

Forum

All students should be given AP options

JENNIFER SITTON

Staff Reporter

For students who put great emphasis on their education and being admitted to a good college, junior year is a nightmare. Between juggling school, sports, clubs and Advanced Placement classes, many students don't have time for anything else, and that isn't right. Teenagers need to have the time to be teenagers. It isn't fair that everything should be piled on during the third year of high school; what about freshman and sophomore year? While there are advantages to only offering the majority of honors and AP classes to upperclassmen, I think the disadvantages greatly outweigh them. These higher level classes need to be offered to all students of all ages in order to spread out the workload and give kids their lives back.

For many students, freshman year is a piece of cake as far as homework load and level of difficulty goes. Almost all classes are pre-loaded into their schedule and students usually are not allowed to take any honors or AP classes. Sophomore year is the same, with a bit more leeway. Sophomores are offered numerous honors classes and one AP class: AP U.S. History. Junior year is when everything changes.

When it comes time to forecast for your third year of high school, you suddenly have a multitude of options and available classes. Students are given the choice as to whether they want to pursue a more rigorous class schedule or continue with regular classes. According to Megan

Runyon, guidance counselor, AP and honors classes are usually only available to juniors and seniors because they are college level courses

science classes if that is the appropriate placement. The majority of AP classes are only offered to upperclassmen because they come later in the sequence of courses and

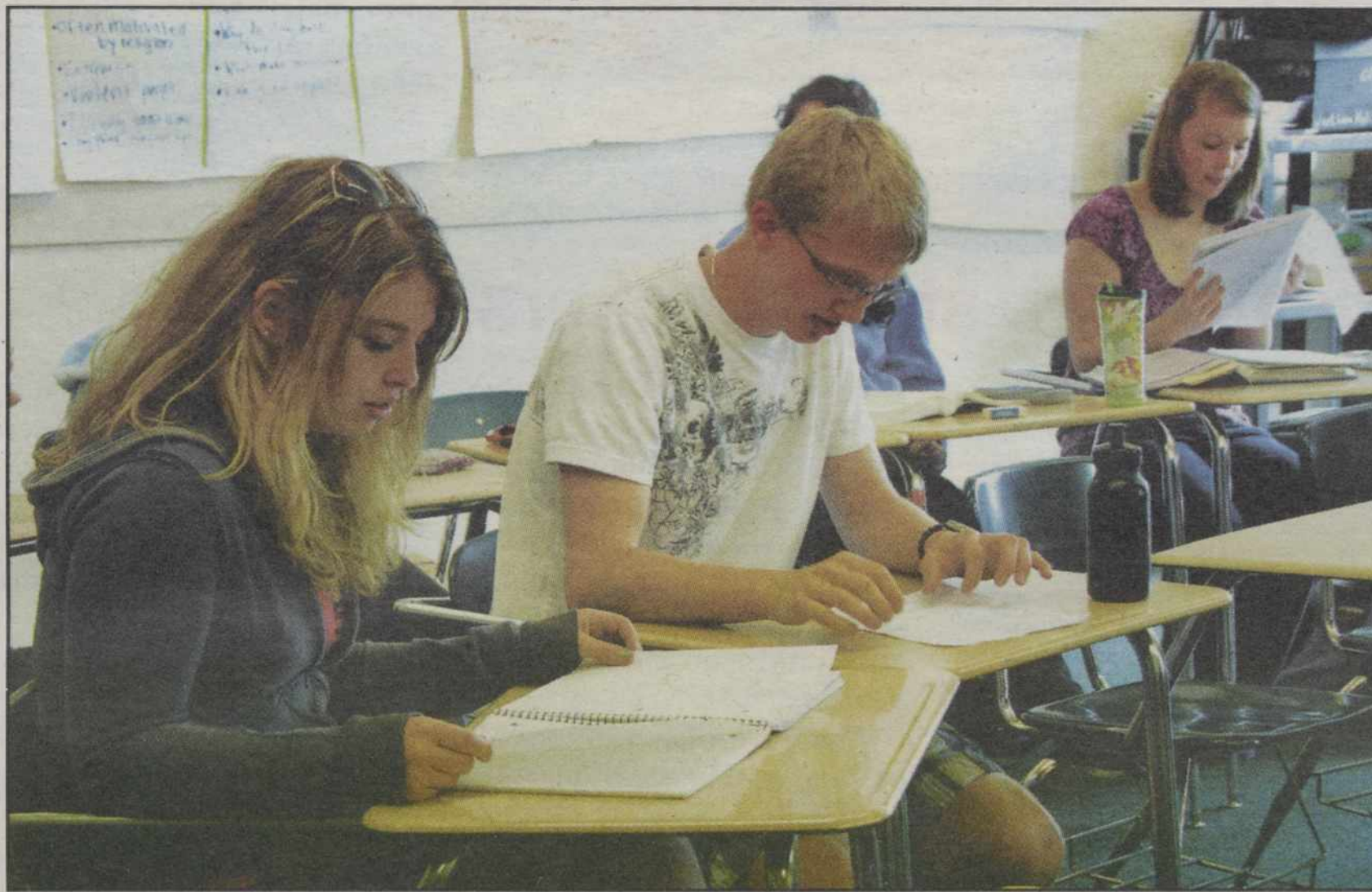
requirements and have proven themselves to be responsible, why can't they take them?

The administration and counselors do offer another option for these students

is advertised during Options Evening in the fall," Runyon said.

While I applaud the counselors and administration for coming up with this innovative solution to our needs, how many people actually know about plan Two? WLHS has roughly 1550 students and only 25 are involved in Plan Two. How many students would have loved to have had the opportunity to create their own academic plan, but didn't know how to? Or didn't even know it was an option? Most students have no troubles with the required classes during their freshman and sophomore years, but then they begin planning the next two years and find that they can't fit everything into their schedules. If those students had known about Plan Two from the beginning, they might have saved themselves a lot of stress.

I understand why most of the AP classes are available only to upperclassmen and that students can apply for a Plan Two to customize their high school experience, but WLHS should offer at least some AP classes for underclassmen so come junior year, students aren't pulling their hair out and wondering why everything had to happen at once. Just like the old saying goes, when it rains, it pours. It's just beginning to sprinkle during freshman and sophomore year and then suddenly the thunder strikes and the sky opens up. Come on WLHS, don't let your juniors drown.



Holly Ashby, Gregory White and Mackenzie Laughlin, sophomores, study for the Advanced Placement exam in their AP U.S. History class. The class is the first AP class available in high school, and is usually taken by sophomores.

Photo by Alison Fieldhouse

and students tend to be more ready for the rigor in their junior and senior years.

I agree that many students aren't ready for the difficulty of class and amount of homework that AP classes include during their first few years of high school, but some are. If students are able to prove that they will be able to juggle their schedules and still keep up in an AP class, why not let them take them?

The only AP class that sophomores are generally allowed to take is the aforementioned history. According to Runyon, sophomores are also allowed to take higher level math and

students need prerequisites to qualify for these classes.

Obviously a freshman or sophomore who hasn't taken chemistry shouldn't be allowed to take AP Chemistry and someone shouldn't be allowed to jump from geometry to AP Calculus, but what about social studies classes such as AP Economics and AP Psychology? The only pre-requisite AP Economics has is Advanced Algebra and many students take this as freshmen. There is no pre-requisite for AP Psychology. If students meet the

who have the ability to move beyond the required curriculum. This is known as Plan Two. A Plan Two, which students can apply for in the fall, requires students to write an extensive four year plan proposal, along with an explanation as to why they are requesting to waive a required course. The proposal is then submitted to a Plan Two committee (people outside of WLHS) that decides whether or not it is approved.

"Currently I'd say we have 25 students involved—that is a rough estimate. Plan Two

Prom should be an option for all — no matter how much money you have

CARLY HALVERSON

Staff Reporter

Couples and friends arrive dressed in glamorous attire for one of their most memorable nights of high school. Prom is an often eagerly awaited event for juniors and seniors—except for those who can't afford it. Prom has morphed into something so extravagant that most people don't realize there are alternatives to spending large sums of money to attend.

Prom is something everyone should be able to experience if they want to. It is one of the last times before the school year ends when students can be with their classmates before some go off to college, or wherever life



Andrew Riesen, junior, Natalie Smith, sophomore, Alec Carrier and Sydney Nelson, juniors, load onto a short school bus which they rented with others on prom night. The group used the bus as a way to save money with each couple paying only \$10 each.

Photo submitted by Kristin Bushnell

might take them after high school ends.

In order to attend prom with a date, it is a given that

you have to spend \$60 on tickets.

Prom overpriced

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Amplifier

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