

*City High has seen two student-orchestrated protests in opposition to the results of the November 8th election.*

## Students, Sensing Tension, Turn to Protest

By Sofie Lie

With a swift tap of her phone, on November 17th, Alma Apolonio-Bernal '17 sent out a snapchat inviting allies and victims of discrimination alike to join her in a silent protest. The request was well-received: the next day, to echo a sit-in led by West High students, ten City High students assembled during lunch to craft signs bearing sentiments of discrimination that they carried through the halls during seventh hour and after school.

"It was kind of a social media thing," Apolonio-Bernal said.

And the reaction, she said, was as expected: some students laughed, some pointed, some expressed their support. Ultimately, though, she hopes that the intent of the protest—to foster a sense of unity in the face of discrimination—was clear.

"I hope that people got our message; I hope that they understood what we were trying to say," she said.

In addition to condemning discrimination, the protest aimed to express solidarity between City and West High.

"We thought that we would put this together to show that, while we're both rivals, we can get along with each other well," said Laura Apolonio Bernal '19, Alma's younger sister who also partook in the protest.

The protest was not randomly timed, according to Byron Ortiz '18; rather, it was in response to a spike in hate crimes (up 6% from 2014) across the United States in the past year, as reported by the F.B.I. in an article released in mid-November. Ortiz, one of the ten silent protesters, cites an ever-intensifying feeling of discrimination, specifically following the November 8th triumph of President-Elect Donald Trump over Hillary Clinton, as his motive for participating in the protest.

"It exists at City High, but it's people giving dirty looks to each other," Ortiz said. "We're all supposed to be equal and happy," he continued. "We're not supposed to feel uncomfortable in the community."

This wasn't the first student-led demonstration following the election results, either; just two days after election day, a group of students, led by Armani Smith '17, staged a walkout specifically in opposition to Trump's win. The march went through downtown Iowa City—where it picked up protesters from the University of Iowa—and ultimately blocked parts of I-80 for half an hour.

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**RIGHT:** Anita Casas '18 (in focus) stands arm in arm with fellow students in the main foyer after school on Friday, November 18th. **PHOTO BY** SOFIE LIE



## One-to-One: One Step Forward or One Step Back?

*Students and teachers are divided on whether one-to-one—a system where every student will receive a Chromebook—will have a positive effect.*

By Victor Kalil

Students are hunched over their Chromebooks in class, the occasional whisper breaking the constant rhythm of tapping. It's the average day of work in English teacher Colleen Davis' U.S. Lit. Honors class. But next year there will be changes in the classroom—no more classroom cart of laptops and no more lining up in front of the cart. Instead, every high school student in the Iowa City Community School District will be receiving their own Chromebook.

Going one-to-one with Chromebooks will serve roughly 4,000 high school students total, and 2,000 more students when the program initiates in the junior high schools. One-to-one is a significant investment in the modernization of education in today's technologically advanced society and will "provide an

important resource that students can use both within and outside of school," according to Adam Kurth, Director of Technology & Innovation for the ICCSD.

Many students do not share Kurth's belief that one-to-one is a positive step. In a survey of 64 City High School students, 61% of students said that one-to-one would either not affect their classes at all or have a negative effect—possibly because over 90% of those students surveyed already have access to a computer, tablet, or smartphone with wifi at home and usually study there too.

"I don't see it making much of a difference at all. Most of my classes do not necessitate

the use of a computer, and the ones that do have enough computers in the classroom for everyone to use," Quenton Max '18 said. "I see

this as just another vain attempt to improve education by improving technology, even if that isn't always the best solution."

Davis uses Chromebooks almost every week in her classes but believes that putting a Chromebook in every students' hands could lessen the students' attention spans.

"I don't know how the logistics will work, but as someone who watches kids get completely distracted by technology, social media, phones, I'm a little concerned about when they have a computer in front of them all the time and how much they're going to be

"MOST OF MY CLASSES DO NOT NECESSITATE THE USE OF A COMPUTER."

QUENTON MAX '18

able to control their desires to move off topic and onto something distracting," said Davis.

Conversely, Serena Collins '18 believes that going one-to-one next year will definitely help shorten time wasted in school.

"We won't have to waste class time lining up to get computers, waiting for everyone to get logged on, and then plugging them back in," Collins said. "Students won't have to waste time searching for a working computer in the library."

Leveling the technological playing field for school work is also an important reason that Collins cites for her support for going one-to-one. Nearly 10% of students surveyed don't have access to things like their school Google accounts at home, but 45% students with access to those accounts surveyed said that going one-to-one would help them.

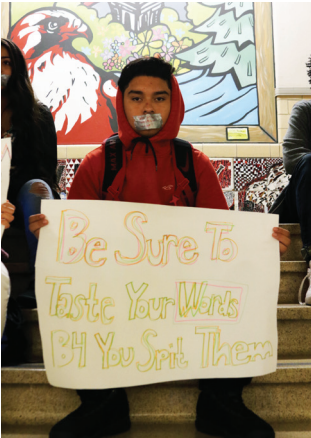
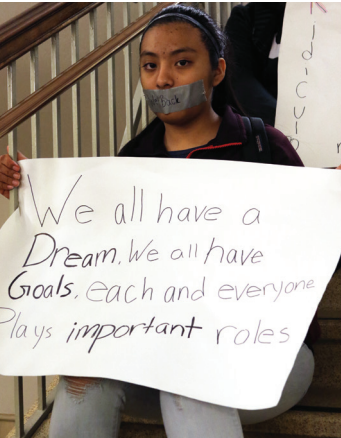
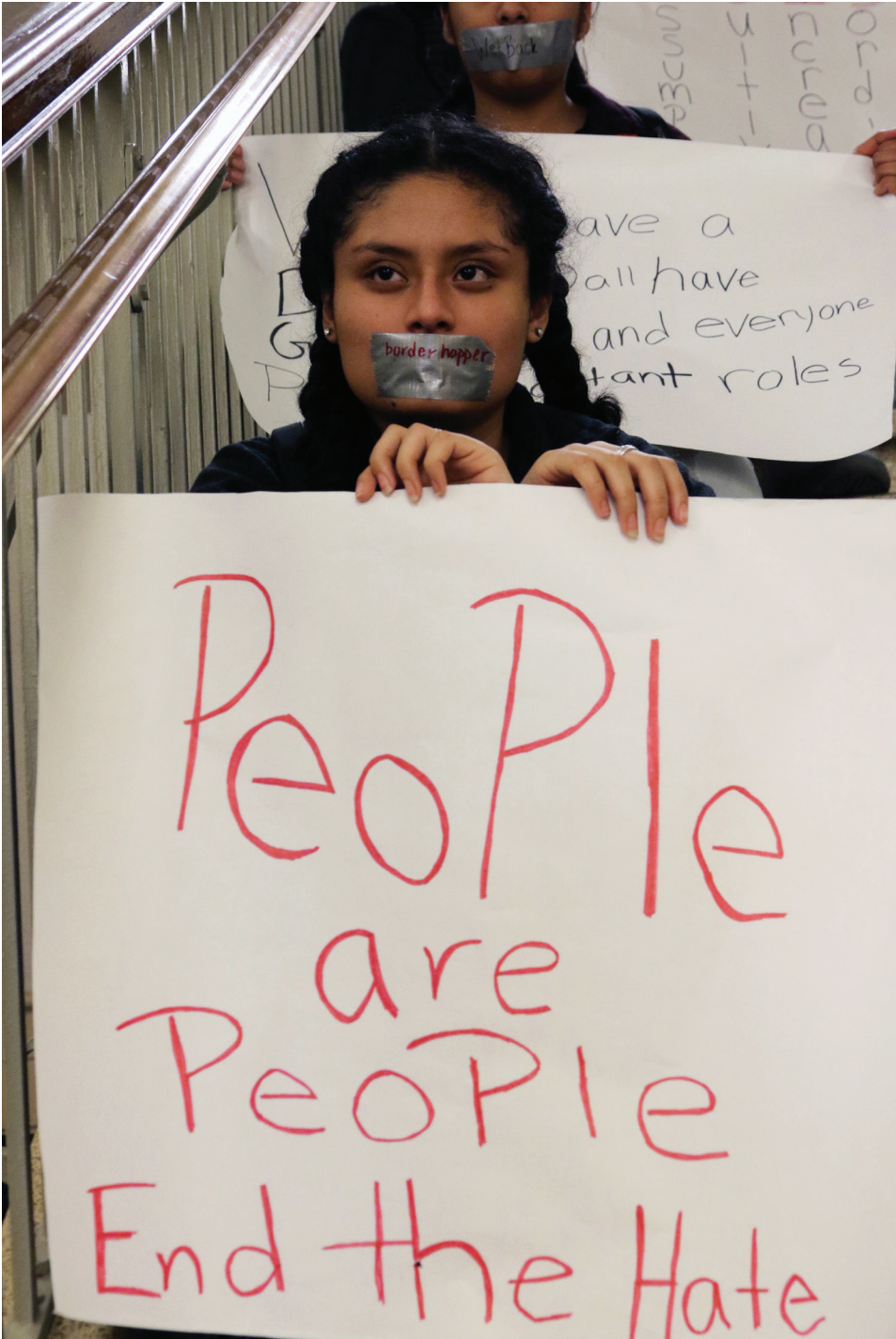
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Protests *continued from A1*

“[DISCRIMINATION] EXISTS AT CITY HIGH, BUT IT’S PEOPLE GIVING DIRTY LOOKS TO EACH OTHER... WE’RE NOT SUPPOSED TO FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE IN THE COMMUNITY.”

BYRON ORTIZ ‘18



**TOP:** Alicia Estrada '19 sits on the staircase following a silent march around the school in protest of discrimination. **LEFT:** Laura Apolonio Bernal '19 holds a sign in a protest led by her older sister, Alma Apolonio Bernal '17, ended. **MIDDLE:** (from left to right, top to bottom row) Billy Holiday '20, Alma Apolonio Bernal '17, Laura Apolonio Bernal '19, Alicia Estrada '19, Anita Casas '18, Erick Vázquez '18, and Byron Ortiz '18 stand in silent protest in the main foyer. **RIGHT:** The tape over Byron Ortiz's mouths reads "wall jumper." The aim of the protest, Ortiz '18 said, was to stand in solidarity with those subjected to discrimination. **PHOTOS BY SOFIE LIE**

In both instances of protest, administration has not intervened: such expressions of free speech are fundamental to school-wide unity, asserts Principal John Bacon.

The students that walked out were not penalized further than being counted unexcused for the classes they missed. Bacon says that the protests have helped the student body as a whole, and, therefore, no further disciplinary action was necessary.

“The last couple weeks have been an emotional time for many students so I believe the sense of togetherness and unity they found with these actions has been positive for them,” he said.

English Teacher Alina Borger-Germann expressed a sentiment similar to Bacon's regarding student-led demonstrations. Borger-Germann said that, as long as demonstrations don't incite violence, they should be permitted.

“I think that giving students a space to express their feelings and politics is really important, as long as those feelings of politics do not create a dangerous environment for other people,” she said. “In

both of these cases, students chose things that were not going to create a dangerous environment for anyone else, and I was really proud of that, for not venting in ways that would hurt people.”

“I RESPECT STUDENTS ORGANIZING IN A PEACEFUL, RESPECTFUL MANNER TO MAKE THEIR VOICES HEARD ON SUBJECTS THEY CARE DEEPLY ABOUT.”

JOHN BACON

Borger-Germann describes her students' reactions to the fallout of the election as ebbing and flowing with news of new

appointments to the president-elect's cabinet, and she suspects that Trump's first days in office will be the point of most upset her more liberal students.

“For those students on the left, there is kind of an uptick when there is an appointment and then a lull,” she said. “I imagine that there will be an uptick during the inauguration.”

Though the future of the political climate is indefinite, Bacon stands by his support of student-led demonstrations.

“I respect students organizing in a peaceful, respectful manner to make their voices heard on subjects that they care deeply about,” Bacon said.

Apolonio-Bernal anticipates that there will be further organized student efforts of a similar nature in the coming months.

“I think it [the silent protest] was successful,” she said, minutes after the chaos of students in the main foyer calmed following the silent protest. “Later on, we might have similar protests.”

An adaptation of this article, along with a photo slideshow, was posted online following the silent protest.

Celebrating the Holidays:  
Four Family Traditions

Phoebe Chapnick-Sorokin  
& Emmeline Kraus

As the weather is getting cold, people are preparing to celebrate various winter holidays throughout City High's diverse community. Grace Foster '19 celebrates Christmas throughout December.

“We celebrate it just for family tradition, no religion. The holiday brings family together,” Foster said.

For many families, the celebration continues before and after Christmas day.

“We go to Michigan after Christmas to see my [extended] family where we open presents and eat a huge breakfast and dinner. [My family] has an elf on the shelf, which we hide throughout the house during December. The elf goes to the north pole and reports to Santa,” Foster said.

“Our family looks at [Christmas] from a religious standpoint,” Zoë Miller '19, said.

Miller grew up attending church on Christmas Eve and celebrating her religious connection to the holiday. Christmas traditionally celebrates the birth of Christ, and the name Christmas comes from the Mass of Jesus Christ.

“At church we start by lighting the advent candles on Sunday and closest to the 25th, we light the biggest candle,” Miller explained on how she celebrates Christmas. “There is a Christmas eve service at church where we sing Christmas Carols and the church is decorated beautifully.”

Hanukkah, a Jewish holiday, is celebrated at a different time every year during the winter months. Meirav Flatté '19 has celebrated Hanukkah her whole life. According to Flatté, eating fried food is a key tradition during Hanukkah. Foods include latkes, which are potato pancakes fried in oil, and Sufganiyot, which are jelly donuts.

“We eat a lot of fried food without having to feel guilty about it,” Flatté said. “My family usually makes a lot of latkes and Sufganiyot.”

The holiday of Hanukkah celebrates how a small amount of oil was able to last eight days when the Jews were at war in biblical times. As a result, the holiday is celebrated for eight days because of the oil lit in the Menorah, a traditional candelabra.

Jewish families light the menorah for eight nights, adding a candle each night.

“Religiously, [gift giving] is not part of the holiday,” Flatté said. “But since it is usually paired with Christmas, we get presents for Hanukkah.”

Julia Coelho '19 believes the true importance of Hanukkah is family.

“I spend time with my family,” Coelho said.

Maya Durham '19 celebrates a Hindu holiday, called Diwali, in addition to Christmas. Diwali celebrates the victory of light over darkness and hope over despair - a metaphor for resisting evil.

“[My family] lights candles, which are called diyas, that ward off evil,” Durham said.

In addition to family traditions, Durham participates in University events.

“We attend the University's Indian student association's Diwali show. They have little kids and adults dancing and putting on skits and we dress up,” Durham said.

Theo Prineas '19 celebrates an original holiday called Return to Light. The holiday is usually celebrated during the winter season and is centered around New Year's and Winter Solstice. Theo's family celebrates the holiday for one to three days.

“My sister and I made it up four or five years ago because we have no particular connection with Christmas, [and] we're not Christian. We didn't like how materialistic and commercialized Christmas [was], so we just decided to make up our own holiday,” Prineas said.

Return to Light has very minimalistic and creative traditions. Although there is no religion involved in Return to Light, the holiday celebrates the season and reflects family values.

“We light candles, burn incense, and we have to make presents if any at all...it's very centered around food,” Prineas said.

