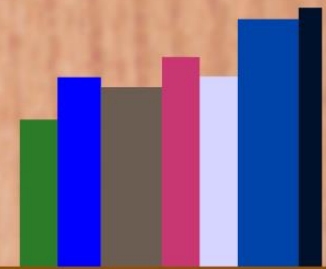
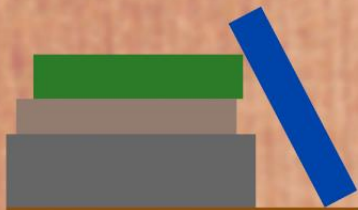


EDUCATION IS THE CENTERPIECE OF MANY MODERN POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DEBATES. AT IMSA, STUDENTS ARE ENCOURAGED TO THINK ON HOW THEY LEARN BASIS. THIS ISSUE EXPLORES EXACTLY WHAT THAT MIGHT MEAN. HOW DO PEOPLE TEACH? WHAT MOTIVATES PEOPLE TO CONTINUE THEIR EDUCATION? WHERE DOES THE MOST ENGAGING LEARNING IN AMERICA TAKE PLACE?

UNITED STATES' STUDENTS SLIPPING AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

Every three years, 15 year olds from countries around the world take the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) which tests reading ability, and math and science proficiency. This allows an international comparison of students in developed and developing countries. In 2013, the scores from the 2012 PISA were released and the United States settled around the middle of the countries tested, ranking 35 out of 64 countries in math and 27th in science. European countries generally had a higher score in math and science. For example, Finland had an average math score of 519 and a score of 545 in science while the United States' scores were 481 and 497, respectively (scores shown in Figure 1 at the bottom of this article). This showed a drop from the previous PISA scores ... continued on pg. 3



IMSA THROUGH THE EYES OF MANY

IMSA is rigorous. There has been much controversy over how much homework students receive at IMSA; compared to other elite boarding institutions such as Phillips Exeter Academy and Deerfield Academy, IMSA hands out a fairly large amount of it to students. ... continued on pg. 4

SYSTEMS AND STYLES OF EDUCATION

Undoubtedly, IMSA is renowned for its unique teaching approach which promotes more critical thinking and inquiry-based learning compared to other schools throughout the United States. In the context of the world, the system... continued on pg. 4

WHY SOME ARE AGAINST GOING TO COLLEGE

We've all been told since we were young students, that going to college would help us achieve success in life. Our parents and teachers constantly forced the idea of college into us, saying that it will: get us a better paying job, make our lives better in the future, keep us off the streets, help us gain... continued on pg. 5



DOES RESIDENTIAL LIFE HAVE A BENEFICIAL ROLE IN HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION?

Upon entry into IMSA, many students feared living away from home, complaining about the competitive culture, loose residential sphere, and debilitating duties that come with independence. With the need to develop group study habits, feed oneself, maintain emotional sanctity in one's immediate sphere, and more, discovering how to conquer residential life is no small task. Although students find themselves overwhelmed with the superfluous stresses of residential life, they are continuously uplifted with a simple and bittersweet phrase: "It might be terrible now, but, trust me, when you get to college, you will fly."... continued on pg. 5

Upon entry into IMSA, many students feared living away from home, complaining



EDUCATION AT IMSA VS. EDUCATION AT OUR HOME SCHOOLS

The pressure put on students here at IMSA to do well and to manage all their work with their extracurriculars and sleep schedules is a constant reminder of how easy school was back home. I remember those days when I was the best at everything when it came to academics, and I never had to work hard to get an A on my transcript a single day of my life. The contrast between those low-key lazy, zero-stress days at my home school and the continuous, strenuous, zero-sleep days here at IMSA is astounding when I reflect back on it, but it has also impacted my life in ways I would've never thought about before.

The pressure put on students here at IMSA to do well and to manage all their work with their extracurriculars and

While my home school was, hands-down, 100 times easier than IMSA is, I've realized that I hardly learned.... continued on pg. 4

CONTRIBUTORS

Parth Dhyani
Staff Writer

Abhay Gupta
Staff Writer

Krishi Korrapati
IMSA News Editor

Shivali Shukla
Opinions Editor

Ethan Fisher
Staff Writer

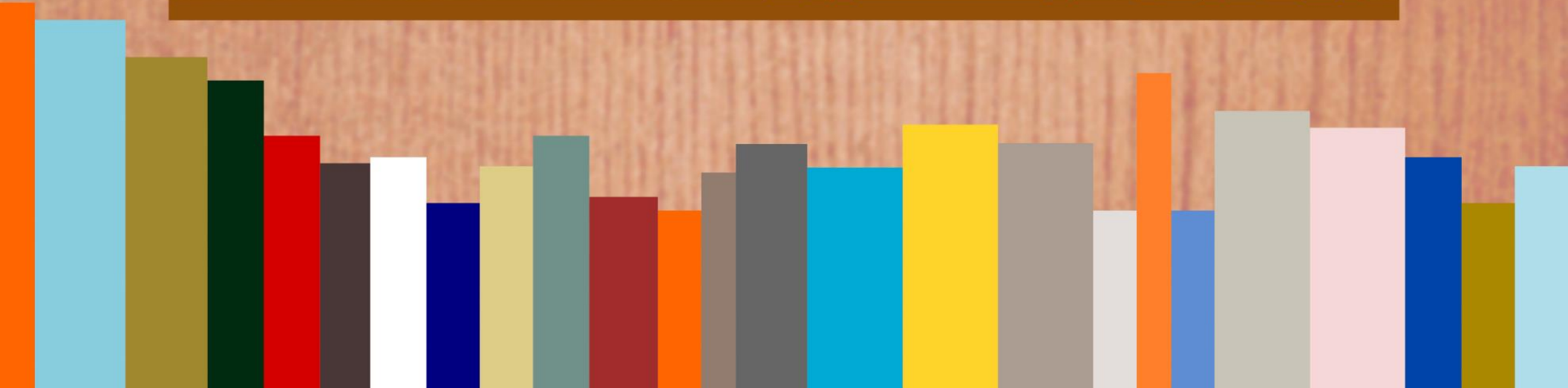
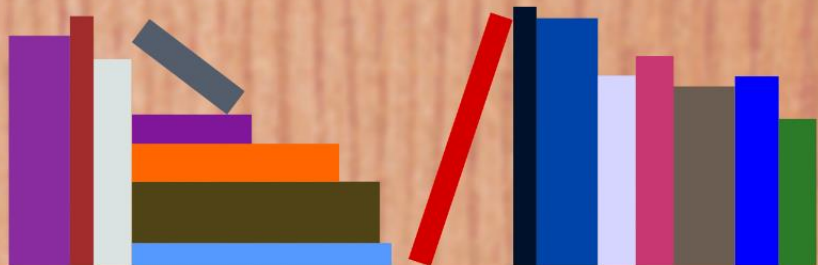
Teddy Khan
Staff Writer

Heena Srivastava
Staff Writer

Alexis Giff
Staff Writer

Sweta Kotha
Staff Writer

Lily Anne TranCat
Staff Writer



NEWS FROM THE WEEK

STUDENT USE OF RESIDENCE HALL ELEVATORS RESTRICTED

Krishi Korrapati
IMSA News Editor

As of Friday, October 23, 2015 the indiscriminate use of the IMSA elevators which have persisted in the hall since the completion of IMSA's residence halls has come to an abrupt end. Students were informed via email, courtesy of Area Coordinator Eric Hetland, who dubbed it a "small change... in the residence halls." However, too many students who took joy rides or were simply too tired/indolent to take the stairs, the shutting off of elevators is significant change to the dynamics of their IMSA lifestyles. However, this change did not entail absolute cessation of elevator use; they can still be used upon necessity as Eric wrote: "Students and parents who need to use the elevators can see the RC on duty in the office, who can then turn the elevator on for their use. After

this use has finished, the RC will turn the elevator off once again." Although seemingly tedious, it has become a security necessity. Yet the ambiguity of the situation yields not only conspicuous questions such as what compelled the need to use an elevator but also more profound questions such as what are the motivations to this alteration? After speaking to 05A RC Jeremy Johnson, it seemed as if each hall had its own motivation for discontinuing unfettered elevator use. There are rumors that an 05 incident had to do with this change. However, Eric wrote the elevators were shut off "In an effort to maintain an effective level of supervision in this area, we will now be shutting off the elevators between uses." This decision was apparently made because the current surveillance system does not capture the upstairs bridge. Hence, someone could enter a hall and roam the upstairs undocumented. Students could also somehow participate in activities that would normally yield severe repercussions were they captured on

camera. Nevertheless, while this new system was described to students at ten check by their RC's, the details germane to the decision-making process to this change were not mentioned. In fact, it was informed to the students by each of their RC's that if they are absolutely trapped (i.e. without a fob or phone) on the upstairs bridge when an RC is not in the office, they must wait until a security personnel reaches them during rounds (if no other student sees them) whereas before they could take the elevator downstairs and exit the hall, seeking another student for help. Although unfortunate and time-wasting, waiting in such a scenario would be a student's only option. Questions remain on this subject: Why was this change made now? Did Student Life abruptly realize surveillance was lacking upstairs after all these years? Did some incident recently happen that impelled administration to implement this change? Will surveillance be installed upstairs? If so, when? And if surveillance is in place, will the elevators be always active once again?

SCOTT WALKER STRIKES BACK

Ethan Fisher
Staff Writer

Recent presidential campaign-dropout Scott Walker signed a bill last week that effectively protects him and other public officials from investigation into political corruption by something called the John Doe law. This law gives prosecutors the ability to conduct secret investigations by executing search warrants and making people obligated to testify. It gives judges permission to compel people to come to court and testify. As Milwaukee County District Attorney E. Michael McCann puts it, "For over 165 years, the John Doe statute has served our state well and has been particularly effective in recent decades in bringing to justice legislators and other public officials who have committed crimes in public office." This law has been very effective in rooting out corruption in public office. Walker himself has been involved in two John Doe investigations. The more recent one, which involved claims of illegal campaign fundraising, was shut down in a close and controversial decision, in which justices whose own election campaigns were backed by the same groups in question found nothing illegal about the fundraising. This new bill is, simply put, ridiculous, and a reflection of the sway big money has in modern politics. Without this law, public officials will be able to easily get away with bribery, illegal campaign finances, and any number of election law offenses. Even worse, Walker is also campaigning to remove Wisconsin's Government Accountability Board, which keeps close tabs on elections and enforces laws regarding lobbying, elections, and ethics. He is even trying to remove the state's campaign financing regulations. This means that corporations and other interest groups would be able to spend as much money as they please in Wisconsin politics. It's frightening that an elected official can get away with signing a law that essentially gives him added protection from the law and is now moving to allow more money into politics. Walker and his allies in the Wisconsin government have called the John Doe Law a partisan witch-hunt. If anything, Walker's legislation is a sign that we need more tools to combat corruption. Perhaps he thinks that giving himself added protection from the law around the time his campaign is being investigated doesn't make his suspicious. Hopefully the rest of Wisconsin doesn't think so.

RAPE IN INDIA

Krishi Korrapati
IMSA News Editor

Nearly all of New Delhi, India was in utter turmoil when irate crowds congregated in the capital city, accusing the police department for failure to act over the rape of two young girls.

Two children, aged two-and-a-half and five, were brutally raped on October 18 in impoverished regions of Delhi. The two-and-a-half-year-old-girl was happily attending a religious event on the western side when she was unknowingly abducted by two men on the grim night, raped, and then left, still alive, in a nearby park. A separate incident on the east side involving the five-year-old transpired when the poor girl was lured into a neighbor's home where she was raped by three men. One man first assigned to the former case, Pushpendra Kumar, a West Delhi police officer stated the girl had definitely been raped after medical examination but whether both men were complicit is still unknown. However, the girl was found alive the same night, although bleeding profusely, several hours after she went missing. Regarding the latter case, police of eastern Delhi have successfully arrested three men during the same night. Thanks to the endeavors of cognizant locals who barged into the house with the girl, the perpetrators were caught in their gruesome act. Unfortunately, medical tests revealed that the five-year-old was still raped multiple times. Officer Anand Vihar reports: "Her clothes were partially torn with blood spots all over them." Currently both girls are receiving medical treatment and are reported to be in stable conditions. Nevertheless, the mental scarring and physical thereof cannot be erased in the entirety of each of the girl's lives.

Parents of each child, amidst their tears, stated they never would have anticipated such a tragedy to occur to their own children despite the litany of sexual assault cases that run rife in not only New Delhi but also all of India. Rape, the fourth most common crime against women of all ages in India, according to the National Crime Records Bureau, has been recorded 36,735 times in 2014 alone with 2,096 of the cases happening in Delhi. And these numbers are almost definitely an underrepresentation of the true figures as many women report being too embarrassed or frightened to report the crime committed against them. They fear subsequent raping or are simply too ashamed to take their case to the police. However, with the proliferation of rape cases, now disgustingly trickling to younger females as well, the women's movement in India alongside efforts of foreign groups has had success in garnering international attention to the issue of sexual assault in the nation. Later that week, the rightfully discontent crowd gathered at the two-year-old's

home in order to block traffic and simultaneously censure the police's inability to catch the two rapists who still roam free. A protesting relative of this toddler stated: "They are not doing anything to arrest the rapists. We don't feel safe in this city and there will be a day when parents will stop giving birth to girls fearing they will be raped." The rape case earlier this month, in which a four-year-old girl was purportedly raped, cut with a knife, then dumped by a railway track in Delhi, does not quell the dissatisfaction of the people either. Although the perpetrator of this latter crime has been caught, the girl had sustained several internal injuries from which she may not recover. Delhi Commission for Women president, Swati Maliwal, tweeted in response to three cases not only the obvious "Gang rape of 2.5 and 5 year old [is] shameful" but also the grimmer observation that (sexual) violence against women had already reached "epidemic proportions."

“VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN HAD ALREADY REACHED 'EPIDEMIC PROPORTIONS'”

Beyond causing unrest within the civilians of India, different strata of Indian government are also in strife over how best to address the growing rate of rape incidents. Chief Minister (CM) (most similar to governor in a US state), of New Delhi, Arvind Kejriwal, faulted Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi and his administration for failing to effectively implement security measures for women in the country: "Repeated rape of minors is shameful and worrying. Delhi police has completely failed to provide safety. What are PM n his LG doing?" Modi however assured the public that he would manage the situation and it was not necessary to transfer control of Delhi's 84,000 police officers to the chief minister. Having the largest metropolitan force in the world, New Delhi should have an advantage in not only catching criminals but also preventing rape whether the police is an autonomous entity, controlled by the CM, or controlled by the PM. Contrary to assuaging the unrest and improving safety for India women and girls, Ranjana Kumari of the Delhi-based Center for Social Research claimed that the "the turf war between the two government was making the city less safe for women." She continued to preach that "most of these incidents have been reported in lower-income areas like slums and densely populated areas, where most migrants stay. These men live in cramped spaces with no social or parental control and usually have no fear of the law." Regardless of who manages the police forces, someone, even if they are not Indian, must conjure a unified solution for sexual violence against women and girls alike which continues to pervade both Delhi and all of India. How many more girl's lives need be compromised before true preventative action is taken?

ALL ABOUT PHILLIPS EXETER ACADEMY

Alexis Giff
Staff Writer

Known as one of the most selective and prestigious academies in America, this school has a long list of famed alumni, including Mark Zuckerberg, the renowned founder of Facebook. It is an elite boarding academy that challenges its students and is noted for its use of the Harkness table method, a teaching method in which classroom discussion is student-led at a round table. Unlike IMSA, however, the students at this academy typically get at least 8 hours of sleep every night, while still maintaining good grades and a healthy involvement in extracurricular activities and social events. Some of you may have heard of it... others may have not. This school is Phillips Exeter Academy- also known as PEA or Exeter to its students.

Unlike IMSA's 7 dorms, Exeter has 29. However, with only 815 students, Exeter's abundant resources enable it to give some students single rooms. Additionally, unlike IMSA, the dorms also have resident faculty members, who live on campus with their families in separate apartments. The faculty make sure that the students are receiving academic help whenever needed, and also know if anyone goes to bed too late or skips class. While it might be hard to imagine all of our IMSA teachers living with us, it is also important to consider the benefits of such an addition. Our teachers would be more sympathetic to our plights, and would also know us more personally, something that could affect their teaching methods in class. Knowing one's students well would also provide insight as to when a student is not adjusting properly. With the right procedure, the teacher could resolve this problem either in or outside of class.

While IMSA students only have a full class schedule on 4 days of the week, Wednesdays are also spent working on homework or pursuing a guided investigation. Exeter, however, has a 5-day school week with activities, extracurriculars, and sports all scheduled into the student's daily routine. School typically starts at 8am, but some students choose to attend fitness training or yoga sessions as early as 5:45am to stay healthy. The schools days tend to be long, but the students say that the classes are worth it. For instance, while some students end their school day at 5pm, others have scheduled classes or activities until 7 or 8pm.

Moreover, students at Exeter can only take up to 3 courses at any given time. Since each class



meets for about 5 hours a week, only 15 hours are dedicated to classes offered by the academy. Students at PEA don't receive more than an hour of homework for each meeting of a class, something that enables them to get quite a bit of sleep. What do they do during the rest of the long school day, though? This time is taken up by a wide variety of extracurricular activities, including electives, volunteering at Children's centers, viewing gallery openings, and meditation, to name a few. Sports are also included in the school day, and Wednesday afternoons are chiefly devoted to athletic contests.

On the other hand, the application for Exeter is very similar to IMSA's. Students have to complete English and math recommendations, along with full transcripts and essays. However, there is also an interview portion on the application, a feature that IMSA does not employ.

Unlike IMSA, Exeter serves all students from grades 9-12, and also enrolls new students in every grade. While the majority of its students live directly on campus, Exeter also has a percentage of day students, who generally spend from 8am until about 9 or 10pm on campus. Finally, Exeter does not restrict its application to in-state students. Instead, it welcomes "youth from every quarter," taking students from five continents and every state.

Before a new student can become a fully-fledged "Exonian," however, he or she must also learn to speak Exonia, a language that resembles

the jargon that IMSA students use. Since Exeter was established in 1781, this language has been passed down for generations, and has subsequently evolved as well. First, Exeter has names for each of the grades. Prep represents 9th grade, lower represents 10th, upper represents 11th, and senior represents 12th. This is quite different from IMSA's normal terminology for sophomores, juniors, and seniors, although IMSA does nickname younger students "schmens." At IMSA, you might hear words like yare, hall, wing, mod, and inter visitations uttered in the hallways and dorms. At Exeter, however, you'd probably hear words like block, D.H., dickie, E.P., and V's. Interestingly enough, IMSA's inter-visitations are quite similar to Exeter's V's, except that students at Exeter can only visit each other's room between 7 and 8pm.

Although Exeter may be a fantastic academy, it is also quite expensive, and highly competitive. The environment there mirrors IMSA's in many ways, and there are definitely pros and cons to both. However, it is crucial that we IMSA students realize that IMSA can be just as beneficial to our education as Exeter might be to Exonians... that is, if we take the opportunities we are provided with, and make the most out of them in the short time that we're here!

To learn more about Exeter, visit their website at: <http://www.exeter.edu/>

UNITED STATES' STUDENTS SLIPPING AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

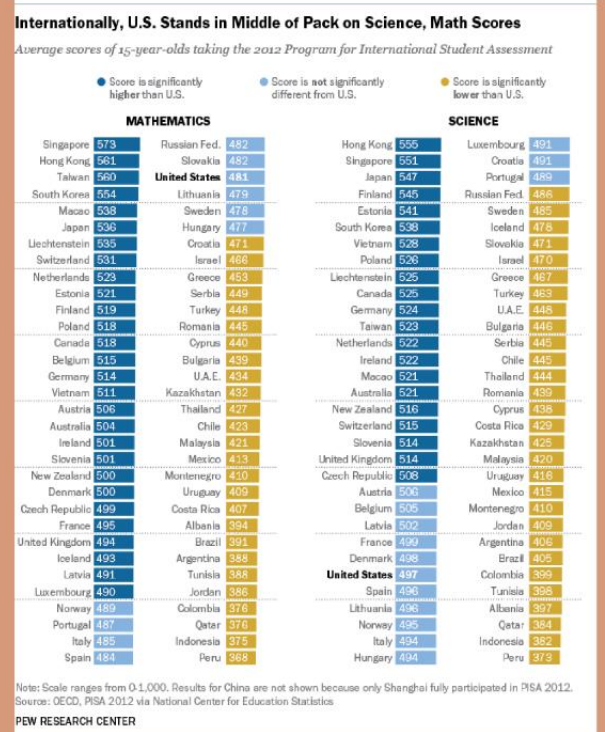
Teddy Kha
Staff Writer

Every three years, 15 year olds from countries around the world take the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) which tests reading ability, and math and science proficiency. This allows an international comparison of students in developed and developing countries. In 2013, the scores from the 2012 PISA were released and the United States settled around the middle of the countries tested, ranking 35 out of 64 countries in math and 27th in science. European countries generally had a higher score in math and science. For example, Finland had an average math score of 519 and a score of 545 in science while the United States' scores were 481 and 497, respectively (scores shown in Figure 1 at the bottom of this article). This showed a drop from the previous PISA scores released in 2009; the US ranked 35th in math and 17th in science. How can these drops in scores be resolved? Many officials saying scores in math and science could be improved if the United States modeled its education system after European countries. In 2011, the National Center

on Education and the Economy (NCEE), an organization that studies education systems around the world, released a report titled "Standing on the Shoulders of Giants: An American Agenda for Education Reform". It studied the education systems of Canada, China, Finland, and Japan. NCEE believes the most effective way to bring the United States level with other countries in addition to modeling their education systems, is to improve upon them. A controversial suggestion recommended students must pass tests at certain grade levels before continuing their education. The tests would be high quality and standardized across the nation and the only way to succeed on them would be to actually master the material instead of just test preparation. NCEE also recommended redirecting more money towards paying for higher quality teachers instead of putting the majority of money towards paying more towards high tech facilities, new textbooks, and administrators.

While NCEE pushes more towards standardized testing, Finland, which has been scoring highly on the PISA since 2000, pushes away from it. Finland promotes more critical thinking and collaboration learning compared to the United States' test based learning. In addition, Finland considers a teacher's profession similar to that of doctors and lawyers, requiring higher academic training than of educators in the United States. For example, in Finland, 1 in 10 primary school applicants are accepted. In 2012, Pasi Sahlberg, a Finnish

education expert and the director of the Center for International Mobility and Cooperation in Finland's Ministry of Education and Culture, criticized the United States' emphasis on standardized testing, saying it influenced how teachers taught too much. In 2016, the results from the 2015 PISA should be released and it can be seen if any implementations in the American education system have affected its ranking.



IMSA THROUGH THE EYES OF MANY

Abhay Gupta
Staff Writer

IMSA, is rigorous. There has been much controversy over how much homework students receive at IMSA; compared to other elite boarding institutions such as Phillips Exeter Academy and Deerfield Academy, IMSA hands out a fairly large amount of it to students. I interviewed several IMSA students as well as a staff member to get their take on IMSA's homework situation.

Blair Hu, a sophomore, has a positive outlook on IMSA, saying, "IMSA's education is very good because I learn a lot and we have good teachers. We receive a decent amount of homework; however, I like the classroom experience and its uniqueness." Blair Hu applauds IMSA for its resources and its teachers, and asserts that IMSA has its own teaching experience.

A junior, Rohit Mittapalli, also agrees with one of Blair Hu's points, stating, "Dr. Prince and Dr. Dong are the best teachers at IMSA; however, the physics and chemistry labs are pointless. Also, the homework is too easy." Rohit Mittapalli is sure of IMSA's homework being too easy and comments

that the chemistry and physics labs are pointless; however, has he faced the full brunt of IMSA yet?

On an opposing note, Nitya Talasila, a junior as well, contrastingly argues, "We have too much homework and it is pointless; instead of having a lot of homework, we should have a decent amount of homework that actually matters. Some people choose not to do it because it is so pointless but others are forced to, because of grades, which causes them to lose sleep over the extra homework." According to Nitya, instead of focusing on the quantity of homework, IMSA should focus on the quality of homework.

Jonah, a senior at IMSA, has a completely different point, emphasizing, "IMSA has a lot of opportunities but it limits those opportunities through the competitive nature of this school, which causes cheating and depression. We do not receive too much homework, however." Jonah is probably speaking from experience and personal occurrences being a senior who has endured the largest part of the rigors in the prestigious institution.

From the perspective of an adult, staff member in the Information Research Center, Paula Garrett, argues positively about IMSA, contending, "IMSA is very similar to a university; it is astounding how high school students ask such research-oriented questions. It reminds of days when I used to work

at Fermilab because physicists would come up to me with similar questions." Paula Garrett thinks highly of IMSA's students and praises IMSA for providing students with many opportunities. Ultimately, although IMSA might provide students with a bit of extra homework, their bright students will handle anything that comes at them, thriving under the academic and environmental rigors of a new school.

IMSA might give out too much homework, but it might now. It's a value judgement rooted in what you perceive as good pedagogical standards? Are you classically oriented to drills and lots of practice? Or are you more modern, focusing on projects and large inquiry assignments?



EDUCATION AT IMSA VS. EDUCATION AT OUR HOME SCHOOLS

Shivali Shukla
Opinions Editor

The pressure put on students here at IMSA to do well and to manage all their work with their extracurriculars and sleep schedules is a constant reminder of how easy school was back home. I remember those days when I was the best at everything when it came to academics, and I never had to work hard to get an A on my transcript a single day of my life. The contrast between those low-key lazy, zero-stress days at my home school and the continuous, strenuous, zero-sleep days here at IMSA is astounding when I reflect back on it, but it has also impacted my life in ways I would've never thought about before.

While my home school was, hands-down, 100 times easier than IMSA is, I've realized that I hardly learned anything there. My understanding of concepts was solely surface-level, and while it was enough to keep me on top, it was not enough to answer all of my questions. Coming to IMSA, while it may be a decision I think about regretting at times, was definitely something that enhanced my capabilities and overall understanding of other concepts. The quality of education here at IMSA, as a result of it being based off of collaborative, thought-provoking approaches to learning, allows the student body to develop a more profound interest and knowledge base in all subjects, and keeps everyone asking "why?" rather than accepting and memorizing the facts we are given.

Daniel Shin, Class of '17, says, "I remember lying in my bed with disappointment after not getting an A+ in one of my classes at the end of my freshman year. Needless to say, much has changed since that day and now. Although I struggle much more in every aspect at IMSA, I believe that IMSA is teaching me something that is more important than calculus. IMSA is teaching me to adapt and adjust to more and more challenging situations, and I think that is the most important lesson to learn in school. Although I miss being the best at everything, I think this was a necessary lesson for me to learn."

IMSA, through its methods of teaching, shows us that we have to learn that our grades will reflect the work we do and the effort we put in, and that learning more and trying to understand concepts rather than memorizing them are more important than a letter grade on a piece of paper. In the end, the knowledge we take with us from IMSA will surpass that which we have learned in the past, and likewise the knowledge of our future peers as well.

Vadini Agrawal, Class of '17, says, "My old school was pretty easy, and we didn't have any thought-provoking discussions in class compared to our classes at IMSA. Here, we think more about underlying concepts and try to understand more, and I think that's really important in making us better students and better learners rather than just kids trying to get good grades."

Similarly, Gina Jiang, class of '17, says, "IMSA is a much better environment for us, as students. The content is more challenging and actually makes us think, and it's also often hands-on and collaborative. This style of learning is more effective as it allows us to see how other students approach their learning, and motivates us to try new ways of learning that may help us even more. Also, the teachers here are so much more willing to talk to me outside of class and help me fortify my understanding, which is important because you can't find that kind of support anywhere else."

Overall, I agree with all three of these points and truly believe that the education system here at IMSA, while more complex, is so much more beneficial to the student body than any other school could be. Granted, the stress levels and the lack of sleep are no motivation to continue to work hard, but we all understand that the profound level of comprehension we gain from the style of teaching here is more beneficial to us in the long run, and completely worth the long nights and tiresome days.

SYSTEMS AND STYLES OF EDUCATION

Sweta Kotha
Staff Writer

Undoubtedly, IMSA is renowned for its unique teaching approach which promotes more critical thinking and inquiry-based learning compared to other schools throughout the United States. In the context of the world, the system of education in the United States has the potential to both adapt and influence other systems that are prominent in different countries.

Many schools and universities throughout the United States are developing unique approaches to promote critical thinking and inquiry-based learning. In a universal context, the system of education in the United States has the potential to both learn from as well as influence other systems that are prominent in different countries.

Websites including the Huffington Post (2012) and MBC Times (2015), describe two countries, South Korea and Finland, as having two of the "best education systems" for several years. What really draws attention is the somewhat contrary and different education approach that both countries have initiated.

For the past several years, South Korea was ranked for having the "best education system" in the world. In many of South Korea's schools, students are immersed in an extremely competitive environment. Many of South Korea's education institutions have high expectations for the academic achievements of students, which could place them in a desirable position for success in colleges and careers. However, it seems that the success of many South Korean students does come with the heavy toll of stress and pressure. A TED article from 2013 describing thriving education systems around the world describes how the educational culture in South Korea values the diligence and hard work of students, as opposed to other qualities such as skill and creativity. South Korea offers quite a different educational environment than what most Americans are used to, and it may be in the U.S.'s and South Korea's best interest to adapt some education styles from each other.

The same TED article describes a very different system of education prevalent in Finland. Typically, schools in Finland are much less rigorous than those in South Korea, yet they still advocate self-diligence and perseverance. Finland's teachers only teach for around 600 hours a year compared to the 1,100 hours on average that America's teachers teach. The majority of Finland's education institutions focus on developing students' interests through extracurricular activities and electives, which encompass a significant portion of each student's school schedule. Additionally, even though it has a less competitive culture than some South Korean schools, Finland's education system still prospers as one of the best in the world. Consequently, both Finland and the United States have their similarities and differences in regard to education styles, but both countries can learn from the other in order to develop better learning styles for students.

Many of the United States' education systems tend to fit in between the two contrasting ones of South Korea and Finland. Both of the latter countries have very dynamic and changing education systems. In the United States, the government and school organizations are constantly looking for ways to improve systems of education. In order to do so, it is likely that we as Americans have to alter our attitude towards education. Recently, a lot of U.S. schools have been pushing to more project-based and analysis-based teaching styles. I interpret this as a great step to improving the quality of education that is being offered to students since students are constructing their own knowledge through experience and deduction. These measures demonstrate a shift in America's mentality towards education. As the TED article claims, American parents are no longer focusing on finding the "right" schools for students, or focusing on students becoming "smarter". Rather, teachers, parents, and officials are focusing on improving the academic opportunities available to each student. Although education systems are constantly being advanced throughout the world, I would like to point out that there is no "best" system of education. All students have different learning styles, and perhaps it is in the best interest for all countries to have a diverse system of schools. The mutual concepts of teaching and learning are so diverse and dynamic - often dependent on a society's culture towards education - that it is practically impossible to distinguish one or a few systems as the "best". It is also clear that statistics such as national test scores, career success rates, etc. are not the only factors that distinguish an educated society. When it comes to education, there is an overwhelming amount of factors to consider, but we can generalize every country, institution, and adults' goal to prioritize the varying needs of students before all else.

THE FLAW WITH AP CLASSES

Parth Dhyani
Staff Writer

"This course will prepare you for the AP Human Geography exam in May," read the first line of my AP Human Geography syllabus from freshman year. We worked from an AP-approved textbook, completed worksheets from the AP website, and attempted practice AP tests. Everything revolved around that final test we would be taking in May.

While it seems logical to prep like this, this is the major flaw with Advanced Placement Courses. They claim to bring college-level classes to high school students, but they more so deliver a standardized test prep class; one standardized test cannot define an entire college course. Rather, a course should be a recursive learning experience that boosts one's ability to think, not only recite abstract facts.

What students actually learn in these AP classes is then how to study for tests. AP students buy prep books and some even hire tutors—all for a single exam. Yes, this test could potentially help you save money in college, but what have you actually learned? Have you learned about the course? Or have you simply learned about the course's AP test?

AP classes inevitably distort into this test-based preparation class. To many students, the entire purpose of an AP class is not to learn at a heightened level, but to impress colleges and to potentially reap college credit by earning acceptable test scores. When the course syllabus states that the purpose of a class is to prepare for an exam instead of thoroughly learning, the class plummets down that dark and dismal test-centric path.

At IMSA, we do not have normal AP courses available to us - the only two are Calculus and Statistics, which are taught in an IMSA style anyway - because they are too constricting. They hinder a truly creative learning experience. Without

AP classes, students are free to actually learn for the purpose of enlightenment—not to pass a test. And teachers are free to inventively teach to their subject instead of to an AP curriculum. Though we have some classes that loosely tie into AP, like Advanced Chemistry or Physics: Calculus Based Mechanics, they do not concentrate on the AP test. Learning always comes first.

Nevertheless, IMSA students do take AP tests, and score very well, hence there and there is no reason they should stop. It is a great way to save money on college and display your academic skills. AP courses in their purest form—with a proper learning-based curriculum and experienced teachers—could be incredibly effective. They may not perfectly represent college classes, but I advise to take advantage of them as long as you remember to learn for yourself and not for a standardized test—an outstanding test score is just a side-effect.

WHY SOME ARE AGAINST GOING TO COLLEGE

Lily Anne TranCat
Staff Writer

We've all been told since we were young students, that going to college would help us achieve success in life. Our parents and teachers constantly forced the idea of college into us, saying that it will: get us a better paying job, make our lives better in the future, keep us off the streets, help us gain more knowledge and widen our perspectives, and prepare us for the outside world.

With good intentions, guidance counselors drilled in our heads that we were to go to college or imagine ourselves barely surviving, starving, and miserable. Although all of these people had good intentions, they hyped up the idea of college without exploring the negatives to it. College should be a choice for students, and in order for students to decide whether they want to continue with secondary education, they must be presented with the negatives along side with the positives of going to college.

There are many reasons why students don't attend college after high school. The list of reasons include:

For most IMSA students, college is where they will definitely end up after high school, as expected by their teachers, parents, and friends. However, all students need to make a personal choice about college, and they should not be judged if they choose not to.

1. Many careers don't need college education, instead favoring vocational degrees or some training, e.g mechanics and pilots.
2. College does not guarantee getting a job for the career paths that need a Bachelor's or Masters.
3. There are many rich, successful people like Oprah Winfrey, Mark Zuckerberg, Bill Gates, Steve Jobs who did not go to college or complete it.
4. College is very expensive, and many people take decades paying off their student loans.
5. Many college graduates work at jobs that do not require degrees such as cashiers.
6. Many students get steered off course by their new independence in college and squander their resources doing useless activities instead of trying to advance their career paths.
7. It may not be necessary for their career path.
8. College does not promote entrepreneurs, but nurture job seekers instead.
9. With online resources such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) , it has never been easier to self-learn something.
10. It is not the only way to be successful.

DOES RESIDENTIAL LIFE HAVE A BENEFICIAL ROLE IN HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION?

Heena Srivastava
Staff Writer

Upon entry into IMSA, many students feared living away from home, complaining about the competitive culture, loose residential sphere, and debilitating duties that come with independence. With the need to develop group study habits, feed oneself, maintain emotional sanctity in one's immediate sphere, and more, discovering how to conquer residential life is no small task. Although students find themselves overwhelmed with the superfluous stresses of residential life, they are continuously uplifted with a simple and bittersweet phrase: "It might be terrible now, but, trust me, when you get to college, you will fly."

IMSA, being a college preparatory school, prides itself in the atypical educational experience it offers outside of the classroom: how to take care of yourself. While most are thankful to IMSA for preparing them for colleges in ways which cannot be taught in classroom, others debate whether high school is really the ideal time to conquer the task of emotional and academic self-sustainability. Are the benefits of residential high schools worth it to prepare for the individual's future? Or does it force premature independence, initiating a temporary flight, only to discover we will later crash and burn?

Keith McIntosh, Associate Director of Student Life and previous Resident Counselor, has witnessed the positive results that come from an pre-college residential life experience. He explains "It's about taking baby steps. You learn independence and the ability to take care of yourself. For some people, they go in without that prep, and it's daunting. They go in with no discipline or skill, and are vulnerable. I know people who come from IMSA and when they get to college, they don't miss a beat." He reminisces on his previous experiences in military academy, where he had a preliminary exposure to diversity: "College, it

throws you into a melting pot. In the Mojave Desert, we slept in tents with 60 people. Problem was, we all wanted to listen to music at the same time, and that led to chaos. What happened? We learned how to listen to each other's music. And I learned about rock, classical, country, Aerosmith, Ted Nugent. We could've just put in headphones, but we got to learn instead."

Moreover, AC Michelle Hoehn, IMSA Class of 2005, has seen both the student and counselor side of high school dorm life. "It definitely builds your life skills with simple things, like doing your laundry and making your own food, which make college easier." Alternatively, she acknowledges the detrimental effects a residential lifestyle can have: "Sometimes it offers opportunities to make poor decisions, because it's easy to stray from the path you are supposed to be on. All nighters are easy. Your parents aren't there to regulate your procrastination. There are those students who are not ready for that lifestyle yet." Nonetheless, she reflects on the benefits in these challenges. "It's important to learn it now. You will end up being so ready to balance your social, academic, and extracurricular life. College is ten times easier when you are used to self-regulation."

The difficulties of residential life are apparent, potentially prohibiting students from a balanced lifestyle, causing some to stray away from original priorities, and even discouraging them from reaching their utmost potential. Alongside the potential hazards that come with residential living, one must not forget the learning experiences it offers. Regardless of the late nights and disruptive study hours, the residential life at IMSA allows for an atmosphere unlike any other school. Not only do we grow create a strong IMSA network, but we experience a premature form of diversity. We are allowed to mature and learn some vital skills from beyond the classroom. Rez Life: it is not a chaotic scheme originally created for just academic collaboration, but rather one of the greatest learning opportunities an academy can offer in order to strengthen one's own morale.