

# SchoolMatters



Special Insert  
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Superintendent

In this special insert edition we celebrate the accomplishments of Kimberly High School students who are pursuing advanced coursework. Last school year, students earned credits and standings worth approximately ***\$1.1 million in potential tuition savings!***

Featured in this story is senior Justin Coon. In addition to pursuing his passion for music by playing the trombone in numerous KHS and community-based ensembles, by the time he graduates he will have taken 11 AP courses and completed Pre-Calculus through CAPP. He is a great example of a student who is pursuing their potential in academics, the arts and activities.

-- *Bob Mayfield*

## ***\$1.1 Million Saved by Students while Preparing for Life After Graduation***

Over \$1.1 million in potential tuition savings was earned by Kimberly High School students last school year. There is no doubt that pursuing advanced coursework is challenging, but the rewards are life-changing for the students reaching their potential through these opportunities.

Through their combined efforts, students earned over \$1.1 million in potential tuition savings in Advanced Placement (AP), the Cooperative Academic Partnership Program (CAPP), University of Wisconsin (UW) Placement, College Level Examination Program (CLEP) and Fox Valley Technical College credits.

Justin Coon, a 17-year-old senior at Kimberly High School, is one student who is reaping the rewards of pursuing advanced coursework. He has successfully completed six AP courses: Human Geography, English Literature and Composition, Physics 1, Physics 2, Calculus AB, and European History. This year, he is taking five more AP courses: English Language and Composition, Physics C, Music Theory, US Government and Politics, and Calculus BC. He also completed Pre-Calculus through CAPP.

He attributes his motivation for taking so many challenging courses to both pursuing topics he is interested in and also learning more about himself. "For example, the English courses helped me consider becoming a writer," said Justin. "I am interested in AP Music Theory because I'm a musician and it helps to know the theory behind it."

Justin has been an avid trombone player since he was in the fifth grade and is an enthusiastic member of the KHS Band. Locally, he performs with the UW Fox Valley Concert Band, Lawrence Academy Wind Ensemble, and Fox Valley Youth Orchestra.

He especially enjoys finding the connection between AP Music Theory and how applicable it is to different types of music. "For each thing that Mr. Popke teaches us about, we can listen to music and suddenly notice these things that he is teaching us in class," said Justin. "It's almost enlightening to notice it's been happening your whole life and it provides structure to music."

He believes that the higher level coursework is preparing him for his future. "It's more lecture-based like a college, but it's also preparatory like a precursor to college because you still have time to

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talk with the teachers and they can help you during their lecture,” said Justin. “I think it prepares you for the idea of independent learning.”

Advanced level coursework requires a significant commitment from students, but for those taking on the challenge, the rewards can be great. “I would say it’s more rewarding than most classes,” said Justin. “The projects are more interesting. AP classes are more about understanding the actual concepts behind the formulas and facts, they’re more foundational and help you develop a mindset for comprehending bigger ideas.”

Some students pursue more challenging coursework from the very beginning of high school. For Justin, he started in English 9 and soon realized that he wanted more in-depth knowledge of the curriculum and was able to switch into Honors English. “I hadn’t felt like I was a good writer when I was younger and I was interested in getting better at writing,” said Justin.

He also took one AP course, Human Geography, his freshmen year. As a sophomore, he took CAPP Pre-Calculus but no other AP courses. During his junior year, he went from zero AP courses as a sophomore to taking five AP classes. “I wanted to branch out in terms of my knowledge as a person,” said Justin. “With math and physics, I had been good at math when I was younger but had never delved into physics, which is very similar, so I was curious about the subject.”

Fitting the rigorous curriculum into a full schedule comes with its own set of challenges for students, but with the challenge comes the development of skills and habits that prepare them for the future. When asked how he manages his busy schedule, Justin offered some advice that he heard and found particularly helpful. “It’s ok to make mistakes sometimes, you just have to forgive yourself,” said Justin. “Also, each day it’s good to know that you’ve done something toward your goal before the day is over. For me, that translated with AP classes to do something each day, little by little, so I’m not doing it all at the last minute.”



KHS band students, including Justin Coon on the far right, practice marching for the Appleton Holiday Parade.

A record number of KHS students are pursuing advanced coursework and earning multiple accolades throughout the year. The AP program at KHS had an especially strong school year. A record breaking 177 KHS students earned individual recognition from the AP program. Four students were recognized as National AP Scholars, 51 additional students were recognized as an AP Scholar with Distinction, 53 as an AP Scholar with Honor and 69 as AP Scholars.

There are many benefits to taking advanced coursework while in high school, such as higher level learning, exposure to new subjects and developing educational skills that help students while they pursue further education. “I want students to stretch themselves and prepare for their life after graduation while having an enjoyable high school experience,” said Mike Rietveld, Principal at Kimberly High School. “My goal is that all of our students are aware of the opportunities available to them and that they pursue their potential.”

Like many Kimberly students, Justin plans on attending college after he graduates. “I’ve been looking at Ivy League and in-state schools, depending on if I want to pursue my interest in becoming a writer or a musician,” said Justin.

KHS provides opportunities for students to take on more challenging coursework and offers an indexed GPA to account for the more rigorous curriculum. When a student pursues higher index coursework, they are earning college credit while in high school. This not only saves potential tuition costs, it helps students develop skills crucial to success in post-secondary schools like time management and collaboration. By getting a jump start on fulfilling general education credits, they are able to focus on coursework related to their major and possibly add another major or a minor. View an infographic at [goo.gl/R19YBy](http://goo.gl/R19YBy) to see more details about the tuition savings Kimberly High School students earned from AP, CAPP, CLEP and FVTC Courses.

