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The unsigned editorials in this issue represent the opinions of *The Mainsheet* editorial board. Other material contained herein does not necessarily reflect the views of Chadwick School, the staff, or the newspaper.

Letter to the Editor and other contributions are welcome from any member of the Chadwick community. We reserve the right to edit letters for reasons of length and clarity. Other material will be evaluated on an individual basis. Mail all correspondence to the address below, or give it to the receptionist with "For the Mainsheet" prominently displayed.

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opinions

Matt and Austin: Corruption in the spelling bee?
EK Smith: Thoughts on the PCB science curriculum
Lindsey Waller: Why we tell stories

Staff Editorial**Thoughts on the college process as it gains speed**

We cannot begin to describe and relate all of the questions we have had to dodge this year.

"Where are you going?"

"Have you heard from anyone yet?"

"Well, what's your top choice?"

"Oh, you don't have a top choice? Well then, what are your top three choices?"

Here are some things we would like to say instead of answering your questions, and we will make these as subtle as possible.

1. Please SHUT UP. We understand that you are curious. We get that you are invested in our lives and want to share the good news and advice with us. But please do not talk to us about this stuff before May 1, because chances are we are either very anxious about hearing back from somewhere or we are very anxious about making a decision. I'm sure your best friend's nephew once removed had a wonderful time at that state school, but we are not your best friend's nephew once removed,

and we don't want to hear about it unless we specifically ask you about it. So we ask that you please respect that.

2. If you insist that we answer your questions, we will probably lie to you. A lot of us are very uncomfortable sharing our personal college admissions with people, and chances are we will just tell you something to get you to stop asking questions.

3. Do not EVER ask us what our scores are. It doesn't matter what type. It can be AP, SAT, ACT, PSAT, SAT subject tests, anything. The only people we should share our scores with are the schools we are applying to. It's incredibly inappropriate to ask us what our SAT score is, and it shames me to think of how many times I have been asked to share my SAT score.

4. It makes us uncomfortable when people post their admissions acceptance letters on social media. Yes, that is very exciting that you got accepted into that school, and you should be proud. However, posting the admissions letter for a college you may

not attend is fairly selfish. Consider all of those people out there who got denied or wait-listed there. How would they feel seeing that? On a related side note, letters that contain a message of scholarship just make people uncomfortable. Nobody really needs to know that you got the so-and-so award for \$18,000 each year. So please keep that to yourself.

5. Please don't reinforce the idea that the prestige of the school we are attending determines our worth. Yes, we know that you have probably never heard of the small liberal arts college in Pennsylvania that we are going to, but we are excited and we want you to be, too. We are very sorry that not all of us can go to an Ivy League school, but please be proud of us no matter what, not just if we are going to one of the top 10 colleges according to U.S. News and World Report. Let's not forget that college is only one small piece of our life, and that our future successes and careers are still to be determined, no matter where we end up.



by JAKE GOLDSTEIN and MADDIE BOGERT

Jake and Maddie: Apex=A pain?

At the end of last year, upon learning about the Apex Project, the Class of 2015 was understandably taken by surprise and very confused. The few examples of projects that were given to us did not provide a lot of clear direction: a play in Laverty, a no-flush toilet, and an app.

We were unsure about what was actually expected of us, and many of us were disappointed that we would not have the opportunity to continue with our normal English assessments and activities. When we began the project at the beginning of our second semester, many of us felt lost, and we still feel dissatisfied. A total of 88% of the seniors we surveyed reported that they disliked the Apex Project. The English teachers have asked us for feedback on many finer details of the project. However, we don't feel that these surveys have allowed us adequate room to communicate our feelings about more fundamental issues with the project, so we would like to do so here.

The Apex Project takes a "one-size-fits-all" approach to engaged citizenship

The Apex Project is supposed to help students fulfill part of Chadwick's Mission Statement, which states: "Through active participation in a diverse school community, students prepare to contribute meaningfully to their local, national, and global communities."

Although senior students were required to create our own personal definitions of engaged citizenship, the project itself forces us to neglect them. The rhetoric of the Apex Project treats engaged citizenship as something inherently tied to solving issues. Although a senior could very well define an engaged citizen as someone who simply interacts positively with her community, the Apex Project forces a student to abandon their own personal conception of engaged citizens for that of the English teachers': people who solve issues.

This idea limits the applicability of Chadwick's mission statement to the Apex

Project. As our readers likely know, we consider involvement in theater a great way to contribute positively to the Chadwick community, regardless of whether a specific show was performed with the intention of addressing an issue. The Apex Project, however, does not allow for this. A person who, for example, wrote a play not to address a deeply researched problem but rather just for the sake of writing it--or to entertain others--would not fulfill the requirements of the Apex Project.

We maintain that students can contribute positively to their communities without performing a month of scholarly research with the end goal of solving an issue.

The excessive structure is limiting and does not help students

Over the course of the first semester, the seniors were forced to write not one, not two, but *three* proposals for this same project. The third proposal, which was due in some classes during finals week, demonstrated an incredible disregard for students' time. We had to answer essentially the same questions as we answered on the previous two proposals, but this time we had the opportunity to do it in an official signed-and-dated letter, printed with the official Chadwick logo. How cute! Although it was super fun to reword our previous proposals while drowning in tons of other work during finals week, doing so (shockingly) served little purpose.

At the end of each class period, seniors spend five to 10 minutes briefly describing what they had accomplished during the period, listing any changes to their projects they thought of, and providing their teachers with a statement of what they had learned about their projects or themselves during 40 minutes.

Many students have complained of harsh grading on these daily logs: one student, in particular, cited that his teacher gave him an 80% on a daily log simply because he wrote his statement of learning at

the beginning, not the end, of his update.

Why should senior students have to deal with such patronizing, hand-holding structure? Since students rarely ever perform any meaningful reflection in the daily logs, they really serve little purpose other than to prove to our teachers that we are making progress. Such busywork does not benefit Chadwick seniors.

Apex symposia are essentially small discussions in groups of about five to seven students about their progress on the project thus far. While providing time for discussion between peers is helpful, the teachers' insistence that we follow their specific guidelines on the structure of the symposia--students may only speak about their project for one minute each, and then must spend no more than two extra minutes answering questions--is suffocating and damages the purpose of the discussions in the first place. After all, how can students meaningfully discuss and improve their projects in only three minutes? Again, busywork does not benefit Chadwick seniors.

The time-frame of the project is not conducive to making an impact on a community

As we explained earlier, Chadwick's Mission Statement attempts to create citizens who can "contribute meaningfully to their ...communities." Students can very well contribute meaningfully and prepare themselves for the world outside of Chadwick by leaving their typical environment (like Chadwick or Palos Verdes) and traveling to other parts of Los Angeles. However, given our mere 45 minutes a day in school, plus our 45 minutes or hour of nightly English homework, traveling far outside of our normal communities is virtually impossible.

At many other schools, students have entire days or weeks to dedicate to projects like this. A similarly flexible project structure would better allow Chadwick seniors to really engage with our communities in a meaningful way.