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Letters to the Editor

Leilani Luna
Photo Editor

"Excuse me. " Can I get through?" "Watch out. I’m sorry, can I get by?" These are just some of the few things students find themselves saying walking through crowds on campus. It has come to several students’ attention that our school is very large; the campus is large but so is the number of students that attend Otay Ranch High School.

If students walking down the Ranchway find themselves stopping several times just to try to move through the crowds of people, usually, such situations tend to happen at the beginning of the year, but this year, it appears as though this phase is dragging on a bit longer than it should. Our school has grown remarkably since its opening in 2003, but is that such a positive thing? Many of us find ourselves in classes of over thirty students, and this is oftentimes seen as a negative aspect due to the fact that the student-to-teacher ratio is a bit off. Teachers can’t always offer one-on-one help and that means that students aren’t getting the grades that they have the potential to receive.

Many AP and honor students have the ability to work independently but for those that are barely learning how to study on their own, they might need a little more assistance. Fortunately, for ORHS, tutoring opportunities for certain classes are offered.

"Teacher contracts only allow a certain number of students per teacher," said Jose Broz, principal. This ensures that full classes will be evenly out to fit teacher contracts.

Having such a great number of students does mean higher test scores. Better test scores, however, mean that more students will want to transfer to ORHS, thus increasing the student population.

"Every student has something to contribute so there is an opportunity for kids to integrate their culture and talents, whether it is in fine arts, athletics, or academics. I think that’s what makes our school one of the top schools in the nation," said Mr. Broz.

Leilani Luna

Closed Campus

Mimi Choi
News Editor

If you are in an AP class, you may have noticed the large number of students around you. There are about 30-40 students in an Otay Ranch High School AP class, depending on the subject. The CCHS administration recommends a class size of 25 students. So why are the AP classes at ORHS so crowded?

"There are so many students because we only have a certain number of funds from the recommended class size," said Teresa Kramer, assistant principal and AP Coordinator.

Ms. Kramer also notes that it’s not only the AP classes that are full, but almost all classes.

"Clearly, the large classes don’t particularly bother me. It’s that more that students are challenging themselves to take AP courses, and that they all have an opportunity to do so.

More students taking AP classes may also help to achieve the high standardized test scores that the administration is always emphasizing.

With their rigor and focus on independent learning, students must be especially motivated in order to survive an AP class.

However, we are less than a month into school and more than a few students are bound to drop classes. As for now, I don’t feel it necessary for the administration to attempt to control the class sizes, unless there is a significant shortage of materials or teachers. That is not the case at all. Yet the class sizes are still being controlled.

"The state and district fund at 182 students per teacher," said Ms. Kramer. "It’s a difficult balance between state funds, teacher contracts, and accommodating student demand."

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Opinion Editor

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An Evolution of School Culture

Juan Carlos Hernandez
Staff Writer

School spirit hasn’t always been the best here at Otay Ranch High School. As a senior here at the Ranch, I’ve had three years of watching both the previous seniors and past underclassmen show their school spirit.

In the class of 2012’s freshman year, not many showed school pride. Also, the famous “booing” of the freshmen was not allowed at assemblies, and anyone who tried to boo the freshmen would face severe consequences.

As the class of 2012’s sophomore year approached, the seniors of 2010 were determined to set an example as one of ORHS’s finest classes. Summer Bash was a success and with Mick Buencamino as BMOC, Homecoming was a success as well. The same could not be said for the Homecoming game—not as devastating a loss as the previous year’s 50-0 shutout, but a loss nevertheless. Not many showed up to the game.

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As ORHS’s culture continued to evolve, the class of 2012’s junior year began to truly see a push for class spirit. The class of 2011 showed up to the assemblies ready to “rep” its seniority. What caused the senior class to band together and show some spirit? It had mostly to do with Mr. Kray’s push for spirit. At the first assembly of the year, he announced, in conjunction with the ASB, that there would be a spirit banner, a prize to the class who earned the most spirit points throughout the year.

Spirit points would be rewarded by participating in spirit weeks and by being the loudest during roll call. In addition, the unique “Big Blue Wave” was put into motion by Mr. Kray, who ran all over the gym and initiated waves of varying speeds.

Clash elections, a representation of democracy, also added to the school’s culture. Students elected their leaders and began to plan for the future of their own classes as well as the future of ORHS’s culture. The Multicultural Fair that replaced the Summer Bash showed a decline in attendance but Homecoming proved successful. The long awaited rematch between the CVHS Spartans and the Mustangs was, what many teachers stated, the most attended football game in ORHS’s history. The Spirit bellowed by the showed the assemblies were incredible and the school ran with it for the rest of the year.

School culture evolved greatly last year. The Senior Lawn was built, a champion volleyball team drew a humongous crowd of supporters, and the “I believe that we will win” chant was born.

So I leave you with this, Mustangs: be proud to be a part of an ongoing legacy, always remember the banners that you helped put up on the gym wall, and help your class succeed in winning this year’s spirit banner. As we all add to the culture, pride, traditions and spirit here at the Ranch, the only person that can make the culture even more sophisticated is you.