

The Hatchet

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Washington High School 38442 Fremont Blvd. Fremont, CA 94536

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Niles residents petition closure of post office

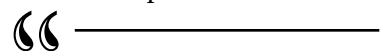
BRIANA TERRY
News Editors



Local residents discussed the potential closure of the Niles post office at a community meeting held by the U.S. Postal Services at the Niles Elementary School auditorium, Jan. 5.

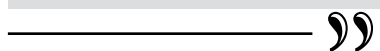
Niles joins 169 post offices on the list for closure because of the detrimental effects of the economic downturn. People favor using email communication, causing a reduction of mail circulation and overall declining post office revenues.

Residents spoke about losing a local post office that has been in business for 136 years. The office has poor road access to other Fremont districts and is four miles from the nearest full-service post office.



"It shouldn't have to be this way. It's a lot of gas to be going around to the next nearest post office."

Carmen Correia



Correia made one of 3,000 signatures on a petition drafted to defend the post office against closure. Information and the petition signatures will be handed over to the Postal Service district manager's office in Oakland, to then be forwarded to the Postal Service area vice president in San Diego. The final decision will be made at the Postal Service headquarters in Washington, D.C., in 2010.

"I feel horrible! I grew up with it being around, and now we have to commute to another post office," senior Angelina Correia said.

Barbecue honors basketball teams

PAIGE CASTREN
CHRISTELLE XU
News Editors

ASB held a lunchtime barbecue Feb. 23 to celebrate the advancement of both the boys and girls basketball teams to NCS.

"It's been roughly 10 to 15 years since we've sent both boys and girls basketball to NCS together," activities director Helen Paris said.

The funding came from ASB, athletics and the money initially meant for the "Up Yours" lunch. Leadership decorated eaves with paper replicas of team jerseys, each personalized with players' last names and numbers.

"It was great for ASB to put on the barbecue for basketball and to show support for the team," senior

John Songponnopachon said.

ASB made the decision Feb. 22 to put on the barbecue; they set up posters and announcements around school by first period Feb. 23. Despite the unexpected rain, ASB fed over 300 students.

"The price and food was good but there was a really long wait to get the food. It took like 20 minutes," junior Andrea Bonilla said.

ASB members began turning students away so they would have enough time to clean up, not because there was a lack of food.

"One lesson I learned was that I should do every barbecue in the rain; everybody stays on campus," Paris said.



Photo by STAFF MEMBER

Photo caption as follows; serif font bold.

Photo caption as follows; serif

ASB decorates school campus with flowers and walkway

WRITTEN BY ALEX TYLER
NEWS REPORTER

ASB members redistributed large planters filled with an assortment of wildflowers around campus over the past few weeks.

The students put in a brick pathway outside of the Eggers building, and they also trimmed plants around school, with student activities director Helen Paris wielding an electric edger.

These efforts are appreciated, but some students feel the money should go to school improvements, such as new books and bathroom locks. However, ASB isn't authorized to use student funds on such items.

Senior John Rasure said although the improvements are helpful "they should have done this a long time ago, at this point the money could be better spent elsewhere."

Paris thought of the idea to

move the planters from their original position near the Eggers building because she thought that students were not noticing them. So ASB moved the planters to more noticeable areas, and work during fourth period to water the new flowers and make sure the additions maintain their beauty.

Junior Julien Malard, president of the New Leaf Club, said their club submitted a plan to ASB to place plants around school throughout the year, but then ASB moved ahead with this project separately.

"I first was a bit disappointed because I wanted our club to do the planting," Malard said.

However, ASB agreed with the New Leaf Club to continue adding flowers, trees and other plants around the school with the help of the club. They will plant to celebrate Earth Day, April 22.



Photo by KAYLEE MIU

ASB members Benjamin Rich and Paul Sun decorate the school walkway

Students fail to recognize their rights

WRITTEN BY JUDY WU
NEWS REPORTER

Teenagers have more rights than most people think. Teenagers have the right to an education, free speech and a safe environment. They also have the right to a legal counsel and trial by jury. Authorized figures can order teens to answer questions but teens don't have to answer.

Teenagers are also entitled to go through a juvenile court system instead of an adult court system. They become a "delinquent child" and have to go through rehabilitation, which means parents may have to pay a fine or the teenager might have to go to juvenile detention.

There are projects, like the Algebra Project, that fight for different student rights. The Algebra Project is a national,

nonprofit organization fighting for every child's right to a quality public school education. Teachers and parents are working to achieve this goal by using better educational research and building an alliance to create changes.

"All students should have the right to a good education. They should be exposed to the same opportunities despite their social status," government teacher Elizabeth DeWitt said.

Teenagers are guaranteed most of the rights in the U.S. Constitution, but certain rights such as their freedom of speech are limited.

In *Morse v. Frederick* (2007), the Supreme Court ruled it was legal for the principal to punish a student advocating an illegal drug off-campus.

Supreme Court case *New Jersey v. TLO* (1985) decreased students fourth ammendment rights and legalized search and seizure of students' belongings as long as there is reasonable suspicion.

Safford Unified School District v. Redding (2009) ruled that the school crossed the line of reasonable suspicion when they made 13-year-old Savana Redding strip down to her underwear for giving her friend four Advil pills.

There are limitations on teenage rights, but teenagers can and should stand up for their rights.

"Students trust the government more than their instincts on their rights. Students should be able to challenge the government when their rights are being violated. Challenging the government makes America the free and just country it is," DeWitt said.

Information about CHSPE not readily available to students

NICOLE PHAM
News Reporter

Those dissatisfied with the school system can leave early by taking the California High School Proficiency Examination (CHSPE), but few Washington students know about it.

Most students drop out, complete independent study or attend an alternative school, such as Robertson. Some students learn about the CHSPE through word of mouth, but the school has not communicated this option to all juniors and seniors.

According to state law, high school principals are required to distribute an announcement explaining the CHSPE to each student in grades 11 and 12. The superintendent is responsible for informing the principals.

Students who pass CHSPE earn the legal equivalent of a high school diploma by obtaining a Certificate of Proficiency, even without the required units for graduation. Those interested must be between 16 and 18 years old. The exam includes math and English language arts sections. Taking and passing CHSPE, however, does not necessarily require a student to leave high school.

"I believe students should be made aware of this option by school staff," superintendent Milt Werner said, in an e-mail.

Principal Linda Fernandez relies on career technician Michelene Wittmer and school counselors Carol Brahmst, Britny Stewart and Carrie Merfeld to relay information about CHSPE to students.

In her eight years as a counselor, Stewart knows of two students who took the test.

"For most people, it's not the alternative they want to take," Stewart said. "They don't want a full exit."

English teacher Teri Hu prepared "How Would You Like to Finish High School Early?," a presentation about CHSPE, at a Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) meeting Dec. 7.

"It is not up to counselors, teachers or administrators to determine if a student would possibly want to take CHSPE," Hu said.

"At most, maybe a dozen or so kids will take it, but that will be a dozen kids who would otherwise be miserable in high school."

The test is administered three times a year: March, June and November. Though the March 21 test date passed, those interested can apply for the June 19 test by May 21.

The fee is \$92 for regular registration, \$120 for late registration and \$145 for special registration. Results are mailed July 23.