Opinion

Students Deserve an Open Campus

Jesseca Frost
Staff Writer

The Loy Norrix campus has been closed to students during the school day since the 1997-98 school year. Students at LN feel that they are responsible enough to have the freedom of an open campus during lunch, but the parents and administrators disagree. With an open campus students would be allowed to leave school during their assigned lunch period to go elsewhere for lunch.

Many students agree that they should have the opportunity to prove that they can handle an open campus responsibly.

If students had the chance to leave campus and go to lunch, they would not feel the need to cause a scene in the cafeteria just because they are bored. There is a lot of violence in the cafeteria during lunch. This is the result of students being bored and having nothing better to do. If students were not forced to stay in the cafeteria during lunch, there could be a major reduction of violence in the student cafeteria.

Junior Marissa Rodriguez thinks that one of the main reasons the students have fights in the cafeteria is because they have nothing else to do.

"It [open campus] would probably reduce the violence in the school cafeteria," said Rodriguez.

It is not only upperclassmen that would like open campus. Freshmen and sophomores also agree that it would be a great privilege.

Some people get sick of being here [at LN] all day and they want the freedom of an open campus, said LN freshman Demontre Stuckey.

Even though freshmen do not have cars or licenses, the privilege is still appealing; many have friends or siblings with cars.

"There's a whole world of food out there," said LN sophomore Mollie VanOrsdol, "It would be wonderful to have an open campus."

Seniors want an open campus because they are the class with the greatest opportunity to leave campus. It is their final year of high school; they want to be treated like adults.

"We [seniors] are growing up and becoming more mature," said LN senior Demetrius Brooks, As we get older, we get more responsible.

With such long blocks, students need a break. Sitting in class all day, ninety minutes at a time can become overwhelming.

With the opportunity of an open campus should also come a longer lunch period. Twenty-five minutes is not enough time to get off campus, eat lunch, and make it back in time for your next class. A longer lunch period would ensure that more students would return to school.

Even though it is clear that most students are in support of open campus, it should not just be handed to us. Students should have to prove that they are mature enough and that they will not abuse the privilege by showcasing good behaviors and maturity.

BLUE slips are a great way to encourage good behavior. Students receive BLUE slips for acting respectful and responsible. The BLUE slips could add up and once the students get a certain amount they could earn the privilege to leave campus during lunch.

Students should have set standards and criteria to meet in order to enjoy this luxury and to prove that they deserve an open campus.

Some guidelines that should be followed would include a maximum amount of referrals and suspensions for students who can leave campus. If students get too many referrals, their privilege of leaving campus for lunch would be revoked. Too many referrals are the result of a lack of respect for teachers, administration, and students; therefore, those students would not deserve the freedom of an open campus. This would be a proper way of punishing those students who do not wish to follow the rules and rewarding the students who do.

Students at LN believe the reason we do not have an open campus is because school administrators do not think students will return to school if they are allowed to leave. A solution to this problem would be to monitor and keep track of the students who leave campus and the students who come back.

Students could have an off campus pass. There would be a security guard in the watchtower, and all the other entrances would be blocked off. When the students leave, they would hand their pass to the security guard. If the students don't come back to retrieve their pass, the school would know who didn't follow the rules and punish them accordingly, instead of punishing all of the students by keeping us in the LN cafeteria.

Another reason campus is now closed is because of the parents. Parents want to know that their kids are in school all day. However, students at a high school level are responsible enough to make their own decisions when it comes to most things, especially going to lunch.

If the school gave students the chance to prove that they can handle an open campus then students should meet administration at least half way. Students would probably behave better if they were given the opportunity of an open campus.

"If students really want an open campus they should take steps toward getting it started, by regulating behaviors and talking to Principal David LaPrairie to see what guidelines need to be met," said Rodriguez.

If students want to leave, they are going to leave whether they are allowed to or not. Punishing students who deserve the privilege of open campus has no purpose. Students at LN should have an open campus. With the motivation of an open campus, students may begin to behave better during the school day.

Having A Job In High School Is Beneficial to Students

Katelynn Lucas
Copy Editor

Underclassmen tend to wish their lives away, longing for the time when they can finally say they worked through four long years of high school. Have teens forgotten that with age comes responsibility? By the time junior and senior years come around, upperclassmen are stressing about school, sports, a social life, and trying to figure out what they want to do with the rest of their lives. When their parents tell them to find a part-time job, it seems too much to ask.

While the whole process of searching and applying for jobs may seem only to add to the stress level of students, in reality, landing that first job is an incredible confidence builder. It is easy to get discouraged when job applications ask for prior experience and you cannot fill those spaces but instead of giving up, you should just keep going. Eventually someplace is bound to call back.

It might seem as if adding the extra responsibility of working to everything else in life is unimaginable. How on Earth are we supposed to juggle school and a job? Not to mention having a social life… and what about that vacation we planned?

Relax! Most employers who hire high school students are willing to meet the needs of their employees, they know we have school activities going on, and all you really need to do is let them [the employer] know ahead of time when you are available to work.

Having a job is not as bad as some people might think. Not only does it allow for a little extra spending money and help to build self-confidence, but also makes college applications and resumes look more impressive.

Having a job in high school teaches responsibility and time management. You have to learn quickly how to plan so that you can spend time with your friends, manage to finish your homework, and work two shifts over the weekend. Naturally it is a challenge at first, but in no time at all the process becomes easier and easier until it feels as if you have been doing it forever.

The best thing you can learn from having a job while still attending high school is how the "real world" actually works. In no time at all graduation will have come and gone, followed quickly by college. After college we will be out in the "real world" completely responsible for our own choices. Getting a taste of the "real world" before leaving high school teaches lessons on patience, reliability, and responsibility, the sorts of lessons not found in the classroom alone.

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Although the thought of that first job is terrifying, actually having it feels amazing. The added stress is completely worthwhile when you feel more confident at interviews and have extra spending cash available.

While you might have forgotten that with age comes responsibility, the reminder you get from on-the-job experience is life changing.

I Swear To Be Disrespectful

Kristen Wehling
Feature Editor

Every day as I walk through the halls of our absolutely wonderful high school, I am apt to hear words uttered that, for purposes here, should be indicated by an asterisk.

Phrases such as, "Yo mama (asterisk)," "Why don' choo (asterisk)," and many others blare through the halls during passing periods and can be disruptive to classes currently in session, or for those who simply would like to enjoy their walk to class without potential fights brewing.

Swearing has become an epidemic and Loy Norrix provides evidence for this. Honestly, if you were an outsider walking into LN for the first time and heard slang and derogative remarks, would you want to step further into our halls?

Swearing in today's society has become a virus, and I myself admit that I have caught the bug. At LN though, swearing has gotten out of control with no end in sight. The swearing by students is disrespectful to teachers, administrators, and their peers. Swearing is offensive and more initiative must be taken to quell the demeaning language.

There have been many occasions in which I have witnessed teachers being verbally harassed by students. These teachers try and stop it, but their efforts are in vain. Teachers attempt to get the real names of the perpetraitors by way of their ID (if they are in fact wearing the correct ID) and write them up.

The students then either run away trying to avoid punishment, are caught by security and are merely reprimanded, or are sent to the infamous "Bridges" where some students will just cuss some more and say "Man it's not my fault the (asterisk) got in my way," showing that cussing does not cease, even when being punished for it.

Punishments are dealt to the students who shout obscenities and the LN faculty are trying their hardest to suppress the epidemic. While many students learn from their mistakes through the punishments they face, many do not.

Swear words are the language for the ignorant and those who cannot come up with anything more clever and intelligent to say. Instead, try saying such phrases as, "You quintessence of dust," "Canker of a calm world and a long peace," or "A wretched pulling fool, a whining mammet!" William Shakespeare used these insults, and don't they sound more fun than modern swear words?

Swearing has gotten out of control and it mostly stems from television, popular music, and family. If your older sibling is swearing up a storm 24/7, you may be influenced by him or her and feel that you must do the same because it's "cool." A simple solution to swearing would be to stop it at its source.

Limiting what young children observe on TV or listen to on the radio could stop the spread of this infectious disease and leave more time for reading where children can gain valuable language skills and possibly will be able to learn clever insults and comebacks instead of uttering inappropriate, overused words.

When used too often, swear words lose their "oomph." Throwing swear words all over the place and using them just for the (asterisk) of it causes these words to age fast. I know you think that your friend is being a(n) (asterisk) or that the cafeteria food tastes like something bad, but please, if you have to use profanity, use those words when you really mean it. Hearing shouts of "@$%&*!" in the halls becomes meaningless when overused.

Swear words are hurtful and are often degrading. No person should have to be called ugly names, even if someone only casually calls another person a(n) (asterisk). When a person swears, they are being disrespectful to their teachers, peers, and parents. A witty comeback sounds much more intelligent and can be laughed at afterwards because of the silliness of the vocabulary. I mean, wouldn't you laugh if you were being called a "quintessence of dust?"

I will stand up and say proudly, "you are a quintessence of dust" instead of swearing and being disrespectful.

Impact of Teenage Car Accidents Hits Hard

Sarah Leip
Business Manager

Sometimes I do like to drive fast because it is a rush even though it is not the best decision I could ever make because auto accidents are the leading cause of death in America for teenagers. I don't really want to die in my car as a teenager.

I did have a near death experience. I was on my way out to Bittersweet Ski Area in Otsego, Michigan and I was driving with my friend Whitney. I was going sixty-five miles per hour and right after the entrance there is a dirt road, so there was some gravel on the street. I tried to slow down and turn at the same time. That didn't really work as planned.

While turning, I went in between the brick sign and the gate. I dodged the first tree but hit the second tree at an angle. Whitney and I are very fortunate to be living, but thank goodness my windows were down or else my head would have been through the window.

Most car accidents in the news generally involve teenagers who usually don't walk away from these accidents. The reason behind this is because teenagers often drive too fast or under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and don't always pay full attention to the road. But if you think about it, most teenagers crash their cars because they are showing off for their friends or they are trying to impress someone.

The California Highway Patrol in 2000 reported that in California 37,532 teenage drivers (ages 16-19) got into an automobile accident in 2000.

When a child turns sixteen they usually want to go get their license and many expect their parents to buy them a really cute car. Who doesn't want that? But what many don't realize is that cars take lives. It is a parent's worst nightmare to get a call from the police saying, "Your child is hurt," "Your child has been in a car accident," or "Your child is dead."

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There are plenty of ways to avoid car accidents, especially as a teenager. Check out your car and make sure it is in good shape before you leave for a trip, make sure to check both ways and be very cautious when crossing intersections, avoid getting in fast lanes as much as possible, don't get too close to cars in front of you, keep your hands at the 3 and 9 position on the wheel, move as close to the steering wheel as possible and be overly alert and careful while driving at night.

When looking for a car remember these things; the risk of a crash per mile is four times higher between ages sixteen and nineteen according to Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (I.I.H.S). Sports cars with special motors, such as turbo charged motors are more likely to encourage speeding. I.I.H.S states that teens are often better off driving the family sedan with newer safety features.

Car accidents are the leading cause of death among teenagers mainly because of the high rate of speed that the teenager is going. There are six main reasons why teenagers get into car accidents. Those six reasons are; failure to yield, not adjusting to weather or darkness, tailgating, speeding, not wearing seat belts, and driving under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol. Males are more likely to speed and drive recklessly than females, but females are just as likely to get into a car accident.

"Every hour police officers across the United States have to deliver such news to parents of teens killed in car crashes and each time it is equally as horrific," according to Teencaraccident.com.

Teenagers make up about ten percent of the US population but they account for twelve percent of all fatal car accidents. Forty-one percent of teens that die in car accidents are not wearing their seat belt.

Now I know why parents tell you not to speed and also why car accidents are the leading cause of death among teenagers.

Six Main Reasons For Car Accidents

- Failure to yield
- Not adjusting to weather or darkness
- Tailgating
- Speeding
- Not wearing a seat belt
- Driving under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol