

Cricket Conspiracy

Six students are caught, will be punished for dumping crickets in hallway as senior prank

The six seniors allegedly involved were sent home for the rest of the day yesterday. They will take their exams with the rest of their class, but whether they will celebrate their graduation with the class hasn't been decided yet. It is possible that the perpetrators may be prevented from attending the graduation ceremony Friday and the graduation party Friday night.



Above and left: Crickets roam the halls on the second floor Thursday during second period.

A group of six seniors, less than a week away from finishing their four years at Newington High School, thought they could get the last laugh on Thursday, the final day of regular classes, by pulling a little prank.

That may have been a slight miscalculation.

The school, it seems, is planning to strike back against the students who allegedly dumped a bucket of crickets on the second floor, leaving the insects free to roam the hallway near Room 213 during second period Thursday. There were also reports of another batch of crickets near Room 229.

Rumors were flying Thursday afternoon that the six seniors, all of whom were sent home from school for the rest of the day after being questioned about the incident, would be forced to miss their graduation ceremony Friday and the subsequent all-night party Friday night and Saturday morning.

Magee House Principal David Milardo said he favors that punishment, but stated that the final decision has not yet been made. "That is my vote. My vote is no graduation. But I'm one of four," he said, referring to NHS's other two vice principals, Donald King and Nancy Koplín, and its principal, Paul Hoey.

Asked why he favors such a penalty for the students who were involved in the senior prank, Milardo said, "First of all, it disrupted the day. It meant that we had to call the custodians over to do an additional task on top of everything else. Most of the kids that were involved showed little or no remorse."

Additionally, he said that the perpetrators were trying to "set an example that other kids in the school are going to look at and try to copy or try to top, so next year's class will try to do something 'bigger and better.' And I think we have to make a strong statement to show that we're not going to tolerate that kind of behavior. And [we] have to, unfortunately, do something like this which I think is going to make an impact."

"I think it was blown out of proportion," Class of 1999 President-elect Ryan McBride said of the whole incident. "Just a couple seniors having fun. There's nothing wrong with it."

"I think it was kinda funny," stated Joey Serfass.

But, said Milardo, "We're basically saying, 'This is what was done, it was inappropriate, and these are the kind of consequences that have to follow....This is [the perpetrators'] way of saying, 'We're going to get the last parting shot at you.' And we're saying, 'No!' You follow the rules 'til the end of the year, and then you go off and enjoy yourself."



Above: Crickets gather near the door to a 2nd-floor