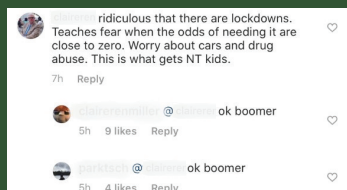




No shave November

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...Ok Boomer

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Field hockey wins state title

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# Accidental lockdown leaves student body shocked

## False alarm led to fear of real threat at Winnetka

by Hannah Sussman

At approximately 1:59 p.m. last Friday, the lockdown alarm rang through the Winnetka Campus alerting students that they needed to get to a classroom as quickly as possible. Unlike previous lockdown drills, this alarm sounded during a passing period.

Lasting for 18 minutes, the lockdown was later revealed to have been falsely activated by a teacher simply attempting to leave the school building.

Adding to the confusion, the PA system was not properly turned off and the sounds of someone apologizing and static could be heard throughout the school.

Senior Tess Stetter described feeling a certain numbness when the alarm first went off. She and many other students initially believed it was simply a planned drill.

“It wasn’t a surprise, it was more like a ‘oh, here we go again’ type of thing. Because from what it seemed, it’s probably not a great mindset, but I was like ‘it’s not that urgent,’” Stetter said.

However, many students quickly gained the sinking feeling that the lockdown had not been planned.

For Junior Iris Ely, the crackle of the speaker coming in and out made her realize the lockdown was real.

“Then the PA came on, and it wasn’t really clear and there was that

part where we heard the voice saying ‘I’m sorry’ and there was a lot of static,” Ely explained. “That’s when it hit me, this is real.”

The weight of the situation was heightened by the increase of school shootings across America. According to Maeve McConnell, a Junior, the thought of other schools that experienced gun violence made her class’s fear even more intense.

“The whole situation with everything that has been going on, with all of the school shootings and stuff like that, definitely got to us,” said McConnell. “I really thought the worst thing possible would happen. I thought I was going to die.”

Overall, lockdown procedure was implemented swiftly once the alarms sounded. Within two minutes, the hallways were clear. Within three minutes, Winnetka police were on campus to sweep the building. Amid the chaos and confusion, many students looked to their teachers to understand what was going on.

For junior, Mila Cutler, the actions their teacher took during the drill simultaneously increased the gravity of the situation while also creating a sense of security.

“What really hurt to watch was seeing my teacher stand in front of the door. Knowing that she was ready to sacrifice herself for us was something really intense that I wasn’t ready to see,” said Cutler.

Students had a wide variety of experiences depending on the room they were in. Sophomore, Blair Weiss, described how people in their room all reacted strongly.

“It was really scary and [the teacher] was crying, and since the

teacher was crying a lot of the kids were crying,” said Weiss.

Junior Sadie Bard managed to reach the safety of the gym locker rooms, but getting there proved to be an independently scary experience.

“On the way to the gym, I remember just getting chased by like ten people screaming ‘go to the locker room.’ There were 70 of us lined up against the back wall, and teachers kept telling us ‘we don’t know what it is, we are just praying it is a drill,’” said Bard.

From the locker rooms, the PA system was only heard faintly. This made staying updated more difficult, amplifying the stress of the lockdown.

Other problems that occurred throughout the school were indirectly caused by Lit Fest being that day. Lit Fest is an opportunity for students in writing classes to attend seminars run by several writers, authors, and musicians. As a result, several classes had substitutes who were unfamiliar with lockdown procedures, and many students were in different classrooms.

“I have friends who because it was Lit fest, they might have ended up in the wrong room, and there were no subs to show up, and they didn’t have a key to lock the door” Ely explained.

Other problems arose because the lockdown took place during a passing period. Scheduled drills have always happened during class periods to ensure every class has a teacher.

Junior Eyllah Babbitt was with her English class during the lockdown. Her teacher had not yet arrived, and the students had no way to lock their door.

“My teacher hadn’t shown up

yet, so we were just in there without a teacher and the door was unlocked. This guy stacked the desks, and we all flipped over the desks. We sat there and we waited and we didn’t have a teacher in the room. We broke a meter stick in half so we had a weapon,” Babbitt said.

In a statement sent to parents, Superintendent Paul Sally recognized that several procedural problems had become apparent during the lockdown that the administration could now address. Students were given the opportunity to discuss these concerns during advisory and at the beginning of several classes.

“While many parts of the lockdown went well, we know we have improvements to make. Our top priority is to ensure that we never have another accidental lockdown activation. We are also gathering information from students and staff about places where the PA announcements could not be heard and doors could not be locked, among a number of other items,” Sally wrote.

Sally also praised students and staff for their quick reaction and patience during the lockdown.

“I am proud of their response under such significant stress, and I know some of them may continue to reflect on these events over the weekend and beyond,” Sally wrote.

After the lockdown had been called off, students’ experiences varied dramatically. For junior, Olivia San Jose, her experience was very positive.

“Afterward, teachers were very sensitive which I appreciated, I think it was good that the traumatizing

effects of it were acknowledged,” San Jose reflected.

Unfortunately, not all students shared the same comfort from teachers as San Jose.

“My next class, [the teacher] didn’t talk about it at all, he just went on with the class as if nothing happened,” explained junior Elie Zieserl.

The following Monday, advisory period was dedicated to discussion of students’ experiences and what specifically went wrong during the drill. Many students appreciated this opportunity to process what had happened and specifically address what changes were needed.

“During advisory we talked about not just what happened with us, but also what we think needs to be addressed or changed. That really helped us feel like we had our voices heard,” said Zieserl.

Ely agreed it is essential for students to be continuously involved and informed of changes going forward.

“The administration is overseeing some changes to the system and students should be a part of this process and notified,” said Ely.

Though the lockdown only lasted for 17 minutes, students may continue to feel its impacts.

“What makes me the most mad is that a lot of kids felt like their feelings on the event weren’t valid since it was a false alarm,” said Cutler.

“Ultimately, even though the threat in the lockdown wasn’t real, the fear and anxiety students felt was,” said Junior Tatum Richardson.

# Students outraged by earlier registration date for AP tests

## Change in deadline could boost revenue at student expense

by Caroline Bewley

Garnering mixed reactions from staff and students, the College Board has moved the Advanced Placement test registration deadline up months earlier and has added new fees to testing.

Previously, students had until March to sign up for the AP test. Now, registration must be completed by Nov. 15 to avoid incurring a \$40 late fee. If the student does not take the test after signing up, an additional \$40 will be charged.

These changes were announced by the College Board in February after being piloted by a group of 400,000 students from the 2017-2018 school year. They went into effect nationally in August to, as put by the College Board, ensure that AP students “stay engaged in class and tackle challenging topics head-on.”

But Chimille Dillard, Director of Curriculum and Instruction at New Trier, questioned the relevancy the College Board’s rationale has to New Trier.

“Having students register by Nov. 15 isn’t going to motivate them anymore to prepare because New



College Board CEO David Coleman (left), and College Board President Jeremy Singer (right) | College Board

Trier has students that work hard and prepare regardless.”

For Dillard, the College Board’s changes were not made solely with the best interests of the students at heart.

“The College Board is still a business, and the tests have to be paid for. [Early registration] secures a lot of people by Nov. 15—to me, it’s just a business decision.”

Senior Beth Fisher echoed Dillard’s sentiment, and said she believes that the deadline was really changed so the College Board could profit monetarily.

Since 2018, a petition for the reversal of the exam costs and deadlines has gathered more than 120,000 virtual signatures. New Richmond High school counselor

Jennifer Wander, the creator of the petition, cited financial reasons for her position. “Let’s face it—the College Board says they’re a nonprofit, but they are all about money. They are going to make at least \$40 million more every year with this new policy.”

Katie Baakkonen, a junior, voiced another concern against the AP test revisions: the difficulty to predict how one will perform on the test.

“I think it’s bad,” said Baakkonen. “People shouldn’t have to pay so far in advance for the AP test when they don’t know how they’re going to do in the class.”

As a sophomore, Baakkonen took the Human Geography AP test while being enrolled in World

Geography, a non-AP class.

“I registered for the test in February,” said Baakkonen. “If the deadline had been earlier, I would have talked to my parents about the possibility of registering but not taking the test if it looked like I wouldn’t be prepared in May.”

According to junior Rory McKeough, the new deadline puts added pressure on parents.

“They have to be on top of signing their kid up since the date is so much earlier than it used to be, and that can be stressful,” explained McKeough.

Peg Stevens, Testing Coordinator at New Trier’s Winnetka campus, said that, besides the date and fees, the actual registration process was revised. In previous years, students only had to register

and pay for the AP test through RevTrak. Now, however, the College Board asks that students join their online system, as well.

“I was not that enthusiastic about it in the beginning,” said Stevens. “I think it’s going well now, though. Students and teachers were having a bit of a disconnect about registering on RevTrak and registering for the class on the College Board, but that’s been resolved.”

In defense of the new registration program, the College Board reported that administrators saw an increase of scores of three or higher across multiple groups in its 2017-2018 fall registration pilot program compared to 2016-2017 scores. AP tests are graded on a one to five score, with five being the highest.

In addition to the new cutoff and costs, the College Board now offers students resources that will help them to prepare for the AP test in May. Such additions include unit guides and a bank of former AP test questions.

According to McKeough, her AP teachers have had her sign up for access to materials on the College Board website, but haven’t begun utilizing them. “They could be helpful—keep that if it helps students,” said McKeough.