

# THE BASIS SCOTTSDALE GAZETTE

## THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR AS WE KNOW IT

BY GINA RYU

Prior to the start of Thanksgiving Break, BASIS.ed made an announcement through the ParentSquare platform that all BASIS Schools in Maricopa County would return to full-distance learning from Tuesday, December 1, 2020 through Friday, December 18, 2020. The decision was made in accordance with strict adherence to public health guidelines and expertise from Arizona State University (ASU), examining both the number of positive COVID-19 cases per 100,000 per week and percent positivity of COVID-19 tests administered in Maricopa County. As both metrics were on an upward trend, BASIS.ed made the decision to prioritize the safety of BASIS faculty and students. Unfortunately, this closure marked the end of in-person instruction at BASIS Scottsdale until the beginning of 2021 at the earliest. With this announcement, all previous arrangements with the Families Choose program were waived.

As fully online learning commenced, lectures were given by teachers to students both in the comfort of their own homes. Back to the rhythm of the first month of the school year, students complete the daily attestation form each day to confirm their attendance and readiness to learn and sign into SPORKForAll and follow the embedded link to join class calls in Microsoft Teams. For students who have been taking school virtually through the Families Choose program, the school closure had no



Source: KSB School Law

substantial impact on their learning environment; however, students who had opted to learn in-person had significant changes in their learning environment with a change in their commute schedule and classroom setting.

At BASIS Scottsdale, certain planned in-person activities were canceled or postponed because of the school closure. Basketball practices remain strictly regulated, with temperature checks for student players upon entering the gym, but all future basketball games

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### SAVE THE DATE

- |                           |                             |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Dec 10-18:<br>Hanukkah    | Dec 25:<br>Christmas        |
| Dec 31:<br>New Year's Eve | Jan 3:<br>Last Day of Break |

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have been postponed until January. Events planned by Leadership Society such as decorating the school for the holiday season have consequently also been canceled. Instead, many clubs or societies have turned to online platforms to hold virtual events like Kahoot! or drop-off events like donation drives, allowing school clubs and societies to host events regardless of the campus closure.

The situation remains fluid, but the school is prepared to take measures to bring students back to school while ensuring both student and faculty safety. Beginning with younger students, BASIS.ed plans to integrate students gradually with a close attention to COVID-19 metrics, ensuring the re-implementation of in-person instruction is conducted according to the counsel of experts at ASU and the AZ Department of Health. BASIS.ed plans to streamline its policies to strengthen responses to COVID-19 cases and exposures. Firstly, an internal web portal will be launched in partnership with ASU, logging contact

tracing and the documentation of positive cases. This new web portal is a move towards a more sophisticated response to COVID-19 than the current documentation system at BASIS. Secondly, the Mitigation Plan will be revised to better contain staff-to-staff transmission, governing staff interaction, meetings, and physical distancing. This revision was made keeping the trend of staff-to-staff transmission in mind, in hopes that increasing distancing would allow for less mandatory quarantines for when a positive COVID case does arise. Lastly, BASIS.ed is working to ensure that teachers get early access to the vaccine as soon as possible as an additional measure to mitigate the spread of COVID-19.

BASIS remains optimistic that our doors will open back up to welcome students back by January 4th--continuing the implementation of the Families Choose program.



Source: Timothy Sullivan

# A GUIDE TO PRE-COMPS

BY DERRICK KANG

As winter break ends, many BASIS students will be required to take the Pre-Comprehensive exams to demonstrate their skill in various classes. However, with the current situation of the pandemic, changes will be implemented in order to ensure that students will be able to perform in a suitable testing environment while also following appropriate guidelines to reduce the risk of spread. Here is a list of these changes and rules that will be instituted during this year's pre-comprehensive exams.

1. The entire pre-comprehensive exam will take place online via Gradecam. The students' login information will be sent out through Parentsquare on December 8th.
2. Students on campus will take their exams under the supervision of a proctor, but will still use Gradecam in order to complete their tests. Students at home will complete their exams via Gradecam, while being monitored by an online proctor in a Teams meeting.
3. The pre-comps will still have two tests per subject, the common and native, each worth 50% of the overall test score.
4. For 6th and 7th graders, the test will be 50% of their GP3 grade. For 8th graders, the pre-comp will be 30% of their Trimester 2 grade.
5. The English, Physics, and Biology exams are scheduled to be on Tuesday, January 12, followed by the History, Chemistry, and Economics (for 8th graders only) exams, scheduled to be on Wednesday,

January 13. The Math and World Language exams are scheduled to be on Thursday, January 14.

6. The common portion of the test will be multiple choice that is usually 30 minutes long; however, the Biology exam will only have 15 minutes while the Math exam will take 45 minutes. The World Language exam is the only test that does not have a common portion this year.
7. The native portion of the exam will consist of multiple-choice questions and at least two free response questions, with students having the option to handwrite their answers and upload onto the exam. The native portion will be 30 minutes long with Biology (with only 45 minutes) and World Language (being 60 minutes) as the only exceptions.

Many students may be troubled by the new changes to this year's exams. In addition to preparing for some of the most important exams this year, they must be able to test in an environment that minimizes the risk of spreading the virus. Some may consider the rules bothersome while others may argue that allowing testing within a physical environment is a significant danger present in itself. Regardless, students must be careful for this year's pre-comprehensive exams from both an academic and medical standpoint.



Source: NDTV

# THE QUEST FOR A PEOPLE'S VACCINE

BY SAHIL SUD

The race for a coronavirus vaccine has been the most important race in the last 20 years. For months, as the COVID-19 pandemic spread across the world, the most anticipated product on the market has been its vaccine. The quest for a vaccine has been difficult, as trials have taken months, with various obstacles, like competition, obstructing maximum efficiency. As governments and private enterprises compete for the vaccine, it is important that we understand the progress of trials and the ramifications of a vaccine.

First, we have to understand why a coronavirus vaccine is so crucial. Ever since December of last year, the coronavirus has spread across the world and has infected many in the United States. It has killed 1.54 million people worldwide, and 282 thousand in the US, with CBS reporting that it was the leading cause of death last week in the United States. It has especially ravaged areas of poverty as well as those in the global south, which have been historically most adversely affected by imperialism and colonialism. As a result, these areas have less access to resources like healthcare and their people are more likely to be affected by the virus. This inequality makes it vital that exploited, and therefore vulnerable, communities receive quick access to the vaccine. In order to prevent a further intensifying of the spread of the virus, a COVID vaccine must be efficient and mass-produced.

Because this vaccine is so important, we must understand how it was created and make sure it is safe. Ever since the first vaccines for the influenza virus were developed, the process for developing vaccines has changed and adjusted to new evidence. When this disease was originally identified as a strain of coronavirus, scientists were able to use previous knowledge of Sars-Cov-1 and MERS to focus their research on the S protein, or the Spike. This is the target antigen because it allows virus particles to enter the cell. The creation of the coronavirus vaccine has involved four techniques, which are using a protein subunit, virus-like particles, genetic vaccines, or viral vector vaccines, the latter two of which are next generation methods. The difference between the conventional methods and the next generation methods is that conventional vaccines contain the antigen themselves, while next generation methods contain parts of the DNA or mRNA of the vaccine. We must be careful with the use of

these next generation methods, because they have never been previously used.

Surprisingly, both vaccines that used mRNA succeeded and moved onto phase three trials. Both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines used mRNA components as their base. On November 9, drug giant Pfizer announced that its vaccine, which was developed by German biotechnology firm BioNTech, was 90 percent effective at protecting people from the pathogen when compared with a placebo saline shot. In fact, on Tuesday December 8, a 90 year-old woman named Margaret Keenan was administered the first dose of the Pfizer vaccine by the National Health Service. Later that day, the FDA confirmed the safety and efficacy of the Pfizer vaccine. A week later, Moderna, after a partnership with the National Institutes of Health (NIH), announced that its vaccine was almost 95% percent effective at preventing coronavirus. This vaccine was funded solely by the taxpayers, as the government spent 2.5 billion dollars on this vaccine. This allowed the developers to prioritize effectiveness and safety over profit. Moderna had actually completed development before Pfizer, but because the development of the vaccine was based on societal benefit, more safety precautions were taken, and trials took longer.

Once we work out the kinks of the vaccine, we need to tackle the problem of distributing it. It is necessary that as many people as possible have access to his vaccine, because of the havoc the coronavirus has wrecked on our society. Without universal access to the vaccine, the pandemic will continue to spread, and will infect people across the world. It may even spread to the point that vaccinated people are exposed and begin feeling symptoms. That's why the Washington Post noted, "It puts everyone in danger if rich countries hoard a vaccine," arguing "we are not safe unless everyone is safe."

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Unfortunately, global economic systems make this difficult as wealthy people in wealthy countries are able to take high priority over all else. The maximization of profit incentivizes companies to prevent access to the vaccine to the vast majority of people, because, by keeping supply artificially low, prices will increase. It's essential for our total benefit that we cooperate and extend vaccine access to all. As economic anthropologist Jason Hickel recently noted, "The international competition for access to the vaccine is regressive in the extreme. Vaccines should be delivered to all vulnerable people and healthcare workers first, regardless of whether they happen to live in Britain or

in Guatemala." Instead of limiting access, we must guarantee that this care is made available to all.

We must fundamentally shift the distribution of this vaccine to benefit global health. Under our current methods, millions in the global south and impoverished communities will be in want of this essential good. To quote Hickel, "The fact that healthy 30-year-olds in Western Europe and North America will in all likelihood be vaccinated before ICU nurses in most of the rest of the world should give us pause."



New York nurse receives the vaccine, Source: ABC

# FOSTERING HOPE FOR THE HOLIDAYS

BY CALISTA WILK

It was the summer of 2013, when Dan Shufelt read headline after headline reporting the disheartening circumstances of thousands of children in Arizona. According to the articles, there were over 10,000 uninvestigated cases of children in foster care who may have been neglected and had no home to go to, no bed to sleep in, and no family to call for. Sparked with the desire to help these children, Mr. Shufelt believed this was no coincidence since he had been searching for a more specific mission for Arizona Helping Hands, the organization whose board he had served on for over 10 years. Without wasting any time, he immediately sprang into action by rallying together fellow volunteers, coworkers, and friends to create a plan of action. The result was the delivery of seven clean, comfortable beds to children in foster care within the first month of their newly created initiative.

But this was just the beginning.

This dedicated group, together with an army of volunteers, has never looked back or stopped their services for children in foster care. They have since provided 16,000 children with a bed or crib and have expanded their services to supply children with basic needs from clothing to educational materials. To help each child feel even more supported and loved, Arizona Helping Hands prepares personalized birthday gifts and holiday packages. Even in the wake of the current COVID-19 pandemic, Arizona Helping Hands has never once closed their doors for their services and has sent 1,800 beds, 700 cribs, and 3,200 birthday presents to children in foster care this year alone.

“This endeavor has taken over my life,” Mr. Shufelt, now the President and CEO of the organization, told me. “[It has] given me a sense of worth, a sense of doing something special for kids and knowing that I’m making a difference every day by the work we do here.” Indeed, his conviction has not wavered for all the 7 years he has been a part of Arizona Helping Hands’ mission to support children in foster care, as he knows exactly “why [he’s] doing what [he’s] doing every day and can’t wait to come into the office” every morning.

Inspired by his overflowing passion and ambition, I eagerly asked how I, and other students, could help Arizona Helping



Source: Arcadia News

Hands. To my delight, Mr. Shufelt listed many ways one can help children in foster care, including volunteering at Arizona Helping Hands (which does require that you fill out an application and are at least 16 years old), donating supplies or birthday gifts, and hosting donation drives. Additionally, Arizona Helping Hands is holding their 22nd annual Holiday Toy Drive, which fills children’s holidays with joy and love, especially in light of the difficult pandemic. More information about these activities and ways to get involved can be learned by visiting their website at <https://azhelpinghands.org/>.

The work Arizona Helping Hands has been doing since 2013 has dramatically changed the lives of thousands of children in foster care throughout Arizona. Their love for helping to make a difference sings a melody of hope and cheer throughout the community as they give less fortunate children every opportunity to find their voice. Throughout this inspirational journey of empowering and uplifting children, Mr. Shufelt has never once regretted his decision to join Arizona Helping Hands. In fact, he believes that it has helped him grow and develop as a person because “when you’re doing the right thing for the right reason, the pieces fall into place, and good things happen.”

# THE PLIGHT OF THE UIGHURS

BY ALEX ZOU

Since 2017, various mysterious facilities have sprung up within the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region in the People's Republic of China. Constructed with searchlights and barbed wire, high walls make these facilities practically impenetrable to any casual inspection and almost impossible to escape. But what exactly is the purpose of these facilities? Why have they been built here and for what reason? To answer these questions, we must first understand the history of the Uighurs in China.

Supported by the Silk Road, the ancestors of the Uighurs were influenced by cultures throughout Asia and the West, giving rise to the Islamic-centric population that lives in modern-day Xinjiang. This culturally diverse background is reflected in their current religious and cultural practices. The Uighurs first became involved with their neighbor, China, during the Mongol Yuan Dynasty where according to The Conversation, many served as “administrators for the...descendants of Genghis Khan.” The presence of Uighur in government continued until the Qing Dynasty, when the imperial government started a westward expansion to administrate majority-Muslim territories. The downfall of the Qing Dynasty and the subsequent founding of the Communist Party of China (CCP) in 1949 did nothing to change this westward expansion.

Under Paramount Leader Mao Zedong, the 1966 Cultural Revolution caused nationalistic fervor to rise within the majority Han Chinese populace, leading to increased pressure on the expression of religious belief of religious minorities such as the Uighurs and outright destruction of mosques in Xinjiang. Pressure from Beijing on the Xinjiang area of China increased after 9/11, especially in regards to the religious freedoms that the Uighurs possessed, such as the right to fast and enter places of worship. According to the BBC, July 2009 Ürümqi riots and 2014 Kunming attack further exacerbated existing tensions in the region with the central government curtailing or altogether banning certain religious freedoms such as observing the month of Ramadan.

Returning to our original question, the main purpose of these facilities is to be used as internment camps to “detain Uighurs and people from other Muslim minorities” in the Xinjiang region (Graham-Harrison). According to The Guardian, there now exist well over 300 camps in the region.



Source: The Telegraph

The BBC also reports that various memorandums to the UN allege that the vast majority of people detained within the camps have been held without formal charges, trials or even rights. Those held have been forced to work on nearby factories and other work projects for hours on end without pay. More recently, the Interparliamentary Alliance on China (IPAC) condemned the allegations of mass forced sterilizations in the internment camps and called for the creation of an independent investigation into the Xinjiang region.

The official CCP stance on the camps has shifted dramatically over the past few years. At first, the CCP denied the existence of the camps in the Xinjiang region but has since changed its official line, claiming that the sole purpose of these “vocational facilities” are for the re-education of the Uighur population and that many contained within the camps have already returned to society. The CCP also maintains that no human rights abuses have occurred in the internment camps. However, reporters and independent observers have not been allowed to view the inside of the internment camps to verify these claims.

Various Uighur activists and human rights organizations have disputed the CCP's claims. The World Uyghur Congress, representing various exiled Uighur factions, has repeatedly condemned what it

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describes as human rights abuses and “genocide” in the Xinjiang region. The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has also called on the CCP to accede to an independent investigation of the camps present within the Xinjiang region and the return of religious freedoms to the Uighur population.

Despite these allegations, many countries have chosen to side with the CCP in support of China’s official stance on the Uighur population. In a clear rejection of reports brought by various human rights organizations concerning Uighur mistreatment in Xinjiang, fifty countries at the 41st session of the United Nations Human Rights Council signed a letter that commended China’s “protecting and

promoting human rights through development” in Xinjiang.

All of this has culminated in the year of 2020, where multiple higher security facilities have been built in Xinjiang, signaling that the CCP is ready to move the Uighur population to even more permanent and isolated camps. What’s more concerning are reports that other minorities in the region such as the Hui have been targeted in recent years. As world leaders slowly deliberate in closed chambers of the UN, it seems that at least for the foreseeable future, Muslim minorities within China will face many dark days.



Uighurs in Xinxiang Concentration Camps, Source: BBC

# MONTHLY MUNCHIES

## NEW YEAR STAR COOKIES

BY DYLAN SOSINSKY  
AND JONAH MARWIL

Looking for an easy recipe for your New Year's Eve party? Below is an easy and affordable dessert to make. Have a Happy New Year!!

### Star Cookies

#### Ingredients

1. 1  $\frac{3}{4}$  cups of flour
2.  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups of granulated sugar
3. 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  sticks or 12 tbsp. of unsalted butter at room temperature
4.  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp of pure vanilla extract
5.  $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon of salt
6. 1 cup of semi-sweet chocolate

#### Instructions

1. In the bowl of an electric mixer with the paddle attachment, cream together the butter and sugar until they are combined. Scrape down the bowl as necessary. Add the vanilla.
2. In a separate bowl, mix together flour and salt and add it to the sugar/butter mixture. Mix on low speed until the dough starts to come together.
3. Place dough on a lightly floured surface and shape into a disk. Wrap in plastic and refrigerate it for about 30 minutes.
4. Use 1/2 of the dough at a time, keeping the second half refrigerated. On a floured surface, roll the dough out about 1/8" thick.
5. Use cookie cutters to stamp out your cookies. Have a sharp spatula or food scraper on hand to pick up the cookies easier.
6. Place all cookies on an ungreased baking sheet and bake for 12 to 15 minutes, or until the edges begin to brown.
7. Let cookies cool to room temperature, or you can refrigerate them.
8. Melt 1-cup semi-sweet chocolate chips in the microwave or stove top according to package instructions.
9. Use a butter knife to cover half of each cookie top with chocolate. Refrigerate them at least 30 minutes, or until the chocolate hardens. Once the chocolate hardens, you can stack them in
10. Tupperware and refrigerate for a few days.



Source: The Washington Post

#### TASTE TEST

Dylan: Pro-very buttery; Con- chocolate hides the buttery flavor,

Mom: Pro- nice buttery flavor; Con- none

Dad: Pro- icing tastes good; Con- cookie is too grainy

Wondering what soda you should drink on New Year's Eve? Look no further!

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I have surveyed four students and one one teacher, asking them to rate six sodas on a scale of 1-10. As you can see, the ratings were very close with Fanta barely coming out on top with a score of 7.8/10. Yousef (8F) says, “Fanta is an amazing classic that has its own orange taste that doesn’t taste anything like orange juice but is different than other sodas. It is not rough on the throat and is so quenching after a nice dry meal.” Pepsi with a meager score of 4.8 was ranked last out of the six sodas. Mr. Hathaway (Orchestra) says, “Pepsi is just an imitation of Coke really, and it consistently tastes more flat than Coke.”

Soda	Coke	Pepsi	Dr. Pepper	Sprite	Root beer	Fanta
Rating 1-10	7	4.8	7.6	7.3	5.9	7.8



**WORST RATING**



**BEST RATING**

Regardless of what this graph says, you can drink whatever soda you like. If you want to drink Pepsi, no one is stopping you. If you are new to carbonated delicacies, this chart can maybe help you, but don’t feel pressured to try Fanta and not try Pepsi because everyone is different. Happy Holidays!

# KISHORE'S PUZZLE PAGE

## MATH MINDBENDERS

BY KISHORE RAJESH

**Algebra:** Suppose you and two friends order food. You order a meal worth \$27. Each of you decides to split the bill and pay \$10 each to the waiter. The waiter takes the money and brings the food, giving you each a dollar in change. Due to a mistake in the menu, the bill was actually \$25. You and your friends decide to add the extra \$2 to the bill. So, you each paid a net of  $\$10 - \$1 = \$9$ , with a net total of \$27, with a tip of \$2, making \$29. But you originally paid  $3 * \$10 = \$30$ . What happened to the missing dollar?

**Pre-Calculus:** How many complex solutions are there to  $x^i = 1$ ? (Hint: use polar coordinates)

**Calculus:** Find a function  $f(x)$  such that  $f'(x) = f'(x+1)$  and  $f(x) \neq f(x+1)$  for all real  $x$ .

**Multivariable Calculus:** There are 4 ants at the edges of a square with a length of 1m. Each ant moves towards the ant directly counterclockwise to it. The ants also have the same speed of 1m/s. They meet in the middle of the square. How long does it take for them to meet?

**Discrete Mathematics:** Suppose we have a graph with  $n$  vertices and  $n-1$  edges. Can we find a path between any two vertices? Why or why not?

**History of Mathematics:** The Nine Chapters gives one proof of the Pythagorean Theorem. How many more can you come up with?

## HOLIDAY WORD SEARCH

Q	Y	Z	L	Y	G	Q	O	V	C	H	S	U	E	H
U	A	O	M	I	S	O	K	A	H	P	K	C	A	O
J	D	K	P	L	Y	I	A	D	R	M	I	F	D	L
M	Y	R	G	H	I	A	N	B	I	T	J	X	I	I
L	V	S	A	Y	Z	F	O	C	S	O	F	D	E	D
N	A	F	Z	N	S	X	E	L	T	J	Y	C	H	A
Z	R	O	A	X	I	A	O	D	M	V	Q	E	S	Y
O	G	W	F	N	N	S	T	Q	A	E	H	N	G	D
O	K	R	G	E	R	M	O	U	S	Y	X	B	I	T
J	R	D	N	E	W	Y	E	A	R	S	E	V	E	A
K	A	T	T	U	J	X	X	S	O	N	M	Z	D	M
Y	U	N	H	A	K	K	U	N	A	H	A	V	Q	E
X	I	S	K	L	R	R	X	B	T	D	E	L	S	E
W	Z	U	Z	C	G	L	E	I	K	N	Q	T	I	G

### Words:

Christmas  
Hanukkah  
Kwanzaa  
Boxing Day  
Omisoka  
New Year's Eve  
Winter Solstice  
Gravy Day  
Life Day  
Holiday  
Advent  
Yule  
Saturnalia

# COMIC O' THE HOLIDAYS

BY TRISTAN CLARKE

## 2020: A YEAR IN REVIEW

TWAS THE DAY BEFORE BREAK,  
AND ALL THROUGH THE SCHOOL,  
NOT A CREATURE WAS STIRRING:  
WE'D FOLLOWED CDC RULES



WE'D OPENED BACK UP  
IN SEPTEMBER, YOU SEE.  
BUT WHEN CASES ARE RISING,  
IN SCHOOL WE CAN'T BE.



ON ZOOM AND ON TEAMS,  
OUR CLASSES WE'VE HELD.  
AND MADE THE MOST OF  
THE HAND WE WERE DEALT.



WITH MASKS AND FACE SHIELDS,  
SEPARATION: SIX FEET,  
IT'S BEEN LONG BUT THE LIGHT  
AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL WE SEE!



SO HERE'S TO NEXT YEAR!  
LET'S GIVE IT A TOAST!  
BECAUSE WHEN WE CAN COME TOGETHER,  
YOU'LL ENJOY THAT THE MOST!



SO HAVE A GREAT TIME!  
BE WITH FAMILY AS YOU MAY.  
FROM BASIS GAZETTE,  
WISHING YOU A HAPPY HOLIDAY!



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