it's a very project based curriculum." AP 2-D Art and Design teacher Mrs. Susan Smith said. "They know the project they're working on, they come in, set up, get going. It's a lot of one-on-one individual help. I'm the coach or the one on the side helping them to achieve their goal."

The students are critiqued critically, so they can achieve the best pieces that will receive college credit and optimal scores. Each week students work on their pieces, and they revise as they are critiqued.

"One week it will be critiquing in class at the half-way point of the piece, the following week it's due," Mrs. Smith said. "Then the following week a critique and then the next week it's due."

The feedback they receive must help them improve their pieces.

"A critique where everyone is giving superficial praise doesn't really push their learning...One of my roles is to be very honest with students if I think

something is not going to score well, I would be doing them a great disservice if I wasn't honest about that," Mrs. Smith said.

Even though it's early in the semester, these students have started to work on their art portfolios they plan to submit to the College Board in the Spring.

"For the portfolio you pick a theme at the beginning of the year and you create 15 artworks," Coasta said. "By the end of the year you should have 15 to submit to the board."

Their portfolios will be scored by a panel of judges to receive a score of one through five, meeting this standard will be a challenge, but both students are confident in their abilities.

Although you should have a liking for art if you commit to this class, teacher Mrs. Smith formats the class in a manageable way for students. She even compares it to a varsity sport.

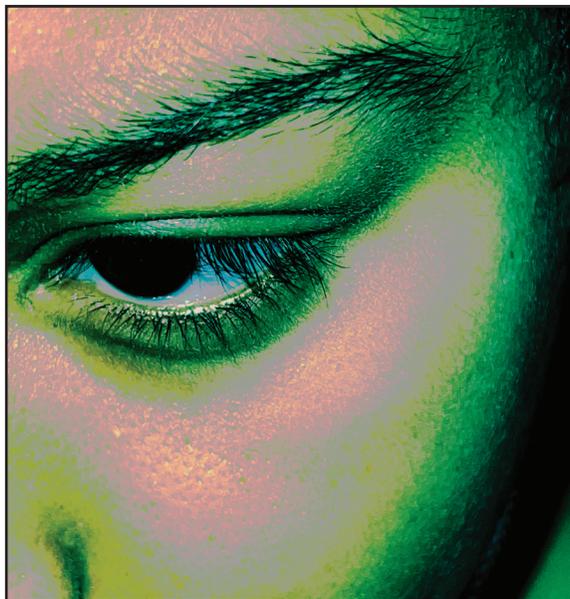
"Pursuing AP art is the equivalent of pursuing a varsity level sport at Mercy and the time commitment," Mrs. Smith said. "If you think about a varsity level sport they have to work every week, day and evenings, and the coach is there to help them work and help them work as a team so that's really my goal."

Overall, the students enjoy their learning and promote the class to other aspiring art students.

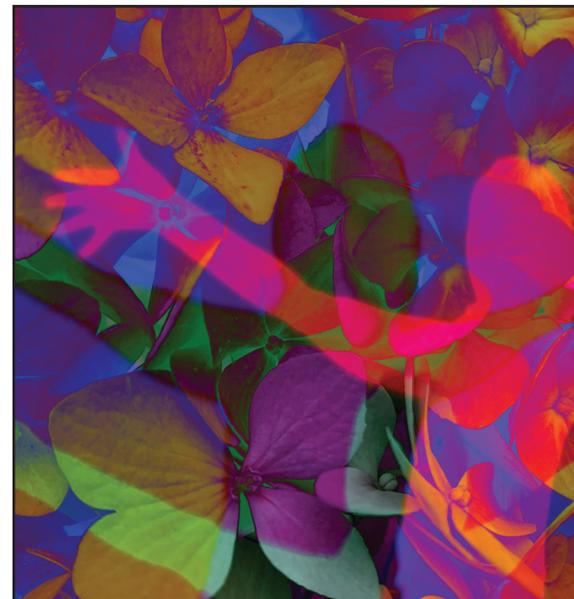
"If you're thinking about taking this class, even if you don't want to go into art, you should take it, it's a really good class, and I'm really enjoying it," Livermore said.



Art Work by Penelope Livermore
Photo courtesy Mrs. Susan Smith



Art Work by Bryce Costa
Photo courtesy Mrs. Susan Smith



Art Work by Marie Schueneman
Photo courtesy Mrs. Susan Smith

Fall Sports: Interviews with Captains

STORY AND PHOTOS: **TESS O'DONNELL, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF**

ADDITIONAL REPORTING: **STELLA COE, JUNIOR REPORTER**

Athletics are a cornerstone of the Mercy High School experience and the five fall sports, volleyball, swimming and diving, cross country, golf and field hockey, are no exception. Interviews were conducted with two captains/ representatives from each

fall sport to hear their insight into their sports upcoming season.

Team captains/ representatives:

Cross Country: Sophie DerKevorkian '25 and Tess O'Donnell '25

Field Hockey: Evie Doneth '25 and Sara Samulak '25

Golf: Maeve Casey '25 and Lila Polakowski '25

Swimming and Diving: Caroline Lee '25 and Sydney Meyer '25

Volleyball: Jill Collins '25 and Campbell Flynn '25

What are your expectations for your team's season this year?

Cross Country

DerKevorkian: My expectation for the season is that everyone sets personal records and has fun with the team and bonds with each other.

O'Donnell: I expect that our team will be able to have a fun season where everyone sets season and personal records and we all can grow closer as teammates.

Field Hockey

Doneth: My expectations for Mercy field hockey are to win catholic leagues.

Samulak: We're trying to have a fun, successful season, while rebuilding the program.

Golf

Casey: Our expectations are to have fun and enjoy playing golf together.

Polakowski: I think just to grow as friends and also obviously to try to win another state tournament, but in order to do that we have to grow as a team.

Swimming and Diving

Lee: I just want everyone to be friends and everyone to feel super close to each other.

Meyer: My expectations for the team's season this year are to come together as a team, I want us to all collectively be a machine together, everyone giving 110%. The grind doesn't stop.

Volleyball

Collins: We want to win another state championship, play really well, have fun.

Flynn: Obviously, we have big expectations for our team because we won states last year, but we're going day by day, game by game, trying to get better everyday so we can accomplish winning states again this year.

Are there any positive changes that have been made this year that can excite supporters?

Cross Country

DerKevorkian: There are more runners than we had last year so we have a better chance of placing higher at meets.

O'Donnell: Almost all of our varsity runners have returned from last year and we have a couple of really talented freshman runners that can help us place higher at championship meets.

Field Hockey

Doneth: We changed our coaching staff for varsity.

Samulak: Improving our stick skills, so it looks cooler when we play. We're trying to win, everyone should come to our senior night game!

Golf

Casey: We've had a lot of key players work really hard over the summer to improve their game, so yes it looks good for the season.

Polakowski: I think a lot of off season work from a lot of our new players on varsity definitely helped us and will definitely help us throughout the season.

Swimming and Diving

Lee: We're working really hard and ready to race this year.

Meyer: This year the state meet is being held at Oakland University, which is closer to Mercy, so more supporters can come and watch.

Volleyball

Collins: We have a lot of new talent this year, Ella Andrews, our junior, can play. Very good middle hitter. A lot of the same team as last year, a good lineup.

Flynn: Ella can play now, she's going to really help us in the middle, opening up our offense.

What is the energy of the team like this year?

Cross Country

DerKevorkian: The energy is positive and upbeat and everyone gets along well.

O'Donnell: The energy is really good; we all get along really well and have fun with each other at meets and practices.

Field Hockey

Doneth: The energy is very good, we're getting really close to each other, so hopefully we'll a good season.

Samulak: The energy's good, we have a close bond this year and we're trying to have fun team bondings.

Golf

Casey: We are a really close group, and especially after being in Crystal Mountain we really got close as a team.

Polakowski: The energy is definitely a lot more positive than I've seen in the past, there's not really any drama between anybody and overall it is a good vibe.

Swimming and Diving

Lee: It's really fun and exciting. Everyone is always laughing and having fun at practice and cheering at meets.

Meyer: We're enthusiastic about swimming, we're excited, we're motivated.

Volleyball

Collins: Very positive. All of our freshmen brought in a lot of new energy. It's very fun this year. I'm so excited for the season. We have a fun year ahead.

Flynn: We have a lot of people on the team this year which means that we get hyped and we're really loud and everyone gets along really well with each other; we all have fun together on and off the court! I love playing with this group of people and I'm excited to see what's in store for us.



Photos courtesy of Sara Samulak and Lila Polakowski

Five by Five

STORY, PHOTOS AND GRAPHICS: **MEGAN SULLIVAN**



Brenda Hernandez '26

Chisom Nwoke '25

Isabela Romero, '27

Ryley Kline '25

Beatrice Lapuz '26

What class are you looking forward to?

AP Psychology

AP Government and Politics

Government

Intro to Engineering

AP Environmental Science

What has been your favorite lunch this year?

Pasta Bar

Pasta Bar

Sante Fe

Rasta Pasta

Santa Fe

What do you want to accomplish this year?

“Keeping up my grades, and having fun.”

“I hope to grow in connections with my peers and friends.”

“Better grades and new friends”

“Good relationships with all my friends before I graduate”

“To get good grades and spend time with my seniors”

What are you most excited for this year?

“I’m most excited for extracurriculars and events.”

“I’m excited to win Powderpuff”

The Bonfire

“I’m excited for all the times with my friend, all the dances, and senior activities.”

“I’m looking forward to all the classes i got to pick.”

Which club, sport, or extracurricular has been your favorite?

Robotics

Mercy UNICEF

Field Hockey

Robotics and Powderpuff

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