



The VERITAS

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RHS goes to remote learning for two weeks

Veritas Staff

Due to multiple students testing positive for COVID-19, RHS has gone from its hybrid schedule back to full remote from Oct. 26 until Nov. 6.

Ten sophomores tested positive for COVID-19 last week, something RHS Principal John Harrison hopes is not a sign of things to come.

"It's very cyclical. If we go back to hybrid, when we come back, we might have to go out again during flu season. You just don't know on a given day...social interactions outside of school dictate what will happen."

He is quick to say that students are not to blame. According to the principal, those that tested positive did nothing wrong. "Our kids did an exceptional job, with masks and social distancing," adding that there was no evidence of in-school transmission.

The principal believes that situations and rules that are outside the school's control have hurt our school's efforts to remain open. "My attitude is that the policy needs to change. Massachusetts rules say you can

go to a restaurant and ten can sit without masks...this message needs to change." It has been made clear that social distancing and masks have been working efficiently in the schools.

Because of the outbreak, Dr. Harrison was able to bring in a free testing clinic on Tuesday, Oct. 27 for asymptomatic students and staff who have not been within close contact of those who tested positive with the virus.

The information gathered from those tests will help Dr. Harrison, and other partners determine what will come in the next few weeks.

Despite the temporary closure of in-person learning, students and staff remain hopeful that transitioning from hybrid learning into full remote will only continue for the intended two weeks.

Although cases have been rising not only in Rockland, but surrounding towns, everyone is doing their best to follow safety precautions and social distance themselves so students can get back to synchronized learning as soon as possible.

Online classes bring their own set of

challenges. Some students say they are more likely to sleep through or just not show up to the classes they feel like not showing up to. Others are experiencing connection issues and get kicked out of classes, resulting in their having a high number of unexcused absences and possible loss of credit in the semester.

On the positive side, going back to remote brings each class back to a whole, uniting Cohorts A and B and having everyone be on the same page and learning at the same pace.

With the school closed for two weeks and classes being on a remote basis, one direct impact is that sports and activities have been canceled.

However, there has been talk that both soccer and cross country will be back.

Dr. Harrison said, "We have every intention of having them resume."

Soccer could resume on Nov. 6 in tournament play although there has not been a formal announcement yet.

Cross country will have its final regular season meet on Nov. 7.

Sadly, golf will not be resuming as the

season would have been over before students went back to school.

One recent development is that the hybrid schedule will be changed up starting on Nov. 9.

The changes include:

In-Person Learning Week: All classes will meet every day. The length of each period will be 45 minutes instead of 56 minutes. This will give students a consistent routine each day.

Remote Learning Week: Synchronous classes in English, math, world language, history, and science will meet twice each week for 45 minutes, instead of four times every six days for 25 minutes.

Teachers will communicate when synchronous classes will occur in the hybrid model. A class will either meet Mondays and Wednesdays or Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Dr. Harrison explained that these changes came after discussions with teachers and students. He said in an email: "The RHS staff continues to work very hard to adapt between the hybrid and remote models of learning."

Students miss activities and social events the most

*Ngan Nguyen
Veritas Staff*

As the school year began on Sept. 24, there were students in the school who stopped and wondered what will happen next and what will be in store for their class this year.

Despite classes going back to fully remote as well as sports and activities being suspended as of Oct. 23, there are still hopes that certain class activities will happen.

As Mrs. Jill Delaney, the junior class advisor, says, "I'm hoping most of the normal activities still happen; they just might look a bit different."

As of right now, there were two events, a senior movie night on Oct. 23 and Trunk or Treat on Oct. 25, that were canceled, but hopefully there will be more events that will happen throughout the year.

Powderpuff is an event that might happen in the future. As most know, powderpuff is similar to football but there have been discussions that this year it might be more like soccer instead.

With that being said, if those activities and events happen, then the process and protocols in making sure that those events are safe are still uncertain.

With everything going on, students just want to have some of the last moments they can with friends at school. As senior, Emily Gaboriault adds, "I was



Coaching the girls at last year's powderpuff game are from left Joe Nguyen, Nick Leander and Cullen Rogers.

Veritas Staff

looking forward to being in large classes with all my fellow seniors and enjoying our last year together."

"We want the different events to happen, yet also need to make sure we are following protocols for each event, such as social distancing," said Mrs. Delaney.

Owing to school going from semi-remote to full remote, activities involving large gatherings will require a lot more creativity. Though we might need a few creative minds. Our class advisers are all still working on plans.

Due to COVID, there is a chance that certain large group events will not happen anytime soon.

But there are still certain ways everyone can contribute and help in making things better.

Gaboriault commented, "Even though we can't be the way we want, it's still important to get involved and help make it feel as normal as possible."

It can be quite difficult having to wear a mask and be at least six feet away from one another and it can often take the fun and excitement away. As a student mentioned, "I will miss being able to have school clubs or events in person without having to be apart."

Class advisers who were interviewed said that as of right now, there is no information about upcoming future events. But all of our class advisers and student leaders are working tirelessly to come up with a safe and socially distant plan.

Anyone with ideas involving class activities and events, are encouraged to contact the class advisers. The class advisers are Ms. Morrison for the senior class, Mrs. Delaney for the junior class, Ms. Leighton for the sophomore class, and Ms. Walsh for the freshman class.

The best way for students to contact their advisers is by email.

Welcoming one of our new teachers to RHS

*Althea Olsen
Veritas Staff*

Despite the unusually uncertain 2020-2021 school year, Rockland High School has been able to bring new staff members into the Bulldog family. New Spanish teacher, Gregory Salgado not only has an awesome beard, but he is one of the newest faces at RHS.

Mr. Salgado has been a full time teacher for 10 years in Massachusetts, and two years in Ohio. Aside from full time teaching, Mr. Salgado was also a substitute teacher for seven years.

On top of his dedication to teaching, Mr. Salgado has experienced numerous perspectives in education.

He began to pursue his education at Massachusetts Bay Community College, and then dropped out for two years to work. He then went back to Massachusetts Bay to pursue his interest in theater for two years.

At that point he transferred to the University of Utah. While in Utah, Mr. Salgado gained a degree in English and fell in love with Latin.

To conclude his education-

al travels, he ended at UMass Boston and completed a double major in Spanish and Classical Studies.

While dedicated to his studies and teaching career, Mr. Salgado loves to travel. In particular he enjoys attending the opera at The Met in New York City. Mr. Salgado said, "[Due to] COVID-19 these hobbies have been on hold."

Even though he can't physically travel right now, Mr. Salgado has his memories from past adventures permanently engraved on him...literally.

He has visited 12 countries

in total, and for every one he visits, he gets their flag tattooed onto his back!

He is "hoping to play catch up as soon as the pandemic ends," and to continue to express his love for adventure.

The Spanish teacher says he has loved his experience at RHS thus far, especially the students. He is looking forward to creating new memories with his students and with the staff.

Mr. Salgado also wants all of us to know he has over 20 pairs of cowboy boots!

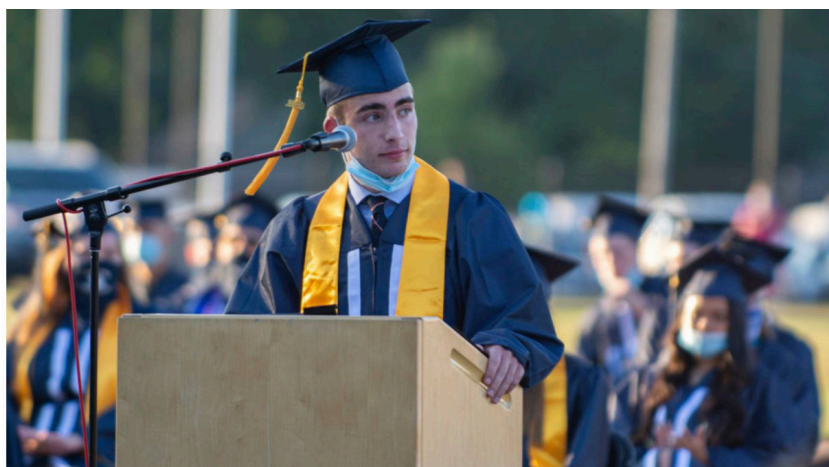
Welcome to the Bulldog family, Mr. Salgado.



Gregory Salgado is a new Spanish teacher this year. *Veritas photo*

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Class of 2020 celebrates graduation on Aug. 1



Class of 2020 President Mathew Bruzzese

photo courtesy of Pat Glennon

Lauren Draicchio
Veritas Staff

At 7 p.m. on August 1st the Class of 2020 graduated from Rockland Senior High School.

Faculty and staff worked diligently and effectively to provide the senior class with the ceremony they deserved despite all the risks due to COVID-19.

Dr. John Harrison, Ms. Kristen Walsh, the senior class advisor, and senior class president Mat Bruzzese explained the tough decisions that were made and how the event turned out.

Dr. Harrison said that a great deal of time and effort went into planning “It’s hard to say how many days- but we spent a good amount of time

collaborating as a team. Ms. Paulding, Ms. Walsh, Ms. O’Brien, Ms. Dunn, Ms. Leahy, Ms Black, the WRPS team, the custodian and maintenance teams were instrumental in the planning.” Dr. Harrison added, “It was a real team effort. I relied on this devoted and talented group to plan the event.”

Dr. Harrison worked with the Board of Health to establish the list of changes that were necessary due to regulations.

One of the major changes made was limiting attendance. This meant that only immediate family were allowed inside the stadium gates. Also, there was no standing outside of the stadium to watch, and tickets had to be obtained early so that staff could allow families to sit together.

He believed that attendance of family was most important on this day as did Ms. Walsh who said, “The students all were grateful for the opportunity to graduate in the stadium, and have their closest family members there to see it.”

Matt Bruzzese explained that seating arrangements were the hardest thing to plan.

He reflected back on how “the first day of rehearsal was a mess, and we experimented with a new seating system which

didn’t go too well, but by the next day Dr. Harrison had figured it out.”

Dr. Harrison expressed his thanks to the Board of Health under the leadership of Delshaune Flippe “for approving the changes and supporting our kids’ graduation.”

Overall the seniors were said to be very grateful to have their graduation despite the abnormality of it.

Dr. Harrison said, “The seniors were great and appreciative. They deserved the celebration and we were happy we could celebrate their success with them.”

Bruzzese, who knew that many students were upset by the overall idea of not having a traditional graduation, said that despite their disappointment, they were “also happy that we were actually able to have a senior week and graduation.”

The class president sends thanks to Dr. Harrison, Ms. Paulding, Ms. Walsh and all the other staff involved in the planning of the event.

He said, “In the end it went really well given the circumstances.” On behalf of his class he said, “It’s gonna be a moment our class cherishes forever.”



The Class of 2020 files into the stadium on Aug. 1. From left, Class President Mathew Bruzzese, Junior Class Marshall, Lauren Draicchio, and Jordan Cunningham.
Veritas photo



The traditional RHS Bulldog stood ready in front of chairs set up in a socially distant manner for the Class of 2020 Graduation on Aug. 1.
Veritas photo

Students focusing through the computer

Kiara Miguel
Veritas Staff

Focusing at home can be tougher for some than for others when it comes to doing school online. Many students are surrounded by siblings who have to do school online and parents that are work-

ing from home.

“You have your pets, your food, you have everything at your disposal,” says Rockland High Spanish teacher, Gregory Salgado.

Teachers understand the struggle of online schooling at home for students.

It’s not easy especially when everyone’s WI-FI works differently at their homes.

In order to make schooling at home more efficient teachers hold classes on Google Meet with students attending the meetings at the time they had the class: from 8:15 a.m. to 1:25 p.m. with ten minute breaks in between.

Many feel that online classes aren’t as effective as in person learning.

According to the Students 4 Social-Change website: “Being at school with a teacher helps students develop deeper understandings of the material and gives the teacher the tools to help their students by identifying student body language (ex: if students have puzzled looks on their faces, the teacher knows to review the material.)”

But online synchronous classes are certainly better than no classes.

When students log in to the classes on their given laptop, they sit through 35 minute classes with their microphones on mute unless given permission to talk.

Teachers do their best to keep students engaged, but students who have very short attention spans and have had problems with focusing in school have struggled with this the most.

Sophomore Ryan Oliveira can relate. “I have a short attention span. I do

feel like it’s hard sitting all morning in a call, but I feel like it bothers me less than others.”

From a teacher’s point of view it’s hard to know how a student is feeling through the computer especially if no one talks.

Mr. Salgado said, “Teaching Spanish well, teaching in general, requires so much, and being at home, and not in a setting where the environment is conducive to learning, makes it really hard. When you’re in class, and you’re not focused I can come up to you, talk to you, try to help you, but on the screen I don’t know if you’re losing focus because the connection sucks, you’re having technical difficulties; it’s just hard, all in all.”

Most students have gotten used to the schedule of waking up and joining the classes in the mornings. But one problem is some students wake up five minutes before each class and are not prepared to join.

Junior Brynn Dempsey says, “In the morning I’m half asleep and can’t focus as well, especially if I didn’t eat anything before my first call.”

If technology plays a role in the rest of the 2020 school year, teachers and students can hopefully explore the full potential of learning online.

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Wearing a mask: an important safety precaution



Students everywhere have been following mask guidelines in classes.

Veritas file photo

Daniel Donahue
Veritas Staff

With the process of going back to school there are plenty of safety precautions to make sure students are in the safest environment possible. With the implementation of masks, students have another challenge they must adapt to this year.

Wearing masks makes it harder for the average student to concentrate during class. Senior Meghan Hoblitzelle explains that she is “focusing more on how to breathe

without fogging up my glasses than the class itself.”

Although people dislike wearing masks, they’re an essential part of stopping the spread of the COVID-19 virus which is transmitted primarily through the air according to scientists.

That’s why masks are a crucial part of people’s safety because they help keep everyone safe in public places.

With all of the safety precautions in place, most students and teachers feel safe going back to school as health instructor, Susan Phelps thinks the safety precautions are

“excellent.”

Senior Mackenzie Baker agrees saying, “Schools wouldn’t put students in a dangerous situation.”

On the subject of mask breaks Baker doesn’t feel students need more of them but Hoblitzelle does. She said, “The more mask breaks the better. I believe we should be able to take our masks off during class if we can take them off during lunch because the distance between people is the same.”

Although masks may not be preferred, students have found a way to have fun with them.

Both Hoblitzelle and Baker tend to focus more on fashion and making sure their masks match their outfits.

Baker said that she has noticed herself looking for more masks at the mall to match her outfits.

Hoblitzelle agreed saying that it’s important to match your mask to your outfit because of how it can make you look if you are wearing a purple mask with a yellow outfit. “It will make you look too mix-matchy.”

But your basic mask works well for most students, and despite those who find them hard to keep on all day, students are following the rules.

Adapting to changes to the hallways and classrooms

Greta Willis
Veritas Staff

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, places all around the world, including Rockland High School, have been forced to take on new safety precautions as they work towards adapting to the COVID-19 regulations.

Students and staff shared how they feel about the school’s new regulations, and how it has affected their lives personally.

Because of the entire group of students in the school being split up between two cohorts, A and B, most students are unable to see some of their friends when they go into school for their in-person learning week.

“It doesn’t affect me too much because most of my friends are in Cohort A,” began junior Thomas Gallagher, “but there are some people in Cohort B that I miss a lot and am unable to see because they’re doing online school while I’m in the physical school itself, and vice versa.”

One example of some of the precautions set in place are one way hallways represented by arrows that everyone must follow while moving about the building.

“I personally am not a fan of the arrows, but at the same time I understand why they were put in place. Being on time to some of my classes is sometimes difficult because they’re across the school and following the arrows makes it a longer trip,” shared junior Lilly Thornton.

She added, “If I could change one thing it would be the arrows. You could always dismiss half a hallway or one



Safety rules and cautions greet students and visitors as they enter the high school’s front door.

Veritas photo

at a time and have us go in the directions we need; it would be much more efficient.”

Not only have students been affected, but the staff as well.

Guidance department counselors have had to tackle a few different challenges, including meeting with students via online rather than in person.

“For me the biggest challenge was figuring out when I was going to meet with students and how I was going to do that,” began guidance counselor, Jill Delaney,

“I have since learned how wonderful Google Classroom and Google Meet are. Getting used to virtual meetings has been a lot easier than I expected.”

Mrs. Delaney also shared how she was able to create students’ schedules efficiently even without meeting with them at the end of the previous school year as was the procedure before the pandemic.

“I thought it would be [difficult] but between phone calls, emails, Google Classroom and Google Meet I’m finding the opposite to be true,” she explained. “I’ve enjoyed meeting with my students via Google Meet.”

A lot of planning has been required to make the school a safe and healthy environment for everyone. The changes that have been made are definitely a huge adjustment for everyone involved, but students and staff have been showing tremendous cooperation and maintaining a positive attitude through it all.

Class of 2024 adjusts to their first year of high school



The hallway from middle school to high school is empty between classes.

Veritas photo

Kiara Miguel
Veritas Staff

Sept. 14 was a big day for everyone, especially for freshmen of the Class of 2024, as Rockland High School students started learning and teachers started teaching.

The Class of 2024 couldn’t finish their last year of middle school the way they intended it because of the shut down of in person school last spring. Then before those eighth graders knew it, they were stepping foot into high school as freshmen.

It’s important to find out how the freshmen are adapting, not only to high school, but also to the scheduling and limitations caused by the coronavirus.

Students at RHS were to do virtual classes at home the first two weeks as they gradually moved into a hybrid schedule.

Joe Earner views online schooling in a positive way. “I love online classes. There’s not one dislike I have about it. It’s going good for me.”

Kyra Ferraro thinks differently. “Hearing about this way of high school was disappointing because I never got to experience the eighth grade events at the end of the year; so having my first year of high school being different than others is kind of annoying.”

Students are very split about which way of schooling they

prefer.

The freshmen were just so used to seeing their friends in the hallways all throughout middle school, but now they may not be in the same cohort.

Another major difference between the high school and middle school that the freshmen commonly have a hard time adapting to is how far away classes are in the high school.

It doesn’t help that the hallways are one way and freshmen are looping around the school to find the class they need to be in. Hopefully by the middle of the year the hallways will get back to what everyone has become accustomed to.

Every kid looks forward to experiencing high school the way they were told it would be with dances, pep rallies, sports and lastly, just to be in school.

Esabella Defilippo, a sophomore, believes the big events are what makes a high school experience worthwhile. “The freshman won’t be able to see any of the big games like football, volleyball, or basketball. They probably won’t even be able to experience pep rallies nor spirit week.”

The beginning of the year has been a bumpy start for everyone. Hopefully, the Class of 2024 will be able to experience high school in a positive and safe manner. Everyone is hoping for the day when things will be back to normal for all.

Students glad to be back in school



The front of Rockland High School

Veritas photo

Alexis DeFranc
Veritas Staff

2020 has been a pretty hectic year for many, especially now that school is back in session.

Being stuck in quarantine for six months has affected the minds of so many and has been stressful as we all learn to adapt

to the new normal.

A handful of students admitted missing school during the last six months.

Senior Alexxys MacDonald said, "Yes, I missed school. I was so bored at home. I tried to get outside as much as I could when I was at home. I missed actually

being in class and learning from my teachers. I had a feeling that school was going to be weird. But I was more excited than scared. I was also nervous because it was going to be different."

Students who were interviewed all had one thought in common: this year is going to be a tough one.

One remote learning senior said, "This year will definitely be a particularly stressful senior year."

But this senior also said, "I think that self-paced online courses will be a great segway into college, and better prepare seniors for life after high school."

What about the difficulty of doing fully remote during this time, and how different is it from normal classes?

This same student added, "The basic premise of 'school' is the same, slideshows, notes, and reviews of what's been taught. However, the biggest difference I notice is the immense quiet. This new and constant stillness poses an unexpected challenge for me. So far classes have been relatively easy."

On Sept. 24, most students at RHS returned to the building once more as very few were

staying fully remote for the time being.

From a student's perspective this can seem scary and intimidating, but what about from a parent's side? What's their take on this new year?

One of my guardians replied, "My take is I like it. I feel it is very important that students go back to have socialization with the teachers and their friends. I feel like it is important mentally for students and teachers to be in person for learning rather than on a computer."

As far as the actual plan to break the students up into two cohorts, she said, "Hands down I believe RHS did an outstanding job on the plan. I feel they took all the right precautions. I loved the video they made, showing the new plans which made me feel comfortable sending my child during this hectic year."

She said that the only "downside is just the worry of wondering if it'll force students to go fully remote."

Hybrid plan or remote, being back to school seems to have gathered some positive responses such as missing school even in a pandemic, as we all hope the upcoming months will be better.

SGC opens year with virtual meeting, elect Big 5

Ngan Nguyen
Veritas Staff

The RHS student government council or SGC kicked off the start of this school year with their first meeting of the year on Sept. 16.

Due to safety measures this first meeting was virtual. SGC advisor, Mrs. Bartoloni explained, "We just wanted to meet as soon as possible, so we decided to do it virtually."

The main recruitment for this virtual meeting was through social media chain posts.

There were about 35 student members at the meeting. Mrs. Bartoloni added, "We didn't have as many students as we are used to seeing, so we are hoping to see more in person on the 30th."

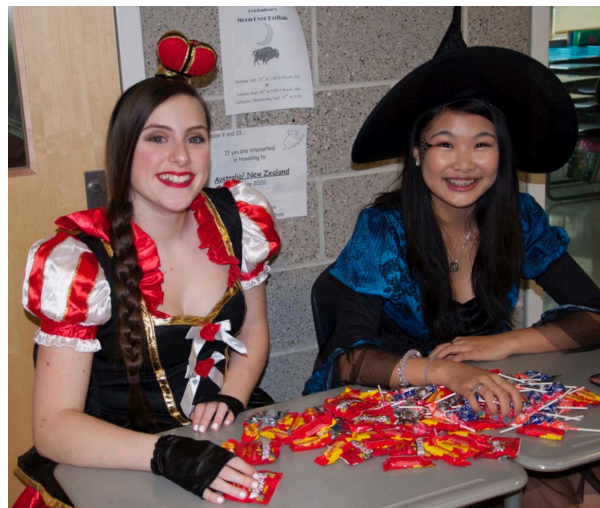
Despite the different feels and environment of the first meeting, students were none-

theless excited to attend due to their love for Stuco or Student Government Council. It's an environment made up of support and leadership, as a returning SGC member declared, "I love STUCO, so I knew it would be worth it to attend the meeting."

To have a virtual meeting, RHS student government council president Miku Yoshioka set up a spreadsheet along with a flyer, and it was shared with everyone in the council.

During the session, expectations were discussed. Those expectations mainly focused on elections for BIG 5 and major positions within the council. The SGC advisor Mrs. Bartoloni mentioned, "We discussed what events we can do this year and which ones we can't."

The meeting went as smoothly as it could go. There wasn't as much technical difficulty be-



Emily Gaboriault (VP) and Miku Yoshioko (President) of SGC last year at Project Pumpkin.

Veritas photo

sides the sound delay, stagger, or as a return, SGC member added "I just forgot to turn on my mic sometimes."

Even with the slight changes, students old and new were still very excited about the meeting.

One student member said, "I didn't feel like I was

as much a part of it." She went on to explain that the meeting was fun and it was nice to see everyone, "but of course I wish it could have been in person, so I could really see everyone."

As the school year begins, the RHS student government council has had a kicked start, and they hope that the next meeting will be even better than the previous year. Mrs. Bartoloni hopes that "once students are in attendance at school we hope we will be able to bring more awareness to when the meetings are."

For the second SGC meeting, an in-person meeting, Mrs. Bartoloni said, "We are hoping to see more in person on Sept. 30."

On Sept. 30, RHS Student Government Council elected this year's Big 5 within the council with Miku Yoshioka, President, Emily Gaboriault, Vice President, Gabriella Gambon, Secretary, Maddie Smith, Treasurer and Carol Lage, Publicity Coordinator.

Golf, cross country and soccer teams able to start

James Tsiantoulas
Veritas Staff

Back in September the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) which governs high school athletics voted to issue an extra sports season (Fall 2) to allow some fall sports to compete later in the year. Football, volleyball and fall cheerleading are now scheduled to play in February after the winter season and before the spring sports season.

Whether or not this second fall season or even a winter season will happen is another thing.

The sports that were given the green light to compete in September golf, soccer, and cross country got underway at RHS on Sept. 25.

RHS Athletic Director Gary Graziano says it is important to get some form of team sports going, "I think it will be difficult but I also think it's essential for us to get the kids back to some sort of normalcy and get them on the field exercising. I think the kids will respond well!"

Senior football captain Cullen Rogers, says, "I am planning on par-

ticipating in golf," and the season has gotten underway. Cullen has been doing his best in his new role as well as the other students who have decided to take on a new opportunity.

Football Coach Nick Liquori commented on the move of three sports to February. "It is certainly different, but more of a necessary evil, to be able to get as many student athletes participating/competing and give the feel of a normal."

There are some concerns with the virus still active across the state and the U.S.

Mr. Liquori shared his insight. "Obviously, not being in the medical field, I don't want to speak if it is safe or not, but I feel that if the data shows that other states are able to play HS sports, why not in our state? As long as the athletes and parents feel safe allowing them to compete. If we can do it safely and smart...why not?"

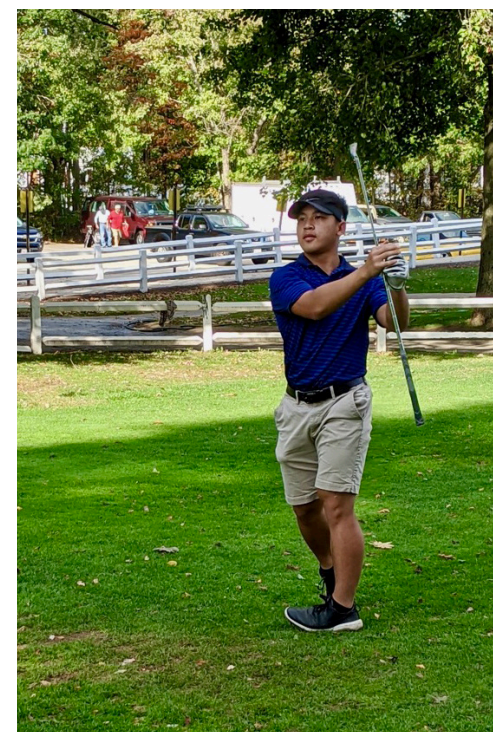
Mr. Graziano elaborated further. "I am concerned with the season and the possibility of it (the virus) spreading, but I also trust the people guiding us to play and follow the guidelines in place

and feel safe."

With administration doing everything to prevent the spread, students could be faced with possible consequences if they violate the rules. Mr. Liquori said, "One thing for certain that I think everyone is in agreement with is the safety of the student/athletes. I feel everyone involved needs to be as diligent and disciplined to the rules, so that no one team or person or school for that matter is having to deal w/consequences that could result in missed games and/or seasons."

Finally, some students are alarmed with all of these changes that it could be difficult to focus both in the classroom and on the field. Rogers gave his opinion on the matter, saying, "I think we need sports right now. Being focused in the classroom and on the field will be a struggle at first, but I know we can all do it."

With the suspension of fall sports on Oct. 23 and the hope of being able to resume on Nov. 6 it is plain to see that high school sports will be in a changing state until the pandemic is under control.



Joe Nguyen tees off at Rockland Golf course. Twitter photo Mr. Smith

Sports suspended but plan to return

James Tsiantoulas
Veritas Staff

Since the school have been closed for two weeks and classes have been on a remote basis, one direct impact outside of the classroom is that sports were suspended as of Oct. 23.

However, RHS Athletic Director, Gary Graziano has expressed that sports will come back in one way or another.

This is big news for the students in the school as this shows that the faculty is trying their absolute hardest to bring everything back to a normal of sorts.

The sports include the boys and girls soccer teams and the boys and girls cross country teams.

"As of right now we plan on resuming fall sports on Nov. 6. That would include starting a SSL tournament that will be set up prior to that date. The winner of each sports tournament will determine the SSL champion in each sport," said Mr. Graziano.

The cross country teams will resume on Nov. 7 at Hartsuff Park with their last home meet. Then they will run in the SSL All League Meet at Norwell on Veterans' Day."

When our soccer teams enter their South Shore League tournaments they will both be coming off good regular seasons. The boys had big wins against Mashpee and Hull, and the girls defeated opponents Cohasset, Mashpee and Hull.

Despite both the soccer and cross country teams making a return once students go back to school, the golf season will not be returning.

Mr. Graziano expressed his sympathy for the team.

"Unfortunately, we are unable to participate in any more golf matches as the season ends Nov. 4th prior to our remote learning time."

This is definitely a tough go for the team as they were slated for two more matches before the shutdown. But alas, this is good news for sports in the school in general.



Girls soccer seniors were honored before suspension. Girls XC runs against EB. Boys soccer will begin tournament soon. photos from Graz, Coach Smith and Mr. Harrison



Students' reactions to finally being back

Joseph Levangie
Veritas Staff

After a break that lasted over six months, students were finally back at RHS. Sept. 26 marked the first day for students in cohort A.

Due to COVID-19 the school has many new rules and regulations to try and keep everyone safe. While many students said they missed school during our break, most of their opinions have changed. It is very easy to see that school just isn't the same.

After being out of school for so long, it is not very easy for students to readapt to being back in the building. While some students may have been prepared physically, it would be difficult to find a single student who was prepared mentally. No amount of preparation could have gotten students ready for this strange year.

School starting has certainly affected students' sleep schedules, mostly negatively, but a few posi-

tively.

Senior Bella Smith no longer gets to take her naps throughout the day. She can only take them during her breaks between online classes or after school. Senior Sarah Gormley only gets around three or four hours of sleep a night. She and many others started this habit of staying up this late during our extended break.

On the other end of the spectrum, senior David Ferraro actually gets more sleep than he used to. For most of the break he worked so he had to wake up at five or six in the morning. For him, school starting means he gets to sleep in a little bit later.

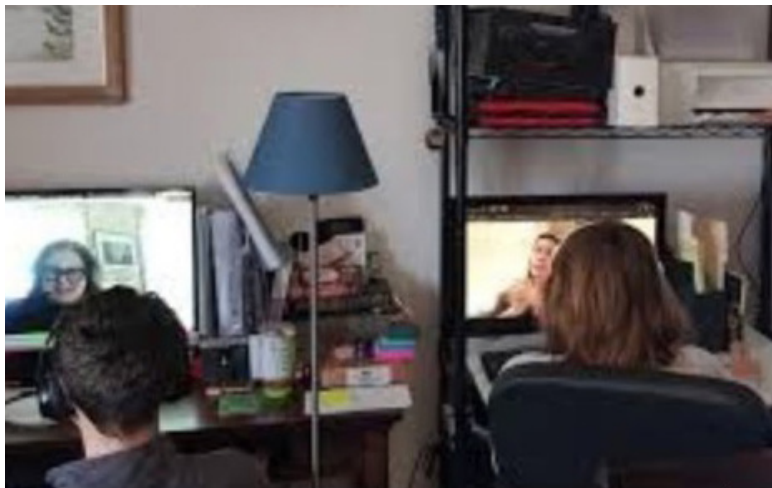
All the seniors are disappointed that this is what their last year of high school is like. However they are very excited to finally graduate. Bella Smith says it is what she is looking forward to the most this year. Others are already getting excited for Christmas vacation and spring break.

While there are some things to look forward to this year, there are also plenty of things students are dreading. For some students just having to wake up early and show up to school is already becoming too much. This is more true this year than any other. Online homework is another reason why students are not looking forward to this year.

Everybody can agree that because of COVID-19, this school year is like no other. Most students can also agree that they were not prepared for it. Most will admit that while they were excited before for school to start, they are no longer looking forward to the rest of this very different year.

With all the new rules and regulations, on top of online learning, students do not believe they are going to enjoy school this year. However, students, especially seniors, say they are extremely excited for the end of the year to come.

Hybrid schedule is a work in progress



Online learning is the new normal for students in 2020. Veritas photo by Dan Donahue

Dan Donahue
Veritas Staff

When RHS students came back to school in September, they were introduced to a new way of learn-

ing, a hybrid schedule with students switching between online and in person classes each week.

Even though classes were switched to fully remote in late

October, administrators hope to go back to this hybrid schedule on Nov. 9.

The hybrid schedule has had mixed reviews.

Some students say they are having a rough time adapting to this new schedule.

Senior Mackenzie Baker said, "There is not enough academic time in the days during the remote week."

With the shortened class times during the remote week, she also believes that she is missing out on work due to the shortened class times and the minimal amount of work given to her.

Students are not the only ones having a struggle with this new schedule. Principal John Harrison states that the new hybrid schedule is like a "scheduling puzzle trying to figure out schedules for both students learning in person and remote at the same time."

This is why changes have been made to the hybrid schedule which will go into effect on Nov. 9. Check the high school website to see these changes that teachers and students all had input on.

This new way of learning has definitely ruined the socializing aspect of school. Baker mentions that she "misses her friends because school was a neutral place for us to meet."

Student Gianna Gervasi also misses being with her friends but she believes that "safety protocols are important."

Many people may worry about safety, but Dr. Harrison said that "all students are safe going back to school."

Dr. Harrison believes that the method that is in place now is the "best approach for students going back to school."

Although the school went back to remote on Oct. 26 because of some positive test results and a number of students having to quarantine, Dr. Harrison said that there is no evidence of "in school transmission." They want to keep it that way.

Although students are disappointed they can't socialize and have fun during school now, Dr. Harrison believes that "at some point this year we could see a full return." But he added, "A lot has to happen for that to happen."

Annual Holiday Stroll won't be held this year



Mr. McDonald and his family enjoyed visiting Santa and Mrs. Claus at the stroll last year.
Photo courtesy of Al McPhee



There were lots of characters from Frozen for kids at the Holiday Stroll last year.
Photo courtesy of Al McPhee

Lauren Draicchio
Veritas Staff

Turning the Rockland town center into the North Pole during the Holiday Stroll each Christmas season has been an event cherished by the people of Rockland for the last 26 years. Spreading holiday cheer, community members and local stores prepared for the arrival of Santa Claus, lighting the streets the colors of the holiday season.

Unfortunately on Sept. 15, Holiday Stroll organizers, Pam Murphy, Dan Biggins, Cathy Stewart and the Board of Selectman met and discussed the closing of the Holiday Stroll for this upcoming Christmas season.

Murphy spoke on behalf of organizers to describe the Holiday Stroll as a festival specifically made to try and bring the town together.

"All of the businesses and churches uptown participate - opening their doors with entertainment and special treats for everyone."

She also explained that kids and townspeople always line the streets to take part in all of the festivities throughout the center "including hay rides, Crazy Critters, the sheriff and Rockland Police K9 dog demonstration, and all kinds of other things for the children to enjoy."

Murphy and co-workers struggled with their decision. However, with everything going on with COVID, they just couldn't see any window of opportunity that would allow the stroll to take

place. "There was no way we could have met the limited capacity, the social distancing guidelines, etc. The Governor has specifically stated that no street festivals are allowed."

Due to the fact that the Holiday Stroll "is probably the biggest event in Rockland as far as attendance," Murphy and her team came to the conclusion that "the numbers just don't work - no matter how we try to work with them!"

Rockland High School students' hearts ache at the loss of this childhood event as they reminisce on their times at the stroll.

Senior Erin Gardner remembers most her "favorite part of the stroll was the petting zoo in the town hall." She will always remember how cool it was to be able to hold a baby alligator.

Junior Emma Burns will miss the warmth of holiday joy in the air and the memories of walking around with her friends with music playing "and being greeted by 'elves' everywhere you went."

Not only did this event bring just amazing memories, but it also allowed for high school students to receive community service hours.

Seniors Hannah Rich, Katelyn Fitzgerald and Erin Gardner say they are not worried about the possible loss of community service hours because they know there will be other opportunities. However, they are still saddened by the loss of the community event and "being involved in it one last time."



RHS students decorating Santa hats at the Holiday Stroll.
Veritas photo

It seems as though everyone in the Rockland community will miss this event and the togetherness it brought to the town, but do not be dismayed. Murphy and her team "hope to be back with the 2021 Holiday Stroll being even bigger and better!"

Will popular app be going away soon?

Alexis DeFranc
Veritas Staff

From making trends to hilarious fails, the app called Tik Tok has won the hearts of people from around the world, but not all good things can last.

In the last couple of months, President Trump along with Congress officially declared that Tik Tok would soon be banned for good because of security issues with the app linking back to its origins with China. They believe people's personal information could be stolen by China.

So TikTok, known for its funny videos is now believed to be leaking personal data and letting in hackers on the app.

One upperclassmen reacted to the news. "I used to have Tik Tok a while back but I deleted the app before its "considered ban" was published. I wasn't active a lot but I only really used it for watching videos really."

He added, "I do believe that Tik Tok should be banned because of the crazy hacking. The only thing I liked on the app was the funny pet memes but that was really it. I don't think I know anyone who is on the app."

Another student who isn't a fan of Tik Tok said, "I don't think Tik Tok was made for me, especially with all the hacking. The app just screams security risk and hack-

ing your home type of deal. I didn't have it but it's not worth your time to download it." He advised, "Don't take the risk of having it hack your phone & info. This app is very sketchy."

One fellow upperclassman claimed, "I was shocked after I heard Tik Tok was considered to be banned. I did not see that coming. I didn't even know it was known to be a hacker's paradise. I think it should still stay around but with heavy monitoring from security."

As of the moment, Tik Tok stands being bought by an American company called Oracle Corporation after winning the app's bid.

But the danger still lurks out there. Within recent days, a U.S. court agreed to expedite the government's Tik Tok app store ban appeal as the US and China tech tensions increased.

Along with this happening, this issue is at a standstill. U.S. District Judge Carl Nichols in Washington issued an appeal of a ruling blocking the government from banning new Tik Tok downloads from US app stores. On November 4, the U.S. District Court will decide on hearing the upcoming arguments following the potential sale of this app.

All briefs for this app will be due on November 12 with oral arguments.



Students reflect on being stuck in quarantine



RHS junior Thomas Gallagher focuses on a video game during quarantine. Courtesy photo

Greta Willis
Veritas Staff

While being stuck in quarantine at home from March to August, many people experienced both highs and lows during this unprecedented time.

A few students who attend Rockland High School shared their thoughts and experiences about being out of school, and how it affected their personal lives.

A few responses included a positive outlook, while others had more of a difficult time.

"I was happy because it was an extended vacation," stated Thomas Gallagher, "I couldn't see my friends but I got to play video games."

As for others, feelings and emotions altered as time went by, especially when Massachusetts began to amplify their safety precautions and measures.

Christa Pollard, now a junior, shares how she felt. "I had mixed feelings when I found out we weren't going back to school this summer. At first, I was sad because going through one of the hardest years of high school was going to be filled with more uncertainty," said Pollard. "Once I got out of my head and embraced the modified school year, it wasn't that bad and oddly enough, being in small remote classes has really helped me overcome my irrational fear of talking in front of people."

Pollard also shared how it was not only a stressful time of uncertainty, but also a relief being out of school for the extended period of time.

"Some of my favorite parts about being at home was the solitude. I enjoyed not stressing out about what I have to wear to school, studying for tests, or even worrying about what people think of me everyday."

Pollard added, "The only downside of embracing my introverted side was it became an addictive habit...It took a lot of getting used to to come back out of my shell and to muster up the courage to be around people other than my family again. Being forced to face society again has made me realize that being alone isn't the answer."

More normalcy has started up again with school reopening and more places opening up in public. With things slowly getting back to how they once were, it's easier to start reflecting on how quarantine has possibly changed us.

Jillian Mitchell adds, "I got to improve myself by going for walks with my family and making sure to stay mentally and physically active."

Unfortunately, COVID-19 has not reached its conclusion, but as improvements are being made to try to get back to normal, the future is still looking bright for what's to come.

Seniors respond to current events survey

Veritas Staff

In the news it seems everything is about COVID-19 or the Presidential Election. Everyone will be glad when they are both all over. However, RHS seniors have larger issues on their minds and they may not be what you would expect.

With the election only a couple days away, the *Veritas* sent out a questionnaire to members of the senior class asking about their views on the election and the issues that are facing the country.

We did not ask about particular candidates. Eighteen seniors responded.

On the question of voting only two said that they would be voting; the others are not old enough yet to cast a ballot. One respondent who is old enough admitted they did not register to vote.

As far as how many students have been following the Presidential election, half of the students said they were "extremely interested" in the election while only one said, "Not at all interested." 38% said they were following it "a little," while 27% said they knew who was running but they'd be "glad when it is all over."

They were also asked to comment on how many of their peers are talking about the election. 88% said that "some of them are" and 6% said they talk about it all the



Ninety-five percent of seniors responding to survey mentioned this as an important issue our country is facing.

time."

The last question that was asked was about the biggest issues that seniors believe are affecting our country.

The leading answer was systemic racism and equality issues. These were followed by COVID-19, climate change, the economy and unemployment, respect, poverty, Supreme Court reform and division in the country.

Senior Kendra Peretzman gave her opinion on the biggest issues saying, "How divided we are racially and politically. How the pandemic was handled."

On the same subject Arthur Norton said, "I think our country

is too divided and that we need to stop hating each other and be united again."

One senior said, "Personally, the biggest problems we face in this country currently involve global warming and systemic racism. It's crazy to me that it's a political opinion but I guess that's how it's viewed nowadays."

Another respondent said, "COVID!!!!, civil rights, police reform, healthcare, gun control, women's reproductive rights, LGBTQ+ rights."

Senior Brendan O'Brien had an interesting response to the biggest issue in our country: "The older men in the different branches cause(sic) their ideals are all old school."

Jonah Pishkin responded, "I would say that the most important issue is equality. The BLM movement has shown that everybody has a part to play in this society."

Alexis DeFranc summed up all the issues that were mentioned. "I would say the country is facing extreme amounts of racism and inequality these days... those not white or heterosexual can be denied any resources. We are supposed to stand united, not apart. White supremacy, police brutality, racism have brought the country to shambles, but we have time to fix it before it's too late."

She added, "Other than that, we need to help out with global warming. Our world is our home and not our enemy, it gives us home and life but all we give in return is fossil fuels and pollution. We need to act now."

Multi-player game of 2020 played by many

Emily Gaboriault
Veritas Co-Editor-in-Chief

With students at RHS at home again due to the school going back to remote learning, some have a little more time to play a popular video game.

The new popular game called *Among Us* has been sweeping the nation and being played by billions.

Among Us is a multiplayer game in which between 4 and 10 players are dropped onto an alien spaceship. Each player is given a private role as a "crewmate" or "impostor." The crewmates must run around the ship and try to complete a set of tasks given to them all while trying to root out and avoid getting killed by the impostor(s). Players can be voted off the ship, so each game becomes one of survival. If you successfully vote off the impostor(s), or complete all your tasks you win. Players can create a unique username and select a variety of character color options after entering a game. They can also dress up their characters

with fun hats and outfits to really personalize their game characters.

This simple yet fun game was released in 2018 by a game company named Innersloth. It had very few players at first, as most games do, until this summer. *Among us* has gone on to be played by a billion people worldwide and the game's servers are even said to have some problems with how many people play the game because the designers were not expecting this big of a following. There is even talk of an *Among Us 2*.

Students at RHS seem to love this game. Senior, Matheus Rocha, a big gamer himself says, "I've played a lot of games and *Among Us* is definitely one of the more engaging. Personally, I consider the game to be really fun and engaging to play with friends."

Senior, Jakob Wells is also a fan of the game. He says, "It's a very interesting game because of how much it depends on trust and how you can play with anyone around the world or with



friends. It really gives you the decision to betray your friends and lie your way to winning and I think that's what makes it so fun, the thrill of finding out who the impostors are."

This game is available for free on the App Stores for mobile devices, or on Steam for \$5 for computers. Happy Gaming!