



New health mentor ready to support students at Cooper

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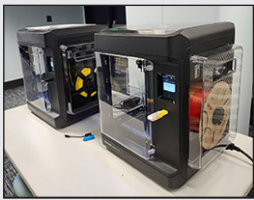
Passing time is long enough to accommodate student needs

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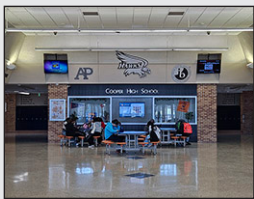


3D printers are open to Hawks

Mr. Seyb Ensman oversees the members of the 3D printing group, which meets in room 103 on Tuesdays and Fridays during HLL

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Opinion



Decision to keep IB is applauded

The potential elimination of the IB program would have done a huge disservice to students in all grades at Cooper

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Variety



Media Center adds new art collection

Media Specialist Mr. King said he is showcasing Hawk artwork in the Media Center to promote student expression at school

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Variety

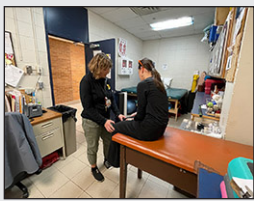


Artists start work on hallway murals

The annual mural assignment will bring art students into the hallways to work on their pieces during April, May

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Sports



Trainer supports Cooper athletes

Ms. Shelstad is available to student athletes in the Athletic Training Room Monday through Friday from 3:15-6 p.m.

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DECA GROUP COMPETES AT STATE TOURNAMENT



Photo by ROSEMARY EVERS

The activities that make up DECA competitions include trying to sell a given object or solve a specific problem.

By SAM PETERSON
Quill staff writer

DECA, which stands for Distributive Education Clubs of America, is a Cooper group primarily focused on helping introduce students to the world of business. The students in the group are enjoying a successful 2024-2025 school year that has seen sev-

eral members make it to the state DECA competition.

DECA is a non-profit organization dedicated to teaching students how to understand the world of business. The group typically meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays in room 130 or 132 to prepare for competitions.

“Students meet oth-

er students, share ideas and make that connection that may be a great factor as these students progress through college and their careers,” Ms. Evers, the advisor for DECA, said.

The competitions that DECA participates in are based on their ability to either sell an object or solve a problem. Students are given

fictional scenarios where they have to come up with a solution. For competitions, these presentations are done in front of a judge. The competitions have a district, state and national level.

This year, Cooper had five members who qualified for state. Those students were Melat Kiflu (12), Mario Martinez Morales (12), Pearl

Five Hawks qualified for the competition, which took place March 2-4

Swift (11), Vision Wonken (11) and Catalina Montejó (10). The group’s state competition happened on March 2-4 in downtown Minneapolis. Although no one advanced to the finals in the state tournament, Evers said she is glad the students had the chance to compete.

“Everyone in the club was participating in fundraising efforts as those going to state wanted to have the full experience of competing and connecting with others,” Evers said.

Members in DECA also gain a lot of useful skills for life. Some examples are public speaking, problem solving and leadership skills.

“I used to have a hard time talking in front of a group of people, but it has been easier after I joined DECA,” Maria Valenzuela Salazar (12) said.

Students also have opportunities to make connections with their peers. The experiences and skills they gain are a good resource to cite for resumes and college applications.

“Students can include this experience on their resume, which is an important marketing tool when getting a job,” Evers said.

To be in DECA, students

DECA
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Budget cuts designed to offset \$21 million deficit

While the district recently decided not to cut the IB program, many other cuts are still on the table for 2025-2026

By MARIAH WASHINGTON
Quill staff writer

The Robbinsdale Area School District is proposing significant budget reductions in response to a projected \$21 million shortfall for the 2025-26 school year. While the school board has yet to formally approve the budget adjustments, several areas are being considered for cuts, which could affect staffing, programming, transportation and district operations.

Proposed reductions include decreasing both administrative and school-based staffing, restructuring the delivery of gifted and talented services and making adjustments to school bell schedules in an effort to reduce transportation costs. District leaders emphasize that these cuts are being considered with the goal of minimizing the impact on students and preserving essential services.

“We are working hard to make reductions that protect student learning as much as possible,” Robbinsdale School District Superintendent Ms. Staloch said. “While some cuts will affect staffing and programming, our top priority is ensuring strong classroom instruction, vital student support services and valuable opportunities for students.”

The budget shortfall stems from multiple financial challenges, and district leaders have been actively reviewing data and seeking input to find a solution. With the aim of balancing the budget while keeping student education at the forefront, the district is exploring various options to make necessary adjustments.

One program facing potential cuts was the district’s International Baccalaureate (IB) program. The elimination of this program would have had a large impact at Cooper, which features multiple IB classes and the IB diploma program. On March 5, the district announced that it was not going forward with the plan to cut this program.

“After reviewing options, we will not be moving forward with a recommendation to eliminate the IB program at this time,” Staloch said.



Photo by ROSE VANG-LOHNES

Students will see fewer teachers and larger class sizes next school year.

One program likely to be cut is fourth-grade orchestra.

“This reduction is part of an effort to balance our budget while still maintaining opportunities for music education in later grades,” Staloch said.

Also facing changes are the district’s talent development services, which support gifted and talented students. The restructuring of these services could change the way students are identified and supported.

Finally, the district is evaluating middle and high school extracurricular

BUDGET CUTS continues on page 5

Concerns about ICE have impact on students, staff

While the school has not faced any direct action by ICE agents, processes are in place to address issues if they arise

By TESSA LENOCH
Quill staff writer

The United States has seen new policies introduced almost every day since the Trump administration took office. Some of these policies have raised concerns for students and teachers at Cooper, leading to some important questions about the safety of students who may be targeted due to their, or their family’s, immigration status.

Historically, schools have been a space off limits for immigration enforcement. That was completely changed when President Trump took office. In the few days after Trump’s inauguration, the Department of Homeland Security released a new policy stripping schools, places of worship and healthcare facilities from their previously safe status for those people who are undocumented in the United States. This change presents new challenges to Cooper students and administrators alike.

Cooper Head Principal Ms. Smith began to address this problem by assuring students in January 2025 that their safety is, and will always be, the number one priority. After this new federal policy was announced, the district immediately sent out emails with the proper protocols and information needed for the administration to continue running the school day successfully in the event of an Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) incident.

“I want to make it very clear that Cooper will never give anyone access to students easily. In order for an immigration officer, or an officer of any kind, to be able to reach a Cooper student, they will require every single form and warrant necessary for such an action,” Smith said.

Smith also encourages students worried about and unsure of their rights to come down to the office, where a student can access a Red Card, which is a small, laminated card with all the information necessary for a student to understand their immigration rights. For any student who has further concerns about their safety, Smith recommends that they reach out to an adult in the building.

“Schools used to be a safe place [for students with certain immigration statuses]. It’s new for all of us. Staff should be able to talk to students about their rights,” Smith said.

One teacher who is seeing the impact of the federal policy change in her classroom is Ms. Foster, who works with English language (EL) students at Cooper. She echoes Smith’s sentiments concerning the importance of protecting students.

“I wish there was more I could do to ease students’ fears regarding the potential of ICE investigations,” Foster said. “The fear of detention and/or deportation

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Early Miyazaki film *Nausicaa* still delights

Now more than 40 years old, *Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind* is a stellar example of excellent anime

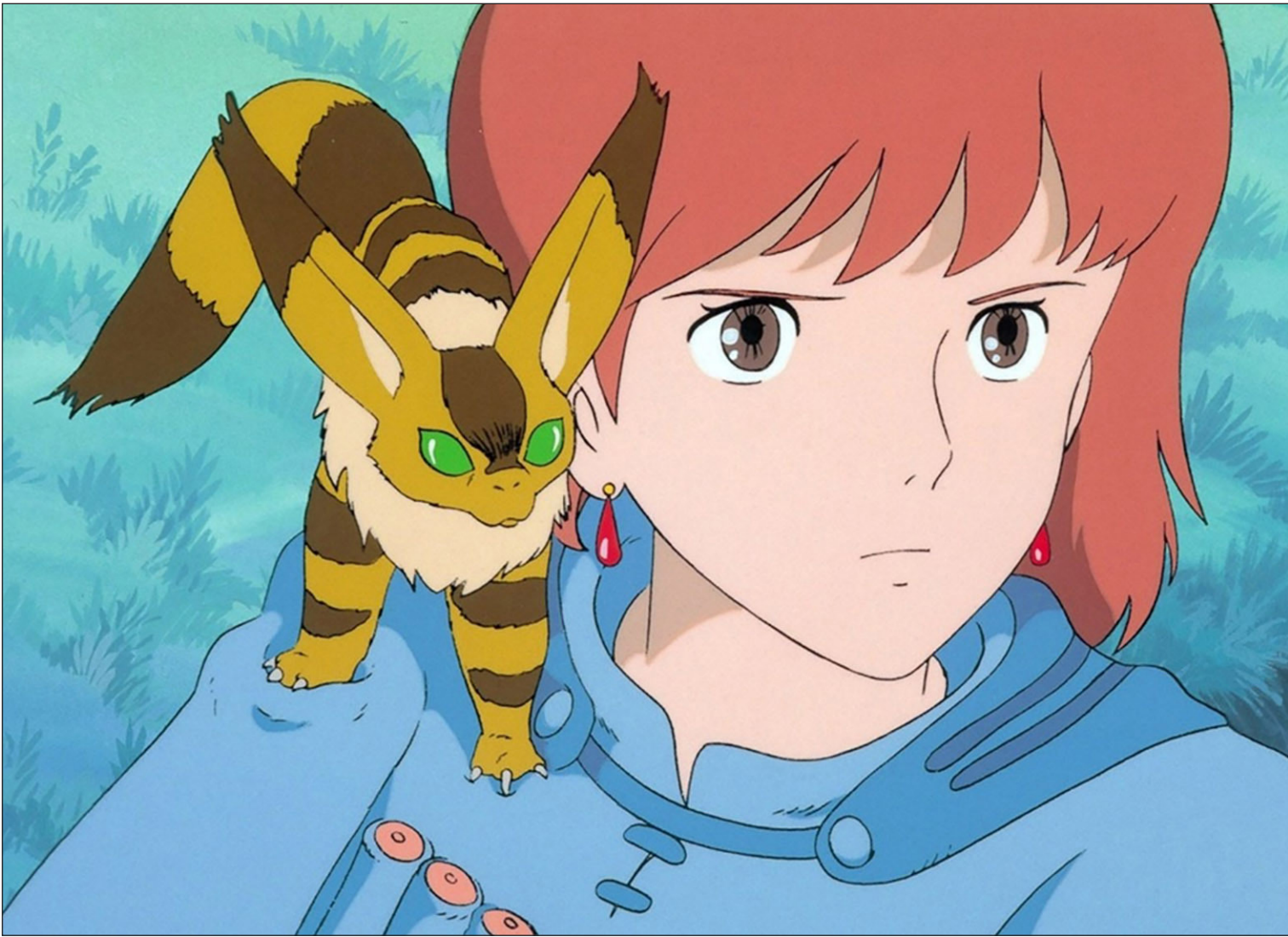


Photo by WALT DISNEY STUDIOS

The film's title character struggles throughout the story to find common ground between the forces of human progress and the needs of nature.

By VIVIAN HETTLE
Quill staff writer

The film I have selected is to review is *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*, directed by Hayao Miyazaki and released in 1984. I chose this movie because of its brilliant musical score and eye-catching costume design. Miyazaki masterfully uses moments of “ma,” where we are left to gaze at a beautiful scene in peace, sometimes with a character, while an enchanting score plays in the background. It feels as though we are lost in the film, as if we could reside inside of it forever. These are the moments that pull me into the movie. Another aspect that captivates me is the engaging costume design, where each character is perfectly represented by their attire, ranging from humble peasantry to royal elegance, from humility to pride. In *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind*, Miyazaki uses costume design and musical score to paint a picture of how spreading fear can lead to war on a dying

planet. *Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind* is set in the distant future, after an apocalyptic conflict has devastated much of the world’s ecosystems. The few surviving humans live in scattered communities within a toxic jungle. The film’s protagonist, Nausicaä, resides in the arid Valley of the Wind and has the ability to communicate with the massive insects that inhabit the dangerous jungle. Under the guidance of a veteran warrior, Lord Yupa, Nausicaä strives to bring peace to the ravaged planet. One filmmaking technique that makes this film memorable is its musical score. Early in the movie, we meet Nausicaä, who is exploring a toxic forest covered in deadly spores. She discovers a deceased Ohmu, an enormous, multi-eyed insect resembling a giant pill bug. Nausicaä harvests an eye shell from the Ohmu, which will greatly aid her people. As the forest releases its afternoon spores, Nausicaä, wearing a gas mask, sits

in the moment, admiring the beauty around her. The music playing is light and serene, contrasting with the danger she faces, as these spores are highly toxic and could kill her instantly. Despite the peril, the scene creates a sense of calm, drawing us into Nausicaä’s perspective. This moment of ma, a stillness of time, encourages us to view the spores not as a threat but as something that can be understood and treated. The music helps set the mood, allowing us to connect with Nausicaä’s peaceful and curious approach to the situation. Costume design is another key filmmaking element that enriches the story, representing each character’s unique traits. As the film progresses, we meet one of the antagonists, a royal woman named Kushana, who has just seized Nausicaä’s village and killed her father, the king. She gathers the villagers to announce her plans and assert her authority. The contrast in clothing between the two kingdoms speaks volumes about their respective cultures.

Nausicaä’s people wear simple, practical clothing that reflects their humble farming lifestyle, while Kushana and her army are adorned in flashy, elaborate garments and armor that signal their wealth and status. Kushana has an ornate outfit that includes a crown embedded with jewels and a white cape. Her right-hand man also dons luxurious clothing, including purple and blue garments traditionally reserved for royalty. This stark contrast suggests that Kushana is not to be trusted; her wealth and status are symbols of her manipulation and control. In contrast, Nausicaä’s simplicity allows her to connect more deeply with her people, as she is seen as one of them. Her clothing conveys humility, while Kushana’s attire emphasizes her separation from those she governs. The central message of the film is that war destroys both people and their planet. A pivotal scene illustrates this is when a

NAUSICAA
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Superman Returns is underappreciated superhero film

With the DC cinematic universe undergoing a massive overhaul, it is a good time to revisit this 2006 release

By KRIS OATES
Quill staff writer

Superman Returns is a 2006 film directed by Bryan Singer, starring Brandon Routh as Superman, Kate Bosworth as Lois Lane and Kevin Spacey as Lex Luthor. I chose to review this film because it was my favorite movie growing up and it made me imagine a life as a hero. In my opinion, it is the best of all the Superman films. *Superman Returns* explores themes of heroism, redemption and the eternal struggle between good and evil as Superman returns to Earth to face his old nemesis.

After leaving Earth for five years to visit his home planet, Superman returns to find that humanity has lost faith in him as its savior. Lois Lane has moved on with her life and society has learned to survive without him. Superman must now find a way to reconnect with Lois and rediscover his place in a world that may no longer need him. Adding to his difficulties is the rise of Lex Luthor, who plots to destroy Superman once and for all.

One key filmmaking element in the film is editing, which is crucial in creating the realism of Superman’s powers. A notable scene where editing plays a critical role is the airplane rescue sequence. The quick cuts and transitions heighten the tension as Superman saves the aircraft. These editing techniques not only showcase the realism of the action but also emphasize Su-



Photo by WARNER BROS.

Donning the famous cape in *Superman Returns* is Brandon Routh.

perman’s heroic abilities and the scale of the disasters he faces. In this scene, the editing builds suspense and maintains a rhythm, using fast cuts between panicking passengers,

the edge of their seats, making the moment memorable and emotionally intense as Superman saves the day.

Another important filmmak-

The main theme of *Superman Returns* is hope, perseverance and the power of good. A pivotal scene that reflects this message is when Superman, weakened by kryptonite, lifts a massive landmass and hurls it into space.

the failing aircraft and Superman’s efforts. This sense of chaos makes Superman’s eventual success feel even more impactful and thrilling. The editing keeps the audience on

ing technique in *Superman Returns* is the use of special effects. A key scene where special effects are vital is when Superman lifts the massive landmass created by Lex Luthor.

The visual effects highlight the landmass’ enormous size and weight, as well as Superman’s strength and determination. The landmass is infused with kryptonite, which weakens Superman, making the scene more dramatic and challenging. The special effects make the impossible seem believable, immersing the audience in Superman’s struggle. The impact on viewers is significant, as the effects draw them into the scene, allowing them to feel the danger and weight of Superman’s actions.

The main theme of *Superman Returns* is hope, perseverance and the power of good. A pivotal scene that reflects this message is when Superman, weakened by kryptonite, lifts a massive landmass and hurls it into space. This moment shows Superman’s determination, hope and unwavering commitment to doing good. It showcases his role as a protector of humanity, even at great personal cost. I strongly agree with this theme, as it reminds us of the importance of hope and the power of doing good, not just being good.

In conclusion, *Superman Returns* explores the themes of heroism, redemption and the battle between good and evil. I love this movie and appreciate the director’s work. It has brought joy to me and my family and we have always gone to see it when new Superman movies come out. I can tell that a lot of effort and time went into this movie, both from the actors and the director. *Superman Returns* deserves five out of five stars.

CONCERNS ABOUT ICE

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some of our students and families are experiencing right now is legitimate, and I don’t want to diminish that real fear. I think the most we as teachers can do to ease fears is provide students with factual information. At this time, schools are not being targeted by ICE. There have been no ICE raids at schools in Minnesota to the best of my knowledge. If an ICE official enters our building, before they have access to any student or student data, they need to provide the school with a judiciary warrant. Our district has put into place a plan involving the assistant superintendent, building administrators and building security to limit ICE access to as little as legally required and protect our students as much as possible,” she said.

Right now, no schools in the United States have been raided by ICE. However, the worry among some students has grown so strong that school attendance rates have been dropping in some communities, according to CNN. In light of that, Foster said it is important that school teachers and staff members support their students.

“For their own safety, a student’s immigration status is on a need-to-know basis. I don’t need to know the immigrant status of a student to teach and support them. Therefore, it’s hard for me to link any behaviors or attendance to fears of ICE raids. I have definitely heard and spoken with individual students who have expressed fear and asked for resources. I have also noticed a decline in attendance and an increase in withdrawn or guarded behavior in the last couple of weeks that may or may not be connected. I think it’s important that, as educators, we don’t jump to conclusions regarding what’s going on in our students’ lives,” Foster said.

On a larger scale, Smith added that there has not been a dramatic decrease in attendance at Cooper and she is hopeful that students will feel safe enough at school to continue coming for the benefit of their own education.

The threat of ICE is not only an administrative issue, however. Students at Cooper who feel passionately about the subject have spoken out against the new federal policy.

“The situation with ICE has reached a point where it no longer surprises me. My friends, all of us at 17, are now speaking up, not only for our own lives, but for others, showing unwavering determination to speak out for what’s right. They have made it clear that they will stand up for justice, meaning facing opposition for those who have never encountered issues with law enforcement,” Carlie Jones (11) said.

Now more than ever, Foster said it is important that students and administration work together in order to keep each other’s best interests in mind.

“The message I want to share with all students is that you belong here, your teachers and administrators want you here and we will do everything in our power to support you. We are here to talk with you if you are feeling fearful, frustrated or sad. If you are hearing comments from others that are hurtful, discriminatory or harassing, please let us know and we will work to end those types of comments. Please know that we care about you and we are here for you,” Foster said.

BUDGET CUTS

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activities to assess their cost-effectiveness and will present a plan in the coming weeks to address these offerings.

District officials stress that they are committed to providing a transparent process for staff, ensuring they receive guidance as staffing decisions are made. The district will continue to talk with students, staff, families and the broader community through various channels, including school board meetings, newsletters and social media updates, to keep everyone informed.

“We know this is challenging, and there are no easy answers. But together, we will move forward, and we will do so in a way that puts our students first and restores trust in our district’s financial leadership,” Staloch said.