

# SLOHS EXPRESSIONS

OCTOBER 2024 | POLITICAL FEATURE | SAN LUIS OBISPO HIGH SCHOOL



*Republicans and Democrats have shaped the United State's government, but we should be open to more options. Graphic courtesy of freshman Mallory Cushing.*

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## Breaking the Binary: Alternatives to the Two-Party System

OPINION EDITOR SAGE MEEKS

Students and staff at San Luis Obispo High School are getting ready for the upcoming election in November. It's clear that the two-party system, long entrenched in American politics, often leaves many feeling disillusioned.

The U.S. doesn't need to be just two parties and two people fighting over the presidency. There are many other alternatives to how the U.S. could run the election and while making it more diverse than the two radically different parties being used.

"Our government is running horribly and the two-party system does not help at all, it just makes us choose between two crazy old people giving us no real choice, and making our situation even worse no matter who is elected," said senior Jenna Cross.

There are multiple alternatives possible instead of the two-party system. Proportional representation, which allocates positions based on the percentage of votes each candidate receives, rather than winner-takes-all. This method could potentially allow for a more diverse set of voices and perspectives in office and might mean that the runner-up could serve as vice president.

Another option is ranked-choice, where voters rank candidates by preference. If no candidate secures a majority of first-choice votes, the candidate with the fewest votes is eliminated, and their votes are redistributed

based on the next highest candidate. This process continues until a candidate achieves a majority.

"The two-party system polarizes the United States and its citizens into one of two sides. The presidency is treated as either black or white but more often than not it's shades of gray and we need to treat it as such," said senior Levi Ammerman.

In a time where the country is constantly divided, we don't need the election to continue widening this divide. The U.S. was founded on principles of respect for diverse beliefs and opinions, yet during election cycles, the focus often shifts to attacking opponents rather than real dialogue between candidates.

"With a two-party system, people need to agree with one or the other. There is no option in the middle, leading to people choosing the 'lesser of two evils' instead of choosing the candidate they most agree with," said Ammerman.

By exploring and potentially adopting alternative voting systems, we could move towards a more inclusive and representative democracy. This shift may not only reflect the diverse perspectives of the American electorate better, but it could also promote a healthier, more constructive political discourse.

If students are eighteen they have the power to vote outside of the two parties, Tigers. Remember the other options come election time.

## Meet Anthony Aaron: The Man at the Desk

FEATURE EDITOR VYOLET BURRUS

There are many people who work at San Luis Obispo High School, most of which are teachers, some often being overlooked. One such member is counseling secretary Anthony Aaron.

To learn more about who Aaron is, Expressions decided to ask him a few questions about his life and what brought him to SLOHS.

**Expressions:** What do you do at SLOHS and why did you choose to work at SLOHS?

**Counseling secretary Anthony Aaron:** I handle a lot of the counselor's paperwork. I deal with setting up their appointments, and I deal with the people that they deal with. I started working for the school district about 2014 and then I just hopped around different spots...I really wanted to get out of the San Joaquin Valley, and then I started applying for jobs out this way.

**Expressions:** What do you do in your free time? What are some of your hobbies?

**Aaron:** Sketching, writing, traveling. I'm a little bit of a gamer, just not a heavy gamer.

**Expressions:** What type of games do you play?

**Aaron:** I like playing "Tetris 99" [and] I'm playing "Link's Awakening." I'm waiting for the "Marvel vs [Capcom]" collection, I pre-ordered that sucker. There's no way I'm not getting a physical copy, I didn't even know I was waiting ten years for that. I play "Mega Man 8" and "Mega Man 11" too.

**Expressions:** Tell us more about your sketches.

**Aaron:** So I've been sketching these cartoon guys from out of my head since I was in middle school. For a while, I even had them in the newspaper where I grew up and then the editor changed so I stopped doing that, but the characters never died. I kept them with me all throughout school, and in high school, I started writing and adding stories to a lot of the guys I sketched...My first [book] was in 2017. So far, I have 11 books published. The latest one was an art book that details where I came up with a chunk of the characters that I've written about and discussed throughout the years.

**Expressions:** What's your favorite part about SLOHS?

**Aaron:** Talking to an interesting array of people, whether it be over the phone or in person or email. I [also] never knew just how much I would use a sticky note until I got here.

**Expressions:** What are some words of wisdom for SLOHS students?

**Aaron:** Number one, don't be stupid. Number two, make sure you get a job that can keep you off the street while you pursue the thing you love. Number three, if you go through a breakup in high school, there's more people on earth. The last thing, everybody is born with a core, and the people you surround yourself with, they can either help you evolve as a person or devolve as a person. You want to find out which is which as you go through life. Get rid of the people that devolve you, keep the people that evolve you.

Next time students visit the counselors, come visit Aaron!

## The NFL Has Fans on the Edge of Their Seats!



First National Football League Game. Photo courtesy nj.com.

REPORTER NATHAN SENNETT

The National Football League season has recently started up, getting lots of football fans at San Luis Obispo High School fired up for the season. Many people are happy with the results of their favorite NFL team's success, such as the first NFL game Chiefs-Ravens, and Kansas City winning. Many of the Sunday football games are having fans on the edge of their seats.

In early September, Dallas Cowboys Quarterback Dak Prescott became the highest paid NFL player in history Artist Kendrick Lamar is also confirmed to be performing at the super bowl, located in New Orleans this year.

"I think it's a great choice for the halftime show because he's getting a ton of recognition and praise as of recently and he's already shown before that he can perform in such a large environment such as the super bowl back in 2022," said sophomore football player Santiago Amaya.

The halftime show this year will be getting plenty of SLOHS students excited for the performer, Lamar. This might result in more students watching the Super Bowl this year.

Cowboys fans now have a future to look forward to, especially since they have been looking for somebody they can rely on.

"It's a great feeling because he's the best in the league," said sophomore Kameron Santos.

SLOHS students are excited to watch their favorite football team play and see how much they have grown as players since the last season. It is exciting to keep up with which teams will make it to the playoffs, or even the superbowl this year.

Sources: si.com, variety.com

## Abby Miller Shares Her Experience as a New Teacher After Student Teaching at SLOHS

PEOPLE & CULTURE EDITOR TALIA GARRETT

Kicking off the 2024-2025 San Luis Obispo High School year, there are a handful of new teachers joining this school. However, algebra II teacher Abby Miller has had a unique experience at SLOHS, as she is a former student-teacher. Expressions decided to interview Miller and give her the opportunity to see what she thinks about SLOHS.

**Expressions:** How does being a teacher compare to being a student teacher?

**SLOHS Algebra II Teacher Abby Miller:** Being a student teacher was so much fun because I got to hang out with math teacher Riley Birdsall everyday! However, being a teacher has other perks such as being able to try new things in the classroom and set my own policies. There are a lot more decisions to be made every day but I still work with Birdsall and other teachers to help me support all my students in the best way!

**Expressions:** What made you want to teach algebra II?

**Miller:** Since I was a student teacher in algebra one, I think teaching algebra II made a lot of sense since it is the next step up. It is cool teaching both subjects because I can see the direct correlation between the two, but also, there was a need for an algebra II teacher and I think I was just at the right place at the right time to get the opportunity to teach it!

**Expressions:** What are your favorite things about being a teacher at SLOHS?

**Miller:** My favorite things about being a teacher at SLOHS are the students! It is so fun seeing my students from last year when I was a student teacher and now in my classes or just around campus. I also love the staff and am super happy to now be colleagues with my mentor, Birdsall.

**Expressions:** Why did you choose to teach at SLOHS?

**Miller:** I had such an amazing experience last year as a student teacher and was so fortunate to be hired the following year. I love the SLO area and wanted to stay here after I graduated college, and SLOHS is just the best!

**Expressions:** How has being a student teacher affected your experience at SLOHS?

**Miller:** Since I was here last year, my transition into being a teacher has been very easy which I am very happy about. I already knew the school, staff, and lots of students, so being a new teacher was not as daunting as I was expecting.

Miller continues to make this campus a better place everyday, so make sure to say hi if students see her around!

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# What Does the New Agriculture Teacher Jamie Stapf Think About SLOHS So Far?

REPORTER MALLORY CUSHING

New agriculture teacher Jamie Stapf was a former San Luis Obispo High School Tiger and now a new addition to the SLOHS staff. Stapf teaches many classes, from Floral Design to Ornamental Horticulture, and is a fan favorite amongst students. She was in the SLOHS graduate class of 2015.

*Expressions* did a Q&A with Stapf, and asked her questions about her SLOHS experience and her agriculture career pathway.

**Expressions:** As a former SLOHS student, what is it like teaching at the school you once attended?

**AG Teacher Jamie Stapf:** It is really rewarding. I think it's very full circle to have gone to this school, and then clearly I liked it so much that I wanted to become a teacher. It's also really fun to see my teachers that are now my colleagues.

**Expressions:** What is your favorite memory as a student at SLOHS?

**Stapf:** All of the senior activities like going to the senior prom, and our senior sunset on the Cuesta grade was awesome. [English teacher Craig] Stewart played Tracy Turnblad's mother in the school play "Hairspray," Being on the cheerleading team and the first stunt team at SLOHS was a great experience. I also loved all the fairs that I showed pigs; those were super memorable.

**Expressions:** What got you interested in AG, and why did you want to teach AG?

**Stapf:** My parents both came from an AG background; they didn't work in agriculture, but their families did. I grew up riding horses with my mom, but I was really into sports growing up, and that's what I kind of did.

When I got to high school, my dad told me to sign up for AG biology and to raise a pig, so it did. From there on I was an AG kid through and through. When I went to college I did not want to be an AG teacher. I was a pre vet, and wanted to be a large animal vet. During my junior year of college I came back to help [AG teacher Anna] Bates and [AG Teacher Jodi] Evans with their livestock practices during the summer, and I just loved it. I just knew how special it was and I wanted to give that opportunity to other people. Then I got to see it kind of pay forward to the students.

**Expressions:** Why should a student at SLOHS enroll in an AG class?

**Stapf:** There are so many pathways that AG leads into, and SLOHS offers a lot of those. I think getting exposed to agriculture is good for everybody. I feel like we are so disconnected between the consumers to a lot of the products that they consume every single day. People should have a connection with their foods and clothes, with the companies. I really do love the hands-on opportunities, and being in AG classes teaches kids to take pride in their work and to take ownership in things. So if that's what you're interested in, or you just don't know what you want to do, we might be able to push you in a direction and help you find a career path you never even imagined.

**Expressions:** What is your favorite part of teaching at SLOHS?

**Stapf:** I just love this school. I knew it was really special when I went here, and then when I went and taught at other schools, I knew even more how special it was. The culture is the best and every student holds themselves to really high expectations. I love this school, it's so special to me.

If students are ever interested in an AG class, or just a fun place to hang out, visit Stapf's room B306!

## Spice Up Fall With This Pumpkin Coffee Cake!

PEOPLE & CULTURE EDITOR TALIA GARRETT



*This large size of pumpkin coffee cake is a delicious treat to have throughout the school day. Photo courtesy freshman Mallory Cushing.*

Fall has just begun, and this delicious pumpkin coffee cake is a perfect seasonal masterpiece for San Luis Obispo High school students to compliment the autumn festivities. This delicious recipe is like no other. The comforting blend of cinnamon, pumpkin, and spices will leave you longing for the next bite. This delicious moist, fluffy cake is guaranteed to warm your heart. Embrace the crumbly streusel on top that beautifully compliments the other ingredients, sending you to another world. This delightful recipe adds to the essence of the warm autumn feeling.

### Recipe:

Prep: 25 minutes  
Cook: 40 minutes  
Serves: 18 people

### Ingredients:

#### For Crumble

4 cups all-purpose flour  
1 cup granulated sugar  
1 cup light brown sugar  
1 1/2 teaspoon fine sea salt  
2 tablespoon ground cinnamon  
1 teaspoon ground ginger  
1 teaspoon ground cardamom optional  
2 cup unsalted butter cold and cubed

#### For Cake:

4 cups all-purpose flour  
2 teaspoon baking powder  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
1 teaspoon fine sea salt  
4 teaspoons ground cinnamon  
1 teaspoon ground ginger  
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg

1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom  
1 cup light brown sugar  
1/2 cup granulated sugar  
2 cup pumpkin puree (not pumpkin pie filling)  
1 cup vegetable oil  
1 cup plain yogurt room temperature  
4 large eggs room temperature

### Instructions

#### For Crumble:

Mix the flour, both sugars, salt, and spices together. Use a pastry cutter to cut the butter into the flour mixture and blend. The mixture should resemble large crumbs and stick together when you press them together. Set aside in the refrigerator until needed.

#### For Cake:

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Grease and flour a 9 x 9 baking pan. Set aside.

Mix together the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, spices, and sugars together in a bowl. Set aside.

Mix together the pumpkin puree, oil, yogurt, and eggs together in a separate bowl until well-combined. Set aside.

Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients and mix until just combined- you want no streaks of flour, but you do want lumps in the batter.

Pour about 2/3 of the batter into the baking pan, then top with 1/2 of the crumble topping. Top that with the remaining batter, followed by the remaining crumble.

Bake for 35 - 40 minutes, or until a toothpick comes out clean.

Allow the cake to cool completely in the pan, then cut and serve. Top with powdered sugar, if desired.

Source: [acookienameddesire.com](http://acookienameddesire.com)

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# Where do SLOHS Students Stand Regarding the Election? Is it Important to Stay Informed?

FEATURE EDITOR VIOLET BURRUS

In what may be one of the most intriguing elections of the past few decades, the 2024 election is fast approaching with former President Donald Trump and Vice President Kamala Harris battling it out. Each candidate's election means different things for the United States, and San Luis Obispo High School students have much to say about both them and their stances.

With the upcoming election, *Expressions* decided to interview a few students to learn more about varied political views on campus.

**Expressions:** How do you feel about the presidential candidates, who are you wanting to win?

**Junior Charly Elston:** I'm not particularly impressed with any of the presidential candidates; all of them have very capitalist values that ultimately doom our country. That said, between Harris and Trump, I would say Harris is the better option, perhaps the only option at this point. Politics are abysmal if you have a moral compass, unfortunately.

**Senior Annika Miltner:** I would be voting for Kamala, but I can't vote in this election because I'm a couple months too young. I've always been more Democratic leaning so I would be voting for the party rather than the candidate, but I also don't agree with a lot of Trump's personal beliefs, like his character and a lot of his policies as well.

**Junior Canyon Davis:** We need to move more towards a socially liberal take on things and in terms of policy, a more of a conservative approach. I don't like either of the candidates; I think Trump is too crazy, and I think [Harris] is also a little bit crazy.

**Expressions:** How would you describe your stances politically? Is there a party you align with?

**Elston:** I don't like aligning myself with a particular party because every party has some awful trait to them. I have my own beliefs, such as freedom for people to be who they are without

persecution, protecting our environment, and the importance of valuing people over profits.

**Miltner:** I've always aligned with the general beliefs of the Democratic party, but that doesn't mean I always agree with everything. It is difficult to funnel yourself down to a party when they often have very polarizing beliefs, however.

**Davis:** I would say liberal socially. Then policy, conservative, so [overall] centrist.

**Expressions:** Do you think it's important for teenagers to get involved politically? Why or why not?

**Elston:** I think it's very important for teenagers to get involved with politics. They will soon be voting and contributing to the community in a substantial way, meaning that it is important for them to discover their beliefs on their own and what they value so they can find candidates/proposals that align with their beliefs.

**Miltner:** It's a good idea to stay on top of things going on in the world as a rising adult. There are a lot of issues that will directly impact you and your peers now and in the future. It's helpful to be aware of the current political climate, even if you're not one hundred percent well versed.

**Davis:** At some point it's important to understand what's going on. I think that understanding who you're going to vote for, not just other people's opinions, is important.

**Expressions:** What do you think is the most pressing issue right now, and how can elected officials as well as citizens fix it?

**Elston:** Right now, I would say the Israel/Palestine and Russia/Ukraine conflicts are the most pressing. Elected officials must call for a ceasefire. Innocent civilians are being mass slaughtered, and the US is funding it in Palestine. These kinds of conflicts are what lead to world wars historically, which bodes well for no one except for companies manufacturing the weapons used to rip the lives away from human beings. Citizens can advocate for elected officials to call for a ceasefire and more financial support for victims.

**Miltner:** Women's reproductive rights are a major issue in the US right now. Since *Roe v. Wade* got overturned, I think that the best thing for elected officials to do is keep talking about these issues so that it is always fresh in the nation's minds. As for citizens, grassroots movements are more impactful than you think.

**Davis:** US debt and cutting back big spending programs. I know our economy is not doing super good.

**Expressions:** If you were elected into office, what are some changes you would make?

**Elston:** I believe that many of the issues pervasive in the country can be traced to capitalism. Child labor can be attributed to the mass consumerism fueled by capitalism. Violence is urged on by the push to sell weapons for "liberty" when in reality, it's money for the companies vending the arms. While some people can handle guns, it is not worth all the children's lives that are lost.

**Miltner:** Ideally, I think that our party system and the way that we run elections is very corrupt, but I know that that would be a very difficult thing to change with the way that the Constitution is. If I had an ideal dream way of changing things, I'd probably try to have less polarizing parties in the US so that we can have a myriad of opinions rather than just be forced to go to a [party].

**Davis:** One thing I would change is just the view towards [presidents]. Right now, we've had Joe Biden, who, you know, was a little bit not there mentally, and Donald Trump was kind of a [jerk]. So maybe trying to change the view towards presidents, in order to elect people who aren't just a part of our preferred political parties, and [instead] elect people who you know are actually going to represent the United States.

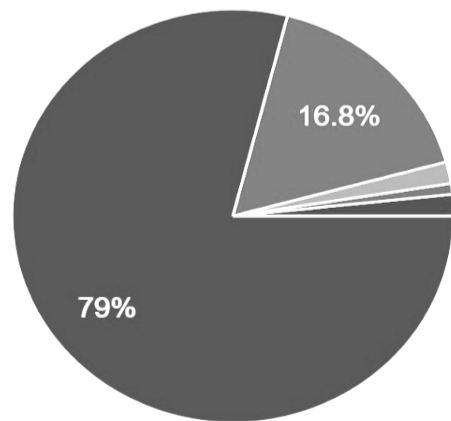
Regardless of views, it's important to stay informed with current events and be educated. If able to do so, pre-register before the election to vote, Tigers, it's not too late to get involved in this year's election.

## If SLOHS Seniors Could Elect the President, Kamala Harris Would Win in a Landslide

REPORTER MALLORY CUSHING

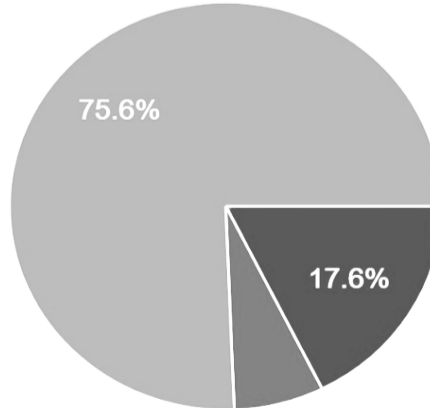
With election season knocking at the door, San Luis Obispo High School *Expressions* held a mock presidential election to see which way the senior class of 25' at SLOHS would vote. We gave the senior class one week to answer questions with topics such as important political issues, and the inevitable question that none of us can escape: Who will you be voting for in the 2024 presidential election?

### Who Would Win if the Seniors Chose?



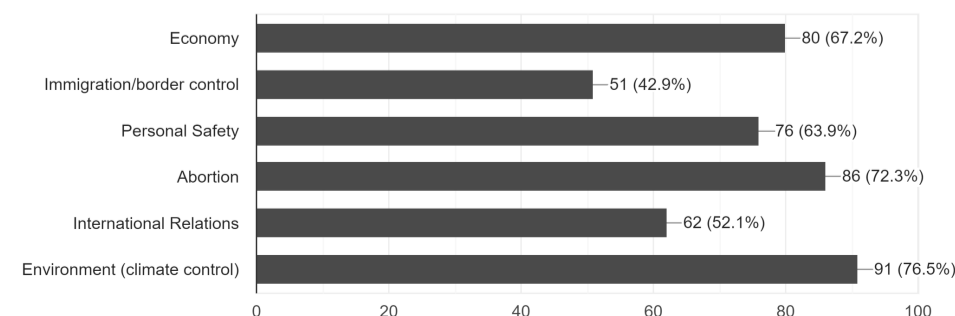
As of September 19, there are 393 seniors at SLOHS. If those 393 students could decide who would be our president, 79 percent would choose Kamala Harris, and 16.8 percent would elect Donald Trump. The three independent party candidates are less popular, sharing 4.2 percent of votes between them.

### Who is Voting in the 2024 Election?



Shockingly, 75.6 percent of the senior class is still too young to vote, leaving only 24.3 percent legally able to vote. Out of the legal voters, 6.7 percent are choosing not to vote in the 2024 presidential election.

### Most Important Concerns for Students:



Environment concerns takes the lead for the most important cause for senior voters with 91 votes. Abortion and Economy are in second and third with 86 and 80 votes. Next up is Personal Safety and International Relations in fourth and fifth with 76 and 62 supporters. In last place with 51 votes, is Immigration/Border Control.

# Who's Running For President This Year?: An Overview of the 2024 Presidential Candidates



Harris and Trump are the two prime candidates in the 2024 election. Collage courtesy of junior Vyolet Burrus.

REPORTER JOEY BERNARDO

The time has come once again for our country to decide its next leader. This year's election will see Vice President Kamala Harris vs. former President Donald Trump as they race for the support from their fellow Americans, some of which will be voting from San Luis Obispo High School.

As the election comes closer, there's likely a few questions that students may have on their mind: who's winning, what are their policies, and what are the third parties?

By this point, most states have decided which party holds the majority. As an example, Harris holds a majority in California and New York, while

Trump holds the majority in Florida and Texas. It is key that Trump or Harris control the swing states, which usually flip-flop between the two parties. Controlling states is important because each state a candidate wins, the more points they get towards the electoral college.

One of Harris' advantages over Trump is her ability to speak well, something that would entice many students.

"I'd vote for Kamala Harris since she's less hypocritical than Trump," said junior Xavier Lara.

Also, it is important to know what candidates will do once they're president. Harris shares many beliefs with her fellow Democrats, such as legalizing abortions nationally, maintaining lower tax rates, and initiating green policies.

Meanwhile, Trump will have many similar policies from his last few campaigns, such as increasing border security, combating inflation, and increasing the U.S. military. He does have a few "Trump cards" when it comes to new policies, including: rolling back the electric vehicle mandate that Biden had intended to implement and taking action against pro-Hamas citizens.

Lastly, there are some third party candidates in this year's election. The Libertarian party's candidate is Chase Oliver, whose main appeal is being a party in between the Republicans and Democrats. The Green Party candidate Jill Stein will mainly focus on climate issues. Lastly, Cornel West will be an independent candidate who will focus on class division, race, and gender issues.

Here at SLOHS, students and staff have varying opinions on who they would vote for.

Trump's policies on the economy are certainly appealing to those who think America's economy is in decline.

"Trump is the better option since his policies are focused on the economy and maintaining America's status on the world stage," said junior Jack Edwards.

Both candidates have many stances and promises that will appeal to people across the country. Between the two candidates, neither party has a distinct advantage over the other. 2024 may have one of the closest and most intense elections in our country's history. But who will win the election? It's all up to the people.

Sources: [ballotpedia.org](http://ballotpedia.org), [bbc.com](http://bbc.com), [donaldjtrump.com](http://donaldjtrump.com), [kamalaharris.com](http://kamalaharris.com)

## The Democrat Club at SLOHS is Making Waves

ADVISOR SCOTT NAIRNE

Just in time for the upcoming United States Presidential Election, the San Luis Obispo High School Democrats Club is meeting weekly. From Election registration to guest speakers, the club is determined to get its left leaning views out on campus.

*Expressions* met with three of the main club members to learn more about their politics.

**Expressions:** Do you guys feel that you can actually make changes on campus this year?

**Freshman Irelynn Zurbach:** I'm confident that we can!

**Sophomore Ethan Hibble:** Of course. The young democrat club encourages students to be more involved with politics because a lot of younger people don't know or see how politics affect them and I think it's important that teenagers get involved because in the future it's up to us how our nation will look.

**Senior Leo DeTurris:** Yes, we do feel we can help drive change. Already we have two guest speakers slated to come and give talks on campus, and we intend on helping a lot of candidates locally. Currently, we're looking into endorsing local candidates, and we have a few other ideas in the works to build some momentum. Through all of that, and other efforts to raise awareness on campus of the importance of voting, civic engagement, and defeating Trump, at the very least I see us helping drive enthusiasm on campus.

**Expressions:** What events/activities do you have planned for the year?

**DeTurris:** We have big plans for the run between now and the election and beyond. We're thinking about hosting a watch party, potentially on Campus, on election night, we're thinking about printing some Harris merch using the screen-printers on campus, courtesy of Mr. Roper, to sell and make some money we can both put towards the club and Harris directly. We're

thinking about organizing local canvassing efforts, potentially even going to central valley to help candidates for congress, and, of course, we will have our guest speakers who will speak to us about a plethora of topics, all to name a few.

**Expressions:** Is Trump going to lose in November? Why?

**Zurbach:** I believe he will. After how he performed in the debate I hope that others see that he is not fit maturely to be president. Not only that but the fact that he is a convicted felon, got corrected at least twice and lied more than thirty times in the debate alone makes me believe that unless someone were truly ignorant, they would see the obvious choice on the ballot.

**Hibble:** Yes, Americans are better than electing a convicted felon to run this country. We deserve someone who will make decisions for the good of the people.

**DeTurris:** That's the million dollar question, and the short answer is yes. The long answer is that it's still going to be close, far closer than it should be, but I do maintain that Harris has better odds to win. Fundamentally, people vote based on whether or not they maintain confidence in the incumbent party in the white house to continue doing a good job running the country. That in mind, it is a fact that the economy is not in recession. It is a fact that job growth under Biden and Harris has exceeded that of the Trump administration. It is a fact that under Biden and Harris the US has had one of the best post-pandemic economic recoveries and GDP growth of any country in the world. It is a fact that Biden and Harris passed the largest clean energy legislation ever passed by any country in the world. The record of Biden and Harris' time running this country will speak for itself come November. If words did speak more than action in presidential politics, then Trump would have never gotten elected. I don't buy the argument that the country isn't ready for Kamala Harris either. If we were ready for an adjudicated ra-

pist, we could be ready for a woman.

**Expressions:** Why do we need this club on campus?

**Zurbach:** I believe that it is good to have people educated young on politics. Being able to form political opinions is a skill you will carry for the rest of your life. Having a place where you can both learn and teach others about democracy and current events is essential to building the foundations of being an educated voter when you grow up.

**Hibble:** To encourage political involvement from younger people.

**DeTurris:** Especially now more than ever, creating a place where people can learn about and explore the beliefs and policies of one of our major political parties is extremely valuable. One of the purposes of this club is not to reaffirm why our beliefs are correct, but to provide a way for people who don't know much about either party to learn about them, and get a sense for politics in general.

**Expressions:** Why isn't there a Republican Club at SLOHS?

**Hibble:** No one has made one. Freedom of expression is highly valued at SLOHS and as long as there's not anything inappropriate or offensive then a Republican club would be welcome. The young democrats are about getting students to understand and participate in politics and if students lean to more republican values then they would be welcome to make a club.

**DeTurris:** The word I've heard is that there used to be one, but it disbanded due to lack of membership. I don't know if that's necessarily true, but it's demographics. We live in a place with more Democrats than Republicans, it would only make sense for there to be a Democrat club before there's a Republican club.

The Democrats Club is a great place for students to explore their political beliefs and become involved in politics. They meet every Thursday at lunch in the Lecture Demo Room.

# The New “Fallout” TV Show is Amazing

REPORTER JOEY BERNARDO

Every year, the entertainment industry creates a piece of media that defines the year, many of which make waves at San Luis Obispo High School. For 2024, Amazon Prime’s “Fallout” TV series has been one of the most successful and notable shows this year.

The series centers around a nuclear war between China and The United States. In this fictional event, vaults were made in order to protect citizens from the conflict.

There are three main characters in the series so far: Lucy, a member of Vault 33 who is looking for her father Maximus, a deserter of the enigmatic Brotherhood of Steel, and an irradiated movie actor, the Ghoul.

For returning fans, there’s aspects of the show that expand on the game’s lore.

“Personally, I really enjoyed seeing some of the familiar factions represented in the series,” said junior Jack Edwards.

One of the show’s main appeals is its environment and story. It features many elements that fans of the game series would recognize. Even for new fans, the story itself is still interesting enough for those who don’t know the lore to be fascinated by the story.

The show itself has a rating of 8.4 out of ten on IMDb and a 94 percent on Rotten Tomatoes. It also had more than eighty million viewers by April earlier this year.

Due to its popularity and acclaim, many students here at SLOHS have watched or at least know about the show.

“I played “Fallout New Vegas” and really enjoyed it. I’m kinda intrigued by what the show might offer,” said junior Maddox Barrett-Loiseau.

For both fans and non-fans of the “Fallout” series, the show is a great watch.

Sources: *thurrott, imdb, rottentomatoes, resetera*



A promotional image featuring “Fallout’s” main characters. From left to right: the Ghoul, Lucy MacLean, and Maximus. Photo courtesy of Forbes.

# Will “Stranger Things” Season 5 be Running Up That Watchlist?

REPORTER GABRIELLE NEER

The Netflix Series, “Stranger Things” Season Five plans to release early next year, being one of the first shows to be reviewed in 2025. With the recent backlash focused on one of the original cast members of the show, as well as the fact that the show has gone on for five whole seasons, it’s debatable whether the same fans at San Luis Obispo High School are still following the story they know and love.

The show ended last season with an ominous cliff hanger showing our favorite characters post battle with the show’s antagonist, Vecna. The characters facing a storm foreshadowing that the battle isn’t over. The ending to last season left fans begging for Season Five.

“I’m really excited for the fifth season. I hope they release it soon,” said freshman Clara Walters.

Some die-hard fans are still going strong in the fifth season. “Stranger Things” has created a strong fanbase with loyal fans that wouldn’t miss the show for anything. The unique and vintage setting for the show draws people in to watch it.

“I don’t think there is a T.V. show that resembles ‘Stranger Things’, it reminds me a lot of the 1980s,” said senior Madison Neer.

The show is mainly recognized as being set in the 1980s, but it doesn’t stop younger ages from watching it.

“Everyone really likes the 1980s, and it’s set in that time period which is fun,” said Walters.

## Billboard Hot 100™

WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 14, 2024

THIS WEEK	AWARD	LAST WEEK	PEAK POS.	WKS ON CHART
1		1	1	21
2		5	1	17
3		4	3	21

The top three most popular songs in the US as of September 14, 2024. Photo courtesy of Billboard Hot 100.

# What Music are SLOHS Students Listening to?

REPORTER MALLORY CUSHING

There is no surprise that students have contradicting opinions about music, because every student at San Luis Obispo High School is different. From the pop sensations Taylor Swift, Sabrina Carpenter, and Billie Eilish, to rap idols Kendrick Lamar, Drake, and 21 Savage, 2024 has been jam packed with releases from all artists and genres! So what kind of music do students at SLOHS listen to?

“My favorite music artist recently has been Megan Moroney, I love her music, as well as Zach Bryan and Drake. I don’t really have a favorite song, it pretty much depends on the mood I’m in. I think that a lot of people have different music tastes, but my friends and I listen to similar music,” said senior Ruby Beckett.

According to August’s 2024 Country Music Power Rankings, Zach Bryan is ranked Number Five, and Megan Moroney ranked at Number Seven. Megan and Zach both released new albums in 2024, with all three albums attracting major attention.

Drake and his newly released music has had a chokehold on all listeners, as he is the number one most listened to rapper, on Spotify, in 2024

“My go-to music I think would definitely be relaxing music, like reggae. I’m really into Bob Marley as well. I definitely have a lot of favorite

songs at the moment,” said sophomore Forrest Avrett.

Reggae has influenced many musicians in the world today, such as Dominic Fike, as well as many hip-hop and rap artists. The popular movie “Bob Marley: One Love” has brought much attention to Bob Marley and the reggae genre in 2024.

“My favorite song is “Banana Pancakes” by Jack Johnson, and my favorite artist at the moment is the band Motley Crüe. I don’t know, they’re a really good rock band. I definitely think people would agree with my music taste,” said freshman Colson Pratt.

Motley Crüe is a rock band from the 1980s with popular songs “Girls, Girls, Girls” and “Kickstart My Heart”. Motley Crüe has seven platinum albums, 22 Top 40 mainstream rock hits, and six top 20 singles.

Jack Johnson is known for his easy listening, soft rock, and acoustic pop music, and he is still a fan favorite amongst younger generations after more than twenty years of producing music. He has peaked as the Number One on the Billboard 100 chart more than four times.

From twangy country to head banging rock, it’s inevitable that SLOHS students have broad taste when it comes to music.

Sources: *billboard, countrycentral, spotify, bmg*

In Season Four, the writers changed it up by adding in new characters. Some of them, like Argyle, were fan favorites, but some were viewed as unnecessary and unwanted.

“I think the writers should maybe stop incorporating so many new characters because in Season Four there were so many new characters,” said Walters.

Many agree that it is unnecessary to add unimportant characters to the original cast, but recently one of the beloved actors of the fanbase has been facing controversy. Noah Schnapp, the actor who plays Will Byers, was seen at a restaurant promoting stickers that say, “Zionism is Sexy.” As a result, many people are still torn on whether to support the show.

“I’m probably not going to watch the next season because I don’t support Noah Schnapp and his actions,” said Neer.

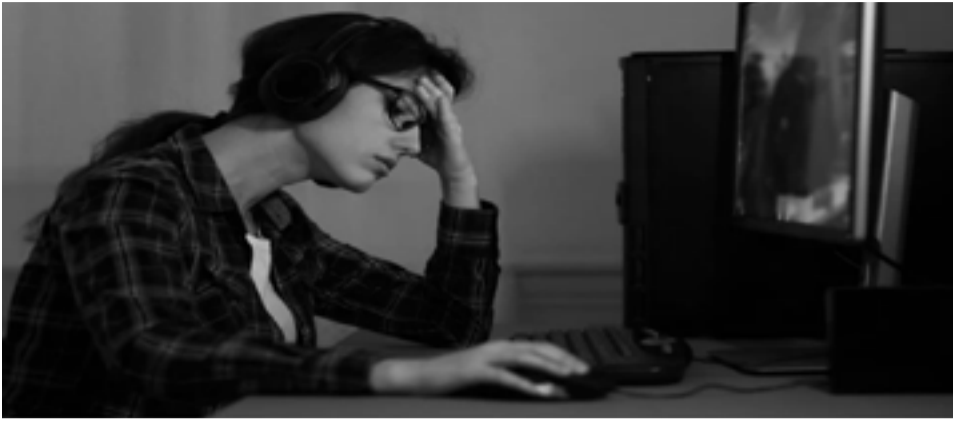
Many people just can’t imagine the show without him.

“Everyone is entitled to their own opinions, but I feel like to boycott a whole show just because you didn’t like something that an actor did is kinda silly, because it’s a great show and they’re missing out.” said Walters.

“Stranger Things” Season 5 has left people wondering whether it will trump the success of the other seasons. Despite controversy with Schnapp, the overall image of the “Stranger Things” franchise remains untainted.

Due to the loyal and widespread fan base of “Stranger Things,” it is safe to say that the next season will be a smashing success.

# Video Games Have Become Stale & Boring VS Video Games Are Still New and Exciting



Games over the last few years haven't been nearly as exciting as they used to be. Photo courtesy of *The Tech Wire*.

REPORTER JOEY BERNARDO

Video Games have been a common pastime for many San Luis Obispo High School students. People can often say the first game they've played or a recent game they've been having fun with. Throughout the industry, students have seen classic after classic from larger companies, such as Bethesda's "Skyrim" or Nintendo's "Super Mario Galaxy".

Sure, there have been many such instances of cult classic games, but the vast majority of these games were from years ago. Nowadays, people don't really hear about newly released games that leave a mark on the industry; instead, releases are unfinished, buggy, or simply not fun to play.

Whether because of nostalgia or better design, some from SLOHS argue that games were the greatest years ago.

"I feel like the golden age of games was from the mid 2000s to the late 2010s," said SLOHS graduate Jordenn Valle-Gearhart.

It's definitely apparent that modern games have less effort put into them; there have been various games such as "Starfield" and "Battlefield 2042" that have been made by companies who have made wonderful experiences in the past, yet haven't released a major game in a long time.

This is because among most big video game companies, releasing full experiences has become less and less prominent, as the model of "release now and finish later" has become an upsetting trend. Another problem is that students are simply getting older. Since they experience a lot more and have less dopamine levels as they get older, games lose a lot of their initial "magic" that they used to have.

Some students don't play newer games and would rather stick to what they're familiar with.

"I mostly play SNES games, 'Touhou', and some classic Valve games" said junior Maddox Barrett-Loiseau.

Sure, the industry has had some wonderful releases such as FromSoftware's "Elden Ring" and CD Projekt's "Cyberpunk 2077". Problem is that most of the beloved games of late have been made by smaller studios and are few and far between.

Games as a whole have gotten less and less and less exciting. People can only play old games for so long until they've become boring as well. Video games have gotten stale, and SLOHS students have gotten older.

Sources: *metacritic.com*, *steam.com*, *gamingbible.com*, *vocal.media*

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR BOB MEYERS

If any student of San Luis Obispo High School has been on the internet in the past few years, or listened to the complaints of anyone who's terminally online, they must have heard the idea that "video games aren't fun anymore" floating around.

"Most [big studio] games have kind of turned into this money cow. It's just lazy and low effort," said junior Ethan Haendler.

Some argue that the big video game industry, also known as the AAA industry due to its size and budget size, has been floundering with mediocre games. However, this is completely untrue, and even within the AAA industry there is still genuine effort being put into content.

Much of this hate has stemmed from the mediocre release of new games. An example of this video game fatigue can be seen with the new Activision game "Call Of Duty Modern Warfare III." The game has been met with aggressive backlash, having a two out of five on Eurogamer and a 1.7 out of five on Google Reviews.

Some people argue that modern AAA games have also become too greedy, and the gameplay has suffered as a cause of that.

So is the problem with video games really what everyone says? Is the gaming industry being held afloat by small developers and independent teams?

While the amount of spectacular indie games out there is great, there are still video game giants out there that make games worth playing.

"I don't think games have gotten stale at all. I'm still having fun with 'Baldur's Gate III' or even with 'Elden Ring'," said junior Mateus Iscold.

The two games mentioned above by Iscold have both come out

in the last few years by respective big studio companies FromSoftware and Larian Studios. These games, as well as other AAAs like "Jedi Survivor" and "Tears of the Kingdom" have received critical acclaim from those who played it, despite their "AAA status".

And the argument that the amount of AAA successes have been getting smaller as time goes on doesn't even work either.

"I feel like the golden age of games was from the mid 2000s to the late 2010s," said SLOHS graduate Jordenn Valle-Gearhart.

However, even in this alleged "golden era", there have been massive flops in AAA gaming, such as "Final Fantasy XIV," "Assassin's Creed Unity," or "Fallout 76." In fact, some games that also flopped during that era, such as "No Man's Sky" or "Battlefront II" have more recently gotten improvements and quality of life updates, showing how more effort is being put into games as time goes on, and not less.

"I think it's just that the market is bigger now. There's more people playing games, more people buying games, and more games being made. It's easier than ever to learn how to make them, whereas in the 80s, knowing how to work with a computer was a legendary skill," said Iscold.

Ultimately, the modern fluctuation of video game quality is here to stay. There will always be bad video games out there, no matter the year or size of the company. But there will also always be good games too, both made by individual developers and industry titans. Whether you want to just focus on negatives or actively look for the positives is up to you.

Sources: *Eurogamer.net*, *Google Reviews*

## The Disaster that was the "A Good Girl's Guide to Murder" Show

REPORTER CADENCE FLICKINGER

Some students at San Luis Obispo High School love TV shows, some love books, and some love both. So why not put the two together? Take the hit book series "A Good Girl's Guide to Murder" by British Author Holly Jackson, for example. This July, "AGGGTM" received a TV adaptation on the British Broadcasting Company that later came to the streaming service Netflix in August. But rather than an example of a wonderful remake, it served as another kind of example: that of the book taking superiority.

The book was originally set and printed in England and then was later changed to take place in the USA for the American release. The TV adaptation was set in the UK for both releases.

"The show felt really rushed. Maybe if they made more episodes [it would've been better]. But we didn't really get that much into the character's [personalities]," said freshman Mallory Cushing.

While it's a known fact that books will almost always have more detail than a movie adaptation it doesn't always mean it's better.

"It kind of depends because I do like watching movies," said Cushing.

But it does seem as if "AGGGTM" was overall a miss when it comes to an adaptation.

"It's worth [the watch] so you can see the characters...and how they look," said freshman Lorelei Hutchinson. She had no other positive comments about the show.

While film adaptations are enjoyable they are never quite the same as a book. When it comes to "AGGGTM", a viewer should read the book first so they don't get turned away by the rushed, detail-lacking show.

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# The Lunch Lines Need to be Fixed: Here's How

REPORTER CADENCE FLICKINGER

It's clear that at San Luis Obispo High School long food lines are a problem. From students being late to class after break to not finishing their lunch; the lines are not only annoying, they're interrupting learning.

An idea developed by many students to solve the problem is vending machines. Where students could get name-brand foods instead of those from the cafeteria. They could alternatively serve the pre-packaged foods already served by staff.

Last year a group of now juniors sent out a form asking students if they would want vending machines at SLOHS. They wanted to use the data to possibly convince admin to install the machines as well as satisfy their curiosity.

"[The form] asked people if [SLOHS] had a vending machine if they'd use it," said junior Owen Rippens.

The data from the form was lost and nothing ever came of this idea.

"Schools avoid having vending machines because of compliance issues with our federal lunch program and because traditional vending machine options can undermine the goals of the federal school lunch program, which is designed to provide nutritious, balanced meals to students," said SLOHS administrator Desiree Dellinger.

Vending machines may not be the solution after all. The cafeteria staff has found their own solution to long lines.

The vending machine on wheels: Tiger Bites.

"We can use Tiger Bites to drive to different areas on campus, and it can have the same hot and cold foods we have in the cafeteria," said director of food and nutrition services Erin Primer.

Tiger Bites launched on October 4, it is out during both break and lunch. Announcements on its current location can be found on TNN.

The cafeteria staff works so hard to make sure all students are fed and enjoy their meals. Part of this is making the experience of getting their lunch quick and easy. The big problem is that students don't bring their ID cards.

"The lines right now look the way that they are because of student IDs. If [students] would just bring their ID cards it wouldn't be that bad," said central kitchen supervisor Sarah Rich.

An alternative to bring the physical card is to take a photo of the ID and show that when getting lunch. The barcode will still scan and it will take a lot less time than the hassle of getting it out of a backpack or phone case.

If students are so desperate to have name brand snacks at school then that is left on them. It goes against California state law as well as the morals of the kitchen staff. Their goal is not to make money off of the student's hunger; they just want all students to get balanced meals. A vending machine would go against this.

Tiger Bites will serve as an amazing alternative to a vending machine as well as a solution to long lines. It's out on campus now!

## What are the Benefits of Four Day Weeks?

REPORTER GABRIELLE NEER

The four day school week is taking schools by storm across the country and is already showing improvements to the lives of students and educators. The increasing popularity of this new schedule has already convinced school districts to change their schedule and this could be a possibility for San Luis Obispo High School.

This new schedule is gaining popularity in mostly rural areas and few districts in California. At San Luis Obispo Classical Academy, the middle school offers a four day hybrid program that students could take and have Friday off.

Students who were in a five day program utilized Friday to take classes that they were passionate about or attended a "grits class" where they used the time to get their work done.

"At SLOCA you would have so much time to do all your at home work because on the school days you were not assigned homework," said former SLOCA student and SLOHS freshman Hannah Murphy.

The lack of burnout from SLOCA is easily explained by students having more opportunities to complete their work before going home. As students prepare for college they are struggling with each other over seats. Students are getting drained between high school and college, a schedule similar to SLOCA would allow more time to prepare and take more personal time overall.

"At a five day school you have to do your homework every single day and you might have extracurriculars on top of that," said Murphy.

Students at SLOCA can focus on prioritizing their mental health while keeping up their grades. This

is something that many students today don't have the opportunity to do with balancing extracurriculars, homework, and sometimes jobs after school.

Teachers also had more room to be eager about their subject and grow their interests.

"Our art teacher was very passionate in art and we had our own textbooks that had art made by him," said Murphy.

Teachers could also utilize the time to organize lesson plans and grading for the week. This would allow teachers to be more organized and use class time to get more done.

"Monday would be a teacher work day for the most part so I would be able to get everything planned out," said SLOHS teacher James Haynes.

The new schedule would integrate some much needed time into everyone's schedule. The only drawback is that students might lose the work habits they learned in the five day school week schedule.

"I think my boys would play video games and catch up on homework," said Haynes.

The new schedule would give students the freedom to spend the time however they need.

"I know a lot of them who spent their Friday like a weekend and then waited until Monday to do their Friday homework," said Murphy.

The four day school week schedule has shown many improvements to SLOCA students and could do a lot for SLOHS.

The school board should start weighing the pros and cons of this new schedule to see how this is in the best interest of students and staff.

## Does SLOHS Need a Nurse Every Day?



Students can often feel the nurse's absence. Photo courtesy of freshman Ray Moffitt.

REPORTER RAY MOFFITT

In the San Luis Coastal Unified School District there is a small staff population for school nurses currently going around, which includes San Luis Obispo High School.

Right now SLOHS only has one nurse for two days of the school week on Tuesday and Thursday. When students get injured on a day where there is no nurse what are they supposed to do?

"I'm told the students would have to go home or sometimes they'll wait in the chairs outside of the nurses office until they feel better to go back to class," said SLCUSD nurse Lisa Valencia.

At this time the percent of schools even hiring a nurse to be on campus for just one day is about 43 percent. This may be caused by the fact that these schools do not have enough money to support the nurses salary which is about \$30-40 an hour, and not all schools can afford that with as many staff as they have.

"We try to keep the students in the classroom but if students need nursing on Mondays, Wednesdays, or Fridays I believe at this

point they are assisted by the current office staff but I'm not sure that the office staff is trained medically to help students," said ASL teacher Kristen Nusbaum.

The office staff can give the students epi pens or medication if they need it and it is prescribed to them.

"I believe the reason why we don't have a nurse on campus everyday is because we just don't have enough nursing staff, physical bodies to be here in our school district," said Valencia.

If the nurse is not working that day then the front desk will take care of the student. Is this the best alternative to not having a nurse at the school?

"I am actually friends with one of the nurses and I know that she is very busy with the work she has to do," said Nusbaum.

No matter the situation, a school should always have a nurse available to students in case something happens and a student needs medical attention.

The fact SLOHS doesn't have a nurse every day is just unfair to its students.

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