



The New Trier News

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Math office flooding puts spotlight on facility's flaws

Though PPS reacted quickly, some faculty still lost belongings

by Anna Ferguson

On Friday, Sept. 18, the Math Department offices flooded during a storm.

Physical Plant Services (PPS) facilities manager Steven Linke offered specifics on the flooding via an email sent to the entire faculty and staff. The email explained how the water got into the math offices through the construction barriers adjacent to the project on both the 2nd and 3rd floors.

"We've never had anything like it happen before," said math teacher Terry Phillips. "The water came in through the ceiling so there were about ten desks affected to varying degrees."

"It was a very difficult day," said Phillips. "Some people lost their lesson plans and with students coming in for math help, the whole day was pretty chaotic."

Math teacher Bradley Kuklis elaborated on the chaos of the day, "During the day, the math teachers were pretty good about sharing desk space, and the people who were hit especially hard were able to work from empty desks in the office."

Flooding is not a new problem for the school, according to Linke, "We have experienced a few major instances over the years, most of



Maintenance team works quickly to repair the damage from the flood in the math office on Sept. 18 | Carly Travis

those times it's been the field house that sustained the worst flooding."

The flooding has not been the only issue the school has experienced with its facilities recently. Earlier in the year, the air conditioning in half of the main building malfunctioned, resulting in sweltering temperatures in many classrooms. "It was actually awful," said senior Brendan Loftus. "I was sweating through all my classes."

Linke addressed the broken air conditioning in an email to the staff and faculty. In the email, he explains that though the air conditioning repairs would take top priority for the PPS staff, it still took four weeks to make the repairs.

Students feel much of the school is in poor repair. Water damaged walls and ceilings, chipped tiles, and lockers that don't lock are trademarks of east campus. The overall wear

of the building has many students wondering if the renovation plan has gone far enough. "The entire school is falling apart," junior Marissa Grief said.

Linke doesn't believe the claim that the school is falling apart, saying "I don't think it is in bad shape at all." He does, however, acknowledge the need for renovation. "We will be renovating quite a few restrooms, our air conditioning and ventilation. We

are planning on some heating system improvements and roof replacements in the next five years," Linke said.

Following the completion of the current construction project and renovation plans, the administration hopes to reduce the \$6 million budget for repair and maintenance.

When dealing with the the maintenance of the school, the Physical Plant Service team's first priority are issues that produce safety concerns for the students, according to Linke. This includes the cleanup of broken glass and the investigation of falling objects. The next priority on their list are repairs for the building envelope, that is, walls, roof, ceilings. After that is occupant comfort.

This system of priorities was reflected in PPS' handling of the math department flooding. "The PPS staff reacted very quickly," said Phillips. "They hired an outfit to make the repairs. By the end of the weekend they had all the carpeting replaced and the ceiling cleaned."

Kuklis echoed these sentiments, saying "The PPS staff did a phenomenal job cleaning everything up over the weekend--when I walked in the office Monday morning, it was like nothing had happened."

Despite having what many students consider a run-down appearance, New Trier is still loved by its students. "New Trier's a rad school," said senior Charlie Collyer. "I just wish the facilities reflected that."

Loss of days off complicates college visits

Lack of days off has seniors stressing over college application process

by Sarah Zhang

Many of the long weekends that were hallmarks of first semester at New Trier have been replaced with school days due to the construction schedule.

With so few breaks during the school year, such as Rosh Hashana and Columbus Day weekend.

Seniors feel overwhelmed with their college admission process, though, their stress doesn't seem abnormal to faculty members.

In prior years, these long weekends were used by seniors who were either just beginning their college application process, or by seniors who were visiting schools they were committed to.

For all students, losing those days off is a major source of stress, as Bella Miller, senior and rower on the New Trier Rowing Team is acutely aware of that stressed "Because of my official visits to colleges for rowing, I'm missing a lot of school. Without the days off, it's difficult to catch up on what I missed."

With the academic rigor of senior year, along with extra-curriculars, missing just one day can



The lack of days off is preventing seniors from visiting colleges, including the University of Missouri | Mizzou Website

cause a huge amount of catch-up work that many seniors have a hard time keeping up. The stress level among seniors seems to be at an all time high.

"I think the level of stress is higher than it should be because there are no breaks and less opportunity to make important visits," senior Carly Cao said.

However, post-high school counselor Deborah Donley sees this year's students has having just around the same amount of stress

they always do, year after year, when college applications come around.

Donley doesn't see much difference year to year. "Students seem fine. Remember, they are often stressed about the unknown aspect of the college process when they see us."

Although post-high school counselors may not be the best indicator of student stress levels, the general trend of stressed Trevians seem very manageable to the college counselors.

Of course, not all seniors are stressed; it seems also to depend on each individual's schedule, and how much work classes give correlates to the amount of time students spend on their college applications and college visits.

Senior Owen LaCava, who is on the less stressed side of the spectrum, said "I have three free periods: 7, 8 and 9. But I still get stressed. My extra two hours of free periods make sure I get homework and college applications done, but then it's like,

what will I do with all my free time?"

Not all students have three consecutive free periods, so they have to rely on the few long weekends left in order to fit in college applications and visits.

The four day long Columbus Day Weekend, usually the second weekend in October, has been replaced this year with an early release on Friday, Oct. 9, and a late start on Monday, Oct. 12.

Traditionally, this was a time where many students visited prospective colleges, especially ones that were farther away. Senior Gabby Sirazi said, "It is really frustrating because Columbus Day weekend would have been the weekend to go college touring, but now I have to miss my actual classes to go, which is way more stressful."

Donley, on the other hand, disagrees. "Missing the Columbus Day weekend does not have such a large impact on visits, since that Saturday is traditionally an ACT testing date that many fall semester seniors utilize."

Donley encourages students to take a few days off for important school visits. "Seniors are welcome to take school days to visit colleges, however, they need to adhere to New Trier attendance policies and notify teachers accordingly, be responsible for missed work and quizzes or exams."