Students can earn up to 4 gym credits through the new biking class.

"The seniors are all stressing out about gym credits because they need to graduate" --An Anonymous Senior

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**Seniors Scramble for Gym Credits**

Susan Chow 11th Grade

East Side, and many other small schools that share buildings, have long found it difficult to meet the City’s Physical Education requirements. For many years there has been an understanding that students would not need to earn 7 PE credits as part of the graduation requirement.

This fall, other small schools were cited for failure to meet the gym requirements. East Side did not want to risk the chance of students’ graduation being threatened and despite our small size and limited facilities, as of this spring, all students must meet the City’s gym requirements.

The news was met with dismay and alarm from both East Side’s staff and students. Seniors with little or no gym credits were particularly distressed at the prospect of spending whole days earning gym credits in their last semester of high school. Furthermore, there seemed to be confusion amongst both East Side’s staff and students regarding the exact number of gym credits necessary for graduation.

“I think it is the school’s fault. The seniors are all stressing out about gym credits because they need to graduate. At first the school said we didn’t need the credits and now out of the sudden, we do!” An outgoing senior said she placed the responsibility of the predicament on the school.

However, not everyone considered the dilemma to be an error of the school, but rather placed the blame on the Department of Education.

“It is really unfair of the city to have these strict requirements, especially since we don’t have the space for a real gym,” voiced Audrey Federman, the 12th grade math teacher.

Currently putting forth a massive effort to ensure that seniors obtain the mandatory credits and graduate this year, the East Side’s staff and students are placing the blame on the Department of Education.

The seniors are becoming distressed at the news of gym credits. “I am short of gym credits and I am taking the biking class this year so that I won’t have to be worried about the credits next year,” remarked an anonymous senior.

Additionally, students may take skateboarding, dance, or competitive gym.

Another physical class that the school has created for students to obtain gym credits is the bike program, known as “I Challenge Myself or” Cycling Smarts. The class consists of 15 students and is run by Adam Holoh, one of the two 10th Grade English teachers.

The program takes place on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons for two hours, with one period during school hours and an additional hour after school. Students are also required to meet one Saturday per month for four hours. During the duration of the class, students will be prepping for a 100-mile ride, Tour de Cure Ride, which will take place on June 3rd of this year. The ride will raise money for research on diabetes.

“We have really enjoyed the rides so far and the weather has been brilliant,” said the students. “We are becoming stronger cyclists every week.” Adam Holoh commented positively on the newly created program.

“I enjoy biking class because it’s fun and great exercise. Everyone works together as a team and we stick together!” Carrie Almote, one of the participants spoke of the comradeship existing through the program.

Furthermore, students who take part in activities such as cheerleading or varsity sports teams will also be able to obtain PE credits each season they participate.

Finally, the school is open to suggestions about adding new and variety of classes in which students can accumulate PE credits. The addition of original PE classes will enable the students to have more choices and an easier way to accumulate the necessary credits. For now, seniors are desperately seeking any solutions that will end their dilemma and enable them to graduate in June. In order to avoid this predicament, freshmen and sophomores should start to accumulate credits now.

Thursdays, the students adapt to a classroom-setting and receive lectures on health.

"I am short of gym credits and I am taking the class this year so that I won’t have to be worried about the credits next year,” remarked an anonymous senior who is taking the non-competitive gym class. Additionally, students may take skateboarding, dance, or competitive gym.

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**Student Wins NY Times Scholarship**

Hang Jing Qiu, an East Side Senior and the school’s student body president, was one of 8 students to receive the prestigious New York Times Scholarship this year.

The award recognizes students who have shined academically despite facing adversity. Hang Jing will receive a scholarship of $7,000 a year for all four years of college as well as a paid summer internship at the New York Times for all four summers. He, and the other scholarship recipients, were also featured in an article in the Times.

Hang Jing explained his attitude towards the application process. “Although the chance of being awarded the NYTimes scholarship this year was very small, I took every step seriously. I followed the belief that you can not expect to be rewarded without taking some risks. People are often daunted by risks, and this is one of the greatest walls that block people from success.”

Even though he knew the odds of winning were small, he worked tirelessly preparing his application, devoting time over Christmas break to write the required three short essays and revise his answers.

Hang Jing described the feeling of winning the award. “I was really excited when I learned I won the scholarship in February. But, after the excitement, I felt lost. I was wondering, what I am going to do with this scholarship and how can I use this opportunity to impact other people?”

Hang Jing will be taking his talents to Cornell University where he plans to study medicine.

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**East Side’s Teacher Pregnancy Epidemic**

Gabriela Castillo 11th Grade

East Side students have not been able to ignore the obvious changes that many of our beloved female teachers have been going through these past few months.

This year, Erica Fontana, Sarvenaz Zelkha, Kate Johnson, Nathalie Elivert, and Audrey Federman, all announced their pregnancies.

Kate explained her joy at learning she was pregnant. “I was very excited. My husband and I had been talking about starting a family since before we were married.” The joyful news certainly motivated feelings of excitement in many students. Tima Donato said, “I was shocked and happy to hear about Kate’s pregnancy and I also began wondering who was going to touch us when she leaves to have her baby.”

Kate gave birth in March and Juan Dulocateus has taken over her history classes for the remainder of the year.

Kate described her experience as the mother of Augustus Philpott Jensen. “My experience as a new mother has been amazing so far. I have never been so sleep deprived in my life, but it is all worth it! I have such respect for all parents now that I am experiencing motherhood myself.”

Nathalie Elivert, East Side’s 10th grade English teacher, was in her ninth month of pregnancy when she discussed her emotions around having a baby. “I was immediately happy but at the same time I had a lot of thinking to do about how to prepare to be a parent and not to mention that this is a hugely important step in anyone’s life.”

Nathalie says, “Parenthood will certainly be a lot of work but it’s exciting because I know that this is a decision that we will never regret.”

Kate will be returning to East Side in the fall, and she is looking forward to working with her colleagues and teaching her students again. Kate assures us that to gather with her husband, she has a plan for when she does return to work that will guarantee that baby Gus does not lack the attention and love that he has received up to now.

Nathalie also plans to return to teaching in the fall. “I would love to take some time off work to bond with my daughter but my career is very important to me,” she says. “I wish I could just touch my students from home!” We hope the best to Natalie. There is no doubt that with her intelligence she will figure out how to work out this issue!

It is certain that East Side is taking pretty well this sadness epidemic that has hit the walls of this small school.

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**Celebrity Baby Names**

Berencie Cruz 11th Grade

Arsavon Oliva, Max Lennon, Honor Maria, Vida Alves, Natalyha Loring, Pijep Mara, Dylan Jaggers, Ellia Comico, Memphis Eve, Ducian Zosie, Paras Batchet, Phoenix Chi, Nathasha Valselacia, Makson Valverlecin, Cay Den Wyatt, Nathaniel Houseman, Gyna Litovi, Gene Appro, Brooklyn, Sunday Rosay. What are all of these names? They are all celebrities baby names.

This year celebrities have come up with some very weird names for their children. Why did they even put that name on their child? Why does that name even mean? Do celebrities choose weird names to get attention?

The celebrities Beyonce and Jay Z had their first baby together this winter. Guess what the name Beyonce and Jay Z decide to name the baby... Blue Ivy! Brendah Colon, a 10th grader says “I believe celebrities give their children weird names in order to give the child a sense of individuality and to separate them from others.” She also added “I love Beyonce and Jay Z’s baby’s name because it’s pretty and I’ve never heard it before.”

Shakil Gofur, a 10th grader, says “I think celebrities come up with strange names for their children out of originality or some types of symbolism.” Another tenth grader, Patricia Polanco says “I think that the name given to Beyonce’s baby is very unique. I mean, where are you going to find someone else with the name “Blue Ivy?” Famous people name their children names that normal people (like us) wouldn’t think about because they are different from us, so these children are also different.” Patricia just thinks that the celebrities have the right to name their children however they want to.

Individuals have asked many questions of why celebrities name their child with such weird names. But on the other hand, many people follow the lead of celebrities and we may see more Blue Ivy’s in the future.”