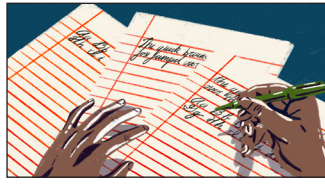


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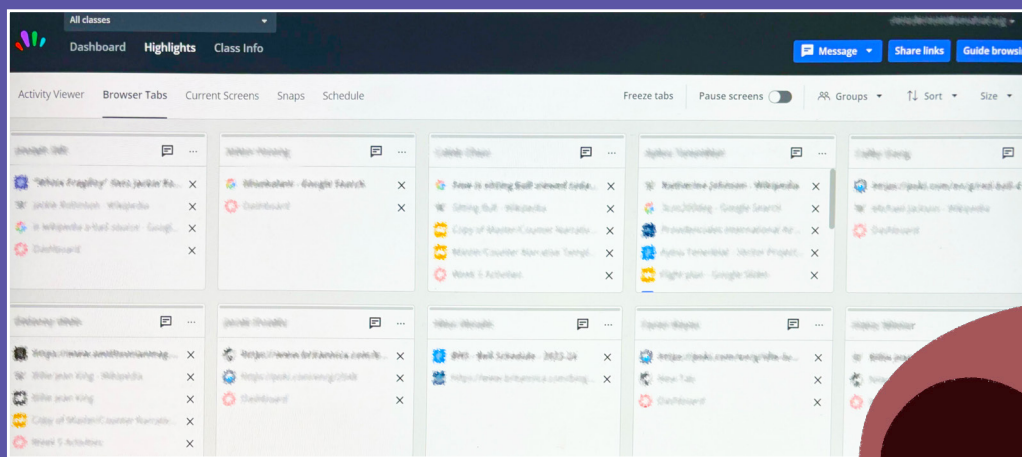
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## Hāpara technology

Teachers use new resource for classroom management



BY JOSIE WETTAN  
Staff Reporter

Last year, freshman English teacher Reema Asia estimated that around 50% of students wouldn't turn in their classwork by the end of class. This year, that number has declined substantially: on average, only a couple of students don't submit their classwork.

Asia attributes that change to her adoption of Hāpara, a classroom management tool that monitors what students do on their Chromebooks and

teaches digital citizenship skills.

When teachers use Hāpara, they can see students' screens, block websites, close tabs, lock students' screens and more. When Asia was told about Hāpara at the beginning of this school year, she jumped at the opportunity.

"I use Hāpara because I've noticed that a lot of students do not stay on task or stay focused during the class period," Asia said. "We really want to make sure that students are taking advantage of the time that we give them in class, that they're

not being distracted and that they're focusing on developing those important skills."

Asia isn't the only teacher at Burlingame who has made use of Hāpara, and Burlingame isn't the only school adopting the tool. According to Hāpara's website, its software has spread to 15% of school districts in the U.S., with 2.2 million devices worldwide.

At Burlingame, all students have Hāpara pre-installed on their Chromebooks.

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## Bigue resolute through recovery

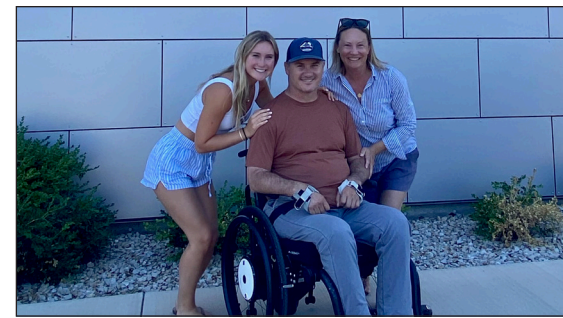


PHOTO COURTESY OF DOMINIC BIGUE

BY ELISE SPENNER  
Editor-In-Chief

When Dominic Bigue landed headfirst into a boulder while on a mountain biking adventure with friends on Oct. 1, 2022, he was instantly paralyzed from the neck down — Bigue could barely move his big toe.

"I literally woke up one day and could no longer do the things that I was doing," Bigue said. "And I feel bad that it was so abrupt. I had to kind of walk away from all of the relationships that I had at the school. And since then, it's just been a battle of recovery."

Before the accident, Bigue was an assistant principal at Burlingame. He had a leadership position in a community he knew like the back of his hand; it was a dream come true.

The accident flipped his life — and his family's life — on its head. In our conversation, the same word came up over and over again: humbling.

"I was always trying to lead the charge," Bigue said. "And handling challenging situations and managing crises and so forth. And then suddenly, I have become very reliant on so many people around me."

While Bigue's reliance on the people around him might be humbling, it is equally a testament to the community he has built over the past 40 years. A GoFundMe organized to assist with short and long-term expenses related to recovery has raised over \$300,000 from more than 1,200 donations. After returning from inpatient rehab, Bigue was greeted with a drive-through welcome party. When Bigue received treatment and therapies at Neuroworx in Utah last summer, two friends drove all the way to Park City to ride a bike with him for the first time since the accident.

"There used to be this old TV show called 'This is your life.' And in that moment, all these people would come back out of different parts of your life to talk about their relationships with you and reaffirm some of the things that as teachers, we don't always get to hear from our students," Bigue said. "We know we have impacts but we don't always know how much and so it was incredibly humbling to have my former students that I had taught, even students I had coached in basketball with my daughters, colleagues that I've worked with in the district for 25 years, all come out and support me."

Returning to work — continuing a life of service, as he put it — was one of Bigue's first priorities. Less than 20% of people who suffered spinal cord injury are able to, but within months, Bigue started a role as a technology coordinator and induction coach in the San Mateo Union High School District, where he has worked in some capacity for

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## Dominic Bigue

From pg. 1

over 25 years.

"I think my world would be very small if I wasn't also trying to connect with people and still be engaged in the world of education," Bigue said.

Outside of work, Bigue continues to make progress physically. He has regained mobility in his arms and legs and begins most days at 5:30 a.m. to complete his stretches and routine before beginning work at 8:30 a.m.

"Feeling like I have more to contribute and be connected to something larger than myself has always been one of my driving and motivating forces and now my physical limitations are a whole other challenge that I continue to get up and grind and push forward every day as well," Bigue said.

That doesn't mean it's easy. Bigue spent decades as the "provider" for his family, but he can no longer fill that role in a traditional sense.

"I was always the person that could step in and tackle issues, a lot of physical things that I did for the house, whether it was taking care of things in the home or being there for my daughters," Bigue said. "There's been a bit of grieving in the sense that we've lost some of the things that I was so capable of, able to do."

Instead, the little things have taken on magnified importance: accompanying Genevieve, his 20-year-old, to a father-daughter outing at the University of California, Berkeley, cheering on the Bears at a basketball game and brunching with her sorority. Or planning a dinner out and a movie night.

A self-described "adrenaline junkie," Bigue has refused to let the accident sideline him. While at the rehabilitation facility in Utah, he was able to bike again for the first time on a three-wheel mountain bike alongside those same two friends who were with him during the accident.

"It was a dream come true," Bigue said. "It was definitely scary because a lot of the things that I was so easily able to do before were absolutely challenging, but it just felt great to be back again and surrounded by friends and enjoying the views and the sights and the sounds and smells of being out on the trail. And just ripping along."

# Cursive makes a comeback

## Debate rages over relevance of writing form

BY INY LI  
Staff Reporter

When fifth-grade elementary school teacher Patricia Althaus saw her son Liam struggle to decipher the birthday card her mother had gifted him, stumbling through the loopy letters and skipping over phrases, she realized for the first time how insufficient the cursive curriculum is.

It seems that lawmakers across the state had the same realization. On Oct. 23, 2023, California joined the growing list of states that have made cursive compulsory in all elementary school curricula. AB 446 aims to equip the newest generations with essential skills — signing one's name on important documents and analyzing historical documents, whether to understand America's history or trace back one's heritage.

"When kids start to color, they always do circles. So the funny thing is, printing is what they're forced to do, but kids naturally do circles, which is basically cursive," fourth-grade elementary school teacher Susan Sawczuk said. "I'm not advocating adding cursive writing into kindergarten, but it's natural for us to do cursive. The problem is we break that cycle, and then we force them to do printing. And then we go back again and they don't have the muscle memory."

Many teachers who have already been teaching cursive long before it was a requirement strongly believe in the psychological and academic benefits of the writing form. Fourth and fifth-grade teacher Kathleen Butler expects that her students write all handwritten work in cursive, but not without reason.

"I think cursive helps with creativity," Butler said. "It helps with focus. I think you actually become a better speller when you are using cursive writing, because you start to think of it all as letters joined together rather than single pieces. From the spelling standpoint, it helps to make a stronger hand-eye coordination and the overall brain development is essential."

An EGG-based study conducted at



Cursive, Annie Miller acknowledged, is a social skill more than an academic one.

the Norwegian University of Science and Technology demonstrated the importance of cursive handwriting as a skill to help the brains of students learn and remember information faster and more efficiently. As schools rely more on technology for in-class assignments, students who are not required to learn cursive are now at a disadvantage, according to the study.

"These last thirteen to fourteen years, we've done a disservice," Althaus said. "There's this big chunk of kids who, going into adulthood, are not completely confident that they can read something their boss writes on a sticky note. Not everything will always be communicated via email."

APUSH teacher Annie Miller, similarly, has noticed an inverse relationship between one's technology use and the quality of their penmanship, signifying a need for cursive in curriculum. For Miller, cursive holds a special place in her heart as it allows her to read the journals left by her deceased mother, who learned cursive through strict Catholic School teachings.

"A life skill, professional skill and academic skill is that we still have some form of legible handwriting that people can read," Miller said. "Personally, I don't care if it's cursive, block letters or script, as long as I can read your handwriting. I'm noticing the more and more people type, the less legible our handwriting is. If cursive is going to help with that, awesome."

But cursive's benefits extend beyond the classroom. Consider a signature — whether it's a quick scribble on a receipt or signing a legal document, a signature encapsulates a person's identity and represents them on paper.

"When I look at everyone in my classroom, I don't think there's any two signatures alike," Butler said. "If I pick up a piece of printed work, I don't know if I'd be able to tell who's is who's, but if I look at a piece of cursive, I know it's so and so's without even reading the name. It's very distinct. It allows students a little bit more creativity and individuality."

To Evan Liu, a fourth grader at Spring Valley Elementary School, cursive seems like an unnecessary skill for his future in society.

"I don't see my parents use it, and they don't know that much about it," Liu said. "[Cursive] is harder to write and it's more complicated. It feels like a chore because it takes more time."

While California's new law may seem promising for cursive advocates, state policies are constantly changing, leaving teachers in what Sawczuk describes as a "pendulum."

"You have people who are not in a classroom or have been out of touch for twenty years that issue these laws," Sawczuk said. "That's what a lot of people don't understand. It's not just what law is mandated, but what's best for my child. What's best for the students in my class?"

An advertisement for TUNA KAHUNA. It features three bowls of tuna dishes: a large black bowl on the left with tuna, avocado, and microgreens; a smaller grey bowl on the top right with tuna, avocado, and a yellow flower; and a grey bowl on the bottom right with tuna, rice, and vegetables. In the center is a circular logo with a palm tree. Below the logo, the text reads "TUNA KAHUNA", "1117 Burlingame Ave, Burlingame, CA", "(650) 731-4972", and "www.tunakahuna.co".