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Comments should be directed to the student editors, who make all final content decisions. The views expressed are solely those of the authors or the student editorial board and do not reflect the opinions of the Grosse Pointe Public School System.

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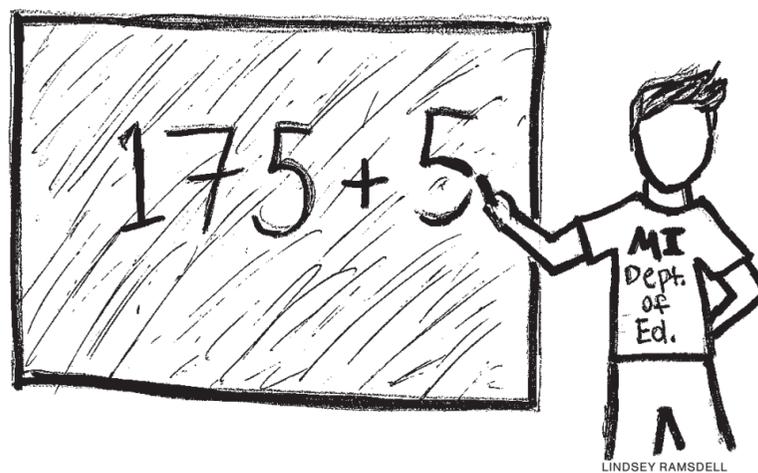
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Caught between a vacation and a hard place



LINDSEY RAMSDELL

OUR EDITORIAL

As high school students, we already have to deal with the pressure of homework, rigorous classes, hours of standardized testing and completing college applications. The only thing that keeps us trekking through month after month of the same schedule and heavy workloads is the promise of an approaching break.

Breaks give students much needed rest and relaxation and endurance to continue through the year. Without them, the days seem to merge into one long, indecipherable stretch of school, homework and sleep. This is why it is crucial to keep the current breaks intact.

As the number of state-mandated school days is increased by five, the possibility of losing midwinter break is looking more like a reality.

This five-day respite comes at an important time of the year. Students need the time to unwind after stressful midterm testing and the end of the third quarter. It provides students the chance to catch up on sleep and maybe even get away from the bleak Michigan winter weather.

We feel we speak for the student body when we say it's not only something we don't want, but it's something that could be detrimental to our mental state as well. The Michigan Department of Education is adding time to the school year, and we're left wondering why.

Do these extra five days really make a difference? We question if that extra week is really enough time to make a noticeable difference in our academic achievement. Five days isn't long enough to teach another unit. It gives students a few more hours in each class to review material, but not enough to outweigh time we already have to do that at home.

By forcing the extra five days in place of

a midwinter break, the Grosse Pointe Board of Education is disappointing the students who have come to expect a vacation in February and creating a divide between them. These days have to be added somewhere, and whatever route the School Board chooses to take will be met with opposition from unamused students, putting the Board between a rock and a hard place.

Especially with School Board elections next month, the new members on the Board will start off their terms on a negative note. It is unfair to students to suddenly take away a break, and it is also unfair to ask a newly instated Board to force this upon them.

With that being said, the Editorial Board would like to propose alternative plans to removing midwinter break for the Grosse Pointe School Board to consider. Although removing midwinter break is an easy fix, it isn't the best option for the school system.

We should be looking at filling the days in other ways throughout the year. A couple of days could be tacked on to the end of the year or a couple of minutes could be added to each class. Even shortening late start Mondays, or ditching them altogether would be less noticeable than taking away an entire break and less likely to cause distress among students.

The extra five days is an unnecessary decree, and for more reasons than one. We aren't just looking at it from a student perspective. Teachers use that time to grade. Parents plan vacations while college students are still in school. The Board of Education has a hard enough time making the current calendar work. The community expects a break. However unnecessary these days are, they are required, and the option that causes the least disruption would not be to take away midwinter break.



MY TURN
GIUSEPPE PARISON

Talking heads, silent keyboards

Amidst a searing political climate of perpetual scandals and never-ending accusations, amidst the reams of media fluff pieces and defamatory exposé specials that would no doubt deforest half the American Northwest if printed rather than spoken, amidst talking heads with impeccable, plastic smiles and lines of partially relating text drifting from right to left below them, one begins to lose oneself in the muck of the media's coverage of the 2016 election.

This is the difficulty with mainstream media, a well-established and heavily aged facet of Americana. Weather it is listening to Cronkite recite the evening news half a century ago or any one of the multiple news anchors-turned-celebrities today, the main source of news consumption since the invention of the radio and television has been a talking head or disembodied voice relaying information.

This was fine in the natal stages of this industry. Stations were sparse and media personalities sparser. The problem arose when technology advanced and more stations became available. This meant stations had to compete. The objective news had to become subjectively entertaining. Newscasters started having their own specials and voiced their opinions. Ideals drifted, and so did people.

Now the majority of mainstream news media, our main source for honest and respectable journalism, is biased. The conservative-leaning FOX news channel or the liberal-leaning Cable News Network, otherwise known as CNN, are two of the most watched news channels in the country, and both skew their content to favor a certain political agenda. This is extremely evident when looking at simple logistics: CNN shows more defaming content of Donald Trump than Hillary Clinton, and Fox shows more defaming content of Clinton than Trump. Both stations even attempt to do damage control when their candidate does something unsightly.

This is a dangerous precedent. It means the public has the ability to perpetuate their confirmation bias by having the easy ability to watch a station that aligns with their presumptions. These echo chambers create delusions and ultimately creates a grossly misinformed public.

However, all of us have the ability to choose. Choose not to fall victim to what we find comfortable and support our own ideals with swayed information while ignoring others. Choose to be as informed as we possibly can be. Choose to truly exercise our right to the freedom of information. This applies to our generation in particular.

For the majority of the era of electronic-based news media, we were limited to a talking head relaying information—a static entity that could not be influenced. Now, things have changed.

We reside in the information age, the age of the internet. An age where libraries of knowledge rest at our fingertips, with millions of websites to traverse, and a large portion of these sites specialize in journalism. This is a revolution in thought.

Never before have we had information so readily available. And our generation, the most well equipped for this new era, is at the forefront of this age. We have the power to be as informed and unbiased as we choose to be. It is just a matter of choosing: "With great power, comes great responsibility."

With this immense gift given, do you choose to go forth and use it to form your own opinions from the billions of others? Or do you simply reserve yourself to be the extended soapbox of your parents' opinions and whatever talking heads could very well reside with them?

The wonderful thing about being able to forge your own path is the ability to choose. So don't choose a path that restricts that choice for the sake of convenience.



"Carving pumpkins with our family and helping my mom make our costumes."

Samantha Bastien
FRESHMAN



"Going with my family to my granddad's and talking about memories and getting candy."

Kristion Martin-Turner
SOPHOMORE



"Heating up the frozen sugar cookies from Kroger and decorating them for the holiday."

Nora Smith
JUNIOR

YOUR TURN: What is your favorite Halloween tradition?

By Katie Link
PHOTOGRAPHER



"Since before I was born, my parents have been going to a cider mill out by Belleville. We've been going almost every year since I was a baby."

Joey Cobau
SENIOR



"When my neice and nephew dress up, and I get to see how much they enjoy it and go out and collect candy."

Andrew Pola
SCIENCE TEACHER



"Requesting all unwanted candy to be dropped off in room B-307 starting Nov. 1."

Allison Dunn
ENGLISH TEACHER

Instant Norsemen Updates



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