



Mock Election at the Hill

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Editors Note: For full disclosure, the author is a member of the AP Government class that hosts the mock election.

Students aren't just observing history—they're making it with this year's school-wide mock election. Future voters are stepping into the shoes of political heavyweights, eager to sway their classmates and win over the student body. There is one question looming large: Who will emerge victorious in this student-led race for power?

Westhill High School hasn't held a mock election since 2016, making this year's event a much-anticipated one. Arya Sharma, co-president of the class of 2025, takes on the role of Vice President Kamala Harris, while Angelo Carella, battalion commander in JROTC, steps into the shoes of former President Donald Trump. Arya's campaign slogan, "fighting for the people, with the people," reflects her commitment to embodying Harris's policies, while Angelo's, "making America great again," mirrors Trump's well-known platform.

Ms. Berkeley, who has led this year's mock election, has high hopes for the project. She split her AP Government and Politics class into two halves, each representing either the Democratic or Republican party.

"The big goal is to educate the student body

on how to participate in our democracy in the United States," Berkeley said. Her students have enthusiastically risen to the challenge, turning the mock election into a school-wide event that mirrors the intensity of an actual political campaign.

The campaign kicked off with a voter registration drive during the school's annual club fair, giving students the opportunity to "register" and prepare for the big day. Since then, the halls have been plastered with posters, social media has been flooded with campaign messages, and daily radio announcements have promoted each candidate's views. "It has me actually participating in an election, it is very educational." Bryan Santos ('25) said. He is a student in the AP Government & Politics class.

Candidates have been actively promoting their campaigns through both online platforms and in-person events. In the classrooms, candidates have shared their perspectives on key issues, ranging from education reform to climate change, mirroring the national debates of their real-life counterparts.

Arya's Harris campaign champions an opportunity economy, safeguarding women's bodily autonomy, and maintaining American prosperity. Conversely, Angelo's Trump campaign advocates for border control, American energy

independence, and economic revitalization.

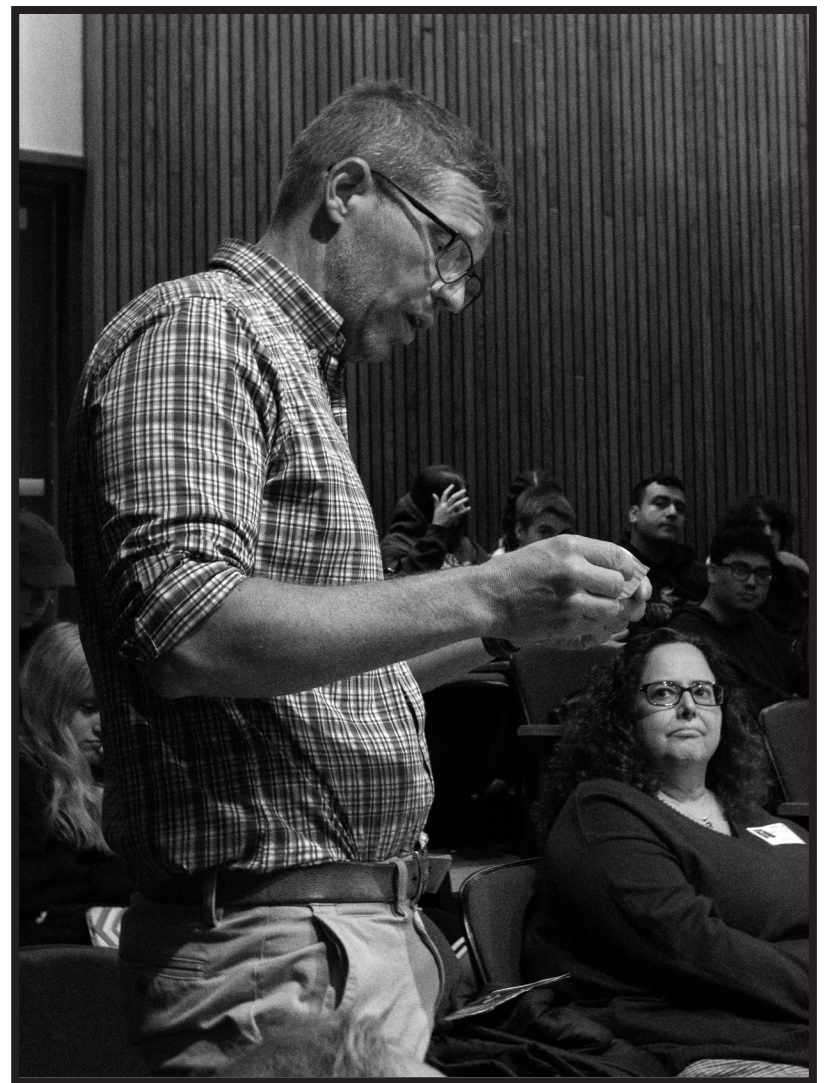
One unexpected turn in the mock election has been the shifting tide of voter support. Early in the campaign, most students leaned Democrat, aligning with Arya Sharma's representation of Kamala Harris. However, after the recent Town Hall meeting—where both candidates answered pre-written questions on a variety of topics, including education and immigration—many students have started to swing in favor of Angelo Carella's Trump campaign. Angelo's strong stance on certain issues has garnered attention. "It was a contrast to the word salad we got from the Harris campaign," Angelo Carella ('25) said.

With the election day fast approaching, it remains to be seen how the students will cast their votes. Will Arya's Harris campaign maintain its early lead, or will Angelo's Trump representation change the tides?

Regardless of the outcome, Berkeley and students alike are seeing this mock election already as a resounding success in terms of student engagement.

"I feel like the mock election is preparing me to vote in the real life," Viridian Leith (26) said. The mock election may not decide the fate of the country, but it's certainly shaping the political awareness of Westhill's future voters.

ALL EYES ON THEM Mrs. Sheryl Berkley stands beside the audience as they listen to Arya Sharma answer questions to the audience. Photo by Eugene Caibal ('25)



MR. TYSON KUBICK reads his preapproved question to Arya Sharma. Photo by Marybel Aguirre ('25)



ARYA SHARMA comments on policy. Photo by Eugene Caibal ('25)