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# School to offer Pledge recitations

BY MARY KOHLMANN

In accordance with a North Carolina law ratified July 12th, students and faculty will be given daily opportunities to recite the Pledge of Allegiance but will not be forced to do so.

"The law requires daily recitation, but that no one be required to recite the Pledge," said Steve Warshaw, Vice Chancellor for Academic Programs.

To meet the law's criteria, the school will offer three recitations each school day: one during the early morning flag-raising ceremony, one as the flag is lowered in the afternoon and one at a yet-to-be-determined time between 8:00 and 11:00 AM. The location for the mid-morning recitation will be decided by the Faculty Council, the SGA and the Academic Programs Department.

This program will place the impetus on students to attend recitations, taking the pressure off those who do not wish to participate.

"There is broad agreement across the community that no one should be treated negatively if they decide not to say the Pledge," Warshaw said.

Kyle Hudson, who has taught both American Studies and AP US History, says that this point is also important to the faculty.

"The main concern that many of the teachers have is that they want students who want to say it and those who don't both to feel comfortable," he said.

RLA Bob Liles is relieved that student presence will not be required at recitations, as he says was rumored earlier in the year.

"Forcing presence is, in a sense, forcing a level of recognition of the Pledge," he said.

Liles does not plan to recite the Pledge.

"I take pledging allegiance very seriously," he said. "I don't like to pledge allegiance to any entity because I believe that it takes away part of myself if I do. I've always viewed it as a very important tenet of the United States that you have the right to live in the country and not agree with it, and I feel that pledging allegiance is giving up that right."

Senior Rebecca Holmes, who does plan to recite the Pledge, believes that, as long as recitation is not required of students, the policy is warranted.

"I don't think there's anything wrong with [scheduling recitations]," she said. "I don't think it's a big deal either way. I think some people make a point of not saying the Pledge not because they disagree with it, but because it makes them cool and different and

rebellious to not want to say it. I find it annoying when people find it uncool to like living in America."

Some consider the recitation of the Pledge to be an important opportunity for students to show their respect, not only for the United States, but also for one another.

"When you look at adults in settings where they say the Pledge or sing the national anthem, there's such a variety of behavior," Board of Trustees member Larry Montith said. "Some put their hand over their heart and some just stand there, some sing and some don't. It's a reflection of America, really. But most people, even if they don't recite it, don't take it as an occasion for saying, 'You're not doing what I'm doing, so you're wrong.' This is a great opportunity to look at all sides of America's makeup—

how we act, how we see ourselves and how we disagree."

According to Board of Trustees

member Mike Pickett, who served on the Educational Policies and Practices committee in charge of discussing the law, it can serve as an opener for a discussion of American freedoms and traditions.

"I think it leaves space for people to discuss all their opinions about it, which is an American right," he said.

To encourage such dialogue, Section III of the law requires "instruction on the meaning and historical origins of the flag and the Pledge of Allegiance," a mandate that, according to Warshaw, Science and Math is already fulfilling.

"We feel that American Studies provides background on the history of the flag and First Amendment issues, so we feel like we were already meeting that [regulation,]" he said.

Hudson also sees the application of the law as a springboard towards the application of such concepts as the Bill of Rights.

"In our American Studies and AP US History classes, it'll provide an interesting teaching opportunity," he said, "because we can discuss the issues that the law raises as well as the history of the Pledge."

As far as student reception of the policy goes, Warshaw is not sure what to expect.

"I think there will be a lot of days, especially in the winter, on which the weather precludes going to the flagpole in the morning," he said. "On days when the weather is not prohibitive, I honestly don't know. I hope that there are enough participants that people feel comfortable, that it's meaningful on a group level as well as on a personal level."



Art by Laura Chao



Photo courtesy of Joe Liles

Kathleen Hébert, shown as the Wicked Witch of the West in last year's production of *The Wizard of Oz*, planned to act in *The Day Room*.

## Administration to Drama Board: pick a new play

BY AMY BRYSON AND MAX ROSE

*The Day Room*, directed by seniors Courtney Angers and Justin Buie and scheduled to be performed on Nov. 3, was formally cancelled in a meeting with the Drama Board and the administration on Tuesday Oct. 10.

After a month of rehearsals, the cast had already memorized and fully rehearsed the first of the two acts and were rehearsing the second on script. The entire script was due to be memorized by Thursday Oct. 5, but on that day the Drama Board was instructed to put the play on hold as the administration assessed complaints made by parents based on the nature of three pages of the play.

The script was submitted to Steve Warshaw, Vice Chancellor of Academic Programs, three weeks prior to the play's cancellation with a note drawing the administration's attention to the objectionable section. Both directors and adviser Dana Marks made clear to administration they were willing to edit or alter the script as deemed necessary. The Drama Board felt the section could easily be deleted without changing the play dramatically.

"I was very upset because I think they took the

scene completely out of context," said senior Kathleen Hébert, a member of the Drama Board. "And what upset me the most was they weren't even willing to consider editing the play."

Rejecting attempts by the Drama Board to find a compromise, the administration told the directors to select a new play, though only Warshaw had read the script in its entirety. Chancellor Gerald Boorman's decision was based on the fact that the Drama Board represents the school.

Hébert, who rehearsed to play Nurse Baker and Jolene in *The Day Room*, said that she had put over 60 hours into the production. Hébert said that she does not represent all of the Drama Board in her feelings.

"Drama Board won't do anything because our position is not stable," she said. "We are afraid if we do something too outrageous then [the school] will shut us down."

In spite of the cancellation, the administration offered additional support.

"They are offering extra money for props, offered to get us the auditorium, offered to let the actors stay over extended for a couple of days," she said. "They are being nice but nice for the wrong reasons."

A new play will be selected this week and will require the approval of the administration.

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