Burke overhauls clubs program

BY JACOB ZUCKERMAN ’22
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Beginning this year, the Burke administration has decided to make scheduling and requirement changes to the operations of morning activities, especially clubs.

Historically, each day’s color had always determined what happened between second and third periods at 10:05. But under the new rules, each grade has a unique schedule based on the days of the week, with a common slot for clubs on Fridays. The school hopes this will give clubs more of what the administration believes to be much-needed meeting time. Students will also be required to be present in a club every Friday, a dramatic shift from the green day periods that many students saw as optional.

Director of Student Activities Kelly Falk and Dean of Students Vanessa Aird said that they decided to go through with the change as part of an ongoing effort to address a common student complaint: not enough time for meetings.

“I think it was also in response to student needs and student feedback in wanting more time,” Aird said. “It was not possible to lengthen the clubs period so by meeting more consistently we were answering the request of students to have more time in clubs.”

By meeting on Friday, clubs can spend more time together, whereas green day meetings could only happen once every seven school days.

Along with the changes to the schedule, attendance in clubs will now be mandatory. This goes both for the required meeting on Fridays as well as any clubs meeting at other times. Falk and Aird said that this change is in response to complaints that clubs didn’t have enough consistent members to be able to prioritize fulfilling the club’s purpose over recruiting new participants.

“Before we started requiring attendance, a lot of clubs spent a lot of time attempting to gain membership rather than doing the work of the club,” said Falk. “So we’re hoping that that will improve.”

This particular change has hit some clubs harder than others. Ben McLenaghan ’20 and Sanjay Seetha-Forester ’20’s Knowledge Comp (formerly Trivia Club) has had to rework its structure to fit within the new policies.

“Now we have a bunch of people who came to our club because of the color day, and now they’re not there because of the policy,” he said. “So in a way, this is making us consider our interests more time and a better chance to accomplish whatever they aim to do.

McLenaghan explained over exclusive clubs attendance. Per the Cageliner’s reporting, one reason for the change was that club attendance was so inconsistent as to interfere with the aims of the club. The administration also wanted students to have more free lunches, so they cut down the number of lunchtime clubs. Unfortunately, initial results seem to suggest that the new policy has not rectified these problems.

The combined effect of these two well-meaning changes has been that students have to choose between two or more beloved clubs that they had previously been able to do simultaneously. At any high school, especially one as small as Burke, students will want to explore new and different areas, and every club will always have a number of people who are members of more than one club. Therefore clubs lose members, students resent the reduction of their freedom of choice, and the atmosphere surrounding clubs changes from one of fun and exploration to one that is much more rigid.

Clubs used to be a welcome respite from the daily grind of classes. Now, thanks to mandatory attendance and binding commitment, clubs period is starting to feel like a new category of required elective classes. In theory, the policy sounds great. Consistent club meetings every week should give groups of people with similar interests more time and a better chance to accomplish whatever they aim to do. Monitoring who shows up to their club(s) should allow leaders to focus on important decisions rather than worry about who’s actually committed. Admittedly, change is always hard, and to new students, perhaps, the old policy seems ridiculous and the new policy is logical. Also, this is officially a pilot run of a new program; there will be opportunities to reassess in January when students can choose new clubs and at the end of the year.

These early flaws may be just the unavoidable kinks in a new system. They could just as easily be symptoms of a deeply concerning within the next hundred or so years there could be global collapse, chaos, and suffering—is what has sparked terror for many in our generation (the group that will have to live through these disasters).

That fear, however, has also sparked a movement dedicated to stopping those effects. Within the last few years, there have been groups of young people across the world bringing this issue to the forefront. Those young people range from Greta Thunberg, a 16-year-old girl who has become the face of the movement, to one that is much more rigid.

Photo by Matt Eich/Patagonia

Perspective: Now is the time for climate action

BY KEELY FERRANDO ’21
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Current estimates say that we have 11 years to significantly lower carbon emissions (most say by about 40%) before slowing or stopping climate change becomes unimaginably harder. If the world fails to reach that goal, different projections of possible effects include vast swaths of unlivable land where crops can’t grow, areas like the Chesapeake, Miami, and NYC under water, near constant wildfires and hurricanes, and unbelievable flooding in any area near water. Those projections seem bad enough, but they become even worse when you figure in the structural collapse and displaced people that would come with that amount of damage.

The idea that we could be slowly killing ourselves and our own children—that within the next hundred or so years there could be global collapse, chaos, and suffering—is what has sparked terror for many in our generation (the group that will have to live through these disasters).

That fear, however, has also sparked a movement dedicated to stopping those effects. Within the last few years, there have been groups of young people across the world bringing this issue to the forefront. Those young people range from Greta Thunberg, a 16-year-old girl who has become the face of the movement, to the many local high schoolers who organize in the DMV every day and have begun the uphill battle to get governments worldwide to even begin working to slow climate change.

Most recently, there was a global youth

Editorial: The clubs policy has many issues

BY CAGELINER EDITORIAL BOARD

Ever since its announcement, the overhauled Burke clubs policy has been a major topic of discussion and complaint among students. Now that clubs have officially begun meeting, it is abundantly clear that the policy is a misguided attempt by the administration to overregulate students’ participation in clubs and the ways in which clubs can operate.

The new schedule where morning activities depend on the day of the week rather the color day was a well-meaning and creative way to address calls for fewer assemblies and more time for clubs. However, the administration undercut its purpose by controlling the clubs signup process and instituting a policy of mandatory and exclusive clubs attendance. Пер The Cageliner’s reporting, one reason for the change was that club attendance was so inconsistent as to interfere with the aims of the club. The administration also wanted students to have more free lunches, so they cut down the number of lunchtime clubs. Unfortunately, initial results seem to suggest that the new policy has not rectified these problems.

The combined effect of these two well-meaning changes has been that students have to choose between two or more beloved clubs that they had previously been able to do simultaneously. At any high school, especially one as small as Burke, students will want to explore new and different areas, and every club will always have a number of people who are members of more than one club. Therefore clubs lose members, students resent the reduction of their freedom of choice, and the atmosphere surrounding clubs changes from one of fun and exploration to one that is much more rigid.

Clubs used to be a welcome respite from the daily grind of classes. Now, thanks to mandatory attendance and binding commitment, clubs period is starting to feel like a new category of required elective classes. In theory, the policy sounds great. Consistent club meetings every week should give groups of people with similar interests more time and a better chance to accomplish whatever they aim to do. Monitoring who shows up to their club(s) should allow leaders to focus on important decisions rather than worry about who’s actually committed. Admittedly, change is always hard, and to new students, perhaps, the old policy seems ridiculous and the new policy is logical. Also, this is officially a pilot run of a new program; there will be opportunities to reassess in January when students can choose new clubs and at the end of the year.

These early flaws may be just the unavoidable kinks in a new system. They could just as easily be symptoms of a deeply concerning
Meet Burke’s newest faculty and staff

BY JEN CHIANCONE ‘21
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Jamie Schmutter - High School Math Teacher
Jamie grew up in Oceanside, New York and later arrived in Maryland to get her bachelo-
or’s and master’s degrees at the University of Maryland, College Park. In her freshman year of high
school, Jamie discovered her love of math, which, combined with her interest in teaching, led her to working as a math teacher. For the past five years, Jamie lived across the street from Burke and when she decided to leave her previous job, she thought Burke was the right fit because of the welcoming and friendly atmosphere along with its convenience. Jamie is set to get married next August (Their hashtag is #RustinwithJamie). Jamie also really loves Harry Pot-
ter and the beach.

Mitch Masucci - High School History Teacher
Mitch is originally from Al-
toona, Pennsylvania and spent the last eleven years in Philadelphia before his wife got a job in DC and they moved here. Mitch’s love of teaching and his passion for humanities and leadership influ-
enced his interest in teaching history. The sense of community and values at Burke inspired Mitch to apply for a job here and also made the school a perfect fit. Mitch also possesses a love of sci-fi movies, vinyl records, and his two dogs and two cats.

Jason Rosenberg - Computer Science Teacher
Jason grew up in Baltimore, Maryland before moving to Mount Airy, Maryland. Jason worked as a web developer for a few years and discovered his passion for teaching while working as a teacher at UMBC. While looking at schools to work at in DC, he found Burke and, because some of his friends’ children went to Burke, he had a positive idea of the culture and envi-
ronment here. Jason has an identi-
cal twin and lives on a small farm with his family where he stays very tech mindful.

Julia H. Cain - Director of Communications & Marketing
Julia grew up in Needham, Mas-
sachusetts and moved to DC thir-
teen years ago to work in the perform-
ing arts and arts education, where she later focused on exter-
nal relations. Julia was interested in continuing her education path and, because she lived in the same neighborhood, decided to check out Burke. She found that Burke was a fast-paced and welcoming environment. Julia takes an interest in math and NCAA Division 1 women’s gymnastics and once learned to play a 16th-century card game called piquet. She also holds an extreme dislike of pizza in all forms.

Laura Boyer - Director of Summer Programs
Laura grew up in Takoma Park, Maryland and spent eight years in Philadelphia before deciding to come back to the DMV. Laura started in musical theater and dance work before rediscovering her love of education. She was instantly hooked on the environ-
ment of Burke when she found it while switching jobs. Laura has a tabby cat named Callie and in her free time takes boxing classes. Her favorite ice cream combo is cho-
colate on the top and mint choco-
late chip ice cream on the bottom.

Alison Schulte - Earth System Sciences Teacher
Alison grew up in Minneso-
ta before later moving to DC to be closer to family and to further develop her career path. Alison started off as pre-med in college and then decided to move her foci to focus on biology and environmental studies. She then started volun-
teedering with a fishery where she conducted research in the Great Basin. Alison discovered Burke through a friend and liked the mis-
sion statement and the variety of activities at Burke. This summer, Alison climbed the highest 14er in the Rockies. She takes an interest in climate change and its correla-
tion with the spread of diseases. She also has two brothers who also have Bachelor’s degrees in the sciences.

Morgan Gargulak - Conceptual Chemistry & Biology Teacher
Morgan is from Milwaukee, Wisconsin and moved to DC when
her husband took a job here. Morgan majored in biology studies in college and when she moved to DC, took a research job with the Walter Reed Army Institute of Re-
search. She later got an M.Ed in Secondary Education when she discovered her love of teaching. Morgan was looking for a job in education and really liked the phi-
losophy and learning environment of Burke, so she decided to apply. Morgan has a twin sister and a fluffy cat named Toby.

Jadéa Asante - Communications & Marketing Associate
Jadéa grew up in Teaneck, New Jersey and moved to DC to work at Burke. Jadéa studied Public Rela-
tions and Graphic Design in col-
lege and has always liked digital communication. Jadéa decided to work at Burke because she loved the inclusivity of the communi-
ty and thought the job title was perfect for her. She also loved the friendly and unique environment of Burke when she arrived. Jadéa is a Capricorn and loves to travel.

Nearby emergency and new policy raise fire drill questions

BY ISABEL GOTTLIEB-NEMO ‘21
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Burke’s first fire drill of the 2019-2020 school year, on September 11th, coincided with a fire at a building down the street. According to DC Fire and EMS, the fire squad located the fire in a 5th-floor boiler room in the same building that houses the Giant. There were no injuries and the fire team stopped actively fighting the fire at around 11:00 AM. Although the simultaneous timing was happenstance, the fire got some students think-
ing about the functionality of Burke fire drills in case of an actual fire emergency.

When thinking back to the drill, Julia H. Cain ‘20 said, “I feel like we got out of the building effectively but once we got to the location we were supposed to be it was disor-
 ganized, people were yelling at us to be places we weren’t supposed to be, no one really knew what was going on.” Nemeth added that the condi-
tions were “way too cramped” and that “they should have had people spread out like last year.”

However, Head of School Damian Jones explained that change came because Burke was not meeting the fire mar-
shal’s requirement of ten drills a year. “The reason we use the staircase is because, over the last five years, I’ve had to cancel at least a half-dozen fire drills because the field gets waterlogged,” he said.

However, students thought that the new procedures caused as many problems as they solved. “I’d rather have safe fire drills that aren’t cha-
otic than get my shoes a little wet,” said Sigitas Puskuris ‘21.

Jones explained that the decision was primarily one of necessity. “I kept canceling drills, and the fire marshal said last year, ‘You can’t cancel any more, you have to do all ten,’ so I had to find a location where we could perform them.”

Photo by Jared Ruderman/WTOP

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As 2020 nears, Democratic race heats up

BY EDDIE DONG '20
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Almost one year away from the general election, candidates from both parties seek to unseat Donald Trump from office. Following his surprising election in 2016, President Trump has enacted several contentious policies, from holding children at the border in inhumane conditions to attempting to repeal the Affordable Care Act of 2010 to warming relationships with totalitarian countries such as Saudi Arabia and North Korea. His approval rate has hovered below 50% throughout his entire presidency, according to FiveThirtyEight.

Frontrunners for the Democratic Party’s nomination include former Vice President Joe Biden, Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders, and Massachusetts Senator Elizabeth Warren. At its peak, more than twenty candidates sought the nomination, but candidates began dropping out soon after, and hopefully continued to do so into the fall.

Biden, widely considered the frontrunner for the nomination, has emphasized his ability to beat Trump in a general election. However, he has been criticized for interactions with women (Lucy Flores, a former Nevada state legislator, accused Biden of inappropriately touching her shoulders and kissing her head at a 2014 campaign event) and his numerous gaffes throughout his campaign.

Another frontrunner, Bernie Sanders, has campaigned on progressive policies, including for-giving medical and student debt and implementing a single-payer healthcare plan named “Medicare for All.” Sanders has labeled himself a democratic socialists, a label traditionally scorned in American politics.

Critics have also raised questions about Biden and Sanders, as both are over 75 years old. If either of these candidates made it to office, they would be the oldest president ever elected; they are both more than 6 years older than Donald Trump was when he took office. Biden has been criticized for his visible gaffes, including an incident in the September debate where former Housing and Urban Development Secretary Julian Castro accused him of forgetting what he had said two minutes earlier. Sanders recently suffered a heart attack, taking him off the campaign trail indefinitely.

Other candidates who remain in the conversation include Pete Buttigieg, the mayor of South Bend, Indiana and the first openly gay major presidential candidate, Andrew Yang, whose policies include Universal Basic Income, and Senator Kamala Harris (D-Calif.), who has garnered attention for her prosecutorial record and challenging Biden in an early debate.

As the buzz kicks off in a little under four months, it is still anyone’s game. In fact, neither Bill Clinton nor Barack Obama were the likely nominee when their campaign started.

In the Republican Party, Donald Trump faces some challenges for the nomination, including former Massachusetts Governor Bill Weld, and former representatives Mark Sanford and Joe Walsh. All are running on an anti-Trump sentiment. These bids for the nomination are seen as having a low chance, as the last time an incumbent president was unseated by his own party was 1884.

Boys’ soccer wins, girls lose narrowly at RFK

BY WILL KENNEALLY ’22
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On Friday, October 4th, Burke soccer players and fans shuttled across town for the annual homecoming soccer games, which took place in the shadow of a D.C. sports landmark that has created many memories over the years.

Whereas previous games had taken place at Catholic University or the neighboring University of the District of Columbia, this year’s games were at the brand new 27-acre Robert F. Kennedy (RFK) Campus Fields complex. With the historic RFK stadium in the background, the girls’ team lost narrowly to Washington Waldorf, and the boys edged out an equally close extra-time win over Waldorf on a goal by Paul Keenan ‘20.

The D.C. government announced that they are planning to tear down the iconic stadium by 2021, due to the substantial costs to maintain it. The once multi-purpose venue hasn’t hosted a Washington team since 2017 when D.C. United moved to the newly completed Audi Stadium.

RFK was known as District of Columbia Stadium when it opened in October 1964. It was renamed after the assassination of Senator Robert F. Kennedy in 1969.

The stadium’s first tenants were the Redskins and Senators. The Redskins’ glory days came while they played at RFK as they appeared in four Super Bowls and won three. Over the 36 years the team played at RFK, they posted a record of 173–102–3 at home. RFK was the place to be on Sunday. Since the completion of FedEx Field in Landover, Maryland in 1997, the team has won fewer than half their games at the new home.

Despite the Redskins’ success and loyalty from their fanbase, the Washington Senators’ tenure at RFK was a different story. The Senators’ lack of success forced the team to relocate to Texas, leaving behind a small but outraged fan base.

In 2005, baseball did eventually make its highly anticipated return to RFK after a 33-year absence from the nation’s capital. The Montreal Expos relocated their franchise to Washington and became the Nationals due to poor attendance and performance in Montreal. The Nationals played at RFK until 2008 when construction finished on nearby Nationals Park.

The stadium’s management team, Events DC, has said that there may be opportunities for fans to purchase memorabilia from the stadium.

CLUBS CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Students of students, and for students. Given Burke’s commitment to including student voices in the decision they make, it seems that such a decision, which affects students almost exclusively, should happen with input from students, or at least SGA. However, according to one member of SGA, the administration simply informed them of the upcoming change without leaving clear room for student input in representing students’ interests. As stated in the school constitution, Burke students have “the right to be represented in conversations regarding potential school policy changes that directly relate to their social, academic, artistic and athletic experiences.” It is important and very distressing that the administration appears to have ignored that right in this case.

Burke’s website says this about clubs: “[Burke] wants students to join together as a community and indulge their passions, a value that should be for art, movies, religion or social justice.” The family handbook states that “participation in clubs provides a meaningful opportunity to share and explore common interests outside of the classroom.” The new policy does not meet these standards. In trying to perfect the clubs program, the administration has forgotten its stated goals, gone away from the identity of the school, and denied students their right to have a say in changes that affect them.

EDITORIAL CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Lamenting the process of being kicked out and struggling to get back into the clubs pool before Club Expo, McLenaghan cited “the lack of communication [that] has really been the root of all of these problems.”

Falk and Aird said they understood that some students would initially react adversely to change. They felt, however, that it was still necessary to make the long-term needs of the community.

“Change is hard in any community but it’s constant and the idea that we’re changing for a reason is important for folks to remember,” said Falk. She added that newer students would be in a position to better benefit from the new setup while more senior students may be frustrated at the unfamiliar state of things.

“I think we continue by saying that the policy is still in development and subject to students’ feedback.”

“It is a pilot. It’s our first time doing [clubs] this way so we’ll see how it goes and we’ll get feedback and we’ll take that feedback to heart and adhere to it and see what next year looks like. So to me, it’s very much a work in progress.”
protests and plans have begun anew. Died down, and preparations for future disobedience. Now that Climate Week is a DC’s protest, and also worked with Patagonia and a general focus on climate change.

Burke joined us, and there were signs and chants, speeches and reporters, and an air of fearlessness, and anger coming from a crowd of people very aware of the danger of inaction. She is still hungry for the blood. She is still hungry for the hunger. She cannot be stopped. Poppins would not stand a chance. Why isn’t there a mouse flavored cat-food?

Really? You think there should be a mouse flavored cat-food? So you’re the hot-shot innovator who’s gonna try mouse, and then hundreds of samples of cat food to make sure they get the taste exactly right? You’re gonna be the one who chooses to put multiple pieces of raw mouse into your mouth, followed by spoonfuls of catfood to compare the flavors? That’s what your gonna do with your life? It’s a good thing you’re going to Burke, because you need that college-prep education if you wanna be a cat food taste. How many chickens would it take to kill an elephant?

What’s the worst question, my friend. What you should be asking is how many elephants it would take to kill a chicken. What’s the colour of your toothbrush?

Who’s still using a toothbrush in 2019? Just eat the entire tube of toothpaste like the rest of us do and stop killing the planet. Also, get the heck out of here with your British spelling. “Colour.” Stop being so pretentious, it’s “color.” Is breast milk okay for vegans?

Ah, a fellow intellectual. This is indeed the timeless debate and raises all sorts of other questions. A vegan, obviously, can’t eat any animal product. But does a human really count as an animal? I would argue, yes. We are, after all, mammals, and the only thing that separates us from any other species is the fact that we cook, so I guess we aren’t all the special. But, where are the vegans getting this ban on eating? It’s not me who is causing the distiguishing (disturbing), then yeah, I’d say it’s not vegan. Drinking another animal’s milk. But if it’s your own (somehow more disturbing), then what? Does it still count? I have no answer for you, young one, but I want you to consider this question: if human breast milk (your own, or someone else’s) is vegan, then what about cannibalism? I think they’re both vegan. It’s time the taboo of cannibalism is abolished. It would solve world hunger and overpopulation, and it would make me the new “eliminate some people you didn’t like. Legalize cannibalism 2k19!”

Tragedy puts on stellar show at Hill Country Barbecue

BY JEREMY RUBIN-THOMAS ’20 rub200@burkeschool.org

Many bands don’t have a theme. Many bands are serious in their music. However, there are some bands that do have a theme and there are also plenty of comedic bands. One specific band that has both is Tragedy: An All Metal Tribute to the Bee Geeys and Beyond. This band is exactly what comes to mind when reading their name and description: a band that does metal covers of Bee Gees songs and more.

The band came to D.C. on September 21 at Hill Country Barbecue, a restaurant and live concert venue about two blocks from the Gallery Place metro. About 50 people in total came to watch the band. Around 7:45, the band walked onstage with “Lance the Towel Boy” in the lead with a siren on his head and a megaphone (more on that later). Lance then immediately got out a recorder to play a low-quality version of the 20th Century Fox theme song. The rest of the band then started playing their cover of the same song, before launching into a cover of “Fame” (which they had covered for their latest album “Tragedy Goes To The Movies”). The rest of their set included covers of songs such as “Country Roads,” “Funky Town,” “Sweet Caroline,” “9 to 5,” “It’s Raining Men,” “Dancing Queen,” and “Stayin’ Alive.” At the end of the set, the band invited onstage any female audience members who were willing to partici-pate. Many band members went around through the audience and interacted with fans.

Overall, the concert was great and very intimate with plenty of interaction. Lance did multiple stunts on stage including painting, making bubbles with a bubble wand, going into the crowd, shooting glitter into the audience, wearing masks, pretending to play instruments, and pretending to be a DJ during the encore. There were other onstage stunts and jokes as well (including a lot of NSFW ones that didn’t make this article).

The show had excellent stage presence from the band members, hilarious stunts and jokes, and interaction with the crowd. After the show, the band went over to meet with fans and sell merchandise at the table and even talked with some fans. The promoter of Hill Country Barbeque wants the band to continue playing there, so no doubt they will be back in town someday.

CLIMATE CONTINUED FROM FRONT

climate strike on September 20th, and over 4 million people protested throughout 185 countries. I was one of the organizers for DC’s protest, and also worked with Patagonia on a campaign for Climate Week (the week of the 20th, during which there was a variety of different strikes and protests, and a general focus on climate change worldwide). A group of students from Burke joined us, and there were signs and chants, speeches and reporters, and an air of fearlessness, and anger coming from a crowd of people very aware of the danger of inaction.

A few days later was the “Shut Down DC” project that intended to shut down major streets around DC by means of civil disobedience. Now that Climate Week is over, however, focus and enthusiasm have died down, and preparations for future protests and plans have begun anew.

I had two main goals while writing this. One was simply to inform and spread information about an event that happened around Burke. The other was to reach out to the Burke community when it comes to this issue. We have not been particularly focused on climate justice in the past, but I hope that, in addition to changing minds and engaging people in the wider world, I can do the same within Burke.

Climate change is one of the few issues that will affect absolutely everything. The global economy cannot adapt to this, the pressure climate change would apply (natural disasters, health costs, billions of displaced people, etc.) and an economic collapse or even weakening would not only affect us directly, but also would impact all other humanitarian causes. The amount of money to support families would mean you could “eliminate some people you didn’t like. Legalize cannibalism 2k19!”

As a last note, I invite everyone to reflect back on the walkout or check it out online, but also to get involved and acknowledge the importance of climate change and its effects. SEA (Students for Environmental Action) will always be here and there will be more on how the school can continue to contribute. Finally, a very sincere thanks to everyone who was involved in the strike on the 20th!