

Word on the street

A look into transportation within the HHS community

Biking to Black Mountain

"Biking with friends is fun because it is a time for everyone to hang out together, and at the end you both get a bond with friends and get exercise while seeing cool sites or exploring places."

- Tristan Le (11)



No car? No problem

Alternative methods to get around the Bay

Bussing to Westfield Valley Fair

"It was cheap and affordable, and I only took one bus for about 30 minutes instead of having to transfer. It's a good alternative that I would recommend. It's relatively quick, cheap and not too slow."

- Enjun Zhang (12)



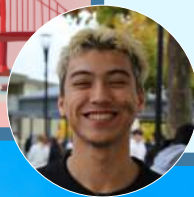
ROCKIN' RIDES

Students, teachers share unique ways of getting to school

Taking the Caltrain to San Francisco

"The Caltrain is pretty fast, and you don't have to get off it. It's just a straight line from here to San Francisco. There's a lot of space and plenty of room for you to choose where to sit."

- Thomas Thornburg (12)



Electric scooter

"As a form of transport, I don't have to exert as much energy as biking, [and] it saves me a lot of time compared to walking. There are a lot of cars during school and traffic hours, which scootering bypasses."

- Cerie Huang (9)



Motorcycle

"What's fun about the motorcycle is that I can lane split, which cuts my commute time in half versus taking a car. If you get your motorcycle license, take classes to protect yourself."

- Law teacher Byron Lee



Electric unicycle

"It's scary because it's only one wheel, and you're not sitting on anything so you're standing the entire time. Once you get used to it, you realize it's not that bad and not that scary."

- Eugene Cho (12)



VTA transit: another one rides the bus

Students, staff discuss bus commute experience

Vivian Kim, Alicia Liste and Selina Wang

For students who do not drive, bike or walk to school, the VTA bus acts as an alternate form of transportation to travel to and from HHS, senior Kieu Vi O'Brien said. Although the bus can be crowded at times, O'Brien said she finds the experience to be convenient and relaxing.

"I actually really enjoy taking the bus and public transit," O'Brien said. "I usually will have friends on the bus so it's a fun time to relax and chat or do some last-minute studying."

As an avid bus rider, junior Natalie Lo said taking the VTA bus allows her to get to and from school independently from her parents' schedule. However, Lo said catching the bus after school can be difficult due to the large number of students it services.

"When the bus comes, everyone's been waiting for a while, and they really want to go home after a long day of school. So everyone runs toward the entrance, and people are stomped on in the process," Lo said. "My friend actually fell over, and people were stepping on her as they were walking into the bus I had to drag her back up. It's like 'The Hunger Games.' I'm fighting for my life just to get onto the bus."

Nevertheless, taking the bus is a cost-effective and environmentally friendly form of transportation, sophomore Aarav Almula said.

"You have a large number of people using one vehicle, so it is very effective for the climate," Almula said.

la said. "In the hours to and from school, the two buses usually become very crowded, so that is a mild annoyance but there is nothing too serious that leaves a negative, lasting effect."

O'Brien, who has been taking the bus to and from HHS since freshman year, said riding public transit is practical because she lives in a zip code that qualifies for a free bus pass through FUHSD's VTA bus pass program.

"I live a little further away from HHS, about four miles away, and I can't drive. So I either bike or bus," O'Brien said. "Especially since the school offers free bus passes, it is just a lot easier [to take the bus]."

The bus pass program offers a free monthly pass to students who reside in zip codes 94089, 94085 and 95086, assistant principal secretary Corissa Esquivel said. The pass ensures students have a reliable form of transportation to school, encouraging consistent attendance and uplifting the student body, Esquivel added.

"This accessibility likely reduces stress for students by easing concerns over transportation, which in turn can support higher attendance rates and positively impact both education and overall well-being," Esquivel said in an email.

While misconceptions about bus safety and practicality can deter people from riding the bus regularly, O'Brien said it is not only a fun way to explore the city but also a unique opportunity to form human connections.

"Once, I met an old man who was meeting his mom, and I thought that was really sweet. I'm able to just get to know people every now and then," O'Brien said. "Whenever I'm on the bus, I'm usually with my friends and just talking. It's a fun time. Even though the bus is such a public area, it still feels like a nice, safe environment."

How students commute to campus

Based on a survey of 201 students

40.3% drive

11.9% have a driver's license

"[Driving] is a really good way to feel independent and like you have control over where you're going. You become less dependent on your parents and other things, which I like."

- Noga Levinson (11)

26.9% bike

"It's pretty fun, but when you arrive to school, you're really tired. I think the most interesting part is that there are a lot of weird routes you can take to school."

- Maya Yatziv (10)

21.9% walk

"It's refreshing in the morning. It was nicer during the fall and during the spring, but it's nice being out [instead of] staying at home or driving. When I am in a rush, I usually get driven to school. Walking is not really convenient for a lot of people, especially people that live farther away."

- Aarya Patel (10)

10.9% ride the bus

"If you take the bus to school and you want to go somewhere after school, you don't have to find a place to lock up your bike. Or, if it's raining, your parents can pick you up. It's more convenient."

- Robbie Elman (9)



Riding the VTA buses is a practical way of getting to HHS, O'Brien said.

Did you know? 323 students are currently signed up for the free VTA bus pass program.

According to an email from assistant principal secretary Corissa Esquivel