

The Communicator

www.chscommunicator.com

Community High School, Ann Arbor

The following information is provided by the adviser to help the critique judge better understand the media program. Please review this information before you enter your comments into the critique form.

Adviser: Tracy Anderson

Editor: Luca Hinesman, Vedha Kakarla, Paige Plavnick, Anthony Wang

IN THIS CRITIQUE, WE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW:

To help ensure the student staff and adviser get information from their critique that they can use right away, we ask them to provide up to three specific questions they have for you. We ask that you address these questions at some point in your critique - either in the specific area of the critique guide where it best fits and/or in comments at the end. This staff asks:

When you look at our website, what do you see? Do you have suggestions about what we can do better? What we should keep? What we could get rid of? We are open to your suggestions!

ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- This school is a **Senior High,Public**
- **School Enrollment:** 504
- **Is the website produced as part of a class or club?** as a class activity
- **Staff Size:** We have 87 students who are divided between magazine, website, social media, yearbook and literary+arts journal. They are all mixed into the same class. It's wild!

ABOUT THE WEBSITE

- **Frequency of Website Updates:** Daily
- **Is this website a standalone entity, or produced in connection with other student media formats (please list other formats)?** Print Newsmagazine
- **Does the website contain paid advertising?** Yes

Website Technical Information

- **Web Service Provider:** Commercial provider (such as SNO, GoDaddy, etc.)
- **Hosting Site/Service Provider:** SNO
- **Web Publishing Software/Platform:** Wordpress-based CMS

Website Analytics

This is MIPA's first time asking our members for analytics data that can be reviewed by critique judges. We hope this information helps the judge better understand this program. If any of these metrics is blank, please do not hold that against the program.

- **What tools do you use to measure traffic on your website? If you do not use analytics tools on your site, please note that here.** SNO and Google Analytics

Analytics Traffic Data for this Website

For the current academic year, from Aug. 1 to present, please provide analytics data for your website on the following items. Please provide comparable data for the same period last academic year.

- **Pageviews - Current Year:** 192,450 (August-February only)
- **Pageviews - Last Year:** 232,601 (August-June)
- **Unique Pageviews - Current Year:** Unique Users: 91,599 (August-February only)
- **Unique Pageviews - Last Year:** Unique Users: 112,334 (August-June)
- **Average Time on Page - Current Year:** 132.33 secs
- **Average Time on Page - Last Year:** 46 secs
- **Bounce Rate - Current Year:** 56.01
- **Bounce Rate - Last Year:** It also came up as 56.01, which seems odd.

User Acquisition

For the current academic year, please provide analytics data for your website on:

- **Organic Search:** 88,000
- **Social Media:** 874
- **Direct to Website:** 22,000
- **Email:** 3
- **Referral:** 2400
- **Other:** 1

User Acquisition from Social Media Channels to Website

For the current academic year, from Aug. 1 to present, please provide analytics data for your website on how many users are acquired for each of the following social media platforms. Please provide comparable data for the same period for last academic year.

- **Facebook - Current Academic Year:** I don't have this information...we don't have social media breakdown in our analytics.
- **Facebook - Last Academic Year:** ^
- **Twitter - Current Academic Year:** ^
- **Twitter - Last Academic Year:** ^
- **Instagram - Current Academic Year:** ^
- **Instagram - Last Academic Year:** ^

Social Media Platforms & Followers

For each of the following social media platforms that your student media program REGULARLY USES, please provide the user name or a link to the student media program's social media page and information on followers on that platform. If your program does not use any of the listed platforms, leave those fields blank.

- **Facebook:**
 - Followers:
- **Twitter:**
 - Followers:
- **Instagram:** @communicatorchs
 - Followers: 1547
- **Snapchat:**
 - Followers:

Social Media Strategy

Please provide a short summary of how this student media program utilizes social media. Consider: How often is new content posted? Is there a type of content you reserve for specific platforms? Who on the staff is responsible for posting?

We post regularly on social media. We try to post every day like we do on our website!

Website Analytics & Social Media Notes

Is there anything else you wish the judge to know about analytics or social media use by the student media program?

Our school population is 504, and we have a lot of engagement on our social media! When you look at our numbers, please take into account our small school size! Below are some examples of posts and engagement:

- Feb. 3 Sunny Days with Sofi (4103 views)
- Jan.8 Breaking News: Communicator Journalist publishes article in "Teen Vogue" (12,592 views)
- Nov. 22 Students and Staff Reflect on the First Snow of the Season (3956 views)
- Nov. 4 Harris/Walz Rally With Maggie Rogers (4863)

Expenses & Income

Income: How do you pay for expenses?

- **Advertising:** \$2000
- **School/Budget:** \$0
- **Fundraising:** \$0
- **Grants:** \$0
- **Other:** \$0
- **Total Income:** \$

Expenses: Describe any costs related to the website

- **Website Hosting/CMS:** \$650
- **Supplies:** \$
- **Technology/Equipment:** \$
- **Training, Workshops and Conferences (paid by the program):** \$
- **Other:** \$1350
- **Total Expenses:** \$2000

Breakdown of Student vs. Non-student Work

It takes a team to publish a news website. The following information is provided to help us understand more about this program and the team of people who worked on it. Advisers are asked to estimate the amount of work done on the following elements by the student, adviser or others. There is no right or wrong answer here. Advisers may provide additional information about their selections in other areas of the entry form, including in the adviser's statement.

Copywriting Completed by **Students:** 100%
Copywriting Completed by **Adviser:** 0%
Copy Writing Completed by **Website Host/CMS Service:** 0%
Copywriting Completed by **Other - :** 0%

Editing of Copy Completed by **Students:** 100%
Editing Completed by **Adviser:** 0%
Editing Completed by **Website Host/CMS Service:** 0%
Editing Completed by **Other - :** 0%

Headlines and Cutlines Completed by **Students:** 100%
Headlines/Cutlines Completed by **Adviser:** 0%
Headlines/Cutlines Completed by **Website Host/CMS Service:** 0%
Headlines/Cutlines Completed by **Other - :** 0%

Photography Completed by **Students:** 99%
Photography Completed by **Adviser:** 0%
Photography Completed by **Website Host/CMS Service:** 0%
Photography Completed by **Other - :** 1%

Photo Editing & Photoshop Work Completed by **Students:** 100%
Photo Editing & Photoshop Work Completed by **Adviser:** 0%
Photo Editing & Photoshop Work Completed by **Website Host/CMS Service:** 0%
Photo Editing & Photoshop Work Completed by **Other - :** 0%

Multimedia Completed by **Students:** 100%
Multimedia Completed by **Adviser:** 0%
Multimedia Completed by **Website Host/CMS Service:** 0%
Multimedia Completed by **Other - :** 0%

Social Media Strategy, Content Production and Posting Completed by **Students:** 100%
Social Media Completed by **Adviser:** 0%
Social Media Completed by **Website Host/CMS Service:** 0%
Social Media Completed by **Other - :** 0%

Website Design & Management Completed by **Students:** 100%
Website Design & Management Completed by **Adviser:** 0%
Website Design & Management Completed by **Website Host/CMS Service:** 0%
Website Design & Management Completed by **Other - :** 0%

Coverage Decisions

How does the program staff determine what to cover?

Our staff has a lot of discussions to determine what needs to be written. Our students make all of the decisions about content.

STUDENT PRESS FREEDOM

Judge: *Students should not be penalized for censorship/press freedom issues by school administrators, but please feel free to offer suggestions to how to handle any circumstances reported here.*

Have you had any censorship problems with your website? If so, please explain.

No.

Does your administration exercise prior review? No

COPYRIGHT & PLAGIARISM

We take copyright issues seriously. MIPA has developed a [Copyright and Plagiarism Policy](#) governing copyright violations and plagiarism in contest entries. Programs may be penalized for violating copyright or failing to credit work that is not their own. Please contact the MIPA director if you have any questions.

Has the adviser reviewed [MIPA's Copyright and Plagiarism Policy](#)? I have read MIPA's Copyright and Plagiarism policy

To the best of the adviser's knowledge knowledge, is this website free of copyright infringement and plagiarism?

Yes

What are your media program's sources of non-student photographs or other visuals?

Contributed by non-staff students, teachers or school personnel, Subscription to a photo service., Creative Commons. Please see additional question below, Other

If you have a subscription to a photo service, what service(s) do you use?

Tribune, but we hardly ever use it!

If you use Creative Commons-licensed materials ... Creative Commons has numerous licenses that restrict under what circumstances a work can be used and how it should be attributed. Have you verified that the terms of the specific Creative Commons license are being followed? **Yes**

ADVISER'S STATEMENT

*The adviser has provided a brief statement for additional background on this media program. This statement may describe any special concerns, school situations or other circumstances the adviser and/or staff may have encountered. We hope this information will help you, as the judge, understand reasons why things were done in certain ways. **Critique judges are under no obligation to change scores because of the adviser statement** (standards do not change just because an adviser has an explanation for why they were not followed), but we do hope the adviser statement will help guide comments in the critique.*

Adviser's Statement - Additional Program Background

February 10, 2025

Dear Spartan Website Judge,

Thank you for taking the time to look at and understand our online publication, "The Communicator." Community High School is a small, public, alternative high school located in downtown Ann Arbor. We don't have bells, students call teachers by first names and we have an open campus. We don't have any A.P. classes, so students take classes at local universities and are encouraged to develop and teach their own courses. We don't have any sports, but we do have two swing sets out front, a field where students play frisbee and a half-court with games of 3v3. We have no homecoming dance, no queen and no king. Our website looks different because we are not a traditional high school. We don't have the traditional events to cover, but we have a lot of non-traditional events that take their place.

I have three journalism classes, which include students from 9th-12th grade, 1st semester on staff to 7th semester on staff. There is no Journalism I course, no application process, and no grade requirements. I believe in opening up all of my classes and working together to do the best job that we can. We've redone the website and gotten rid of our typical categories in exchange for an online magazine format. We looked at a lot of professional sites for models and inspiration, and we are working hard to make our online publication the best that it can be to serve our community.

We have continued working this year to develop our social media platforms. We introduced constants on our Instagram and used it as our primary social media outlet because that is where our students and parents are. In the past, we've used social media as an "easy" place to post, but the content was either lacking or it was just a repeat of something that was on web or print. Our social media team has far exceeded my expectations this year as they raised the expectations for reporting on social media to match strong journalism standards. Our social media team is organized and they work diligently to create an Instagram feed that brings our community together.

We are in a unique position as journalists to start to fill the lingering social gaps left behind by the pandemic through storytelling. This school year has contained a lot of joy as we have returned to a deeper sense of normalcy, which includes long production hours and eating pizza and cookies after the school day has ended. We happily spend hours after school with the music blaring, pizza on the tables, and the sun setting out our window. After a production, one of my students said her mom asked her, "So you stayed after school for all this time for fun?" My student smiled and said "Yes...and work." In our newsroom fun and work fit together.

There is no class that I would rather teach. I am so lucky to work with these students who are reimagining what we can do and working hard to do it. Our website is completely student-run and maintained. We don't receive any funding from the school or district. Nada. Students know that they must be able to stand behind every single word of their work that they publish. It is an honor to watch students in the amazing process of creating a publication. Advising brings so much joy and purpose to my life.

Thank you for your time, and we hope that you enjoy our website. We work hard to make it our best.

Sincerely,

Tracy Anderson
Community High School English Department Chair

English Teacher/Journalism Adviser/Yearbook Adviser/Literary Magazine Adviser
Past Digital Media Chair, Michigan Interscholastic Press Association
Golden Pen Adviser, Michigan Interscholastic Press Association
Distinguished Adviser, Columbia Scholastic Press Association
734-330-3289

###