

# Voltage

Science Park High School

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## Managing Your Time

By Angie Moya

This pandemic has definitely messed up our daily schedules, and if you're a procrastinator like me, you might find yourself worrying (maybe multiple times a day) about school assignments you have to do rather than actually doing them. But, there's still time for you to get back on track before it's too late.

The important thing here is to realize the issue, and then take a course of action. Here are some basic tips to help you out:

## 🎯 Prioritize Your Responsibilities By Setting Goals

You can create a simple to-do list each day, and I recommend using the Google Tasks app, which is free to download, and is super easy to use. To ensure efficiency, however, I suggest keeping your

list at a maximum of 3 tasks a day. Don't overload yourself with tasks!

🕒 *If it takes you less than 5 minutes, do it now.*

Maybe you don't like to-do lists, and in that case, you should just create one big goal for the day that you will put all your energy into. Even better, write it down on a post-it note and put it on your computer or wall. So whenever you get distracted, simply look back at your goal, and get back to your priorities.

After this, you can always go back to completing other small tasks if you need to.



## 🎯 Make SMART Goals



- **S** - Define the goal. What do you want to accomplish?  
Who will be involved?  
Where will you need to be to accomplish the goal? Why do you want to accomplish this goal?
- **M** - The goal should have a quantifiable outcome. How can you track your progress towards achieving this goal?
- **A** - The goal should include an action plan with how you will achieve it. What resources do you currently have at your disposal that can be used to achieve your goal?
- **R** - Are there any major obstacles that would prevent you from achieving the goal?
- **T** - A time constraint will help you to effectively manage your time and feel a sense of urgency. By when do you want to accomplish your goal?

## 🕒 Maintain Regular Hours

By far, the best time-tested technique for being productive is waking up early. Preparation is key to beginning your day, and this way you'll have enough time to assess and plan what you need to do. Though it is difficult, getting used to it will benefit you in the long run. Along with this, make sure you get enough sleep!

You should set specific time frames for your goals and assignments; for example, your time frame can be from 3:30 to 5:30 PM (be aware of what times work best for you). And when the time comes, try your best to stay focused.

## 💻 Designate a Work Space

Choose a spot that is quiet and calm, and try to have an organized workspace. Make sure that you feel comfortable, but not too comfortable, otherwise you won't be very productive. Consider leaving your phone in a different area nearby to limit distractions.



## **Take Breaks!**

Intense work can make you feel tired, and it's important to take breaks so you can recharge and return with more energy. After your virtual school day, take about 30-45 minutes to relax. Then come back and finish up during your designated time frame. This way, you'll finish up your assignments and tasks on time, and you will still have time during the day to do other things.

Also, whenever you have those 5 minute breaks between classes, try to stand up and walk for a bit, to give yourself a break from all the screen time, and encourage blood flow throughout your body.

★ Remember, it's all about trying to find what works for you, the process isn't easy, nor is it perfect, but as long as you begin, you will become a productive individual!

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## **Students and The Pandemic** **By Alexandria Hall**

2021 arrived and while the world rolled out the age old saying "New Year, New Me" and is trying to restart life after the devastating year that was 2020, the reset

doesn't work for everyone. We still have a global pandemic, the one that stripped us of our high school experiences and so much more, but the most devastating thing that has been stolen from us is our mental health.

I was scrolling through instagram and came across something that spoke to me written by Matthew Segal: "I think children deserve a ton of credit for how they handled 2020. We asked them to change their lives in numerous terrible ways, largely for the protection of adults. And they did it."

### **This is speaking about every single one of us.**

At first it was sometime off school that everyone gladly welcomed laughing off the idea of anything more. So we broke out the game boards, dusted off our aprons, rekindled old hobbies we had temporarily shelved and watched every single show and movie on our handy streaming platforms.

But after months of spending time with those we love, well let's just say we needed a break so we headed to our rooms for online

school where we developed a routine of waking up, opening a computer, doing school, going to sleep, waking up and doing it all over again.

Grades plummeted faster than snow in an avalanche in Austria and with them the depression and anxiety rates in teens only went up.

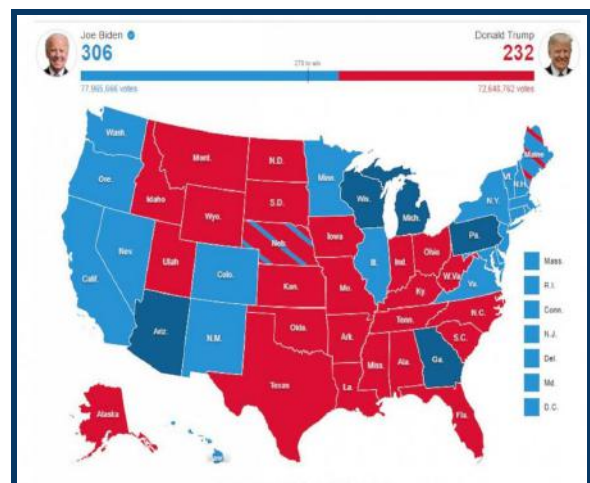
Nevertheless, we persist and, so, on top of regular teen angst, drama, and everything else you would expect from adolescents we had to and are continuing to deal with this year which tested us to our limits, yet we still pulled through because we are strong, powerful, adaptable individuals whether we are realizing it now or later.



## Joseph R. Biden: The 46th President

By Victoria Delgado-Rengel

Joseph R. Biden won the 2020 presidential election along with former Senator Kamala D. Harris. Months after the election, following multiple lawsuits, legal battles and claims of voter fraud, the election is finally over.



President Biden won the election by a huge margin. He received 51.4% of the popular vote, that being 81.2 million votes, while his opponent former President Donald J Trump received 46.9% of the popular vote, that being 74.2 million votes. For the Electoral College, Biden received 302 votes and former President Trump received 232 votes.



## How Do Presidential Elections Work in the United States?

Elections in the United States are quite complicated but come down to one thing: getting 270 electoral votes. Each state gets electoral votes depending on the number of House Members it has.

This means a state gets one vote per House member, and two votes accounting for Senate members. Many wonder if you can win the election through the electoral college but lose the popular vote, and the answer to this is yes. Examples of this would be Donald Trump in the 2016 election, George W. Bush in 2000, and Benjamin Harrison in 1888.

## Who is President Biden?

Joseph R. Biden has been in politics for around 50 years. Biden is 78 years old; he was born in Scranton, PA but now lives in Wilmington, Delaware.

He previously ran for president and has also been elected senator seven times.



He also served as Vice President under President Obama for 8 years. Joe Biden is a self identified “moderate Democrat.” President Biden typically aligns with his party as he is pro-choice, pro-immigration, and pro-reforming the criminal justice system.

## The Inauguration



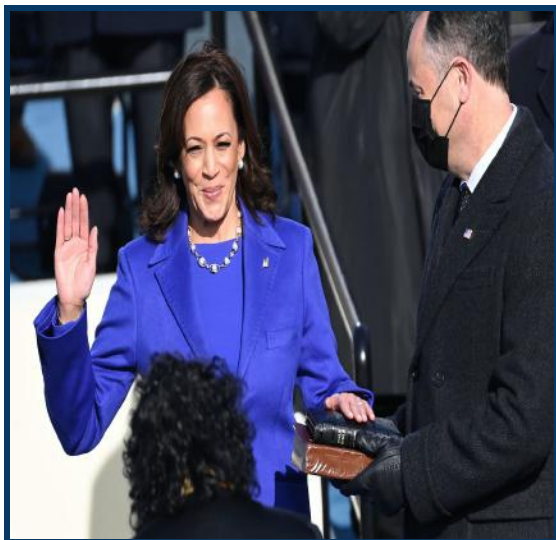
President Biden was sworn in as president at the White House on the 20th of January at noon. Madam Vice President Harris was sworn in just minutes before. This inauguration was different for two

main reasons. The first being that citizens were not allowed to attend as we are in the middle of a deadly pandemic, so instead viewers tuned in virtually. The second being that Biden's predecessor, former President Trump chose not to attend. This was the first time in 150 years a predecessor has not attended.

## **First Woman VP**

Vice President Harris is the first woman to ever be in her position. This made history as it broke gender barriers and inspired many young girls that they could achieve anything.

Finally, regardless of whether or not you voted for Biden, we can all hope these next 4 years will be bright.



## **Stimulus Package Details**

**By Ashley Lourenco**

Over the recent holidays, a stimulus package was passed after a series of negotiations between Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi and majority senate leader Mitch McConnell. Previous stimulus bills had been passed in the spring of 2020.

## **What is the Purpose of Stimulus Checks?**

These packages usually are given by the government to most citizens. The money is meant to help the economy. The general idea is that citizens use the money to shop, boosting consumption. This spurs the economy out of recessions or rough patches.

That is the general idea of the check portion of stimulus packages. However, many and most of these deals have lots more areas that they ask for money to be put towards. Whether it be education, health, or otherwise, they ask for additional funding.

## What's in the Stimulus Package?

The individual check mentioned previously is a total of a \$600 payment to adults with an income lower than \$75k in 2019. Heads of households who make around \$112k per year and couples and widows who make \$150k per year received \$1200. Certain adults will get \$600 for each dependent child in their household. Unlike the first round of individual payments, married undocumented immigrants may receive a chance at collecting this benefit. President Donald Trump, notably, advocated for the payment to be \$2000 as calls for that action come from the working class. Some say that \$600 doesn't begin to cover rent, food, and PPE (personal protective equipment, like masks) because they are out of jobs or living paycheck to paycheck. Due to the high unemployment rate, Congress will restore the benefits for 11 weeks, expiring on March 14, 2021. The benefit provides \$300 per week. The spring stimulus package comparably provided around \$600 in weekly unemployment benefits.

However, for freelancers and independent contractors, there will be an extra \$100 per week on the same timeline.

The package includes \$54 billion to go toward K-12 schools throughout the nation, while \$23 billion is put towards colleges and universities for a total of \$84 billion.



This is much more generous than the 2020 spring package, but it ceases to be enough in the state education in the country is at. Districts struggle with employing teachers and face expensive regulations for remote learning. There are massive constraints that cannot be eased by \$84 billion dollars.

Perhaps to combat the struggles of remote learning some more, \$7 billion will go towards improving

internet speed connectivity, mostly giving low-income families up to \$50 per month for internet bills.

Small businesses will see the Paycheck Protection Program aid them with \$285 billion dollars, a continuation of the spring package. It will be interesting to see how it plays out, as we watched major companies that were not in dire need of the assistance take advantage of the program and undercut small businesses. The new restrictions will have a limit to \$2 million in loans, and only allow companies with fewer than 300 employees, including a 25% drop in sales. One might wonder whether businesses will find loopholes in the plan.



\$8 billion is going toward the distribution of the vaccine as an additional \$20 billion goes toward the purchase of them. For testing, there is a total of \$20 billion for states. There are now also loans for mortgages and nursing homes. The plan also makes it illegal for hospitals to charge patients for things like emergency treatment, air transport, and other scenarios.

## Is it Enough?

It will be important to see how this plays out, especially in the areas of healthcare and education in terms of what other holes need to be filled. While generous, it is still temporary, and we will be in need of another stimulus package soon.

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# *Voltage*

Student Newspaper of Science Park High School  
260 Norfolk Street, Newark, NJ 07103

**Staff Writers: Angie Moya,  
Ashley Lourenco,  
Alexandria Hall, and  
Victoria Delgado-Rengel**

**Advisor: Mr. Townsend**

**Google Class Code: [ybhgjhb](#)**

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