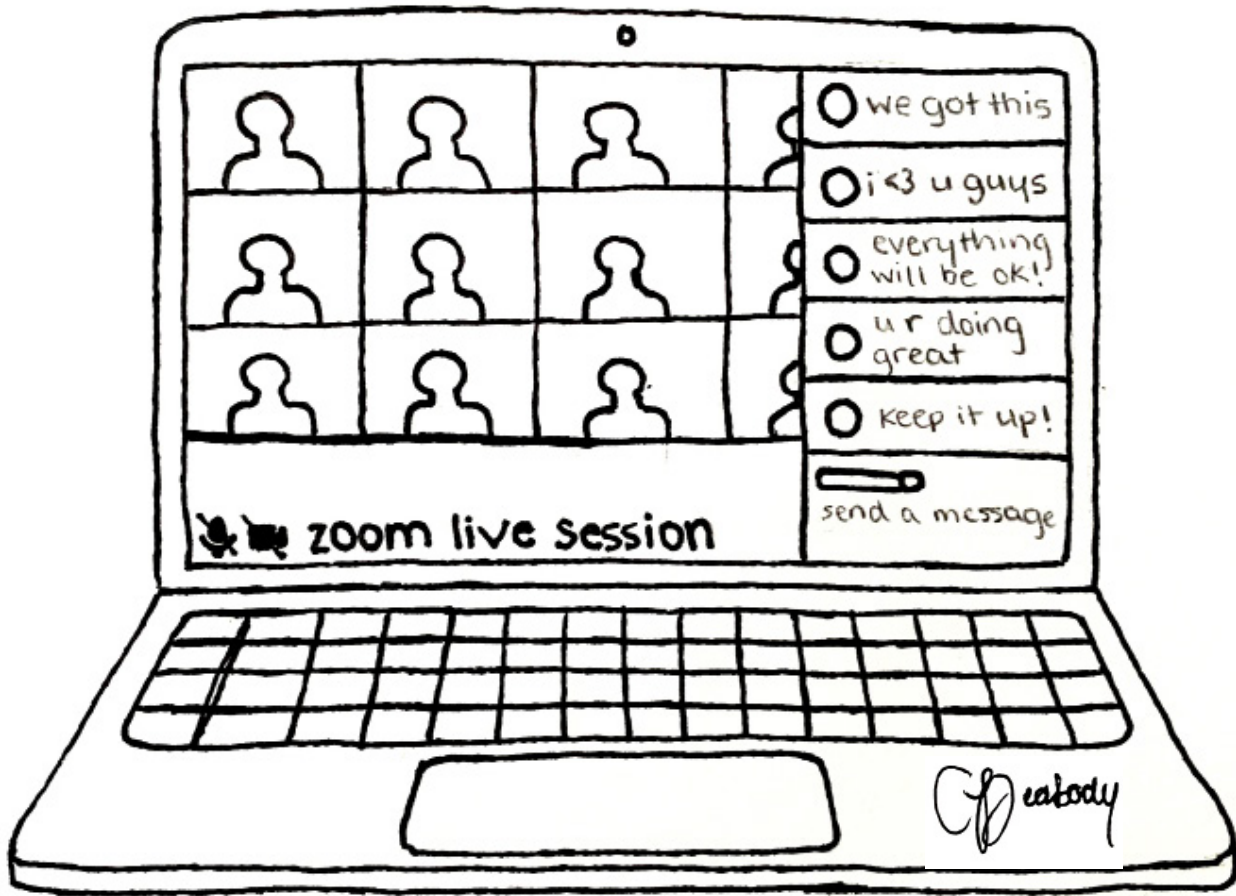


# “Living in a Material ~~COVID~~ World”

## South students urged to band together



GRAPHIC BY CAROLINE PEABODY '22

### Our View Editorial

Although face-to-face learning is postponed for now, we at The Tower urge our peers to remain patient and resilient as we tackle this new territory together.

COVID-19 has brought many new challenges our way, but with

every obstacle we face, we rise. Regardless of the modifications that will inevitably follow the district's plan, we believe our fellow students, teachers and administrators are up to the challenge. We are fervent. We are strong. We are Blue Devils.

some ways to create normalcy while working from home are to confine one's work space, limit distractions and go to the same designated place to work and study, according to Forbes. Alongside these tips, our attitudes are key-- we can't let our circumstances limit our happiness.

# the TOWER

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# Is it time for the voting age to change?



**My View**  
FIONA LACROIX '22  
PAGE EDITOR

Was our nation not founded on the principle of "no taxation without representation?" In 2011, minors paid \$730 million in income tax (per the Tax Foundation), but not one 16- or 17-year-old got to decide how our share was spent. Minors in this country work, support households and have fiscal responsibility without the right to vote. How can a statement so foundational, that every American knows by heart, be ignored so easily?

Sixteen- and 17-year-olds also have no way to alter the law we are tried under. According to the National Juvenile Justice Network, ten-thousand youths are incarcerated in adult jails and prisons per day.

When the voting age was lowered from 21 to 18 in 1970, it was due to 18-year-olds being drafted into the Vietnam War. Teens were considered old enough to fight, but not old enough to vote. Similarly, a 16-year-old can be tried for life, but is contrarily considered too young to have a say in the polling booth.

Lowering the voting age wouldn't just correct these hypocrisies; it would increase voter turnout and instill lifelong habits. Many 18 year-olds experience their first election away from home, but their residence is still listed as their childhood home. Therefore, many have to vote by mail-in ballot, but most are never taught how to request or navigate one. If a 16-year-old could vote, they could be guided through it by their parents and gain confidence for future elections.

According to the American Journal of Political Science, voting in one election increases the chances of voting in the next by 13 percent. After voting with their parents for two years, voting would become a habit teenagers carry with them into adulthood.

The opposition often claims a 16-year-old simply isn't educated enough to vote- in theory, we don't face real-world problems. This belief degrades the struggles many minors face, such as discrimination, poverty, and healthcare access.

Even if a 17-year-old isn't as mature as a 30-year-old, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 determined that a sixth-grade education provided enough intelligence to vote. Most 17-year-olds possess that.

In these past months of political and social unrest, it's clear this younger generation isn't just aware of political topics, but comfortable debating them. Many who had previously avoided public politics have spoken out through social media and protests. High schoolers are more active in politics than many adult voters. Plenty of us are donating to campaigns and bail funds, signing petitions and spreading our opinions openly, yet we don't have the right that makes our country a true democracy: the vote.



**My View**  
DYLAN SCHOENFELD '23  
STAFF WRITER

With the upcoming presidential election, controversy is sure to follow. Due to the responsibility of having a say in our elected leaders, I firmly believe the voting age should remain 18-- no lower, no higher.

Children get a lot of things from their parents, such as a similar nose, the same eye color and mannerisms. Children can also 'inherit' political views. This isn't always the case, but when a child is only hearing bad things about one political party, they're more inclined to dislike them.

According to studies by political scientists Christopher Ojeda and Peter Hatemi, research shows that children are more likely to identify with the same political party as their parents because parents guide the learning process. When kids turn 18, they're legally recognized as an adult. Eighteen year-

olds have a lot of experience under their belt that they've gained from making mistakes throughout high school and learning from them. They have more exposure to the real world and are more qualified to truly know what they believe in compared to 16-year-olds, who still have a lot of learning to do.

Most people finish physically growing around the age of 16, but mentally, one doesn't stop growing until the age of 25. The prefrontal cortex is the part of your brain responsible for decision-making. Keeping the voting age at 18 gives the prefrontal cortex more time to develop, biologically proving voters are more cemented in their beliefs at 18 rather than 16.

If 16-year-olds are too young to buy a lottery ticket and join the military, they aren't qualified to decide who runs our country. Keeping the voting age at 18 will give children time to develop and figure out what they believe in, which is a similar idea behind the other legal limits imposed on us.

Although some high schoolers choose to educate themselves about politics because it interests them, others are clueless. If 18 is the legal age for an adult, it makes sense to earn the privilege to vote at that time. James Meijer, a senior researcher at the Foundation for Government Accountability, emphasized this in a recent interview with Forbes, stating that the American system of government was designed to limit the problems caused by "political ignorance."

Ultimately, being expected to know what one truly believes in at the age of 16 is a lot to ask of a teenager, and allowing an extra two years for voter education results in more logical, educated decisions.

I stand firm in my belief that the voting age should remain 18 because of bias, brain development and political education. The American election system works perfectly fine now, and I don't believe voting age is a substantial enough reason to change tradition.

