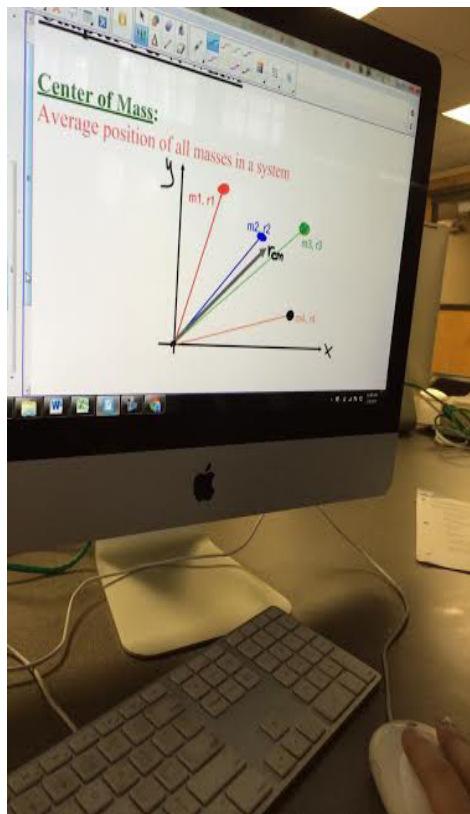


Snow Days Raise Questions About Virtual Learning

by Sam Barton '17

With the spate of snow days and the subsequent plan to restore class time, the question arises: how might the community be able to mitigate this problem in the future? In many classes, teachers have made changes to their syllabi out of necessity, condensing certain topics or removing them altogether. Over the snow days, some teachers distributed homework to students through Schoology while others chose to wait until their classes reconvened. However, in an effort to ensure her classes would not fall behind, Amy Kumpel, a physics and math teacher, decided to post video recordings of her lessons online so her pupils would be able to continue learning from home. This was met with mixed reactions. Whereas some students found this new strategy to be beneficial to their continued learning, others saw this as a bit of an intrusion.

According to Kumpel, she already made use of digital resources, such as Khan Academy, as additional instruction for students either absent from class or in need of extra practice. Over the snow days, she realized that she could make similar videos for her class to make some headway through the snow days. Using software called SMART Notebook, Kumpel recorded her voice along with everything she did on her computer screen. After completing the digitized lecture



On the February 9 snow day, Science Teacher Amy Kumpel recorded a lesson with visuals and sound, and then posted it for her Accelerated Physics classes.

Photo by Julia Shea '16

of sorts, she uploaded it to Schoology for her students to watch.

Kumpel found the whole experience to be positive, both for her and her students. While there are obvious drawbacks, such as a lack of in-person questions and discussions,

students also found advantages. Kumpel said that students especially appreciated the ability to “pause, rewind, or fast forward and re-watch if needed.” Kumpel considers this a viable option for the future in the event of interruptions of school.

Another possible implementation of these sorts of online classes would be for students on suspension. In clarifying the purpose of suspensions, Academic Dean John Drew made it apparent that an important part of being placed on suspension is not only being away from peers, but also being distanced from school resources. A student recently on suspension said that access to regularly recorded classes would be especially helpful for “keeping up with some things like in-class assignments.” Still, this method, were it to be put into use for suspended students, may in effect move resources closer to them, rather than at a distance, making suspensions less of an ordeal. Part of a suspension is to encourage students to rethink their behaviors through discipline, and by making some sorts of teaching materials readily available, rather than requiring an effort to keep up, a suspension loses its power.

When asked what they thought about the idea of implementing this sort of recorded class for future cancellations, some people were quite critical of the idea. As Kunaal Verma, '17, put it, “There’s just something about being in the classroom with my teacher.” Specifically, Verma said he believes it would be harder to learn new material without student-teacher interaction. Spanish Teacher Aída Campos-Nava shared a similar opinion, saying that she preferred traditional classes and would not consider this technique in the future. If we cannot have traditional classes for whatever reason, then certain classes would benefit more from this than others.

For math and science classes, video classes help to keep students on track. Tommy Girdwood '16 said that using comprehensive class notes from his teachers whilst he was absent “felt almost as natural as it does in class.” Girdwood also said that in his Advanced Latin class, he found that he was mostly applying knowledge that he had built up over time, rather than learning new material. In these advanced language classes, when solely writing or translating both in class, as well as for homework, video classes would be superfluous, as the students have all the knowledge they need for the foreseeable future, and the most helpful resource for them would be the ability to interact with their teachers in person to ask questions or clarify any confusion they may have. In this way, language classes, specifically in the high levels, would not be the best candidates for this type of virtual learning.

Although certainly not a replacement for class time, this new online technique may be a good option for reducing the negative impact of snow days in certain classes. If students were able to keep up more effectively outside of school, perhaps lengthening school days would not be as necessary. As more and more universities make lectures available online, CA should pursue making more digital teaching resources available online for certain classes, especially with the increase in snow days.

Why Do We Feel Guilty About the “CA Bubble”?

by Alex Berry '17

While its definition is decidedly ambiguous, the term “CA Bubble” occasionally stumbles its way into conversations across campus. It is a term that has been used in multiple settings, whether seriously or in jest. The recently established “Dessert Discussions” evolved with “Burst the CA bubble!” as their mantra. This slogan was adapted from an email from Concord Academy Dean of Students, David Rost, upon inviting students to the first of many Dessert Discussions to come: a short lecture and conversation on October 7th, 2014 in the Trudy Room led by CA history teacher, Ed Rafferty, on student protests in Hong Kong. 25 students and faculty members attended.

Others soon followed: a lecture on ISIS by history teacher Kim Fredrick attracted 30 people, a conversation on Ferguson and police brutality with Courtney Fields and Kirsten Hoyte, both English teachers at CA, attracted 80, and a hands-on lesson with science teacher John Pickle on peculiar weather patterns that have brought copious amounts of snow to Massachusetts, brought 12 students, faculty members, and campus children together in his classroom.

Having attended all but the Ferguson discussion, I found myself captivated by the knowledge of the faculty leaders and the insight of the students who attended. In fact, a few of the students seemed so well informed they probably could have even led the discussion themselves. Since there were many students who knew something about the topics before going to the talks, it seemed to me there is no lack of awareness of news outside of our campus. CA prides itself in “broadening the diversity of backgrounds, perspectives, and talents of its people,” in its mission statement. I generally agree with that sentiment. There have not been many instances since I have come to CA where I have felt there to be a lack of understanding among the student body about domestic or international affairs. If anything, I feel more cognizant of issues outside of my own school since my first year at CA. Befriending inter-

national students and students with varying backgrounds has shifted the way I perceive certain situations.

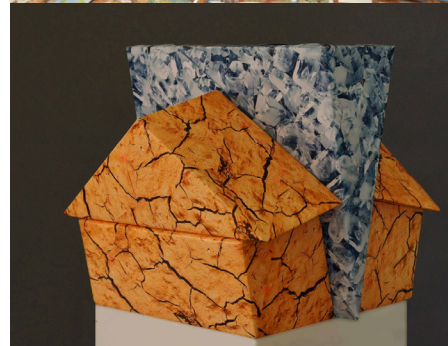
After examining these factors, it certainly raises the question: If CA is at an intersection of cultures and ideas, why do we continue to dub it a bubble? With clubs such as Model UN and CASA, global service projects, and students who live worldwide, it hardly seems like we are in a bubble.

Rost indicated that “mostly boarders” expressed concern that life on campus is too confining, and that the school was in need of a forum to open up the doors to the outside world. This makes sense, since during long stretches of the school year some may rarely leave campus.

When I asked him about his own definition of the “CA bubble,” Rost told me that “students end up being so immersed in daily life that they don’t face outwards.” Rost brings up a fair point: most students, myself included, have a tendency to become so immersed in schoolwork and social lives that we seldom pay attention to the daily news, whether internationally, domestically, or locally. Nevertheless, I think we are slightly off-base in believing ourselves alone in our ignorance. Isn’t being a teenager a symbol of carelessness? High school students are repeatedly the butts of jokes among older generations for their apathy and aloofness. Even though we spend our time on a private school campus, does that mean we are removed from the “real world”? This “bubble” is not unique to CA. I am somewhat positive that other teenagers in surrounding schools - not just private - are wrapped up in the same complex.

But learning more about current events is never a bad thing. Getting our heads out of books and engaged in the issues of the day makes sense, and I have enjoyed the Dessert Discussions and hope they will continue. Instead of the “CA bubble” being used in such a negative light, I wish the term could be altered from a guilt-inducing catchphrase to a friendly reminder.

Inside this issue...



Seniors Transition From Submitting Applications to Reading Them

Academics, Athletics, Administration Struggle Through Snow

Connie Blumenthal ’15

Why would any senior want to spend extra time in an admissions office? Haven’t we spent the majority of the past year visiting them? Surprisingly, some of us can’t stay away. We have applied to colleges, and now we can peruse applications to Concord Academy. From the end of January to just before March break, the senior admissions readers shuffle through the snow across Main Street to the admissions building and read through applications.

As senior readers, we are assigned to committees that each read applications of students in a certain demographic. These groupings are based on applicants’ grade of entry level, gender, and boarding or day student preference. Although we cannot make the final decision in the candidates’ acceptance or rejection, the faculty members in the deciding committees value our opinions. These committees meet at least once a week to discuss applications, which we read in the intervening time.

Assessing applications may sound easier than it is: you read essays, examine test scores, consider interviews and recommendations, and come to a decision. Yet you are reading about individual people, the stories they have and the beliefs they hold. I did not expect to become emotional – as I did – over some of the essays I read, whether they were about disappointments, unexpected family tragedies, or personal struggles. Applicants jumped out at me because of their activities, their essays, and their scores – aspects of what I read continued to surprise and impress me. As a senior admissions reader, I advocated for those candidates I believed would prove “good fits” with CA.

Because seniors must apply to be readers, those chosen enjoy the work. Rose Crowley ’15, one reader, explained, “Not only am I able to help shape [the future of] CA, but I get to strengthen my relationships with my peers and faculty members.”

Crowley is not alone in her appreciation of the student-faculty mix. For all involved, it narrows a possible gap between the admissions officers’ and students’ hopes for the future classes and the community as a whole. Incorporating various voices from teachers and students helps to shed new light each year on what makes CA’s community unique. Indeed, I think these weekly meetings embody the nature of the CA community. The fact that a high school allows students to have such an enormous input in the admissions process is highly unusual and adds to CA’s uniqueness.

As the seniors’ time here comes to an end, we want to leave our personal marks on the school. True, we can do this through clubs, and school- or class-wide positions. But I wanted to be a part of something where I could see my impact for years to come; I wanted to help shape next year’s community. I applied to be a reader because I liked that students are able to be involved in this personal process – this reaffirms, at least for me, the trust CA puts in its students and the presence of common trust.

When I asked Crowley why she chose to apply to be a reader, she felt similarly: “I wanted to do something to leave a mark on CA after I’ve left. It’s great to look at all the applicants and see in them the future students It’s been interesting to see the pool of students applying and to build a small sense of community within the admissions office. Even though reading takes a lot of time, I love talking to my committee about the applicants.”

The admissions process is now coming to a close, and it has been an exhausting month and a half. Still, I am going to miss trekking across Main Street in the bitter cold to the admissions office where I can find a little bit of respite from the enthusiastic buzz of my peers. Reading through applications has made me reevaluate the school and my appreciation for the amazing community I get to be a part of everyday. I know it’s something that I will surely miss next year.

by Eugene Lee ’18

Boston broke a record this year with 108.6 inches of snow, as did Concord Academy with six snow days. According to Dean of Students David Rost, the average number of snow days per year is two. So, when on January 26th, Head of School Rick Hardy announced the first closure to take place the next day, nothing seemed unusual. When the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth closures were communicated, however, administrators, teachers, and students began to raise concerns.

“I think snow days are a happy medium and a nice break from the routine, but 6 [snow days] in 12 days left people feeling a little unstructured. Everyone likes a little structure in their lives,” said Rost.

As a result, many teachers were forced to reschedule classes and reconstruct their syllabi. Many struggled to conduct assessments, collect assignments, and plan around the loss of time. German Teacher Annie Falk explained, “Every day is sort of a new introduction to new material, and I need to be there to introduce that new topic. But without class I can’t really assign new material, can’t ask students to do homework on something I haven’t really introduced, so we fall behind.” Falk often found it hard to be meeting students after long periods of time, and on numerous occasions would ask, “Where were we?” in order to keep the thread of the class going.

Many students also expressed their discontent regarding the academic pace after the frequency of snow days. “Sometimes with tests, teachers can’t push stuff back too far, so we don’t get to learn it as much and it kind of affects my performance,” says Will Cole ’18. During the snow days in the previous months, teachers had often cancelled review sessions in favor of presenting new material. According to Cole, the lack of preparation and cutting down on review periods left many students less prepared for upcoming tests. In addition, the multitude of snow days caused students to lose concentration. “It’s hard to come back to school after a couple of snow

days and be working again,” Cole added. And although some continued with academic work over these breaks, many used the time to get rest. “It’s a sleep day for me,” said Cherilyn Lau ’18.

Sports teams also struggled to stay fit and on top of their schedules. Bobby McKean ’15, captain of the wrestling team, raised the concern that the amount of snow days “made people a lot lazier, because most people aren’t really in the mood to be wrestling two hours a day” on days off. According to McKean, due to the number of school cancellations this year, many people were more focused on catching up on sleep and taking the load off on work rather than preparing for upcoming matches. “Unless people worked out during snow days, which most people don’t, it would hurt the team’s performance during matches,” said McKean.

Even the admissions process took a hit. As Rost explained, “Admissions was hit hard this year because it impacts the people’s ability to read admissions folders and get together for committee meetings.” Snow days lessen both teachers and administrative officials routines. Since the closing of the campus discourages all non-essential personnel from coming to school, meetings are often canceled and the work starts to accumulate.

Despite the negative impacts of snow days, can having this many snow days be beneficial? According to Rost, “I think that there are times when it’s beneficial – it all depends on when it falls.” In 2010, the school had a snow day on the second day back from winter break. “No one needed a snow day then; there was no work to catch up on, no sleep to catch up on,” says Rost. However, this winter, the placements of snow days were in the middle of the semester. Students and teachers alike were tired, and some had contracted colds or the flu while they worked to prepare for midterm assessments. “Bringing a snow day to school at this time was a benefit,” Rost concluded. Nonetheless, the continuous snow was excessive, he says: “It’s like anything in life. [We need] moderation, and we have not had snow or snow days in moderation this year.”

Musing on Making Up Lost Class Time

by Chris Pappey ’15

This winter, as we all know so well, Boston had the snowiest winter since records were kept. With this snow, however, came a plethora of snow days for high schools, and even colleges, in the Greater Boston Area. So far, Concord Academy has had six snow days and two delays this year.

The first couple of snow days were, indeed, a breath of fresh air. For me, they were a time for relaxation and a chance to catch up on some schoolwork. However, once we started getting towards the fourth and fifth snow days, I could feel the attitude in the school changing. I could feel a tension amongst some teachers due to their apprehension about the syllabus. I’m sure many teachers were worrying about how they were going to cram in so much material with the loss of class time.

So, to make up for the six days of lost class time, the administration came up with a plan to recover some of the time that was taken away by the snow days. The plan was to extend the school days one week before and one week after spring break. Most days concluded at 3:35 PM.

In the modified schedule, some short blocks, usually 45 minutes, were turned into long blocks, usually 80 minutes, and some long blocks were turned into two-hour blocks.

Personally, throughout each day, I was burnt out. Students have certain days in their schedules that are difficult for them, but when those days have two extended blocks in them, sometimes it can be unbearable.

Many students, myself included, needed to find ways in order to cope with the excruciatingly long classes. Some would take a couple bathroom trips in a class and others would find it extremely hard to focus for two hours straight. Many teachers caught on to how difficult it was to focus for that long of a time, so in some of my classes we were let go early by the teacher.

Instead of extended classes throughout the day, I think it would have been better if the administration added a class that we normally didn’t have that day. So, instead of having a two hour G block class Thursday afternoon, perhaps it would have been better to have a normally long G Block class and add a C block, which normally does not meet on Thursdays, during assembly.

Also, for me, the weeks leading up



The CA administration implemented a revised schedule the weeks directly before and after March break. The revised schedule included extended blocks.
Photo by Molly D’Arcy ’16

to spring break were the hardest I’ve had to face at CA. Because of the snow days, many teachers had to push their assignments back a week or two, which fell right in the week and a half leading up to spring break.

With the extended school days, I found myself burnt out, which made it that much harder to put in one hundred percent on my assignments. My fellow classmates and I felt the weight of this pressure. I noticed a change in attitude amongst my classmates and even myself. Everybody seemed tired and frustrated due to the extended days added onto the crunch week.

I agree that we needed to make up for some of the time due to the snow days, but with that added time also came a cost.

Winterfest Brightens a Dreary Winter

by Isabel Cushing '17

The months of January and February, the depths of the dreary New England winter, have been especially gloomy due to the so-called “snow-pocalypse,” the series of blizzards that deposited almost four feet of snow on the Boston area. However, Concord Academy’s annual Winterfest elevated spirits and brought festivity to the school community. Winterfest, a carnival-esque event attended by a sizeable portion of our students, has been a tradition at CA for more than forty years.

At the beginning of the night, student-run organizations set up stations in the Student-Faculty Center, selling

baked goods, running miniature carnival games, and getting creative. the *Chameleon*, our resident literary and arts magazine, sold handmade postcards and poems, and the Stu-Fac was awash with the smells of mac ‘n’ cheese, noodles, and pastries from various clubs. Channah Powell, '17, head of CA’s

Jewish Students Organization (JSO), organized and administered a Jewish trivia game, complete with chocolate gelt prizes. Powell remarked: “I enjoyed interacting with people that I wouldn’t get to interact with usually... it was a really good way to participate in the community.” Leila Eshghi '17 agreed, stating that “students had an all-around great time” during the festivities. The sophomore class ran a jail program in which students could pay tickets to get their friends “arrested.” Eshghi, who played the role of cop, laughed when she recounted how she arrested the wrong person, but that it was “all in good fun.” This portion of Winterfest drew to a close around 7:30, but the festivities were far from over.

the win was exciting, preparing “was a fun experience, and that is more important than the winning.”

After a host of spectacular performances, Dean of Students David Rost announced the beginning of the raffle, an exciting and nerve-wracking part of the night. Students were each allotted an equal number of raffle tickets and as each number was called out, we would all hold our breath in anticipation. The countless prizes ranged from Starbucks gift cards to one hundred dollars of Amazon credit. Among the most coveted of prizes was a year’s supply of cookies. A variety of students won, and most walked away satisfied that night.



Juniors Rhea Manwani, Sophia Ginsburg, and Mia Kania staffed The Chameleon table at Winterfest. Photo courtesy of Ben Carmichael

The final, beloved tradition of the night is the “Senior Pie-ing:” students bid to shove a pie into the face of their senior friends, and all the proceeds go toward financial aid. Students from every grade clustered around as friends thrust pie-shells full of whipped cream at the seniors. Connie Blumenthal '15 was one senior whose friends donated to pie her. Blumenthal said, “It’s a fun tradition, and it’s just really funny because even though you know it’s coming, you totally don’t expect it.” The air was filled with shrieking and merriment.

The night concluded with the customary pie-ing, but the thrill of the event lived on throughout the week giving a vibrant and festive air to the icy paths. Winterfest



One of the main events during Winterfest is the talent show in which students dance, sing, and perform other acts. Pictured here is Jack Keller '18. Photo courtesy of Molly D'Arcy

Students gathered in the Performing Arts Center to watch a host of talented peers performing songs, comedy routines, piano pieces, stunning dance routines, and more in a talent show. Nina He '17, whose spectacular, choreographed dance with Cherilyn Lau '18 won the competition, said that although

is a memorable tradition at CA that allows students to forget about the dreary weather conditions and shed light on the darkness of winter.

A Discussion of Public School Stigma at CA

by Julia Shea '16

Earlier this year, I overheard two Concord Academy students talking about the high schools their friends from middle school currently attend. The conversation went something like this: One person asked, “Do you know where X went?” and the other responded in a condescending tone, “Oh, she went to her local public school,” as if she were sorry for X. As someone who attended public school prior to CA, I was offended by the tone of this conversation and the message it sent about the existence of a hierarchy in types of schools—or, worse, the presence of a hierarchy in people based on the schools they attend. Indeed, we are privileged to attend CA, but we are not superior because of it. All of this got me thinking: In what, if any, ways is CA better than a “local public school” anyway?

A portion of CA students fall into one of two categories: those who have only attended private school or those who have had a negative experience at public school (in connection with the social climate, a lack of resources, or another factor). Naturally then, CA attracts some students who either hold public school in low regard or those who have no experience with public school education. I realize that there are exceptions to this rule, since I am one. I loved the K-12 public school I attended, Lawrence School in Brookline, Mass. I was a part of a tight-knit, diverse and vibrant community in which teachers cared deeply about their students and parents were active in the Parent Teacher Organization raising money to supplement state funding for special activities. My classes felt challenging, and I made some of my closest friends during my years there.

The main reason I decided to apply to private schools was that I was concerned about the sheer size of Brookline High School. With nearly 2000 students, each grade is almost ten times the size of my graduating 8th grade class. In hindsight, I am sure I would have become part of a smaller group through classes and activities, but at 13, the size was intimidating, and since applying to private school was an option, I took advantage of it. For other CA students who attended public middle school, perhaps more competition and demand for resources or other consequences of a larger student body steered them toward private high schools.

There is immense variety in the quality of public schools—and all schools for that matter—and my experience at public school was on one end of the spectrum. Based on conversations and comments I have overheard, though, many CA students do not appreciate this spectrum. CA students are generally in agreement that their course work is uniquely demanding. I am irritated when I hear students say, “My GPA would be higher if I went to public school!” because the statement stands uncorroborated and because underlying it is the assumption that public school is inherently easier, not of the same caliber or rigor of CA.

Concord Carlisle High School and most other public schools in the Greater Boston Area offer multiple levels of most academic classes, such as standard, honors, and Advanced Placement (AP). The majority of CA courses are comparable in rigor to the honors or AP classes. So, yes, perhaps a CA student who transferred to CCHS and enrolled in standard level classes might receive higher grades. Yet, I would argue that students tend to perform academically in accordance with the expectations of their school environment, so that a student in a lower level class might

not actually receive better grades.

In order to find a more reliable comparison between public and private schools, one might turn toward standardized testing. I would caution against this approach due to the factors other than schooling that influence scores. On a whole, those who attend private schools are more likely to also have access to private tutoring. More importantly, however, there is more of a range in student academic and testing performance at public schools since there are usually more students and public schools are mandated by the state to provide special education and English as a Second Language programs.

I am far more concerned with the attitudes at CA toward public schools than with scrutinizing numbers to compare apples and oranges. We are part of the minority in attending private school, yet we seem to regard private education as the sole path to a quality education. This attitude seems emblematic of a more general sense of superiority.

I feel that there is also tone of superiority involved in Common Trust. Tour guides are instructed to describe Common Trust to prospective students, and they often focus on the material aspects of the idea. “We can leave our computers around and nobody takes them” is a common catchphrase. Or, “We don’t use lockers. Everyone just leaves their backpacks strewn across the floor!” That seems pretty great, right? And it is. But the rationale behind why this aspect of Common Trust usually works is flawed.

Although tradition and dedication contributes to the success of Common Trust, so do the socioeconomics of our community. I guarantee no school condones theft and that the values encompassed by the section on Common Trust can be found in all school handbooks: respect, academic honesty, and concern for others’ emotions, differences, and possessions. Perhaps we should consider that theft is more common at public schools because there is more socioeconomic diversity, because the schools do not have programs in place to subsidize laptops and sports equipment, because students feel desperation for material objects. The intimate nature of the CA community might also contribute to the success of Common Trust: theft feels more personal than it would at a larger school. I understand that respect for possessions is only one facet of Common Trust, but given that it is one of the most heavily advertised aspects I believe it is worth discussing. Other aspects such as academic honesty and the trust placed in students to give their chapel talks without submitting their speeches beforehand might stem from the student body’s dedication to the values of Common Trust.

Certainly, CA upholds strong values and academic standards, but I do not believe these characteristics are unique to our school. I notice a sense of superiority among students at CA that concerns me. Students seem to think that they are special because they attend CA and that CA is special because it is academically and morally superior to other schools. At public school, there is a notion that private school students are “snooty” or “stuck up.” For as long as we act like this, then these descriptors may be accurate. I open up this discussion to the community and welcome others’ thoughts.

Whiplash Wows Critics and Audiences

By Carter Kratkiewicz '16



J.K. Simmons is the highlight of the movie. He plays an “enthusiastic” music teacher, Fletcher, who crosses the line between tough-love motivation and abuse. Simmons enhances the entire film with his performance. The raw emotion and power in his performance put me on edge for the entire film. His expert acting drew me in and made me forget that I was sitting in a theater and not in the room with him. Simmons has acted in 149 different different project, and he has won 44 awards. 42 are for *Whiplash*.

Whiplash centers around Andrew, an avid drummer who is enrolled at a top music conservatory as a first-year. He is playing in a good, but not high profile, band as an alternate drummer. He meets Fletcher and his life changes in enormous ways . Fletcher presents Andrew with the musical opportunities he’s been dreaming of. Andrew must try to succeed at his passion despite Fletcher’s difficult and abusive teaching style. Through the character of Andrew the film addresses the theme of working hard and working too much. There are also some truly beautiful

scenes where some amazing visuals accompany the performance of a song, such as the band practice and performance scenes. It’s as if you’re at a concert and a film at the same time.

Whiplash is an underdog film that certainly deserves all the attention and praise it has received. The director and writer Damien Chazelle could not muster up the funding to properly produce the film at first. Consequently, he made a short film with an almost entirely different cast than the one featured in the full-length length film. J.K. Simmons is the one actor who was in the short-film as well. Chazelle submitted the short film to the Sundance Film Festival, where it promptly won the Short Film Jury Prize. After receiving this award, he gained the recognition necessary to raise the funding to produce the feature-length film. Not only was he able to create the film, but nearly everyone who has watched his film has enjoyed it. Out of about 175,000 user ratings on the website IMDb, *Whiplash* holds an 8.6 out of 10. To provide some context, this rating places *Whiplash* at #38 on the IMDb user Top 250 Movie list. It was nominated for five Academy Awards and won three of them: Best Actor, Best Editing, Best Sound Mixing. *Whiplash* certainly deserved them.

20 Questions with Richard Colton

By Alex Weyerhaeuser '15

- When did you start dancing and why?*
I started dancing when I was seven and it was because I saw a man flying over a line of men and women and I said to my parents, ‘How do you do that?’ and they said ‘You take ballet class,’ so I said ‘sign me up.’ I didn’t see that behind the line they were holding the man’s foot and had thrown him up, so I was tricked into dancing.
- What is your favorite type of dance?*
Good dancing.
- Do you have a favorite dancer?*
I loved my father’s dancing. I learned a lot from watching him, especially as he got very old because the movements got smaller but had more impact. He loved blues and he’d get up and make little inflections. He had Polio, so when he moved it was meaningful.
- How would you describe the CA dance program?*
The simple answer is that it’s a contemporary dance program with a classic foundation. The less ‘academic’ description would be ‘pretty wild, but not at all like *Whiplash*.’
- How have you managed dance classes at CA with a wide range of dancing abilities?*

I haven’t. Artists accept failure; it leads to progress.

6. *What is your favorite song to dance to?*
Anything Michael Jackson sings can be danced to. All great music for dancing has something of the primitive in it and it brings out the energy of dance.

7. *Is there any show you wish you could dance in?*
I definitely want to dance at my own funeral.

8. *Who or what inspires your art?*
Anyone who is moving, who is thinking other than himself or herself, who is doing something with full concentration, commitment and attention to either the task needing to be fulfilled or the emotion needed to be expressed, and not thinking of themselves. Therefore, I never think a good dancer is selfish.

9. *How did you meet Amy Spencer?*
At a Korean fruit stand in New York. We were both looking for good oranges and squeezing them and we held hands by mistake.

continued on page 5...

A Profile of Chris Rowe

By Leo Feininger '16

Far too often it seems to me that students only know teachers in the Visual Arts Department at Concord Academy if they have taken classes with these individuals. While CA does put a much greater emphasis on visual arts than many other schools of its kind, something that many still fail to realize is that the faculty within the department is comprised of many talented and accomplished artists.

Chris Rowe, a drawing, architecture, sculpture, and (formerly) filmmaking teacher is one such individual. Chris has been making art for a long time and has experience with many different mediums to express his thoughts and ideas through art.

Growing up in a Connecticut suburb, Chris attended his local public high school. He recounted that “The experience was like growing up in Concord, so in that sense it was very comfortable.”

Chris explained that in high school he had a number of great art teachers who served as mentors and influenced him perhaps in ways that led him to where he is now. One of his earliest memories related to art took place in ninth grade. Chris said: “I had just completed a beautiful plaster sculpture, small, carved out of white plaster, and my art teacher liked it a lot...and I didn’t think it was pretty enough. So the next day I covered it with orange and red acrylic paint and I proudly brought it up to her expecting more praise, but she took one look and said ‘My god you’ve ruined it!’”

Chris went on to become a painting major in college. During his senior year he moved to Tribeca in New York and rented out a loft with another painting student. Once fully moved in, Chris painted basically every day, and once a week his art teacher would visit to do a sort of critique with Chris and his colleague. Chris would also frequent art museums. This time proved a “life-altering” experience for Chris, and because expenses were paid for as if it were just a normal year in college, Chris didn’t have to work a job. He could spend every day working on his own projects and looking at other art, a perfect livelihood for many young artists.



Pictured above are two of Chris Rowe’s sculptures from 2012. On the left is his *Cloud Pylon*, and on the right is his *Ice-Wedged Parched Earth Bungalow*.

Photo courtesy of Chris Rowe

At this time, Manhattan was a rather dangerous place, at least compared to today, but for young people like Chris as well as other CA faculty members Amy Spencer and Richard Colton, living in Manhattan was relatively inexpensive, and the area was a popular destination for young artists at the time. As Chris put it, “It was a very desperate but exciting time.”

The following year, Chris returned to Manhattan, to a similar loft, but this time needed to work for a living, so he became a bicycle messenger, delivering packages all over the city. Because of the need to make a living, Chris could really only work on his art by night, and eventually living became too expensive.

However, upon searching to move elsewhere, a friend of Chris offered him a studio space in Vermont for very little money. Chris explained: “I went up there and found that it was too dirty and cold to paint in, so I began making sculptures.” So as a result this move proved important to Chris in finding his love for sculpture. He spent three years at this studio in Vermont, working at a lumberyard to make a living, sometimes using wood from his job to create very large-scale sculptures.

But after about three years Chris decided to attend graduate school in order to

get a degree to become a teacher. However, despite this effort, Chris found himself working a similar job in another lumberyard.

Not too long afterwards, almost by chance, Chris ended up getting a part-time job as a sculpture teacher at CA. Chris recounted the story like this: “I found myself working in a lumberyard again...very depressing. And then I got a job as a cleaner at a girls’ school...And they had a room at the school filled with prep school catalogues... One night I was on break and I was flipping through them, and I came across a catalogue for Concord Academy. And I looked at the course offerings for the arts and they were unbelievable. This school had a better arts program than a lot of the colleges I was trying to apply to. And I said “Well...I should apply!”

Upon arrival at CA in 1985, Chris spent two years as a drawing and sculpting teacher. He then entered a new phase as an artist, and his interest shifted to film. So as a result, he spent the next 13 years as a film-making teacher at CA.

In 1999, Chris got a job offer as an executive filmmaker in a small Hollywood movie company in Los Angeles California. Having taken a few shorter sabbaticals to LA during the 90s, he decided to go for it,

thinking at the time that he was done with CA and would never return. It wasn’t that Chris disliked CA; he was leaving on good terms with community. He put it this way: “I had been offered a job at this very famous film studio, and it seemed silly not to take it.” Though these five years proved very important and influential for Chris, eventually he came to realize that he liked teaching better and missed making things with his hands, so he returned to CA.

Since his return, Chris has continued teaching drawing, sculpture, art history, and architecture. Chris said one of the reasons why he likes CA so much is that “People take the arts, and the artistic process very seriously here.” Being an art teacher has influenced the way Chris makes his own art in important ways. Oftentimes he has borrowed ideas from the assignments he gives his students. Also, he often talks about his students’ work with other art teachers.

Currently, Chris has been working on a series of sculptures based on architectural models. They are small bungalows based on the little houses in the board game Monopoly. Chris first builds them with cardboard, then papers them with various images that don’t suggest structure, like water, clouds, grass, etc. He has experimented further with this concept by placing the bungalows on pylons, making them into towers, and doing other things. Another project Chris is currently beginning is a series of torches, built entirely with cardboard and then papered over with images of fire in a sort of collage style. You can see some of Chris’ art at www.chrisroweart.com.

Chris expressed his art-making hopes for the near future: “I want to get back to sketching and I want to get back to doing a figure class for myself as a student. And the final thing I want to do while I’m at CA is learn to make paper and start a paper-making workshop.”

Chris has had many remarkable experiences through his art over the years and continues to have a profound impact in his various teaching positions at CA. I would highly recommend you take one of his classes.

Train Students Cope With Unreliable Transportation

By: Molly Lazarus '17

To many living in the Boston area, this winter's record snowstorms created numerous obstacles and complications. The Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA), in particular, has suffered from weather-related problems. 85 of Concord Academy's own students rely on the MBTA for transportation to and from school, and have been experiencing problems with the MBTA for months.

With MBTA management changes put into effect on July 1, 2014, CA students have become increasingly frustrated with late and unreliable trains since the beginning of the school year; however, the snow has exponentially increased the problem. The effects of the MBTA's recent unreliability have been detrimental to many of these train students in both their academic and social lives.

Many train students have been getting less sleep due to train unreliability, and therefore are unable to perform as well in school. In describing the train's constant delays, Jackson Abele '18, commented: "Most nights I have waited for the late train getting home for an hour. Because of this, I have to go to bed much later, making school harder because I am so tired." Abele is not the only student to feel the train has affected his academic life. Sam Barton '17 remarked that, "with the canceled trains and delays, it's been harder for me to integrate my homework into my life. I have had to do much more planning around my school-

work in order to get things done on time." Train students also feel that the train's continued lateness has alienated them from the rest of the community. Isabel Cushing '17 said that being late for chapel talks "sets train students apart from the community because we are always coming in late and missing key moments." Dean of Students David Rost asserted that "train students sometimes feel like second class citizens, being denied the same opportunities their peers have, particularly around chapels." Rost continued, explaining that "we always talk about CA as a narrative school, and those stories are told in the Chapel. The chapel is a very significant part of the school and for people missing it, it is detrimental."

Recognizing the need for a backup transportation system, CA employed Dee school buses to pick students up from Alewife, Arlington, and Brandeis University in the morning. The reaction to this new system was relatively positive. Rost said, "after the first couple of days of finding out the route I think [the bus] has been running more smoothly and kids are actually getting here for chapel and announcements—a problem the school has been dealing with all year." Similarly, the train students have had a positive attitude about this shift in schedule.

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This past winter, the outbound commuter rail faced difficulties resulting in unreliable service for CA students.

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Please recycle the Centipede!



CA Students Tutor Local Elementary and Middle Schoolers

By: Anika Talwar '17

Are you interested in working with younger kids or looking for an opportunity to get more involved in the CA community? If so, then the program, CA Tutors, is just right for you. This year, our Community Action Reps, Julia Kostro '16 and Iris Oliver '15, established a new tutoring program that connects CA students with elementary and middle school students.

Such a program would need some inspiration, right? To this, Kostro replied, "My friend, Julia Shea '16, talked to me about this program called Tutoring Plus in Cambridge. We get paired up with a kid and meet for an hour a week in the Cambridge Middle School. I thought it was a really good because and I have been volunteering there since the beginning of this year." She continued, "I just thought that idea was so great that I would love to be able to bring that to Concord Academy. So, when the position for Community Action Rep came up, I thought that might be a great opportunity to try to get the word out."

Clearly, Kostro had a purpose for forming CA Tutors and had couple of goals in her mind that she wanted to see accomplished. She stated, "I want the tutors to feel like they are making a difference in their community. Also, I want them to make connections with people outside of CA and learn more about themselves, teaching, and working with kids."

After this program formed, there was an overwhelming response from the CA community to become tutors. As Kostro recalled, "In the first five days, we got over 50 people saying that they wanted to volunteer their time to be a tutor. I think it shows that the community really does want to help." One of the tutors, Charlotte Mines '17, said this program, "would have a meaningful impact not just on CA but on the wider community." Another tutor, Caroline Stotz '15, explained how, "a lot of CA students want to get involved in community service but there just aren't that many opportunities that are convenient and manageable on a weekly basis."

However, by being a tutor, "you only have to commit an hour a week and it's a nice way of getting more CA students involved."

The CA Tutors program is accommodat-ing to the parents of those children being tu-tored. Having a free tutoring program serves to be beneficial for some parents. As Kostro explained, "Tutors can be very expensive. For parents not to have that burden to pay for a tutor is something that a lot of people would be interested in." She continued, "I want the parents to know that their kid will be tutored well." Since CA students are very qualified, the parents can be confident in the tutoring that their children receive.

The tutors also benefit by being involved in this program, since they receive skill sets helping them in all other aspects of life. "It is useful to talk to people and communicate with them well. It is a good skill to have to know how to teach as it comes up in most people's lives," said Stotz. Tutoring also helps you learn to empathize and gain an understanding towards those students being tutored. When talking about the attitude one should have while tutoring the kids, Mines pointed out, "You don't want to make it sound like you are smarter than them or it's ridiculous that they don't already know it. You need to understand that it's hard even though it's not hard for you." In addition, she described how tutors gain independence by contacting the parents of the child being tutored. She said how she had to, "interact with parents, email them, and keep a sched-ule."

So, what are you waiting for? Come sign up to be a tutor! It's not a big time commit-ment as you only meet with the student for about an hour a week in the Concord Public Library. You simply fill out a questionnaire about the subjects you are interested in teaching and the times you are available after school. Accordingly, you get paired up with the student who best matches your informa-tion. Of course, tutoring is a great learning experience, but what's most important is that you are helping make a difference in the community.

Richard Colton

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10. *What was it like being both a parent and a teacher at CA?*
Isn't it the same thing?

11. *What do you see yourself doing in 20 years?*
I am a man of the present. I really don't see that far.

12. *How is Cupcake (the Colton/Spencer family dog) doing?*
He, like good ballet dancers, is suffering from excessive turnout. Fortunately, he has good parents, and we're teaching him to walk more parallel.

13. *Do you have a favorite word?*
I'm not really a word man, I'm more of a lover man.

14. *What is your favorite aspect of CA?*
It leaves a lot of room for both love and learning.

15. *Do you miss dancing professionally?*
I don't think of my past. I get enthusiastic about what's around me and really all you

have to do is look and you have no need for past or future.

16. *Which do you prefer, dancing or choreo-graphing?*
Seeing. Seeing is what I love above all.

17. *If you could change one thing about the world, what would it be?*
I would make sure that people couldn't buy so much.

18. *If you weren't a dancer what would you be?*
I would love to just sit around and be in-terviewed. I'm also thinking of becoming part of a profession called "Le Nez" when I retire. It's a group of people who lie down and sniff perfumes all day and decide what works. Being a Libra as I am, it would give my life some balance because I've been moving so much.

19. *Where is the best place you have danced?*
In my mind.

20. *Do you have a favorite show that you've been a part of?*
Life.

A Preview of Spring Sports

By Ben Stoloff ’15

Spring is a time of rejuvenation and excitement. The weather gets warmer, the sun comes out, and flowers bloom.

This year, however, spring athletes are eyeing the coming season nervously praying that the snow melts soon. Every spring sport from track to tennis needs to get outside for games and practices.

Jenny Brennan, Concord Academy’s Athletic Director, said, “We are trying to get in touch with local facilities around the area.” While there are facilities for lacrosse, some teams, such as baseball and softball, will likely have to wait for a thaw.

Brennan also discussed some other changes that are taking place this spring. A plethora of new coaches will be joining the athletic department. Many of these coaches come from clubs in the area. The new baseball coach, John Kelly, most recently coached at Concord-Carlisle High School.

Another change coming this year is the addition of a JV girls lacrosse team. A total of 31 girls have registered for lacrosse, and accordingly another team has been added. This team has a complete schedule of its own and will give many more girls the opportunity to compete in lacrosse.

Olivia First ’18 expressed her opinion about the expanded lacrosse program: “Coming to a new school, I am excited to play with new people and new coaches.” With the addition of a second team there is now room for many girls to experience the nature of a team while also competing on a very high level.

Baseball also has roughly the numbers to support a second team. A total of 24 boys are signed up to play. Sam Meyerson ’17 has mixed feelings about the upcoming season. He said, “I’m excited to see how the team will be with the new coach. I am worried that the snow will limit our practice time at the beginning of the year. I want to get out of the gym as soon as possible.” It seems that CA athletes have no choice but to make the best of a bad situation.

Softball also has an interesting year ahead of them. According to Brennan, plans are in the works to at the very least, create a temporary field for the team on the upper field. This plan would give the team more

flexibility and not leave them caught in scheduling conflicts with the town as CA does not own its own softball field.

The team is primed to continue building on the success of past years. Somerset Gall ’16 said, “We became a varsity team my freshman year and we were pretty terrible, but last year we definitely improved and I really think that this upcoming season will be even better.”

Another team looking to improve on last season’s successes is the boys lacrosse team. The team will be led by a new coach and will also have many fresh faces on the field.

The co-ed track team also looks like it is going to have an interesting season. A total of 62 boys and girls have registered for the team. This means that there will be tryouts in order to get the number down to 50.

However there will also be four coaches working with the team. Jon Waldron will return alongside Julia Hanlon who coached Cross Country in the spring. Newcomers Peter Bosky and Joe Bohenek will join them. It is also the first year track will be an EIL sport. Finn Pounds ’15 said, “I really hope we can have a successful debut season. We could be in contention for the first ever EIL track title ever which would be sick.”

Boys tennis is looking forward to the season. Andy Jin ’16 said, “I look forward to winning the league because no one can beat Carter. Most of our team is juniors this year which gives us an advantage in experience.” Clearly, Boys Tennis is determined to raise another banner this year.

The members of the Girls Tennis have a very similar outlook on their season. Lauren Liu ’15 said, “Even though we lost some good players, I believe we are still a strong team”. Liu also added, “It might take a little while to melt but I’m really looking forward to seeing those blue Athletic Campus courts again.”

Sailing will also fight the conditions. The cold has left much of the coastline frozen. Furthermore, many races take place on lakes, which will not be usable for a long time. No matter, the water is certain to be cold but if the weather is good enough, CA racers will be out there taking on other teams.

Finally, the ultimate frisbee team has a busy spring ahead. The 21 members will once again be lead by head coach Kim Frederick.

Debating the “Top 16” NBA Playoff Format

By Jeremy Liang ’16

Even though Adam Silver has only been the NBA commissioner for a little more than a year, he has already demonstrated his intent on improving the game of basketball. The commissioner has toyed with the ideas of advertisements on NBA jerseys, shortening the season, and adding a four-point line, among others. More seriously, however, Silver has proposed to change the NBA playoffs system into a “Top 16” format, meaning that the sixteen teams with the best records will advance into the next stage of the season, regardless of geography.

This proposal is Silver’s response to the the criticism of Eastern and Western Conferences whereby eastern teams known to be inferior compete in the postseason anyway. While competition for the Western Conference spots has turned into a royal battle, in which ten teams with winning records are competing for eight playoff spots, competition for the Eastern Conference’s spots is less fierce, and thus two of the seats are occupied

by teams with losing records. Thus, in pursuit of the highest quality of postseason basketball, the league is considering this change for the 2016-2017 season. However, do be warned: changing the playoff system is no small fix, and could become one of the most monumental changes in league history.

Think about it: with the new system, it could be entirely possible for two Western Conference or Eastern Conference teams to meet for the first time in the NBA Finals. This essentially means that the dynamic in which the best team in the East plays the best team in the West will cease to exist. With the change, the NBA will be the only major American sport without inter-conference finals. This would mark a radical change within the league, and thus the proposal must be evaluated carefully to ensure that the change is truly the best option for the league.

While this playoff change would theoretically make for more equitable competition, the new system will be less engaging, more controversial, and will

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Sarno and Welsh Reflect on Winter Sports

By Somerset Gall ’16

As the winter sports season came to a close, the Concord Academy community recognized exceptional athletes. Athletes from across the board, from ski team to basketball, have demonstrated outstanding talent while highlighting the values of teamwork and dedication to improvement that Concord Academy emphasizes.

The 2015 winter season brought a new round of talent from the ninth grade pool, including Sam Welsh ’18, the leading scorer for the boys varsity basketball team. Welsh recognized the adjustment from middle school to high school athletics, saying how the CA team was, “much more intense.” Coming from a middle school team with “only one practice a week,” the heightened competition was made easier by his experience playing with older students outside of school.

Even though Welsh’s individual accomplishments are noteworthy, he remains concentrated on improvement. Remarking on his position as top scorer, Welsh said, “I don’t think about how much I’ve scored. I think about how much more I can score, which encourages me to get better.”

Emphasizing improvement is a common theme on the boys basketball team. As a young squad, CA played against significantly older and larger teams. However, Welch noted the advantages of having a young group, saying that he is glad to play with, “a young team because we can develop together and get better together.”

For the 2015 season, Welsh described his pride in, “how hard the team worked. Because we were a small team, we needed to have a lot of heart to be in the game with kids that are bigger than us and who are a lot better.”

One particular game against Bancroft

stood out for Welsh. Early in the season CA had lost to Bancroft, but in a rematch managed to pull off a come-from-behind victory. Welsh said, “They were trash talking us, it got personal.”

For the 2016 season, Welsh’s goals for both the team and himself include working on, “endurance and giving everything for the entire game and every practice.”

Off the courts and on the slopes, Joey Sarno ’17, a sophomore skier, lead CA’s ski team to a third place finish in the NEPSAC tournament. Most notably, he won two races and placed fifth over the entire course of the season.

Although his two first place finishes are

big accomplishments for Sarno, the highlight of the winter was the team environment. As Sarno described, “Being on the snow every day and being able to do something I love with friends was the true achievement of the winter.”

Looking forward to the 2016 season, Sarno talked of the pressure that comes with being the top scorer for the past two years, emphasizing that that he is, “not just skiing for myself but for the team.”

In regards to the team as a whole, Sarno hopes to see the team, “mature and improve and eventually retake the league.” In the end, Sarno summarized what CA athletics of every season is all about when he remarked that the best part of the season was, “being able to make lasting friendships and being able to shred the gnar”.



Sophomore Joey Sarno won two races and led his team to third place at the NEPSAC tournament.
Photo courtesy of Joey Sarno

A Recap of the NBA All-Star Weekend

By Lorenzo Lampietti ’16

The first event of the NBA All-Star Weekend was the NBA All-Star Celebrity Game, held on Friday, February 13th at Madison Square Garden. With a field comprised of many actors, three WNBA players, the Memphis Grizzlies owner, a Paralympic athlete, and even 2014 Little League World Series sensation Mo’ne Davis, this game was sure to provide a lot of excitement. Although the West beat the East by a score of 57-51, the East’s Kevin Hart stole the show with 15 points and his record fourth consecutive MVP award. Hart announced his retirement from the competition shortly after setting this record.

The NBA All-Star Weekend kicked off its Saturday night festivities on February 14th at Brooklyn’s Barclays Center. This was the stage for many various competitions including the Three-Point Contest and the Slam Dunk Contest. In the competition, there are five racks of five basketballs evenly placed

around the three-point line. There are four regular balls worth one point per rack, and one “money ball” worth two points. The latest modification to the competition was to add a rack of just “money balls”, raising the maximum possible score from 30 to 34. Each shooter has 60 seconds to make as many shots as possible. This year’s Three-Point Contest was very highly anticipated. Stephen Curry, statistically the best shooter in the NBA today, won the Three-Point Contest with an incredible score of 27 in the final round. The competition was quite tough, with players such as defending champion Marco Belinelli, the NBA’s leading scorer James Harden, and even fellow Golden State teammate, and “Splash Bro”, Klay Thompson looking to beat out Stephen Curry and take home the title. Kyle Korver, an All-Star also competing in the Three-Point Contest said, “I think it’s the best field [of players] ever.” This win

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Through the Red Phone

By Harry Breault '16

If you know me or have taken even a brief listen to my conversations, you'll find it obvious that I am neither of the Republican persuasion nor the bipartisan mold. Just the thought of conservatism's grand patriarch, Ronald Reagan, makes me see red, both literally and figuratively. By contrast, I worship Franklin Delano Roosevelt and the altars of American liberalism that he built. I tend to abhor anyone who wants to chip away at them or destroy them.

Even with my stark ideological filter, tiny grains of logic occasionally make their way into my mind. This bequeathed wisdom encourages compromise and frowns at anger. I get it from my family, my teachers, and my friends, and it was hammered home by Concord Academy's extraordinary Martin Luther King, Jr. Day speaker, Dr. Charles Willie.

Dr. Willie is a Harvard professor and a veteran of the Civil Rights Movement. At CA, he spoke movingly of the need to embrace even our most hated enemies. He told us to talk even to those with whom we adamantly disagree and to find common ground. If he preached anything, he preached universal love.

Some words that didn't inspire me quite so positively were featured in the trailer for *Light Wins: How To Overcome The Criminalization Of Christianity*, a homophobic documentary. According to the *Huffington Post*, the film features two Republican Presidential hopefuls, former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee and Kentucky Senator Rand Paul.

Innumerable horrific and offensive things were said in this video, including the assertion that "if homosexual activists get everything they want, it'll be nothing less than the criminalization of Christianity." I consider many of the views expressed in the video to be abhorrent. However, I was struck by how many of the gripes of my ideological opposites concerned their civil rights, not their hatred of homosexual people. Huckabee asks: "What kind of freedom of speech do we have if a person who expresses a biblical viewpoint about marriage is told they can't open their businesses in a location?" I strongly disagree with Huckabee, but under the doctrine of Dr. Willie, I must talk to and debate those who hold his views and refrain from shouting them out of the room.

In fact, Huckabee is somewhat moderate if the mainstream media coverage of him is read between the lines. In a CNN article entitled "Huckabee compares being gay to drinking, swearing" (he did), Huckabee made a statement that seems antithetical to the article's title: "People can be my friends who have lifestyles that are not necessarily my lifestyle. I don't shut people out of my circle or out of my life because they have a different point of view." Given that I found this story in the "What outrages liberals today" section of my favorite Washington Post newsletter, I was surprised to find myself un-outraged.

Huckabee sees himself as only exercising his First Amendment rights and defending those of others. Although the situation becomes more complicated when one considers the agendas of some who think that way, it shocks me that Mike Huckabee and I can agree that it is important to incorporate alternate views into our lives. Worse, I was ashamed to realize that this man, a vehement



Breault: "In order to change anything, we must listen to those with whom we disagree." Breault believes this statement is especially applicable to those at the US Capitol.

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conservative beloved by Evangelical Christian conservatives, is more accepting than I am.

I admit to violating the precepts that Dr. Willie and Governor Huckabee endorse in part because I hope it will forestall retroactive accusations of hypocrisy. For example, a month after I was profoundly moved by the words of Dr. Willie, I stood in the J. Josephine Tucker Library and laid out a vitriolic and vindictive plan to re-occupy the Southern United States. I felt confident enough in Concord Academy's accepting spirit to spew this plan in loud tones in a very public arena. Even worse, nobody contradicted me, probably because it was nothing new coming from me.

That stark reminder of my constant polarization makes me all the more grateful for those who have taught me to change. My uncles, along with most of my fellow citizens, would have bristled if they heard me say this. Three of them, all conservative, have taught me the value of education, dialogue, and evolving opinions. I disagree often with all of them, but each has taught me a distinct lesson.

The first uncle taught me to appreciate education. He is a superbly well-informed man, a national security expert, and a former White House staffer for George W. Bush. Every hour I spend time with him, discussions ensue that leave me feeling inadequate. He is not shy about impressing upon me the limits of my knowledge. He taught me to seek my own edification relentlessly, the goal being that someday I would know enough to win an argument with him. That is something that any politically-minded person should aspire to. An argument won through debating tactics and loudness alone is a hollow one, and your knowledge base should always support whatever you argue for.

The second uncle taught me to appreciate dialogue. The popular notion in my immediate family is that my uncle is some kind of radical, red-blooded conservative. I only know different because we have long, respectful discussions of our opinions. I

came out of these discussions with a conservative ally on campaign finance reform, ethics legislation, and gay rights, to name a few. There is only one way I could have discovered this, and that was through following Dr. Willie's advice and talking to someone whom I perceived as a political enemy, but who in reality was a political friend.

Finally, the third uncle taught me the value of evolving opinions. I had thought that this uncle, based again on the prevailing notion in my immediate family and on his past statements, was homophobic. Now, picture Christmas dinner with my extended family. My younger cousin whispered to me that he planned to fake coming out as gay to the table. He thought it would be funny. I was quite interested to see how my uncle, who was somewhat inebriated, would respond.

My uncle said that regardless of whom any of us cousins chose to love, he was simply glad that we had chosen to spend Christmas with him and the rest of the family. I was both surprised and deeply moved. I do not know how he came to this change of heart. Perhaps I judged him wrongly from the beginning. Either way, the other end of Dr. Willie's advice was brilliantly on display: listen to those whom you perceive as your enemies. The opportunities to learn and to love that it presents are extraordinary.

Now, the classic political conundrum. Centrist politicians, such as Bill Clinton and Dwight Eisenhower, have traditionally been more adept at compromise. The thinking goes that they are thus able to make progress on the middle ground they find with their opponents. In the view of partisan diehards, however, greater progress is made, although inconsistently, by more radical politicians. The left adores Franklin Roosevelt for this, and the right loves Ronald Reagan for the same reason.

We find ourselves inspired by these people, and thus they occasionally make their way to the fore of national politics. However, I and my fellows in the Democratic Party have been inclined to follow other extra-political prophets, like Martin Luther

King, Jr. and Gloria Steinem. Republicans have done the same thing with the Reverend Jerry Falwell and others. These individuals stay outside of the governmental sphere, and are often able to exact extraordinary change even without joining the system. Perhaps this is the best way to change things, because it avoids the sometimes dangerous practice of base motivation.

Base motivation is what politicians do in order to win elections. They adopt positions that their "base," or most dedicated voters, love. These are almost always to the radical edge of party ideologies. An example of this, covered in Peter Baker's excellent book *Days of Fire*, is George W. Bush's embrace of a Constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage in his 2004 reelection campaign. The book describes Bush, who comes off as quite moderate on the issue, as having problems with this, but doing it anyway so he can win. This strategy is common, and both Barack Obama and Mitt Romney have followed it. The result is often increased polarization, as political parties coalesce around positions that are impossible for initial compromise.

When both sides refuse to work on issues that are ripe for compromise, progress cannot be made on more polarizing issues. This is part of how Washington came to look as it does today.

While centrist government may be a better way to get things done, the political necessity of running to radicalism to win elections still exists, and it is true that radicalism can sometimes help to turn public opinion in the right direction on some issues. However, some compromise must obviously be reached between the poles to move the debate in a more respectful and productive direction. At the very least, political strategies must be rid of their uncompromising elements. Any part of such a strategy that advocates decreasing or eliminating dialogue with those who think differently must be stricken from the strategy.

Today's political system is perhaps as polarized as it has ever been. Our politicians must follow the examples of my uncles: they must learn, talk, and listen. This will anger the constituents of some politicians, and these politicians may lose their elections. It is extremely unlikely that members of Congress, for example, would put their jobs on the line in this way. Thus, the leaders of both parties would need to use their influence to move lower-ranking politicians in this direction. What will ultimately bring respect back to those who survive this process is a functioning government, something that I believe the vast majority of people want.

My final hope is that we will remember Dr. Willie's speech long enough for it to change our behavior. Only with his lessons in mind can our generation move past the example set by today's politicians. The world is profoundly flawed, and I have faith that most people agree at least on that point. So, let's learn, let's talk, and let's listen. Then, we can change the world.

The Centipede

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The *Centipede* is the official student newspaper of Concord Academy. The paper encourages comments from its readers in the form of Letters to the Editor. No anonymous letters will be printed. The *Centipede* reserves the right to edit all articles for length and content.

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The mission of The *Centipede* is to inform, spark curiosity, and generate discussion within the community and beyond. The majority of the content relates to school issues, events, and news, but occasionally writers voice their opinions on politics, sports, and other contentious topics.

Do you want to become a member of the *Centipede* staff?

Look out on CA-FYI during April for information about how to apply for editor and staff writer positions for the 2015-16 school year.

If you have any questions, email Julia Shea (julia.shea@concordacademy.org).

MBTA

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Abele commented that he has to get up “15 minutes earlier in the morning than when I ride [the train], but I can handle that.”

Despite its relative success, the Dee Bus system has a significant economic drawback. Rost did not “want to get into a specific price tag, but it is not an inexpensive option.” Another drawback to the Dee Bus

NBA Playoff Format

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ultimately hurt the league. The first major consideration is unfairness in matchups and locations. Theoretically, the Brooklyn Nets and New York Knicks could play in a series in which the arenas are within a half hour of each other. Conversely, the Miami Heat and the Portland Trailblazers could also match up, teams from regions separated by 2,700 miles--an eight-hour flight. Thus, the winner of the matchup involving two geographically close teams will naturally feel fresher and more energized than a team that has to fly multiple red-eye flights. With the Eastern and Western Conferences, the chance of a New York-New York matchup is still possible, but matchups involving lengthy travel are eliminated. Maintaining the old playoff system removes this variable of distance, and removes phrases like “long flights” and “fatigue” from the matchup discussions.

The second setback is in fan engagement. Fierce, rambunctious crowds are a staple in playoff competition, but some element of that could disappear with the new playoff system. A lot of the interest and passion for sports grows out of team loyalty and historic rivalries, such as the longstanding one between the Celtics and Lakers. With a sixteen-team bracket, many of the smaller playoff rivalries within conferences will cease to exist. Rivalry games such as those between the Pacers and Knicks or the Pistons and Bulls will not occur as often because the bracket

will no longer exclusively involve Eastern or Western Conference teams. Without this fuel, the playoffs will be rendered less engaging and less popular.

Finally, perhaps the strongest argument against this proposal, the playoff system would simply be too radical of a change. Since the conception of the National Basketball Association, the league has always had interleague finals between the East and West, and it should remain that way. Changing the playoffs and finals would conflict with tradition. The postseason is incredibly important to both fans and teams, so why radicalize something that has been so engaging and enjoyable in years past? With the new system, the NBA will step into a new era of the league, which seems rather unnecessary. I believe that this change would be met unfavorably by most long time fans and would deter fans from viewing the finals. This brings up another point: is there even a problem to fix? The disparity between the talent in the west and east is not a new issue. In the past, it has only taken a few years for the talent in the two conferences to balance out or to switch places. Thus, is making this short term change worth radicalizing the identity and history of NBA basketball? My answer is no. I do acknowledge Silver’s desire to improve the league as a whole, but I believe that it would be naïve, even foolish, for the one-year commissioner to make such a change.

All-Star Weekend

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was extremely emotional for Curry; he finally won the contest after his three previous attempts had ended in bitter disappointment.

Saturday night continued with the most notable event of the weekend: the Slam Dunk Contest. In this competition, each player is allowed two dunks which are individually scored between six and ten by each of the five judges. The top two finishers of the first round advance to the second, and final, round. This year, three of the four contestants were first or second year players, constituting a very young field of competition. Zach Lavine, the Minnesota Timberwolves rookie, came away with two perfect scores and his first win in the contest. He performed in style, donning a Michael Jordan jersey before throwing down a huge through-the-legs, behind-the-back slam. His second dunk, equally as powerful, was an self-alley-oop, behind-the-back dunk that had everyone in the building on their feet. These two enormous dunks propelled him to becoming the 2015 Slam Dunk Contest winner.

All-Star Weekend continued into Sunday February 15th, where it concluded with the NBA All-Star Game, played at the Mecca of basketball: Madison Square Garden. The story of the night was Russell Westbrook, who put up 41 points, one shy of the record, and deservedly won the MVP award. Westbrook and Chris Paul paired up on many occasions; Paul also had a great night with 12 points and 15 assists. LeBron James also put on a stellar performance, leading the East with 30 points, 7 assists, and 5 rebounds. And finally, perhaps the rarest highlight of all, we saw Dirk Nowitzki’s first dunk in what seems like forever. The two teams paired up for a whopping 321 points, the most ever in the history of the contest, in what turned out

to be a highlight-filled game, with the West edging out the East with a score of 163-158.

After this overall very entertaining NBA All-Star Weekend, we can ponder the main headlines going into the second half of the season. For one, do the Hawks and the Warriors have what it takes to translate their regular season success to the playoffs? If they are able to stay this strong throughout the second half of the season, they could both become championship contenders. Secondly, who will win MVP? Stephen Curry? James Harden? Anthony Davis? Russell Westbrook? Steph Curry is having an incredible breakout year, yet Harden is leading his team and the NBA in scoring. Anthony Davis seems to have dropped out of the race, while Russell Westbrook has been simply unbelievable in carrying his team, with ten triple-doubles, since Kevin Durant’s injuries. These have been some of the biggest standout players so far this season. And finally, will we see Paul George’s return? After his gruesome injury in August, when he snapped both bones in his leg below the knee during a team USA scrimmage, Paul George was not expected to play at all during the entirety of the 2014-15 season. However, just after the All-Star break, he told reporters he could potentially be back as soon as March. We have recently learned he will most likely make his return on Easter Sunday, April 5th. Not only would his flashy style of play be quickly welcomed back to the court, but considering the severity of his injury, this would also make one of the greatest comeback stories in NBA history.