

SINCE 194
the Southerner

Henry W. Grady High School
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Bockman puts APS policies into action

Most of our parents have always stressed the idea that first impressions are extremely important. As we get older, this advice manifests into telling us how to dress for interviews, properly shake hands and make sure our manners are up to par.

However, first impressions go far beyond these basic societal customs. At the beginning of the school year, students can immediately tell how the year is going to go with their teachers based on the first few weeks of classes.

Four days into Dr. Bestsy Bockman's tenure, she began enforcing Atlanta Public Schools' attendance policy, in which tardy students have to go to the attendance office to get a late pass before eventually proceeding to their classes. Students were told they will receive a detention for coming to school late twice in five days and an in-school suspension for being late to class one more time in five days. Although the lines extended throughout the cafeteria during the first few days, the average number of first period tardies decreased within a week.

With the threat of detention, it seems that students are either leaving their houses earlier or entirely skipping first period. Even though this is an understandably unpopular policy among tired students, the numbers show that the APS policy gets the intended results.

The attendance policy is a stark contrast from the relaxed approach to attendance students were used to prior to Dr. Bockman's arrival, and students needed time to adjust to the changes. Dr. Bockman has also implemented a stricter cell phone policy that follows APS guidelines.

On Sept. 15, students were informed that their cell phones and other personal electronics must be put away at all times during the day, except for their lunch period. Teachers are required to confiscate phones if they see them after one warning. While this is also the APS policy, it's quite a jump from the previously relaxed cell phone rules that most teachers employed within their classrooms. The criticism that immediately followed this policy should have been expected from Snapchat-addicted high schoolers, but it faded after we had time to get used to the new standards.

The policies were unclear at first. Many students didn't know that tardies reset after five days, some teachers were told that it is a 10-day policy, and others were told that it didn't reset at all. When students received a form requiring their cell phone serial number, it was lost in translation what exactly would happen if they had their cell phones out. Once these rules got straightened out, it was easier to come to terms with the changes.

The rules Dr. Bockman has implemented aren't revolutionary; they're simply APS policies. She's unlikely to tighten restrictions on any other aspects of student life, such as the dress code. Despite a polarizing first impression, Dr. Bockman's emphasis on attendance and cell phone usage gets results. She should make an effort to make sure students understand exactly which changes are happening.

With such a dramatic turnover from the formerly relaxed attendance and cell phone policies, students simply need time before adjusting their first impression to fit the reality of the situation.

We hope that as Dr. Bockman continues the year as Grady's principal, she will be able to familiarize herself with the student body and show that students feel their opinions are valued within their academic institution and by their instructors and administrators. □

CORRECTIONS

On the front page of the Sept. 9 issue, the article "Bockman assumes interim role" should also be attributed to Caleb Weinstock and Alex Durham.

The Southerner Policy Statement

The Southerner is an open forum newspaper published eight times a year by student journalists at Henry W. Grady High School. The views expressed in the Southerner do not necessarily express the opinions or the policies of Grady High School's faculty, administration, adviser or students. □

Letters to the editor

Also, 'whats up with...in your last issue...'

Dear Editors,

After reviewing "Doctors Keep License Despite Reports of Abuse" in the Sept. 9 issue of the Southerner, I was awestruck. Previously, I was completely unaware that individuals across the nation endure such hardships and terrors as those which were described in this well-written article.

It is bewildering and insane to think that men and women of such a respectable position have the audacity to violate patients in such a crude and demeaning fashion. This piece truly opened my eyes to the evil that is lurking in our everyday society.

The most shocking aspect of this article written by Katie Earles was regarding the actions of Dr. Ashok Alur. During one of his examinations, Alur allegedly proceeded to comment on his patient's underwear as he touched her genitals. As expected, she felt excruciatingly uncomfortable with his actions but was unsure of how to handle this situation in the moment. It is difficult to imagine a doctor infringing upon the human right to privacy in such a derogative way. It is disgusting and appalling that this could occur in what should have been a safe space for this woman.

What is truly frightening is that these cases of abuse are difficult to prove and go largely unreported. Hundreds of women are defiled in unspeakable ways, but due to legalities and strict confidentiality, accumulating proof of this abuse is nearly impossible even in the modern world. In a manner of speaking, people such as doctors, therapists and priests can get away with nearly anything no matter the severity of their actions. This is truly disheartening, and it makes me fear what the people whom I

trust most and fully respect are truly capable of.

What is even more sickening is that people who cannot defend themselves are more likely to be taken advantage of by those who are supposed to be looking out for their best interests. Patients who are under anesthesia and those who are mentally disabled are more susceptible to these violations by their doctors and caretakers. Individuals who are vulnerable already experience so many obstacles in their lives; adding sexual abuse to their struggles is cruel and should not go unreported.

These people who are committing these awful crimes go unpunished in so many ways. Doctors and therapists retain their licenses, and priests are still seen as holy leaders of their communities. It is horrible to think that these criminals are able to fly above the limits of the law. A prestigious title and a fancy occupation should not give people the right to break the law, and more importantly, violate basic human rights.

This article truly opened my eyes to some of the horrors that plague this nation. I believe this article also has the potential to save hundreds from the terrible effects of sexual assault, especially from those who are in positions of power. "Doctors Keep License Despite Reports of Abuse" tells everyone that sexual assault is nothing to be ashamed of, and the only person to blame is the one committing this horrible crime. This article was extremely well written and informative. Pieces such as this should make a regular appearance in the Southerner.

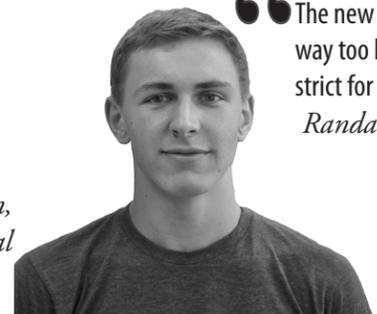
Morgan Watkins
Junior

Question of the month

How do you feel about the new policies instated by Dr. Bockman following Mr. Guiney's departure as principal?



"I think it has been a good and healthy change away from distractions and more toward important educational time."
Raymond Dawson,
assistant principal



"The new policies are way too harsh and strict for me."
Randall Schwartz,
junior



"The cellphone policy doesn't really affect me because it is more the teacher's choice, and they aren't really changing anything."
Robert Mobley,
sophomore



"I strongly dislike the new rules because we are in high school; we are old enough to be able to control our own property."
Ilayah Hill,
junior

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An upbeat paper for a downtown school

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