**Teacher of the Year finalist champions alternative education**

**BY HARDY EVILLE & JULIET MORSE**

**English teacher and Project Vine director Dani Charbonneau** has been nominated for Massachusetts’s Teacher of the Year, and has made it to the semifinal round.

Project Vine is an embedded alternative education program within Martha’s Vineyard Regional High School (MVRS) that focuses on community building. “We have the same school day as everybody else. Our students take English, his day as everybody else. Our current policy is that students receive a detention for a variety of consequences, including an inability to participate in afterschool activities, detention, and even loss of class credit.

The current policy is that students receive a detention for five late, five tardies, or three class cuts. But now we’re reacting to a lot of tardies and increasing cuts.”

Sophomore Georgia Freidman has also been erroneously marked as “cut” during flex. “I received a cut because I went to a different flex in a different room because my teacher was out that day,” she said. “I haven’t always signed up for flex, but I feel like I shouldn’t receive a cut since I am still present in a classroom. I would say that both sides need to take accountability.”

**Charbonneau attributes much of Project Vine’s success to the community it provides. Students spend most of their days together, hold events, and go on trips to different places.**

The teachers chosen as Teacher of the Year in their respective states continue to teach, but often speak at events and are asked to serve on boards for education related organizations. They also visit Washington, D.C., and meet with the U.S. president to discuss education policy. The Massachusetts Teacher of the Year will be announced this summer.

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**The High School View**

The High School View is staffed and prepared entirely by students from the Martha’s Vineyard Regional High School, and published on their behalf by The Martha’s Vineyard Times, with the generous assistance of the sponsors whose names appear below.

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**Administration reinstates late policy**

**BY NIKeya TANKARD**

A fter her nomination, Charbonneau’s role as a teacher in an alternative education program sets her apart from other teachers. “In our state we define alternative education as a different pathway towards education,” she said. “It must address dropout prevention, and offer character education and socialization.”

However, Project Vine isn’t only for students who are struggling. “[Many students] were doing fine academically and socially. They just saw [Project Vine] and were more interested in this,” she said. “I’ve never seen such tremendous interest in alternative education. I think that the landscape of what students want is changing. Just like the landscape of workers is changing. There’s this great resignation going on, which is pushing union labor more, and you’re seeing people say, ‘My life shouldn’t be this way due to tradition.’ I think more students are having a similar epiphany.”

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**The Martha’s Vineyard Regional High School (MVRS) has been nominated for all state Alternative Education Teacher of the Year.**

BY HARDY EVILLE

“Detention was reinstate after our June 16th Graduation ceremony due to overwhelming feedback from students and parents. Though students receive a detention for some tardies, many students are looking at the value of alternative education as a different stream classes at MVRS,” said Principal Dingledy explained the reasoning for the stricter enforcement of attendance policies. “We weren’t really cracking down [on attendance penalties during the first half of the year], but instead trying to make sure that we were back to normalcy and that students were back to the expectations of being in school,” she said. “I think that’s probably why it is being [strongly] enforced now.”

She added, “At the end of COVID, there was an attempt to keep things positive and keep kids in school. But now we’re reacting to a lot of tardies and increasing cuts.”

Spanish teacher Erin Theodore Fairchild-Coppoletti, who also helps with attendance, said, “We came back to school, in masks, in person. We don’t have breakfast, I put on their days here, they’ll have breakfast, I put on some music. They come here for study halls or flexes,” she said. “We also let them clean, take care of, and decorate the space, so they can schedule themselves for educational or enrichment purposes. The scheduling of flex can get disorganized as students may want to meet with teachers they didn’t sign up for or need to go to a different room. A student may not show up to the flex they originally signed up for and will ask another teacher to ‘pull’ them in. If this teacher forgets to pull them, it can result in them being marked for a cut.”

Sophomore Georgia Magden said, “Sometimes my flex teacher isn’t consistent in the classroom and won’t be able to take every student’s attendance. And so then they’ll get a cut.”

 Fellow sophomore Eili Freedman has also been erroneously marked as “cut” during flex. “I received a cut because I went to a different flex in a different room because my teacher was out that day.”

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