

A Comeback on Our Home Court: Victory Against AST

By Adeline Huang, Grade 10

Our home game against AST on December 18 (12/18) was more than just another basketball match; it was a true test of character, resilience, and teamwork. From start to finish, the game kept players and spectators on edge, ultimately delivering a result none of us will forget anytime soon.

The first half was challenging. AST arrived well-prepared and confident, setting a fast pace from the opening minutes. Their ball movement was sharp, and they took advantage of several defensive breakdowns on our side. While we fought hard, our shots didn't fall as consistently as we hoped, and small mistakes began to add up. By halftime, the scoreboard showed us trailing by 10 points. Walking off the court, we knew we were capable of more, but we also understood that the second half would demand a completely different level of focus and intensity.

During halftime, the mood shifted. Instead of frustration, there was determination. We reminded each other that this was our home court, with our supporters behind us, and that no lead is ever safe in basketball. The plan was clear: tighten our defense, move the ball with purpose, and play as a united team.

The second half marked a turning point. Our defense became more aggressive, forcing turnovers and limiting AST's scoring opportunities. Rebounding improved, and our transition play gave us the momentum we needed. Bit by bit, we chipped away at the deficit. Every basket was met with growing energy from the crowd, and that support fueled our confidence on the court.

As the game entered its final minutes, the tension was unmistakable. The score was close, and every possession felt crucial. We stayed composed, trusted our training, and communicated constantly. Key defensive stops and well-timed shots allowed us to take the lead for the first time late in the game. When the final buzzer sounded, the scoreboard read 35-30 in our favor.



This comeback win against AST is something we are extremely proud of. Coming back from a 10-point deficit at halftime showed our resilience and belief in one another. More than the victory itself, this game reminded us of the importance of teamwork, perseverance, and never giving up, especially on our home court.



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2025 Prom: Starry Night



By Annabelle Kuo, Grade 11

After much excitement and anticipation, we held our 2025 prom, Starry Night. The student council members worked diligently throughout the afternoon, decorating the venue with backgrounds, lights, and carpets. The high-energy event began at 6:15 in the International Hall and was well-attended by nearly 100 students from grades 8 to 12. A local DJ provided an amazing mix of music, and a lighting technician created a wonderful ambiance. This was the first year the student council used the talents of these two professionals, and they did not disappoint.

At another venue, food was provided for the hungry dancers, including pizza, snacks, and drinks. Students could fill up before the dance and go to have snacks or beverages during the activity.

The event included activities like “ticking time bomb,” in which the holder of the “bomb” had to answer a question about his or her crush. It was one of the highlights of the evening. A prom king and queen were also crowned. Students voted for their choices.

Student council members did their best to get everyone out on the dance floor so they could join the fun. The student council members provided the DJ with a playlist. There was an excellent balance between random dance, hype dance, and slow dance. During the random dance, students really let their hair down and had a great time. Friends gathered in groups and sang and danced together during the hype dance. There was a romantic vibe with sweet couples during the slow dance.

All good things must come to an end. At 9:30, many of the beautifully-dressed attendees returned home, while many stayed to help with the cleanup. Thanks to all who attended, prepared, and cleaned up at this amazing final event of 2025.



By Mr. Laszlo Kecedi

Every year, the HWIS Christmas Talent Show offers our school a familiar scene: a stage, nervous chuckles full of expectation, cables that never quite cooperate, a growing number of talented and willing participants, and an audience generous with their applause. The event remains one of the clearest expressions of who we are as individuals and as a community.

Students, and a few teachers, step forward to play instruments, sing, or collaborate in small ensembles. Besides the music, however, something else is taking place. The performing arts become a path to knowledge of the self, of others, and of our place within a shared world.

Every performance demands courage which is rooted in a quiet decision to be seen, to allow one's effort, emotions, and imperfections to be witnessed by others. Each performer brings onto the stage their unique way of self-expression, and what we usually do not see: doubts, efforts, hours of practice, and the awareness of personal limits. Fingers slip, voices waver, timing goes astray, technical issues create unexpected complications, but the show must go on. Perfection is, and likely will always be, unattainable, but we realize that growth comes from effort and engagement.

In conversations after the event, several performers spoke about stage fright: the racing heart, the shaking hands, the momentary urge to step back rather than forward. And yet, each chose to perform anyway. What carried them onto the stage was not the absence of fear, but an intuitive understanding that fear could not be allowed to dictate their actions.

Not every performance will align with every listener's preferences, and that, too, is part of the learning. An international school brings together students of different backgrounds, tastes, and perspectives, and this diversity is fully on display in the music we hear. Appreciation does not

require sameness. It requires openness. Sitting attentively through music that is unfamiliar, unexpected, or not immediately appealing is an exercise in empathy and respect. It reminds us that human expression cannot, and should not, be standardized.

The Christmas talent show reminds us that learning does not only happen in classrooms or through textbooks. It happens when we dare to express ourselves, when we honor difference, and when we accept imperfection as an essential part of being human. In that sense, the music we hear is only the surface. The deeper harmony lies in what it reveals about who we are, and who we are becoming.

