

Dear Mr. Porcello and Mr. Niedzwiecki,

We appreciate the school's efforts to make the Learning Commons a more positive environment, with resources to help students destress during ICE. However, we believe another option that would be extremely beneficial at Perry High School is allowing Hardy's to be a quiet place for students to relax, study, and eat, all day long, which will help reduce anxiety and other pressures.

As it stands, Hardy's is a vacant area with limited usage, but has so much potential to be a productive place for students. Currently, it is extremely difficult to find a quiet, safe spot to complete daily activities such as eating and studying, which can cause anxiety in introverted students. In fact, according to a study completed by Dr. Lesley Williams, eating in public places such as the cafeteria can increase anxiety levels and can even "be a place where eating disorder behaviors get their start" (Williams). Also, providing students with a place to take a break is crucial in their academic success, as "stress may even cause students to drop out of school or drop classes" (Carlson). Hardy's is the perfect area to create this much needed quiet space, as it is already developed and would not need any added furniture or restoration.

We understand that it may be difficult to have Hardy's open during all blocks because of lack of supervision. A solution may be to adjust the responsibilities of educational associates or student resource officers, so that it is in their job to observe students. Also, it will be important that we strictly enforce Hardy's as a quiet zone, in order to prevent chaos.

We know students will enjoy the reopening of Hardy's, as it is currently being used inefficiently. Stressed and anxious students will get use out of Hardy's being opened again, and we hope we have successfully brought your attention to this issue in our school.

Sincerely,

Works Cited

Williams, Lesley. "Dear Lesley: Why Is It So Difficult to Eat in Public?" *National Eating Disorders Association*, 20 Feb. 2018, www.nationaleatingdisorders.org/blog/dear-lesley-why-so-difficult-to-eat-public.

Carlson, Douglas. "3 Ways Stress Negatively Affects Student Performance." *Education & Training News for Your Organization*, 21 Sept. 2016, fosteredu.pennfoster.edu/3-ways-stress-negatively-affects-student-performance.

