



**Governing Board Meeting
Thursday, February 16, 2023**



NOTICE OF MEETING

The regular meeting of the Governing Board of the Davidson Academy will be held starting at 2 p.m. on Thursday, February 16, 2023.

This public meeting will be held via videoconference and there will be no physical location for the meeting. Members of the public wishing to hear and observe the meeting may do so using the following link: <https://davidsonacademy-unr-edu.zoom.us/j/93248174754>.

Public comment for this meeting will be received via email, videoconference participation, and telephone. Those wishing to provide public comment via email may email their public comments to boardcomments@davidsonacademy.unr.edu. All public comments received via email before and during the meeting will be forwarded to the Governing Board of the Davidson Academy for their consideration and will be included in the public record as minutes but will not be read aloud during the meeting. Those wishing to provide live public comment via videoconference may do so using the following link: <https://davidsonacademy-unr-edu.zoom.us/j/93248174754>.

Those wishing to provide live public comment via telephone may dial +1 669 444 9171. The Webinar ID is: 932 4817 4754.

AGENDA

2 p.m.

- A. ROLL CALL*
- B. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS*
- C. PUBLIC COMMENTS*

The public may comment on any subject that is not on the agenda that is pertinent to the Davidson Academy. Each speaker will be limited to three minutes. Public comment relating to an agenda item will be taken during discussion of that item. Comment will be limited to three minutes but speaking time may be reduced at the discretion of the chair of the meeting, if there are a large number of speakers on a given subject. No comments will be restricted based upon viewpoint.

Davidson Academy

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D. APPROVAL OF AGENDA *(for possible action)*

The public is notified that the Governing Board may take items on the agenda out of order; combine two or more agenda items for consideration; remove an item from the agenda; or delay discussion relating to an item on the agenda.

E. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Meeting of November 14, 2022 *(for possible action)*

F. REPORTS*

1. ACADEMY DIRECTOR*
 - a. General Program Updates
2. MEDIA AND OUTREACH*

G. PUBLIC COMMENTS*

The public may comment on any subject that is not on the agenda that is pertinent to the Davidson Academy. Each speaker will be limited to three minutes. Public comment relating to an agenda item will be taken during discussion of that item. Comment will be limited to three minutes but speaking time may be reduced at the discretion of the chair of the meeting, if there are a large number of speakers on a given subject. No comments will be restricted based upon viewpoint.

H. ADJOURNMENT *(for possible action)***Next Meeting Dates for 2023:**

- Thursday, May 25, 2023, at 2:00 p.m.
- Thursday, September 21, 2023, at 2:00 p.m.
- Thursday, November 16, 2023, at 2:00 p.m.

CERTIFICATE OF POSTING OF THIS AGENDA

I hereby certify that In accordance with NRS 241.020, on or before Monday, February 13, 2023, at 9:00 a.m., a copy of this agenda was delivered to the post office used by the Davidson Academy addressed to each person who has requested to receive copies of Davidson Academy Governing Board meeting agendas; a copy of this agenda was emailed to each person who agreed to receive copies of Davidson Academy Governing Board meeting agendas by electronic mail; and a copy has been posted online at Notice.NV.gov and at the Academy's website (<http://www.DavidsonAcademy.UNR.edu/>). A physical copy was posted at the Davidson Academy, Reno NV, per NRS 241.020.

/s/ Aimee Fredericks
Governing Board Clerk
Email: afredericks@davidsonacademy.unr.edu
Phone: 775-682-5800

Governing Board: *Bob Davidson, Roger Davidson, Hon. Brian Krolicki, Mark Herron, Lauralyn Lovell McCarthy Sandoval, Richard Trachok, and Annette Whittemore; Ex-Officio: Dr. Susan Enfield, Jhone Ebert, and Hon. Brian Sandoval.*

Note: *The Governing Board may take items on the agenda out of order; combine two or more agenda items for consideration; remove an item from the agenda; or delay discussion relating to an item on the agenda.*

Those items followed by an asterisk () are items on the agenda upon which the Governing Board will take no action.*

Members of the public who are disabled and require special accommodations or assistance at the meeting are requested to call Colleen Harsin at 775-682-5800 at least 24 hours prior to the meeting.

Copies of the packets containing support material for this agenda are available at no charge on the Davidson Academy website at <http://DavidsonAcademy.UNR.edu>. Copies may also be obtained by sending a request via email to charsin@davidsonacademy.unr.edu or by contacting Aimee Fredericks by mail at Davidson Academy, 9665 Gateway Drive, Ste. B, Reno, NV 89521, or by telephone at 775-682-5800.

Meeting agendas and minutes are available on the [Academy's website](http://www.DavidsonAcademy.UNR.edu/) (<http://www.DavidsonAcademy.UNR.edu/>).

Minutes of the Meeting
The Davidson Academy Governing Board
November 14, 2022

Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Governing Board of the Davidson Academy was called to order at 2:02 p.m. This public meeting was held by videoconference allowing members of the public to hear and observe the meeting. Members of the public were invited to provide comments by telephone, through videoconference, or by email.

A. Roll Call

Roll call was completed by Meeting Chair, Mark Herron. In attendance were Bob Davidson, Roger Davidson, Annette Whittemore, Lauralyn McCarthy-Sandoval, Brian Sandoval and Brian Krolicki. Also, present were Academy Director, Colleen Harsin; Governing Board Clerk, Aimee Fredericks; and IT Support, Ben Brown. Richard Trachok, Susan Enfield and Jhone Ebert were not present. Following completion of roll call, a quorum of voting members was confirmed.

B. Welcome and Introduction

Mark Herron welcomed Board Members and members of the public in attendance.

C. Public Comment

Mark Herron provided instructions concerning public comment as stated under item C. of the meeting agenda.

Mark Herron stated that this meeting would be held without a physical location, but in compliance with Nevada legislation, was available for visual participation, and audio call-in for public comments. He referenced the public comment details provided in the agenda and confirmed that public comments, if made, would be received by email or by telephone. No comments were received.

D. Approval of Agenda

Mark Herron requested a motion to approve the meeting agenda. Motion was made and seconded for approval of the meeting agenda as submitted. Motion carried unanimously.

E. Approval of Minutes

Mark Herron requested approval of the minutes for the meeting of September 28, 2022, included in the board book for this meeting. Motion was made and seconded for approval of the minutes as submitted. There was no discussion and the motion carried unanimously.

F. Reports

1. Academy Director

a. General Program Updates

In follow-up to discussion from the previous quarterly board meeting, Davidson Academy Director, Colleen Harsin, reported that the Parent Booster Club, “Friends of the DA”, was creating more opportunities for Academy students through their volunteer efforts. Enrolled Academy students currently range in age from 9 to 18 years. Parent volunteer time has focused on providing supervision for students to be able to be outside and on the University campus more. Students are very excited about these opportunities and have spent time playing outdoor activities in the quad, eating lunch at different dining options on campus or just taking walks on campus. The hope is that these opportunities result in more active students and provide some stress relief during the school day. The Parent Booster Club also recently provided a staff appreciation lunch for all teachers and administrative staff members.

Other successful student activities include the Late-Night Lollapalooza, and the Club Hub which is an event held at the Academy and intended for fun and student club fundraising. Coming up are the middle school dance and high school formal dances. Students continue to be excited about returning and new events.

Bob Davidson asked if Davidson Academy students younger than 16 years continue to be chaperoned. Ms. Harsin confirmed that was still the case with one adult per ten students chaperoned. Brian Krolicki asked how many parents are part of the Parent Booster Club. Ms. Harsin confirmed a core group of five to ten parents organizing the club, however there are many opportunities for parents to be involved as much or as little as they would like. For example, there were up to twenty parents organizing the staff luncheon.

Bob Davidson asked that effort be made in gathering information about Davidson Academy alumni accomplishments and successes. Ms. Harsin indicated she would follow-up on this task.

2. Media and Outreach

Ms. Harsin referred Board Members to their board books for a summary of recent media and outreach activities on behalf of the Academy. Davidson Academy was listed as a 2023 Niche best school as well as a Top 10 School in the College Gazette. The Davidson Academy Print 3D Club recently wrote an article about their contribution in creating prosthetics. Davidson Academy student, Darsh Patel wrote an Op Ed featured in the August issue of *This is Reno*, titled, “Stress is the number one issue facing today’s youth (opinion)”. Website metrics are up across the board with increasing user sessions and page views. The Academy website has been updated with a section for advocating for gifted students. The 2023-2024 application will launch soon.

Lauralyn McCarthy-Sandoval complimented the reported increase in website page views.

G. General Business

1. Ms. Harsin requested Board approval of proposed 2023 Davidson Academy graduates. Mark Herron asked for motion to approve proposed graduates subject to those students satisfactorily completing graduation requirements. Motion to approve was made and seconded. Motion carried unanimously.

H. Public Comment

There were no comments from the public at this time.

I. Adjournment

Mark Herron let the Board know that pursuant to Board Member Richard Trachok's request, quarterly board meetings have been moved to Thursdays. Board Clerk, Aimee Fredericks will forward the updated meeting dates to all Board Members following adjournment.

There being no further business coming before the Board in public meeting, Mr. Herron asked for a motion to adjourn. Motion was made, seconded, and carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 2:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Aimee Fredericks, Governing Board Clerk

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with nature in Northern Nevada



THE PHOENIX FOCUS

Student Publication of the Davidson Academy

Vol. 1 Issue 1

Fall 2022

Strong Season Debut for High School Science Bowl

By Emmy Bonser '24

At the Davidson Academy, the official start of fall signals the end of Diagnostic Period, an increase in pumpkin spice consumption and the intermittent sounds of buzzers coming from Room 225. With the start of tryouts and the start of the National Fall Science Bowl League, the 2023 High School Science Bowl season has officially begun.

After a strong showing last year—JV placing 2nd at Regionals and Varsity placing 19th at High School Nationals—returning veterans are itching to get back to competing, especially as competitions return in-person.

Three of the freshmen—Ethan Chan, Yajur Chandar, and Alexander Weaver—are coming off an even more impressive 2022 season, having placed 4th at Middle School Nationals over the summer. “Going to DC for Nationals was very fun,” said Chan. “[My teammates and I] got to play Science Bowl rounds...and [do] other activities, like the Cyber Challenge.”

Even Science Bowl rook-



Science Bowl competitors with Coach Brett Guisti. Photo by Kentia Kalanaki

ies are picking up on the excitement in the air. “One question! That’s all I came for! One question!” exclaimed junior Bijan Taheri after an action-packed tryout round against numerous program veterans, where he did, in fact, get his one question, much to the excitement of fellow newcomers junior Xander Doubinkine and freshman Kaison Fong. Alongside tryouts, a handful of club members are competing in the National Fall Science Bowl League against teams everywhere from New York to Hawaii.

Senior Alan Kappler, junior Emmy Bonser, sophomore Akshansh Chauhan and freshman Yajur Chandar played their first match against North Hollywood High School’s JV team, winning 180-54. Chandar snagged four points, Chauhan eight, and Bonser twenty, though the real star of the team’s first match was Kappler, who put up an impressive twenty-eight points and 100% toss-up accuracy. The balance of the team’s points came from bonus questions, which were also in large part answered by Kappler. “Can

we hire Alan?” quipped senior Richard Zhu, captain of North Hollywood’s Varsity team, who spectated the match.

Kappler credited his success to playing in the National Science Bowl Association, a Science Bowl parody of the NBA, over the summer, saying, “NSBA was really interesting to be a part of. I learned a lot about being part of a new team and probably got better at buzzing.”

Senior Arvind Murty, junior Xander Doubinkine, junior Jonathan McDow, and

sophomore Dallin Guisti played Tolani School’s Varsity team, narrowly losing 70-90. McDow scored sixteen points, Murty twenty, and rookie Doubinkine four in his first-ever major competition. Although Guisti did not score, he played a crucial role in bonus questions, writing down important numbers in chat so his teammates had all the information they needed.

Bonser, Chandar, Chauhan and Kappler are set to play Centennial High School’s Varsity team, a much-anticipated faceoff after Bonser, Chauhan, Kappler and Davidson Online student Samuel Wang placed 2nd at the Centennial Autumn Science Tournament last season. Doubinkine, Guisti, McDow and Murty, meanwhile, will play The Hopkins School’s JV team.

Five players traveled to Massachusetts over Veterans’ Day weekend to compete in the 4th annual MIT Science Bowl Invitational. The team had a strong second place showing at this important national competition.

Taylor Tickets in Academy's "Wildest Dreams"

By Max Grinstein '24

Ever since downloading Taylor Swift’s “Fearless” album onto her pink iPod Nano, Academy senior Samantha Glover has been hooked.

“I just connected with that music so much,” Glover said. “It has always been a constant. Anytime someone asked me who my favorite artist was, it was always something related to Taylor

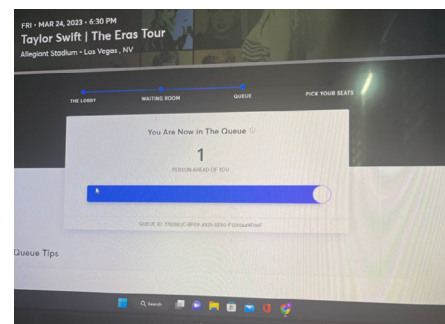
Swift.”

Glover was elated, then, when she heard some big news from her friend, senior Sophia Burbano: Swift would be going on tour for the first time since 2018. Burbano and Glover were determined to attend their first ever Taylor Swift concert.

But, unfortunately for the pair, getting tickets to the “Eras” tour, slated to begin in March, would not be easy.

For one, Swift does not have any concerts planned in Northern Nevada. On the West Coast, fans will pack stadiums in Seattle, Inglewood, Santa Clara, and Las Vegas, bopping their heads to classics like “Shake it Off” and “Blank Space.” Apparently Reno—with its thousands of loyal “Swifties”—did not make the cut. They will just have to settle for seeing Reba McEntire, in

SWIFT Page 10



Success! Sophia Burbano is first in line to purchase tickets, a coveted sight after spending hours online. Photo courtesy of Sophia Burbano

2 | NEWS & FEATURES

Reno Youth Express Concern Over Nevada Ghost Guns

By Kayla Lee '25

Less than three months after the ATF serialized and mandated background checks for “buy-build-shoot” kits in Nevada, dealers have found a way to skirt the law, and Nevada communities must now face the resurrected reality of ghost guns.

Assembly Bill 286 approved by Gov. Steve Sisolak of NV went into effect on August 24, requiring sellers to serialize “buy-build-shoot” ghost gun kits and conduct background checks on prospective buyers.

The impending regulation from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) prompted a fire sale of kits from dealers looking to offload their inventories, according to CBS News. However, now that the rule is in effect, regional dealers in Nevada have already found ways to circumvent these rules by offering to sell ghost gun parts individually.

For the most part, community discourse in Nevada lacks the intensity seen in other larger states, like in California and Texas. Communities are tightly knit and reclusive. Since discourse is so fragile here, people have harder times opening up

AB 286 in effect to regulate sales of kits and require background checks on buyers



The Reno Police Department in Downtown Reno after a snowy night on Tuesday, Nov. 8, 2022. Photo by Kayla Lee

about their experiences with violence.

A 16-year-old Reno High School student described how they were threatened by another student, who flashed his gun on school grounds around the beginning of school, in early August. The student recalled that they bumped into the perpetrator while they were walking to the bathroom.

“It was like a cliché you would’ve seen in a Netflix

show. I told him that it was an accident, but he was really pressed anyway,” the student said. “It was kind of a normal occurrence at school, so I didn’t really think much of it until he opened his jacket and flaunted [the] gun ... he supposedly made himself.”

From what the student implied, the weapon they were threatened with was a ghost gun. The student did not disclose whether the perpetrator faced disciplinary charges; however, community realities are becoming clearer.

Ghost guns are not just a whispered topic of national gossip, where we can chat away knowing that we won’t be affected by such an elusive phenomenon.

Though the Davidson Academy is much more secure than other public schools in Northern Nevada, students here aren’t fully sheltered from the violence and the ‘outside world.’

According to court records, ghost gun components, especially those from Polymer80 kits, are used to construct the vast majority of ghost weapons that have been found by law enforcement around the country.

For this reason, Nevada’s legislators had contested the legal parameters around ghost guns for the past few years; anti-gun violence advocates recognized a rare opportunity to thwart transport of ghost gun parts.

Many of these advocates believed that this Nevada legislation would’ve been more effective than the fragmented legal efforts of the past few years.

And it was nearly successful.

In May 2021, AB 286 was approved by the legislature on a party-line vote and signed by Gov. Steve Sisolak. The new legislation would become effective in seven months from the date, and American manufacturer Polymer80, Inc. would no longer be producing ghost gun kits in Nevada.

However, with the aid of the New York law firm Greenspoon Marder (and the court’s convenient location in the rural suburbs of Nevada), Polymer80 was successful in having the portion of the legislation that would’ve prohibited its ghost gun business legally declared invalid.

Although it is now prohibited to manufacture or own a ghost gun in Nevada, it is still permissible to own, disassemble, and transport the parts of one.

Anti-gun violence advocates claim that this legal outcome in Nevada is a standing example of the failure of state law: state-level limitations won’t work to close the ghost gun loophole.

Later in June 2022, a string of mass shootings prompted President Joe Biden to sign the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act, a federal gun bill, into law.

However, advocates assert that the bill doesn’t truly address ghost gun loopholes, or ghost guns in general. As the name suggests, ghost guns have been incredibly elusive up until now—both in terms of legislative and community discourse.

“In my mind, violence that happens in our community is interpersonal, in a way,” Catherine Leon, the facilitator of the 2022 High School Giving Circle, a youth philanthropy program in Northern Nevada, said. “Guns are also defense mechanisms to people. You’d rather be carrying a gun so that people can’t hurt you.”

This argument has been used by gun advocates in what seems like an eternal debate of national gun rights and violence in America.

However, on a community level, the language of gun violence is much more nuanced. Gun violence manifests in very particular settings, like with domestic violence, intimate partner violence (IPV), and school violence.

“Mass shootings, which are nationally recognized, are different from gun violence recognized in a community. Victims of mass shootings often have more of a face than the mass shooter themselves,” Leon said. “That’s why community conversation has to be part of a larger regional and national conversation. I mean, ugh, we’re just so freaking violent!”



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Students Offer Solutions for Quashing Imposter Syndrome



Students Hana de Queiroz, Corina Nicolescu and Olivia Garrison spend time together in the Academy courtyard. Fostering healthy relationships outside the classroom is a key way to avoid imposter syndrome.

Photo by Kentia Kalanaki

THE PHOENIX FOCUS

The Phoenix Focus is the student newspaper of the Davidson Academy of Nevada. Founded to promote public discourse and depict student life at the Academy, The Phoenix Focus embraces truth and freedom of expression. Ultimately we strive for our newspaper to be a lens that focuses and presents the information necessary to advocate for both school and civic accountability. The newspaper aims to provide truthful and ethical coverage of matters here in our school community, but also happenings in our city, state and country that may be of interest to our students.

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The Phoenix Focus welcomes Letters to the Editors that adhere to the Academy's core values of respect, integrity, and responsibility. We reserve the right to edit letters for content and clarity. Letters should be emailed to phoenixfocus@davidsonacademy.unr.edu.

Interested in joining our staff? Newspaper Club meets on Fridays during lunch in Room 244.

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Academy students and counselors agree that imposter syndrome can take a toll on your mental health if left unaddressed; excessive perfectionism and unhealthy comparisons signs of a problem

By Geo Kim '27

Have you ever found yourself struggling with accepting compliments or criticism? Or have you found yourself being excessively perfectionistic, overworking yourself, or constantly comparing yourself to others around you?

If so, it may be a sign that you are experiencing a psychological occurrence called imposter syndrome. Many students at the Davidson Academy struggle with imposter syndrome and, as a result, it becomes harder for them to balance their lifestyles.

According to Laurie Parish, one of the counselors at the Academy, imposter syndrome is a feeling of inadequacy and/or incompetence, specifically when comparing oneself to others. In other words, it is a feeling that you are not good enough or do not deserve a placement, recognition or accomplishment. Additionally, Parish said that imposter syndrome can include thoughts of feeling like a fake and worrying that someone will find out you do not belong.

You might think that none of the descriptions above fit you, but that does not mean you do not have imposter syndrome. One can experience imposter syndrome in many ways; different people experience it differently.

Luke Metzidakis, a sophomore, said that imposter

syndrome can be related to the sense of belonging. "When I moved to Costa Rica and I didn't speak the language, I was pressured to learn the language as soon as I could and felt very left out," Metzidakis said.

Lily Yuan, a junior who serves as a Peer Advising Liaison, thinks that imposter syndrome can also deal with human relations. "I occasionally feel like I do not deserve the wonderful people in my life," Yuan said.

*"I took the ACT, and got a really good score... but I sometimes feel like if it was a less lucky day, then I wouldn't be here."
— Haig Keylian*

Senior Andrea Peng said, "I think the first year when I joined DA, I felt imposter syndrome because everyone around me was so smart and took higher classes than me. I associated taking higher classes with your level of intelligence, which I know now that it isn't the case."

Haig Keylian, a chaparrone who attends the University of Nevada, Reno, said that his experience with imposter syndrome was associated with college. "When I was a senior in high school, I took the ACT, and got a really good score, and that enabled me to come to UNR and get a very good scholarship," he said. "I was able to come to this school without paying a lot of money, but I sometimes feel like if it was a less lucky day, then I wouldn't be here."

Academy counselor Laurie Parish says that students can visit their counselors who are always available to discuss imposter syndrome and whatever else may be on their minds. Photo courtesy of Laurie Parish

Although imposter syndrome may feel difficult to overcome, there are ways to tackle it. Chaperone Halie Rines said, "I think it would take a lot of personal reflection and realizing the effort that you think is what's getting you where you want to be. It can take a lot of patience to get to that point."

"My tip would be learning the difference between being stuck-up and having a huge ego and allowing yourself to experience positive emotions about your successes," Junior Kennedy Rouse said.

Chrissie Wright, who works in special services, also points out that imposter syndrome is not limited to age. She said, "I know that many middle and high school students, as well as adults, suffer from it..."

"I don't think there are any age limits to imposter syndrome," Wright also pointed out how retaining such a mindset can damage not only one's growth as a person but also their well-being in general.

Although imposter syndrome may seem like a minor problem, it has the potential to affect your life negatively. It may be common to think that imposter syndrome can push an individual to work harder and achieve more; however, the constant anxiety you experience could lead to depression and other mental health issues.

Imposter syndrome can be overcome with the right mindset and a little bit of effort. Reach out to others for advice or help to implement for yourself a healthier mentality.



4 | NEWS & FEATURES

Davidson Academy University? Taking UNR Courses as a DA Student

By Weina Lu '24

UNR courses—to take or not to take?

To answer the question, let's take a deeper look at the advantages of enrolling in University of Nevada, Reno courses as a Davidson Academy student and the perspectives of students who have taken them.

When the Academy was established in 2006, it was "designated by Nevada legislation as a 'university school for profoundly gifted pupils,'" according to the Academy school profile. Laurie Parish, a counselor and college consultant at the Academy, explained that when you are admitted to attend, you can become a non-degree seeking student at the University as well. As a result, many Academy students—around 25% in the fall/spring semester, according to Ms. Parish—take University courses.

If you want to take languages other than those provided at the Academy, pursue other interests like music or anthropology, or have exhausted the Academy school curriculum, then University courses are for you. For instance, after taking Calculus III at the Academy, students often pursue more challenging math courses at the University, such as differential equations (MATH285) or linear algebra (MATH330).

Although students who take University courses are mostly juniors and seniors, if you're a middle school

student, you can do so as well. Ms. Parish explained that you just need to attend the Academy for at least a semester and pass three University course readiness assessments.

Since Academy students are automatically enrolled in the University's Early College Academy, you

for the experience. It gives you a taste of what college is like and also encourages self-advocacy," Akshansh Chauhan—a fourth-year sophomore who has taken three math and physics courses—said. "Even just meeting UNR students and getting to study and work with them is a whole lot of

teach the concepts better."

"Professors spend much less effort in making you understand [the content] compared to DA teachers," Egan Ram—a third-year junior who has taken seven math, physics, and economics classes—agreed.

This is not always the case, though. Both students

may be as well.

"College classes are very different," Chauhan warned. "It can be daunting to sit in a room with people 5 years older than you, with a class size that is (by DA standards) pretty big."

An Academy graduate—who has taken two history courses—said that University classes can also be held in a very different way than Academy classes. One of their courses was so unlike what they were used to at the Academy that they were not sure how to judge it. Their overall message for Academy students who are considering University courses was: be prepared to learn in a different way.

In addition to the hit-or-miss factor with the quality and style of University courses, they can be expensive. The cost per course during the fall/spring semesters is typically \$450 for Academy students (\$150/credit). During the summer and winter, you must pay the full price of \$256 per credit.

Also, as Ram pointed out, it can be difficult to fit University courses into your schedule during the fall/spring semesters.

Through exploring the advantages of taking University courses as an Academy student and the experiences of students who have taken them, you hopefully have a more in depth understanding of whether or not you want to enroll in University courses in the future.



A student strolls beside the University logo sign in front of the Knowledge Center. The DA's location on the University campus allows DA students to conveniently attend UNR classes in-person, as well as access the University's various facilities, such as the gym, libraries, labs, and dining areas. Photo by Weina Lu

have access to all undergraduate courses provided by the University. With the location of the Academy, you can easily take classes among University students and professors.

"I would definitely recommend taking UNR classes to other students, not just for the academic benefits but

fun."

When asked about their experiences with University courses, Academy students agreed that University courses are easier than Academy classes.

"Homework and tests are generally more straightforward and simpler," Chauhan said. "[But] DA teachers

specified that the quality of a course depends on the professor. They both have had good experiences with engaging professors who don't just teach from a textbook.

Not only are the difficulty and quality of University courses unlike those at the Academy, the class styles

Over the past four years, students have taken these classes and more:

English

ENG202 Film Analysis & Interpretation
ENG288 Ethics in Literature
ENG413A Sociolinguistics
ENG433B Comedies & Romance
ENG487A Horror in Literature

History

HIST211 History of Asia I
HIST231 History of Modern Africa II
HIST300 Historical Research & Writing
HIST393 England & the British Empire
HIST464 Europe 1914 - Present

Language

ARA111 First Year Arabic 1
FREN491 20th Century French Literature
ITAL111 First Year Italian 1
JPN305 Japanese Comp and Conversation I
PAIT111 First Year Northern Paiute

Math

MATH331 Groups, Rings and Fields
MATH485 Graph Theory & Combinatorics
MATH486 Game Theory
STAT352 Probability and Statistics
STAT452 Regression & Linear Modeling

Science

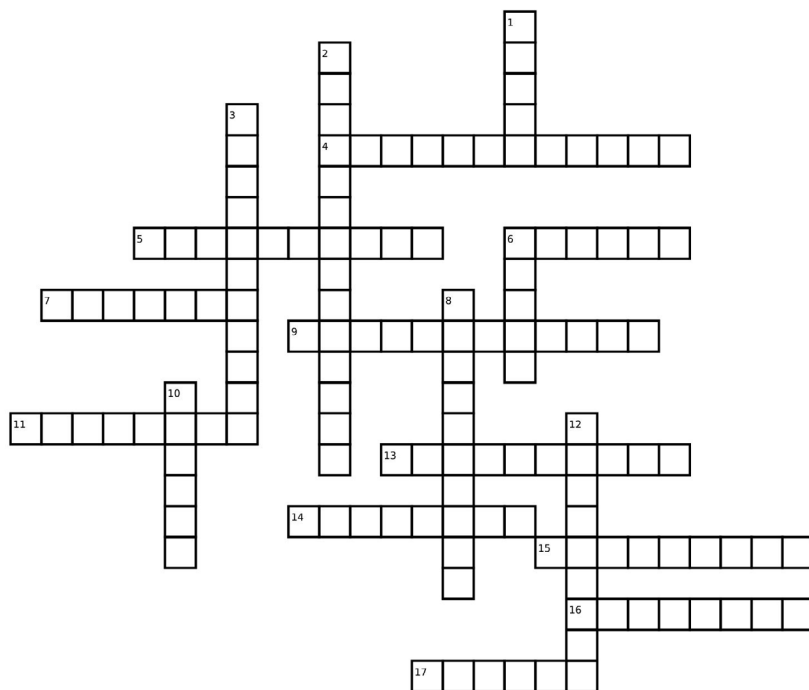
BIOL312 Ecology and Population Biology
BIOL453 Immunology
CHEM341 Organic Chemistry
CHEM421 Physical Chemistry I
PHYS151A General Physics I

Other

CS302 Data Structures
ECON440 Intro to Mathematical Economics
ENT200 Fundamentals of Entrepreneurship
PSC304 The Legislative Process
PSY413 Measuring the Brain

Source: Davidson Academy School Profiles

GAMES | 5



Down

- 1. Fleshy part over male turkey's beak
- 2. Fear of Halloween
- 3. Part of a chickadee's brain that grows 30% in fall
- 6. First video game character in Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade
- 8. Sound of rustling leaves
- 10. Sound that only male turkeys make
- 12. President that refused to support Thanksgiving as national holiday

Puzzle courtesy of Weina Lu

Across

- 4. Famous nursery rhyme character who had a great fall
- 5. Pigment in orange and red leaves
- 6. When a pumpkin is dropped
- 7. Raccoon that became President Coolidge's pet instead of Thanksgiving dinner
- 9. Day after this holiday is the busiest day for plumbers
- 11. State that produces the largest number of pumpkins
- 13. How one pumpkin describes her gourd girlfriend
- 14. Ruler of the pumpkin patch
- 15. Most common fall birth month
- 16. Animal that fails to find almost 3/4 of the nuts they bury
- 17. Movie with biggest Thanksgiving release

Chess Club Puzzle

White to mate in two



Puzzle courtesy of Chess Club. Chess Club meets on Mondays during lunch in Room 205.

Number Stumper

16+		2x	9+		18x
				10+	
1-	3	100x			
	16x		6	5+	
		2÷	5+	2	20x
11+					

Each row and column has the numbers 1-6. No numbers repeat in each row or column. Compartments are denoted by bold lines. The numbers written in the compartment must add, subtract, multiply or divide (according to the symbol) to form the number at the top of the compartment. Numbers can repeat in each compartment. Example: a compartment with "11+" can be filled with a 5 and a 6. A compartment with "10x" can be filled with a 5 and a 2.

Puzzle courtesy of Jordan Chong

MAD FOR MATH

Competition Math Rocks Davidson as Students Hone Problem Solving

Story and Photos by Emmy Bonser '24

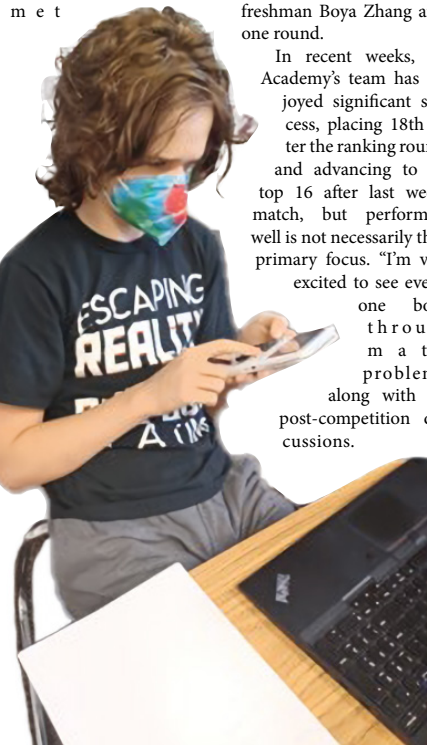
Like other competition clubs, Math Club refuses to confine itself to one room, often spilling across the hall from room 239 into the nearby room 241 because to many math kids, there's almost nothing more infuriating than not being able to discuss a problem. Now that Math Madness is in full swing, Wednesday lunches have settled into a steady and familiar pattern: grab a quick lunch, do the eight-question round, and discuss problems in the remaining time.

Although Math Madness is technically a head-to-head competition complete with brackets and prelims, there is little interaction with other teams—in fact, in nearly all cases, the Academy team does not even play their round at the same time as their opponents. Sometimes they play first, setting the bar for their opponents, and sometimes they play second and have to hope that whatever they score is high enough. “[Compared to finding out results immediately, it’s] way more stressful after the event when you wait and watch the other team,” said sophomore Evan Lim. “[But] it’s even more stressful when we do the competition second because then [we] just wait and wait until our team gets enough score.”

While other math competitions often incentivize strong individuals over strong teams, Math Madness is different. A team's score is never decided by one person alone; instead, scores are calculated by

summing the five highest individual results, leading to a maximum score of 40/40.

Math Madness is also considerably short, compared to other math competitions. Each round contains eight questions to be done in thirty minutes, in contrast to other high school math competitions like the American Mathematical Society's AMC10 and AMC12, which have twenty-five questions to be done in seventy-five minutes. This change of pace is



Freshman Alex Davi double-checks to make sure he entered the right numbers on his calculator.

with mixed reviews by the Academy team. “[Math Madness] is just fast paced,” described freshman Kaison

Fong. “Like, you saw everyone finished within ten minutes...and I think [the contest organizers] should focus more on hard questions instead of relatively easier [and therefore] easier to get wrong [questions].”

Another major difference from other contests is the online format. While even the AMCs have an on-paper option, Math Madness is purely online, which has led to some unique challenges, particularly with the automatically graded text boxes. “I typed a slash!” howled freshman Boya Zhang after one round.

In recent weeks, the Academy's team has enjoyed significant success, placing 18th after the ranking rounds and advancing to the top 16 after last week's match, but performing well is not necessarily their primary focus. “I'm very excited to see everyone bond through math problems, along with the post-competition discussions.

All of us have different talents, and it's wonderful to see all of us come together!” said sophomore Shelly

Yang.

Learning and discussing is definitely a major part of the team's routine. “There was one [question] that required you to know Cramer's Rule, and it was just... dumb,” explained senior Alan Kappler one week while other team members worked out calculations on the board to figure out where they went wrong. “If you know linear algebra, you have to add up a bunch of numbers in the question and that's it. If you don't know linear algebra, you have to just guess.”

Often, these discussions lead to sudden realizations as to where mistakes were made. “I tried to [coordinate] bash but did it wrong,” said senior Megan Davi after examining her scratch work over again.

“It said ten seconds? Oh my god...I just didn't read the problem” lamented sophomore Akshansh Chauhan as he discussed a different problem with the team.

Mistakes like Chauhan's belong to a wider category known as “sillies,” due to their simplistic nature. Other common sillies include simple calculation errors or writing down a number wrong. Because of how hard sillies are to catch and how easy they are to make, sillying a problem is a source of extreme frustration sometimes.

Luckily, the team has already developed a wide way of coping with sillies. As a result of their experiences in the second round, Fong and freshman Boya Zhang have expressed interest in creating their own contest called “Math Happiness,” the goal of which is to improve upon the Math Madness format and provide students with

more difficult questions that are harder for them to silly.

Sophomore Evan Lim takes a different approach. “Humbug! Semimajor axis...I multiplied by two...This is annoying,” muttered Lim as he rushed off to play foosball after the most recent match against California's BASIS Independent Silicon Valley.

Lim also encourages others to join him in venting frustrations through post-math games. “Hey Alan, can you play foosball?” he asked, after the otherwise perfect-scoring Kappler made a rare silly of his own during round four against New York's Deer Park High School.

As Math Madness enters its final few rounds, the pressure is mounting for the Academy team to curb sillies. “The problems aren't hard; we're just bad at them,” said sophomore Nate Potter, referencing sillies in some of the earlier rounds.

Although problems have gotten more challenging since those preliminary rounds, the caliber of the competition has increased. Looking at match statistics, the Academy team's biggest strength is its speed: in many cases, slightly lower-scoring Academy team members are actually faster than perfect-scoring players on other teams. Kappler, for instance, who is ranked fifteenth after a fourth-round silly, is over thirty seconds faster than the top-ranked player.

This speed will definitely help the team with tiebreakers, but at such high levels, match outcome is more likely to be based on which team sillies less. Luckily, harder problems look to be playing to the Academy team's strengths, and the

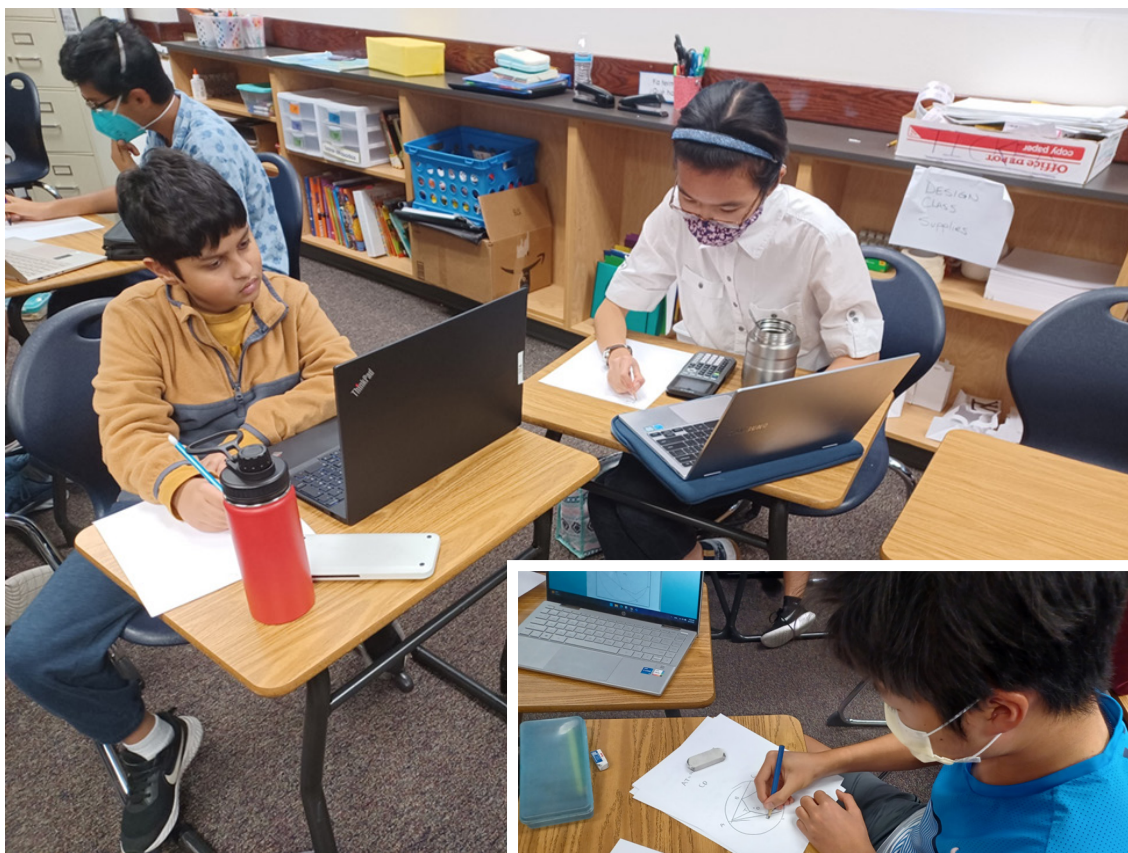
THE MADNESS

Math Academy Sharpening Skills

weekly discussions have led to noticeable improvement all around. The team's score has increased a full four points from the first match, from 34 against Connecticut's Valley Regional High School to a nearly perfect 38 against BISV.

If the Academy team wins their next match against California's Quarry Lane School, they'll advance into the top eight and play

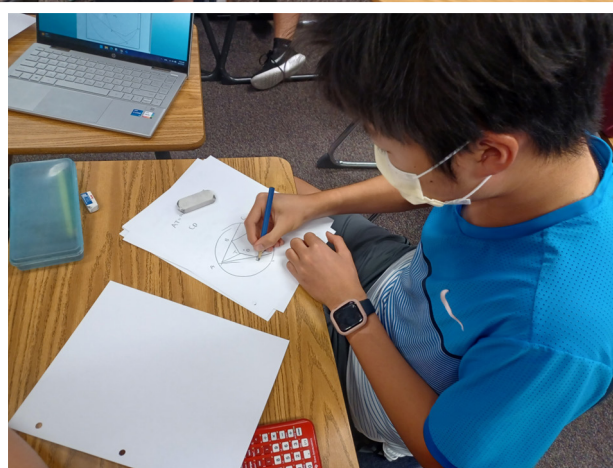
either Florida's American Heritage School Broward or Illinois's Naperville North High School. Last year, the team was able to advance all the way to the semifinals before losing off a time-tie-break. This year's final results are still yet to be seen, but one thing is for certain: Math Club is mad for Math Madness.



TOP RIGHT: Senior Megan Davi explains a solution post-round.

MIDDLE RIGHT: Sixth grader Vib Ganesan and sophomore Shelly Yang copy down equations from their laptop screens.

RIGHT: Freshman Kaison Fong tackles a problem.



8 | VIEWPOINTS

Editorial: Have We Scrapped the ABCs for the 123s?

An Argument for Humanities Education and Why You Should Care

By Max Grinstein '24

In April, U.S. News and World Report released its 2022 Best High Schools Rankings.

Especially for institutions of higher education, these rankings have come under fire. Columbia University was caught inflating its statistics to fudge its spot in the rankings. More recently, a number of “top” law schools have decided that they have had enough with participating in the first place. If these controversies can teach us anything, it is that a lot more goes into the quality of a school than merely its spot on an arbitrary list.

It is an impressive accomplishment, though, that the Academy came in first place on U.S. News’s list of “2022 Best STEM High Schools,” based on, among other factors, student scores in science, technology, engineering and math Advanced Placement tests. The Academy’s STEM teachers work tirelessly to support their students’ interests, a fact that is reflected by the

large number of STEM-centered articles in this paper’s inaugural issue.

But let’s not forget that the Academy is not explicitly a STEM school, unlike some of the other “elite” public schools on the rankings. Students here have the opportunity to delve deep into major works and historical events. And they can go to the University for more.

STEM subjects are essential for a well-rounded education, and it is wonderful that Academy students have so much passion for them. Without STEM, humans would have never shattered technological ceilings by flying to the moon, developed a COVID vaccine in miracle-breaking time or even had cars to drive to school.

At the same time, we need to work toward breaking the supposed dichotomy between “STEM” students and “humanities” students. Indeed, a good computer scientist needs a moral grounding in philosophy, and a good historian needs

to understand how scientific factors have impacted historical trends. Want proof? Just look to current events.

For better or for worse, perhaps no STEM innovation has dominated the public discourse in the past few years like cryptocurrency. And perhaps the conversation has never been as loud as the last several weeks, since FTX, the third largest cryptocurrency “exchange” (somewhat like a bank, where customers can store and trade their coins), went bankrupt after a liquidity crisis — potentially losing up to \$1 billion worth of client funds in the process, according to Reuters.

Two lessons are at play for outside viewers. The first is not to entrust one’s assets to a company based in the Bahamas, the globe’s notoriously unregulated financial Wild West. The second — and more relevant — lesson is not to eschew the humanities for a laser focus on math and science.

FTX’s collapse occurred after the cryptocurrency website CoinDesk pub-

lished an expose in early November, revealing that founder Sam Bankman-Fried (a self-described “effective altruist”) had dubiously transferred customer funds (against the company’s terms of service) to sister company Alameda Research (which then largely invested in FTX’s own token). Having gambled with customer money, the firm was unable to fulfill the large number of post-expose withdrawals.

From all the stories born from FTX’s bankruptcy, one trend stuck out. For his part, Bankman-Fried seemed proud of his lack of understanding of the humanities, exclaiming in a (since deleted) blog post from venture capital firm Sequoia Capital that he “would never read a book.” At least Alameda CEO Caroline Ellison, who grew up on the math competition circuit, expressed some interest in the humanities, having spent her childhood engrossed in Harry Potter novels. However, she clearly did not absorb any moral lessons from all her

time spent reading.

Numbers are fantastic, but they lack a strong moral foundation. To FTX’s leadership, the company’s balance sheet was merely an indication of how much money it had, not necessarily of the trust that customers bestowed on it with their hard-earned cash, nay, cryptocurrency. Had Bankman-Fried and Ellison been able to benefit from the Academy’s robust humanities education, then perhaps their fall from grace would have gone down differently.

So, as we begin to plan classes for next year, let’s not forget the importance of humanities education. STEM is pivotal for advancing the human race, but one’s passion for it cannot come at the expense of learning about history, literature, or philosophy. And, with a well-rounded perspective, maybe our society will finally stop giving so much credence to meaningless numerical school ranking lists.

Column: The State of Davidson ... Air Hockey

Welcome to our column covering all things that make Davidson, well, Davidson! Periodically, we will examine “The State of Davidson...” This issue, grab your puck, switch on the table, and let’s play!

By Rainier Porter '26

I am rather familiar with the air hockey table at this school. Ever since I discovered it last year, I have been enthralled with trying to hone my skills against

the competition. Any day when I do not have a club and the air hockey table is open, I sit as close as I can to it, wait until around 11:30, and get to playing.

Air hockey tables seem to evoke something primal

in the human brain. The fast motion of the puck, the monotonous noise, the mathematics of reflective angles, all make it an appealing sport.

It is no surprise that one of the most popular games at arcades is a popular activity at the Academy. Almost everyone I know has played on the Academy’s air hockey table at least once, with varying ranges of skills.

However, it comes back around to the old Yogi Berra quip “nobody goes there anymore, it’s too crowded.” People usually prefer playing full games to seven points, as the full game offers the most tension as well as the guarantee of not forgetting to reset the points.

Nothing leaves everyone satisfied. Playing fewer points leads to less satisfaction from winning. Last year, so many people were playing that we often got

down to one-point rotations. At this level, even the worst players could best the best with one slip-up. Given how many people there were to necessitate this change, the line rotated faster than a power shot.

This semester, the crowd has thinned considerably. Among the remaining players, Cloud Verano dominates the table with a signature mix of strong offensive shots and quick defensive reflexes. I am one of maybe three people who has beat Verano in a seven-point game more than once in the past two years!

Can it get boring? I haven’t felt it yet. Losing so much but having victory within reach just makes me want to keep playing air hockey.



Junior Cloud Verano and author Rainier Porter battle it out at the air hockey tables during lunch. Photo by Kentia Kalanaki

Supreme Court Case May Pose Threat to Lake Tahoe

By Jordan Chong '27

"Keep Tahoe Blue" is a phrase ubiquitous in Reno — on license plates, on lampposts, on car stickers. It is a commonsense proposal; a beautiful lake with renowned clear waters should be protected against pollution. It is important for and because of tourists — some say Lake Tahoe is being "loved to death," which could be true — as around 15 million people visit the lake each year and produce emissions that reduce its water quality. Lastly, it is increasingly urgent as climate change alters biodiversity and creates algae blooms in the already sensitive Tahoe Basin. A large part of the fault is on tourists, though keeping Lake Tahoe blue might face other challenges in the future — not from major polluters or vacationers, but from the highest court in the land.

Since the '60s, scientists have measured the clarity of Lake Tahoe with 10-inch white or checkered plate called a Secchi disk. This disk is slowly lowered into the water until it is no longer visible, and its farthest visible point is recorded as a measure of the clarity of the water. Higher values correspond to higher clarity, and in 1968, according to researchers at University of California Davis, the clarity in the summer was an astounding 94.2 feet. While readings vary with conditions each year, the clarity has been on a significant decline, decreasing from 75.5 feet in 1990 to 54.8 feet in 2021. This drastic decline has been attributed to small particles, algae and smoke from wildfires contaminating the lake — all three amplified by climate change and tourism.

Enter Mike and Chantell Sackett, owners of a 0.62-acre lot in Idaho. In 2004, they began filling the lot with gravel near Priest Lake, a popular destination in Idaho. In 2007, the EPA, under the Clean Water Act, warned the lot contained an adjacent wetland to the lake and ordered the Sacketts to remove the gravel and stop filling the lot. They could have still continued construction if they had got-



10-foot boulders sit on the waters of Lake Tahoe. A fall from the rocks could be deadly, but there is nothing stopping you from climbing them. Photo by Jordan Chong

ten a permit from the US Army Corps of Engineers, proving filling the lot with gravel would not be harmful. However, they chose the longer path, and for more than a decade, they have been fighting the request for them to halt construction on the lot. On October 3, 2022, the Supreme Court of the United States heard an argument between the Sacketts and the EPA concerning their powers to protect wetlands like the Sacketts'.

What the Sacketts' lawyer argued was radical: in general, wetlands not directly connected (by other water) to, say, a lake or an ocean, would not be a "water of the United States," a term in the Clean Water Act denoting waters that cannot be polluted without permission. Such a wetland would become unprotected and could be polluted with little to no government interference.

This idea seems reasonable or, at most, inconsequential, but such a proposal is misguided.

The EPA currently classifies wetlands adjacent to waters as "waters of the United States" under the Clean Water Act — and a large part of the dispute in the argument was what "adjacent" means. Adjacency, in dictionaries, does not just mean physical contact, but also reasonable proximity to something else. Congress sometimes gets things

wrong, however, so a large dispute was whether "adjacent" should be redefined to "touching" and whether regulating non-touching wetlands is constitutional.

In this case, the dictionaries are right. When Congress passed the Clean Water Act, their intent was to keep our waters clean. A definition of adjacency to include proximity fulfills their intent because waters not even connected by a river or stream can and do pollute each other. University of Nevada, Reno Assistant Professor Joanna Blaszcak explained it quite simply: "if [contaminated] groundwater flows from one water body to another, contaminants ... can be transported." And another unsuspected way of cross-water pollution: "birds can eat algae, bugs, or fish that have high contaminant concentrations ... then poop out those contaminants into a new water body." It does not matter if two bodies of water appear to be separate; if they are close enough, they may end up significantly impacting each other.

Such pollution to the countless surrounding wetlands of Lake Tahoe would not just be detrimental to the health of the lake. It would be hurt residents of the Tahoe region, whose drinking water comes mainly from groundwater in the region. Unfortunately, this ramification might not matter to some mem-

bers of the Court, nor to the Sacketts, whose lawyer emphasized that an ordinary, reasonable citizen should be able to decide with their own eyes whether a water is protected. Here is the problem: no ordinary person can and should know all the factors concerning protection, much less should they be able to make decisions that could harm people and entire industries.

Indeed, the Sacketts' lawyer did seem dismissive of the notion of groundwater flow. When Justice Sotomayor brought up the idea of a subsurface connection of non-touching waters, he made the facetious claim that "it's hard to imagine any property in this country that does not have some degree of subsurface flow ... [u]ltimately, that water is going to flow to some surface water." What is his point? The fact that there is flow is much less relevant when a wetland is 10 miles

away (nonadjacent) than when it is 100 feet away (adjacent).

Perhaps what would be hurt most, come a decision invalidating the protection of a non-touching wetland and a body of water, would be the tourism industry of Lake Tahoe, which has brought billions to the region. Right now, the lake is still beautiful, blue and clear. But as the clarity reaches 30 feet down, then 10, then five feet, people would notice, Lake Tahoe would lose its status as a pristine lake, and redeeming factors would be few.

One day, while sitting upon boulders on the lake, the giant ones you have to hop across, I wondered why humans flock to these pristine places. I believe it is because they represent a purity that has been lost in the modern-day world. There are few barriers or borders, and the lake speaks of ruggedness and individuality, as demonstrated by the boulders on which someone who loses their step could just... die. Lake Tahoe is hope, an escape. It is no wonder why threats to the lake, such as consumer littering, have spawned grassroots efforts such as Keep Tahoe Blue — a loss to the lake would be a loss to the spirit of the community.

On the other side of the US, the Supreme Court, filled with justices hostile to the Clean Water Act and the EPA, may knock it all down. Around 90% of the land in the Tahoe area is publicly owned and likely safe. However, what may happen to the remaining 10% is anyone's call — and could make all the difference.



Supreme Court building in Washington D.C. Photo by Supreme Court Office of the Curator

10 | ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT



Author Luke Metzidakis getting laughs at the Gotham Comedy Club in the Big Apple.
Photo courtesy of Luke Metzidakis

Laugh Finder: Your Guide to Stand-up Comedy in Reno

By Luke Metzidakis '25

At home, you may watch comedy specials on Netflix. You might watch comedy on YouTube or see clips on TikTok. But what if you could watch comedy in person in Reno? Well, you can. I used to perform at Gotham comedy club in New York City, but since moving to Reno, I have had to find more venues to get laughs at. In Reno there are essentially three tiers of comedy shows.

The first tier is the open mics, which anyone can perform at (including you), and are frequented by local comics. At an open mic, anything goes, and anything can be said. Sometimes, nuggets of gold emerge, and truly hilarious stuff is performed. Other times there are comedians trying out new jokes that they are working on. Sometimes there can be partial political rants.

I contacted six comedians who frequent open mics and host shows. The consensus among them was that the best open mics are at the Blind Onion in Sparks hosted by Dead Panda Comedy on Sundays, or my personal favorite, the mic on Tuesdays at Coffee n' Comics hosted by Stephen Mollman. Additionally, there is an open mic at The Office: Hughes & Porter. However, these mics are not clean. You will be hard pressed to find a truly kid friendly show in Reno, so make sure that you and your parents are ok with some potentially adult jokes.

The second tier of the Reno comedy scene is the low-price paid shows. These shows feature more

Find the Funny Around Reno

Blind Onion Pub in Sparks

Coffee 'n Comics on Moana

Ferino Distillery on E 4th

Black Rabbit Mead Company on E 4th

Don't Tell Comedy (various locations)

Laugh Factory at the Silver Legacy

seasoned comedians who are invited by the hosts to perform. Unlike the open mics that are free, these shows can cost from five to fifteen dollars. One such show is hosted by Dead Panda comedy on every second and fourth Saturday at the Blind Onion in Sparks.

Most of the comedians that I contacted listed this show as their favorite, but I have other opinions. One comedian, David Gamble Jr. runs three shows here in Reno. One is at Ferino Distillery and has some fantastic comedians. Gamble Jr. also runs a show at Black Rabbit Mead Company and Don't Tell Comedy.

These places are not only great for watching comedy, but also for performing. Like Gamble Jr. said "anyone who has a flair for the dramatic, the ironic, and humor should give stand-up comedy a try. The thing I like most about it is that you get to say exactly what you think and feel, but there is a challenge in trying to formulate it in a way that your audience will understand and which they will find in-

teresting and entertaining. When you get it right and you get that laugh, there's no feeling like it!" This is an eloquently put explanation of the stand-up community.

You can find all the comedians I have mentioned, including David Gamble Jr., on Instagram for information on their shows. But the warning about the potential for adult humor at the shows remains for paid shows as well as open mics.

The third tier of stand-up shows in Reno is the shows in the casinos. There are often famous comics performing at the Grand Sierra Resort and talented headliners performing at the Laugh Factory. These shows will have different levels of mature content depending on the comedian performing. These shows are also significantly more expensive than the shows that I have talked about thus far but with good reason.

Now that you know the three-tier system, you can easily find laughs in and around Reno!

Taylor Swift Tickets

Continued from Page 1

concert at the Reno Events Center on March 23.

Needless to say, Burbano and Glover did not let geographic adversity stop them; the two were prepared to drive, or fly, as far as necessary to reach a concert.

But there were more dark clouds ahead for the duo. They would have to navigate Ticketmaster, the venue through which tickets were sold, as well as the hoards of other fans eager to secure tickets of their own.

"It was like getting attacked by a bear," Glover responded when asked about the experience. While her claim might be hyperbole, it does reflect the tenacity with which fans sought out tickets. According to the oddsmakers at Bookies.com, so many people were simultaneously trying to click "purchase" that fans only had a 5% chance of success.

Eventually, despite the odds, Burbano and Glover succeeded. And how did they succeed? By using "verified fan" codes from their friends and enlisting family members to help. The Burbanos even signed up for a Capitol One credit card so that they would have access to a special queue on Ticketmaster.

"I had to spend the whole day coaching my family on how to use Ticketmaster," Burbano said, reminiscing on her experience teaching her grandmother — who only recently learned to use FaceTime — on the ins and outs of ticket-buying.

Burbano's and Glover's approaches were not iden-

tical, though. The two disagreed on whether to put "all their eggs in one basket" and focus on a Ticketmaster window on one device, or to maximize the number of screens with Ticketmaster open, potentially jeopardizing their response time. In any event, both strategies proved to be fruitful, as the two succeeded in securing tickets to spread among their friends.

Not everyone in the Academy community has been successful in their pursuit.

"My wife signed up to get some kind of code for the presale, but then when she logged in and clicked on a pair of seats it would tell her that someone else had already bought them," Academy instructor Jared Powell said. Powell's wife and daughter had their hearts set on seeing Swift.

"The cost wasn't an issue then," Powell said, "but it is now." The tickets that Powell's wife had her eyes on were \$45 directly from Ticketmaster, but they have since shot up more than ten-fold.

For some, like Powell, the quest to buy "Eras" tickets left them with "Bad Blood" and a "Blank Space" in their hearts. Dedication and tenacity paid off for Burbano and Glover, who cannot "shake off" their love for Taylor Swift. Regardless of if they were successful or not, most prospective ticket-buyers can agree that their experience with Ticketmaster was not a "Love Story." But then again maybe they just "Need to Calm Down."



Sophia Burbano scours Ticketmaster for the best seats.
Photo courtesy of Sophia Burbano

More to These Ghost Books Than Meets the Eye

Five Middle-Grade Books that Won't Keep You Up at Night but Will Get You Thinking Deeply

By Hana de Queiroz '25

Halloween is long past, but these middle grade ghost books can be enjoyed year-round. Because I am terrified of all things horror, I have included five books here that give a different perspective on ghosts: maybe they are not always to be feared.

"The Girl and the Ghost"

by Hanna Alkaf



Photo by HarperCollins

Suraya is delighted when her dead grandmother's pelesit — a Malay familiar spirit — becomes her first friend. Pink, as she names the ghost, is equally happy with Suraya, who is the first person he has ever cared for. For years, Suraya and Pink are inseparable ... but Suraya still longs for human friends, as other children always try their best to avoid her.

When Suraya starts at a new school and meets a new friend, Jing, Pink is happy for her ... at first. But as Suraya spends more and more time with Jing, Pink sinks into jealousy ... and then malice. Suraya and Pink must learn to control Pink's dark side before it's too late.

This is one of the best books that I have read this year! Suraya and Pink's friendship is very complex and well-developed, and the author really makes you love the characters. I also love the setting: I have never read a book set in Malaysia, so that perspective was really fun to read.

"Ghosts"

by Raina Telgemeier

When Catrina's family moves to the spooky seaside

town of Bahía de la Luna, she's positive that she's going to hate it there. But Cat knows that the reason they're moving is to help her little sister, Maya, who has cystic fibrosis; Maya will benefit from the cool sea air. So Cat tries her best not to complain.

When Cat and Maya meet their neighbor, Carlos, they discover that there is something weird about their town: there are ghosts in Bahía de la Luna. Maya is ecstatic, but Cat cannot hide her own fear — they are ghosts, after all. But she's going to have to cope with it — for her sister's sake, and her own.

This is definitely one of my comfort books; Raina Telgemeier's illustrations are cheerful and really make you live in the scenery. The story is very cute and cozy and it's the perfect book to curl up with on an autumn night.



Photo by Scholastic Inc.

"Ophie's Ghosts"

by Justina Ireland

Ophelia and her mother are uprooted from their happy life in Georgia when a horrible act of racism takes her father away from her. Now, it's no longer safe to stay in Georgia, so Ophie and her mother have to move to Pittsburgh, the steel city, to find work and lodging with relatives.

But as she enters Pitts-



Photo by HarperCollins

burgh, Ophie learns that she has a special power. She can see ghosts.

Keeping this secret from her mother is hard, especially since Daffodil Manor, the mansion where Ophie and her mother have found work serving a wealthy white family, is filled to the brim with ghosts. These ghosts (and one of them in particular) are waiting on earth for their purpose to be fulfilled. And they think that it's Ophie's duty to help them.

One thing that I love about a lot of the books on this list is that they put BI-POC characters in a fantasy or surreal setting, which is unfortunately still relatively rare; this book in particular touches on important Black history and ties in the fantastical elements very well. The book has an overall tone of melancholy, but in a way that makes you feel deeply for the characters.



Photo by Penguin Random House

"Séance Tea Party"

by Reimena Yee

Lora is determined to not let go of her imagination. Her friends seem to be drifting away, becoming more interested in sports, fashion, and other things that Lora has no interest in.

When a séance tea party brings Lora to discover Alexa, a ghost haunting her house, the two girls become fast friends. But what happens when Lora starts to grow up — and Alexa can't?

I really loved this book. It has a touching message about the pains of growing up, and the author uses the ghost to put this theme into perspective.

"Sheets"

by Brenna Thummler

Marjorie Glatt lives and works in her family's laundromat, doing most of the work while her depressed father copes with her mother's death. Some days she feels like a ghost: at school, where she sits alone, and at home, where she is stuck running the family business. And it doesn't help that the ambitious Mr. Saubertuck keeps coming over and demanding that the Glatts sell their store to him.

But one day, Marjorie meets a real ghost: Wendell, an eight-year-old boy who does not yet fit in in the afterlife. Wendell can only take corporeal form under a sheet, and when he enters the laundromat, he tends to cause problems. Soon, Marjorie is struggling to keep her family's livelihood alive single-handedly — but maybe she doesn't have to be alone.

This story touches on grief, independence, and loneliness, and the author handles all of these themes with care. If you read this book and enjoy it, make

sure to check out the sequel, "Delicates."



Photo by Simon & Schuster

Puzzle Answers

DOWN

1. Snood
2. Samhainophobia
3. Hippocampus
6. Sonic
8. Psithurism
10. Gobble
12. Jefferson

ACROSS

4. HumptyDumpty
5. Carotenoid
6. Squash
7. Rebecca
9. Thanksgiving
11. Illinois
13. Gourdgeous
14. Pumpking
15. September
16. Squirrel
17. Frozen

CHESS

1. NxF6+ QxF6
2. QF8#

NUMBER STUMPER

- 3,2,1,4,5,6
- 6,5,2,1,4,3
- 2,3,4,5,6,1
- 1,4,5,6,3,2
- 4,1,6,3,2,5
- 5,6,3,2,1,4

Scan the QR code for The Phoenix Focus experience in full color.

12 | SPORTS & OUTDOORS

Want to learn about wildlife? Just step outside your back door!

Story and Photos by
Kentia Kalanaki '26

Do you want to get connected with nature? Do you feel like you need an activity to help you de-stress and take a break from your busy life? All you really need to do is just go outside—nature is all around you and wildlife is very common! There are birds, cool plants, and fungi all across Nevada as long as you know where to look.

There are many little pockets of pristine nature all around the Reno area, including many nature study areas and lakes full to the brim with wildlife. Some locations include Virginia Lake, Crystal Peak Park near Verdi, Oxbow Nature Study Area, Damonte Ranch wetlands, Rosewood Lakes Nature Study Area, and Rancho San Rafael Park. These locations are all perfect for peaceful nature walks and birding.

The best time of day to go birding is in the morning because wildlife is most active during the morning. Also, the morning is the freshest, coolest time of day, especially during the warmer months.

Another way to get into nature and learn about wildlife is to go on field



A Mountain Chickadee visits a backyard feeder and grabs a seed for lunch. Mountain Chickadees are common and smart birds which are frequent feeder visitors.

trips with local nature societies, like the Lahontan Audubon Society and Great Basin Bird Observatory for birding walks. Some local neighborhoods like Caughlin Ranch also lead annual birding trips around the neighborhood, which can be excellent for beginner birders.

Equipment like binoculars come in really handy when you are trying to spot wildlife, although just getting out into nature without any gear is still fun. If you want to actually identify birds though, you're going to need some sort of magnification, at least a pair of

8x42 binoculars.

If you want to get into more serious birdwatching, you might want to start learning how to identify the species you see. Being able to identify species on sight makes birdwatching a lot more fun because you can start a life list (a record of species that you have encountered) and see it grow as you get out into nature!

A few great resources to use for identifying birds are the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, the Audubon online field guide, and any bird field guides (Peterson guides are my personal favorites!) Feel free to send

me an email if you ever have trouble identifying a bird. I will give you any identification help that I can and answer any bird questions you may have to the best of my ability.

Photography is also a really good way to get more connected with nature. Nature shots are very fun to take and collect. I have a collection of bird photos that I'm very proud of, and I try to document all the species of birds I see with photos so I can always look back and make sure I identified the bird correctly.

Backyard birding is the way many people start bird-

watching, and it's a cheap, easy and fun way to see lots of cool wildlife. If you want to be more involved in nature, but you don't have that much time (or you don't want to put that much of an effort into it), you could always observe the wildlife in your backyard. There will likely be a surprising amount if you look for it, especially if you hang up bird feeders.

Although most birds that flock to feeders aren't rare or unusual birds, if you keep a keen eye on your backyard birds, you can spot all sorts of interesting songbirds that might be hard to find popping up to enjoy the food you've put out for them.

You can also keep a "backyard list," which is essentially a list of all the birds (or all the wildlife) that you've spotted in your backyard. More information about "backyard lists" can be found in my article on the Lahontan Audubon Society's website.

Connecting with nature is a perfect way to take a break and refresh after having a busy day or week, so make sure to check out a few of the mentioned locations, or just take a moment to breathe some fresh air and take a look around the next time you step outside!



Clockwise from top left: Canada Gosling in the ponds at Caughlin Ranch; Black Crowned Night Heron at Virginia Lake near Midtown Reno; Canada Goose near the tennis courts in Caughlin Ranch; Common Raven at Point Reyes National Seashore, California and Mallard at Virginia Lake near Midtown Reno. Photos by Kentia Kalanaki

Name:

Word Bank: communication, listening, respect, kindness, boundaries, reflect, empathy, awareness

j	a	h	c	b	r	e	o	e	l	e	f	o	e	e	o
l	e	k	b	o	u	n	d	a	r	i	e	s	a	i	a
g	s	k	p	l	m	f	o	d	d	c	m	n	r	l	y
c	j	s	a	k	r	m	v	l	d	l	p	c	g	r	z
m	q	a	e	i	a	q	u	i	t	f	a	u	n	a	k
x	b	t	c	n	l	b	v	n	b	f	t	s	i	k	v
r	s	c	o	d	e	e	y	o	i	r	h	a	n	r	j
e	b	i	z	n	y	r	w	r	n	c	y	d	e	m	g
s	t	k	i	e	e	z	a	j	r	k	a	f	t	b	f
a	p	l	a	s	v	r	b	w	n	w	l	t	s	u	p
i	e	u	p	s	x	q	l	m	a	e	w	m	i	g	a
g	r	e	z	w	k	k	c	r	c	t	h	n	l	o	z
s	c	l	r	l	m	b	e	t	n	v	z	a	e	i	n
t	b	k	o	r	a	n	i	m	n	a	t	o	u	b	c

All students who submit a completed pamphlet will receive one raffle ticket. The first thirty students to submit a pamphlet will be given flowers.

Davidson Academy

Approaching Conflict Map

Mediating Disagreements
in Everyday Life

The PALs Team, 2022-23



Evaluating Concerns



1. Self Reflect

Before approaching a situation, always pause to evaluate how you are feeling. If you are feeling upset or angry, it can be difficult to communicate your feelings. Take time to reflect before making any decisions.

2. Independent Action

For smaller conflicts, like a friend hurting your feelings, consider if you can address a situation on your own. Are you confident in your ability to express how you feel? Will the other people involved be willing to listen to what you share? .

1. Evaluating Your Intentions

When involving the administration, make sure to thoroughly consider your intentions. The admin can only address concerns about bullying, physical threats, or situations where students are in danger. However, if your feelings or boundaries are continuously being disregarded by a peer, reach out for support. Please avoid reporting people with the sole intent of getting them in trouble, though.



2. Approaching an Advisor or Counselor

If you would like to bring a concern to the admin's attention, ask an academic counselor (Erin V. or Rebecca C.) or counselor (Laurie P., Jessie K.) to meet. Discuss the situation and listen to their perspective—they're here to help and always have your wellbeing in mind.



3. Approaching your PAL

If you're not sure if you can mediate a conflict on your own, reach out to your PAL! The PALs team is here to support you and help you navigate friendships. Remember that as PALs, we are obligated to stay impartial and want to foster as much positive and effective communication as we can!

2



Involving Administration

2.5

Using Safe Voice

Only use Safevoice when you feel that your or a classmate's physical or mental wellbeing is at **immediate serious risk**.

Moving On



3

1. Letting a Situation Go

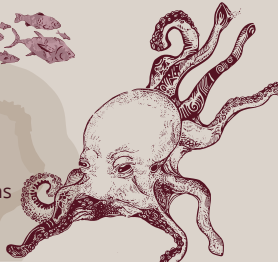
Sometimes, your feelings may not be listened to by other people involved in a conflict. In these situations, if a concern is too small to bring to the administration's attention, focus on releasing frustration. Holding grudges will only hurt you and will make it difficult to interact with other students and friends!

2. Avoid Gossip

While confiding in a close friend may help you process a situation, avoid spreading gossip. Spreading or creating gossip will worsen a situation.

3. Treat People with Respect

Even if a conflict hasn't been resolved, it's important to treat everyone around you with respect. Antagonizing people who may have hurt you in the past will create a cycle of aggression that will hurt both of you! Acknowledge any negative emotions you may have and try to release them.





Media and Outreach Updates February 13, 2023

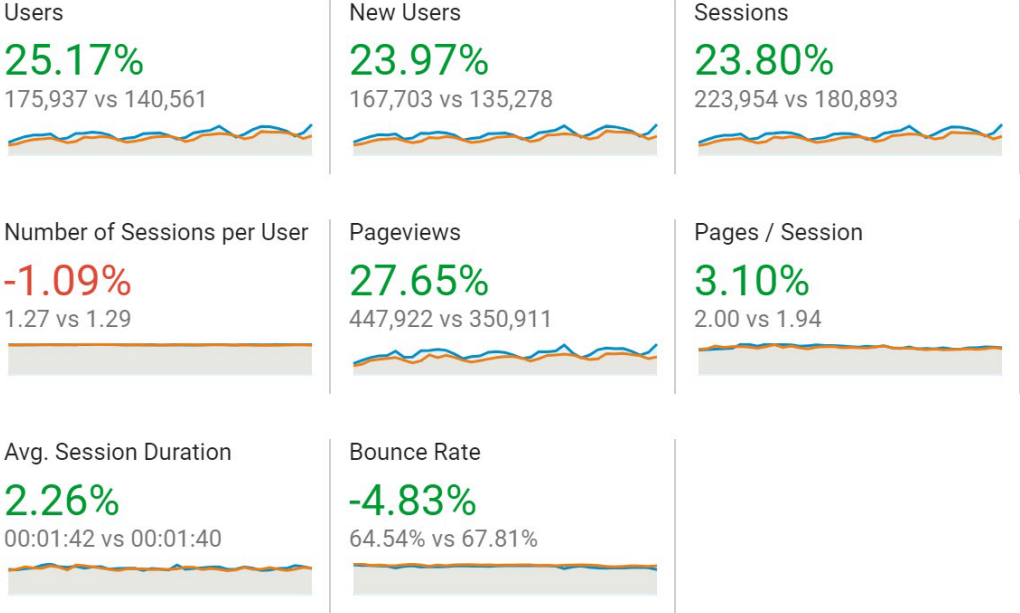
Media Updates/ Notable Website Mentions

- *Davidson Academy in Reno Wins Nevada Science Bowl for Fourth Straight Year*
February 4, 2023 – KTVN (Features the Davidson Academy Science Bowl Team for fourth consecutive win; will now advance to the National Science Bowl in Washington, D.C.)
- *PRESS RELEASE: Nevada Students Selected for United States Senate Youth Program*
January 10, 2023 - United States Senate Youth Program (Davidson Academy senior Samantha Glover has been selected for the United States Senate Youth Program. Samantha will travel to Washington DC to meet Senator Catherine Cortez Masto and Senator Jacky Rosen and receive a \$10,000 scholarship for her undergraduate degree)
<https://www.davidsonacademy.unr.edu/news/press-release-nevada-students-selected-for-united-states-senate-youth-program/>
- *Davidson Academy Alum Featured in The Nevada Independent Podcast*
January 3, 2023 – The Nevada Independent (Davidson Academy alumni and nuclear physicist Taylor Wilson was featured on the Nevada Independent's podcast IndyMatters. Taylor mentions his time at the Academy explaining how it allowed him to feed his interest in science)
<https://www.davidsonacademy.unr.edu/news/davidson-academy-alum-featured-in-the-nevada-independent-podcast/>
- *Davidson Academy Students Receive Recognition for 2022 Congressional App Challenge*
December 19, 2022 – Congressional App Challenge (Davidson Academy Students Eegan Ram and Aadi Patwa each received a Certificate of Congressional Recognition from U.S. Representative Mark Amodei in recognition)
- *Davidson Academy student represents Nevada in Washington DC*
November 6, 2022 – KOLO-ABC (Davidson Academy Senior Samantha Glover was featured for her time spent in Washington D.C., participating in the 75th American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) Girls Nation session July 23-30, 2022)

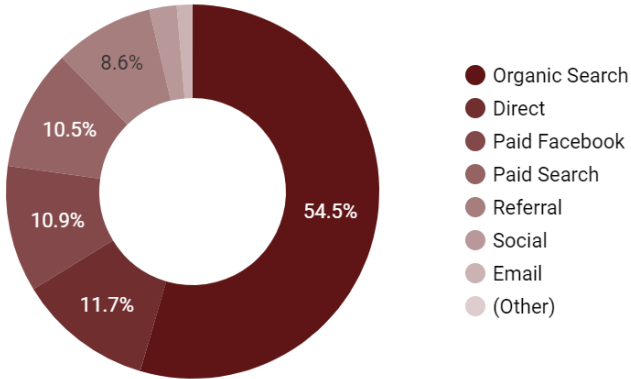
Davidson Academy Website Metrics

(Jan 1 – Feb 6, 2023)

Improvements year-over-year in most metrics:



Users by Acquisition Channels



- Organic search:** search engines such as Google
- Direct:** directly visiting our website
- Referral:** Arriving on our website via a link from another website, such as NAGC or a news article
- Social:** Social Media such as Facebook and Twitter

Top Viewed Pages

Page Title	Pageviews ▾	% ▲
How to Apply - Davidson Academy	7,026	57.8% †
Davidson Academy: A School for Highly Gifted Students	6,360	29.1% †
Types of Behavioral Problems Gifted Children Face Davidson	2,545	27.4% †
Eligibility - Davidson Academy	2,503	32.6% †
Accepted Tests Davidson Academy	1,749	28.2% †
What Does Profoundly Gifted Mean? Davidson Academy	1,738	32.9% †
10 Characteristics of Profoundly Gifted Students Davidson Academy	1,607	2.7% †
How Does a Child Get into a Gifted Program? Davidson Academy	983	28.3% †
Tuition - Davidson Academy	935	38.3% †
Underachievement in Gifted Students - Davidson Academy	877	11.6% †
Davidson Academy Admissions	841	17.6% †

SEO keyword improvements/wins:

- “highly gifted program” #2 -> #1
- “high school gifted programs” #10 -> #7
- “challenges of gifted and talented students” #2 -> #1 (with a featured snippet on Google)
- “challenges for gifted students” #2 -> #1 (with a featured snippet on Google)
- “school for highly gifted students” #6 -> #1

Ongoing Outreach

Virtual Open Houses

- Past:
 - Nov. 21, 2022
 - Dec. 14, 2022
 - Jan. 25, 2023

Davidson Institute Eligibility Assessment Partnership

Partnership with Northwestern University's Center for Talent Development (CTD) to offer the opportunity to take an official PSAT 8/9 for 3rd-8th grade students and an official practice SAT for 6th-10th grade students; scores can be used to apply for the Davidson Academy.

- SAT test administration dates (held virtually):
 - December 3, 2022
 - January 7, 2023
 - February 4, 2023
 - March 4, 2023 (*upcoming*)

- PSAT test administration dates (held at Davidson Academy):
 - March 4, 2023 (*upcoming*)
 - March 5, 2023 (*upcoming*)

Davidson Academy eNewsletter – distributed every other month to 6,000 recipients

- [January 2023](#)

eNews-Update – Often prominently features the Davidson Academy; distributed every other month to more than 17,000 recipients

- [January 2023](#)
- [November 2022](#)

Social Media

- Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/thedavidsonacademy/>
- Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/TheDavidsonAcademy/>
- Twitter - <https://twitter.com/TheDavidsonAcad>
- YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/user/DavidsonAcademyNV>
- LinkedIn - <https://www.linkedin.com/school/davidsonacademy/>