

# The Elephant In The Room

Milton High's Student Newspaper

25 Gile Road, Milton, MA 02186

December, 19, 2023

Volume XIII, Issue III

By ISABELLA MURPHY,  
JACKIE SEGALL, and  
LEO WALDBAUM

On Thursday, November 8, the staff of The Elephant In The Room were given an opportunity unlike any other: covering Vice President Kamala Harris's speech in Boston.

It all started with an email from Headliners in Education containing upcoming journalistic opportunities sent to our club advisor Mr. Young. Among those opportunities, it offered the ability for local high schoolers to cover Vice President Kamala Harris's moderated discussion with members of registered apprenticeship programs on Thursday, November 9.

Being able to see our Vice President in person was something that we (Griffin Angus, Isabella Murphy, Jackie Segall, and Leo Waldbaum) could not pass up.

We signed up and hoped that we'd be selected to go. Luckily, later that night, we all received an invite and instructions allowing us to cover the event.

The morning of the field trip, we checked in with the front office and Mr. Young, we picked up a camera from Mr. LoPresti and went to first period. At 8:20, we left our classes and changed into our business attire because we didn't want to go to class looking ready to give a business



V.P Kamala Harris addressing union members  
pitch. We headed to the venue.

After a brief phone call with Anton Derevyanko, one of Kamala Harris's press relation officials, on the logistics of arrival, we found out that they were the ones who would provide us with press passes.

Upon arrival, we were immediately situated outside of a parking lot full of Secret Service agents. Every time a car pulled up a Secret Service agent brought a dog to sniff around the car.

We entered the building and went through security. After that, we headed to another table where they checked us in and gave us our press passes.

Once inside we had no idea what to expect, who was going to be

**Photo by ISABELLA MURPHY**

there, or what it was going to be like. Surprisingly, we learned that we were the only high schoolers there. Nonetheless, we started to go up to people and ask questions to try and gather a story.

The first person we talked to was Marquis, an apprentice who gave us insight into what it was like to learn a trade and be a part of a union.

This geared us into formulating a few different questions. Why did Kamala choose this school to talk at? What were the roles of the people here? Why weren't unions and trade-schools a popularized option when thinking about future paths after high school?

After waiting for two hours, we were the first to be ushered by

Derevyanko into the conference room.

There we found a paper with Elephant in the Room written on it set up on a table in the back.

We were situated next to reporters from the National Public Radio (NPR), the Boston University newspaper, and Channel 7 News.

We waited for about an hour for the Vice President to enter, during that time Leo befriended and talked to New England's most traveled reporter Dan Hausle of 7 News Boston.

While Leo was talking to Hausle, Bella and Jackie were trying to get him to plug the Elephant In The Room. Leo was too distracted to notice those attempts. It took Bella to walk to Hausle and hand him one of our newspapers to do the trick.

Then Vice President Kamala Harris was introduced, the national anthem came on and Vice President Kamala Harris came on stage.

Vice President Harris spoke with impressive gravitas, she talked about the importance of apprenticeship jobs and establishing unions.

She said: "The measure of strength is not how many people you beat down but how many people you build up."

The talk went on for the better part of an hour; the Vice President left amid a wave of applause. After the speech, we left.

## Hinckle Leads Milton Football to Unforeseen Domination



The Milton Wildcats after winning the Super Bowl.

**Photo courtesy of Ben Parmele**

Patrick Miller, Running Back Nate Ehui, Wide Receiver Ronan Sammon, and many others being first year starters.

They not only had big shoes to fill, but they also had a mission to bring home the Division 3 MIAA trophy that had slipped out of grasp the year before.

However, if there was someone the team could count on, it was Hinckle. The Super Bowl was his fourth state championship appearance at Milton High. With two wins already under his belt, he is no

stranger to the big stage. Playing a huge role in Milton High's Baseball team's state championship win last year, it is obvious Hinckle is not fazed by the spotlight.

Hinckle showed this in the pick-six that pushed Milton ahead by two scores with less than two minutes left until halftime.

Walpole's Quarterback Noah Mackenzie dropped back into the pocket and looked for any open receivers.

With limited options, he threw downfield to receiver Jamal

Abdul-Khallaq.

The ball spiraled towards him when the outstretched hand of Patrick Miller reached and hit the ball up. Hinckle caught it before it hit the ground. While running, he reached down with one hand and pulled the ball in.

The original target, Abdul-Khallaq, was left on the ground as Hinckle ran in for the touchdown.

When the clock wended down in the fourth quarter, the stadium was filled with energy.

The score was now 42-21, and Milton knew they had won. As everyone looked out onto the field, a sense of relief and accomplishment rushed over the field.

Just one year ago, Milton was in this same stadium, playing for the same title.

So this time, when the Agganis trophy was brought out onto the field, Milton had a lot of pride in knowing that instead of being brought out for their opponent, the trophy was being brought out for them.

The rest of the Wildcats celebrated in the endzone with Hinckle, and the whole team was filled with a new goal. Not only had they come back from the early 14-0 deficit, victory was now only two quarters away. With their fourth touchdown in a row, the points were raining down for Milton.

There was certainly some doubt coming into the Super Bowl. Coming off a loss to Braintree at the annual Thanksgiving game, many were weary about how well the Cats were going to perform.

The football team is a younger one, with Quarterback

# FEATURES

## Be Cautious of Caffeinated Drinks

By MACY BURNS

Your shaking hands pick up a heavy backpack as thoughts tumble through your head one after another. Stress builds as does the exhaustion from another night of doing assignment after assignment. You realize that without caffeine, there's no way you can get through another day without falling asleep.

Many students walk around the high school with energy drinks like Redbull or Celsius in their hands.

Although many healthcare trends and professionals, including the school nurse, say that these drinks aren't good for kids to drink, many disagree because of their workload and how exhausted they are.

"Shaky," "jittery," and "nervous" are descriptions of how some students feel post-energy drink. Others say "energized," "awake," and "vitalized."

A survey was sent out to Milton High School English classes,



Graphic By ANNA ALVAROVA

making up 10% of the student population. While 38.4% of respondents say that they do drink highly caffeinated energy drinks, 61.6% say that they prefer a different source of caffeine, or none at all; mostly because

energy drinks make them anxious.

Nurse Aikey said, "I see students that will come in and even after drinking just coffee they're super anxious and have panic attacks because they have underlying anxiety.

Adding caffeine on top of it increases their heart rate, which increases their blood pressure. So caffeine is not only affecting them physically with jitters, but it's also affecting them mentally."

Aikey also added that when teens drink too much caffeine, it could affect their ability to focus on tests, homework, and sports. She also notes that drinks such as Celsius and Redbull aren't recommended for children under 18.

Red Bull only has about 80 milligrams of caffeine per 8.4 fluid ounce can, similar to a cup of coffee.

It is recommended that people under 18 only have around 100 milligrams of caffeine a day. A Red Bull spokesperson said, "It's important to note overall, children should consume less caffeine than adults due to their lower body weight."

Celsius, however, contains 200 milligrams of caffeine per can, which is twice the amount recommended for

**Continued on Page 4**

By MELINA ZULLAS

Ding, Ding, Ding! The bell rings. The students start filing into their classrooms. The teachers review their lesson plans. In a few minutes, the morning announcements will come on. It's another day at Milton High School. The students and staff know where to go and what to do.

However, they rarely stop to recognize those behind the scenes who keep everything going, like Superintendent Dr. Peter Burrows, who began his formal entry plan into the Milton Public Schools this July.

The School Committee hired Dr. Burrows, a former high school English teacher and high school principal, back in January. Since then, he has been exploring all the schools to get a feel for what they are like and how to improve them.

He described how his entry plan, which can be found on the MPS website, "outlines all of the work that I am doing this year to better understand where we are, build relationships throughout the community, analyze district level data, understand our curriculum and assessment systems [and] our outcome."

He said that it is important for him to bring "our community together to work together to craft our vision moving forward," because he can't build an implementation plan without help from staff, students, and community members, and he doesn't want anyone to be surprised as the plans turn into actions.

According to the Patriot Ledger, Burrow taught English in Japan, Mexico, and South Korea, and was a teacher, assistant principal, and principal at Wilmette High in Oregon before going to Vermont,

## A Sit-Down with the Superintendent



The Central Office Staff on the first day back for teachers in August 2023. Dr. Burrows is the third from the left.

Photo courtesy of Dr. Peter Burrows

where he became a superintendent.

However, after sitting down with him on October 24, who he is and how he will impact our community became clearer. One of the first questions concerned fun experiences that he has had within the schools so far.

Instead of bringing up a specific event, he talked about how, "it's been wonderful to

get to know the community and, you know, I think in this kind of job it is really important that you are out meeting people and a part of the community." Specifically, he has enjoyed how welcoming Milton has been and how "passionate the community is about doing what's right for students."

He said, "I see people stepping up in Milton to make Milton a super strong community and those are the ingredients, in a position like this, that you need to move an organization and continue to improve

and provide whatever a student needs, which is really exciting and inspiring."

When discussing his impressions of the high school, its student body, and its culture, Burrows said that he found it to be awesome because students are open and

**"I think that until every student's needs are being met, we're not done."**

-Dr. Peter Burrows

"comfortable to speak freely and to share what they think is working and their vision for

the future." He is even planning on sending out applications soon to put together a superintendent advisory team that actually gives the students a voice in decisions that are being made.

On being a superintendent, Burrows remarked how he "actually likes the varied nature of the job, you know. No two days are the same, so it's fast-paced and I really like helping people and have found that in this job I have the ability to make an impact in ways that feel good."

Burrows also talked about

the differences between Milton and the other places he's worked, like Vermont. He said, "Well, I think that one of the things that is very different coming from Vermont to here is that it is more urban and more diverse. Those are the two reasons I wanted to move here: I was excited to live in an urban/suburban community and appreciate the commitment that this community has to diversity and to supporting all of the people that are coming to Milton to make it a strong community."

Interestingly enough, according to the Patriot Ledger, the Addison Central School District, where he was a superintendent for 10 years, has actually less than half of the population of MPS.

As a new superintendent, one of the challenges Burrows faced coming to Milton was how, "education as a whole and communities have really suffered over the last three years of the pandemic, and now that we're coming out of the pandemic and looking ahead I think there's a lot of work we need to do to pick up the pieces and reorganize and re-envision where we're headed."

He also pointed out that even after recovering from the pandemic there is still a lot to be done. "I think that until every student's needs are being met, we're not done," he said.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns for Burrows, make sure to stop by the Superintendent's office, which is right near the nurse, or email him at [pburrows@miltonps.org](mailto:pburrows@miltonps.org).

You can even ask him about music because, in his downtime, he enjoys playing funk and jazz fusion in his band.

# NEWS

## Despite Importance, Trades Remain Unpopular Among Milton High Students

By GRIFFIN ANGUS

On November 9, United States Vice-President Kamala Harris made a highly anticipated visit to Boston. She spoke to a crowd of union workers, small business owners, and media personnel at the Pipefitters 537 building in the Dorchester neighborhood.

Brian Doherty, the leader of Local 223, a Boston labor union, served as the panelist at the event. Doherty praised the work of union workers and tradespeople, saying their goal is to "make people's lives a little better, a little easier." Harris added, "All labor, all work has value. Workers deserve recognition for their labors."

However, despite high praise, union jobs and the trades are unpopular among Milton High students. In the season of college applications, decisions, and commitments, students are rejecting labor union jobs and the trades.

School counselor Scott Devlin said he believes there is "a social pressure to apply to traditional four-year colleges, and the college experience is still worthwhile." He added that the trade route is "a little more narrow, since some kids go to college undecided, whereas you cannot go into the trades undecided."

Students like sophomore



Members of the Pipefitters 537 Union before Kamala's speech.

Photo by JACKIE SEGALL



Brian Nicholson (second from right) and Pipefitters 537 Union members.

Photo by JACKIE SEGALL

Florian Zoll have other concerns. He says that when it comes to the trades, "there isn't enough flexibility."

Devlin is quick to mention, however, that "last year's graduating class had the largest number of students going into the trades as Milton High has had in quite some time."

Brian Nicholson, a business

agent with Local 537, argues, "the school system, in general, is more college-focused. The word is sort of getting out that college isn't a bad thing of course, but there are other options."

Milton High currently offers courses in subjects such as automotive care and woodwork. Additionally, they offer internships, directories

on technical and vocational schools, and career advising in the School Counseling office.

Still, the amount of resources available for trade-related future planning stands in the shadow of college advising. School Counseling offers college planning, scholarship help, summer programs, and more. It is impossible to ignore the dozens of college posters and pendants adorning the school, particularly in the counseling office.

Harris was repeatedly praised for her support of labor unions, dating back to her time as a District Attorney in San Francisco. She was quick to point to the benefits that were offered by working in trades and labor unions.

She particularly voiced her support for pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs, saying to the workers that the federal government is, "counting on you to get it done," about various infrastructure-focused government programs.

Her views were echoed by union workers, nearly all of whom said they felt fulfilled through their work. Despite the benefits offered by trades and labor union jobs, they remain unpopular among high school students due to social pressures, individual preferences, and the school itself.

## REVIEW

### It's OK to Pass Up Your Shot to See "Next Goal Wins"

By ANNA ALVAROVA

"I can't win."

"Then lose. But don't lose alone, lose with us."

Inspirational, a bit cliché, and definitely something different, Next Goal Wins tells a story of hope and chosen family. The actual movie, however, wasn't what I thought it was going to be.

I walked into the theater with high expectations and got something quite underwhelming. What I thought was going to be a comedy full of new ideas, was actually just your classic story of a bad guy turned good - and even that plot was barely covered.

Micheal Fassbender plays Thomas Rongen, the bad-tempered, unlucky soccer coach who is forced to coach a hopeless team.

It is based on a true story about the worst soccer team to ever exist - the national team of American Samoa. The film highlights an especially bad day of their playing history, when they lost 31 - 0 against Australia, which actually happened in real life. But then comes Thomas Rongen to save the day. With a rough start, but a successful end, he turns the team around to score its first ever goal. And as you may have guessed, it all works out in the end.

A very simple idea—one that makes sense to implement in all movies—is to finish every story. Unfortunately for Next Goal Wins, this didn't happen. One example of this is the relationship between Thomas and his ex-wife Gail. From the very beginning, we can see that he is hung up on her, even though she has already moved on. But in the end, it doesn't seem like he has improved at all. In one of the final scenes, we can see him wishfully looking up at her while she kisses another man. This part feels... unfinished. While everything about Next Goals Wins is something I've already seen, they could've at least finished what they started.

The entire movie is filled with many cliché moments that aren't for everyone, and jokes that seem out of place, but one thing that did take me back from bad opinions is the inclusivity that was put into it.

The effort they put into combining the many parts of being human was certainly evident. The topics discussed ranged from race and gender to religion and community.

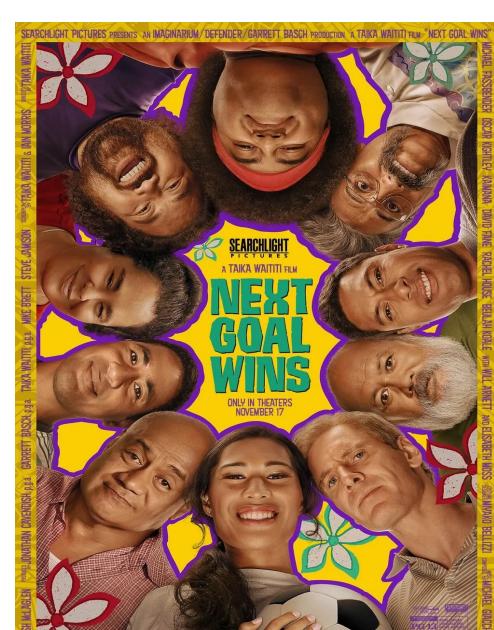
Kaimana plays Jaiyah, one of the main soccer players on the team. Above everyone else, she deserved this film. Not only are her thoughts and feelings highlighted as a trans

woman, but also her real-life accomplishments.

Jaiyah is the first openly transgender soccer player to play in a FIFA-sanctioned tournament, and she is a global representative of the LGBTQ+ community. She has now gone on to become a soccer coach, an online influencer, and still plays on teams. If you're going to watch Next Goal Wins, watch it for her.

If you've ever seen Ted Lasso, think of Next Goal Wins as a less glorified version of the show. If you're really craving something about soccer, I would definitely recommend Ted Lasso rather than Next Goal Wins. There is, however, an earlier documentary on the same team of American Samoa, that is also called Next Goal Wins. This version of the movie is more accurate, and is much more worthy of your time.

With some good qualities, and a lot of weird moments, overall, I wouldn't watch it again. While it did have a few good jokes, good comedy doesn't mean sprinkling a couple of funny sentences here and there. If you're someone who loves overused inspirational speeches and awkward family relationships, go for it. Otherwise, I would give this three out of five stars.



Movie poster for Next Goal Wins  
Poster courtesy of IMDb



Graphic By ANNA ALVAROVA

New members are always welcome to join!  
Meetings are every Wednesday morning at 7:00 in room

212

Join the google classroom:  
3hmwlql

