



# the torch

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## COMING UP



Behind the music: Kennedy Band and traditions that shape their program.

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The Kennedy Football Program: Bigger than just a game.

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## Celebrating Kennedy's Seniors

Written by Jersey Bilyeu

In their last year of secondary education, students get involved in several of the senior traditions at Kennedy. From senior sunrise, to prom, each senior class has events throughout the year to celebrate before graduation.

"I feel that many seniors are starting to realize just how fast time has passed," senior Jacob Bruns said. "Knowing that we will go many different ways after graduation, we increasingly value spending time with one another and senior traditions capitalize on that sentiment, allowing us to make the most of our final year at Kennedy."

Senior members of the National Honor Society organize an annual senior service project, with the class of 2024 planning to plant trees around Cedar Rapids with the Noelridge Greenhouse.

The National Honor Society is not the only club with events specific to seniors. Sports throughout Kennedy host "senior nights" where they honor graduating athletes and activities like marching band and theater have senior

speeches and senior mic checks before final performances.

Group activities like prom and senior sunrise bring the class closer. As more social events, they allow people within the class to get together and

connect on a more personal level, outside of obligation. The community aspect of these traditions has been a big factor in continuing these events.

"The best part of senior traditions in my opinion is that all of the senior

class is invited to attend, which brings together so many different kinds of people who share a common excitement of graduation," senior Lizzy Hawkes said. "It marks the beginning and end of your last year in high school, the end of your high school career that many worked very hard for."

As we look into the future, these traditions will continue to be an important part of Kennedy's senior classes.

"I think senior traditions will become more complex and important as time goes on," Hawkes said. "More people will implement new traditions that honor the diversity of our student body and the sacredness of graduating from high school."



Kennedy's student section rushes the court after the clock runs down to congratulate their team on qualifying for the state tournament. Feb. 28, 2023. Photo by Merideth Langton

Those who attend sports events at Kennedy are aware of the student section, a dedicated spot in the bleachers

for students to come and cheer on athletes. As a school, Kennedy comes together to support a variety of sports

## The Heart of Kennedy Athletics

Written by Rowan Hesford and Haile Miller

and activities. They do it because their marching band practices countless hours to perform at halftime while the football team finally comes home after weeks away on the turf. Because the volleyball team pushes themselves across the court after months of training. No matter the sport, students follow.

Dressing up, making posters and cheering on the school in the student section is the biggest way students feel they can support their athletes.

At games, the student section is assigned different themes to coordinate in clothing and decorations. From pink-out games filled with monochrome clothing and face paint to Hawaiian games filled with Dad shirts and tropical sunglasses, the themes differ in uniqueness and creativity.

"With themes it allows people to have fun and express themselves within the themes," junior Jordan Horne said.

Student section traditions not only consist of

fun themes but also chants and cheers as well. Although cheers can differ by sport and activity, the purpose stays the same.

"When the student section is at its peak 'hype-ness', everyone feels alive and energetic, but when the crowd goes silent it feels too tense," Horne said. "I think it helps ease the pressure and intensity of the game if everyone in the crowd is cheering."

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