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## Students resistant to new advisory technology restrictions

Administration aims to bring back original purpose of advisory

by Alyssa Pak

With the newest restrictions on technology, students can no longer use advisory to finish up Spanish homework or last-minute cram for that first period math test, but are encouraged to shut off their phones and converse with their fellow advisees.

The first few weeks of limited technology use in advisory have seen a large number of unhappy students as technology becomes an increasingly present force throughout the school.

New Trier has promoted iPad use over the last seven years, with many classes making the transition from physical textbooks to more backpack-friendly eBooks, and more and more teachers opting to upload their grades and files to Canvas.

Although pen-and-paper homework still exists and is allowed during advisory, iPads are now a staple of student life and academic work, too.

The original goals of the adviser program are to bring students together, both Junior Girl's Adviser Chair, Patricia Sheridan, as well as Assistant Principal Scott Williams

emphasized that advisory was never intended to function as a 25 minute free period, but rather to foster a community that is able to have meaningful discussions.

Some advisers have a positive attitude about the modifications and have seen noticeable results.

"From a personal standpoint, I've seen guys with more spontaneous conversations that aren't technology based, and I think that's a really positive change," said MCL teacher Gary Schubert, a senior boys' adviser.

Senior girls adviser Jackie Gnant's current advisory is her first of three in which she's implemented a no technology rule, actually starting from sophomore year.

She observed that they're the most social group she's had. "Not having screens to isolate themselves has been a big part of that," said Gnant.

However, students don't always share the same opinion.

"Advisory is still supposed to be an okay time for us to do homework or study, but with no technology, how is that supposed to be possible when most things we do now at school are online?" said senior Rachel Hsu.

Sophomore Ben Levens agreed that although he acknowledges the purpose of the ban, the lack of technology in advisory can throw off his daily routine.

"On a general scale, advisory is really helpful for getting my head back into a school space when I'm able to catch up on some overarching



Students may no longer use any form of technology in advisory, including iPhones, iPads, and laptops | Pearlman

projects or small scale homework assignments," he said.

Other students, such as senior Asher Noel, are frustrated with some of the inconsistencies that the restrictions have created.

"The rule has escalated out of proportions, as my adviser now bans homework in advisory," said Noel.

This new modification, whether good, bad, or a little bit of both, has students wondering about the motivations behind the limited technology use.

"Our advisers say that they want to decrease our stress, so wouldn't allowing us to use technology to complete homework help take some of the stress out of our lives?" questioned junior Maia Law.

Even though a large part of the student body is disappointed by this recent change, there are also advisees who don't feel as strongly about it.

"I don't really care that much about not going on our phones during advisory because I don't think it's hurting us at all to just talk with our advisory if we have nothing else to do," said senior Lexie Kaplan.

Schubert noted that the technology restrictions have been especially difficult for seniors to adjust to. But he also noted that his advisees are still able to do homework.

"If they need to find a few other minutes during the day to do assignments involving technology, they can do that, and as advisers we can help them figure it out," he said.

One of the administration's goals with this ban was to promote a more collaborative advisory environment where students are interacting with one another as opposed to focusing on their studies or their screens. Sheridan highlighted

that it's not a technology "ban," but is actually more about "reestablishing an acceptable use of technology in advisory."

Sheridan elaborated on the purpose of the restrictions, stating that "This isn't an attempt to demonize technology. I think it's about balance. There's a good part of your day where you'll be on your device, so this is a small piece of the day where we're trying to nurture that idea of being able to disconnect briefly."

However, some students still attest to the idea that technology can actually have the power to connect advisees to one another as opposed to creating an unsociable and distant environment. Law pointed out that "Sharing pictures, videos and music can bring people together and can really only be accessed by technology."

## KW locker rooms will remain open after school

For student safety, girls' locker room was closed after 3:25 at start of school year

by Molly George

Temporary closure of the girls' Kinetic Wellness locker room caused confusion among students in the first few days of school. The issue was resolved quickly as the school stepped up security to increase safety.

New Kinetic Wellness department chair Andrew Butler said that students may perceive that locker room rules are tightening.

"We are identifying security needs and looking at protocols, policies, and past practices to see what we can do for students," said Butler. "Our goal is to create a safe environment, and we can't just leave everything wide open," he said.

Safety and lack of supervision is the reason behind the girls' KW locker room being closed after school in the first week of school.

"There was some confusion in terms of how we deal with the new security measures," said Athletic Director Augie Fontanetta. "We're making sure everything is done appropriately. It's most important to us that kids are supervised and the building is safe. That's our priority."

Fontanetta worked with Butler

and the KW department on resolving the closed locker rooms.

"When students are in there from 6:30 in the morning to 6:30 at night, it should be a safe place," said Fontanetta, "so when you're here, you feel safe."

Student Alliance communicated with Fontanetta in hopes of letting students know what the current situation is regarding use of the KW locker room.

"We're working to get the word out to students that they will not be locked for the rest of year," said Student Alliance president Bill Yen.

Now the locker room is open for use — and supervised — after school, but security is still a concern.

KW equipment assistant, Rubi Flores, said that supervision involves "everything — an emergency, assistance with lockers, and any potential issues." Her job is more than supervising and involves assigning lockers, managing uniform rentals, preparing equipment for classes, taking equipment out and putting it away.

"It's all about the safety," said athletics equipment assistant Beth Lopiccolo, "that's the reason we're there after school."

Flores said, "When I leave right at 3:30 there's a great number of girls in the locker room. My major concern is safety, especially if someone needed something and there was no one to help out."

Butler said that to ensure safety,



Many students use the locker rooms after school for team practices, games, and personal workouts | Pearlman

it is "not functional to just lock the door. We have to effectively figure out how to use and supervise the space." A locker room attendant is there to make sure no one leaves their stuff "up for grabs."

While the KW locker room is open, the swim locker room is locked during the day, and some girls leave their bags for practice outside the door.

The difference, according to senior swimmer Addy Hillerbrand, is that "someone is there for most of the day, and we're never worried someone's going to steal our stuff."

"The only thing that's ever gotten stolen is food," she added.

While it has not been a concern to swimmers, security of students' belongings is a focus in the KW locker rooms.

"We want to prevent bad decisions that are sometimes

made in unsupervised areas," said Butler, mentioning vaping, theft, and physical altercations as a few examples. "It puts us at risk as a school," he added.

The KW department is watching out for people, too, now requiring students to wear their green KW uniform shirts for security at doors.

"It helps tremendously to know the students in a class," said Bill Rose, a security guard near the gym doors several periods a day.

Rose described supervising gym security in the past, "They'd just be filtering in before, and anyone could join in the group."

"No one's complained about it," Rose said about the students.

"I get why they made the decision," said a junior who takes the Wellness for Life KW class, "but I think it causes students so much more stress." The former policy allowed

students in some classes to wear any New Trier shirt, which was more convenient, said this student.

"If the school says we have to wear them, it's not that big of a deal," said senior Aidan Jones.

Any changes in the KW department are related to security improvements throughout the school, including limiting student access to the building to one door in the gym area.

Because the school has a reputation as a safe place, Butler said, "we are strategically implementing subtle changes over time. Changing culture takes time," he added. "It may feel like a privilege being taken away."

While policies develop to keep students safe, Butler said, "It is important to make the changes necessary while fitting with the parameters we have."