

## Individual voices should be heard

As members of a school funded by the democracy in which we live, we should never shy away from voicing an opinion on school policy which will affect our lives.

The reaction to the change in the internet policy has sparked debate over the modes of self-expression appropriate to NCSSM students. In fact, the reaction as a whole is a great example of how student opinion can be translated into action. The comments on the open forums and on fliers posted around the school make the student voice heard. These attempts will be rendered unnecessary only when the student body feels as though it has had a role in the process of creating school policy.

The work of the student government is appreciated, but if theirs is the only voice that is given the ear of the administration, the total picture is not seen. SGA should not be used as a shield behind which to hide. They are one mode for communication between students and the administration, but they are not a replacement for

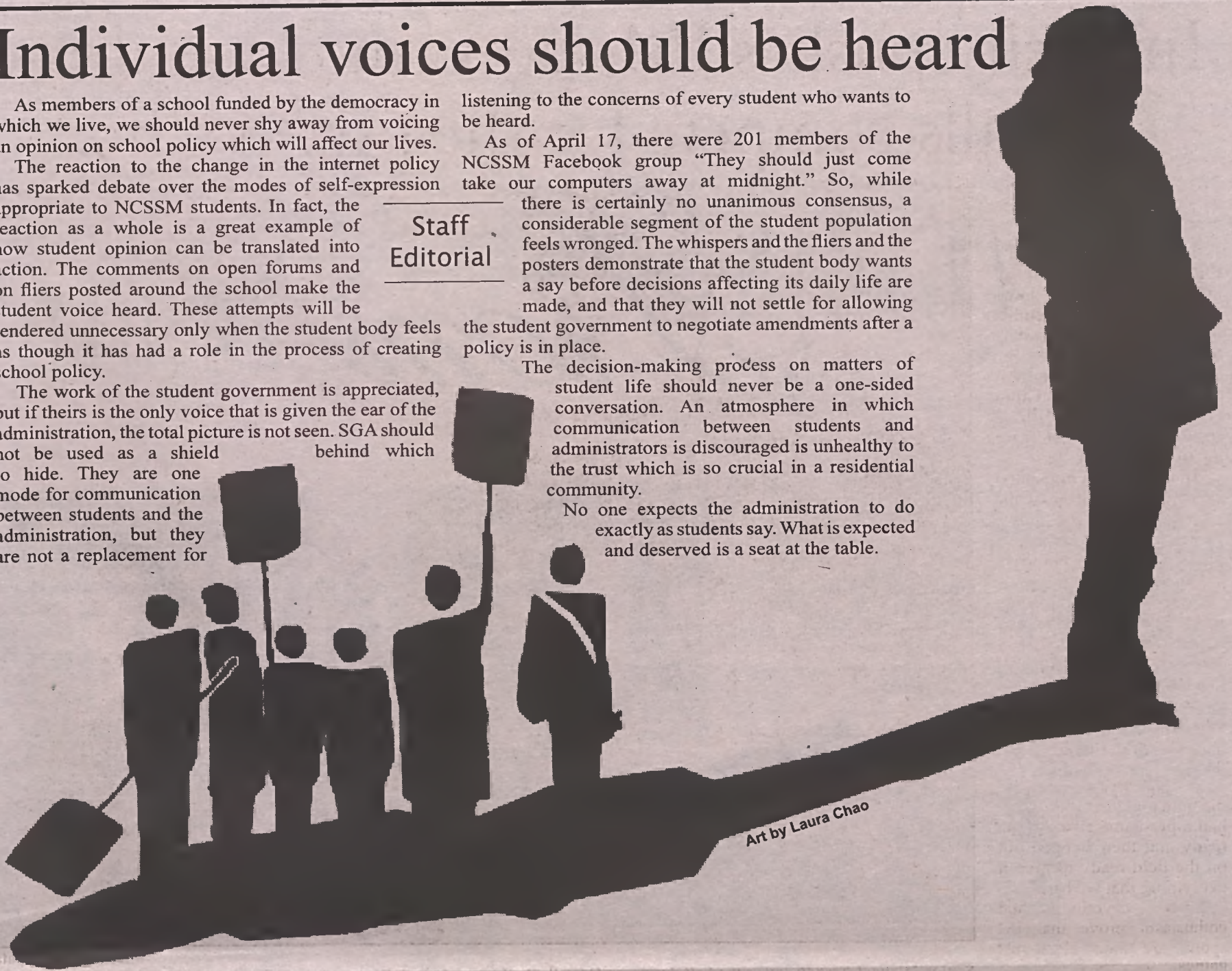
listening to the concerns of every student who wants to be heard.

As of April 17, there were 201 members of the NCSSM Facebook group "They should just come take our computers away at midnight." So, while there is certainly no unanimous consensus, a considerable segment of the student population feels wronged. The whispers and the fliers and the posters demonstrate that the student body wants a say before decisions affecting its daily life are made, and that they will not settle for allowing the student government to negotiate amendments after a policy is in place.

### Staff Editorial

The decision-making process on matters of student life should never be a one-sided conversation. An atmosphere in which communication between students and administrators is discouraged is unhealthy to the trust which is so crucial in a residential community.

No one expects the administration to do exactly as students say. What is expected and deserved is a seat at the table.



Art by Laura Chao

## Fabrication lab to benefit future engineers, add opportunities to curriculum

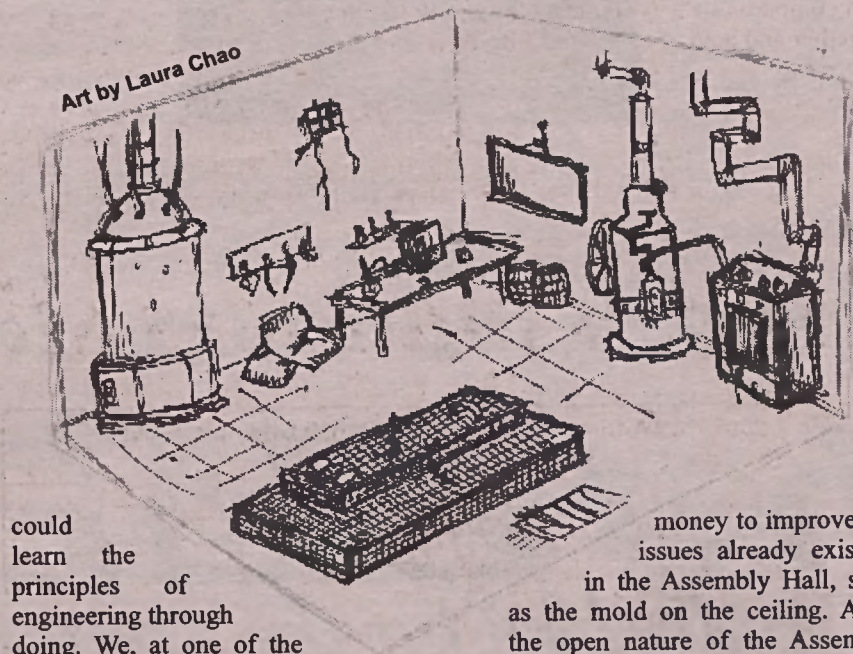
BY JENNIFER PEELER

There are many students at Science and Math interested in pursuing careers in engineering. However, there are currently few opportunities available in this field. We have had a robotics team for six years, and this year we acquired a new teacher, a new Principles of Engineering class, and a new Underwater robotics team. The engineering class has several projects in which students build simple machines. Currently, their main resource for constructing these projects is the Ground Reynolds Lab (GRL). There are limited resources for machining wood or metal in the GRL or Robotics Lab, which is already home to both robotics teams. As a member of last year's robotics team, I was extremely excited when the alumni came and offered to build a fabrication lab for the

school. I had been disappointed when I came to Science and Math to find so few opportunities for engineering.

The fabrication lab is a chance for students to learn in a hands-on manner about machining, an important part of any engineer's knowledge. Here, we learn science and theory, but in the real world, you need to know how to practice what you learn. Engineering is the practical application of science, and should be taught to NCSSM students as such. We are told to go out and become leaders of tomorrow, but we need to know more than just theory.

NCSSM was founded on the idea of a different education, a hands-on experience for all students. We come here to earn a better education than we would have gotten at our previous schools. But at my school, there were machining and engineering classes where students



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could learn the principles of engineering through doing. We, at one of the premier high schools in the nation, have limited resources. We need a fabrication lab so that our students have opportunities that exceed, or at least equal, those of students who don't plan on attending a university.

Any time people practice and apply what they learn, making something out of nothing, it motivates them. A fabrication lab at Science and Math would allow more students to experience hands-on learning and become passionate about engineering.

The people in charge of creating the fabrication lab have done a thorough survey of the school and found the Assembly Hall to be the best place. The reasons of this range from aesthetic to safety issues. The Assembly Hall has not been remodeled like many parts of the school and is noticeably shabbier. The fabrication lab's budget could include

money to improve the issues already existing in the Assembly Hall, such as the mold on the ceiling. Also, the open nature of the Assembly Hall is a valuable safety asset for a fabrication lab. When working with the machinery in question, adequate light and ventilation is required to maintain a safe working environment.

Many of the events that occur in the Assembly Hall now can be relocated. I am a regular attendee of both Koffeehaus and DYAO and do not wish to put an end to these activities by building the fabrication lab. There are other places on campus where these events could be relocated. Science and Math, like all educational institutions, must strive to find a balance between its academic and engineering interests and its cultural interests. The use of the Assembly Hall for a fabrication lab instead of its traditional uses is just another weight on that balance. We just have to wait to see on which side it will fall.

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