

THE BULLDOG BARK



Video: Suffolk Public Schools Submission to Virginia School Boards Association 2023 Student Video Contest "We are Better United Than Divided."

Managing Minds: Mental Health at KFHS

Mental health illness in high school students is common and often overlooked or ignored. Mental health illness is a condition that can be mild to severe and is a unique experience for each individual. Mental health illness occurs in many different forms. At the high school level, many students suffer from anxiety, stress, or depression due in part to the academic pressures of high school.

In the 2023-2024 school year, there has been a drastic change in the daily class schedule. This change has presented some challenges for students at Kings Fork High. Some students are adjusting to the schedule change better than others. In order to be better informed, I compiled a group of questions to ask students in each grade level about their personal experiences at KFHS.

I asked this same question to all grade levels, "How has your mental health been affected by the new 4 X 4 class schedule?" There are some differences between the responses of the upper classmen students and lower classmen students. During interviews with 9th and 10th grade students, most stated that the new schedule made them feel anxiety while in class. Sophomore, Kason Cartwright, states, "It is challenging having the same classes everyday because it requires more work and tests which makes it easier to fall behind." Some lower classmen were positive about the new schedule. "It's actually a lot better since you only visit four classes, it's easier to keep up with all your work. You don't feel as stressed." Shyla Cheeks stated. Many upper classmen found the new schedule to be an advantage. For special cases like Seth Cobbs, an early graduate at King's Fork High, the 4 X 4 allowed Cobbs to take his final two classes and graduate early in 2024.

Just as the 4 x 4 daily class schedule has been met with different levels of support or discontent, mental health illness affects individuals differently and for several different reasons. I set out to find out what some of these differences were and how students are coping with it. I began by speaking with students in the freshman class.

The Bulldog Bark

One of the things I'm learning is that crisis passes, and for anyone suffering, I think it's important to know that. - Logan Paul

MANAGING MINDS CONT.



Freshmen were asked, "Do you feel overwhelmed now that you're in high school?" Some of the freshmen I interviewed had negative views of being in high school. Things are very different from what they thought it would be. Ja'Niya Anderson-Wood states, "The new schedule has made the classes go too fast which has me stressed." Many other freshmen are also feeling overwhelmed with stress and anxiety. However, Jamaya Deering, states, "High school is actually so much better than people say it is. I'm enjoying it so far and what it brings."

Next, I turned to the sophomore class of 2026 and asked students, "Have you adjusted to 'high school life' or is it still challenging?" The most common answer was, it has gotten easier since being in school for two years. Aliyah Harrell added that, "I've gotten to understand and see things I couldn't in 9th grade. This allowed me to stop stressing and just enjoy high school a bit more." On the contrary, when Makayla Hayden, a transfer student, was asked the same question, she disagrees with Harrell's perspective. Hayden states, "It's still taking some getting used to for me, being that this is my first year at King's Fork. Sometimes I feel like giving up but, I push through regardless."

While interviewing upperclassman, Vincent Butler, I asked, "How is your mental health affected as a rising senior?" He stated, "It feels amazing to leave high school knowing I did good. Makes me feel like the boss of somebody." Even with positive feedback, there are still students who feel overly stressed about joining 'the real world'." Junior, Kinara Reid, expressed "I've been thinking about adulthood constantly. Things like bills and money. It's very stressful but overall I'm happy and excited." The seniors that were interviewed had similar views. Seniors are looking forward to graduating high school and moving on to adulthood. Seniors were asked "How does graduating or senioritis affect your mental health?" In that, Jacari Scott gave a cheerful response. "Graduating has made me happy, actually. It is a good thing for my mental health knowing that I am able to make it to the end."

Desiring to help students "make it to the end", here are some warning signs of someone suffering from a mental health illness: a reduced ability to concentrate, withdrawal from friends and school activities, and excessive fears or worries. Many students that are facing stress are coping by listening to music. Other students have a different outlook like Taikayla Joe. she states, "I love to dance. I just dance it out. Dancing feels like a place where I can just be free." - **Alana Givers-Wilson**



**UPCOMING
EVENTS!**

Friday, October 27

7:00pm: Football: Varsity vs. Deep Creek

Saturday, October 28

1:00pm Kennel Classic Band Competition

Monday, October 30

Tuesday, October 31

Ghostly Graveyard Guided Tour (During All Lunches)

-

Wednesday, November 1

5:45: Scholastic Bowl vs. Grassfield

-

Thursday, November 2

6:00pm: Football: JV vs. Hickory

Friday, November 3

7:00pm: Football: Varsity vs. Hickory

Monday, November 6

End of Marking Period 1 (MP1)

-

Monday, November 7 - Election Day (GO VOTE!!!)

Teacher Virtual Clerical Day (No School for Students)

Wednesday, November 8

Second Marking Period Begins (MP2)

5:45pm: Scholastic Bowl vs. Oscar Smith

The Bulldog Bark

“So how do you make it as a mainstream entertainer? Who knows? But I think you have to be uncomfortable, right? You have to make yourself uncomfortable. All success stories depend on that. That’s why I might start sleeping on hardwood floors and taking cold showers.” - **Logan Paul**

DELAYED RECOGNITION

Sienna hugged her parents tightly, after all it might be the last time she sees them for quite a while. Her mother wanted her to get a better education than what she thought her last school was providing. Her dad on the other hand didn’t see the point because Sienna was learning, and had an excellent chance at being valedictorian due to her extremely high GPA. Well that was what he claimed at least. Sienna knew he just wasn’t ready for her to leave home.

“I already can’t wait for the summer! Be sure to call us a lot okay? You don’t want to worry your dad, ” her mother commented.

“Don’t be stupid, of course she’ll call us. Now let her get into her dorm so we can leave,” Sienna’s father said in response. Sienna waved her parents off, closing the door as they left. She took a good look at the dorm. There were two beds, one already had a bag and some bed sheets on it. Her roommate must’ve already been in and out, she figured.

Sienna wiped the sweat off her face as finally finished unpacking. She looked at the time and saw it was now around four o’clock. She sat on her bed and looked around at the posters and decorations she put up. It had taken her a bit of time because she didn’t want to mess up the walls when she had to take them off later, so she looked up tutorials meant for people going into college. Sienna’s head turned to the door quickly as she heard it open. The first thing she noticed was the large coffee stain on the girl’s shirt.

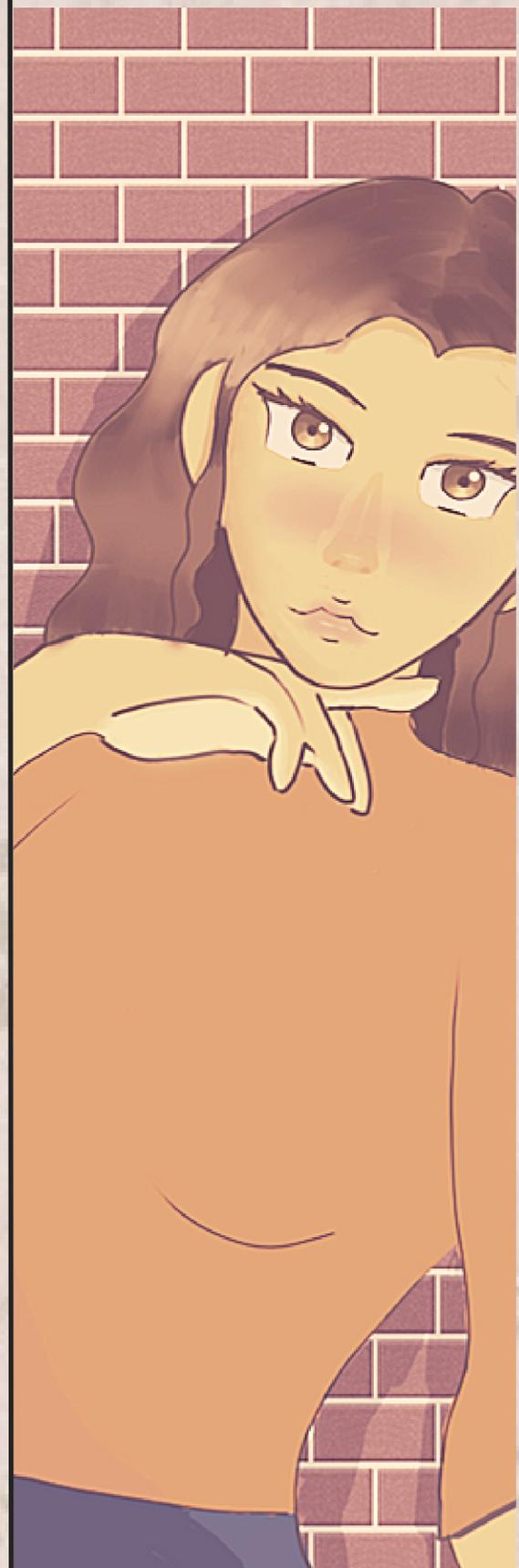
“Ah, hi. My name’s Sienna, what's yours?”

“Kaitlyn,” she replied quickly. Sienna waited for a moment, expecting her to say more. She stared at Kaitlyn until she realized her roommate wasn’t going to say anything else.

“Well it’s nice to meet you,” Sienna smiled before they stopped speaking again.

Sienna practically fell onto her bed once she left class. Her first day was exhausting plus her professors had already assigned an essay and two homework assignments due by next class. Who even assigns an essay on the first day, Sienna thought to herself as she flipped onto her back. She inwardly cringed as she heard the door open. Sienna and her roommate hadn’t talked much since their first interaction, but she could tell they were polar opposites. It was especially obvious considering they already had two falling outs. Kaitlyn was unkempt and her side of the dorm reflected it. It bothered Sienna because she liked having an organized space to help her concentrate. She had mixed but mainly negative feelings about her roommate because of it. Kaitlyn herself didn’t particularly seem to feel any way towards Sienna. At first Sienna, due to Kaitlyn’s silence towards her, Sienna thought Kaitlyn didn’t like her, but Sienna soon came to realize that silence was Kaitlyn’s way of interacting with everyone.

A Short Story by
Lori Miller



Do you remember who you were before the world told you who you should be? - Logan Paul

DELAYED RECOGNITION PT. 2

“Have you seen my phone charger?” Kaitlyn asked while looking around her own bed.

“Did you check to see if you left it in your bag?” Sienna replied.

“Yeah. This is the second time I’m checking here,” she mumbled the last part, seemingly to herself.

“Well I wasn’t supposed to keep up with it. Maybe if you didn’t live in a pigsty you wouldn’t lose it,” Sienna retorted coldly. Kaitlyn made no reply and simply ignored Sienna’s retort. She left soon after.

The two girls had many more incidents of snarky comments, sometimes growing into arguments. Most of the time it had something to do with Kaitlyn losing something or not cleaning up after herself. Sienna came to the point where she hated having to share any space with her roommate. Kaitlyn also didn’t like Sienna simply because she viewed her as bellicose, and yet also somewhat whiny. At some point Sienna ended up in a group discussion with some classmates about their dorms.

“Ugh, I can’t stand my roommate. I swear it’s like she doesn’t shower because she always smells rancid,” one of the girls said.

“At least with your roommate it's only her that smells. My roommates' bags and bed all smell like vomit,” a louder guy countered.

“Mine is the worst,” Sienna began, “she has trash everywhere. Stains all over her clothes, and she has a rat's nest for hair!” The conversation continued, with more friends commenting on their roommates bad habits. Some of them even had some good things to say, but that was less common. Eventually the conversation ended and Sienna realized something. She might never like her roommate, and other people she interacts with in the future, but she’s not the worst person. Sienna didn’t have to get along with her, but she also didn’t have to make her out to be horrendous. That only aggravated her own feelings more, and caused more tension. It was a shame she only realized it at the very end of the year.



The Bulldog Bark

Everyone who uses their phone on a day to day basis just be careful with how much you're consuming because it can get unhealthy quickly. - Logan Paul

DRESS CODE: CLOTHES MAKE THE MANDATE



School dress codes have always been a debatable topic and cause a lot of controversy for most schools. At the beginning of each school year, every student receives a code of conduct that they must adhere to whether they choose to read it or not. The majority of students feel that the dress code goes overboard on certain policies and feel as if the males have it easier compared to females.

From the administration's point of view, they believe that the dress code isn't biased toward males or females. Most entities such as the work place, churches, and businesses have a dress code policy. If there is a dress code policy in those places, then I agree there should be a dress code policy for and in the educational sector. Many adults agree that there should be a dress code policy at school.

Many parents and teachers agree that students should come to school dressed appropriately for an educational environment. Some parents feel as if slides and Crocs shouldn't be worn at school due to safety concerns. If a situation such as a fall due to a student wearing inappropriate footwear happens, it's possible a student could injure themselves as well as someone else.

Males have very little to no issues with their dress code, but there is a frequent issue with following the dress code which includes them keeping their pants above their waist, keeping hats and hoods off in the building as well as not wearing shades. Those are simple tasks that shouldn't be hard to follow at our age. As for females, they have frequent offenses stemming from exposed midriffs, pajama pants, and shoulder straps.

Students may be unaware that the decisions regarding the school dress code comes from the school board rather than from the administration at Kings Fork High School. Therefore, they can address and discuss many of their concerns related to the current dress code policies at the monthly school board meetings. - **Tania Jackson**



THE BULLDOG BARK SPORTS

King's Fork vs. Oscar Smith

**For the Second Time in King's Fork History,
the Bulldogs Tamed the Tigers.**



The undefeated King's Fork Bulldogs (7-0) took on The Oscar Smith Tigers (5-2) in a highly anticipated contest widely expected to be the game of the week. Countless media posts, news reports, and announcements focused on this game. King's Fork High School was definitely the place to be on Friday, October 20th.

The game started out a little rocky for King's Fork when Oscar Smith scored the first touchdown. But our King's Fork Bulldogs didn't get discouraged, by one touchdown, especially after the failed extra point attempt, they settled in and began to execute their strategy. In the second quarter, our Bulldogs were able to score a touchdown and kick a go-ahead field goal by Freshman Jean Pierre Bile.

Going into the 3rd quarter with a score of (7-6), Oscar Smith was able to score another touchdown followed by another failed extra point. Fortunately for the Bulldogs, they were able to respond to the Tigers with a touchdown and another field goal kick. With the score of (14-12), by the end of the 4th quarter both teams scored touchdowns for an end score of (21-19). Our Bulldogs remained undefeated while also showing once again they aren't a team to mess around with.

THE BULLDOG BARK SPORTS

King's Fork vs. Oscar Smith

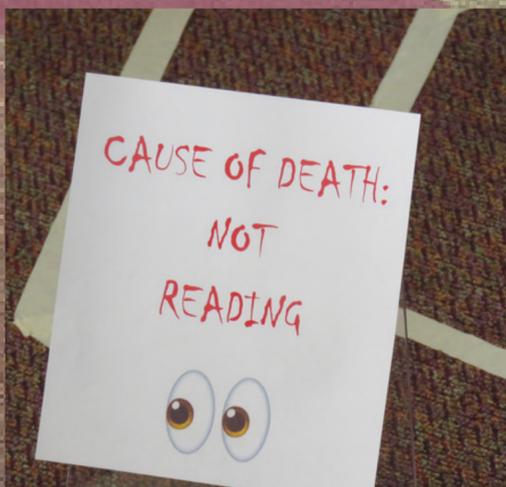
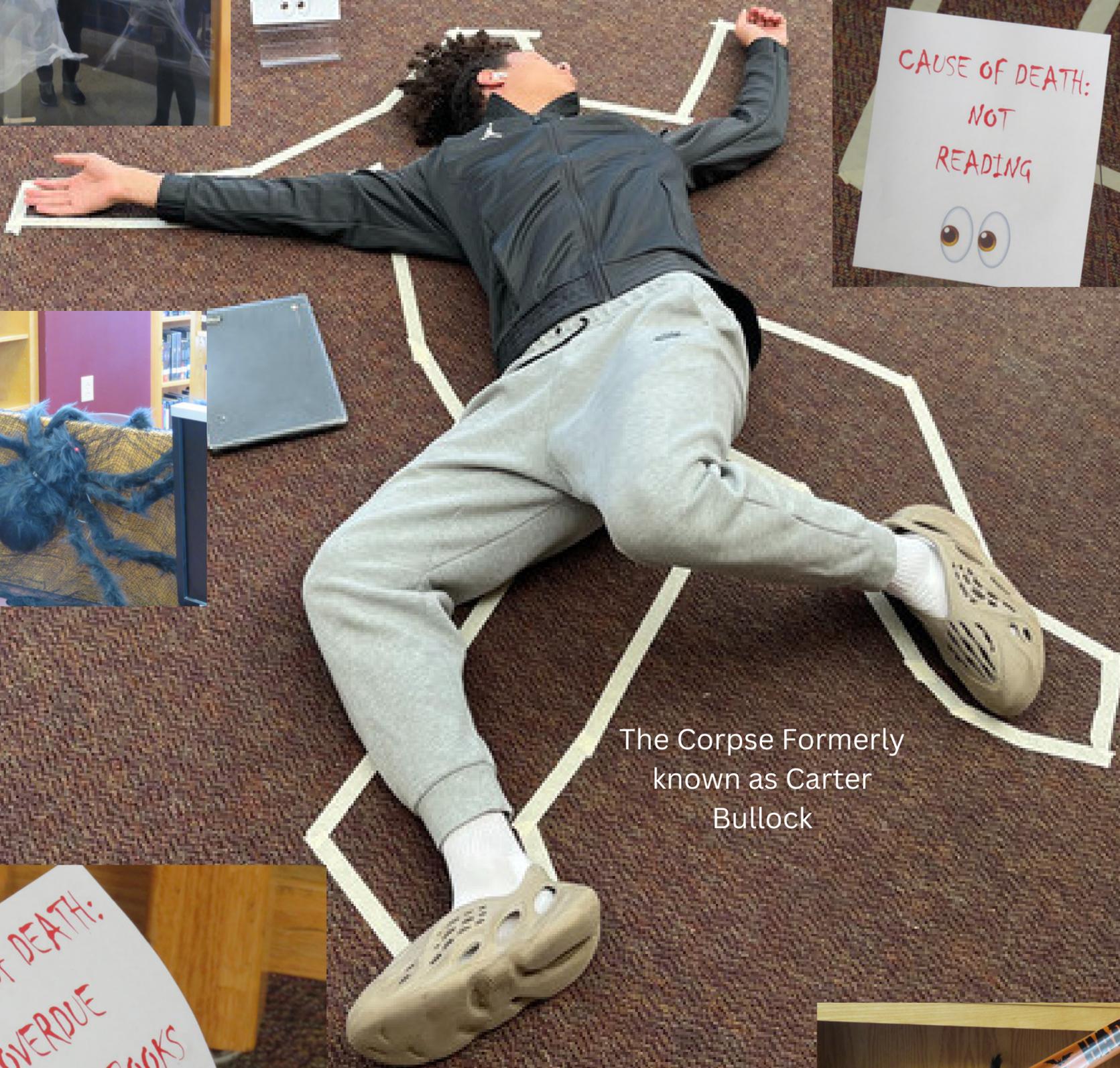
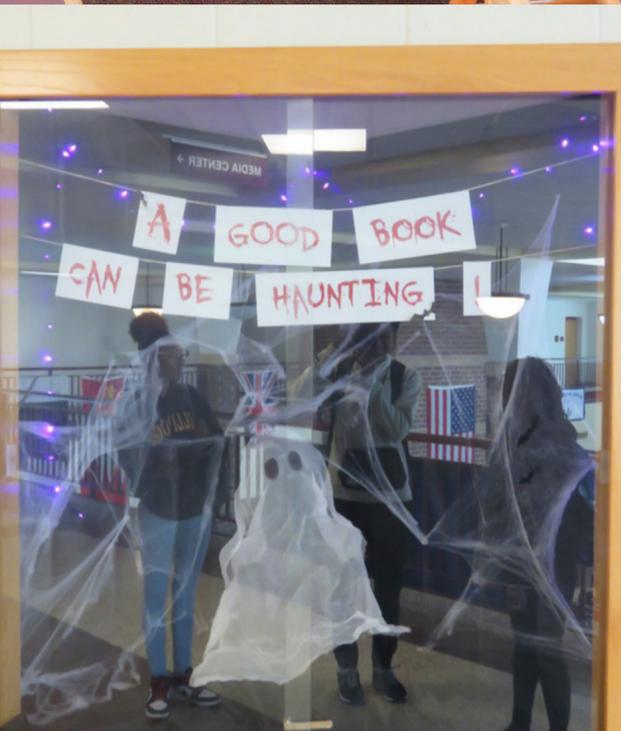
FINAL SCORE: 21-19



Impressive showing from Javon Ford (#0), the main ball carrier, ran for 235 yards and 3 touchdowns to help lead the Bulldogs to the victory over Oscar Smith. Despite the heavy rain conditions, the Bulldogs raised their record to 8-0 going into week 9 this season. Credit has to be given to this great defensive effort all game, culminating in a game-sealing interception by cornerback Kaevon Blanding (#2). The crowd acted as “the 12th man” to the players, cheering the Bulldogs on every step of the way.

When the clock hit zero and the Bulldogs officially won the game the exhilarated cheers from the crowd, players, teachers and coaches was proof of the importance of the moment. This was only the second time in Kings Fork Football history that the team has successfully taken on and beaten the Oscar Smith Tigers. The Bulldogs prepare to move into the next week with a great mindset to defend their undefeated record as they take on the Deep Creek Hornets on October 27th, 2023 at Deep Creek High School. - **Azekiel Hutson, Tre’vion Branch, De’Marya Ricks**

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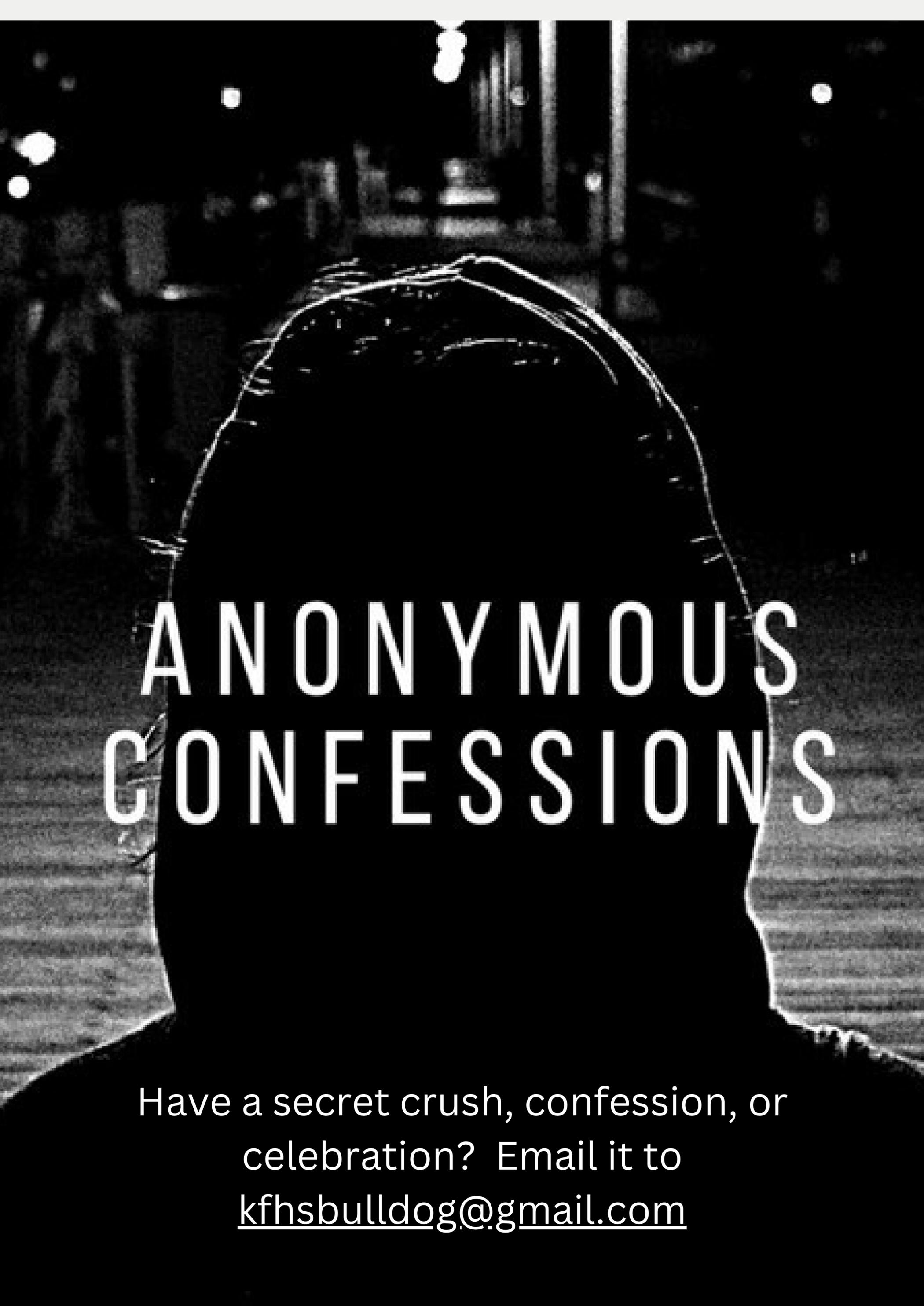
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