

CHARTER INK

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✧ Has Charter Lost its Student Voice?

As the year passes by it seems as if the percentage of students involved in the high school community decreases. However, is it just uninterested students or the lack of opportunity the student body has to participate? Yearly, a student board is elected by the students with no influence from teachers and faculty, which makes it seem like their vote and input are heard. However, that's not necessarily the case. Although it may seem as if the high school chose these individuals, there are still voices left unheard. So basically, whoever has the most friends wins? Sounds right. This brings up the problem that these members only represent part of the population in the high school. How can the other part make their voices heard?

In a democratic government the majority rules. However, does the student board truly represent the majority? With no town meetings, issues are never brought to the student body, as well as not voted on by the majority; they are only discussed with the members of student board. A grade representative's job is to represent his or her grade, and bring the input they receive from their grade to the table. However, grade representatives have been denied the ability to attend student board meetings (with the exception of last week), which completely disregards the main purpose of grade representatives.

In the past, students have had the opportunity to help plan events, such as prom, semi, dances, community building events, and fundraisers. However, now they are planned exclusively by student board members, leaving the students voiceless once again. Students should be able to be involved with the organization of events through the creation of side committees. These committees would give the non-student board members the chance to be involved with organizing such events. When this issue was addressed to the board, they voiced a concern that people say they're going to help, but then they don't show up. If students were given the chance to become invested in a project then they would be committed to it. They work off of the presumption that no one wants to help, when in fact, many are desperate to make their high school experience more meaningful to them by helping out.

What makes Charter unique is the ability for students to voice their opinion and be able to have a say in our high school's government. Without the students' voice, Charter no longer means the same thing. Let's bring this school back to what it has stood for from the beginning; otherwise, it's just another high school.

5 New Years Resolutions that Almost Never Get Completed

by Kayleigh Wright

Every year, thousands of people say to themselves on January 1, "I'm going to do ___ this year!" But, after a day, or week, or month, people typically start to fall of these resolutions. There are

some that are pretty difficult to keep up on. Time Magazine listed some of the most commonly failed at New Years Resolutions, and we've shared them with you!

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New Years - Continued from page 1

1- Travel to New Places

You might say to yourself, "I want to go to these three places by the end of this year!" But let's face it, traveling is expensive. And your life is probably pretty busy! So it's no surprise that this is one that is tough to accomplish.

2- Be Less Stressed

Maybe there are some things you can do in your life to make yourself less stressed, like cleaning your bedroom or reading a good book. But there are some stressful things that you cannot control, like what happens around you. And because you cannot make these things stop, it's pretty

difficult to be completely stress-free.

3- Get Out of Debt and Save Money

As high school students, this is one that many of us probably do not have to deal with. But for adults, this can be a real challenge. Getting out of debt and saving money takes a lot more time, effort, and planning than you might expect. It's not something that just happens in the blink of an eye!

4- Volunteer

This one is not one that should be difficult, but it is. Doing volunteer work makes people feel great,

especially just after the holiday season. But, it becomes difficult to set time aside every week, or to keep up a constant volunteering schedule. This one is one that falls through after a few months.

5- Eat Better and Work Out

Of course, this is the most common and most difficult of all New Years Resolutions. Because the trip to the gym is NOT what you want to be doing on your Saturday, and that bag of chocolate cannot just sit there and go to waste! So while this one is a nice idea, it is understandably one of the most difficult resolutions of all time.

Nelson Mandela - A Leader Remembered

By Kayleigh Wright

On December 5, 2013, the world lost one of the most influential leaders these generations have seen: Nelson Mandela. Born on July 18, 1918, Mandela was a South African anti-apartheid revolutionary from South Africa who served as their President from 1994 to 1999. In his lifetime, Mandela served more than 27 (1964 to 1991) years in prison for his efforts to fight apartheid. Apartheid was legal racial segregation that was occurring in South Africa following World War II. It created an extremely terrible lifestyle for anyone who fell subject to it. They were forced to live in a small portion of the land of South Africa, with infertile soil, terrible resource access, and overall bad living conditions. Apartheid was upheld by the South African government until 1990, when it was officially abolished. Although it was abolished in 1990, the true end of apartheid is associated with the election of Nelson Mandela as president in 1994, following his long life of fighting the terrible system. When he passed away, the world mourned the loss of such an influential man, and he was memorialized with a service on December 10, which was attended by many world leaders including President Obama.

"What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead."

- Nelson Mandela



Upcoming Events By Zain Akhtar

Monday, December 23rd-January 2nd- Holiday Break-Enjoy the holidays! Vacation is soon! This year, vacation is twelve days, including the weekends. Remember to get your gifts early, the mall is going to be packed. Have a Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

January 22nd-24th- Mid-Terms- Study up! Mid-terms are almost here. Students will receive their study guides a few weeks before.

The schedule will be A and B block on the 22nd, C and D block on the 23rd, and E on the 24th. Freshman, unlike last year, will have half days during Mid-Terms!

January 31st-Grades Distributed-Is it report card time already? Although it may feel like we got our first report cards last week, report cards are almost here. These will include your second quarter and Mid-Term grades. Students will be dismissed 10 minutes early from workshop to go to their homerooms to receive their grades.

Donika's Engineering Workshop By Samantha Circelli

As many of you have probably heard or realized, Donika's workshop is collecting milk jugs, to help Melissa's kindergarten class build a igloo. In addition to the building of an igloo, Donika's workshop students are given assignments like current event articles.

This year, not only do we get to look forward to fashion shows, concerts, poetry slams, and more, Donika's workshop will be combining with the other science and engineering workshops to have a science fair! The science fair is believed to be in early February. While talking with Donika, she described her workshop students in a few words. She chuckled, and said, "They're energetic, and eager to complete tasks."

One of her students told me about her experiences in the workshop. Kenzie Blithe told me about some of the activities they do, like, "We build a lot of small things like designs of bridges and looking at strength, but the biggest project we have done this year so far was building the milk carton igloo for the little kids." So if you're interested in constructing awesome projects, Donika's workshop is perfect for you!

Popular Christmas Toys of All Time By Kevin McGuiness

The holidays are coming soon, and parents are lining up to get their kids as young as second grade the newest iPods, tablets, and video games, but what did kids get before all of these electronics were out? In the 1980's, there was no such thing as an iPod. One of the most popular holiday toys were Fluppy Dogs. These dogs can do way more than the average dog. They can not only talk, but they can walk on two legs like us. Not only that, they have dreadlocks! Another popular toy of this time were Glo-Worms. This was a hard plastic worm that lit up when you squeezed it. Glo-Worms came out in 1982 and sold out almost immediately during that year's holiday season. Glo-Worms were a huge success, so books, night lights, videos, and other merchandise were made. Glo-Worms had friends! There was Glo-Snugbug, Glo-Snail, Glo-Doodlebug and more.

While the 80's had great toys, the 90's also had a lot of interesting toys. Of of these was something you may have heard of, Tickle-Me Elmo. When Tickle-Me Elmo was squeezed once, it would chuckle. When it



CHANGING THE PHONE POLICY

by Maryellen Vanderveen

I will admit, I may not be the most unbiased author, but I believe that my experience is one that many students can relate to. Over my past three years at South Shore Charter Public School I must have been written up for cell phone policy violations at least five or six times. Other than that, I have a squeaky clean record. When I asked Mr. Small, Dean of Discipline at SSCPS, how many other students were getting in trouble for using their cell phones in class he said, "Certain people who do it [get caught] over and over again, most of our students don't, let me put it this way, get caught". Most can agree that high schools today are facing a challenge as to how to respond to the growing presence of cell phones in school. Jenny, high school teacher and head of the science department, called it



SSCPS's cell phone policy hasn't been updated in six years, that's since the Nokia Classic was the most popular phone.

"unrealistic" for schools to expect that students do not have their phone in class, as that is the trend the world seems to be moving towards. The best way for our school to handle this issue is to readdress our cell phone policy and revise it to allow students to use their cell phones during lunch and break time, a model that many other schools have been adopting around the country.

The school's current cell phone policy (taken from the 2013-2014 handbook) reads; *"While on any property used for SSCPS purposes, students will not carry any such device between 8:15 AM and 3:00 PM, unless given specific permission to do so. If given permission, they will use devices for the sole purpose that they were given permission. If these devices need to be brought to school, they will be kept in lockers for the duration specified and only removed when leaving school or for specific times the student is given permission."*

This policy is surprisingly uncompromising and out-of-date for a such an innovative school as SSCPS. Many teachers surveyed agreed that the school hopes to utilize more technology in classes in the future. Innovative ways to help learning through technology have been gaining popularity, many other schools use cell phones as a way for students to participate and send in answers during class time. Last year, Jenny's astronomy class used an app so that they could like at the

night sky from their classroom. As SSCPS hopes to further utilize these innovative methods (as many teachers have expressed desire to), shouldn't they also have an updated cell phone policy to accommodate for them?

I proposed my plan to several teachers to hear their opinions. I explained that allowing students to use their phones in between classes would limit in-class use. Teachers and parents may have the idea that we are all sitting in class, snapchatting each other selfies and texting our friends, but we're all in school at the same time and more often than not, taking a break to text a friend while expending the energy it takes to avoid any teachers is much more trouble than just waiting to talk to them during break. As Mr. Small put it, "All of us can be without [phones] for seven hours a day, there are seventeen other hours, plus forty eight on the weekend," adding that he had no problem with teachers who use them as teaching tools.

However, we are living in a time where students are busier than ever as they try to balance all the aspects of life while buffing up their college resumes. Communication, between employers, car pools, coaches, and relatives, is occurring by phone and text rather than in person. I could not tell you how many times my boss has sent out a mass text at noon looking for someone to fill an extra shift or

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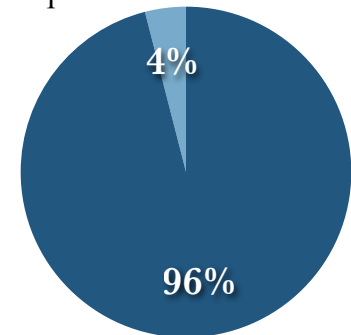
asking me to come in an hour early that afternoon. With my phone off and in my locker from 8:15 to 3:00, I miss out on the opportunity to pick up extra shifts and the chance to let my parents, or whoever else is responsible for driving me there, know that their schedule is now interrupted. Often waiting to tell them until 3:00, when I need to be there at 3:30 is obnoxiously short notice, inconveniencing my parents. This is especially relevant at a regional school, where some students have an hour plus commute one way to school without any bus options available.

By allowing students to get their personal business done in between class time, the school would be effectively diminishing classroom use. As Edina, a junior at SSCPS, put it "Right now, students can't find the right opportunity to use them, if they could, then they wouldn't be using them in class." We want to avoid a write-up and having our phones confiscated as much as the teachers want a distraction-

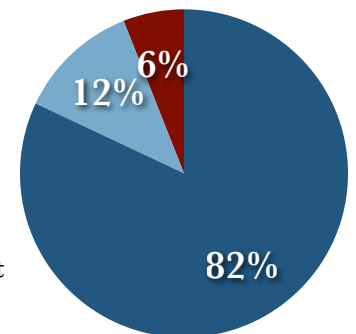
free learning environment. When Angie was asked if this was a plan that could be considered, she said that "In order to change the policy, we would need to have things in effect to deal with the concerns." These are concerns such as them interrupting class time or taking away from learning, a problem addressed by students using them in between classes so that there is no need. Jenny added that she did not think that this change in policy would create a slew of new problems as long as students were taught the rules and appropriate behavior, perhaps during an advisory block. Some teachers interviewed also raised the concern that by allowing cell phones for part of the day would be a gateway to students using them in class. However Dan, junior at Duxbury High School, which has a policy that allows students to use cell phones in between classes, confirmed that cell phone use during class has declined since the new policy was enacted. He said that the new policy "took

away the distractions" that cause students to text during class time. Ed, a high school teacher and head of the math department, suggested an increased penalty for in-class usage, as there would be no excuses. This is a sentiment that many students agreed with. Not surprisingly, the 96% of students and 82% high school teachers are in favor of this plan. It is up to the student body and student board to work with the administration to work to make this reform because allowing students to use their cell phones between classes and during lunch would help to eliminate the reasons for in-class usage benefiting students, teachers, and SSCPS as a whole.

Students Who Support Plan to Update Cell Phone Policy



Teachers Who Support Plan to Update Cell Phone Policy



● Support
● Abstain
● Oppose

DECEMBER JOKE

by Luke MacCormack

One day a college professor, after getting irritated in his college class, stands up in front of the class and asks if anyone in the class is an idiot, and if there is one then he/she should stand up. After a minute a young man stands up. The professor then asks that guy if he actually thinks he is an idiot. The boy replied, "No, I just didn't want to see you standing there all by yourself." (<http://unijokes.com/school-jokes/>)

WOULD YOU RATHER

by Danny Freitas

Guess who's back? Back again! WYR is back! Tell a friend! A new regular in the newspaper will seriously make you think.

Would you rather...

Get the best present ever and have it be your final present? (Not money)

OR

Get decent presents for the rest of your life?

Lick the sap off a Christmas Tree?

OR

Stand in the freezing cold for 8 hours collecting for charity?

Which movie Would You Rather be in?

Elf?

OR

Home Alone?

Walk around all December dressed as a gingerbread man?

OR

Shrink down to the size of a gingerbread man and hide in a Christmas tree, trying to not get eaten?

Be a reindeer stall cleaner?

OR

Santa's plumber?

Typhoon Haiyan Wreaks Havoc on the Philippines

By Ethan Seal

Typhoon Haiyan, also known as Yolanda in the Philippines, was one of the most powerful storms to ever form on Earth. It formed on November 3rd, reached its peak intensity on November 7th, and dissipated completely by November 11th. 5,832 people have been confirmed dead, with 5,796 of them being from the Philippines alone. There have, however, been 10,000 reported deaths, meaning that it's impossible to know at this stage the complete level of devastation the cyclone wrought. The ludicrous wind speeds also had disastrous repercussions with velocities sustained for 10 minutes at 145 mph and the highest speed sustained for one minute at 196 mph, unofficially making the storm the fourth most powerful tropical cyclone ever observed. According to UN officials, 11 million people have been afflicted by the typhoon and many have been left homeless. The Philippine Atmospheric, Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration has retired the name, "Yolanda," from their naming system of storms. The people of the Philippines must be resilient to get through this calamity.



Fortuitously, aid to the Philippines has been abundant. Many countries around the globe have been deploying rescue teams and supplies to help the victims, and these countries have also donated millions of dollars. The countries who donated the most money were Japan, donating \$52 million, Canada, donating \$40 million, and America, donating \$37 million. Countries who could not donate money or supplies sent teams of people to help the individuals stricken by the tempest. Many individuals, organizations, and companies have also donated money to help in the rebuilding. The support that the Philippines is receiving from around the world has been phenomenal.

Peculiarly, China, despite being so near the Philippines and controlling such a robust economy, donated only \$1.4 million, which was dwarfed by even the furniture company Ikea's donation of \$2.7 million. A reason for this may have been a dispute over ownership of the South China Sea between the two countries. Bonnie Glaser, an East Asia adviser at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, says the real reason China offers so little is that, "China is always tight when it comes to disaster aid. The rising economic power still sees itself as a developing nation. There's not a lot of support domestically



December FYIs: Lesser Known Holidays

Everyone knows about all of the traditional holidays of December, however there are many you may not have known about!

December 4th -
International Hug
Day

December 10th -
Human Rights Day

December 14th -
Monkey Day

December 22nd -
Forefather's Day: A
holiday only
celebrated in
Plymouth, MA that
recognizes the
landing of the
pilgrims at
Plymouth.



Student Submissions

The following is a piece written by Ian Sibbald, a freshman at SSCPS. He wrote this piece as an assignment for Mr. Small's Creative Writing Workshop, where Mr. Small often gives the students a piece of art to inspire a piece. In this case, it was Mark Rothko's Yellow and Gold, an abstract painted in 1956. Ian was also inspired by the anime show, Fullmetal Alchemist.

THE PHILOSOPHER'S STONE BY IAN SIBBALD

The test tubes were spun, chemicals were combined, the scientist had spent years searching for his elusive elixir; however, times and times again, failure at the end of every path of every fork. Enraged, he took the flasks from the table in a wrathful grasp, and he threw them against the walls of the lab. In a state of depression, he sighed and went home. The scientist lived alone, as he spent so much time in his bottles ignoring people, that he was forgotten by society. However, in the world of scientists, he was admired as a god, he had single handedly, discovered the immediate cure for cancer. The scientist was an withered old man, and for the magician's final act, he planned to make his last stand the grandest, he would discover the secret of longevity. He would never meet this goal because he would abandon that dream.

When the scientist fell asleep, he had a rather odd dream. He dreamed of an object, which due to it's nature, he could not accurately describe. The object changed every few minutes. At times he first saw the object, it took the

form of a ruby-red rock crystal, and at others it was a golden liquid in a bottle.

But, another odd thing, was that there were people surrounding the object. The people were crying, wailing out for the object, reaching out for the object, but never being able to grasp it. As time, went on, the arms of the people, grew to amazing lengths, but as did the distance between them and the object. Something truly odd, was that with each time that the object changed forms, so did the people surrounding the object. When the object was a ruby-red rock crystal, the people were hooded monks, travelers, and old men; But, when the object was a golden liquid in a bottle, the people changed into young men, whose time weighed heavy in the text. Finally, the object and the people, began to change into something new. As the object changed, the scientist's alarm went off, and he woke up. The scientist woke up feeling cheated out of closure, but he shrugged it off. He got up, and went to his bathroom, opening up his cabinet, where all his medications and cosmetics were; and, at the speed of thought, he knew what the object from his dream was going to turn into. He closed the cabinet, and looked into his mirror, into his own old and withered face.

Yellow and Gold by
Mark Rothko



Continued from page 6

in China for foreign assistance. The leadership worries that they would be criticized if they were found to be giving too much money away and not helping the poor at home." What this speculation means is that Chinese citizens would potentially become irate when they found out that the government was not giving to their own poor citizens, but instead giving tremendous amounts of money to citizens of other countries. Overall, the event caused hundreds of millions of dollars in damage and took as many as 10,000 lives. It will not be forgotten in years to come.



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was squeezed three times, it would shake and start laughing hysterically. These toys were so popular and hard to come by, that a clerk at a Wal-Mart was injured because of Tickle-Me Elmo. After spotting him being handed a box of the toys by another employee, 300 people trampled him. According to *People*, the clerk "suffered a pulled hamstring, injuries to his back, jaw and knee, a broken rib and a concussion". Another toy, Sky-Dancers were popular at this time. They were dolls with Wings! When they were put in their base and a string was pulled, they flew.

The most popular holiday toys of the 2000's were mostly technology based. The iPod was, and still is a really popular gift. iPod's can essentially do anything you want, "there's an App for everything". Gaming systems are also a really big hit during the Holiday's. PS3, Xbox 360, and the Wii amazed people everywhere. There are multiple games for each of these systems, Sports games, shooters, and more. Each of these have been replaced with newer versions, but are still great systems. This year, the most popular toys of the holiday's will be the newly released PS4 and Xbox One, Grand Theft Auto V, iPods, and phones for teens, while kids will receive Leapfrog tablets, Monster High dolls, and Legos.

Toy's for the holiday's have changed a lot over times, from Fluppy Dogs to iPods, but still have the same idea: to spread a smile on kid's faces when they go look for their gifts.



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