

Ah choo!

Business



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Here we go again. It's that dreaded time of year when half the student body is visibly miserable and the other half is hiding their sleep-laden eyes behind over-sized textbooks. It's the time when hallways are filled with grouchy students moaning about their aches and ailments (and no, this is not referring to AP testing). When classes are interrupted at three minute intervals by continual coughs and sneezes, when trash cans are overflowing with mounds of used tissues, you know it is here.

Worst of all, it won't leave until it has wreaked havoc on the lives of all that are unlucky enough to get a whiff of its disease infested breath. It's the flu season. Unfortunately, this sinister minded monster is allowed to prey on countless victims year after year thanks to the aid of two loyal sidekicks: parents who shove some Tylenol down their kids' throats and send them off to school saying, "you'll be fine" and teachers who innocently state that, if students are not present for certain in-class activities and quizzes, they will "simply receive a zero." While sickness is an unavoidable part of life, it becomes even more unavoidable when four out of five of classmates are coughing their viruses out at every corner. One would think that after all the waves of epidemics that have rippled through human history, people would realize that sickness only begets more sickness. Thus, if someone has come down with the flu, the most selfless and noble gift he/she can bestow upon society is simply –to just stay at home.

Of course, what afflicting, feverish student wouldn't want to rest in the comfort of his/her own home (and earn some plaudits from society in the process)? But no, parents and teachers insist, even demand, that their kids show up in class each and every day like clockwork – even if it means with

bundles of Kleenex and cough drops in hand. It is true that, in certain situations (especially at the high school level), maximum school attendance is crucial to the success of one's educational pursuits. However, educators and parental authorities alike need to understand this obvious reality: sick students do not learn, even if you chain them to their desks and pry open their tired, watery eyes. So why even bother? Why not just spare the frail, wheezing, throat-aching child, and the hundred other students that he/she comes into contact every day? In the end, only two things accomplished by forcing a diseased student to go to school – inflicting unnecessary suffering on an already miserable human being and cruelly fueling the delight of the bestial flu virus. So, to all parents and teachers, put yourself in our stressed-out, sleep-deprived, nose-congested shoes – and show some pity.