

The Talon

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Advanced Placement test dates altered

If you are a young person on social media, there is a strong chance you have seen at least one post attacking the College Board. From calling it a “scam” to criticizing its reliance on memorization to boycotting their exams, high school students across the country are expressing their frustration with what they view as a broken testing system that contributes to a teach-to-test culture. Each year, thousands of high schoolers take AP tests and wait two months for their results as they are graded by teachers across the country and scored from one to five upon a curve determined by their fellow test-takers. Although the organization is clearly not without flaws, it seems to be dedicated to aiding test takers in the midst of this pandemic.

The year 2020 left the world scrambling for solutions to a million problems, one of which included how to format AP tests. The answer became a shorter, virtual, and free response only at-home exam. For some students, it propelled them to success, but for others they felt as if they were robbed of their chance to earn credit hours for their year-long hard work.

This year, the College Board has appeared determined to do their best in helping students succeed. Thousands of videos recorded by actual AP teachers across the nation have been created and uploaded to AP Classroom as a study resource that can be used both for unit tests and preparing for the big day. Practice multiple choice

exams and free response essay questions are also readily available, and being utilized by both teachers and students.

In contrast to previous years, the College Board created three waves of testing in response to the fact that each school has handled their learning schedules differently as a result of the pandemic. Administration One offers fully in person, on paper tests that take place beginning in early May. The third administration is in early June and entirely at home and digital. Administration Two, chosen by the Rockwood School District, is a hybrid of one and three during mid May in which some exams are virtual and others are on paper. For the digital tests, they can be individually chosen by each student to be taken in their own home or at school.

Faculty including math teacher Shannon Walton and social studies teacher Greg Gilbert told their students they intended to support this second administration because of the extra time it provides to review content. These couple of extra weeks are especially important this year; Missouri’s later start in the fall and the shorter school days during the first semester both led to less time for learning course content.

As AP courses enter their final units before the tests this spring, remember the resources that have been put in place, both by the College Board and your teachers. Even though this year looks far different than those in the past, it is still possible to be prepared.

-EDITORIAL-

-COMMENTARY- Cookie craze: the forgotten Fridays

Carrie Sandler
News Editor

The halls of the school are notorious for their many smells, odors, and fragrances. Some smells are rather dreaded, while others are welcomed, such as that of the famous aroma that comes once a week. Not only do students look at Friday as the end of a long week, but also as a day where they can reward themselves by participating in the phenomenon known as Cookie Friday.

These Fridays are days where the DECA class comes together and bakes a variety of cookies for the Falcon community for the primary purpose to raise money for the annual Veteran’s Day celebration, while also giving sweet treats to students. Ranging from chewy chocolate chip to crunchy M&M to simple sugar, a warm spirit is brought about in the hallways.

Unfortunately, however, due to the restrictions set by COVID-19, Cookie Fridays have been limited this year to just starting a couple weeks ago. I don’t know about you all, but I loved Cookie Fridays. I mean, who doesn’t love getting a sweet treat at the end of a long week? I, like other students, would always set aside money each week purely just for those cookies. I would pay with dollars, quarters, and sometimes even pennies- whatever could add up to be enough to purchase a sweet treat. Any loose change I found in my car would be set aside and saved for those Fridays.

However, it has dawned on me that a quarter of the school still hasn’t had the opportunity to indulge in these fantastic Fridays. Adding on, another quarter of the school may have had their last Cookie Friday just a couple weeks ago. Honestly, it makes me so sad because I know how much these cookies not only meant to my friends and myself, but also to the school. Cookie Fridays provided a day where kids and staff could reward themselves from a long week with a delicious treat. Everyone in first lunch was always hyped about having a variety of treats to choose from, whereas those who had last lunch were not so lucky. Some had the unfortunate news of not being able to get a cookie at all, something that I was personally upset with.

Even though these cookies may not seem like a big deal, they can do a lot to make people happy. I’ve seen so many kids excited that their friend bought them a cookie, and others sharing one to make their days better. While these beloved days will (hopefully) continue, all I can say is that if you haven’t had a cookie in your years here, first of all what are you doing, and secondly, go ahead and try it. I cannot stress this enough. Cookies are truly lifesavers on their own, but when they’re from Cookie Fridays, they are truly the best.

