

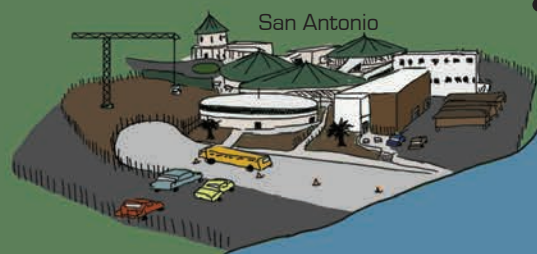
THE GAVEL O.W. HOLMES HIGH SCHOOL

# The Climate Issue

*Going Green (& Gold) pg 8*

*Climate for Women pg 4*

*Climate Denial pg 14*



THE NEW GULF OF MEXICO



### Greetings from Ingram Beach

This issue's cover and contents play with the concept of climate change's affect on our world. The consensus from most scientists is that as climate change continues to heat up our atmosphere over time, the polar ice caps could melt and cause drastic changes to coastlines, putting whole cities underwater and making beaches of more inland communities. Our issue art imagines what this might look like for the state of Texas, for San Antonio, and for our campus on 6500 Ingram Road.

Climate change remains a politically-charged issue in the world. When one hears the word "climate," they immediately think of the literal sense of the word, relating to weather. In this issue, we take a look at issues surrounding our physical climate, as well examining the metaphorical climates on campus including the social climate, political climate, and the climate for learning. Nationally, these climate issues have been in the headlines, but the more local issues often go unheard. We hope that you read about these issues and continue these discussions on your own. -Gavel Editors

# Greetings from INGRAM

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JANUARY 2018

# THE GAVEL

JANUARY 2018 VOL 54 NO 2



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This magazine is published twice a semester, along with regular postings on the Gavel Online ([studentnews.nisd.net/holmes](http://studentnews.nisd.net/holmes)), and daily news via our Facebook page (Holmes/BC News), Twitter, and Instagram (@holmesbcnews) by the journalism department at Holmes/Business Careers High School, as a laboratory project for students in advanced newspaper classes. Its purpose is to provide leadership in news and editorial content, and to create a forum for student and staff opinion.

Letters to the editor are encouraged, and may be submitted via e-mail to [matthew.singleton@nisd.net](mailto:matthew.singleton@nisd.net), or presented in person in room F101. The staff reserves the right to edit all letters for length and/or appropriate language or libelous content. All letters must be signed. For advertising information or rates, e-mail Matthew Singleton, or call (210) 397-7054.

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# HUSKIES DON'T NEED CAT-CALLS



## HARASSMENT A PART OF COMMUNITY CLIMATE FOR GIRLS

by Krissie Ruiz, News Director

*Editor's Note: This article is the first in a series of articles from the Gavel Staff concerning the climate on campus for women. Follow us on Twitter @holmesbcnews or visit our online paper at [studentnews.nisd.net/holmes](http://studentnews.nisd.net/holmes) for more on this topic as it is made available.*

As she walked past a group of guys in the courtyard outside the D-building, she begins tugging up her blouse and pulling down her skirt. The feeling of vulnerability overtakes her emotions as if she was being weighed down by others' comments. She feels them watch and hears them whisper, causing her to second guess the way she presents herself. She wonders why for some reason guys on this campus look at her more or less like an object, instead of as a person. Walking the halls has never been more uncomfortable than when passing a group of guys, and hearing them make comments on her body or the way her clothes fit. When thinking about what she had done to deserve such attention, she came to a conclusion; nothing. She had done nothing to "deserve" it and didn't ask for it. It made her uncomfortable, and she realized that this thing she's experienced has a name: sexual harassment.

With moments like the #metoo and #timesup campaigns bringing light to the rampant sexual harassment issues alive and well in Hollywood, on Capitol Hill, and in many other spaces of industry

and society, young people are opening their eyes and seeing where it exists in their own spaces, including on this campus. The Northside Independent School District student handbook defines sexual harassment as "whether by word, gesture, or any other sexual conduct, including requests for sexual favors." In other words, any act, including verbal exchanges, that insinuates a sexual advance can be deemed as sexual harassment.

Holmes class of 2009 graduate and women's rights advocate Denise Hernandez, who is the founder of Maestranza, a spokesperson at Growing Empowerment, and a member of the San Antonio New Leadership Council, knows all too well how sexual harassment is a reality for students on campus, and how it is a reality they will face at college and in the workplace as well.

"I've dealt with that, where they're looking at what I'm wearing versus what I'm saying, and that's kind of hard. Every woman and girl has gone through sexual harassment walking on the street. Going to class I was sexually harassed and almost sexually assaulted while at college at Baylor. I think we've all dealt with it in some respect," Hernandez said. "It's not right. It's not fair, but it's up to us to educate each other and take care of each other."

Senior Ricky Luna explained how he fits into the

masses with his males peers, such as when boys get called out for always being on the wrong side of the spectrum. Luna believes that girls are automatically subjected to cat-calling because of their gender, however he believes that males can be verbally harassed by females as well.

"Most of the time it's us, but not always. The decision is made for girls, socially," Luna said.

While students like Luna understand the issue and consider its complexities, some young men on campus still offer reasons and excuses that they believe make verbal harassment a non-issue. Senior Tiarah Figueroa has heard all of the excuses as to why this type of harassment is "not that bad" from individuals who have not been victimized by it.

"Boys think it's okay because they say, 'I didn't touch her,' 'she didn't say anything,'" Figueroa said.

Figueroa feels strongly about boys talking about girls in an inappropriate and sexist manner. She has personally experienced verbal sexual harassment, and has spoken openly on the topic to let other girls know that it's okay to call it out, and that the act of verbal sexual harassment itself is not okay.

"It makes me feel as if I'm an object. And I'm not," Figueroa said.

When Figueroa was in her sophomore year, it happened with her then-boyfriend. He had begun

# BE THE SOLUTION

Not sure what is considered harassment? Unclear on what is okay and what's not okay? Generally, if you're not sure about something, it's probably not okay. But if you need more guidelines on what decent behavior toward and about women looks like, here are some tips to start:

**1** "NO" means NO. Always. And saying nothing, DOES NOT mean "yes."

**2** "Boys will be boys" is not an excuse. It dismisses men from their responsibility, and promotes rape culture.

**3** Unless they literally, in words, ask for something, no woman is "asking for it" because of the way they look, behave, where they happen to be, what time it is, or the way they dress.

**4** Don't text, DM, tag, or otherwise message someone body comments, and sexual images or words, and don't ask for inappropriate messages either.

**5** Don't try to hit on or ask out every one of your friends in your friend group until you get a "yes."

**6** Do not touch, grab, hug, kiss, or hold a girl without consent. Consent means that they voluntarily agree to something before the action is taken.

**7** Keep your comments on a woman's body to yourself.

**8** Don't be a creep and stare at a girl, or look at their bodies in ways that are dehumanizing or objectifying.

**9** Don't get mad or take it personally when your advances are rejected or turned down, or when a girl doesn't feel for you what you feel for them. It takes courage to ask, but is also a complicated, difficult situation to be the one who is asked.

**10** Just because you are close to someone, doesn't mean you're allowed to speak to them in inappropriate ways.

**11** Be an ally by calling out harassment, objectification (talking about or treating a person as an object or a piece of meat), and "locker room talk" when you hear it or see it. Don't let friends or family believe that it's okay or normal.

**12** Just because you think of yourself as a "good guy" doesn't mean you're exempt. "Good guys" can apply the same bad ideas or pressure toward girls in ways that give the guy an "out." It's still wrong.

saying certain comments that were not appropriate to his peers and friends, a talk that is commonly referred to as 'locker-room talk'. She was unaware of this until it had been brought to her attention by a close friend. She was shocked at the story that was circulating the school.

"I always tell people 'You don't even know that, because you never even ask. No-body ever asks, Ooh is that true,'" Figueroa said.

When people do find out about the things being said or verbal harassment she's experienced, they often start telling her things she should have done differently to prevent it, which we call victim-blaming. Victim-blaming, in this situation, is where instead of holding the individuals who verbally harassed Figueroa accountable for their actions, individuals respond by telling Figueroa, the victim of the harassment, things she did that made her "deserve" the things that were said about her. Figueroa feels as if this culture of victim-blaming extends to our campus culture as well, making her hesitant to bring up these negative verbal comments to administra-

tors or other authority figures on campus.

"I can't go to administrators and talk about verbal harassment without them questioning me about what I wear, or what I did," Figueroa said.

Figueroa is not alone in these experiences of verbal harassment on campus either, and she believes that many of her peers experience it and are subjected to this treatment without even understanding that they have a right to not experience it.

"I think a lot of girls go through it without even knowing," Figueroa said.

Senior Taylor Ramirez is one of those other young women on campus who has shared Figueroa's experience of verbal sexual harassment by boys on campus. She has had

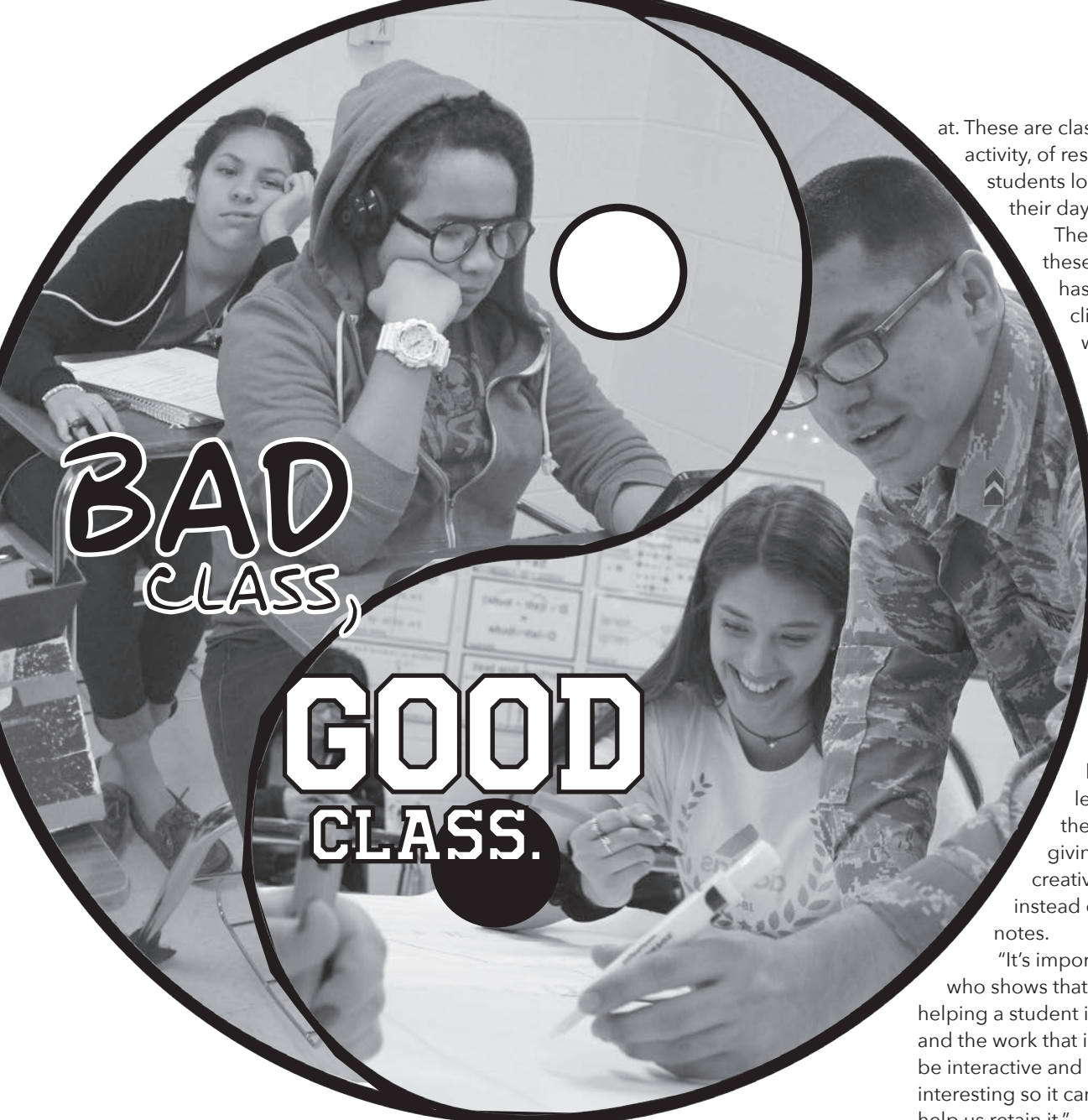
disturbing comments thrown at her when she walks to her classes, feeling unsettled as she sat in class. Despite her discomfort, she manages to handle her emotions so that she wouldn't make the situation worse. She could not understand why a person--her own peer--would say something so distasteful to her. By the time she was a sophomore, Ramirez became used to the cat-calling considering the frequency of it during her freshman year. She makes sure to shed

light on the situation every time.

"I think girls and women should not be afraid to tell someone that they are being verbally harassed. When society says that we should just ignore them, they are making an exception for boys," Ramirez said. "That's not acceptable."

Having been a student growing up on campus and in the Holmes community, and with the benefit of her own education and experience, Hernandez offers advice for young women wanting to change this culture on campus.

"Find other girls who feel the same way you do, and start a campaign and keep it small. Start a little meeting in the library. Outline your goals you want to achieve, what you want to change, and what outcome you ideally want. Then get this all formulated, put this all together really nicely, and then present it to your administration. Say, 'hey I want a meeting, this is what we're dealing with, this is what we're doing, and we want you to respect and honor it,'" Hernandez said. "It's valid because you can say, 'we come here, we're here most of the time, and we deserve to feel safe here, and to focus on our education.'"



## TEACHERS CREATE CLIMATES FOR LEARNING, GOOD OR BAD

by Chantal Melesio, Staff Writer

The climate of a classroom can be very different depending which door a student walks through on campus. In one class, the teacher fumes in a dark corner, trying to frighten students with a stare and by filling up as much class time with their own voice dominating. There's an outburst from defiant students, yelling across the room. Arguments between peers and between the teacher and a student are regular. It can look like chaos, with papers being thrown, hateful comments slicing back and forth, and students staring into nowhere, or with heads resting on their desk, resigned to

their fate of failure. It's so chaotic that it's known to be the realm of darkness, and once you take a step inside you feel the uncomfortable and negative energy.

The bell rings, and a student may only take a trip across the hall, through a different door, for the scene to be completely different. Suddenly it seems like a light shines across the room, there's an environment of calm and subtle excitement, creating a place where there seems to be peace and a purpose. Students interact with each other, and the teacher invites them into learning and engages them where they're

at. These are classrooms of action and activity, of respect and positivity, that students look forward to during their day.

The teacher in either of these classrooms most often has the power to create a climate where students want to learn and are engaged, or to create a climate where students are shut down, uninspired, and even resistant to learning.

Students on campus have their own theories as to what makes a difference in the classroom learning environment, and the power that a teacher has to control those things. Junior Paula Ramirez believes a good or bad learning climate starts with the teacher's heart, and with giving students respectful, creative learning experiences instead of simple lectures and notes.

"It's important to have a teacher who shows that they really care about helping a student improve in the subject, and the work that is given to us should be interactive and interesting so it can help us retain it," Ramirez said.

Students might be surprised to find that experts are on their side, and agree with the views of Ramirez and others. NISD language arts specialist Tracy Winstead, in charge of all high school English classrooms for NISD, knows the importance of a positive learning environment, and how and why students struggle when teachers don't adapt, even when they mean well. She confirms Ramirez's observations that having a healthy environment requires certain steps to make the classroom better and make the students feel comfortable and open instead

of being negative.

"First and foremost, it's going to be the relationship with the teacher and student and making sure there is mutual respect. I think if teachers come to their classroom respecting their students, wanting the best for them and they establish some type of support with them, that's the very basic ingredient. I don't think you can move up without that," Winstead said.

Teachers often experience a lot of pressure from testing requirements, and not having the time to do everything that needs to be done, which weighs them down and results in stress. Often times, it's these things that push them to develop a negative energy, and that can be put on the students. That stress and negativity can make it difficult for teachers to walk the fine line between disciplinarian, fun-loving educator, and just plain boring that students like junior Josh Carrion recognizes as so important.

"The teacher can be a cause of a bad classroom because they can be too lenient by letting kids talk whenever and not caring if they are doing the work. Also, the teacher can be too strict, killing communication or getting mad over every little thing. Being boring can also take part by not engaging the students and leaving them confused," Carrion said.

Teachers may want to be better, but they may not know how to get there with

**"A lecture isn't what kids need. Your brains are wired differently because of technology. Very few people are auditory learners. For most kids, that's the worst."**

so much pressure being put on them.

"What you need to understand is how much preparation goes into creating a good learning environment. Making something student-centered takes so much more time to prepare. During the actual class, many of the teachers aren't doing as much as they would have

been before, but they are doing so much more to get to that point," Winstead said.

Students recognize that teachers have to make tough choices in order to keep the classroom environment the best they can make it, but they want the complexities of their own lives and schedules to be valued by the teachers in return.

"Teachers should try to be more inter-

active with their students and to understand that their students are in extracurriculars, so try not to give them so much out-of-class work or, if not, give them more time," senior Lisa Sanchez said.

Winstead understands the student's perspective, and confirms that research and best practices suggest that a lot has changed from twenty years ago to now, and teachers need to change with it.

"A lecture isn't what kids need. Your brains are wired differently because of technology. Very few people are auditory learners. For most kids, that's the worst. I think we need to understand that some people don't learn in those traditional ways," Winstead said.

In the same way, Winstead understands that embracing a new style and trying new things is difficult for teachers feeling a lot of pressure.

"Real learning is very messy and it's very hard for teachers. Teachers have a lot of pressure. They're being judged by the students, parents and administrators. They really want to do a good job, but everyone has different ideas," Winstead said.

If a student finds themselves sitting in a classroom where the learning environment is less than ideal or where they feel lost, the best a student can do is to be confident enough to ask the teacher, with respect, for help.

"Be proactive. Don't be afraid to go beyond the teacher. Ask friends or another teacher for help. There could also be tutoring and peer tutoring, and that's where teachers start to be open to seeing the kid do a better job," Winstead said.

At the end of the day, the responsibility falls on the teacher who is paid to teach the students in their classroom, not on the students.

"You may look at it as a business and the kids are our customers. I need to keep them happy--not necessarily do what they want--just understand if they aren't at a place to learn from me, it's all on me. Teachers have this idea of who their students should be and you have to teach who your students are," Winstead said. "If they are failing, it's not their fault, it is a mutual relationship. The person who is going to have to change is the teacher."



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Ingram Park (inside and outside the mall)

# GOING GREEN

## HOW TO FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE

by Gabriel Wilson, Managing Editor

In order to keep the spirit of school golden, it is important that we take care of our environment. Many on campus are not aware of how they can take the first step to make the world a better place. Fortunately, this first step can be taken right here on campus and at home. We

asked NISD Environmental Coordinator Terry Casey and Postdoctoral Research Associate at the University of North Texas Tate Barrett for advice on how students can make a positive impact on their environment, as well as some everyday things that you can do easily around school or in the comfort of their home to become more "green."

(è GOL



### HOW YOU MATTER

"By biking or walking you are reducing emissions from vehicles, you are reducing your dependence on fossil fuels and you are saving money. Those are three ways just from using alternative transportation methods. With the composting bin you are helping to cycle nutrients back into the ecosystem with things like carbon and nitrogen which make the ground more fertile. Composting also provides an ecosystem for small insects. Recycling means less resources have to be used, and it helps save the forests. You can try not to buy new clothes and repair the clothes that you have instead, reducing the amount of goods you consume which can reduce the amount of emissions and conserve resources," Barrett said.

### ADVICE TO STUDENTS

"The first thing would be to know the facts and do a little bit of personal research. Don't necessarily look at social media for that, there is a lot of not accurate information posted on those sites. I would definitely check out some sites like the NASA website. It is a good one for facts on climate change. Be careful about what you post or what you say, that way you can make sure you are getting credible sources. The next one I think would be a good way to take action is to then communicate those positive facts, but also to take those small steps such as using natural light in the home whenever you can and not driving. If everybody takes those small steps, it can have a big change," Barrett said.

### INTERESTING FACTS

- The Arctic region is warming up twice as fast as the rest of the earth.
- Carbon dioxide, one of the major forces of climate change, is at its highest level in 6500 years.
- The average sea level rise is 3.4 millimeters per year.
- The planet's average temperature has risen two degrees Fahrenheit since the late 19th century.
- 2016 was the warmest year on record.
- NISD vehicles and busses are not allowed to sit with the engine idling for more than a couple minutes in order to reduce emissions.





## MAKE A COMPOST BIN

"A cool thing that students can do easily at home is to make a composting bin. Basically, you can get some soil and any food waste that you have other than meat and you can put that in the compost bin. That cycles those nutrients back into the soil and you can use that soil around your home for planting things like flowers, herbs, or vegetables. It's a positive way to cycle nutrients back into the ecosystem, rather than just throwing it in a trash bag which is sent to go to a landfill," Barrett said.



## HARVEST RAIN WATER

Something you can do to not only save on water usage but also save on a hefty water bill is to collect rain water. It is a simple and easy way to help yourself and the environment.

"Another cool thing you can do from a water conservation standpoint is to get a rainwater harvesting bucket. Basically, you can get a big bucket that catches rain water, then you can use that to water plants. If you have a small yard, you can water an entire yard off of it," Barrett said.



## TRAVEL SMART

"Use alternative ways of transportation, riding a bike, walking, skateboarding, things like that. That is a real easy way for students to have a positive impact, less emissions, less fossil fuel use and it's cheaper also," Barrett said.

"I would say be aware of what's going on. I know high school students are just starting to drive, so just be aware of the impact you have when you start your vehicle. One of the things I was always taught is to plan your routes," Casey said.



## RECYCLE

"Reducing paper waste from school and simply recycling is another big thing that students can do and it doesn't cost them anything. If you recycle cans you can actually make money off it, not a ton, but if you've collected cans throughout the year, then just turn those in for money," Barrett said.

# TRY IT!

## 10 STEPS TO MAKE YOUR OWN COMPOST BIN

**Step 1)** Any simple plastic bin will do the job.

**Step 2)** Drill or puncture about ten small holes into the bottom of your bin as well as the lid.

**Step 3)** Grab a bundle of leaves to cover the bin about 1/4 full.

**Step 4)** Next fill in the bin with dirt till it is 1/2 full.

**Step 5)** Place the items you will compost in the bin and mix the dirt with the items. Before doing so look to see what things are able to be composted. (See below)

**Step 6)** Spray with warm water until somewhat moist (not soaking).

**Step 7)** Put lid back on securely and find a nice shady spot to keep it outside.

**Step 8)** You can now add items to the bin, giving them a stir each time.

**Step 9)** Now in a short 2-3 months your compost will be ready. It can now be used around the garden or lawn to spread rich soil.

**Step 10)** Make sure to keep at least 1/3 of your compost to be able to keep the cycle going.

### Here is a small list of things that can be composted:

- Most vegetables and fruits.
- Coffee filters and grounds.
- Cardboard
- Lint from dryers
- Eggshells
- Hair

Sources: <http://compostguide.com/composting-chart/>  
<https://www.younglove.com/2008/08/younglove.com/compost/>

# IN OR OUT



## CAMPUS CLIMATE FOR LGBT A MIX OF SUPPORT, ALIENATION

by Clara DeLaRosa, Copy Editor

A student sits alone, away from everybody else, at lunch. Some people stare, some people whisper to each other, but this student sees all of it. They are overcome with a feeling of worthlessness and despair. It's not a good feeling.

LGBT students on this campus look just like everybody else, yet they often report being discriminated against and gossiped about like circus attractions. This campus sets as one of its goals to be a safe place for everyone, but many students feel like the exception.

"I have had people hate me so much because I was a part of the LGBT community. I was being pushed down the street and told to kill myself," sophomore Amber Hernandez said. "It made me feel hurt that somebody would do that. We may be different, but we are all the same, we are all humans."

Hernandez has witnessed discrimination, not only on campus, but around San Antonio as well.

"One day I was with my ex-girlfriend and this guy refused this girl's service because she was wearing an 'I support the LGBT community' shirt. When he saw it, he asked her if she was [a part of the LGBT community] and she said yes. He told her that he didn't want her in his store ever again," Hernandez said.

While students who identify as LGBT experience this in the community, the intended safe-haven of the school can also be a place of abuse where they feel degraded in their own learning environment. Students aren't just getting negative interactions from their peers.

"Last year a teacher discriminated against a transgender student. [The student] had asked if the teacher could call them a name that they would prefer to use and the teacher said, 'No I'm not going to use that name. That's not your birth name,'" sophomore Garrett Sinor said.

Although Sinor did not release the names out of respect for the individuals, that does not make the situation

any better. He believes many students find a mentor in their teachers and that being ridiculed for wanting to be called a name that is a preference creates the opposite environment.

"It was depressing to know that a teacher could discriminate against a student just for asking to call them a different name," Sinor said. "I asked him to call me a different name other than my birth name and he did, which didn't make much sense."

Sinor uses his middle name as a personal preference, and seeing that the teacher complied to his request but not the other student's made him realize that there were people on campus who aren't as accepting.

"I don't see it as a dangerous place for [LGBT students]. There's always going to be those few people who are jerks and are going to be homophobic, but I think the majority of the student population at Holmes couldn't care less," Sinor says.

Sinor isn't the only student that believes this campus is a comfortable campus for students who identify as LGBT. Sophomore Jesus Rivera explains that the LGBT group is heavily supported by each other.

"We have a great group of students that are a part of the LGBT community, and we all get along with each other for the most part," Rivera said.

According to a survey done by the Human Rights Campaign, 8 in 10 of youth Latino LGBT students say that their peers are accepting of them.

"For me, personally, I'm surrounded by a good group of friends. When I'm walking, I get stares, but when I'm with them I feel comfortable," Rivera said.

There are ways to help LGBT youth feel comfortable in their own spaces. Fiesta Youth is an organization that provides LGBT youth with resources and allies.

"We hold weekly youth meetings where the youth, ages 12-18, are able to be themselves, have fun, learn,

and build fellowship in a safe space," president Darrell Garcia Parsons said.

In addition to providing a safe space for students after school, Fiesta Youth works with different colleges as well. These colleges provide a safe-space for students even after they graduate high school.

"In addition to our weekly meetings, we also work with LGBT groups at San Antonio College, Texas A&M SA, Trinity University, and UTSA," Parsons said.

When asked about the situation that Garrett Sinor spoke witnessed, Parsons had some words of advice for students who may find themselves in a similar situation.

"The teacher may need to be educated on transgender issues and why the proper use of preferred names and pronouns are important to transgender or non-binary students. If the student is able to do this on their own and the teacher is open-minded, then that would be great. If the teacher is not open-minded or supportive, then the student might want to bring in their parents, a counselor, or an administrator," Parsons said.

Although some LGBT students are comfortable at the school, there are still those people who have yet to become educated on the importance of being kind to one another. The language that some students on campus use can be destructive and insensitive according to LGBT students. While some would say that students being hurt by words means they're too sensitive, experts recognize that words have power to create either a painful or welcoming environment on campus.

"Believe it or not, the phrase 'That is so gay' is still being used," Parsons said.

Aside from watching their words, students can do more positive things to create a safe climate for their LGBT peers.

"Students can identify themselves as allies and a safe person to talk to," Parsons said. "Stand up and speak out when you hear or witness anti-LGBT bullying."



# WALKING AWAY FROM THE

# FIGHT

## CAMPUS CLIMATE OF CONFLICT AN AVOIDABLE PROBLEM

by D'Mitre Dimas, staff writer

It happens while walking across campus. A crowd starts to gather and the volume increases as students take out phones and try to get a better view. Two students are fighting, as teachers and administrators move quickly to end the action. What drives students to this moment of conflict? Many rumors being spread, whether they are true or false, and despite being taken out of context or changed, are the driving force. Despite the consequences, many students on campus make a big deal of fights because they feel they need to do so.

Senior Destiny Garcia believes that the main reason for conflict on campus is because of rumors being spread around by fellow peers.

"I would say rumors [cause fights] because people talk. Everyone says things, and as time goes by, the words get switched up and people end up getting angry in the end," Garcia said.

Senior Torri Perkins agrees.

"I think [the cause of fighting] would be the rumors that happen around the school. Even though it's about you and you think it's not true, people just overthink about it, and then they spread more fake rumors about other people. It just becomes a big deal," Perkins said.

Students tend to get into fights because some feel they have the need to show that they can't be talked down about. Many students don't want to be undermined by anyone else, or be at risk of losing credibility, so they are willing to fight anyone who is talking about them. Despite having other options, many students can get hot-headed and pick up their fists quickly.

"People get into fights because they think that they need to do it. They think that because someone is talking about you, that you immediately have to go and fight them to prove that no one can mess with you," Perkins said.

According to best-selling author and researcher Malcolm Gladwell, Perkins is right. There are certain historical and cultural factors that make public confrontations seem necessary that may still persist in students' culture and mindsets today. In his book *Outliers*, he explains research done on historical "cultures of honor" that were developed in mountainous regions where sheperdaing and watching flocks of sheep were once important. The way shepherds in these historic regions fought publicly to protect their flocks, still influences us to protect

our image today, even though we don't live in the mountains or have sheep to protect. Gladwell quotes ethnographer J.K. Campbell about these cultures.

"The critical moment in the development of the young shepherd's reputation is his first quarrel. Quarrels are necessarily public. They may occur in the coffee shop, the village square, or most frequently on a grazing boundary where a curse or a stone aimed at one of his straying sheep by another shepherd is an insult which inevitably requires a violent response," Gladwell writes, quoting Campbell's research.

So while students might be tempted to handle conflicts based on the cultural influence of shepherds long ago, public fights are no longer the only option. There are many systems at schools that try to reduce problems, and try to keep students from arguing and resorting to fighting.

As an administrator for conflict resolution between teens, Lucy Agueros believes that it's the lack of communication that causes students to get into fights. Agueros believes that students are not the only ones to blame. She thinks that the staff at schools play a vital part in resolving social differences.

"I think it's the lack of communication, because most students seem to resolve the situation if you give them conflict resolution. Students may also get into fights because of the lack of involvement with the staff. Because if they have a staff member they can go to, the members can help them solve the main issue," Agueros said.

Peer Mediation Program Coordinator DeAnna Curcio, who's primary role as coordinator is to help students in Bexar County resolve conflict in a non-violent manner, also shares Agueros' ideology that students react from anger and don't focus on what they actually should be thinking about.

"A lot of times, people are reacting from anger, from a fight or flight response, rather than trying to think in the moment, and breathing. I would say that people aren't thinking to themselves but are rather just reacting too quickly," Curcio said.

Garcia believes that students should just talk out their problems and that people should be more aware of how fighting affects everyone. She thinks students should talk it out one on one, rather than being rallied up by a group of students and fighting

everyone around them.

"If you don't know anything about the rumor or the situation, then you shouldn't say anything about it. People want to talk because they want to become more popular, but if you don't know if the rumor is a fact, and even if you do, you shouldn't just go and spread it around," Perkins said.

Agueros believes the most effective way to properly resolve conflict is to establish social peer groups where the students are more involved and where they are in full control of the situation. In these particular groups, the students need to feel safe to say what they want. They can't feel pressured to go to these groups.

"Ownership is power," said Agueros.

Curcio runs one such mediation program that helps students find better ways to resolve situations without violence.

"We go to schools and provide conflict resolution to students. We also do training exercises to show students better ways of solving issues instead of using violence," Curcio said.

Agueros believes that violence can be very detrimental, to a point where it can be devastating and that violence needs to be taken seriously. The best time to show students is when they are young because they can be guided in the right direction.

"Helping to prevent violence has to have involvement from everyone in the community, not just schools. Everything and anything should be done to avoid violence and put a stop to it. By educating students we can have a massive, massive result," Agueros said. "It will come close to eliminating violence."



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# BE RADIANT

## HOW TO CHANGE THE CLIMATE OF A BAD DAY


by Kodi Oehler, Photo Editor, and Samantha Urdiales, Media Manager

We all have those days where nothing seems to be going in our favor. The day can start with a mixture of waking up late, spilling our drink all over our clothes, and forgetting the things we can't live without (usually our head-


phones). Unfortunately, all those little things, are examples of what can start the avalanche that is a bad day. After one bad thing happens, it is often hard to try and switch our day around for the better, but the Gavel Staff is

here to help out the next time you can't get out of your funk. We have the knowledge you need from both peers and experts to help you try and change the climate of a bad day. Read on, and have a better day!


### WHAT OTHERS DO TO FEEL BETTER:



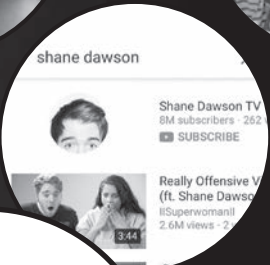
"So since I'm Catholic I do little prayers before I go to sleep or during the day and it kind of calms me down and [allows] me to connect with my culture."  
Dora Haro 12th




"I would say being around either one of my best friends Krissie or Alyssa. They're very funny and they keep me laughing all the time."  
Devin Norman 12th



"I watch 'This Is Us' because they have it harder than what I have and they're always positive. They get through it and it makes me feel better."  
Brianna Carter 12th

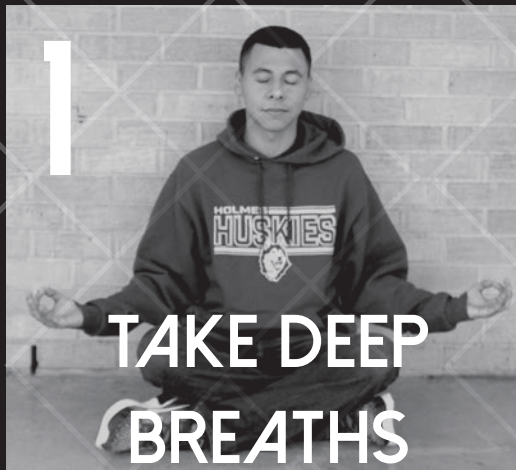


"I watch Shane Dawson [on Youtube] because he really brightens my day up a lot and he's really funny."  
Katelyn Lopez 10th



"I listen to 'Good Life' by One Republic. It makes me think about the future and how good it's going to be and that I can make it."  
Antonio Chapa12th

# PROFESSIONAL ADVICE



When you find yourself spiraling, frustrated or angry, try and stop what you're doing. Take deep breaths and focus on your breathing, because right there, in that very moment, you are okay.



Taking care of yourself is usually the last thing on your mind, but it is the most important. Eat healthy, drink water, go out for a walk and get fresh air. Do things for yourself. Write, draw, run, listen to music, anything that relaxes you. Most importantly, do something that makes you feel like you when you're at your best.



Look at the positives in the situation (even if the positives are very small), and try to put things into perspective. What is the worst case scenario? What is the likelihood of that actually happening? And most importantly, be grateful. It could be as simple as making room to feel gratitude for your ability to breathe.



Feelings were meant to be felt. Coming to terms with what you're feeling allows you to set them free. Even crying is beneficial. Most people would rather bury their feelings, but that could be worse than actually dealing with them. Letting things fester causes them to manifest into something bigger than it needs to be.



Sometimes digital life is too much. It is okay to turn off your phone and cut things out that don't need your immediate attention. Minimalism is the key to happiness; do things that help you relax so that you can conserve your energy.

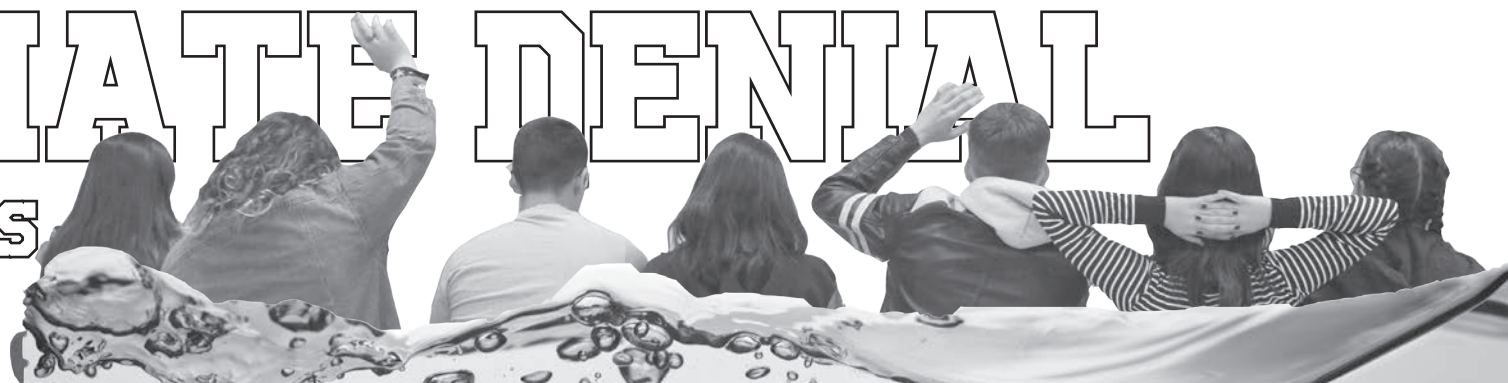


No matter what your spiritual beliefs are, you should focus on the future and on the way that you view yourself. Focus on staying true to your morals no matter what the situation is, and remember that everything will be okay in the end, and that no one is truly alone in their problems.

Steps adapted from interviews with Holmes counselors and information from Huffington Post and Psychology Today.

# CLIMATE DENIAL

## ON CAMPUS



## OPINION: CURRICULUM FALLS SHORT ON CLIMATE CHANGE

by Samantha Ruvalcaba, Co-Editor

There's curiosity in all of us. Roadside accidents and arrests easily draw the attention of passerbyers. They can't help glancing at them as they drive by, because they simply must know what happened or who was involved. My curiosity tends to get the best of me when the government is involved. I'll spiral into articles upon articles about Area 51, Dulce Base, and other "government secrets." Whether curiosity is neurological or psychological, I'm not sure. What I do know is that curiosity -- in its simplest form -- is the demand for more information.

As students, we are guaranteed a constant flow of information. Some of it we enjoy processing, and most of it we don't (advanced math, in my case). Whatever information we aren't given at school, we're fortunate enough to have the internet to fill in the gaps. What happens when the information you seek or should have access to isn't taught at school or is disappearing from the internet? I'm not talking about a conspiracy theory (yet). No, the topic I'm referring to isn't a conspiracy theory, it has been scientifically proven regardless of what Donald Trump tweets. I'm talking about climate change.

Climate change is not required in the science curriculum for the state of Texas. The topic itself has been debated for decades and maybe that's why it isn't required to be taught in schools. Just this past year, Texas legislators introduced a bill that would allow science teachers the academic freedom to teach controversial subjects such as climate change, the chemical origins of life, biological evolution, and human cloning; however, the bill died in May because its sponsor couldn't specify what teachers were and were not allowed to teach. The lack of climate change advocacy and education isn't just in Texas, it's nationwide.

Ever since the Trump administration took office in 2017, references to climate change and renewable energy have been wiped off of the Environmental Protection Agency website. They are literally erasing the words "climate change" from web pages.

At this point, consider my interest peaked. We have a government conspiracy in our midst, and

with every conspiracy comes two logical theories and five far-fetched ones.

The most logical theory as to why the Trump administration is doing this is for economic gain. I'll let our very own environmental science teacher Acacia Grothues explain this, because I'm barely starting economics this semester and, well, this is an environmental issue after all. She explains it like this:

"For us to admit that we are contributing to global warming is us admitting that the industrial revolution and the increase of carbon in the atmosphere is what's causing it. That increases the likelihood of oversight, which decreases profits. So the Trump administration - Trump being a businessman - is in support of all of his friends that are also businessmen, and they want reduced oversight. They want less government involvement and regulation so that they can make more money."

Sounds about right(wing) to me. Just because they choose to turn a blind eye, doesn't mean that we should. There are so many ways that climate change can be taught in the classroom without sounding like a doomsday prepper on the National Geographic channel. It can be brought up when talking about pollution, biodiversity, and biogeochemical systems. No one is enforcing ideas on anyone. Everyone is entitled to their own interpretation of the data, which is why it has become a social controversy. Except in the case of Donald Trump, because I'm pretty sure that he doesn't read any of the data.

The fact is, the Earth is getting warmer, ice caps are melting, and sea levels are rising.

Not only is the teaching of climate change itself valuable, but it's also important to take the steps to minimize our impact as humans so that we can continue evolve in a way that isn't harming the planet. Climate change deniers like to burden the next generation by not working towards a solution. Even superheroes understand this. Bruce Wayne in the new Justice League movie said it himself, "We tend to act like the doomsday clock has a snooze button." (This reference is in not an endorsement for Ben Af-

fleck as the new Batman.)

What it all boils down to -- besides an inhabitable planet -- is the acquisition of information. Your science teacher may not mention climate change, but that doesn't make it any less real or unworthy of your attention. Sometimes our only connection to climate change is the occasional World Wildlife Fund advertisement that makes you want to symbolically adopt a polar bear. Given everything that is happening globally such as forest fires, hurricanes, and earthquakes, we must stay mindful of those disasters, those affected, and the actions we choose to take. Don't let the State Board of Education or the Trump Administration stop you from feeding your curiosity. It's just like Grothues said, "It's important to know why these things are occurring."

Despite it not being in the curriculum, Grothues encourages the conversation of climate change in her classroom. At the beginning of each year, she asks her students to figure out their ecological footprint by visiting: <https://islandwood.org/footprint-calculator/>. I'm happy to say that my footprint isn't too harmful, but it definitely needs improvement. You can figure out your impact by visiting this website and answering a quick questionnaire. It gives you tips on how to minimize your impact. Some tips include: shopping at second-hand stores, reducing shower time, and carpooling. (Playlists are key to carpooling so choose wisely.)

If you want to learn more about climate change, you can download a free PDF about "The 12 Questions Every Climate Activist Hears And What To Say" on the Climate Reality Project website. You don't have to be an environmental activist, you just have to be curious enough to want to inform yourself. NASA also has a lot of information on climate change when you visit their website, and it's not the extraterrestrial footage that we all know they're hiding, but it's still worth checking out. If climate change isn't a discussion in your classroom, by all means, be the one to start it. If you get any blowback from climate change deniers, gracefully open your YouTube app, find a WWF polar bear video, and press play.

# ONE YEAR UNDER TRUMP



"NOT THE SAME, MR. PRESIDENT" Political Cartoon by Gabrielle Estrada

## OPINION: TRUMP CREATES NEGATIVE CLIMATE FOR ALL

by Dezaray Villarreal, Co-Editor

There's a moment of silence, as everyone is reeling. There seems to be a somber atmosphere as people process what just happened. For many, this mood of despair set the stage for the next year as Donald Trump was elected the 45th president of the United States of America on November 8th, 2016. There has since been a major change in America's social and political climates, as our new president has created new dialogue and new problems.

We've just passed the first year anniversary of Trump as president. Since then, there has been a significant shift in the feelings of citizens across America. Looking at what he's done and not done during this time has negatively impacted America's atmosphere.

When it comes to running a country as a President the way you act, your actions, and words have a huge influence on the citizens. So when you have Twitter wars, are making travel bans on several entire countries, and completely disregard many important issues such as climate change, it changes things for the country as a whole.

For those who want to argue that having Trump hasn't affected the climate in the US; let's take a look at the August 12th attacks in Charlottesville, Virginia. What started out as a protest against a demonstration by white supremacist turned into the death of a young woman when a car ran into her and a group of counter protesters.

I'm not directly blaming Trump for the events that

took place, but it's his reaction to this tragedy that was reeling. Instead of calling out the white supremacists and denouncing them and what they stand for, he said that there were "two sides to the story." Instead of directly denouncing a hate group, he said that both sides were to blame. This is one example of the type of climate that Trump is creating in his actions and words.

It seems that this idea that the racism, hate, and prejudice that was an undercurrent for many years here in America have come to the forefront of society with the election of Trump.

Because of his statement and tweets, there is a climate of tension and separation in our country, whether that's in politics between the Democrats and Republicans, or even between race, religion, gender, and more. There seems to be a shift in the way people feel towards these subjects and issues.

It's the way he acts, his demeanor, his actions and his overall decisions and words that are affecting the whole nation and the way that people feel.

Not only should we look at the way that Trump's action affect the political and societal climate, but also the way his presidency is affecting the literal climate. With acts like Keystone XL pipeline gaining approval, and the U.S.'s withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement, Trump is literally altering America's commitments to preserving the climate of the Earth.

There's nothing we can do about Trump being President, at least not for the next three years. Only

the legislature can remove him from office after impeachment, which remains a small possibility as the Mueller Investigation into Russia collusion conflicts. What we can do as students and Americans, is be more aware when it comes to what's going on in the world. As a country that wanted change, we elected Donald Trump president nearly a year ago. But as the next generation who will go on and be able to elect the next president, we have to be more aware of who we elect. In knowing what's going on and being more aware, we can avoid what has occurred this past year. Being aware means being informed and looking at what's really going on both locally and around the country. It's about learning from legitimate, trustworthy sources, making a point to use the voices we have to speak up, and to use the power of the vote.

To stay informed locally, check out local news sources such as KSAT 12 News and Texas Public Radio. To keep up with nationwide news, especially when it comes to the president, outlets such as ABC News, the Washington Post, and The New York Times, and the Wall Street Journal are all good sources to use. It should also be noted that with keeping informed, we also have the right and ability to use our voices not only to create change, but to counteract the negativity by creating positive and constructive conversation, which could really be used in times like these. Don't be afraid to share your knowledge with others.

# SPORTS SHORTS

## VARSDITY BOYS BASKETBALL 6 WINS AND 17 LOSSES

Senior guard Estefan Trevino shoots a half court shot just as the halftime buzzer goes off against the O'Connor Panthers.

## VARSDITY GIRLS BASKETBALL 8 WINS AND 17 LOSSES

Senior shooting guard Karissa Caldera focuses on her shot while on the free throw line against the Brandeis Broncos.

## JUNIOR VARSITY BOYS BASKETBALL 11 WINS AND 6 LOSSES

Sophomore forward Malachi Johnson single-handedly goes up for a layup against four of Brandeis' junior varsity players.

## JUNIOR VARSITY GIRLS BASKETBALL 11 WINS AND 8 LOSSES

Junior varsity's freshman point guard Pauline Diaz drives past the Panther's defense in an attempt to score.



photo by Ricardo Ramos



photo by Ricardo Ramos



photo by Karissa Caldera



photo by Jake Lee

## COMIC RELIEF



"CLIMATE DENIAL" written and illustrated by Lucille Gradillas

## SHOUT OUT

The "shout out" section is dedicated to those making a positive impact on our campus, whether it be students, faculty, or organizations.

We appreciate your time and dedication to making our school a better place. In this issue we would like to give a shoutout to:

- **Custodians** for working hard to keep our campus clean year-round

- Government teacher **Patrick Flenniken** for keeping students aware of social and legislative issues happening around the U.S.

- Librarian **Melissa Santellan** for making the library a calm and safe space for students

- Senior **Ethan Hageman** for leading the senior class as president and being a helping hand around campus.