Comic by: Abby Swoboda

Lunch: to eat or not to eat?

Lily Riale
Reporter

Do you know the muffin man, who's now too small for his muffin pan? Not only that, he's whole grain too.

Lunches this year are straying from your stereotypical tater tots and macaroni and cheese; in fact, you might not even see those old favorites this year in the lunch line.

Replacing those scrumptious 400 calorie chocolate chip muffins that we hold so dear to our hearts are measly little imposters in the form of scrawny, whole grain dough balls that hail from the land of Zumba and whole wheat.

Don't get me wrong, I understand the need for well-balanced, smarter nutrition in America, but if I want to gorge myself on processed carbs and simple sugar, let me have the forsaken muffin!

Cafeteria Manager Lynn Buracynski agrees, saying: "It's important that students learn healthy eating habits, but I also feel that if the students are paying, the students should be able to choose what they want to eat."

Isn't this America? Land of the free, home of the freshly-baked-by-your-Grandmother cookies?

On a more serious note, we may feel that we are the only ones being affected by these changes, but we are not alone.

Buracynski further commented that "[The standards] make [the cafeteria ladies'] job a bit more challenging…we have to learn new recipes and figure out what the kids like and don't like. On top of that, because of the new and unique choices, kids aren't taking the food."

Personally, I feel that is a shame. Have we as students really stooped to such a level that we can't even exercise our taste buds a little bit? I rarely pass up a

Photo by: Lily Riale
Cafeteria worker **Kathy Walters** makes sandwiches for that day's lunch.

piece of fried chicken or a doughnut, but eating such foods unfailingly becomes tiresome. I think we could all stand to introduce some spices other than salt and butter to our home-grown, York County palates.

I mean, the last time my mother brought a bean salad to our church covered dish the elderly ladies just about had a fit because it wasn't baked corn or pork chops.

As we know, the apple doesn't roll far from the grocery cart, so if our parents have this intolerant view of tasting, then we are bound to adopt this same attitude.

If our parents never encouraged us to try new foods as kids, it is unlikely that we will find the motivation to try new foods now.

Change is scary, especially in high school. Why would anyone choose a new option that he or she may not like in the lunch line when we all know that grabbing a chicken patty is far more familiar?

Our lunch ladies are working hard to comply with government standards, and if we refuse to even sample the almost-Thai food that they provide, it is more than a tad insulting.

The changes certainly beg the question: are these new standards really any healthier? According

to Chartwells, each student lunch should have approximately 450-650 calories.

However, the source of the calories is the real issue. 500 calories from a chicken nugget and boxed mashed potatoes entrée is quite different than 500 calories of assorted veggies and fish.

Senior Allison Stewart remarked: "There's not many truly healthy options or gluten free options. There should be more vegetarian options as well."

She brings up a valid point: The food that the government has decided to provide is purportedly "healthy", but honestly, just adding whole grain to a chocolate chip cookie isn't exactly a wellness plan. A cookie is still a cookie, and if you're going to eat one, might as well go big or go home.

But, according to Chartwells, a whole grain cookie fits the requirements for one of the two servings of whole grain that must be provided for grades 9-12.

Am I missing something here?

So, you be the judge. Is the cafeteria food truly "healthy"? Should a chocolate chip cookie count as part of a well-balanced nutritious meal? Will the world of Wall-E be a reality in a few short years? If so, I want a blended burger to go. And yes, I want fries with that.

Technology: friend or foe?

Abby Swoboda
Editor-in-Chief

I hear phrases like "when I was your age…" and "in my day…" several times every day, but how many times of hearing this does it take a person to understand that, shockingly, things have, in fact, changed over the last thirty years.

I resent these phrases thrown around, and yet, recently, I have found myself doing something very similar: I, Abby Swoboda, am guilty of having been—gasp—a technology hater.

This realization came to me one day in English class when we determined that I was the only cellphone-less student in the classroom; a determination that evoked some pride on my part.

For years, I have fought against any suggestion of purchasing or carrying a mobile phone with me, and have won this battle thus far.

I kept telling myself that a phone was not something I needed or wanted, and I took to carrying that idea as a sort of badge of honor, which I realized during that class in English was actually a very silly thing to do.

There I was, amidst a group of modern, up-to-date classmates, toting my technological ineptness as some kind of award, when in fact, I was just behind the times.

Growing up, our generation has been surrounded by ridicule for our use of technology, incessant-

ly being told to get our noses out of our phones or to go outside.

And, unfortunately, I suppose I inherited some of this curmudgeon-esque mentality over time. But why?

I find myself scoffing at people that choose to use a Kindle or iPad to read versus a paper book, but then I have to stop and remind myself that I'm not any better than them for my rejection of the reality of the present.

If anything, these people should be scoffing; they have managed to move along with time, embracing the technological advances that I so vehemently rejected. And why? So that I could clutch my clunky Walkman to my chest and feel better about myself?

After that English class, I had to come to terms with the fact that I lived in a world where reading the book before seeing the movie made me exactly zero percent better than anyone else.

Reality is, the world will never be the place my neo-luddite affiliates and I pretended it to be, and no matter how much we shield ourselves with safety of the past, the present is upon us and comes with unlimited talk and text.

I still fear being a so-called "slave to technology," but it's too easy to say this without taking into account that perhaps such a person does not exist, only someone existing organically *now*.

When someone is on their

smartphone, an onlooker may only see the unnatural glow on their face from the device, but it is important to remember that the phone user could be talking to their friend that lives in another country or reading Walt Whitman and experiencing life in a whole different way.

Living in the world where a phone feature called Siri is assigned gender and personality is not something I have completely come to embrace yet, but more and more often, I am asking myself: why not?

The information of the world is at our fingertips, and yet, some of us continue to shame those who take advantage of this phenomenon.

To deny reality is inevitable at times, but everyone has the choice after this initial denial to either embrace the world as it changes or condemn its advances, which therefore cheats them of the wonders that could be available to them.

Part of my generation has never seen a world without Google, and contrary to my former beliefs, I don't think this is necessarily a bad thing any longer.

I greatly admire those with the power of adaptability within this constantly expanding world of technology, and I've been working to integrate myself among this breed.

It will take some adjusting, but if my great grandfather, who predates sliced bread, has come to embrace some of the newest computer technology at 92, I think I can manage to swap my typewriter for a laptop.

Graduation criteria

Lauren Benedict
Assistant Editor

Entering high school can be nerve racking on its own, let alone the fact that it seems every year there are new requirements needed for graduation.

Beginning with the class of 2017 and every class thereafter, graduation projects are no longer required.

This change is due to the implementation of chapter four in the Pennsylvania state code, which requires students to pass the Keystones with a proficient score in math, literature, and biology.

Students who do not receive a proficient score will be required to take them again, and if they still are not proficient, then the school will have to administer a government-created project.

The state of Pennsylvania is giving guidelines to schools for graduation requirements, and because of this, schools have little to no say in what their students need to graduate.

Principal Heather Venne explained that for students who do not score proficient on the Keystone exams, they must complete a project-based assessment in order to graduate.

All of the guidelines are currently tentative, but they are coming down the pipeline from the government, to the state, then to administration.

So, it is important to remember that, in this case, it is not administration's fault for changing graduation requirements.

Do not get me wrong, I think it is immensely considerate on the government's behalf that there will be alternatives for students to graduate, such as a project-based assessment if a student cannot score proficient on the actual Keystone exam, but I still think that more graduation preparation should be completed.

One part of high school is preparing for college, and taking away graduation projects could get rid of preparation that some students need.

Many students do not have the support and knowledge to prepare them at home.

I know guidance will always be there for the students and give them the help they need for college, but I think more needs to be done.

Because administration is still unsure about what the new requirements will be with the Keystones, I think they should still require college visits, shadowing of interesting jobs, and the completion of activities that help guide students to the best college for them.

Looking forward into upcoming years, graduation requirements are subject to fluctuate in school systems, as has been the case in the past.

Because of this reality, graduation requirements may or may not be the same for a while, and school districts never know what new changes the government may make.

That being said, we should all be required to do more than just pass the Keystones.

More requirements not only would help preparation for college but allow students to see what options they have.

On the other hand, Venne said, "As a leadership team we did not feel it was fair to give students more requirements on top of the Keystones for graduation, but still keeping them prepared for college."

While that is very true, the tests can be quite an intimidating and overwhelming pressure for the upcoming junior class to pass in order to graduate.

I think it would be a better idea if something little was also incorporated again for a project.

Not only should the state require more than the Keystones for graduation, so should each school district even if the state does not say so.

In the past few years, it was only required that students visited a couple of colleges, filled out worksheets for guidance, during junior year take part in a mock interview, and made a resume though their four years.

In my opinion, it was not a lot of work, and it was quite simple to complete.

I feel that it still helped me prepare for college and choose what was right to do after graduation.

If anything, we should still require college visits, guidance meetings, and maybe even an essay proving that students are taking the necessary steps for choosing a major and a college to attend.

The state of Pennsylvania should step in and require more assignments that would benefit individuals after high school.