



RITON VOICE

Triton High School

Triton's Student-Produced Newspaper

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Introducing *Triton: Past, Present, Future*

A Four-Part Series Examining Triton's 55-Year-Old Building & Its Needs

About This Series: Over the next four weeks, the *Triton Voice* will report on the condition of our building and options for renovating or completely rebuilding it in the future. **This week**, we explore what students, staff, and administrators think about the present state of the structure. **Next week**, we look at how Triton began, why it was first built, and how we got to where we are.

Facilities Concern THS Principal Kelley Favors Renovating Current Building

Compiled by Sadie Clifford
Staff Writer

EDITORS NOTE: This article has been edited for length and content.

Of all of the schools he has worked at, high school principal, Patrick Kelley, said that Triton is in the most dire state.

"Most of the systems at Triton are 50 years old," said Kelley.

In a recent interview, Kelley compared Triton to his past schools with their similarities and differences. Triton differs most with its current physical state. Kelley also spoke about the biggest concerns at Triton and how a new school building could benefit the district greatly.

Triton Voice: What are the differences between your old school and Triton?

Mr. Kelley: This is my fourth school. My most recent school was in Holliston, Mass. It was built in 1969 and then in 2001 it was renovated. Compared to Triton, the upkeep of the building was better. Overall, it felt like the other schools were physically in better shape but had flaws in their design like Triton. Most of the systems at Triton are 50 years old. There is a lot of dead space that we don't use. Our classrooms are smaller than what they would be in a new school, especially our science labs. Learning at Triton feels hidden because of the issues with the building.

Voice: What were the similarities between your old school and Triton?

Kelley: Both schools (Triton and his former school in Holliston) were built around the same year. They are two-floor buildings with a lot of the same features, one being the overall coloring of the classrooms and floors. From a PE standpoint, both had similar gym attributes. My former school in Sharon just got a new building. That building before it was renovated was so old, it was making people sick.



Principal Patrick Kelley discusses the state of the Triton Middle/High School building (Allen photo).

Voice: What are the main issues at Triton that you see as the most important/most needed to be fixed?

Kelley: The greatest challenge right now is the roof. We've had a lot of issues with leakage in classrooms. Originally it was a \$10 million roofing project which has now reached up to \$12 million. Obtaining a new roof would involve fixing related problems, such as the heating and cooling systems.

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STUDENTS: Building is Outdated, Unwelcoming

By Sadie Clifford
Staff Writer

The need for renovation at Triton High School is no secret to its students.

When asked about their school building, Triton High School students made note of many improvements that could be made.

Triton hopes to one day renovate the building, curing the ceiling problem and all others. The students are hopeful that their school building will one day be renovated. A lot of students mentioned their concern with the building's state, especially its bathrooms and roof.

Freshman Foster Campbell's overall opinion when he first entered the building was that it needed work.

"I think it's just the main school. It needs general maintenance," said Campbell. Campbell made note that the bathrooms need to be redone as well as the leaking ceiling. Campbell said that the track and the stadium are the school's best attributes. For a school this size, Campbell said that they match nicely.

Freshman Jane Myette said that when she first came to Triton, it wasn't inviting.

"It's pretty disgusting and not very welcoming," Myette said. Myette believes that the school itself is a health risk.

"I would say that mold issues are the most detrimental to people's health," Myette said. Though the building has had mold issues, they have been remediated. And although it has its faults, Myette pointed out that she thinks the auditorium is a

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Head Custodian Speaks on Building Problems

Compiled by Ben Aham, Sadie Clifford,
Michael Coco, & Aiden Syzmanski
Staff Writers

Over the next ten years, the maintenance and upgrades needed for Triton's school building could cost millions of dollars.

The biggest obstruction in Triton's renovation plan is cost. The school requires fixes to its roof, major systems, and finishes, and Head Custodian Ryan Collins thinks it would be better to tear down and rebuild than try to renovate.

"The building is hurting," said Collins in a recent interview.

With the maintenance staff shrinking from seven people to three in recent years, Collins believes the school would be in better shape with more people to work on it. But with annual layoffs, the problems have only been increasing.

"There's going to be cuts next year," said Collins. "It's pretty dire."

Problems with the building include: water coming through doors, windows, and walls on rainy days; vandalism in the bathrooms, gym, lobby, and

back staircases; and the large school size leading to a plethora of areas in need of major renovations.

"It's worn," Collins said when asked about the school from a maintenance standpoint. "It can be unsightly at times."

Collins, who lives in the district and has four children of his own who could attend a new Triton building, added that the site of the school is one that he wouldn't change.

However, the size of the building is an issue. "The school is so big that there are wasted resources," he said. Just last year, \$40,000 was spent renovating Triton bathrooms, Collins said.

All told, nearly \$200,000 was spent on major maintenance problems in the 2022-23 year. Due to the shrinking population of the school compared to the size of the building, Collins said he would favor building a new school that fits Triton's needs.

At right, Head THS Custodian Ryan Collins discusses the needs of the Triton building and its future (Allen photo).



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'A Sense of Pride'

School Committee Vice Chair Describes Benefits of Updated Building

Compiled by Ben Aham, Sadie Clifford, Michael Coco, & Aiden Syzmanski
Staff Writers

School Committee member Mrs. Nerissa Wallen is very familiar with Triton High School's building needs. This week she and the rest of the school committee applied for state funds to fix the school. It is the third time the committee has applied, and they are hoping the third time is the charm.

Wallen visits the school often, helped usher through a major study of its many needs in 2019, and regularly discusses its crumbling roof with her fellow school committee members. She also has been a key backer of an application to the state agency that could award funding for a new or renovated building.

In a recent interview Wallen said a new school would have a positive impact on the community, recalling a similar effect when the middle school renovation in the 1990's, generating excitement. A new building would contribute to the reputation, image and attractiveness of Triton, she said.

"People want to be proud of their school," said Wallen. "A new, up-to-date building would make people proud."

Wallen's vision for a new school involves partnering with the Massachusetts School Building Committee. Together, Triton and the MSBA would study building a new or rehabbed structure, ensuring that similar problems do not carry over, such as leakage and inefficiently used space.

Last year, Triton's need for a new school project just didn't make the MSBA cut while others were funded. In the last two years Triton applied and was denied, it was close, "but we just didn't get in," said Wallen.

At the same time, Wallen said that construction costs are continuing to rise, so it is difficult to project the how much a new building will cost. When asked which systems most need attention, Wallen said, "Everything. Electrical systems, HVAC, wastewater treatment plant," as well as the roof.

Triton has not formally started planning for a new school, said Wallen. The first step is to document the problems, which Triton did back in 2019, but will need to do again for updated costs. In the later stages, Triton will need to seek funding from its sending towns, the state, as well as establish a building committee.

In the meantime, the school committee has set aside \$1.5 million for initial building planning and design.



School Committee Vice Chair Nerissa Wallen (TRSD photo).

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satisfactory space. Comparing it to the middle school gym, she believes that it is a lot nicer. When asked about how she thinks a new building would affect her as a student, she responded positively. "I think it would be helpful to have a safer building."

Sophomore Grace Alcaraz agrees with Myette that the building definitely needs an upgrade.

"Our building itself is disgusting," Alcaraz said. "I don't like it." Alcaraz noted that if the Triton building was nicer it would motivate her to want to come to school. Alcaraz said that the one thing that could go without a lot of improvement would be the high school gym. Even so, she noted that the ceilings do need repairs in the gym and everywhere else.

Senior Savannah Colbert had strong opinions about the appearance of the school building.

"It is not modern at all, and some parts of the school are not pleasing to look at," said Colbert. She says that Triton needs to focus on basic repairs like replacing rusty surfaces and cleaning up water stains. Even though Colbert is graduating this year, she said that a new building would benefit the students still residing at Triton.

"Being in a more aesthetically pleasing atmosphere would be nice," Colbert said. When asked about what aspect of the building doesn't need much improvement, Colbert couldn't think of anything.

"It is not modern at all, and some parts of the school are not pleasing to look at." — THS Student Savannah Colbert

"It's just the main school. It needs general maintenance." — THS Student Foster Campbell

"It's pretty disgusting and not very welcoming." — THS student Jane Myette

REVIEW The Grammy Awards: A Legacy of Snubs and Upsets

By Bryant Monaghan, Ryan Snow, & Weston Murphy
Staff Writers

The Beginning of the Controversy

The 1992 Grammy Awards witnessed one of the most controversial decisions in music history when Eric Clapton's twenty-year-old song, "Layla," triumphed over Nirvana's iconic "Smells Like Teen Spirit" for Record of the Year.

This decision sparked massive outrage among both the audience and fans watching at home, leaving fans perplexed as to how a song two decades old could claim such a prestigious award. This marked the beginning of the Grammys' ongoing controversies, with numerous artists facing snubs since the 1992 awards, including notable figures like Travis Scott, Noah Kahan, and Kendrick Lamar.

Fans have long harbored skepticism toward the Grammys, accusing its members of the Recording Academy of racism and indifference to an artist's impact. As the 2024 Grammy Awards officially concluded last month, the winners left fans once again scratching their heads.

2013 Awards:

The 2013 Grammy Awards unfolded no differently than their predecessors. Music enthusiasts eagerly awaited to see if their favorite artists would secure an award.

However, the dynamics shifted when Daft Punk won Album of the Year for "Random Access Memories," beating out albums such as Kendrick Lamar's "good kid, m.A.A.d city" and Taylor Swift's "Red."

The Rap Album of the Year category raised eyebrows as Macklemore claimed victory with "The Heist" over formidable contenders like Kendrick Lamar and Kanye West with "Yeezus."

The night concluded with a surprising text from Macklemore to Kendrick Lamar, admitting he felt he had robbed him of the Rap Album of the Year.

2019 Awards:

The 2019 Grammy Awards introduced its own share of controversies, starting with Cardi B winning Rap Album of the Year for "Invasion of Privacy." This sparked a major outcry, given the release of other impactful albums that year, including Mac Miller's "Swimming" and Travis Scott's critically acclaimed "Astroworld."

Despite Cardi B's understandable nomination, "Astroworld" is considered one of the most significant Grammy snubs of all time.

Video footage following the award show captured Travis Scott angrily leaving Crypto.com Arena (AKA Staples Center), and Mac Miller's untimely death subsequently ignited the ongoing "Swimming" drama still haunting the Recording Academy.

2024 Awards:

The most recent Grammy Awards in 2024 proved to be among the most controversial to date, featuring undeniable snubs and the spectacle of a three-time winner being escorted out in handcuffs.

The night commenced with Taylor Swift winning Album of the Year over projects such as Lana Del Rey's "Did You Know That There's a Tunnel Under Ocean Blvd.," setting the stage for several question-



able choices. Jay-Z took the stage to address Grammys controversies, highlighting Beyonce's record-breaking thirty-one total wins but emphasizing her lack of an Album of the Year win.

Killer Mike dominated three rap-based categories, including Rap Album of the Year, which was followed by an angry performance by Travis Scott, who altered the lyrics of his song "FE!N" to express the Grammys' repeated oversight.

Killer Mike, the winner over Travis Scott, was later escorted out in handcuffs due to an outstanding misdemeanor, generating both shock and outrage.

The Best New Artist category fueled more criticism as fans eagerly waited for Noah Kahan to win for his hit album "Stick Season (We'll All Be Here Forever.)" Instead, Victoria Monet took home the award, prompting immediate backlash on platforms like X (AKA Twitter) and Instagram. Despite a record-breaking viewership of 16.9 million people, very few music fans left satisfied.

Fan Voting Dilemma:

Despite the fan-driven voting process, the Grammy winners are not chosen by the fans at all, but instead by select registered members of the Recording Academy.

This revelation diminishes the impact of fan votes, revealing bias in the decision-making process. Instances of bias include one academy member admitting to not voting for Lana Del Rey due to personal dislike of her music.

This discrepancy between fan expectations and the Recording Academy's decisions creates numerous problems in the voting process, consistently leading to underappreciation and heartbreak for artists and fans alike.

The Heartbreak Continues:

This heartbreak has become a familiar experience for music fans, as the Grammys prioritize profit over merit. From Travis Scott losing all ten of his nominations to Kendrick Lamar's defeat by Macklemore and Victoria Monet's surprising win over Noah Kahan, the Grammys face criticism for their questionable choices.

Jay-Z's statement, "Some of you shouldn't even be here," resonates with those who feel deserving artists are consistently overlooked. As the 2024 Grammy Awards fade into the past, uncertainties loom over the future of the Recording Academy, leaving fans to wonder if their favorite artists will once again be unjustly snubbed in the years to come.

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Voice: How does a new building raise the appeal of possible new students, or possibly raise the reputation of a school?

Kelley: The most significant reason for choosing to leave Triton is its facilities. A new school might attract people into the community while also having students reconsider leaving to private schools.

Voice: How can new facilities positively impact the success of a school, whether it be sports or academics? Are there any direct examples that can prove this?

Kelley: I believe that a more communal learning environment would be much more beneficial towards students. Some Triton rooms and learning areas have been said to look like "bunkers" the way that they are built. Classroom learning at Triton has been isolated and doesn't have any aspects that stand out to students. Having things unique to a building can be crucial so the students can be proficient in a specific area that they are interested in. Whittier has classrooms with equipment for the topic they are learning, giving students more experience in their subject. Also having improved athletic facilities such as new weight rooms

can be more functional for all the sports teams. With indoor turf the weather can be less of an obstacle for teams that practice outside. Our locker rooms are currently outdated but with newer locker rooms, the population of player participation could skyrocket.

Voice: Do you think the outdated building affects Triton's staff?

Kelley: The outdated building affects staff morale and teaching. A new school has areas of learning that old schools don't. When you're at an old school you don't get the needs that a new school has; especially with athletics, Triton is behind with equipment and facilities.

Voice: Do the athletic activities and equipment more modern schools are able to offer vary greatly from our own? Is the safety equipment a school is able to offer a large factor when considering whether or not a school is due for renovations?

Kelley: Higher quality artificial turf and locker rooms, more modern sleds, and more indoor space for when it's raining are examples of things that other schools are able to offer that we could with future renovations. More modern schools and buildings are able to offer and promote an improved level of inclusion and functionality for athletics.

Up Next in Triton: Past, Present, Future

Next Week (March 8): Triton Past — A look at the 1970s and 80s, renovation in late 1990s/early 2000s, parents who attended Triton, and an interview with our longest-serving teacher.

March 15: Triton Present — Demographics of our school, a survey of our students and teachers, funding from the state, and what the experts say is wrong with the building.

March 22: Triton Future — Triton Voice takes a trip to the all-new Pentucket, What 21st Century looks like, more modern schools where our faculty has taught, and how new buildings affect student learning.