



The High School View

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New administration raises spirits and questions

BY LILY SEBASTIAN AND SARA CREATO

As the nation acclimates to new federal leadership, students and faculty at the Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) shared their perspectives on the Biden administration's diverse Cabinet appointments, pandemic response, action on climate change, and reliance on executive orders.

President Joe Biden's Cabinet includes the most Latino appointees and the first Native American appointee. U.S. history teacher Brian Roesler sees this as a positive change, but believes that there is more work to be done. "It's great to see, but I think that's just a baseline...we need to see more policies and practices put in place," he said.

History department chair Olsen Houghton agrees. "I

feel for the first time that we're going to have a cross-section of what the American population is," he said. "There's still a few places where you could be critical of his selection because his inner circle is still white male dominated, but only a very small percentage considering the cross-section."

One of the top priorities for the new administration is continuing to manage the pandemic response, including the vaccine rollout. Junior Nick Pecararo is hoping for a return to normalcy. "I want COVID to get tackled the most. After Trump got demonized for how he handled the virus, I expect Biden to deal with it better, but we will see what happens," he said.

Mr. Houghton emphasized the role that the federal government must play in managing the pandemic. "It's been proven time and time

again in our history: when there is a national emergency, we need the federal government to step in and play a role. I know people disagree on how they should do it, who should fund it. But the reality is, we need that structure and history has proved that," he said.

Senior Rachel Salop is optimistic about the future because of the new measures the Biden Administration is taking to address the pandemic, such as implementing mask mandates. "We have nowhere to go but up, hopefully. As long as people start or continue following social distancing guidelines, I'm really hoping to see an improvement" she said.

The administration is also tackling climate change by taking measures such as appointing former Secretary of State John Kerry to the new position of Presidential En-

voy for Climate. Mr. Houghton is in favor of such measures. "I grew up with a mad scientist as a father, so from the time I was eight years old, I was being told that I had to recycle. We were the first ones that I ever knew that got a solar panel on our house. I've been on board the whole time, it's just common sense to save the environment for the future," he said.

Rachel was impressed by the United States rejoining the Paris Climate Agreement. "I'm really passionate about the environment and I want to go into environmental law to fight for that kind of conservation. I thought it was really admirable that they did that so quickly," she said.

However, not everyone agrees with all of President Biden's actions. Nick said, "I like his idea about making it easier to become a citizen, but his canceling of the wall and

the Keystone pipeline puts many out of jobs, which I don't agree with."

Mr. Roesler has some concern about the forty-two executive orders that President Biden has signed as of this week. "I don't believe executive orders are the way that the country should be run," he said. He added, "It's a unique situation. I hope it doesn't continue to go down from here. I'd much rather see us work through having Congress and a Senate that can get laws passed."

Sophomore Maggie Bernard sees Vice President Kamala Harris' victory as a



Olson Houghton speaks about President Biden's historic Cabinet in class.

big step towards progress. "Because of the fact that we have a Black woman as vice president, I hope we realize that we can also elect women into the presidency. Even though Kamala Harris' victory is a huge step, I hope people can realize that you can go even further." **HSV**

Hybrid model prompts changes in CTE

BY JULIA SAYRE, LILA MIKOS, RUBY REIMANN AND CHLOE COMBRA

Martha's Vineyard Regional High School (MVRHS) transitioned out of remote instruction into a hybrid learning model on January 11. Teachers in the Career and Technical Education (CTE) department have had to redesign some of their methods in order to meet social distancing guidelines without sacrificing the hands-on learning that their courses are built around.

Dr. Barbara-Jean Chauvin is the director of the CTE department, which currently offers courses in automotive technology, culinary arts, health assisting, building trades, and horticulture-landscape maintenance. As a member of the Massachusetts



Junior Riley Sylvia assesses car troubles.

CTE task force, she was part of structuring a safe, hybrid version of MVRHS' CTE program to align with the safety protocols students are expected to follow in the workplace.

"One of the things that we decided early on was that we would follow industry guidelines," she said "So even if the school said one thing, we would go to a higher level in terms of the industrial stan-

dard. All of our programs are aligned to the industry anyway, so it made the most sense. In addition to that, we are also following school and Department of Education guidelines."

The hybrid model split the student body into A and B cohorts that determine whether a student comes into school or learns from home on a given day. This has cut most class sizes in half, or sometimes

smaller, since a portion of the student body has opted to remain fully remote.

Automotive technology teacher Ken Ward said, "The biggest change is the smaller groups. It's not too hard to separate [students] when they're in these smaller groups, but we still have to wipe everything down: all of the tools, the safety glasses, and all of our areas when we're done."

Additionally, cars being serviced can only be from MVRHS staff or a student taking the automotive course. In previous years people from the community could bring in their cars to be serviced. Despite these changes, Mr. Ward is delighted to have his students back in the building. "Being able to get students active in our shops again is nice because that is where it all comes together, so that's super

important," he said.

The smooth transition to hybrid has been possible due to the cooperation of the students and efforts of teachers, administrators, and staff. Senior Emily Anderson said, "All my teachers are really good with communication. It's really nice to just see everyone and be able to work with people one-on-one instead of in breakout rooms. I talked to other people too and [hybrid] has made them more happy and motivated."

Senior Sydney Bierman said CTE's nursing program has had to put their clinical hours at Windermere on hold and instead practice skills in the classroom and other certifications. "I definitely prefer being back in the building for nursing in particular because we do a lot of hands on skills," she said.

Culinary teacher and CTE department chair Chef Jack O'Malley has made adjustments to his teaching methods

to accommodate the needs of students during remote and in-person instruction. This has even included dropping off ingredients to students' homes. He has also increased students' ingredient prep time in person in order to minimize the likelihood that students will cross paths with one another.

Overall, Chef O'Malley said he is happy that he gets to continue to share his love for cooking with his students. "I've been pretty lucky," he said. "Kids at home have been doing their best. A lot of the students that have been cooking along with us at home have been sending me pictures."

Dr. Chauvin seemed most excited that students are having no issues complying with the school's safety protocols. "Everybody is doing great with social distancing, they're doing great with mask compliance, and the teachers have done a fabulous job," she said. **HSV**

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