

The East Rock Record

133 NASH STREET, NEW HAVEN, CONNECTICUT 06511 MAY 2019 · VOL. 6, NO. 2

THE RACE TO LEAD THE CITY Four run for New Haven Mayor



East Rock Record Reporters meet with all four people running for Mayor. CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Mayor Toni Harp; Justin Elicker; Urn Pendragon; Wendy Hamilton.

BY ISABEL FAUSTINO, DAVE CRUZ
EAST ROCK RECORD STAFF
EDITED BY HÉCTOR PERALTA

New Haven faces many challenges. These include education, energy, public health and safety, environment, social atmosphere and city finances. It's important to have direction, especially from our leaders.

This year so far there are four people running for Mayor of New Haven. Candidates can still file to run until August 7. The Primary will be on September 10, with Election day on November 5. The East Rock Record Political Team interviewed all candidates in person.

We also had the opportunity to speak with Paul Bass, Editor of The New Haven Independent, who has been covering politics in the city since 1980. He knows many of the problems that New Haven faces and what different politicians want to or have done to address them.

The city finances are, he said, "a challenge." Mr. Bass mentioned how most of the city's revenue comes from property taxes. It's tempting to raise taxes to pay for services but

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East Rock Record Reporters Query State Leaders at Capitol

BY EAST ROCK RECORD STAFF

East Rock Record reporters traveled to the state Capitol on April 2, meeting with Governor Ned Lamont, Senate President Martin Looney, State Rep. Roland Lemar, State Rep. Toni Walker and CT Mirror Bureau Chief Mark Pazniokas.

In a series of wide-ranging interviews over the two-hour visit, reporters asked about state responses to global warming, tolls, the state budget, the value of standardized testing, the anti-vax movement and managing stress, among other issues. There was support for finding ways to cut use of fossil fuels.

"We have to be using more solar and we have to do things like get rid of plastic bags," said Sen. Looney.

During a visit with Rep. Walker in the Legislative Office Building, everyone got a chance to try meditation using Rep. Walker's phone app.

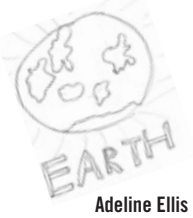
"It was interesting at the state Capitol," said Mohammed Khan, in sixth grade. The bus ride was nauseating, several reporters noted. But, said



Governor Ned Lamont answers ERR reporter questions

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East Rock Gets Solar Panels Will Focus on Waste + Recycling Follow?



BY JADEN MARTINEZ, ADELINE ELLIS,
JARELIS CALDERONE, KEYLIN MONTOYA,
KEY'ERIAH MAE WILLIAMS
EAST ROCK RECORD STAFF
EDITED BY DONYA FEGAN



Go to the second floor hallway near the science classrooms and look out the window. You will see something new, strange — and exciting. A masterpiece criss-crossing all over the roof!

This year, East Rock Community & Cultural Studies Magnet School got 600 solar panels. The shiny dark rectangles look like chocolate bars and are bigger than most fourth graders. These panels make electricity out of the sunshine they collect.

John Kennedy, who teaches seventh

grade math, is happy about them. "The sun is the most abundant energy source that is available to people," he said.

Alex Melendez, a custodian at East Rock School, is responsible for doing "visual inspections" of the solar panels and reporting cracks or loose wires to GreenSkies, the company that installed them. He said they lower energy costs because panels "harness energy from the sun" and "feed it back into the grid" that powers the school.

Mr. Kennedy, who has solar panels on

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Yes, stress is a kid issue (Can meditation help?)

BY LUNA FLORES-KELLY, DAISY CANALES,
MORGAN PRESCOD, TY'KNEISHA THOMAS,
ERION WILLIAMS
EAST ROCK RECORD STAFF
EDITED BY ISABEL ROOPER

You forget a pencil on the day of a quiz. You get into a fight with your parents. Your friends are talking behind your back. Grades. Family. Life.

Are you stressed yet?

These are some of the things that make students at East Rock Community & Cultural Studies Magnet School feel stressed out. Whether at home, school, practice, or in between, kids have stress in their lives.

According to the East Rock

Record Spring 2019 Survey, 28 percent of students said they felt stressed at least a few times per week. Stress can affect your focus, how you do in school and your mental health.

Teachers see different signs of stress in their classrooms.

"When students are stressed out, they lose focus. Sometimes they'll act up or get in trouble," said Erika Koch, a 4th grade teacher. When students appear

stressed, Ms. Koch tells them to

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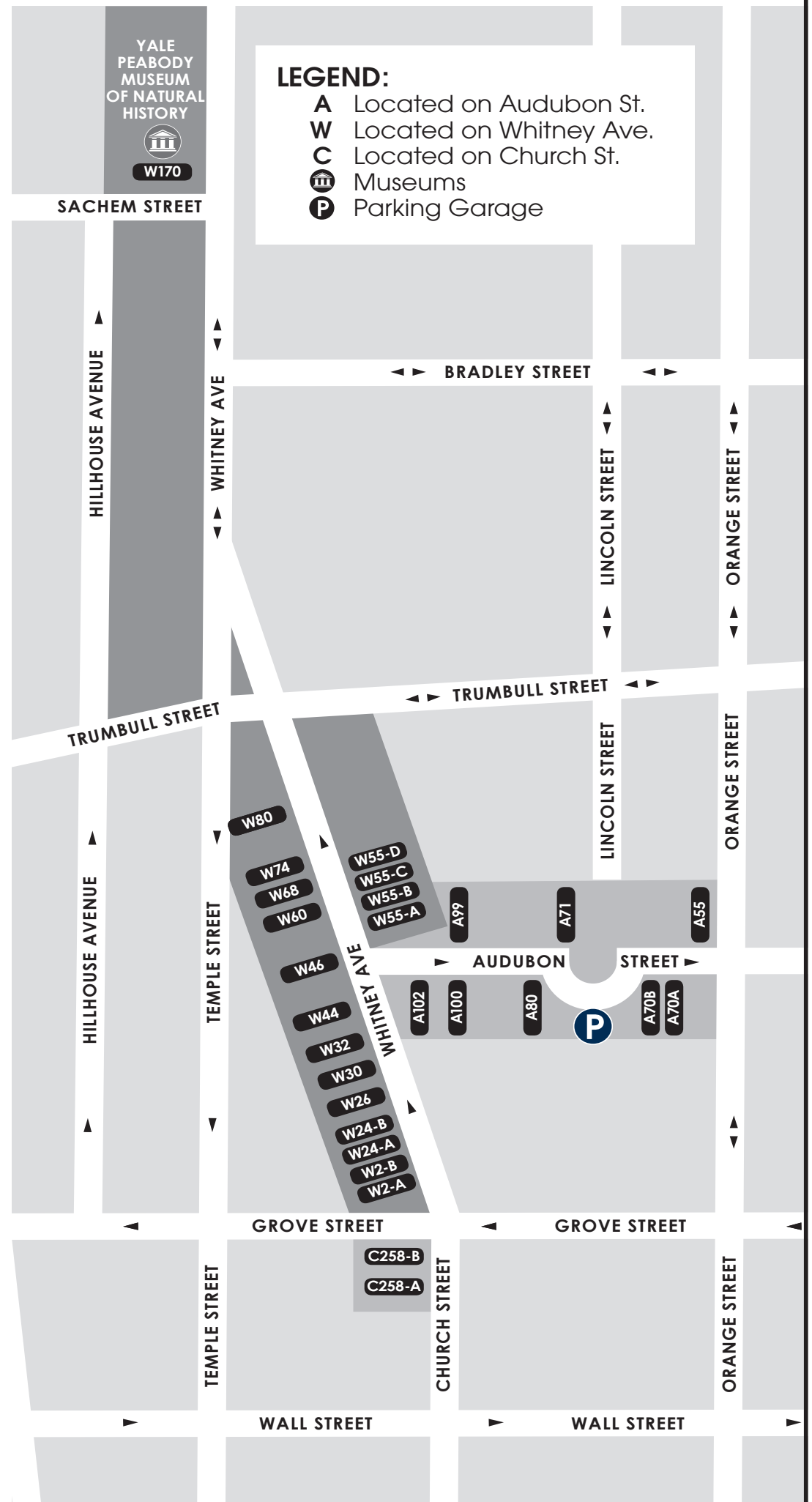
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SCHOOL NEWS



Natalia Penna

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TESTING, TESTING, TESTING: TOO MUCH?

BY JAYLEEN BAEZ, OMAR DWECK,
ALEC SAMSEL, MOHAMMED KHAN,
NATALIA PENNA
EAST ROCK RECORD STAFF
EDITED BY MAX GRAHAM

On state testing days at East Rock Community & Cultural Studies Magnet School, the atmosphere is tense. Students sit quietly in classrooms.

Some go down multiple choice questions on laptop screens. Others fill in bubbles on paper. Teachers try to calm their students. But sometimes the weight of the test is too much.

“We were so pressured,” Luna Flores-Kelly, a 4th-grader said about test day this spring. “It really mattered. If we didn’t get a lot right, we’d be held back.”

Tests are a big deal these days. Not only are there lots – and lots – of tests in class for regular learning, but students also take state tests. In kindergarten students take short tests that take only a few minutes, but by Grade 3 they take four tests over 11 hours. In Grade 8, students have three different tests taken over 11 days.

According to the East Rock Record Spring 2019 Survey, more than two-thirds of students at East Rock Community and Cultural Studies Magnet School think they take too many standardized tests. Nearly nine out of ten said that tests stress them out.

Teachers and administrators are divided about state testing. But many students said they oppose the tests for several reasons. Some said they are unfairly worded or “tricky.” Others said the tests increase anxiety.

“I feel nervous,” Victor Rodriguez, in 5th grade, said about the state tests, which he called “scary.”

Some East Rock School teachers said the tests put too much pressure on students. Others said the state test is needed to track student learning.

Dave Cruz, in 7th grade, said the state tests “aren’t accommodating to students” and said the SBAC, which stands for Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium, is “a one-

size-fits-all kind of test.” “Every student learns at his or her own pace,” he said.

East Rock School Principal Sabrina Breland said during a press conference that even though she thinks students “are over-tested,” that she is “not opposed to state testing.” Ms. Breland called the state test a “double-edged sword.”

She said it does cause a lot of anxiety for students, but that it also gives teachers information. Ms. Breland said teachers use testing data to make lessons better fit students.

John Kennedy, seventh grade math teacher at East Rock said the state tests are a “a necessary evil.” While he notices that tests do stress his students, he said they help him figure out at what pace his students are learning and what skills they need to work on.

“It is important that we know where every student’s strengths and weaknesses are,” said Mr. Kennedy. Still, he does not teach with the state tests in mind. Mr. Kennedy said he wants to students succeed “not just on state exams but in their real lives.”

Adam Sharqawe, a 7th-grade student, said teachers do a good job preparing him for the state test but often focus on test-taking techniques rather than content. “I would like to learn about substance,” he said.

Garrett Griffin, a 6th grade teacher, said state tests can limit what teachers teach. “Because this test is taken seriously by the school,” Mr. Griffin said, “as educators we tend to teach for the test.” But teachers do need “some kind of means across the board [to track] a student’s progress.”

Teachers are under pressure to get students to perform well. “Our schools are judged by the testing,” said Ms. Breland. “I don’t think it should be the be-all, but it is.”

Schools that don’t do well on the tests, she said, are “probably frowned upon by a lot of people.”

Not only do teachers feel that pressure,

but students do, too. According to the East Rock Record Spring 2018 survey, 87 percent of students said the tests make them anxious.

“One of the reasons I’m not a fan of the testing is because I’ve seen it cause anxiety among the children to get 100 when they don’t have to,” said Amy Binkowski, who teaches sixth grade.

“I’ve seen kids put their heads down on the keyboard, just like they didn’t want to take” the test, said Laura Generoso, who teaches 7th and 8th grade Social Studies.

But not all students feel nervous taking standardized tests. “I don’t think much about them,” Mr. Sharqawe told the East Rock Record. “I don’t bother with investing too much time in them.”

Mr. Sharqawe said tests are more helpful for some than others. He said some test questions require “certain background information,” like mythology, which is not taught in class.

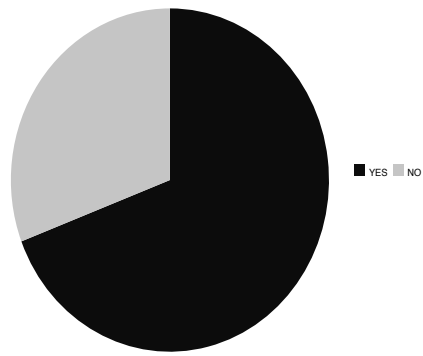
New Haven Mayor Toni Harp supports testing. “One of the things educators have got to know is what progress they’re making with young people and how young people compare with others,” she said. Without a better option, she said, “We need to continue having a SBAC test for our state.”

Justin Elicker, one of Harp’s opponents in New Haven’s upcoming mayoral election, also told East Rock Record reporters that he thinks the state test is important. “But I don’t think we should have tests every year and I don’t think tests should be so important that you don’t go to recess, that you don’t have art class,” he said.


In the meantime, East Rock teachers said they will try to help students manage their stress—and make sure that they grow as people and not just test-takers.

“I would rather see a student bomb a test knowing they had tried, than stress about trying to get proficient or above,” said Ms. Binkowski. “I feel my students are much more than a test score.”

Are Students Given Too Many Tests in School?



Source: ERR Spring 2019 Survey




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SCHOOL NEWS

Are you stressed? Try meditating

STRESS FROM PAGE 1

take slow breaths in through their noses and out through their mouths.

Some students know ways to deal with stress. The survey showed that 92 students know how to meditate; 68 said they did not know how.

Jean Lawrence, a music teacher at East Rock School, meditates daily to deal with her own stresses, which include driving, sitting in traffic and listening to the news. She also teaches her students to meditate by leading them in meditation during class.

“It breaks my heart to see students stressed,” she said. “I teach them that they can meditate at home to deal with whatever they face.”

Natalia Penna, a 6th grader at East Rock, learned to meditate in Ms. Lawrence’s class. “I do meditate,” Penna said. “I like laying on the couch or my bed and peacefully listening to some music and maybe taking a nap. My head feels clear when I meditate.”

Kayson Maciel-Andrews, who is in fifth grade, has been meditating for years. His mom taught him to meditate as a strategy to deal with stress. “I’ve meditated, not often, though,” he said. “I just go in the corner and calm myself down.”

Garrett Griffin, who teaches sixth grade, used to fall asleep with the TV on. Now, he pulls up a YouTube meditation video. “I sleep with meditation music,” he said. “It helps me go to sleep.”

While some students like meditating, others said it does not help their stress because it is difficult to do. The reporters for this story attempted a two-minute meditation. While Morgan Prescod, a 4th grader, said the meditation had a calming effect on her mind, Luna Flores-Kelly, also a 4th grader, had trouble committing to the meditation because of all her thoughts.

“I try to mediate, but it has never really worked for me,” she said. “It just doesn’t calm me or anything.” Ms. Flores-Kelly said her mind just

thinks about other things. “I try not to, but it keeps coming back and back.”

Teachers, too, sometimes have trouble meditating. Amy Binkowski, who teaches sixth grade, likes the idea of meditation, but finds it difficult in practice. “I tried meditation,” she said, “but I just couldn’t focus.”

Although meditation does not work for everyone, students and adults have strategies for handling stress. Some work better than others.



State Rep. Toni Walker leads reporters in meditation using her phone app during a visit to the state Capitol

“I don’t really deal with stress. I just try to ignore it and I try to think about not being stressed,” said Norah Matz, a 3rd grader. “If my sister is stressing me out, I just walk away from her,” said Victor Rodriguez, in fifth grade. “Sometimes it’s hard because she follows me.”

Knia Ellis, a 6th grader, said, “I go in a quiet place and calm down.” Fourth grader Adeline Elis prefers to punch her pillow in order to work through her emotions. Tyrease Gear, also in fourth grade, said he likes “to play my games when I’m stressed.” Stephen Martinez-Hamilton, a Yale first-year and mentor at the East Rock

Record, talks to friends dealing with similar stresses when he feels overwhelmed. “Being able to relate my struggles with another person helps me process everything I’m dealing with,” he said.

Daisy Canales, a reporter for this story, deals with stress by eating sugary foods like ice cream, yogurt, Oreos, gummies and more. “One day I finished a whole ice cream pack,” she said.

The adults interviewed for this story often advise students to take deep breaths and try to calm down when they feel stressed or anxious. “I



tell them to breathe and remember that tomorrow is a new day,” said Angela Maiocco, who teaches fourth grade.

Max Graham, a Yale mentor at East Rock, recalls being a stressed middle schooler. “I was worried about getting good grades and pleasing my teachers. Looking back, I think the habits you form in middle school are really important, so I wouldn’t say that they shouldn’t care because it ‘doesn’t matter,’” he said.

“I would advise students to not feel like their grades or even their performance in school are a reflection of their self-worth.”

At the state Capitol, Rep. Toni Walker said she has “a very stressful job.” She said she is “constantly moving and I eat badly and I get very tense.” To deal with that, Rep. Walker meditates, using an app on her phone. During the interview, she had East Rock Record reporters try. Said Rep. Walker, “It really helps me to calm down.”



Jomar Lamboy



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Saturday, 9/21/2019 from 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Saturday, 9/28/2019 from 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
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STRESSES + STRATEGIES
By Luna Flores-Kelly

What Makes People Get Stressed:	Strategies for Dealing with Stress:
•Tests	•Take a deep breath
•Family	•Listen to music that makes you feel happy
•Projects	•Talk to your friends
•Fighting with your parents	•Read a book
•People hacking your electronics	•Watch TV
•Global Warming	•Play videogames
•School	•Play with your pets
•Drama	•Go for a walk
•Being in debt	•Take a shower
•Failing in school	•Eat a healthy snack (we recommend an apple and peanut butter!)
•Homework	•Ask for a hug from a loved one
•Acne	•Take a nap

COMMUNITY NEWS

HOW TO TALK ABOUT DIFFERENCES? ASK ELLA.

BY NORAH MATZ, SAHIL LEMAR,
ADHAM DWECK
EAST ROCK RECORD STAFF
EDITED BY AMY DEPOY

It is scary to be different. Everybody in the school could make fun of you.

So, imagine you are in front of the whole state being different. And talking about it.

That takes bravery. Meet the kid governor of Connecticut: Ella Briggs. She has made LGBTQ issues and being accepted her platform.

“At my old school, some kids wouldn’t talk to me or even touch me,” Ms. Briggs said in an interview with East Rock Record reporters. “I hope kids will connect with their other peers about their differences. And then when they are adults, they will be more accepting.”

She said that schools and classrooms are good places to talk about differences. “In my classroom we have a library with books where everyone can see themselves, including people of color and strong women,” Ms. Briggs said.

Ms. Briggs said that her school —CREC Ana Grace Academy of the Arts Elementary Magnet School in Avon — has a program, “Second Step,” that helps kids deal with strong emotions and be respectful.

“We also have morning meetings where we talk about how we are feeling,” she said.

These things are important, especially in schools where different students come together and spend time. Even in New Haven Public Schools, including East Rock Community & Cultural Studies Magnet School, students can be unkind to one another.

At recess, some kids call other kids names

because of their skin color, including “poop,” “chocolate,” and “vanilla.” Sometimes when you wear glasses, people call you “four eyes.” If you are girl, kids say you are bad at sports or “weak.” People at school also make fun of boys who take ballet classes.

These are problems all schools should pay attention to. The East Record Spring 2019 survey found that 48 percent of students said that kids do tease other kids about their race, religion or gender identity.

Aaliya Maddox, Taniya Meade, and Jazlynn Calderon, all third graders, said that their teachers don’t talk about differences. But the students definitely notice racism and sexism around them. Ms. Maddox said that sometimes people tell her she can’t do things because she is a girl.

Grayson Wittington, third grader, told the East Rock Record that her brother called her “a boy” because she likes to play sports.

Amy Binkowski, 6th grade teacher, said she talks to her class about difference when it comes up in class materials. For example, now her class is reading *Roll of Thunder Hear My Cry*, a novel about racism in America during the Great Depression.

Norine Polio, the ESOL teacher at East Rock, said that there are over 60 students on her roster. That means there are over 60 students at East Rock who know a language other than English!

Sometimes, she said, that makes people hide

themselves to try to fit in even if it makes them unhappy. “Everyone wants to be part of a group,” she said.

Ms. Briggs said that it is important to “love everyone no matter what” and to be respectful and kind. She said that if you notice someone who is alone, to try to be friends with them. “Just talk to them,” she said. “You never know what can make someone’s day.”

She also said that we need people all around to be more accepting of one another’s differences. Said Ms. Briggs, “Everyone has the opportunity to be open-minded.”



Ella Briggs became Kid Governor on an LGBTQ platform

Talk at Capitol ranged, but focus on global warming threat

CAPITOL FROM PAGE 1

Morghan Prescod, “the escalator was fun.” Ty’Kineshia Thomas loved the “people movers” in the tunnel connecting the Capitol to the Legislative Office Building. Sahil Lemar, in 3rd grade, noted that “I saw a famous writer on the top floor of the Capitol,” which is where they visited the press room and Mr. Pazniokas.

Adham Dweck, also in 3rd grade, was excited to visit the House chambers. “I got to see my friend’s dad,” he said, referring to Rep. Lemar. “It was cool because I have never seen him at work before!”

Omar Dweck found the state Capitol “cool” and “exciting,” and said “the interviews were just right so you would not get bored. It was awesome and everybody was hype.”

Victor Rogriguez, 5th grader, worried the trip would be boring, but “when I saw all the details I was like ‘OMG!’ The designs of the building were so cool. It was so fancy and so normal. When I met the Governor, legislators, and reporters, I learned they all had special jobs to do, like take care of the votes, and take care of the money. It was an awesome place to go. But the thing I didn’t like was the stairs. SO MANY STAIRS!”

Fourth grader Adeline Ellis said that she and Jarelis Calderon “got headaches because of the bus and its bumpiness,” but that she could picture herself working in a building like the Capitol.

“I want to work in a place where I make big decisions, because I would get rid of littering,” she said. Ms. Calderon, also in 4th grade, liked “getting to see different kinds of famous people like Rep. Walker and Gov. Lamont.” She likes the idea of having jobs like them because “you get to wear fancy suits.”

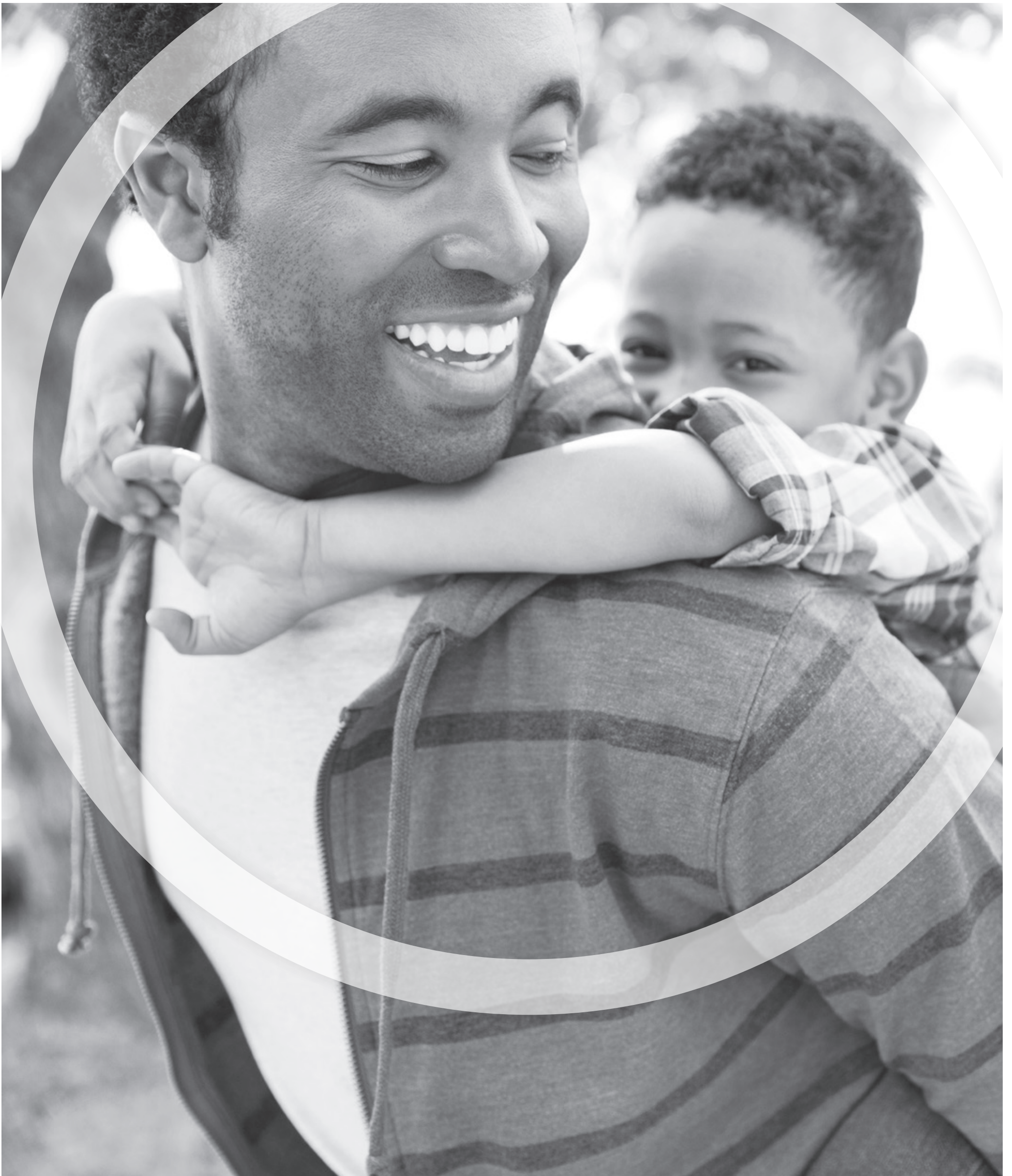
But she also recognizes the real work required. “It would be stressful to pass laws, because there could be hard decisions that not everyone would agree with you. If I were the governor, I would make sure that everyone was doing their job correctly, and that people who work for me do a good job. I would make it a rule that all schools should be free because some people might not have money to go to good schools, but everyone needs to learn. My second decision would be for whoever sees homeless peoples on the streets has to point them to the free houses for them.”

Keylin Montoya, also a 4th grader, “would make sure that every classroom had extra snacks, like fruit, and at least 20 or 21 minutes of recess to get extra energy for math.”

Dave John Cruz Bustamante, in 7th grade, found it “fascinating to be inside the Capitol and talking to the people who work in it.” He especially liked seeing the press room and found it “inspiring to see how reporters thrived on chaos.”



TOP: Mark Pazniokas speaks with reporters; CENTER: Sen. Martin Looney answers questions; LEFT: Rep. Roland Lemar talks about global warming; RIGHT: Reporters query Rep. Lemar.



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COMMUNITY NEWS

Four very different candidates running for Mayor

MAYOR FROM PAGE 1

you can't raise them too high, he said. It's also complicated in New Haven. "A large part of our property can't be taxed," Mr. Bass said. That is because it belongs to Yale.

Mr. Bass also pointed out that we have all learned since 2016 that political races never go as expected. There are a lot of issues for voters to consider and differences among the candidates. We want to make sure that residents have the information they need to vote. During interviews, we covered the anti-vaccination movement, homelessness, clean energy, education, and criminal rehabilitation among other issues. Here's what we learned:

Mayor Toni Harp

During Mayor Harp's three terms, she has focused a lot on the city's youth. She started a Youth Stat program, made efforts to create community centers for youth and increase high school graduation rates. Youth Stat tries to "reduce the number of youth in the criminal justice system."

In a press conference with East Rock Record reporters, she also said that the city is working on "reducing our carbon footprint." Mayor Harp said the city installed clean energy fuel cells that power City Hall. "Many of our high schools have solar panels on them," she said. "We have been early adopters."

Mayor Harp takes concerns about the anti-vaccination movement very seriously. "When I was about 4 years old, I contracted polio. Which meant I couldn't walk. It also afflicted my lungs," she said. "People ought to get better information and understand the value of these vaccines."

Mayor Harp said that being Mayor is about believing in the city's residents. "You have to believe in everybody who lives in your city and everybody's ability to participate."

Justin Elicker

Justin Elicker ran for Mayor in 2013, losing to Mayor Toni Harp, though winning 46.9 percent of the vote. He is running again now, focusing his attention on improving education across New Haven and providing "equal opportunities for all." Mr. Elicker puts a strong emphasis on the environment. "Global warming is the biggest environmental crisis of our time," he told reporters. He said the city has to do a lot more than it is doing now. Even though President Trump made the U.S. back out of the Paris Agreement, he said that, "I think we need to sign up for that agreement."

Mr. Elicker said that he would also strengthen New Haven's role as a sanctuary city. "Our police are not allowed to report to the federal government," he said. But New Haven is "not actually a sanctuary city because not every department is required to do that. The Board of Education, teachers, public court employees should be required to not tell about people's immigration status," he said.

Why is Mr. Elicker running? "I walk around the city and I see things that could be easily fixed. I see people struggling in life, dealing with stress or trauma in the community. I think the city can play a role."

Wendy Hamilton

While Wendy Hamilton has not run for mayor before, she supported and helped finance the campaign of Sundiata Keitazulu in 2015. She has a lot of faith in people, especially in young people, she told reporters.

At the top of her list, Ms. Hamilton wants to address the housing issue. She also wants to change policing in New Haven. "We have too many people in prison. Police have better things to do than bother poor homeless people," she said. "If elected, I will be making other changes in the police department."

Ms. Hamilton also spoke about the dangers of climate change and the need for clean energy. She emphasized the variety of clean energy sources, including geothermal, wind and solar energy, but also acknowledged that we may be past a point of return. "Unfortunately for your generation, we can't replace 200 years of fossil fuel," she said. "We will never have it as good as when we had plentiful gas and oil."



Urn Pendragon

Urn Pendragon considers herself a good representative of the people on the margins of society. Ms. Pendragon is a transgender woman who has faced discrimination and homelessness. Ms. Pendragon was laid off alongside 600 other employees at a call center at Cablevision in 2016. Ms. Pendragon considers herself "an academic." She has just completed a master's degree in political science at Southern Connecticut State University, and previously wrote a 70-page proposal on Combined Inclusive Housing and Clean Energies.

As a child, Ms. Pendragon faced intense bullying and harassment. "Bullying will probably never go away," she told reporters.

However, she wants to see schools taking action to train students and teachers to recognize it and report it with training methods like role-playing. Ms. Pendragon also believes that there should be a more open and honest conversation between students, parents and the school to come up with policies against bullying.

With her bachelor's degree in psychology, she said that she knows how the mind works and wants to focus on rehabilitating people who have committed crimes. Ms. Pendragon considers herself "down to Earth." "Reducing violence is a good, realistic goal," she said. "Not world peace."

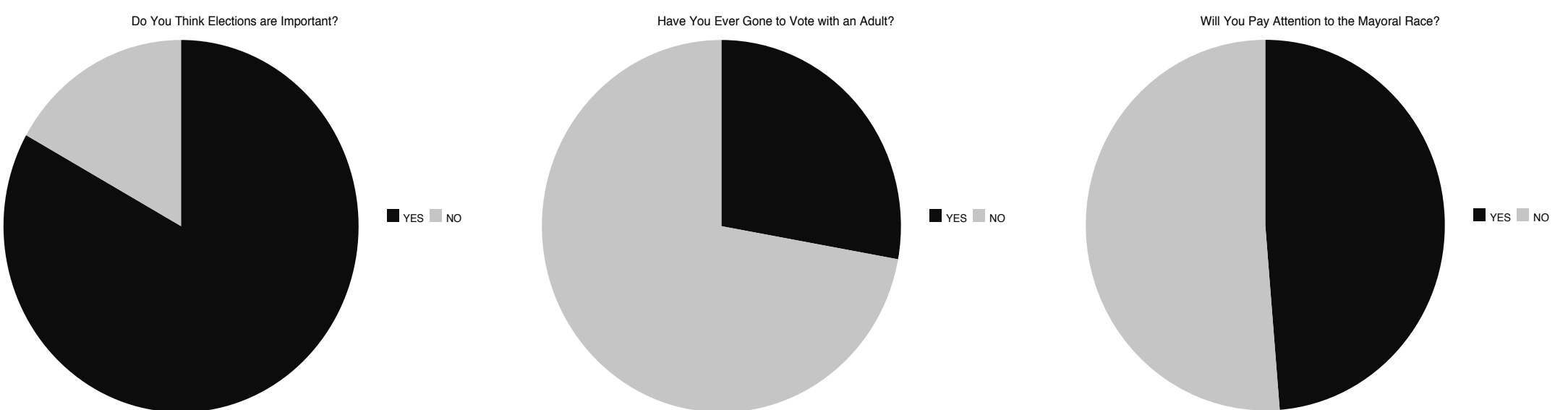
A key issue that Ms. Pendragon brought up was affordable housing and the homeless community. She stated that Connecticut is expensive, and that she is working hard on pushing her academic thesis onto the General Assembly.

Our conclusion: With four declared candidates, the Mayoral race this year is set to be dynamic!



New Haven Independent editor Paul Bass has covered city politics since 1980

Survey results: Student views on elections, voting



Source: ERR Spring 2019 Survey

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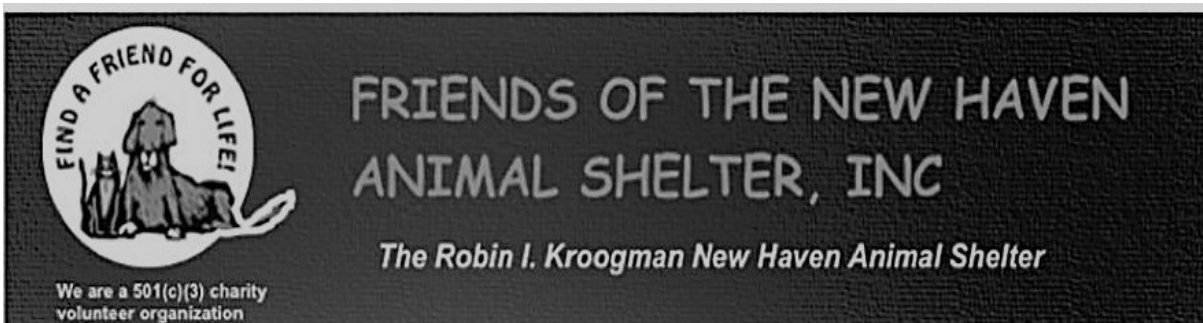
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TECHNOLOGY & SPORTS

DO WE HAVE A GENERATIONAL APP GAP?

BY JANYLA GASKINS, KNINA SIMONE,
TIOR HARVIN, NY'ARIE WILLIAMS
EAST ROCK RECORD STAFF
EDITED BY CORAL ORTIZ

We walk into a 6th grade classroom and find students and a teacher looking over worksheets. We ask to interview and get a “yes,” so we ask the question, “Have you ever used Houseparty?”

The teacher looks at us confused. “What is Houseparty?”

The other students look at each other surprised. This conversation is repeated as we interview more students and more teachers. Even more repeated is the divide that pops up between students and teachers.

“Houseparty is a new app. Adults are old,” said Amere Best, in 6th grade, who uses the app. He said kids and adults like different things. “Adults rock with the things they want to.”

So, what exactly is Houseparty?

Contrary to its name, Houseparty is not really a party at someone’s house. Houseparty is a “kid-friendly social networking service that enables group video chatting through mobile and desktop apps.” Up to eight people can be on at once.

It is one of many ways that pre-teens communicate. Like texting or Snapchat, it is a way to continue talking with many friends after school — all at once. It’s an app that is up and coming at East Rock Community & Cultural Studies Magnet School.

When we asked several teachers about Houseparty they said “No,” they didn’t use it. “I have never heard of Houseparty,” said Laura Generoso, who teaches 7th and 8th grade social studies. What do teachers use to communicate with family and friends? “Messages, Instagram, and Marco Polo.”

How does Houseparty work and how is it different from other social media sites? It is similar to Snapchat and Facetime but it doesn’t glitch that often. The only difference between Houseparty and Snapchat is that on Snapchat when you’re on the phone with someone and somebody (other than the person you’re on the phone with) texts you, you can’t exit. The only time you can exit is when you hang up or you press the home button.

On Houseparty you can watch videos with sound without the phone hanging up. The cool thing about Houseparty is when you are on the phone

with a friend or family member and your mom or someone tells you to call somebody for them don’t be in a rush to hang up.

All you have to do is tell your friend or family member to hold on or put yourself on mute for a minute then call that person.

You can have three people on the phone at once without any apps hanging up when you’re on Houseparty. That is the reason why people like it, because they can do multiple things on Houseparty without hanging up the phone.

Even with the recent increased use of Houseparty not everyone in the school uses it. The East Rock Record Spring 2018 Survey, showed that only 58 students said they know about Houseparty and 100 said they did not know about it.

Monkey is also a video chat app that introduces people to random people for short video calls. Ms. Generoso said she is concerned that Monkey is unsafe because it is with random people all around the world, but she said Houseparty is safer because it is with friends.

Norine Polio, ELL teacher, had also never heard of Houseparty and doesn’t plan or recommend using it. Also, Ms. Polio does not have a mobile device. She said that she communicates with people by visiting, e-mailing and writing notes to others.

Amy Binkowski, who teaches 6th grade, also did not know about Houseparty. “It sounds safe,” she said, but would have to do some research to know for sure. Ms. Binkowski uses texting Facetime, Twitter and Facebook. She also plays with filters on Snapchat when she uses it with her daughter. The other sixth grade teacher, Garrett Griffin, also did not know what Houseparty was and does not recommend using it. He uses the phone and talks face to face with other people.

And John Kennedy, who teaches 7th and 8th grade math, also did not know about Houseparty. He uses WhatsApp. He wants to be sure that students don’t spend too much time on social media apps. “I don’t think students should be addicted to them,” he said.

Adtziry Perez, in 6th grade, knows about Houseparty and uses it to talk with friends. She likes it because you can video chat “even with people who have androids,” she said.

Houseparty is something cool that most adults don’t know about. So please, don’t ruin it!



Soccer, Hockey, B-ball, Karate!

BY MOHAMMED KHAN
EAST ROCK RECORD STAFF

My views on soccer are good and my passion about soccer comes because I watch it and play it. I want to play it because I want to play in the finals. I want to watch soccer because it’s fun and creative. Most students at East Rock don’t care about soccer. It should be more popular because soccer is the most popular sport in the world. I think it is so popular because it is a good way of connecting with and learning about cultures different from my own. Students at East Rock could gain a new perspective by learning about soccer teams from countries all over the world.

BY ALEC SAMSEL
EAST ROCK RECORD STAFF

The East Rock Dream Team basketball team is a great program to have because it brings kids together and teaches them to use teamwork. Even if you’re not good at basketball or have never played it before, you can learn from the Dream Team. The practices are fun and the coach, Mr. Griffin, is very good and can teach you a lot. There is also a team for girls. Maybe next year you can consider joining the East Rock School Dream Team basketball program!

BY OMAR DWECK
EAST ROCK RECORD STAFF

Have you ever heard of West Haven Karate Academy? It’s the best because they studied Tang Soo Do Mi Guk Kwan. Did you know that Chuck Norris studied this art? Tang Soo Do Mi Guk Kwan means a place in America where you learn the way of the open hand.

Also in the West Haven Karate Academy, they have the Grandmaster (note from Max: his name is Charles Ferraro). He is a ninth dan member, which means he is a nine-degree black belt. He also created the art.

He also has this ability to heal, which is what I want to really learn because it is a good thing to know. He has a brick belt which only high ranks have — eighth dan to infinity dan. I want to be a 9th dan but I’m still an orange belt. Karate helps your brain, and it calms your spirit.

BY SAHIL LEMAR
EAST ROCK RECORD STAFF

Hockey is one of my favorite sports. The object of the game is to get the most goals. If your team makes the playoffs, it kind of turns into a tournament. If you win the playoffs in the NFL you win The Stanley Cup. Every team dreams of winning. If you win, you have a lot of honor.



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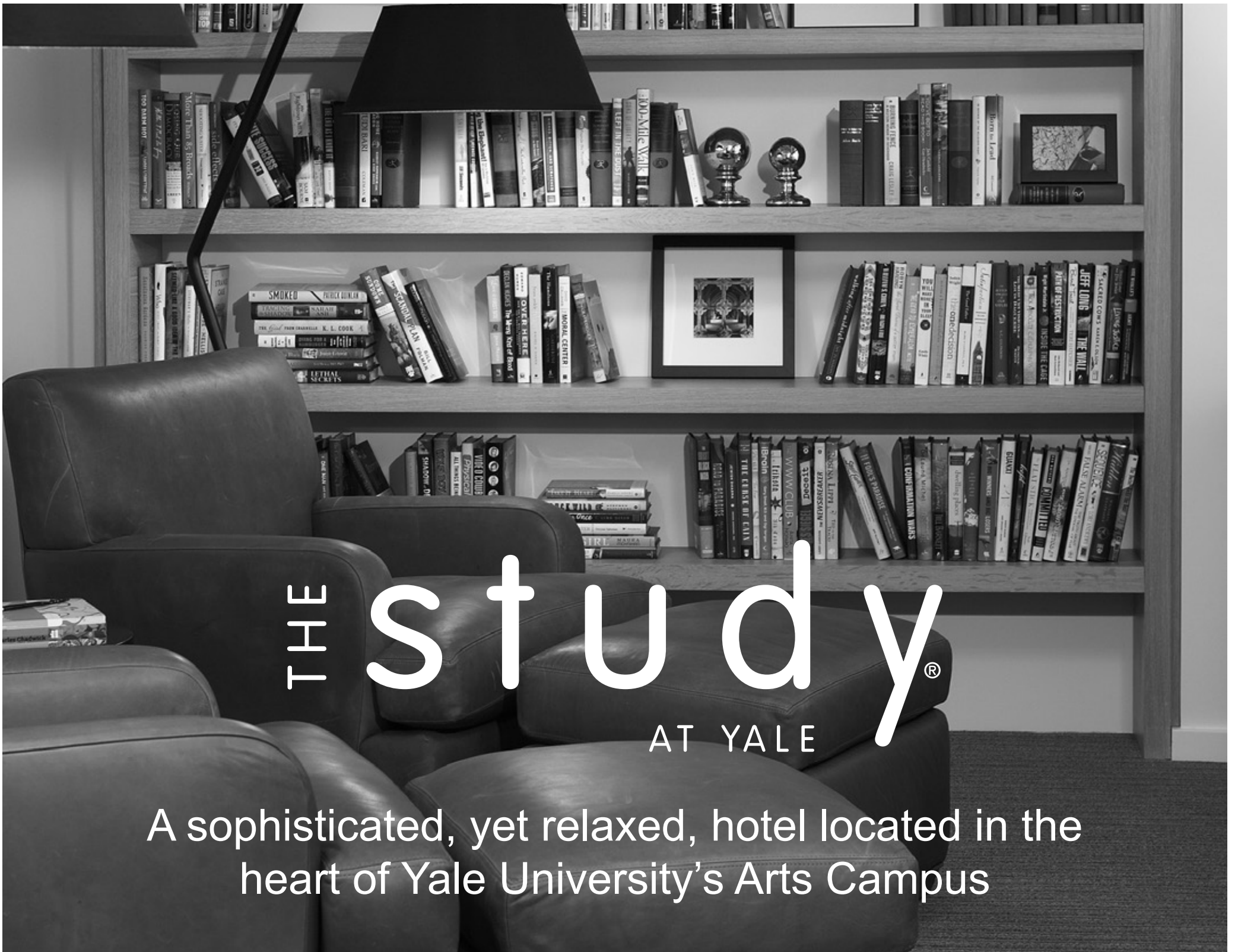


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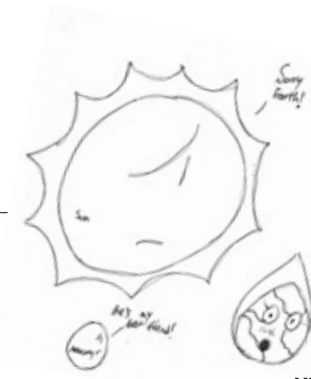


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THE ENVIRONMENT



Victor Rodriguez

Global Warming: What it is and why it's a problem

BY MADISON POOLE, JOMAR LAMBOY,
VICTOR RODRIGUEZ, TYREASE GREAR,
JAYDEN LIS JONES

EAST ROCK RECORD STAFF

EDITED BY STEPHEN MARTINEZ-HAMILTON, NICK TABIO

Climate change, also known as global warming, is a problem throughout the entire world, not just the United States.

But what is global warming? How does it affect us in New Haven? And how can we reverse the effects of global warming today, tomorrow and in the future?

We decided to find out.

Global warming is process in which the earth is warming up as a result of changes in the atmosphere. Scientists say the changes are caused by humans in a variety of ways, including factories, cars and other gas-and oil-powered machines.

Global warming is causing more wildfires, rising sea levels, and disrupting the polar vortices — low pressure areas at the North and South Poles. Experts say that we can help prevent these problems by using less energy and by recycling bottles, cans, and paper so that we are creating less waste. We can also conserve water.

“Global Warming, it is the biggest environmental crisis of our time,” said Justin Elicker, executive director of the New Haven Land Trust who is also running for Mayor. “It is

important for us to be stewards of the earth.”

Connecticut did not have normal weather patterns in 2018. There was a lot of rainfall and a lot of floods. The winter also saw a lot snow. According to the U.S. Department of the Interior, New Haven saw five inches of rain per month through its wet season. This is two more inches than its normal of three inches per month.

Students at East Rock Community & Cultural Studies Magnet School were divided about whether global warming will be a problem in their life, according to the East Rock Record Spring 2019 Survey. But 60 percent said adults are not doing enough to address it.

East Rock fourth grader Jaden Martinez, said global warming “is a problem because it is destroying our planet.” Adam Dweck, a 3rd grader, worries that “the earth can blow up.” Tony Valez, a 6th grader said does not think global warming is a problem. “It makes no sense,” he said.

Mayor Toni Harp told reporters that her administration has tried to stop global warming in a bunch of ways.

“One of the things we are working on in New Haven is reducing our carbon footprint — we are trying to encourage people to walk, bicycle, use cars less,” Harp said. “We will ask people to use fewer plastic bags when they go to the store and

be aware of the things that we do that increase our carbon footprint.”

Global warming is also affecting cities and countries all over the world. Chilean glaciers are melting faster than they have in at least 350 years which is causing sea level to rise which is flooding other places. The residents of the Marshall Islands are not getting enough land to build houses and grow crops because the waters have been rising 3 millimeters per year since 1993.

The UN has said that we have 12 years to limit the effects of climate change. If not, the likelihood of droughts and floods and other natural disasters will increase.

One big thing that the world is trying to do: 174 countries and the European Union signed the Paris Climate Agreement to slow global warming. The United States pulled out of it in the summer of 2017. President Donald Trump did not like the Paris Climate Agreement. Mr. Elicker was disappointed. “Unfortunately, our president decided to back out of this agreement. The only way we can address global warming is if the whole world is involved.”

Helping the environment “is really important for us individually and for our government,” Mayor Harp said. “It is not too late for us to make adjustments in the way we use our environment to slow down global warming.”

Is East Rock School Finally Ready to Recycle?

RECYCLE FROM PAGE 1

his own roof, said “they save me a lot of money.” By having the sun power his house, “coal and oil aren’t polluting the environment as much.”

The new solar panels are exciting. But is East Rock School doing enough to slow global warming? Kathy Ramin, who teaches art to students in grade 4 through 8, said the answer is “No.”

Ms. Ramin is concerned about pollution. Her students are doing projects that focus on waste and garbage, especially the effect of plastic garbage on animals, the ocean, and the environment.

Fourth graders make sculptures and learn about National Parks and endangered species, and sixth graders make ocean creatures, such as fish, out of plastic garbage to learn about how sea creatures eat plastic when it goes into the ocean that can kill them or make them sick.

Ms. Ramin brings plastic from home or finds it in the cafeteria.

“I’m a garbage collector,” she said to East Rock Reporters visiting the art room. She had baskets of empty water bottles, chip bags and plastic utensils. “I’m saving all of this stuff.”

Ms. Ramin hopes all students “hear the same message — and start a schoolwide conversation.”

She has noticed all the plastic waste produced at school. In the cafeteria, the trash bins overflow with food waste and plastic items that you only use once, then throw away like spoons, forks, chip bags, juice boxes, and styrofoam trays.

In classrooms, people throw away paper when they mess up. Garbage often ends up in dumps, where the wind blows it into water, endangering animals and making a mess!



Above: Art Teacher Kathy Ramin’s students use trash to make art and learn about global warming. Below: School Solar panels



But some garbage can be turned into other things through recycling, Ella May and other students have started talking about how to do more recycling at school. She will have support from students — and teachers.

“I’m getting behind Ella May’s initiative to recycle more in our school,” said Mr. Kennedy, who is the chair of East Rock School’s Planning and Management Team. “It’s really important that we do all we can to help the earth stay clean.”

According to the East Rock Record Spring 2019 Survey, 86 percent of students want to see more recycling in the cafeteria. Fifth grader Madison Poole said recycling will “prevent a lot of damage. When people don’t recycle, the whole earth is

filled with garbage. It’s ugly, and dangerous!”

Isabel Faustino, a 6th grader, does not think East Rock does enough to recycle: “I’ve never seen a teacher or student recycle here.”

One problem is that when people think about global warming, they picture melting ice where the polar bears live. They think about plastic waste killing ocean creatures. And rising temperatures hurting animals in the rainforest.

They think the problem is far away. The East Rock Record Survey showed that just 43 percent of students think global warming will affect them. That is not true. We already have more dangerous weather and rising sea levels.

“New Haven is a coastal city,” Justin Elicker, executive director of the New Haven Land Trust, told reporters. He said the rising sea level will affect the city over the next 50 to 60 years. “We have the highway along the coast. We have oil tanks along the coast and residential communities — people’s houses along the coast,” said Mr. Elicker, who is running for Mayor.

What is the city doing to slow global warming? In a press conference with reporters, Mayor Toni Harp said New Haven is “one of the first cities to invest in clean energy,” using solar technology to power City Hall and several schools. “It has been really helpful in reducing our electric bill,” Mayor Harp said. “We have been early adopters.”

Mr. Elicker agreed that New Haven is “doing a lot of things” but could do more. He said students have more powerful voices than they think. “You can influence your parents to care about the environment and global warming and recycling.”

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ART & LIFE

Making Paper Pop: Artist Makes 2-D into 3-D



Pop up paper artist Monika Brandrup shows reporters how paper is made into 3-D designs for books and greeting cards.



BY OMAR DWECK
EAST ROCK RECORD STAFF

I like pop up art because it is fun and interesting. It's made when people take paper and pop it. It's for creative people. It's interesting to me because I don't really hear much about it. I like piano, and Ms. Brandrup generously gave me a card with a pop-up piano on it

BY MORGHAN PRESCOD
EAST ROCK RECORD STAFF

I like drawing animals and they would look cool in a pop-up book. I think people like pop-up books because they pop and there are these secret areas you can find. It makes you pay more attention. One thing I like about the books and cards that Monika Brandrup brought in was the leaves book. The leaves changed colors from green to red and orange, the fall colors, when you pulled on hidden tabs. She gave us cards to keep for ourselves. Mine looks like a Las Vegas sign and says Happy Birthday. I'm going to give it to my step-dad because it was his birthday on the 9th of April.

BY NORAH MATZ
EAST ROCK RECORD STAFF

On April 11, 2019, the East Rock Record interviewed Monika Brandrup. At the end of the interview, everyone who was there got to get a pop-up card. Mine was a birthday card that has a fluffy cat in the middle that I named "Fluffy." She is a white cat with a hot pink bow. My cat has a furry texture and that's why I named her Fluffy! The card has presents on the inside and on the outside. The background is night time, and there are lots of stars. The interview went well and I asked if she liked anime/manga. She likes anime. I draw anime. She did not know what "manga" is so I told her. Manga is another type of anime.

BY NATALIA PENNA
EAST ROCK RECORD STAFF

I love art, but the best kind of art is pop up art because when you open books or cards you get a weird surprise. But the surprise isn't scary. It's actually cool, and has nice colors. When you make pop up art it can be very hard and stressful. Making a pop up book takes about four to six months of intensive work. Art can be stressful because it requires a lot of imagination.

BY ALEC SAMSEL
EAST ROCK RECORD STAFF

I like the pop up art because it makes me see what I'm reading. Also I think it's very creative. My personal favorite pop up book today was the Marvel one because it was so thick and had so many pictures popping up at you.

BY SAHIL LEMAR
EAST ROCK RECORD STAFF

The things that pop up artists make are really cool. But what we experienced was beyond cool. We met a pop up artist named Monika Brandrup. She was vice president of their company. She went to art school and then went to make pop up art. She has done this now for 26 years! She brought examples of her work and they were awesome! They went from pop up birthday cards to pop up books. Some had noise; some had fur. It was a fantastic experience.

BY MOHAMMED KHAN
EAST ROCK RECORD STAFF

I like pop up art because it is creative and fun. If you create a Marvel book it is really cool. The texture of the pop-up drawings is firm. It helps me understand the story better. And when pop up art is published, it's cool.

Taste Test, Physical Fun, Thinking and Puzzles!

East Rock Record reporters wrapped up the year with a series of activities that included proofreading the issue, making invitations, drawing a "map" of their future, darting through an obstacle course that included jump rope, doing floor puzzles and taste testing sports bars and drinks. For the record, the "Harvest Berry" chewy cereal bar edged out the mixed berry cereal bar and Gatorade Zero Blue beat Powerade Mountain Berry Blue. And students had big life goals that included going to college, becoming a lawyer and being drafted into the Major Leagues for baseball. How to start that sport journey today? Sahil Lemar leaned on common sense: "Practice."



EDITORIAL & OPINION

Letter from Principal Breland



Hello East Rock Record Readers,

I am still in awe! We are more than halfway through the academic year and I am still riding the wave. East Rock continues to hold a special place in my heart and our students continue to amaze me with their creativity, ingenuity, thoughtfulness and work ethic. As I reflect on the last seven months, I am comfortable with East Rock's progress and I am very excited for what lies ahead.

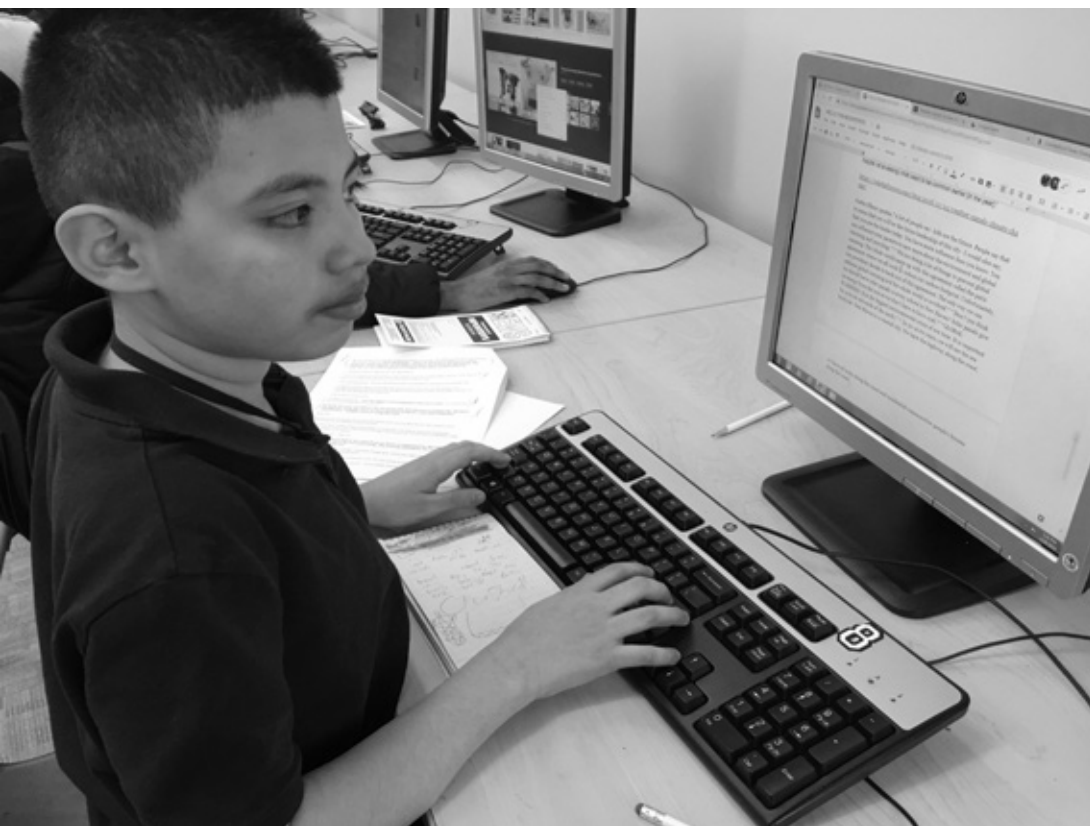
Our students are currently in the midst of a deep dive into our magnet theme. Students are learning more about their communities and are beginning to understand what it takes to be productive members of a society.

Our eighth graders were recently notified of their acceptance status into their high schools of choice and they will be leaving us soon. Some are happy because they will be going to their favorite high schools. Regardless of what schools they attend next year, whether they "got in" or not, I encourage them ALL to hold on to their dreams and make purposeful and careful choices. As Eleanor Roosevelt said, "We all create the person we become by our choices as we go through life. In a real sense, by the time we are adults, we are the sum total of the choices we have made." It is my hope that our 8th graders become the best version of themselves and reach every goal that they set.

Please enjoy this issue. Our students have worked really hard to produce stories that will hopefully inspire, delight, encourage and impact YOU!

Respectfully,

Sabrina Breland, Principal



Reporters at work in the East Rock Record "newsroom," AKA school computer lab

The East Rock Record

East Rock Community & Cultural Studies
Magnet School
133 Nash Street, New Haven, CT 06511

BORDER WALL: WRONG APPROACH

The Wall was proposed by President Trump during his campaign. President Trump promised that the wall was to prevent unauthorized immigrants. The Wall was to be built for keeping people safe. However, could it be that the wall could be doing the opposite?

Perhaps President Trump is trying to fix the product and not the machine. People don't risk their lives and bring their children along for the ride for no reason; there are always reasons and answers. The Wall has provided nothing but more suffering and desperation.

President Trump shut down the government in an attempt to negotiate funding for the wall with the Democrats leaving federal workers working but without pay. What will the workers put up with until they say "enough"? President Trump's proposal hasn't taken into account the lives of the Native American reservations that are located along the border between the U.S. and Mexico. Trump hasn't taken into account that almost two-thirds of illegal immigrants travel legally, overstaying their visas.

This raises another question: Why? Why do these people overstay their visas? Why do they sacrifice their privilege of seeing their family again?

The U.S. needs to make sure that people are treated like humans and not numbers. Perhaps the U.S. should try making the home countries of immigrants more livable, where they don't have to worry about their children's education, or getting access to healthcare or basic medicine. It's time to focus on the machine and not the product.

—Dave John Cruz, *East Rock Record Opinion*

The Good and Bad of Photos

Some photos make me happy because of the memories. Some photos make me mad because some people show off and it makes me mad. I know this because my best friend showed of his hoverboard. Some photos make me happy because my best friend shows me funny stuff, like he makes a lot of funny faces. Children should not go on Facebook because there is bad stuff. Some of these bad things are bad photos that they should not see.

—Tyrease Grear, *East Rock Record Opinion*

THINKING OF FAMILY BRINGS STRENGTH

I like thinking about my family and friends because it makes me strong and happy. I think that other people should think about their family and friends because it might make them feel happy, too. A specific thing I like to think about is when my brother was born.

—Jomar Lamboy, *East Rock Record Opinion*

Why We Laugh So Much

What makes me laugh? Memes. Why do you like laughing?

I like smiling when I laugh. I love laughing at myself especially when I do clumsy things. Laughing helps me get through my day. Laughing helps me connect with other people. Do you care if someone laughs at you?

No and yes. Sometimes I laugh with them, but sometimes it hurts your feelings. Usually if it hurt I come back with a comeback. Laughing is contagious. Sometimes I just laugh to get my friends going. I feel like kids laugh more than adults. I hope to continue laughing for the rest of my life. I don't want to stop laughing like adults do.

—Janyla Gaskins, Knina Simone, *East Rock Record Opinion*

Thank you!

The *East Rock Record* would like to thank the following for their help and support:

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Laura Pappano

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FOCUS: THE WALL

WALLS, BORDERS, FAMILIES, POLICIES, PRACTICES & THE PRESIDENCY

East Rock Record reporters studied news stories, Trump Tweets, news photos and discussed what they saw, felt and thought. They share views about the ongoing border wall debate and what it takes to be President of the U.S.

There is no need for the wall because it stops people from traveling and meeting new people. People coming here aren't trying to hurt us. They are not scaring anyone or putting fear into our hearts. Our school has a lot of cultures, it's like taking all of the kids out of our school and not letting them come back. The wall will separate our cultures: Mexicans from Americans.

It would cost 8 billion to 70 billion dollars to build the wall. I would use the money to help places rebuild like Puerto Rico. I would also stop drug use and stop giving out harmful drugs that make people addicted. I would stop selling cigarettes to help stop cancer. I would provide more programs in schools to help kids. Our school has a lot of things that other schools do not. If I had billion of dollars I would help build new schools. I would help old people in hospitals that are very sick and help people get jobs.

— **Ny'arie Williams**, *East Rock Record Opinion*

Trump shouldn't put up a wall. I feel like he's being racist. You can have some dark skin friends. You wouldn't like it if someone didn't like you because of your skin color. I was also wondering if Trump's wife liked the things he was doing. I don't think she would like that. I liked the picture with the kid because I could tell that the mother and the baby really loved each other. Trump shouldn't kidnap babies. How come the cops don't arrest him for kidnapping? If someone kidnapped me, I would be looked for. But if someone takes a baby from a mom at the border, it is okay? I don't think it should be allowed.

— **Jarelis Calderon**, *East Rock Record Opinion*

Donald Trump is really not using his brain because if he's going to build a wall everyone is just going to figure out a way to get over it or under it. People can climb over it with ladders or dig under it with shovels. Why do we even need a wall? We have a fence now, and it has a gate. If we build a wall, there would not be a gate. Then we can't open it when we want to. And even if the wall doesn't have a door, people will still find a way in. People won't just see the wall and turn around because they might have family in the US or friends, and if my best friend Jarelis was on the other side of a wall I would climb it or dig a hole under it to see her. I wouldn't let a stupid wall stop me. I think it's really rude to stop people from seeing each other. I think that \$20 billion dollars is too much money for something that won't work. We could spend that money on food for homeless people or give some to charity or pay taxes and care for family and friends. I would also donate pianos to schools. Money on just a plain wall that won't work is just a waste. Donald Trump should re-learn the golden rule, and treat people how he wants to be treated.

— **Adeline Ellis**, *East Rock Record Opinion*

Donald Trump's wall is useless. There is no need to separate the Mexicans from the Americans. We're all people. Just because we might be different from each other doesn't mean we have to be separated. I also think that it's not fair for children to be separated from their family. Just because we may look different doesn't mean we have to be treated differently from one another. Today we also looked at some pictures. One that really stuck out to me was the California fires. I personally think that it's very sad to see things like that happen.

— **Jayleen Baez**, *East Rock Record Opinion*

Trump is taking away babies from mothers. If that was me, I would be crying. Everybody needs to be with their mothers. Donald Trump is doing a bad thing by keeping children away from their families. I wonder how Trump would feel if he were separated from his family? Families should be united instead of apart!

— **Daisy Canales**, *East Rock Record Opinion*

Donald Trump wants to build a wall. People can't see their families if they are Mexican or something other than American. People should be able to see their families. Imagine if you were homeless and had nowhere to go but your family is in Connecticut and Donald Trump's wall is in your way and you are stuck on the other side with no one to help you?

— **Natalia Penna**, *East Rock Record Opinion*

What are some skills that are expected when you are President of the U.S.? Giving peace to your country? Giving people better rights? Giving people a better education? I believe that if you are the President you should give peace to the people. If being President is to give peace, why would you separate families? I think that Donald Trump has just made everything more chaotic. He had made a "wall" to supposedly "make the United States more safe." Even though a Native American tribe is now being split because of this wall. This does not mean that Trump is a bad person. He has good intentions, but the way that he is showing it is not the best.

— **Isabel Faustino**, *East Rock Record Opinion*

I have read that Mr. Trump said that the Mexicans (of Mexico) were going to pay for the wall. In my opinion, I would NOT participate in this particular event because if I were a citizen in Mexico. I would want to travel the world and I would want to go to our closest neighbor, the United States. I can't imagine what people born in Mexico but live in the United States feel. It's like choosing sides about whether to stay or go. Your job, your kids, your husband/wife are in the States but your whole family line is in Mexico. I would be overwhelmed. How would you feel?

— **Madison Poole**, *East Rock Record Opinion*



East Rock Record reporters view and discuss news photos, including of the border

Donald Trump is not being fair because he is trying to make Mexico pay for the wall when they didn't want to put it up. He said they had to pay \$40,000,000,000 then nobody listened at all so he changed the price to \$20,000,000,000. They still didn't listen. Some people like what Donald Trump does and some people don't at all. Right now I am going to tell you some words people have said, "Not My President," "Resist Hate." Some people even said, "Separating Families is Inhumane" and "Make America Trump Free Again."

— **Keylin Montoya**, *East Rock Record Opinion*

Hello my name is Luna Flores and I'm writing about the wall that Donald Trump is planning to put in front of Mexico. He wants to stop people and animals from getting in and out of Mexico. People are being affected but so is our environment. The border/wall is going to block animals from food and water. That honestly makes me feel so bad for the animals.

— **Luna Flores**, *East Rock Record Opinion*

What does Donald Trump have against Mexicans? Why is he building a wall between the U.S. and Mexico and nowhere else? This makes me think he is racist. Today we also looked at news photographs. In one, Donald Trump was sitting down and getting yelled at by German Chancellor Angela Merkel. He looked like he didn't care. He seemed disinterested. There was one where everyone was holding up signs that said, "Don't take my children." This is because Donald Trump was separating kids from their families and putting them in tents. I am disappointed. I wish Trump would listen to people, make seatbelts on buses, and keep families together.

— **Morghan Prescod**, *East Rock Record Opinion*

Donald Trump wants to build a wall. I think that's pretty rude because it's only around Mexico, and not around Canada. Donald Trump doesn't want to talk to people to try to understand them. The wall funds are WAY TOO EXPENSIVE. Nobody can pay for something that's like 20 billion dollars! That amount is probably gonna go up more.

— **Norah Matz**, *East Rock Record Opinion*

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Priscilla Torres, Patient Care Associate, Yale New Haven Hospital and graduate of the School-to-Career program with mentor Nancy Busch, Patient Services Manager, Yale New Haven Hospital.

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