

# Northern Highlights

NORTH HIGH SCHOOL • NORTH ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

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## A Glimpse into the AVID classroom

By J. Cooke

Northern Highlights Reporter

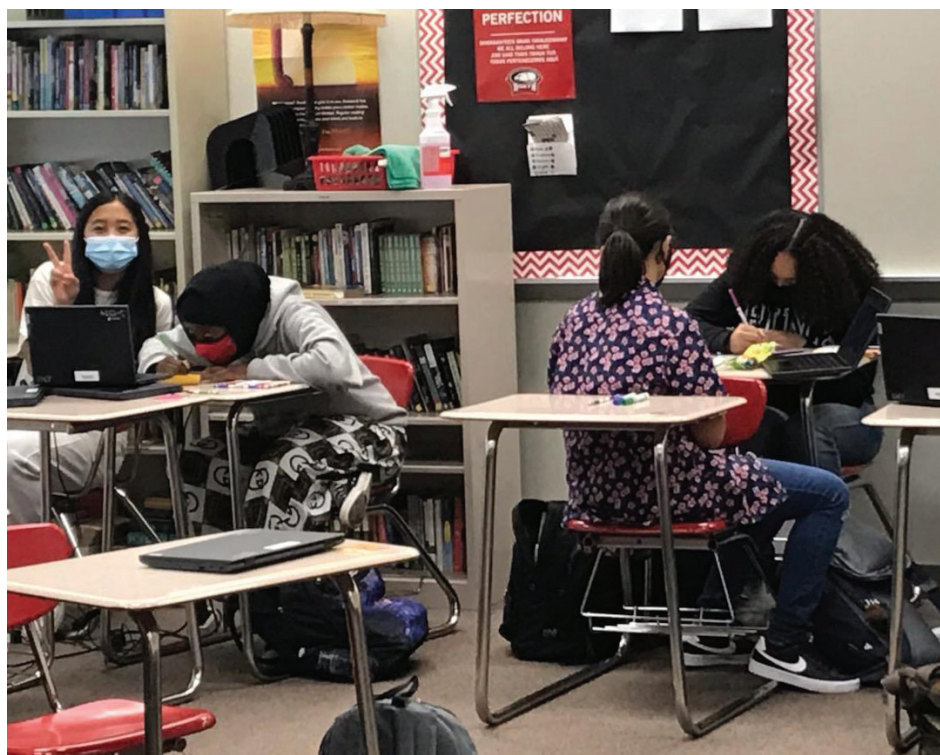
AVID is an elective class that stands out among the others. You may have a friend or two in the class. But, what is it? A question you have probably had at the lunch table.

“It’s pretty simple, Achievement Via Individual Determination. That’s what AVID is,” according to Katherine Cooke, an AVID student. The acronym that was created by Mary Catherine Swanson, the developer of AVID.

AVID has over 2 million students Nationwide and from beginning to end it can take you from 7th to 12th grade. With weekly tutorials to help with classes, any problem would be solved in the 56 minute class hour.

“AVID alumni that go to college are four times more likely to graduate than their national peers,” according to the AVID website.

This leaves AVID students with the assurance that they can improve their lives. Not only do they have a higher chance of graduating, but with the college viewing field trips they get a better



Students work in pairs in the AVID classroom.

view of where they’re going.

With most AVID students being from lower-income families, with a minimum of a 3.0 GPA, it’s inspiring to see them take the next big step in

their path.

“AVID is an opportunity that helps you organize yourself as a student and a person,” said Kathrine Cooke.

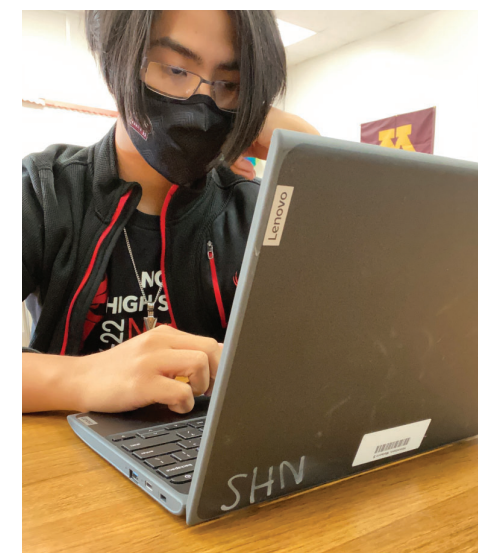
## Polars adjust to in-person schooling

By Emilson Alvarez Suazo

Northern Highlights Reporter

After a year and a half of virtual classes, students came back to school with masks on their faces in an effort to slow the spread of COVID-19. The past couple of years have been really difficult for students at North High School. A lot of students prefer going to school in-person rather than doing school online.

While many students enjoyed online classes, but found that online school threw them off rhythm.



“Online classes were ok, but there were too many distractions,” said Gloria Anani.

One of the most challenging  
Adjusting continued on page 2.

## Robotics “gears up” for another successful season

By Parker Nelson

Northern Highlights Reporter

There are many clubs at North High, so many in fact it can be hard to decide on one to join, and some can fly

under the radar. One such club is the robotics team.

The robotics team is a collaborative effort between many sub teams, such as programming, whose job it is

to write the code that makes the robot work; the build team, who physically constructs the robot; and the marketing team, who secures funding for the Robotics continued on page 2.

## American High Schools and the German Gymnasium Comparison

By Lorena Freier

Northern Highlights Reporter

Attending a U.S. High School is very popular in other countries. It is part of the American dream life some people would like to live. That is probably the reason why so many exchange students spend one year in the U.S.

I am Lorena Freier, an exchange student from Germany this year. I am writing about the differences between the German School, which is called Gymnasium, and American High School and which school system I prefer.

I have been attending the gymnasium in Germany for 11 years, and these years are really hard for students who are not really good at math, language arts, foreign language or science. But it does not matter if they are interested in these subjects or not, they have to learn it. Occasionally, you can choose



between 2 classes like arts or music, but students are not really able to decide what they want to learn in school.

Meanwhile in the U.S. the students mainly can choose their classes on their own, and it is sometimes really difficult because there are so many different options; but it can keep the most students interested in school while they learn to explore their own interests.

Lunch is different outside of the United States. In many U.S schools the food offered is often not very healthy, but students sometimes can get it for



free and that is helpful for people who don’t have that much money. While the German students have to bring lunch on their own. That can be sometimes healthier, but after a long time it can be very expensive.

In addition, the German Gymnasium does not offer such school athletics or activities like in the U.S. High Schools are very popular for their extracurricular activities and their school spirit. Some schools in Germany offer drama, but this is nowhere near as large a selection as at most U.S. schools here. But it should be because

it brings you into the school community, you can easily find new friends and you stay active.

All in all both of the school systems have pros and cons, but in my opinion the U.S. high school is the school I would prefer. You have just more options in choosing classes, you can do activities that let you find more friends and you can get lunch. Of course the German school system is well known for its stronger education system, but more and more students drop out of school earlier because whether it is too hard for them or they do not have fun in being at school.

I think the German Gymnasium should add more possibilities in choosing classes and let their students follow their own interests. Besides that they should add more extracurricular activities to create a better school community.



# POLARS TOP ST. ANTHONY 30-25



North Polars football team defeated St. Anthony for their first win of the season on Friday, October 1st. The Polars scored a season high 30 points in the victory, but it was a defensive goalline stand that sealed the victory.

The football team will finish the regular season with games at St. Paul Central at 1 pm on Saturday, October 9th, home against Highland Park, and at Park Center.

# Boy’s CC led by upperclassmen

By Emmanuel Ajayi  
Northern Highlights Reporter

The Boys Cross Country Team at North High may not have a lot of runners, but we do have quality runners like senior Juan Severson and junior Frederick Heaser.

According to Coach David Terry, they both finished 6th and 7th respectively out of 90 runners at meet in Somerset, Wisconsin earlier this season.

Cross country races are 3.2 miles long, so training distances consist of 4-6 miles of running each day. This results in having strong cardiovascular endurance, making you a healthier person.

Frederick says that practices are fun and that he and Juan push each other to get better everyday. He runs cross country to stay in shape, have fun with the other runners, and to compete.

“I am motivated to try and beat Juan at a race, because I have never done that before and I am motivated to try and get All Conference because that is something that I want,” Frederick stated.

Despite his experience, Frederick still gets nervous. “I still get nervous before every race. I know during the race if it’s a good race or a bad race based on how I feel.”

# Volleyball Blanks Tartan 3-0



North Girls’ Volleyball team defeated Tartan in straight sets to even their record to 6-6. It was the third consecutive win for the Polars as they try to build momentum toward the playoffs.

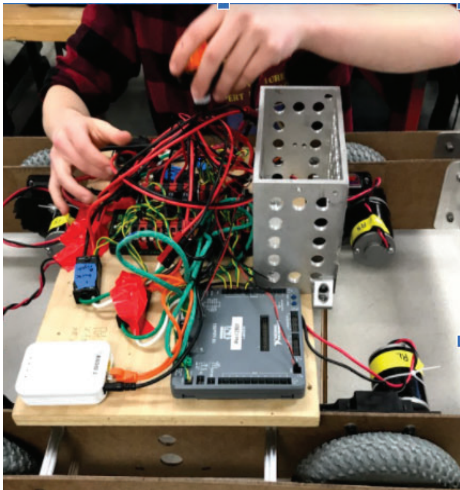
Robotics continued from page 1  
robot.

The consensus among members is that robotics is a great place to meet new people, and make friendships that last.

“I joined for my friends,” said Anthony Demars.

It also helps to build skills that are both useful in the business world, as well as a hobbyist. With marketing you can learn both management skills, and speaking skills. Programming teaches the ever popular programming skills (c++) and build is chock full of tool use, as well as digital modeling and CAD design.

If you’re at all interested, the first meeting is October 7th in room 292.



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things about coming back to school is the wearing of face masks. It is hard to communicate with other people. Sometimes you might feel anxious or panicky, as covering your mouth and nose might affect the air you breathe. However, online school did not require face masks unless you were at school.

Being in school is very important for students, even if they doesn’t like school. I think it is important to attend school because you do not have to deal with distractions around you that can mess up your grades. Moreover, less teachers have to worry about staring at black screens all the time because they get to interact with the students.

# Boys’ and Girls’ Soccer: Do they have what it takes?

By Chase Axtell  
Northern Highlights Reporter

The fall season begins as the boys and girls varsity soccer teams look to bring state back to North St. Paul. But do both Coach Dan Torrez, with the boys team and Coach Taylor Daas, with the girls team have what it takes to make a post season run?

Both Dan Torrez and Taylor Daas, expressed being very confident in their teams and are both excited for the upcoming season.

“I’m very happy with the team we have this year. We have a mix of returning veterans and a group of new and younger players that all bring individual talent to the team,” said Head Boys’ Coach Dan Torrez.

“Getting to state requires a lot more than just talent. I do believe this team is talented enough, and deep enough to make a deep postseason run. We’re working through a number of different defensive scenarios right now and if we’re able to figure that out as a team then I am confident that we can be very dangerous come playoff

time,” said Coach Torrez.

Girls head coach Taylor Daas is also happy with the team she has for the upcoming season saying “I am extremely happy with the team this year. The girls have positive attitudes and are willing to work hard and learn the game.”

“We are making improvements that potentially if we are able to put all the pieces together for the full game rather than one half we could have a shot. We ultimately want to improve the girls’ knowledge on the field. We want to make sure they are enjoying the game and loving every aspect of it,” said Coach Daas.

With the season starting now this September, it’s gonna be a big test for both teams as the season will reflect how they will do once state comes around. Hopefully both teams can have a good season and show improvement throughout the conference, section, then state. Good luck to both boys and girls varsity teams as well as the head coaches!

# Fall and Winter Dance Teams



By Gloria Anani  
Northern Highlights Reporter

North’s Fall and Winter dance team are gearing up for another great season.

The Fall Dance Team do non-competitive events and there are no tryouts. In the Fall the team performs hip hop & pom style.

The Fall Dance teams mostly gets invitations from groups to dance and perform at events like North’s pepfest, football games, and parades.

The Winter Dance Team has competitions, and they conduct tryouts for the season. During tryouts, dancers are taught a little combo that gets the participants to practice and later perform as a group. The team is selected based on the performances. The team competes in two types of dancing, jazz & high kick.

The winter team competes in the Metro East Conference and gets a few invitations where the groups invite them to dance.





# The best ways to deal with school-related stress

**By Maifa Vang**  
*Northern Highlights Reporter*

We are six weeks into the school year and days are now getting busier. Many teenagers are stressed because of school work, household conflicts and even personal conflicts can pop up at any time.

Students have also dealt with stress due to school activities such as joining a club, volunteering for a school event and more. Unfortunately, cases like that are more likely to happen because of school work. Majority of students have been dealing with stress and are going through a tough time dealing with schoolwork to get better grades.

“75% of high schoolers and 50% of middle schoolers described themselves as “often or always feeling stressed” by schoolwork. According to an article from Financesonline.com. “Almost 80% of high schoolers and 50% of middle schoolers felt

stressed by the work that they have received.”

The Pew Research Center also found that “61% of teens 13-17 years old say they are under a lot of pressure to produce good grades. Pew also found that this percentage is twice as high as those pressured to look good or fit in socially. This shows that school plays an important role to teenager’s mental health due to stress caused by the amount of work they need to do to maintain an average grade to pass their classes.

Each person experiences grief in many different ways. As a child or a teen, losing loved ones causes you to be overwhelmed and stressed. Crying, being moody, having unusual behavior, fatigue and having a loss of appetite is normal after losing a loved one. Many teenagers have lost their family members and friends at a young age. This is the number one stress driver according to Adventhealth.com.

School related stress is made worse by poor time management, also known as procrastination. Doing assignments last minute can affect their mental health causing them to be stressed about submitting assignments on time.

The most common type of stress people experience is called Acute stress. Acute stress is a reaction that you feel after an overwhelming or traumatic event. You may feel like you’re tired, sleepy, irritated and emotions going up and down. Being stressed can lead to serious threats like having suicidal thoughts, harming yourself and even high risks of health problems.

The counselors at North High School have recommendations on how to handle situations with stress in the alarm stage, and how they handle students with stress of a serious threat.

According to our counselors, stress management techniques could include

relaxation techniques, time management skills, or counseling.

Here are some strategies to resist becoming over stressed: 1. get enough sleep, 2. exercise regularly, 3. take calming breaths, 4. listen to music, 5. get organized, 6. eat a healthy diet, 7. make time for hobbies, 8. slow down, 9. talk about your problems, and 10. do your best.

Counselors at North High School recommend these methods to help you cope with your stress.

When the stress is greater than the person’s ability to cope, we offer additional support to the student and family.

Our counselors stated that if you know someone or is someone who is going through stress, don’t be afraid to reach out to your family, friends and staff at home and school. Talk to your friends and family, they will listen to you and help you. You matter and so does your health.

## Remembering Maxwell Xiong

**By Charlize Her**  
*Northern Highlights Reporter*

Born on September 25, 2003, Maxwell Xiong grew up in North St. Paul, with his mother, father, and sister. At North High School, Maxwell participated in many extracurricular activities including Robotics, and JROTC. Outside of school, Maxwell had other hobbies like drawing, computer designing, muay thai, and jiu-jitsu. These activities would calm Max, and were primarily his motivation in life, and in happiness.

Unfortunately, Maxwell’s happiness and life abruptly stopped on July 17th, 2021.

“Maxwell passed away by suicide as a result of depression and various life circumstances,” says Maxwell’s mother Mee Yang.

Despite his death, he lives on through his parents, Mee Yang and Kou Xiong, along with his older sister, Krystal Xiong. Many friends: Parker Nelson, Lucas Haindfield, Anthony Demars, and Carter Shaul

live on Maxwell’s behalf.

“He was one of the kindest people I’ve ever met...could hold a super funny conversation for hours about nothing, he was great.” said Anthony Demars.

Maxwell was described as reserved, intelligent, creative, kind, and comical. Maxwell used his intelligence to his best advantage, and joined activities and clubs that not only satisfied his mind, but his character.

Many of Maxwell’s friends understood him and his hobbies, Parker Nelson and Anthony Demars participated with Maxwell in North High robotics. Maxwell’s interest in computer design and programming led him to robotics.

Maxwell also had interests in general history, more so military history, which led him to join the JROTC program at North High. With many fellow friends in these clubs, Maxwell stayed close to his friends, and kept good ties. As COVID-19 began, separation of friends and school was put upon Maxwell as well as all students.

### Mental Health Resources

- National Alliance on Mental Health: 651-288-0400 or text “Support” to 85511
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255 or Text “MN” to 741741 for 24/7 confidential, free crisis counseling
- MN Department of Human Services Crisis Line - Call \*\*CRISIS (274747)
- The National Child Traumatic Stress Network: 1-800-985-5990 or by texting TalkWithUS 66746.

Maxwell was diagnosed with ADD (attention deficit disorder) at a young age, Mee stated. “He is a bright young man but needed support and guidance on how to focus.”

As COVID caused a disruption to school and his social life, Maxwell struggled with the workload of online classes, missing friends, and other factors. “He did not like school, being forced to do things. I could tell he didn’t have the passion for much of the work.” Parker Nelson stated.

With the online school and not much interaction with friends, Maxwell had little to no motivation and interest in school. Maxwell still proceeded to go to school, and did not deny the idea of focusing on school, according to his mother. As Maxwell

continued school, his head was not in the right place.

“He was in pain and that pain inhibited his ability to see his future, his worth, and how special he is as an individual.” Mee concluded.

The isolation caused by COVID-19 has been hard for all people, and many of us have won the battle. Maxwell was the fallen soldier of life in this harsh time. For those who feel the same way as Maxwell, or have the same symptoms of depression: loneliness, anxiety, doubt, and low motivation/energy—do not hesitate to speak to someone. It may seem as though suicide is the only answer, but it is not. The National Suicide Prevention hotline is: 1-800-273-8255.

# Three questions about mental health awareness

**By Kyle Eklund**  
*Northern Highlights Reporter*

**How are students affected by mental health problems?**

Mental health problems can affect a student’s energy level, concentration, dependability, mental ability, optimism, and hinder performance under pressure. Some research suggests that depression is associated with lower grade point averages, and that re-occurring depression and anxiety can increase this association.

Commonplace mental health

issues for students are depression, anxiety, and bi-polar disorder. Mental health issues have been on the rise throughout western society beings predominantly affecting adolescents and young adults, this in mind suicide is the second highest cause of death for people ages 15-24 and still rising in rates through the last



20+ years.

**How can we help students with mental health?**

Some recommendations for mental health treatment can be fixing sleeping and eating habits, while in some cases has been proven to relieve stress and anxiety for people.

It’s often realized that most of the predominant mental health cases in students are related to past traumas

that were either ignored or repressed coming back up in forms of depression, anxiety and personality disorders.

**How can we spot the early signs of deteriorating mental health in students?**

Changes in eating habits, difficulty sleeping and low energy which makes it difficult to get out of bed are early signs of mental illness.





# What’s new in gaming: Halo Infinite

**By Charles Franzmeier**  
*Northern Highlights Reporter*

2020 and the beginning of 2021 may not have had many new game releases due to COVID-19, but gamers will have a lot to look forward to for the rest of the year. Games such as Halo Infinite, Guardians of the Galaxy, Dying Light 2, Battlefield 2042, and many more, are set to be released in the coming months.

Halo Infinite will be the sixth installment in the main Halo story, and the sixteenth game in the overall series, which originally debuted in 2001 with the release of Halo: Combat Evolved. It is being developed by 343 Industries, a video game developer based out of Redmond, Washington.

The game will pick up where the previous installment, Halo 5: Guardians, left off, continuing the story of Master Chief. Halo Infinite was originally set to be released on November 10th, 2020, but was delayed to Decem-



ber 8th, 2021.

Halo Infinite will feature a multiplayer and campaign mode. When discussing on Twitter where 343 Industries is in the process of getting the game ready for release, Brian “ske7ch” Jarrard, the community director for 343 Industries, stated recently via

Twitter “We have teams across the studio digging into game data, crash logs, bug tickets, and feedback threads to turn into actionable items as warranted.”

Halo Infinite will be released on the Xbox Series X and S, Xbox One, and Microsoft Windows. If played on

the Series X or S, Halo Infinite will feature new enhancements, such as reduced loading times and up to 120 FPS. If you are playing on the Xbox One, you will not receive the same enhancements, but there is no need to worry, as development director Frank O’Connor said the game will be made “so it plays and looks fantastic” on the Xbox One.

The initial gameplay reveal for Halo Infinite received disappointing feedback when first revealed in July 2020. However, the game’s multiplayer beta received overall praise when released in August 2021. Players mainly praised the game’s improved gameplay and movement.

There is a lot for gamers to look forward to for the rest of the year, with new titles also being announced for 2022 and even 2023. Needless to say, gamers will be very busy over the next couple of months.

# China inacts new law to limit video game use for minors

**By Junior Vang**  
*Northern Highlights Reporter*

On August 30, 2021 China established a new law that prohibits minors from playing more than 3 hours of video games per week due to concerns for addiction.

In an effort to prevent video game addiction among minors the Chinese government limits the window of play time to only 8 p.m. to 9 p.m. and only on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. They are forcing video game companies to be stricter and make logins using real identity procedures to allow gaming. Video game companies are to monitor and eliminate any fake accounts that may rise due to this new law. Some are speculating how this might affect the video gaming industry as a whole and it’s future.

“The age restrictions will drive a lot of young pro gamers to not get engaged with esports, so I think that will



be one of the major impacts,” said Cui Chenyu, an analyst at tech consultancy Omdia in Shanghai in an Aljazeera article.

Some of the top Chinese competitors involved in the esports scene have stated they started playing competitively in their teens to hone their skills. China is one of the most competitive

and active video game fanbase with an average of 12 hours per week and is the largest esports market in the world with an average of 400 millions fans and viewers. Losing them will greatly affect esports in revenue and watch time.

Professional esports leagues are deciding whether to let China partici-

pate in tournaments or eliminate them off the roster because of this law. Limiting the amount of time being able to play will affect the capability of minors participating in esports.

In 2019, China enforced a law that also limited gaming but because of the lack of identification some bypassed this law and continued to play video games. They bypassed this by making new accounts or having multiple accounts that they can alternate with when their time runs out. The new law is far more strict but can still be exploited using an older family member as the identification.

“Parents of minors today have grown up with gaming, so they’ll be more liberal minded and may be more open to letting their children use their accounts to play games,” said Daniel Ahmad, an analyst at Niko Partners in London in an Aljazeera article.

# How has “The Simpsons” gone down in quality over the past 35 years?

**By Jonathan Behrens**  
*Northern Highlights Reporter*

The Simpsons is an animated sitcom created by Matt Groening and produced by 20th Century Fox. The Simpsons started off back in 1987 as shorts that were a part of the Tracey Ullman show; soon, after three seasons the show was developed into a 30-minute prime time television show.

The show gained massive popularity and was praised for its charm, wit, characters and messages. Throughout the years it seemed like the Simpsons just got better and better with seasons 1 through 9 being known as “the gold-

en age”.

Season 10 is when people started to notice the decline in quality of the show, the humour wasn’t as good, the characters felt like caricatures of themselves and later seasons adapted a bland animation style that looked clearer, but was flat and stiff.

By season 10, the Simpsons started to lean away from character driven plot lines in favor of celebrity cameos and references to pop culture. The Simpsons cast was starting to transform into caricatures of themselves, constantly throwing out one liners and performing zany antics.

The Simpsons is still enjoyed to



this day by millions of fans and it doesn’t seem to be going away anytime soon, but even super fans of the show can acknowledge the downfall in quality. Whether you enjoy modern

simpsons or not. You have to admit, the charm, wit and story arcs are not as prominent as they were in the early seasons of the show.