

Headlight



Written by the students of Marblehead High School for our school and community

www.mhsheadlight.weebly.com

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I Survived 4-Minute Passing Time

Amber Born, News Coordinator, Junior

It was the beginning of my sophomore year. Marblehead High School had recently reduced the time between classes from five to four minutes. The idea behind this was to increase the amount of time spent in actual classes. A noble initiative, to be sure, and a good idea, in theory. One minute surely wouldn't make that much of a difference. I didn't think that it would. But then I tried to make the cross-school journey in four minutes. This is my story.

Generally, it's considered rude to start packing up to leave a class before the bell rings. There are little things you can do to prevent yourself from using your precious four minutes unnecessarily: notebooks can be casually closed, backpacks can be quietly unzipped to allow for easy transfer of supplies. I tried. I was sitting forward, ready to spring into action as soon as the bell went off. When it did, I quickly jammed my binder, pencil, planner, and textbook into my backpack. Oh no. My backpack wouldn't close. I had too much stuff in there already. I briefly entertained the completely ludicrous idea of putting a book in my locker. My locker was on the third floor, I was currently on the first, and my locker was in a different wing than my class. I tried one more time to force my backpack closed. When it failed, I left my backpack unzipped, holding onto the back of it so I didn't drop everything during my mid-hallway sprint.

At this point, I had already lost a good fifteen seconds, and my path out the door was blocked by a group of people who could only move horizontally. This also applied to doors, apparently, and after they were through, I continued on, speed-walking through

the hall. I was about to break into a run when I reached the traffic jam that is the main staircase. Since it was early September, the freshmen were unaware that other staircases existed. I don't blame them; it took me a good three months before I stopped thinking there was a first floor B-wing. Even last week, I went down the staircase that leads to a locked door. I waited in the crowd for maybe fifteen seconds, and when it had still failed to move more than a millimeter, I gave up, and opted to go the long way. I was able to make up for some of the lost time by running down a nearly empty hallway (empty because everyone that should have been there was trying to get down the main staircase) and the relatively unobstructed staircase at the end. In my haste, I accidentally smashed directly into two people that had stopped to hug in the middle of the staircase, and then I lost some more time apologizing for being inconsiderate enough to use a staircase during passing time. Then, my backpack exploded, scattering four classes worth of materials. I scrambled to pick everything up, and decided to carry everything up the rest of the stairs in my arms, rather than risk using my backpack again.

Someone had spilled an iced coffee all over the hallway into which I finally emerged, and people were walking single-file around the catastrophe. I glanced at my watch. I didn't have much time left. I ran into a teacher I hadn't seen since last year, and I said hello to him, just in case I had him next year and he would hold it against me if I didn't. He asked how I was, and I said I was fine, just so I could keep going. Then I ran into a friend I had two classes with, and she informed me that the results of a recent test had been put on The Portal. I was tempted to check on it, but resisted the urge, because getting in trouble for using a phone in the hallway would further slow me down.

My shoe came untied. I almost tried to rectify the situation, but I realized that I didn't have enough time, so I continued on. I dashed down the rest of the hallway. Trying to turn the corner, the overflow traffic from the main staircase slowed my progress. I knocked a few people out of the way, including a few enthusiastic hand-holders and people trying to check their schedules in the midst of the hallway.

I was so close. Just six doors away. And then the bell rang.

"You mean to tell me that I can practice my writing, meet new people, and get published in the Marblehead Reporter?"



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yet, we're still not allowed to go to the bathroom without a hall pass. If we're still children, why is there pressure to not act like it? I went to middle school to prepare for high school, which is preparation for college, which is preparation for a job and the rest of our lives. And, somewhere along the way, I'm supposed to squeeze in every possible experience I can, because when I'm older, there's no time for games. But I challenge that. I challenge the assumption the being one year older means one year closer to adulthood.

What if with every birthday, we celebrate our youth rather than our age? Why are adults the only ones allowed to wish they were younger? Because the stories about the "fountain of youth" weren't written by teenagers. I'm not saying that the world would be a better place if everyone acted like themselves at five years old, because that

is unrealistic. However, I do think that every person has the right to maintain some aspect of their youth, no matter what age. It's all about balance. For example, I love getting dressed up and going out late at night, which I suppose is an "adult" habit. But I also love coloring pages and building forts out of couch cushions. Am I the most typical teenager you'll find? Maybe not, but it isn't hard to guess that we all want to stop the clock and just goof off, even for a moment. This school year, slow down for a moment and appreciate your youth. Take some time to jump on the bed, toss a ball around, or watch a favorite childhood movie, your inner child will thank you for it. Trust me – it's fun.

Half Marathon

Drew Faria, Senior

I just ran my first half-marathon this past Saturday—what a workout! It was a race 12 weeks in the making. In other words, the last 12 weeks were spent running a lot! Some of you may be reading this, thinking I'm an adrenaline-junkie crossed with a Spartan warrior. If so, you're wondering, "Who in their right mind would want to run 13.1 miles?!" As I sit here, alternating between massaging my leg muscles and typing this article, I reflect on how I was able to run such a grueling race.

I never really began to exercise until my freshman year of track. Even then, I was a short-distance sprinter, which meant running for more than ten seconds was considered "a brutal workout." During sophomore year, I realized that sprinting was not my event, so I jumped into the long-distance team, where I was successful. The "D-Squad," as we called ourselves, seriously transformed my physique and my athletic mentality. Running was no longer a chore; it was a duty to my team and me. When my mom proposed the idea of running a half marathon this spring, I was totally on board.

Running made a noticeable difference in my life. It sounds cliché, but the exercise gives me a constant energy boost. Between seasons of winter and spring track, I felt the effects of school work and other things beginning to irritate me a lot more. Why? I stopped running! I learned that I had a responsibility not just for my physical health, but my mental health, too. When I ran, I fixed that problem.

Before high school, I was never much of an athlete. As sports grew in my life, I reaped more and more benefits. I have no regrets for turning myself from a couch potato to a hardcore running machine, and ANYONE can do it, too! Some of my friends have told me that they have recently started to run after never actually considering it their whole lives. They start simple: maybe a few miles per week, but then they slowly increase their mileage. That is truly awesome! None of you have to sign-up for the next half-marathon as I did, but neglecting cardiovascular exercise is only holding you back from whatever benefits that I have gained, and you may discover.

"Running made a noticeable difference in my life... [It] gives me a constant energy boost."

The Fountain of Youth

Becky Twaalfhoven, Junior

With each new school year, there is a renewed sense that as students, we should be that much wiser, more responsible, and mature. In high school, upperclassmen are practically adults, and by graduation they're expected to be ready for life away from home. With no parents to make decisions and no familiar faces in the hallways, it's time to grow up and face life, right? Certainly that's what we're taught to expect. The second I hit high school, I became a "young adult": too young to be completely independent, but too old to be a kid and play games. Suddenly, faking sick to miss a day of school wasn't quite so tempting – in fact, it would put me at a disadvantage to miss class. And

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