



THE SNEWSPAPER

BERNICE MACNAUGHTON HIGH SCHOOL - MONCTON NEW BRUNSWICK - NOVEMBER 30TH, 2025

AN INTERVIEW WITH OUR SUPERINTENDANT



Superintendent MacLean stopped by for an interview.

By: Layla Adams

On Friday, November 14th, the Superintendent and CEO of Anglophone East School District, Mr. Randolph MacLean, was kind enough to give up some of his time for an exclusive interview, where we discussed, among a few subjects, the responsibilities involved with such a position for the largest district in the province.

Mr. MacLean's influence ranges across 40 schools, 20 500 students, 4000 employees, and cascades out to the families of the students. Mr. MacLean assumes he is responsible for around a quarter of a million people. "Legally, I'm responsible for the learning of every one of those students. I'm responsible for their progress and their safety, their professional learning, and their success. We operate 100 busses a day. When I have students sitting on the busses, I am legally responsible for their safety."

Many decisions that are made and implemented in schools across our district, contrary to popular belief, aren't made by our teachers and principals; rather, they are made at district offices, by a small committee of around fifteen people. This committee has very distinct goals when it comes to the publicly funded education system. It comes down to the pillars of education which Mr. MacLean explained. "The district improvement plan starts with literacy and the target in literacy is every child, 100% of students, be able to read, write, and communicate in both instructional languages. Target for numeracy is 100% of our students will be at level mathematics, and be able to think logically, sequentially. Then the third pillar is safe and caring: every child and adult will feel safe, safe, cared for, and engaged in learning. And our last pillar is graduation, every child will graduate from high school."

Mr. MacLean stated that it's serendipitous that we were sitting in an auditorium for this portion of the interview,

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COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT DYSLEXIA

By: Holly Northrup-Banks

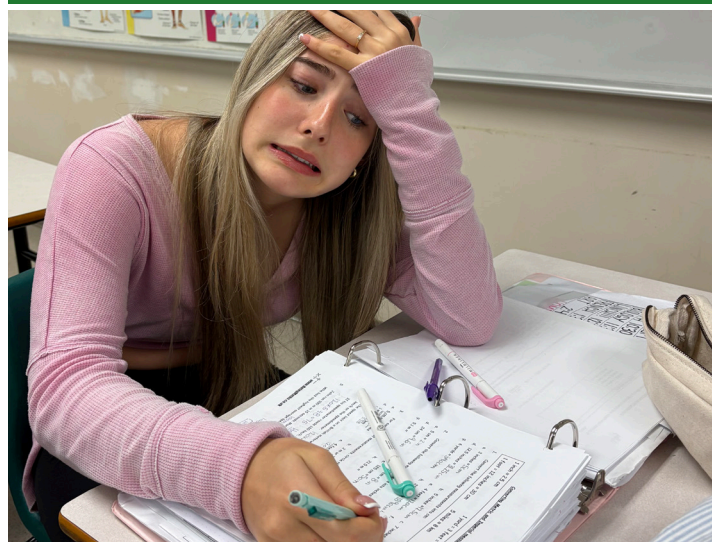
Many students at Bernice MacNaughton High School struggle and have disabilities, but you can't always see them, like with dyslexia. Many assume that all disabilities need to be visible, but those people are wrong.

Most think that 'dyslexia' means that words fall off the page when you read, but that's not true; it's not about eyesight. It's about how the brain processes language, especially sounds in words, which is very challenging. Not everyone with dyslexia suffers it at the same level; it depends all on how you process.

In a interview with Mrs. Tammy Pellerin, a resource teacher at BMHS, she was requested to share how she helps students with dyslexia and similar challenges. "Flexible assessments such as oral responses and extended time. I collaborate with classroom teachers to ensure accommodations are consistent and encourage students," she stated.

Many students express how they believe that accommodations for people with learning disabilities is not fair, but tools like audiobooks or extra time don't give an advantage

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Students with dyslexia face an uphill climb on most days.

LONG DISTANCE RELATIONSHIPS

TAKE EFFORT AND HUNDREDS OF DAILY TEXTS, STUDENTS SAY

By: Saifeldin Ibrahim



Photo credit: Alisa Baydemir

Long distance communication has become a normal part of teen life, but Bernice MacNaughton High School students say staying close through a screen takes more work and more texts than most people realize.

Grade 12 student Anya Boruva says the challenge depends on the day. "Sometimes long distance feels easy, like talking online is enough, and other times it feels tiring because you can't just walk up to the person," she said. She explained that keeping a strong connection can easily take more than 150 to 200 texts a day, especially when both people are busy.

For others, the main struggle isn't emotional, it's financial. Ernesto Mendoza, a grade 12 student, said constant messaging and calls can push phone plans to their limit. "People don't realize how fast data goes when you're texting non-stop or video calling," he said. "You think it's just a few messages, but suddenly your bill is higher."

Still, some students find the experience manageable. Ethan Ng, also in Grade 12, says long distance communication is easier when expectations are clear. "If you're willing to put in the effort, it's not impossible. The hard part is keeping conversations meaningful when you're sending so many messages a day," he said.

Many BMHS students estimate sending anywhere from 150 to more than 300 texts daily when trying to maintain a strong long distance connection. Between school, activities, and time differences, texting becomes a lifeline but also a responsibility.

In the end, students say long distance communication isn't always hard or always easy. It depends on effort, time, and how well people stay connected one message at a time.

UPPERCLASSMEN TALKING TO 9TH GRADERS

ABOUT THEIR HIGH SCHOOL LIFE

Lessons Learned: What Upperclassmen Want You to Know

By: Amelia Paul

As a brand-new student, high school can feel eye opening - new people, harder classes, and the stress of "figuring yourself out" before graduation. It's a stage of excitement and uncertainty; every upperclassman remembers those first-year nerves and doesn't know what to expect.

To gain more insight, students and teachers were asked: "If upperclassmen could go back and say one thing to their grade 9 self, what would it be?"

For many students, the transition into high school introduces new routines, heavier workloads, and unfamiliar expectations. The first year may feel demanding, stressful, or even flat out chaotic.

The following years, however, only bring more difficulty. According to grade 11 student Daria Blokhina: "If you think that it's hard, be aware that the next years will be much harder." This increased difficulty is common throughout high school, as each year brings more complex concepts and skills.

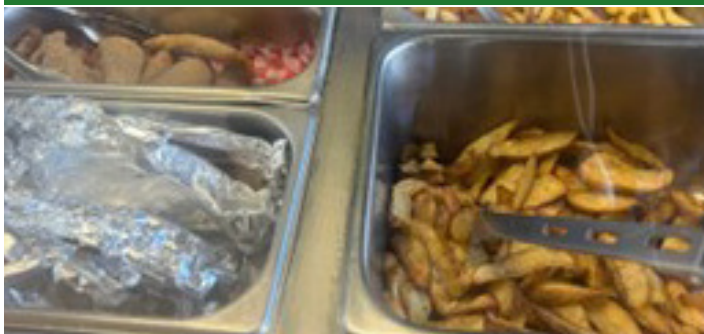
Alongside increased academic demands, upperclassmen and teachers encourage younger students to remain calm. Fashion and Design teacher Ms. Myra Malliet noted that, "Life doesn't end when you graduate high school, and that most of the mistakes that are even possible to make in high school aren't going to matter in about five years."

Her perspective focuses on the idea that challenges in early high school are temporary and part of a larger path. Ms. Maillet also encourages students to "keep your head up, wade through the swamp, and life does get better."

While Ms. Maillet focuses on after high school and the bigger picture, other advice highlights the importance of staying in the present. Grade 11 Student, Kyla Brayson stated, "I would say to give yourself a break, high school is not that deep and there is more to life." Brayson's message shows that stepping back can make your high school experience feel more tame and easier to manage.

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STUDENTS' FAVOURITE CAFETERIA FOOD AND WHY



By: Lexi Castrillo and Ava Ovadia

From delicious Mac and Cheese to classic *poutine*, Bernice MacNaughton High School students have many opinions on which cafeteria foods they truly love, and stay true to, during the lunch hour.

Lunchtime is one of, if not the most, anticipated parts of the school day, especially after having to go to three classes in the morning. At Bernice MacNaughton, the cafeteria menu plays a big role in the excitement students feel for lunch. With students lining up for their meals and snacks, and chatting about what's being served, many people in the school have different opinions on what is the best food sold at the cafeteria.

Many people seem to have a common favourite; *poutine*, the classic Canadian comfort food. Students can be heard in the halls talking about how much they love the poutine and excitedly line up to have it for lunch. "I love the poutine because I love potatoes; the cafeteria staff make it well," said 2026 grad, Von Bravo. The poutine is served with yummy fries, gravy, and perfectly melted cheese.

Another popular option is pizza, seeing as the staff have to refill the pizza section every couple minutes. According to many students, the pizza is served deliciously warm, crispy, and full of flavour. Grade 11 student, Josh Ruga says, "My personal favourite is the pizza because I can buy two and sandwich them together, making it more fun." Whether it's simple cheese or pepperoni, students say it's easily one of the best choices for lunch.

For students just looking for a nice, sweet snack, it's a tight competition between banana bread and classic cookies. Both treats are quick to grab and are popular choices for those who want a side or a snack to bring to class. "The banana bread is definitely my favourite because it's soft and flavourful," said grade 12 student Carmela Arancon. "It tastes homemade." Other students, however, argue that



FIVE DOLLAR DATES CHALLENGE FIVE HUNDRED DOLLAR NIGHTS, STUDENTS SAY

By: Alisa Baydemir

Five dollar dates spark just as much connection as five hundred dollar outings, according to BMHS students, who say the price of a date rarely decides how meaningful it is.

Grade 12 student Anya Boruva believes the smaller budget usually creates a better atmosphere. "A five dollar date can be way more meaningful because you actually talk and connect instead of worrying about fancy plans," she said. She explained that simple outings like grabbing a drink or walking through town feel more natural and less stressful.

Still, some students appreciate what a higher budget can offer. Ernesto Mendoza, also in grade 12, said expensive dates work well for special occasions. "A five hundred dollar date isn't about showing off. It's about planning something special that you can't do every weekend," he said, adding that concerts or upscale restaurants can create memorable experiences.

But big price tags can come with pressure. Grade 12 student Ethan Ng said the atmosphere of an expensive outing can feel overwhelming. "If a date is too expensive, it can feel like you have to act perfect the whole time, and that ruins the fun," he said.

Across BMHS, students agree that both date styles have value. Five dollar dates build comfort and conversation, while five hundred dollar dates build excitement and lasting memories.

Most students say the real success of a date depends on comfort, effort, and chemistry. The cost only matters if the people on the date forget to enjoy each other's company.

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HEALTH CARE SYSTEM UNDER STRESS

By: Raven Cormier

Doctors scurry through the Emergency Rooms (ERs), while patients wait for medical attention with no free room in sight.

According to one Moncton Hospitals employee, Belinda Roy: "How I personally believe would help our health care system here in Moncton N.B. is if we had more health care workers who are certified to work in special care homes would be a start.

At that point we would be able to have room for our patients who are admitted to the hospital waiting for a spot in a special care could be moved to a home. That would open up beds for the sick patients sitting in our Emergency department waiting for beds up on the units, at which point our Emergency Department could work more efficient and not end up at stand still because there is no room to see patients. That would then decrease waiting times in the Emergency Department and patients could get the care they need and deserve here in our city."

BMHS student Felix Russell suggested: "Some of the ways the health care system in Moncton can be improved is by working on primary care capacity. Primary care units such as the ER are in need of more registered nurses on hand to deal with the sheer number of patients. Other options are to have urgent care clinics open 24 hours to relieve from the hospital work load."

According to former Moncton hospital phlebotomist, Penny Michaud: "I would focus on preventative health programs, mental-health services, and additional support for the aging population - this could help address long-term system demands. New Brunswick should have competitive compensation for new and existing talent, as well as supportive workplace environments, and clear career pathways that could make the province more attractive to incoming health professionals."

In conclusion, there are lots of things we need to work on, as the health-care system is in need of improvement to make the itself better and even more work is to be done for the future benefit of patients.



A first aid kit.



Photo credit - Veronika Pankova

IS AI IN THE CLASSROOM A HELPFUL TOOL - OR NOT?

By: Linden Bernard

Artificial intelligence, within the last few years, has gone from something you *hear* about to something almost everyone in school has used, at least once. Some students use AI for many things: whether it's help with writing, checking homework, or explaining a confusing topic, AI is appearing in more and more classes. Which makes us question is this a good thing or is it just distracting students?

For many students, AI feels like an extra hand. If you're struggling on an English assignment, AI can help you brainstorm ideas. If you don't understand what you're learning in math, it can help walk you through the steps. Some teachers say AI makes learning more flexible, because it can explain things in different ways, so you can understand what you're doing.

But there's another side to it. Some teachers have concerns that students might start relying on AI too much and skip learning the subject. If an app writes your essays or does your homework in seconds, it might save a lot of time, but you're not really learning the skills you need to know for that class. And since AI can make mistakes or give weird answers, it could be harder to know what's correct.

Mr. Cory LeBlanc, a teacher at Bernice MacNaughton High School, worries about how much students might depend on AI. "AI is overhyped, and when students use it as a shortcut, they skip the skill-building that school is meant to teach," said Mr. LeBlanc.

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DYSLEXIA (CON'T)

it just makes everyone equal, trying to even out the playing field for those who need an extra push.

Lots of people have dyslexia but just don't know about it, or they believe that it's a disability that affects everyone the same. Not everybody with dyslexia has words falling of the page. You could possibly just have a mild or medium level of dyslexia. Even if you don't, you could have her sisters: Dyscalculia, Dysgraphia, or Dyspraxia, which are also a pain in the butt.

Many students don't really know what dyslexia really is, so we asked a random BMHS student, who happens to be called Haley Patterson, what is everything she knows about dyslexia. She stated: "It's the inability to read proper sentences," which is true, but there is much more that students should know about this common affliction.

To wrap up this rambling, dyslexia doesn't make anyone less smart; it just makes school feel like you're reading instructions from IKEA without the pictures. You just need tools and some pictures all you'll be perfectly fine!

UPPERCLASSMEN (CON'T)

While her advice focuses on staying in the moment, and stepping back from all the craziness high school has to offer, it is still important to instill daily routines to help accomplish your high school goals and needs. Foundations 11 teacher, Ms. Elizabeth Taylor, explained: "I would have to say to myself in 9th grade is to curve in sometime every single day, even on the weekends, just for a little bit of time to review or study for whatever topic that I need to study for, every single day, even if I didn't have homework."

In addition to her advice to instill study habits, she also encourages students, saying: "Don't be so hard on yourself. You are better than you think you are. Everybody is."

These perspectives gives guidance some students may be looking for as they move through high school. Ms. Taylor's final thoughts summarize this overall message: "You have a good life ahead, so work hard and try to be positive and have fun, but not too much fun."



FAVORITE CLASS AT SCHOOL AND WHY

By: Isabelle Michaud

At Bernice MacNaughton High School, there are many fun classes, but which class is the best? There are tons of classes to choose from, and everyone has their own favorites. Many students pick their favorite class based on the teacher, how fun it is, or whether it challenges them.

Grade 10 student Veruka Ripley Ruhnke said: "Media Studies is my favorite class because Mr. Cormier makes it enjoyable, and I like what we learn." For her, the class is fun, and the teacher makes it interesting, so it's something she actually looks forward to.

Some students like classes where they get to be creative. Grade 11 student, Clifford Bartlett Glidden, said: "My favorite class is drama. The reason I enjoy it so much is because there is so much opportunity to have fun, make characters, and learn while doing it. Drama also is my favorite class because I have made friends and had friends already going in." For him, it's not just the acting; it's the people and the freedom to express himself.

Grade 10 student Ava Cormier said: "My favorite class is biology because I really like learning all the fun facts and Mr. LeBlanc is the best teacher."

Others prefer classes that push them to think harder. Grade 10 student Devin McConaghy picked Math as her favorite. "My favorite class is math. It challenges my abilities and skills, and makes me think." She likes the feeling of solving tough problems and improving at something difficult.

Grade 11 student Parker Allen suggested: "I would say my favourite class would be Gym. I know it's generic but it gets you moving around and gets you to be active. It's definitely something I would suggest for anyone who has to sit around

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SUPERINTENDANT (CON'T)

because, for a long time, our school's theatre is where the Bernice MacNaughton High School graduation ceremonies took place.

It was immediately obvious to Mr. MacLean why the interview started where we did. He quickly and wryly addressed the elephant in the room... (...the elephant being the countless squeaky and broken seats): "We're sitting in a theatre amongst many of our theatres across our system, many of our schools are requiring capital upgrades. It's that balance between building new and upgrading the existing."

Mr. MacLean went on to list numerous new schools that are in the works, from Shediak to Sunny Brae. He emphasizes that the district needs to spread out their allocated resources for upgrades to all schools, from the oldest school in Riverside-Albert, which is over 100 years old, to even the newer schools in the district, such as Wabanaki, Moncton High, and Maplehurst.

Although you would think the older schools would be prioritized due to age, Mr. MacLean makes the valid point that if they don't upkeep the newer schools, as well, they could fall behind on maintenance, and they would cost even more the next year to repair. The big question on the district's mind when it comes to budgeting is; how do we allocate resources to have the greatest impact?

"Some things were not funded for, like seats in the auditorium," Mr. MacLean explains. Even some of the things that are funded for don't always get attention, due to the available amount of funds. "New school playgrounds, for example: we get an \$80,000 budget for playgrounds, and the playgrounds cost half a million dollars to build."

Some in our theatre department, who use the space quite frequently, often have questions on why the theatre has continued to be in poor shape.

As the snow begins to fall, some students have had their concerns about what should or shouldn't count as a "Snow day."

Mr. MacLean, when queried about what he wishes students knew about big decisions like these, offered a surprising response. "I don't like snow days, so I don't cancel school. You write it right in there: 'Superintendent Randy MacLean does not like snow days.' I will do everything in my power to keep schools open."

Mr. MacLean acts as an open book and insinuating that the district is open to telling students information that they would like to know, like why the schools heating wasn't turned on earlier in the year, and why our school sees minimal snow days. "And to answer your question, what do I think students should know? Whatever they need to. We live in a democracy," Mr. MacLean states proudly.

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FAV CLASS (CON'T)

all day with any challenging courses to take. There's also a wide variety of gym courses at Bernice, or courses that get you moving around."

According to grade 10 student, Addison Clarke: "I particularly enjoy Ancient Medieval History with Mr. Jamieson because even though he assigns a lot of assignments, most of what we learn is very interesting and he teaches very well. If you show that you care about his class, he tends to be nicer to you and more willing to help you with your assignments as well. I would not suggest taking the class if you are more of a STEM student, but if you are extremely good at and enjoy writing essays, you'd do well to take his class because he assigns a LOT of essays."

Even though all these students like totally different subjects, they all mentioned things like good teachers, fun experiences, and being comfortable with the people around them. At BMHS School, that mix helps everyone find a class they enjoy and feel excited about.

Journalism 120 and Media Studies 120 teacher Mr. Steve Cormier, when asked if teachers *try* to make their classes into student favourites: "I think if a teacher is really invested in what they teach and they like being in the chaotic world of young people, the class resonates with that energy. A combination of students' interests and teacher energy can make for some unforgettable educational experiences."

TOO STINKY TOO BATHROOMY



By: Saige Hinter

The bathrooms at BMHS are still stinky, and they are still bathrooms, and Saige *still* isn't over the smell.

After the success of the article from the October edition of the SNewspaper, the writer of said article, Saige Hinter, has become unoriginal and stale. Unable to reclaim the fame and success 'Stinky Bathrooms' had garnered, Saige tried desperately to not allow his creation to become like the *Fast and Furious* franchise: Bad. Saige tried to birth

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BMHS teachers show their support for men's health by participating in the Movember challenge.

HIGHLANDERS STAND TOGETHER FOR MOVEMBER AT BMHS

By: Hunter Gutierrez

Students at Bernice MacNaughton High School embrace Movember as the school organizes activities, raises awareness, and supports men's health through fundraisers and fun events.

According to the Movember Foundation, Movember is a global movement that occurs annually in November to raise money and awareness for men's health. Participants sign up on the foundation's website and choose whether to grow a moustache or walk/run 60 km throughout the month.

Students got involved in Movember by donating to vote for the teacher with the best moustache. Posters around the school encouraged donations, and a short video shown on the Morning Snews explained why Movember is important and what the school is doing to support it. These efforts helped bring the BMHS community together while raising awareness for a meaningful cause.

Ms. Carly Lecocq, RED group advisor, said: "As the month progresses and moustaches get larger, students are increasingly engaged with keeping up with teacher's moustaches. Of course, the addition of Reggie's 'moustache' was a big help!"

RED group member Diva Mittal mentioned: "Movember felt especially meaningful this year because it brought students together around real conversations about men's health and showed how small actions can spark big awareness. The

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SUPERINTENDANT (CON'T)

Being the superintendent of schools for four years now, Mr. MacLean has been in the "big chair" for long enough to have the chance to grow proud of his accomplishments. He shared his proudest moment as a superintendent so far, though there is much to be proud of. He didn't hesitate to respond that he is proudest of how the school board reacted to bill 713 in New Brunswick.

Bill 713, also known as the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy, deals with the right of students under the age of 16 to be able to self-identify as whatever gender, name, and pronouns they would like to be referred to by their teacher, without parental consent. The bill accommodates students to use which ever gendered washroom they identify with.

The bill was changed back in June of 2023, when the conservative government modified it without a legislative vote. The revised version of the bill contained significant changes. Students ages 16 and above who identify as transgender or non-binary would have to engage in consultations with school officials, allowing for them to use their preferred name and pronouns. Another section added that parental consent will be required for students under 16 to keep records of their preferred name. The change forbade New Brunswick teachers from using students' preferred pronouns, if they are under 16 years of age, without parental consent.

Mr. MacLean emphasized how sternly and strongly he and

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BATHROOMS 2 (CON'T)

a new success, attempting articles like 'How to cure depression. (Not clickbait)', and 'Everyone but me will fail at life!' He even tried to name the portables. But none of those articles gave Saige the recognition he sought, so here Saige is, trying to milk those bathrooms for all they are worth.

Desperately foaming at the mouth, Saige asked the superintendent to comment on the bathrooms. Superintendent Randolph MacLean said he believes that the bathrooms can actually be fixed. He elaborated; "What we are doing across the system is bathroom retro-fixing, where it's a hallway, and each has its own stall. So, that's where we are going. I can't give you a timeline, but that's our goal."

One of Saige's close friends, Willow Morrissey, has lots of confidence in their friend's creative abilities. Going as far as to state: "I feel that he needs to focus on it, and he will make something better than 'Stinky Bathrooms' in no time."

Despite the kind words from Willow, not everyone is so confident that Saige will find success with his journalistic endeavors. Irene Bastarache, friend of Saige, is very worried about Saige's mental state. "It clearly has affected him deeply, stinky bathrooms have taken over his ever waking thought. I'm surprised he hasn't exploded from the stress."

When asked about his mental state, Saige simply responded with, "I'm not ok." After this, Saige may be stuck in this bathroom rut forever, and trust me, this is a very stinky rut to be in.

SCHOOL TRADITIONS: BUILDING SCHOOL SPIRIT AND BRINGING STUDENTS TOGETHER

By: Naomi Carpenter

At Bernice MacNaughton High School, students get the chance to be a part of every school tradition and maybe even start a new one!

"I think that school traditions play a big part in school culture, because they have such a huge impact on the atmosphere," says Nicole Breau, a very involved twelfth-grade student.

School traditions definitely play a role in strengthening the overall atmosphere of the student life at BMHS. By encouraging participation and leadership not only do students get to contribute to something, they get to contribute to the larger community in meaningful ways.

In addition, traditions give balance to the school year, between the academic responsibilities and enjoyable experiences.

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MOVEMBER (CON'T)

teachers' efforts were inspiring as well!"

Reflecting on this year's campaign, Mr. Kevin Foster, BMHS teacher, said, "Movember is important because it addresses men's health issues. When it first started, it focused on testicular and prostate cancer, but it's since been broadened. They raised a lot of money, so they branched out into mental health supports and other support networks for men's health."

When asked about strategies to encourage more students to participate or donate in future Movember campaigns, Ms. Lecocq mentioned, "We hope to build off this year's momentum to turn the BMHS Men of Movember into an annual Highlander tradition. Social media and electronic payment methods are both options we may further explore to increase student participation and donation, but we are always open to new ideas and recommendations!"

BMHS Principal Mr. David MacDonald, who spearheaded the initiative among teachers, reflected on this year's Movember efforts: "I think it's great that BMHS men came together to bring awareness to a very serious men's health issue, raised far more money than we thought we would, and had some fun along the way."

As November comes to a close, the Highlander community can celebrate not just the fun and engagement, but the incredible impact of their efforts. With a starting goal of \$1,000, BMHS students and staff have more than tripled the amount, proving what can be accomplished when the school comes together. This success sets the stage for even stronger participation next year, ensuring that the awareness and conversations sparked during Movember will continue well beyond the month.

With delight, Mr. MacDonald noted the school's efforts, saying: "Movember went fantastic this year! Maybe it will become an annual tradition. I am very proud of our school!"

SUPERINTENDANT (CON'T)

his team resisted the changes in the bill. "We stood up and we said 'no.' We believe in the safety of every child and every staff member. We believe they have the right to self-determination as well as self-identity. We fought the government, ended up in courtrooms and, ultimately, the people of the province of New Brunswick agreed with us."

Students may not see the work that's happening behind the scenes, especially at such a high level, but hearing from Mr. Randolph MacLean offered valuable insight on what it takes to run a school board. Mr. MacLean's presence and answers were highly appreciated and we can't wait to see what he does within Anglophone East in the future.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE STRONG? **SURVIVING**



By: Annaliese Nemis

"I can see the sun, but even if I cannot see the sun, I know that it exists, and to know that the sun is there- that is living." – Fyodor Dostoevsky.

Here, Dostoevsky talks about the human experience of perseverance- pushing through hard times even when you can't see the light at the end of the tunnel- or rather, the sun. When we talk about mental strength, this ideology comes up often, but what does it mean exactly?

When somebody mentions mental strength, our first thought is likely that it may refer to somebody with no mental health struggles, however I'd argue it's simply not the case. Mental health is defined as "the presence or absence of a mental health issue." While mental strength is referring to the ability to cope with tough times in a healthy way.

Grade 11 student Ella Steeves, she explains it like this: "To me, mental strength isn't just what a person can handle, but how they handle it. It's being aware of your emotions and behaviours and building ways to positively overcome challenges, like positive thinking and attitudes, even when times are tough."

So how does it relate to school? Struggles with mental health don't just affect a student's personal life, they can affect things like energy levels, mental ability, and concentration, all things that can hinder a person's performance at school.

Along these lines, we can ask whether or not school itself can have a direct influence on teens well-being.

"I think it does," responds Ava Steeves, 10th grade student when prompted "for some school can boost mental health by being around friends if you can't see them outside of school. But it can also harm your mental health if you're under stress or being picked on." Identifying and under-



CAFETERIA (CON'T)

the cookies are unbeatable and are a go-to choice. The demand for both snacks are so high that they often sell out before lunch ends.

In the end, the variety of meals and treats sold at the cafeteria are a big part of the school and they reflect the different preferences of the school community, especially the students. It could be a nice complete meal or a quick little snack, but any option is enough to bring comfort to students and keep them coming back for more.

AI IN CLASSROOMS (CON'T)

But not every teacher in BMHS sees AI negatively. Some believe it can be helpful if used responsibly. "AI can be a game changer if students use it to support their thinking rather than to avoid thinking," said Mr. Aaron Proud, another teacher. He believes AI can help with creativity and problem-solving—as long as students don't let it do the work for them.

Nadirah Adelakun, a student at BMHS, said, "AI can be helpful for inspiration, but if you use it to do your work for you, you're really just cheating yourself out of learning."

There's also the issue of fairness. For example, not everyone has access to a good laptop or fast internet at home, so if AI becomes a normal tool used for schoolwork, some students could end up at a disadvantage.

The majority of people seem to agree on the fact that AI isn't going away anytime soon. So instead of pretending it doesn't exist, schools might have to start showing students how to use it properly for checking facts, using it for ideas and not just copying, and treating it like a tool.

So, is AI helpful or not? Honestly, it depends on how people are using it. AI can make school easier and maybe a bit more interesting for students, but only if we're using it to learn and not to *avoid* learning.

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SURVIVING (CON'T)

standing your stressors or triggers – like having assignments pile up or being bullied – is the first step in building up mental strength and finding ways to persevere through challenges.

How are Highlanders coping with their stressors? While everyone copes with challenges differently, healthy coping mechanisms are especially important for mental strength. In interviewing Highlanders to ask how they cope through tough times, student Lexi Sippley responded with: “I end up crying usually, probably sitting in bed with a blanket playing with my hair or picking at my hands.”

When asked the same question, student Cameron Marr responded: “I just put it aside, then I forget, and life is good.” Which can demonstrate differences between people’s preferred coping mechanisms. Other coping skills such as exer-

cise, scrolling, school or work, or dissociating seem prominent among students. However, psychologists recommend coping mechanisms such as journaling, mindfulness, meditation, taking up a hobby, and minimizing stressors.

Now that we have a better understanding of mental strength, how do you actually become ‘strong’? While mental strength can’t be built up in a day, there are strategies to help yourself become more resilient, like finding ways to acknowledge and accept your emotions and struggles while meeting them with logic and self compassion, taking small steps towards your goals, working on mindfulness, externalizing negative emotions through things like therapy or journaling, and trying to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Although I’d argue that remembering the sun – especially when you can’t see it – is the most important aspect of mental strength.

SHOULD BMHS INSTALL VAPE DETECTORS

By: Markian Babiak

BMHS students are debating whether vape detectors should be installed in the school. Opinions are split, with some seeing them as helpful, while others worrying about privacy and fairness.

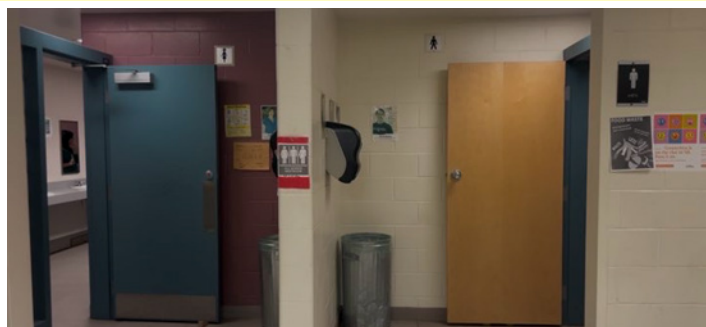
Lately at BMHS, vaping in the bathrooms has been brought up enough. I don’t *personally* think the school should install detectors. They feel unnecessary and don’t really address why some students vape. Detectors might just make the school feel stricter without solving anything.

Some students agree. One anonymous grade 12 student said, “No, we don’t wanna get caught so we don’t need none of that here.” Another added, “I don’t think they should, because no one is vaping in the bathrooms.” Brooke Welner, a grade 12 student, also expressed concern, saying vape detectors “are most likely an invasion of people’s privacy and can lead to problems at home.”

Others think detectors could make a difference. Chris Leclerc, who graduated last year, said, “Yes, vape detectors should be installed because there are too many delinquents making the bathroom smell fruity.”

Matteo Lessard, a grade 12 student, offered a more moderate opinion: “I think it might help, but students would still find a way to do it regardless. I think we should help the students who are vaping and see what they’re going through, rather than install vape detectors.”

Clearly, there isn’t one answer everyone agrees on. Some students want stricter rules, others want more support, and some just want the school to stay fair. Even though I don’t think vape detectors are the solution, the conversation shows that BMHS students care about keeping their school environment comfortable and respectful for everyone.



Should BMHS install vape detectors?

TRADITIONS (CON'T)

riences. Instead of making school solely a stressful place where you are assessed, BMHS has made it a place where you can take a step back and connect with classmates. This balance gives students something to look forward to and helps maintain motivation during the stressful times.

“Traditions bring hype and excitement to the school, when otherwise some students would dread it,” says Breaux.

For many students, traditions are what make the school feel special. They give them a break from the workload and many different opportunities to bond with peers. Whether it’s spirit games, theme weeks, clubs, assemblies, or volunteering, these things bring joy and pride to the school life.



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LOVE AND PAIN

CLASSES THAT CHALLENGE AND INSPIRE US

By: Veronika Pankova

Every year, students at Bernice MacNaughton High School face the same challenge: choosing the classes that will shape their next year and possibly their future.

Every school offers a wide range of classes for students to choose from - some that help them prepare for future careers and others that reflect their personal interests. But with so many choices, moments of both joy and pain also come. At BMHS, students often find certain subjects more difficult than others. While some struggle with math, others say languages are their biggest challenge. Many students admit that the classes that cause the most stress can also be the most rewarding, pushing them to learn, grow, and sometimes even fall in love with the subject.

At the same time, many students discover that the classes they enjoy most become the ones they remember forever. Creative and hands-on courses often stand out because they allow students to express themselves in ways other subjects do not. Housing & Design and Technology 9 teacher, Mrs. Kari O'Neill, sees firsthand how much joy these classes bring, saying: "If you want something inspirational, take something that is hands-on. Even if you don't use it later, it's going to be so fun in high school." Her message reflects a common theme: inspiration often appears where students get to create, experiment, and take risks.

Teachers across BMHS know about it and echo this feeling. They understand that students will not connect with every topic, but the environment they create can make even a difficult class feel meaningful. As a Mathematics and Science 10 teacher, Mrs. Martine Boudreau explained, "I always try to inspire my students. Even if something seems boring, I try to make it fun and engaging." This is the heart of what many students appreciate, teachers who turn challenging lessons into experiences worth remembering. "I hope all the teachers try to inspire their students,"

TRADITIONS (CONT)

While every student participates in their own way, almost everyone agrees that traditions play a big role in shaping the BMHS atmosphere. They create a sense of belonging, helps students connect, and build memories that will stay with them forever.

"Things like activities, clubs, and sports traditions also encourage students to become more involved in the things they enjoy, creating a more diverse and engaged student body," Breau added.



One student is living for the book, while the other is sleeping on it.

explained Mrs. Boudreau.

Students themselves experience this mix of challenges and inspiration in personal ways. Clair Ngo, president of Fashion Club and at-large representative for Student Government, shared that English is one of the classes that pushes her the most: "English inspires me because I like debate a lot. It makes me dig into my morals and think about different perspectives. I try to keep an open mind because it's not only my perspective that matters." Art plays a different role for her, giving her a place to breathe: "Anything artsy inspires me. It is where I pour out my frustrations, my feelings, my emotions-all my creativity. And seeing other people's artwork inspires my own." Her experience shows how inspiration can come from both thinking deeply and expressing freely.

But for Ngo, inspiration does not mean the work is easy. She admitted that English is challenging because it forces her to balance her own ideas with others. Her challenges aren't limited to English; Biology challenges her as well, but for different reasons: "Science isn't my forte. There's a lot that isn't set in stone, and it's hard to study something when I'm not sure of it myself." Her honesty connects back to what teachers like Mrs. Boudreau and Mrs. O'Neill emphasized: learning is a mix of fun, difficulty, curiosity, and persistence.

Other students share that their inspiration often comes from pushing themselves creatively. Ma Geyl Del Rosario, a grade 11 student, said Visual Arts motivates her to grow: "It challenges me to broaden my skills and try new media." Even her most demanding class, Vocal Music, brings its own rewards: "Some notes are hard to hit, but it's still fun-it helps me grow."

Her experience reflects a common theme at BMHS: that challenge, and inspiration often go hand in hand. Together, these stories paint a clear picture of student life-classes that push them, classes that excite them, and classes that

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LOVE AND PAIN (CON'T)

do both at once. A debate can spark a new perspective; drawing can open emotional freedom, and a difficult assignment can build lasting confidence.

In the end, the “love and pain” students feel in their classes is not something to avoid—it is the very heartbeat of learning. The subjects that stretch them, frustrate them, and excite them become turning points in their lives. They reveal new strengths, uncover hidden passions, and shape students not just as learners but as people.

At BMHS, the classes students choose to do more than fill a timetable—they help define who they are now and who they are becoming.



A closet full of thrift bargains can save you a ton of money

THRIFTING CULTURE AT BMHS DRIP ON A DIME

By: Sofia Hernandez

Thrift culture, as of 2025, has hit a new high in Bernice MacNaughton High School. Students, instead of going to the mall, now prefer thrift stores where they can get clothes without a big price tag.

Highlanders can always have different tactics when picking out the right piece that speaks the most to them. Grade 10 student Landon Gauvin shared his experience and favorite spots for thrifting. “My favorite overall thrifting spots are Value Village and Frenchie’s. And my strategies are to basically look through everything quickly, just zoom through the shelves and racks and look for things you know you’d wear.”

Gauvin also shared what you would need to do whilst thrifting if you are interested in selling the items you find. “Eventually if you are looking to sell stuff, look at tags. You must memorize vintage tags.” He strongly believes if you plan to sell clothing, your customers must trust that you are providing them with actual branded clothes and secondhand clothes that are of good quality.

Many BMHS students do prefer thrifting over normal shopping because of the better prices and better quality. “It’s way cheaper and there’s like a way better quality to thrift because they are from old vintage brands,” according to StuGov At-Large Rep, Claire Ngo. She also believes it’s way more sustainable and cheaper to buy from thrift stores.

Ngo has also noticed how prices changed when she first started thrifting about three years ago. “Back when I started thrifting the prices for shirts was around 4\$ but now I could get the same exact shirt for 12\$, because of inflation.”

Even with the rising prices of thrifting, BMHS students can still get cheaper clothes of better quality than the fast fashion

ion sold at malls or other retail stores.

Beyond just savings, thrifting has become a form of self-expression and individuality for students, allowing them to create unique styles that stand out from mainstream trends.

Thrift is no longer just a shopping method; it’s becoming a culture that defines the fashion identity of plenty of BMHS Highlanders.

PHOTOS FROM THIS YEAR’S FLOAT!

