

# The New Trier News

Founded in 1919

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## STAFF EDITORIAL:

### Question how you're taught

New Trier's Mobile Learning Initiative has brought iPads to about 2,300 students this year, a number that will expand to the entire student body for the 2014-2015 school year. According to the New Trier website, this initiative will contribute, "access to resources in classrooms; a plethora of easy-to-use apps; increased digital communication with teachers; efficient feedback about learning between teacher and student; improved classroom routines and practices; and improved student organization and management of work."

In a nutshell, iPads will make academic tasks more efficient and replace textbooks to save your back. Instead of cutting down trees, we complete digital assignments that don't require a paper and pencil but rather a screen and stylus. It's an innovation that will push students forward and enhance their learning. But there is definitely a level of concern.

At first, it will take some babysitting from the teachers. If a student decides that a lecture is boring or meaningless, he will take out his iPad to play videogames or surf the web. For all the teacher knows, he's taking notes -- that's why he's looking at the screen. Or maybe the teacher *does* have suspicions... The point is, no one should be playing the guessing game in the classroom --- it distracts from the learning process.

More and more, it both fascinates and frustrates us how technology is taking over the world. It allows us to make medical advances, organize information efficiently, and find data that simply would not be possible without the power of the computer and internet. But including iPads in the classroom

is a dangerous endeavor.

God knows how much the average high school student spends on Facebook, their smartphone, and watching television combined. Even from the moment the bell rings, what's the first thing you do? Many resort to their phone immediately. Overuse of technology outside of school has become a significant-yet commonly ignored-problem, and including more technology inside of school will perhaps worsen these bad habits.

Our sight, too, will be constrained in exchange for more "efficient" learning purposes. Slowly, our vision will deviate away from the teacher and toward the screen. Gone will be the days of dealing with what's around us. We will be taught that whatever lies in our 9.5in by 7.3in device holds the answer.

We have to be careful about how much technology consumes us. The added efficiency brings extra baggage, which includes gradually poorer eyesight and a potentially less social classroom. There needs to be a line drawn for how much technology becomes a part of our daily lives. In a study conducted by Stanford University professor Gerald Crabtree published in the journal *Trends in Genetics*, humans are becoming dumber because finding information is becoming easier, and we no longer have the need to be as intellectual. Having iPads just to make my backpack lighter and the work more efficient isn't enough to convince me that they are necessary. We know and accept that we can use technology to communicate, be entertained, and also type our essays, but iPads becoming a mandatory item in everyone's class next year might be taking it too far.

## Sophomores tackle first day of school with upperclassmen

by Kelsey Curran

Now, when I say we are going to discuss the sophomores and the first day of school, I know what you're thinking, "Why are we talking about them? They aren't juniors starting the worst year of their lives, and they aren't seniors starting their best year yet."

Truth is, we all should feel bad for them. I mean they were thrown in with "the sharks" on their first day.

Most of the upperclassmen are probably thinking that that was a pretty good idea, but think back to your own first day of sophomore year.

We probably didn't know that the P stairwell gets way too crowded or that the cafeteria is like a sauna. Some may have been so nervous that they just blocked out that memory completely. However, the difference between the new sophomores and us is this: we didn't have to deal with the scary upperclassmen on the very first day. And they did.

The first day of any year is always a little exciting and a little nerve wracking, but throw in a new campus and 2,000 older kids. Now that's just not nice.

"Being with upperclassmen on the first day was definitely overwhelming because there were just so many people compared to the freshman campus, and I wasn't good at navigating my way around the school," said sophomore Monica Diaz.

Junior Danielle Steinberg remembers her first day. She was overwhelmed by the size of the school, worried she would get lost—and she had it easy compared to

Diaz.

Some would argue that it's great to have all the classes together on the first day because the juniors and seniors could show the sophomores the around and they would get the true high school feel right from the start.

While true, the first part about showing the sophomores around has a catch (as do most great-sounding ideas).

The first piece of advice I ever got as a rising sophomore was from a rising senior. She was all excited because she couldn't wait to show a new-comer the wrong way to their class. That's when she added, "Don't take directions from any upperclassmen, especially the seniors. They will point you in the wrong direction."

As you can imagine, that put the fear of juniors and seniors into me. Seriously though, I was terrified of being pointed in the wrong direction and being late for class the first full day.

What most people don't really think about is how having all the classes together changed the atmosphere of the first day of school. Traditionally, sophomores have a "laid back" first day with ten-minute class periods and with only their grade level peers in the school. It was still hectic and chaotic according to Junior Lauren Holly, but it was not as hectic as it seemed to be this year.

One sophomore adviser said of the first day that her advisees were overwhelmed and full of anxiety partially because they didn't even know there would be upperclassmen at school that day.

She also added the hallways were so crowded that it made the anxiety worse for most of the new students, not to mention that their biggest fear were the juniors and seniors.

If the sophomores weren't already anxious enough, Diaz claimed, "The upperclassmen are definitely not fond of the sophomores—they make that very clear both at school and on Facebook."

For the future, Senior Ella Brumitt said to keep the first day to the sophomores.

Diaz agreed with Brumitt, "I would change it so the upperclassmen wouldn't be there on the first day. It just puts a lot less stress on the sophomores and allows them to adapt to the new school without all the extra people."

Also agreeing with Brumitt was Steinberg, who said it would make it easier for the sophomores and having the day with the upperclassmen is unnecessary because they already know their way around.

Sophomore adviser Melissa Raguseo said, "The first day should be just the sophomores with a short day or everyone with a full day."

So now that we have sufficiently created an anxiety filled environment for the first day of school and we know it doesn't work, I think it's time to go back to the good old days where the sophomores have the day to figure out things before the "big, scary" juniors and seniors show up to cause mayhem in the halls.

## Start working, stop stressing out

by Max Friedman

It's time to let summer go. Sorry everyone, but the party's over, and now it's time for school. Which means we have to get into that dreaded school mentality. We have to start doing our homework at home. We have to be prepared for class. We have to not pass out every period.

I know some of us are having some problems with this. I know because I am having said problems, and I refuse to believe that I'm alone. So, forget everything that happened this summer, because it doesn't matter anymore now that the school year's started. Unless, of course, you took summer school. Remember what you learned there.

Now, what I'm about to say here is going to sound a little strange. Especially if you read everything I wrote before this paragraph.

Get out of that school mentality. Stop stressing out constantly. I know you've been told this a million times before. I know the people who wrote this column before me told you this a million times. But I still think you need to hear it, oh, at least three more

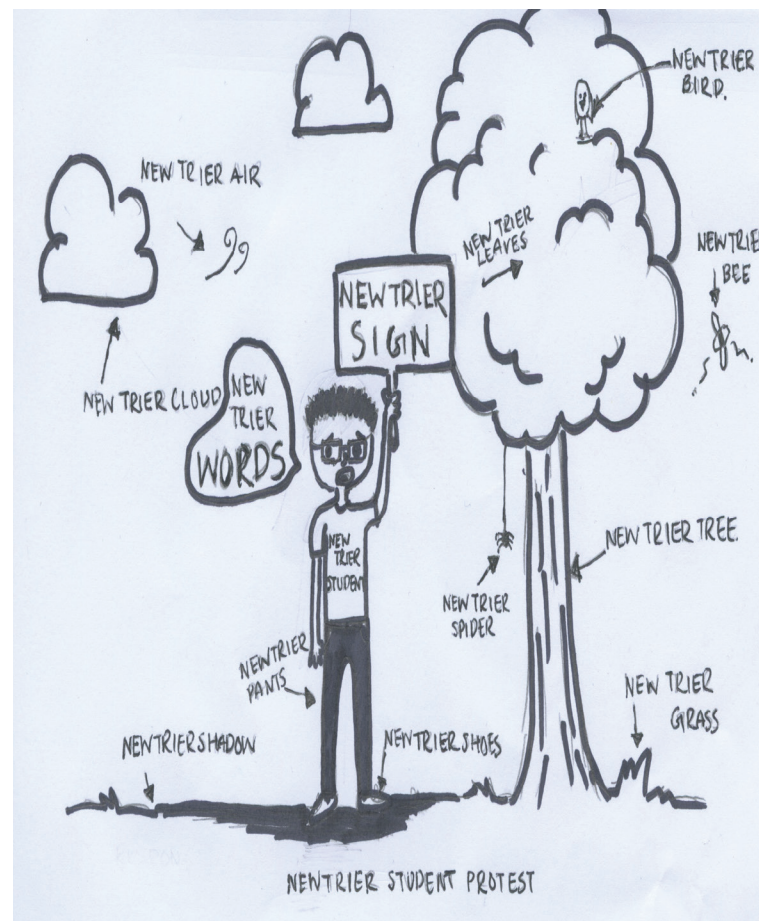
times. Stop stressing out. Stop stressing out. Stop stressing out.

I know it's not as simple as pushing a button. I know you're all sitting in advisory right now screaming "Max, I don't know how to not stress out! Help!" And you clearly need the help, because you're screaming at a newspaper in school. You look crazy, and everybody is looking at you, and everybody is laughing at you, and everybody is judging you. And now you're even more stressed out. So let me help you.

Over the summer (and yes I know I just told you to forget your summer, shut up and let me talk), I met a man named Billy Jonas. Now, I'm not religious, yet I'm incredibly tempted to call this man a prophet. Let me put it this way: if Billy Jonas started a cult, I'd be the first person to sign up. And Billy, he said something that has really stuck with me. He said that the most important part of his week is when he's not working. It's when he's by himself, relaxing. He said that everyone needs time like this in order to survive.

So what I need you to do is relax. Every day. Set aside one hour, every day, for yourself. A time for you, and you only, to relax. This doesn't mean you should go on Facebook and start chatting people up, or go on your phone and start texting people. I want you to be alone, with zero communication with the outside world. I want you to use this time to write, or draw, or relax, or listen to music, or do anything that absolutely does not require any sort of communication for you to enjoy. I want your "you time" to be you time.

So remember that you are in school, and that you need to focus, and be prepared, and not screw around because your grades depend on it. But also remember that you're a person, who needs to relax and enjoy life, because your life depends on that too. And remember that you shouldn't take everything the newspaper tells you literally, because it'll often contradict itself in the same article. So take a deep breath, close your eyes, and relax.



Tanya Kurepina