

Editors Column

The Lake Oswego Policy Might Be a Good Change



Ansley Kang
Grade 12
Lake Oswego High School



The new phone policy also requires AirPods to be left at home or away in backpacks.
[Source: Author, Ansley Kang]

The new “Zero Phone” policy that Lake Oswego High School has implemented has faced mixed opinions from the student body. Some positive, some negative, and some neutral. With this new policy, students won’t be

able to use their phones at all. From 8:25 to 3:30, phones must be off and away during class, lunch, and passing period. Initially, I grumbled, but I realized that while there are minor inconveniences that come from not

being able to use my phone, such as the inability to check the time when I’m not in class or not being able to take pictures of notes on the screen, in the long run, the benefits that I’ve seen from the phone policy have outweighed those cons for me.

Student Sara Lee admits, “I didn’t have very strong faith in the enforcement of the policy. I scoffed and told my friends, ‘It’s only going to last a week at most,’ but here we are, through the month of October, and the policy seems to still be going strong.” Something refreshing to see was that students were interacting with each other. Whether it was in the hallway during break or in the classroom during the passing period, I noticed that people really were talking more. I’ve seen this happen to me as well, and it makes me feel much better about myself. It’s my senior year, and one of the goals that I set for myself was to make more friends and get to know the people in my classes. I feel that making connections with other people and learning how to be socially aware is also an extremely important life skill to learn, and there are hardly any people in this world who were born to be natural conversation makers. This opportunity to connect with people that we’ve never connected with before or to learn new things about people

you already know is only building those skills.

It can be possible that someone is not a “people person” and prefers to stay in their own bubble, which I totally understand. Abby Johnson commented, “I think what’s important to realize, though, is that too much of anything is never good. It’s never good to eat too many vegetables or too many desserts or to watch too much TV. So why do we treat our phones in a different way?” I agree; It’s never good to spend too much time on our phones, just as it’s not good when we eat too many vegetables. Another valuable part of removing phones for a portion of the day is the fact that now you have time to find something just as enriching as being on your phone. I guarantee you that almost everyone has another hobby other than scrolling on their phone. If you feel you don’t, maybe you haven’t taken genuine time to find another hobby. Lee has picked up new ones such as “reading and crochet. They help me relax.”

At the end of the day, we are here at school for an education, and our teachers are trying their best to give us opportunities upon opportunities. School isn’t a place where we get six extra hours of screen time, but a place where we can fulfill goals and strive to be the best we can be.

Student Reporter

A Weekend of School Event Season



Reanna Lee
Grade 10
North Hollywood High School

It is nearing the end of the year, and for North Hollywood High School, that equals Homecoming season! As a member of the Associated Student Body (ASB), I was in charge of planning and putting everything together for our annual school dance with the rest of my committee (which is the event committee!). Let’s rewind back a bit. It is August 28th, and the results of the Homecoming theme voting have just been revealed. Drumroll, please—this year’s Homecoming theme is Tangled! A beautiful concept with cool purple and glowing yellow would make for a wonderful night. Everyone was excited to see what the event committee would come up with.

We are back in the present: on the day of, all of ASB is setting up for that same night. This was my first time planning an event this large, so it was very exciting to see all the hard work finally come together. Decorations consisted of hanging flower archways to enter through, a step-and-repeat photo space that imitated the lantern canoe ride in the Tangled movie, sun flag garlands, lanterns, fairy lights, and Tangled-themed centerpieces. The arrangement of the stage, food, and bar were also decided by the event committee, and I hoped the attendees would enjoy it.



This year’s Wild West-themed Pep Rally MCs, Yosseph and Izzy, getting the audience ready for a game of musical chairs!
[Source: Author, Reanna Lee]

As people were shuffling in, the electricity of the excitement could be felt! Students were already forming a crowd near the stage, and by the time we began serving food, there was a mosh-pit of everyone having fun. Many still seemed energized from the buzz of the events the previous day—Friday was when we had our first Pep Rally of the year! It was themed Wild West and was planned by the Spirit Committee, although the rest of us did pitch in

as well. The day went as follows: an opening introduction, a wonderful performance of the national anthem by the vocal ensemble, a routine by the color guard and band, a parade of the participating sports and clubs, an interactive game, a dance showcase with the dance team and cheer squad, and an electrifying performance with our very own principal and his band! Seeing the crowd go wild with applause was truly satisfying.

Homecoming the following weekend maintained ASB’s work streak, but we all had fun. Throughout the planning of these events, I was able to grow closer with my fellow event committee members, expand my creativity, and practice my design and communication skills. I am proud to say that this grand event was a huge success, and many loved it! Now, I am confident that next year will be even better because of the amazing team we have.

Student Reporter

Serving Up Compassion to Souls In Need



Emily Lee
Grade 10
Sunny Hills High School

In a world where lack of affordable housing, low wages, and mental illness leeches into the lives of countless individuals, homelessness is a dark hole that many seem to fall into. Homelessness tends to cause victims to be depressed and even aggressive, resulting in a stigma that such people are a danger to others and to society. Recently I decided that it was my mission to not only help these struggling individuals but to determine whether they live up to their reputations.

On October 26th, PAVA hosted the Midnight Mission event, where volunteers woke up at 4:00 a.m. and drove to Los Angeles to feed breakfast to hungry citizens. This was also my first time being a team captain for a volunteer event, so I knew I had to commit with my greatest effort.

Upon arriving at the kitchen, the PAVA team and I were greeted warmly by other volunteers. I quickly delegated tasks; the younger members stayed behind in the kitchen prepping the produce, while the older volunteers, including myself, made and served plates in the front, coming in direct contact with the home-

less. The atmosphere was filled with camaraderie as we worked together to achieve a common goal: serving those in need.

When it came time to serve meals, my stomach whirred with anxiety but also excitement. I found myself face-to-face with individuals from various backgrounds. Some were visibly grateful, others appeared withdrawn or hesitant, and a few of the guests were irritable and intimidated me. Nonetheless, as I handed out the plates of food, I ensured that I smiled and engaged in their conversations whenever possible. Throughout the breakfast service, I went back and forth between the kitchen and the front, checking to see that everyone fulfilled their responsibilities.

Overall, I witnessed moments of joy amid hardship – a woman clasping her hands in worship as she received her first meal in days, a man smiling for what looked like the first time in a long while as he ate his plate of food, and an elderly couple tearing up with appreciation. These interactions reminded me that despite their circumstances, many of these individuals possess resil-



PAVA volunteers pluck grapes to be washed and served to the homeless.
[Source: Author, Emily Lee]



PAVA volunteers hand out plates of food to the homeless.
[Source: Author, Emily Lee]

ience, hope, and, most importantly, a heart, abolishing their violent stereotypes. Feeding the homeless made me appreciate my own privileges while igniting a desire within me to continue advocating for the homeless both within and beyond my community.

Volunteering at PAVA’s Midnight Mission was more than just an act of service; it was an eye-opening experience that

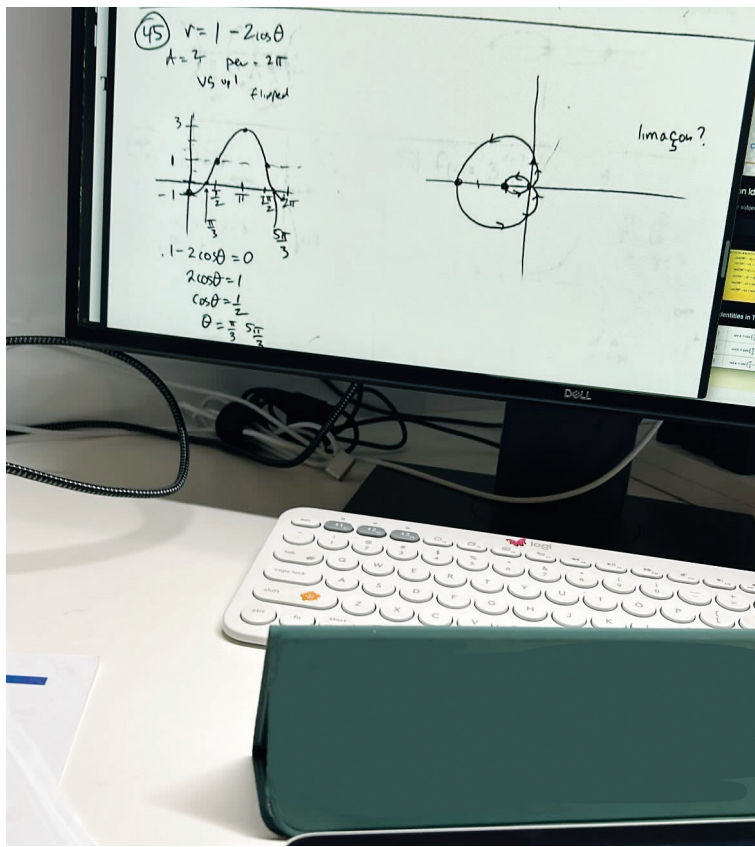
reshaped my understanding of compassion and responsibility. It reinforced my belief that everyone deserves dignity and respect regardless of their situation, as one never knows what another is going through. Therefore, I am more confident than ever to assert that there are no limits to compassion, so it is vital to express it meaningfully, especially to the ones who need it the most.

Editors Column

Digital vs. Traditional: Is the Transition Worth It?



Isleen Lee
Grade 11
Harvard-Westlake School



One of the most common uses of my iPad is when I am studying for math tests. [Source: Author, Isleen Lee]

“Unbox my new iPad with me!” “Writing things by hand helps you remember them better.” Have you ever heard either of these phrases? If so, you likely know that a

new popular form of notetaking is on the rise: digital notetaking using a device and a stylus, such as an iPad and an Apple Pen or another tablet. While many high

schoolers still use the traditional pen and paper, some prefer to go digital. As a high school student myself who has made the transition to digital notetaking, here are some of my best tips if you want to try this system.

My transition to using an iPad for notetaking purposes dates back to 2020, when the pandemic hit. I was only nearing the end of my 6th grade year, yet I always had an interest in Apple products and technology. I remember having watched a YouTube video that demonstrated the unboxing of a brand new iPad model that had just been released, paired with an Apple Pencil and a colorful case. I knew what an iPad was back then, but I never knew how versatile and useful it could be for educational purposes and efficiency. After many days of convincing my parents, I used Apple’s education discount and their trade-in policy to purchase an 11-inch iPad Air 4th generation in a glistening silver shade along with an Apple Pencil. Looking back, that investment changed and tremendously aided my study methods! Apple constantly releases new iPad models, but I still continue to use my model to this day. However, this does not mean that I have completely abandoned the standard pen-and-paper method. Over the years, I have tried many types

of notetaking and tested multiple tools that I thought would help me boost my efficiency. Ultimately, I found that I work best using a hybrid of my iPad and the standard pen and paper method.

When I first got the iPad, I gravitated toward using only it for taking notes for all of my classes. Then, I realized that I prefer to take notes by hand or typing for some classes, while for others, I liked the iPad much better. For example, in my history classes, I found it extremely useful to be able to make diagrams and connections quickly, so I preferred a combination of handwriting and typing since I noticed that doing it on my iPad made me focus too much on making my notes look pretty. In other cases, such as math and chemistry, I solved many practice problems when preparing for assessments and doing homework. As someone who hates carrying a lot of scratch paper around, the organization system and quick erasing ability of the iPad aid my studies very much. For these reasons, I recommend anyone thinking of transitioning to digital notetaking to remember to try out different methods before locking in on a specific one. I truly believe that when it comes to studying, the methods you use should be highly personalized to your own style.

Student Reporter

Why We Should All Appreciate Mid-Semester Breaks

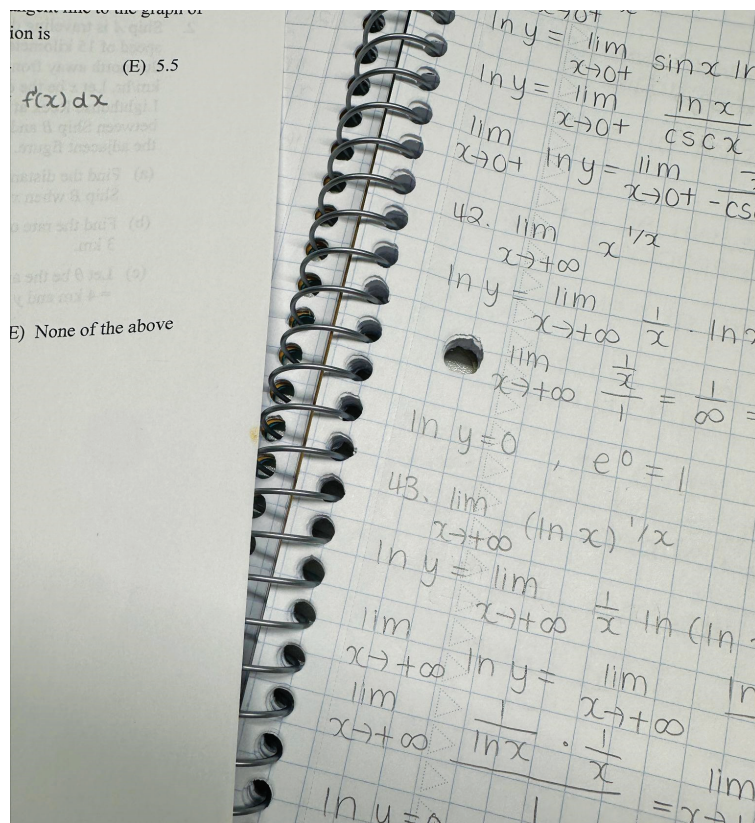


Angel Song
Grade 10
Harvard-Westlake School

After having the Labor Day weekend off, many students feel they have a long journey before them. They are not wrong, however, because the nearest break is all the way in late November, with a more extended break looming in December. Many schools have begun implementing mid-semester breaks to prevent burnout and a lack of motivation in students.

As someone who goes to a college preparatory school focused on promoting academic excellence, I’ve felt the importance of having breaks between school days. Many high school students would agree, but sometimes, just a weekend might not be sufficient to rest and finish any upcoming assignments before the busy week starts. To alleviate the stress students receive from rigorous coursework, our school has a system known as “Flex Days.” Students and faculty get a day off from school almost every month to ensure that all members of the school community get their work done but also have an opportunity to take a break from life.

Flex Days are the perfect opportunities for students to take some time to enjoy their lives without having to worry too much about school. One of the best aspects of Flex Days is that they are usually during the middle of the



Catching up on homework is one thing students like to do on days off from school. [Source: Author, Angel Song]

week. People may have different opinions about this, but personally, I found these mid-week breaks easier to ease into and adjust back to school once the break is over.

extra day motivates me to power through the remaining few days of the week and enjoy a full two-day weekend.

Students get to sleep in on these days and have the entire day to themselves to do whatever their hearts please. Many will hang out with their friends or run errands that they were too busy to handle during the week. Some students will even get their driver’s licenses on a Flex Day to avoid scheduling conflicts on weekends! Still, some will use these days to catch up on schoolwork or study for upcoming tests. Judging from these types of students, it may seem like there is no real break, but the truth is that this is enough of a break. Although some may choose to prioritize schoolwork even on these days, ultimately, it is their choice, and there is still less stress involved as there is no required schoolwork on that day.

In light of high school students’ hardships, some schools have implemented mid-semester breaks that occur almost every month. Students can use these days however they want, whether it is shopping, acquiring driver’s licenses, or just locking in. Undoubtedly, this day off from school helps many of us take a much-needed break from the academic environment.

Student Reporter

Beyond the Easter Bunny Myth



Sora Ju
Grade 10
Geffen Academy

Did you know rabbits are the third most common animal in shelters, only second to cats and dogs? Despite California’s ban on selling live rabbits unless they come from shelters, many people continue to breed and sell them illegally, especially around the holidays. Before or after events such as Easter, many rabbits are abandoned at shelters, creating a cruel cycle of neglect.

Recently, over 100 rabbits were rescued from a “backyard hoarding situation” in California, an unfortunately common occurrence. Rabbit shelters often face severe overpopulation, such as in facilities like Los Angeles Animal Services.

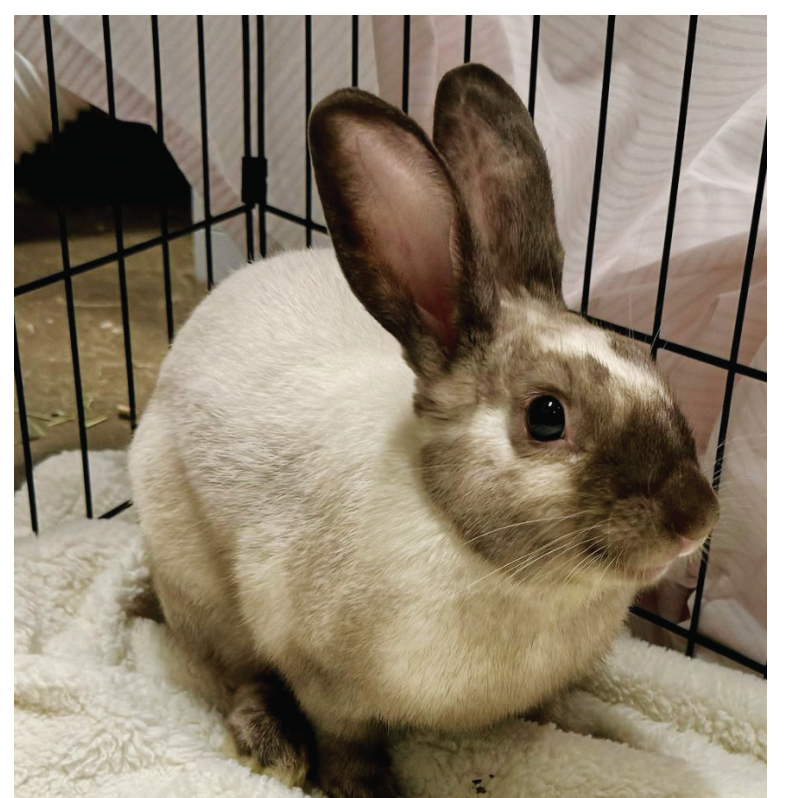
First-time rabbit owners often believe they can keep these pets outdoors, protesting, “But wild rabbits can live outside!” However, as Michelle Kelly, founder and CEO of the Los Angeles Rabbit Foundation, a nonprofit rabbit welfare group, points out, “Wild rabbits and domesticated rabbits are completely different!” Domesticated rabbits are ill-equipped to survive outside, facing dangerous predators and extreme temperatures.

Many rabbits end up in shel-

ters due to unpreparedness—often, owners quickly lose interest or become unable to provide care. “Especially after holidays, the shelters see a significant increase in surrenders,” Kelly explains. “People realize they aren’t prepared for the responsibility of a living creature, and they just inhumanely dump them off at the shelter.”

For those considering adopting a rabbit, research and preparation are essential. As Kelly often explains, “There’s just so much to learn about rabbits. You learn something new every day. While it is a common misconception that rabbits make gentle, “easy” pets for young children, they are actually extremely fragile and also bite (not as hard as other pets might, but still enough to break the skin).” As Kelly advises, “If a household has young children, it’s better to wait until they’re older and can understand how to treat animals with care.” Every rabbit is different—some might be gentle and affectionate, others more shy or aloof.

Many rabbits are eager for loving homes at local shelters and rescue groups. Even if you can’t adopt, consider volunteering or



Contrary to popular belief, rabbits and cats, as well as some dogs, can become great companions! [Source: Author, Sora Ju]

donating to organizations focused on rabbit care. To learn more about rabbit adoption or support

the cause, you can visit the Los Angeles Rabbit Foundation’s website or your local animal shelter today!