

HYBRID LEARNING (CONT.)

environment where I can learn from the teacher in person.”

Most seniors also like hybrid better because it is their last year at high school. Senior Rylee Bales said, “Hybrid allows me to ask questions and get help as I go along so I learn a lot better this way. Also, being around my teachers and friends keeps me motivated!”

As students keep wearing masks, hybrid is a completely safe option of schooling for high schoolers. Hybrid provides a stable learning environment for these growing students. It ensures the future education of the students and their safety.



Students pictured wearing masks in a socially distanced classroom.

## Bettendorf High School staff member begins selling Black Lives Matter hats

By Jayne Abraham

Schools are meant to be a welcoming environment for all students where they feel their learning can be limitless. In many ways, morals are embedded within us through peers and teachers at schools. So why is it that the very schools that are supposed to invite all students in with open arms are knowingly invalidating some of their students?

Recently, Bettendorf hats with Blue Lives Matter flags on them were displayed at a Bettendorf High School open house. To preface, I don't believe schools should issue statements on controversial and sensitive topics. Black Lives Matter should never have been politicized, considering it is about human rights. With that being said, Bettendorf High School should release a formal apology to its students for displaying these hats.

Bettendorf Junior Olivia Anderson had some thoughts on the situation, “I do not think that politics belong in school, especially a very diverse school such as Bettendorf,” she explained, “I know many others would agree that it makes many students uncomfortable to be around people who show support to a movement trying to counter the BLM movement.”

Similarly to All Lives Matter, Blue Lives

Matter has turned into a form of retaliation to the Black Lives Matter Movement. The phrases “All Lives Matter” and “Blue Lives Matter” were coined after the Black Lives Matter Movement was founded, but how did all of this come to be?

Black Lives Matter was created out of a place of suffering. It was created in an America where black people are victims of police brutality almost every single day. Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, Tamir Rice, Trayvon Martin, Breonna Taylor, Jacob Blake...the list of victims goes on. Black Lives Matter was founded in a time when systemic racism was and is still very much alive. Black Lives Matter is an empowering rallying cry for black people around the world.

This battle for equality has been invalidated by Blue Lives Matter. When black people begged to not have to fear for their lives when walking down the street, their cries were negated by phrases like “Back the Blue”. Blue Lives Matter was created to support the police force and place reverence in the profession, but that begs the question: who is truly in need of support during these times?

Students like myself have felt empowered through association with the Black Lives Matter Movement. For our own schools

to invalidate such a meaningful movement in this way is frankly disappointing. This is one instance of many involving race and discrimination at Bettendorf, and other schools are not innocent either, including PV.

PV's own Junior Ethan Kilcoin spoke out, “I really think that a public high school board taking a stand on a political issue is a bad idea. It's always gonna cause controversy and/or make people mad,” he said, “Why do you need to have some merchandise from your school that also has a political statement on it?” Kilcoin is right: political topics are probably best left untouched by schools. However, Bettendorf High School did not just make any political statement with these hats. This statement was direct and hurtful.

While the immediate issue at hand is these Blue Lives Matter hats at Bettendorf High School, it is important to acknowledge that schools in Bettendorf, the Quad Cities, Iowa, and across the nation must do more to be anti-racist. No student should feel unwelcomed in their own school, especially if that exclusion is linked to blatant discrimination.