

Student Body & Culture at Alpharetta HS

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01

Education

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Special Education Program

What's Going Well



Unified Raiders

This club has brought so much joy to these students and has allowed for more integration between general and Special ed. Unified hosts dances, activities, and field days for special ed.



Dances

Students get to attend prom and have their own dances. These events are always successful and enjoyable.



Areas to Address



Isolation of the Program

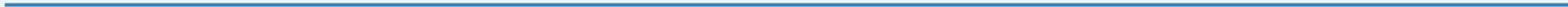
Special ed students feel isolated from everyone and feel as though no one likes them. Many people aren't aware that they even exist within our school.

Student Body Ignorance

General ed constantly judges them for their actions. I have heard multiple cases of bullying from the students. People do not understand and accept their disabilities.

Lack of social Opportunities

There is no opportunity for these students to adapt socially in life when they are isolated in the basement hallway.



What can we do



Educating Student Body

For the first week of advisement, one of the lessons should be about understanding and accepting all individuals

Exceptional Children's Week

We should go all out!
(More information on the next slide)

Buddy System


Some general ed students can pair up with special ed students throughout the year

Student Spotlight

Each week on the announcements one of the special ed students can be recognized.

Activities

Talent Shows, Field days, Dances, sport halftime games all on a bigger scale than ever. There should be a larger showout for these activities.

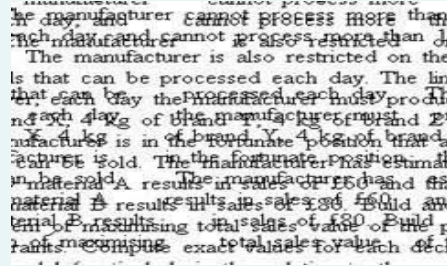


Exceptional Children's Week



Spirit Week

For each day, students could dress up for awareness of each disability such as blue day for autism awareness.



Stations

To increase awareness of the special education program, for each day we could implement stations at the front of the cafeteria during lunch that demonstrate a disability. This could raise awareness of how strong these students really are.



Dance

To celebrate exceptional children's week, Unified Raiders does a dance for the students. If this could be blown out on a much larger scale the students would be extremely happy.



International Baccalaureate Program

What is IB?



International Guidelines



IB students follow the curriculum of IB, not the state guidelines.

Unique Style of Learning

Heavy emphasis on conceptual knowledge rather than discussion; there are plenty of essays and rarely multiple choice questions.

Extra work

IB requires multiple major research assignments, CAS, and the extended essay on top of regular class.



To gain a proper student perspective, I did an anonymous survey
for students to fill out
Out of around 40-45 IB students I had 35 responses

**WARNING!! IB STUDENTS ARE
DRAMATIC!!**





Positives

College Acceptances

We have students attending USC, UPenn, and many other prestigious schools.

Personalized Learning

The smaller class sizes allow for more personalized help and a better learning experience to ensure success.

Prepared for College

The insanely heavy workload, style of learning, and rigor reflect that of college. Discourages procrastination.

Real-life Skills


The diploma forces you to speak and debate publically to ensure that you have proper social skills.

Confidence

Being such a small group of students allows for more comfort and confidence in class, and allows for students to feel ok asking questions.

Research

Students have the opportunity to explore areas that interest them. These research papers prepare IB kids for tedious papers in college.



Areas of Improvement



IB Support

The IB Diploma is held in the support anchor time for unnecessary amounts of time even when completed all requirements to leave.

IB Lit

This class is the biggest complaint among all cohorts. There is no structure to much of what is done in this class.

Scheduling

Promises are made that certain classes can be taken (IB Chem), and are not followed through. Students often take the diploma due to these promises.

Uncertified Teachers

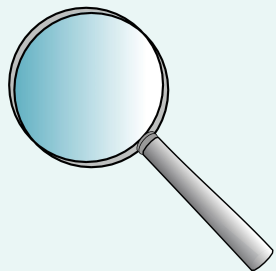
There have been numerous occasions in which teachers are uncertified, and do not understand how the diploma works. This results in students being underprepared for exams.

Lack of Teacher Coordination

There are weeks where there are tests in every class, and weeks with nothing at all. Year 2 students will also not receive the adequate Extended Essay time of 1 year by the due date.



What can be done?



Heavier observation

Beyond just the IB coordinator, there needs to be supervision and oversight in some classes.



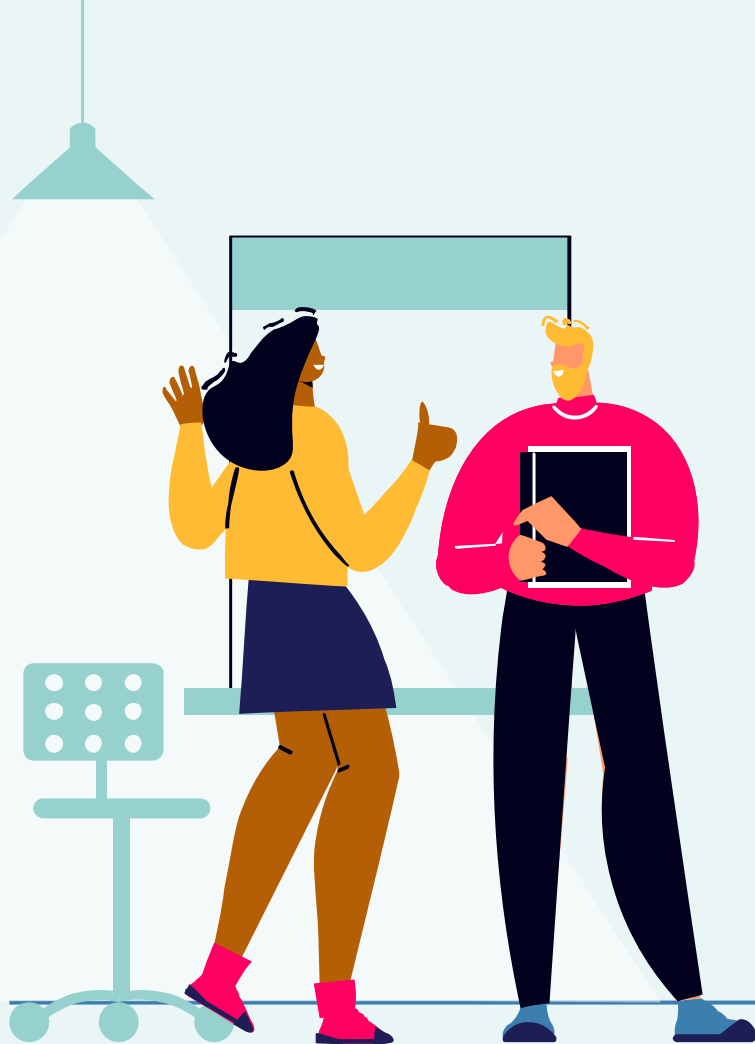
Require IB Certification

This would ensure every teacher has gone through IB training and can properly teach students about IB essays and exams.



Fix scheduling.

Do not make false promises to get students to take the diploma. Offer more courses suited towards STEM and other majors beyond Literature and History.



02

Safety & Culture



Culture:

Preface: AHS typically does a great job of meeting the needs of students in terms of cultural or religious accommodations amongst most classes.

Feedback: Students understand that not all accommodations can be met for every single student. What would be most beneficial would be support during times of major cultural and religious holidays where students may need additional accommodations to perform to their highest ability in school.





Accommodations that can be made:

To gauge how AHS can best support students during times of major religious or cultural significance, I had conversations with peers to understand how religious/cultural needs can be met.

Rosh Hashanah

Jewish New Year. Typically falls in September, and is where most Jewish students will be absent to attend Synagogue. Make the night before a balance night.

Yom Kippur

Jewish Day of Atonement. Typically falls in September (near Rosh Hashana), and is the holiest day on the Jewish calendar. Jewish Students will be fasting for 26 hours and will attend synagogue. Minimize assessments and make the night before a balance night.

Ramadan

Islamic month of fasting. Usually occurs between March and April or April and May. Some students find it difficult to focus, and require some accommodations. Try to minimize assignments due at 3:30, and possibly allow for accommodations during quizzes/tests (allowing for a student to take an assessment earlier in the day vs. later in the day, or even during lunch). Excuses from any gym or sport activities.



Other Recommendations

Announcements:

Sharing the importance of a religious or cultural period over the morning announcement is both a great way to educate students about a cultural/religious events, and allow for students to have their holiday recognized by the school. This makes students feel more welcomed.

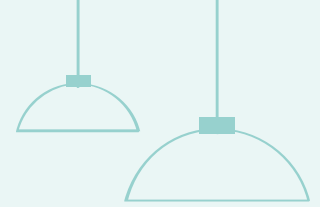
Educate Staff:

Sending out an email to staff about an upcoming religious or cultural holiday may help teachers understand the importance of a holiday/event, and may help teachers better accommodate for their students. It will also serve as a helpful reminder to be aware of student absences/need for accommodations..



Safety:

- Upon talking to students, the primary reason they feel unsafe is that they see students being able to get around security measures.
 - Students can easily enter through side doors when other students open it for them.
 - Some students walk off campus for lunch without the off campus privilege.
- The fights that occur are another reason why some feel unsafe; sometimes students pushing each other around in the halls also makes students feel uncomfortable



Safety:

Upon talking to students, I found that most of the things that make them feel unsafe are the rare, yet scary instances they have encountered. These instances include fights, people threatening to hurt people in school via social media, and instances where students felt uncomfortable on campus. A specific instance that was shared with me was when someone was approached on campus by an individual who was clearly under the influence after school hours.



03

Electives & Extracurriculars

Community Service
Club Opportunities
Fine Arts



Community Service & Fundraising



Adopt-a-Spot

Great, low-commitment opportunity for clubs. Given clubs a sustainable opportunity to contribute to the campus.



OSP Alternatives

OSP can hinder students/families from donating to fundraisers because it is not a software used for anything besides school activities. Venmo is more widely used and would improve participation in fundraisers & events



School-Wide

Create a school-wide community service event (5K, large-scale clean-ups, etc.) to bring community service more to the forefront of AHS's values.



Official Partnerships

Many bigger clubs have partnered with service organizations for events to get students involved. If the school also made some of these partnerships, it would ease the burden on some of our clubs & encourage community involvement.



Clubs and Interaction

Have more interaction between clubs, including socials and group community service opportunities so we can make a bigger difference.

Emphasize greater feeling of community at school.

List requirements for clubs in Teams page to make it easier for leaders to ensure they are keeping up with commitments and upholding school expectations.







Fine Arts Funding

Fine arts gets minimal county funding, making fundraisers crucial to advertise them more prominently and get non-fine arts families involved as well

Funding is used towards

- Sheet music
- Instruments
- Transportation
- Other competition equipment





Additional Fine Arts Feedback



Involvement

Maintain fine arts, visual arts, etc. elective involvement at AHS. Many students are going to Innovation academy, but it's important to stress how great our programs are here.



Honors Points

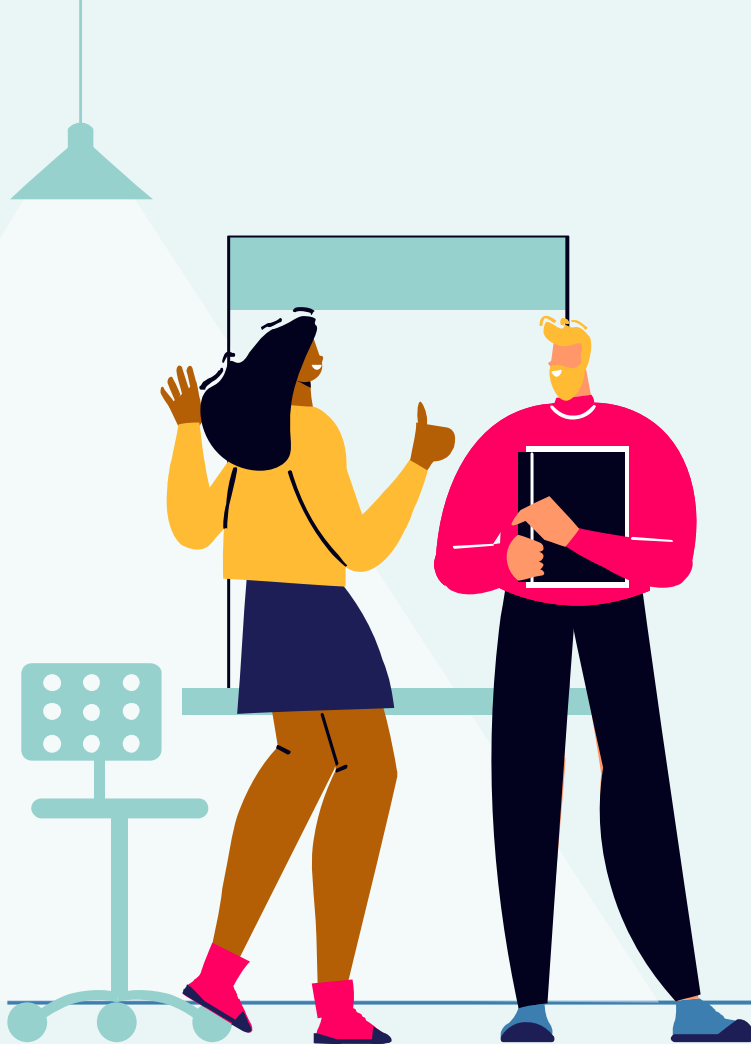
Student Feedback: Students want to receive honors points for being in the highest performing ensembles of their groups (Wind Ensemble, Chamber, SWE)



04

Misc & Student Feedback

Parking
Late Start/Early Release

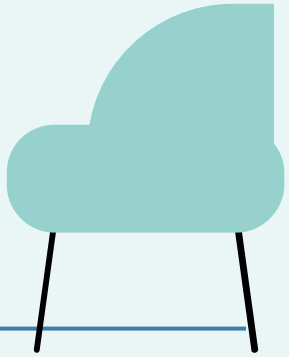




Late Start and Early Release

Began two years ago, and many students want to see it brought back.

Gives students and teachers a chance to rest, and keep up with their workload.



Parking



Glows

We all love the opportunity to park at school! The parking application and the directions are easy to follow, logical, and make it easy for students to submit everything they need on time and get a spot.



Grows

In the past, I know that some students on the waitlist have gotten parking spots in higher lots than students who submit their documents on time. If there is a way to minimize this, it would be great. Additionally, certain juniors have higher parking spots than seniors, which is frustrating to many of our students.





Other Feedback




HOCO Week / Football Game Themes

Participation in school-wide spirit weeks could still use improvement. Many students wanting trendier themes, etc., but it is difficult to get approval



Campus Upgrades

Simple upgrades around the campus can make it feel more welcoming and comfortable for students, like picnic table umbrellas.

A teal line-art icon of a picnic table with a bench and a small square table, located in the bottom right corner of the slide.

Thank you!

