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KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN

STRUGGLES WITH STATIONARY STUDENTS

Advice to Get Traffic Flowing

MITCHELL ROCKWELL

In Loy Norrix High School, at the overcrowded merging point of the three main wings (A, B and C), student traffic frequently comes to a complete stop.

According to the “Kalamazoo Gazette” article “Kalamazoo Central High School Historical Highlights,” Loy Norrix was founded in 1961. Its design from the 60’s has remained relatively untouched, which is reflected in its “glass castle” design. The school was founded after 799 students graduated from Kalamazoo Central High School in 1960. This was the largest graduating class in Central’s history, and in response, the district built Loy Norrix to ease the crowding.

Loy Norrix has gained more than 21 hundred students since the announcement of the Kalamazoo Promise, and more than 11 hundred in the last four years, according to Kalamazoo Public School’s Reports. Loy Norrix was not designed to hold as many students as it does today and has plenty of crowding problems, where just 5 years ago lunch periods were split up due to crowding issues in the lunchroom.

Today, a bottleneck keeps students stationary during passing time, and it’s notorious with Norrix security guards. Security guards are always in the area to encourage students who stop to talk with friends in the halls to continue walking.

Officer Williams, head of Loy Norrix security, said, “I encourage students

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STAFF RACES TOWARD NEW PARKING SYSTEM



Image of the students new parking pass for the 2015-16 year. These passes are required for registered cars. **Photo Credit / Alexis Martin**

Alexis Martin

It's a new school year. Students are waking up, getting ready to board the bus or start their cars. Upon entering class, they take their seats, but when the announcements come on, there's something new. Student drivers are now required to register their cars for parking passes.

Starting October 1st, students will be required to register their cars. After asking Loy Norrix Principal Rodney Prewitt about the benefits of the new parking passes, he gave one immediate answer:

"Safety," said Principal Rodney Prewitt.

Going in-depth, Prewitt informed Knight Life reporters that there has been a slight problem with unknown cars parked in the Loy Norrix parking lot. If all cars are registered, campus safety can then check for the presence of any weapons or explosives in the vehicles, and they can then alert the school.

Teachers and EFE/EFA students are to be registered also. Students who don't have the registration pass on their car window will be given a warning sticker on the car window. If you still do not have your car registered and are cited a second time, the car may be towed.

Now, as for the question that is on all of our minds: how did the \$30 registration fee get put in the announcements?

"It was meant as a guideline for me," said Prewitt. "An informational sheet that was used, it listed charging \$30 for student parking along with the required documentations for student parking. This sheet was mistakenly turned in to be announced along with the correct announcement for student parking."

In other words, the sheet that was meant for Principal Prewitt was accidentally given to those who give the morning announcements and was delivered to students during the announcements that morning. Upon hearing this new registration rule requiring the \$30 fee, students were not happy.

Senior Jordyne Hitt said "was going to pay \$30 to park at the park before I park at my school. Students would have parked here anyway. I think that's what most people would have done," said Hitt.

On September 11th, Assistant Principal Aguinaga made an announcement that the \$30 dollar registration fee was not intended and would not be required to register a car.

So please, make sure you register your car in the tower and get that registration sticker on your car window. All you have to do is go to the tower with your license and car registration form and receive your registration sticker for the 2015-2016 school year.



Connor Peterman (Front Right) and Cade Peterman (Back Left) sitting in his car after school. Both are prepared for the car ride home.

Photo Credit / Alexis Martin

HELPING STUDENTS DECODE THE CRYPTIC DRESS CODE



Melissa Commissaris sporting a crop top that exposes her stomach. This is one of the standards deemed inappropriate for school. **Photo Credit / Jordan Brown**

Jordan Brown

Last year, Loy Norrix was bursting with defiance. Students rebelled against the dress code. Staff feared enforcing it. Organized events took place where a many of students wore leggings on the same day. Students and parents spoke at school board meetings. All of this occurred in a desperate attempt to get a more fair, more equal, and a less gender-biased dress code.

"The reason that we responded with a change in the dress standards to last year's events, is not because we felt pressure from the students to do so. It is because social standards changed, and we adapted to fit them," said Principal Rodney Prewitt when asked why the dress standards had been revised.

Officer Curtis Snell has worked at Loy Norrix for 8 years now, and that's certainly enough time to see some change.

"As the shorts got shorter, the attitudes got bigger," said Snell. "In my first two years here, it was mostly boys sagging their pants that we had a problem with, now we see more girls pushing it and seeing what they can get away with."

There are two long paragraphs that boil down to a few simple meanings: your shirt and pants need to touch in all areas, your shirt's neckline should not go lower than the middle of your armpits, and your shorts should not go higher than the middle of your thigh.

Administrators who can determine the community standards include Kelly Hinga, Erin Middleton, Christopher Aguinaga, Rodney Prewitt and Andrew Laboe.

There are seven more rules to follow:

1. Your shirt straps must be at least three finger-widths apart.
2. Head coverings with a religious, medical, or reasonable cultural need are permitted. All other head coverings are prohibited.
3. Shoes must be worn at all times. House shoes and slippers are not permitted.
4. Full-length coats or trench coat like apparel worn to school must be stored in lockers and not worn during the school day.
5. Clothing that has a double meaning, promotes the use of violence, gangs or gang symbols, drugs, alcohol or tobacco, material that is obscene or of a sexually suggestive nature is not appropriate or allowed.
6. Wallet chains are not allowed.
7. Any apparel which the administrators determine to be unacceptable in light of community standards or disruptive to the educational setting.

But what do the students think?

"I like this set of dress code better than last years because there is not a leggings rule. Other than that I do not see much of a difference. It is gender neutral in wording, but not in the intent," continued sophomore Will Briggs. "Do I think that the staff will abuse the power to deem clothing inappropriate as they see fit? Sure. They have different opinions than we do, so there naturally will be some areas where we don't agree."

Will Briggs isn't the only one who thinks this way.

"I think that the staff will abuse the power to say what they think is inappropriate and they will continue to go by the old dress code," said junior Erika Wagoner. "Also, I like this dress code more because it allows us to wear our shorts."

However, others believe that this power won't be abused.

"I don't think that the rule will be abused, the staff are reasonable, and personally I think that this set of dress codes is better because it allows us to wear more clothes that we want to, without getting in trouble," said junior Taylor Brown.

Who is right about how this rule will be enforced? If you listen to Principal Prewitt, it's Brown.

"The staff are more equipped to enforce the dress standards this year. They have been given a script to use. The script allows them to take their opinions out of the dress standards and just follow the book," said Prewitt.

MILWOOD ELEMENTARY IS DEMOLISHED FOR REMODELING

CaitlinCommissaris

Wrecking balls and bulldozers are now tearing down a place that children used to learn, laugh and play. The halls that students used to roam with peers are no longer standing.

Former Milwood Alumni couldn't bear to watch the school, that helped shape him as a person, be ripped apart. Outside the gates of construction, a man with silver hair stood watching the destruction with tears in his eyes and most likely recalling the memories of old friendships and times when things were simpler.

"Seeing my old school being torn down feels like my memories from there are being torn down too. I remember playing with friends on the playground and basketball court and now that's all gone," said Jake, Milwood alumni.

Milwood Elementary is a school that has stood in Kalamazoo for nearly 100 years.

According to mlive, the school's north wing, which was constructed in the 1920s, is being torn down and rebuilt along with the playground

and basketball court. This project is estimated to cost 5.5 million dollars.

"I remember running through the halls with my friends and racing each other to class. We had a blast there. I'll never forget it even when those halls that we ran through are in crumbles," said Trevor Morgan, a former student.

Students who attended Milwood Elementary are now being bused to the former Kalamazoo Christian Middle School. The building was purchased by KPS in 2013. These students were also given the option to attend Greenwood Elementary for the year.

"My favorite part of that school was the huge wall with the jungle mural painted on it because I thought it was really cool and would look at it a lot as a kid, it's sad because that wall was torn down," said junior Morgan Kenbeek, a former Milwood student.

By the fall of 2016 Milwood's doors will reopen and the school will look better than ever. The memories made there will never be forgotten and many new memories will be made in the years to follow.



Milwood Elementary, a school that has stood for almost 100 years, is demolished for remodeling. A crane lifts up rubble from the demolition.
Photo Credit / CaitlinCommissaris

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FIFTH YEAR PROGRAM

EARLY/MIDDLE COLLEGE GIVES STUDENTS HEAD START TO COLLEGE

Early/Middle College

Makenna Sandt

High school has always been known as the last four years of being a kid, not having adult responsibilities and enjoying it while it lasts. But, a new idea has come around, a fifth year of high school where students are able to dual enroll and by the end of the year, have an associate's degree and a high school diploma.

This new program that has sparked attention in Michigan is called the Early Middle College program. Students are purposely taking another year of high school.

"The student must remain high school students to qualify for funding during the '13th grade'," Julie Mack reported for MLive in the article "Free College: Kalamazoo County Students Can Graduate High School with Associate's Degree in New 5-Year Program."

According to the website Pix11, some students may take a fifth year to

get more attention from college sports teams, get better options for college or to help meet demanding graduation requirements.

Schoolcraft and Gull Lake High School are piloting the Early Middle College program this year. Kalamazoo, Portage, Vicksburg, Comstock, Parchment, Galesburg-Augusta and Climax-Scotts are waiting for approval.

Not only will this Early Middle College program potentially help the high school dropout rate, but it could also improve college enrollment, completion and college costs.

Early Middle College is a program that high school students would start in their second year of high school. Sophomores would then take a class to learn about different strategies they could use in order to be successful in college. After a student's sophomore year, students would then choose a course of study and begin taking dual

enrollment classes at Kalamazoo Valley Community College or an Education for Employment/Arts class, along with classes at their home high school.

What makes this program unique is that by the end of a student's fifth year of high school, they can acquire an associate's degree and go right into a job or a four year college. Through this program, students can take almost three full years of college classes that are paid for by their home school.

If students decide to join this program and take a fifth year of high school, they may be missing out on traditional senior activities since they are planning on returning to school for another year.

"The senior year stuff is what you look forward to throughout high school," said junior Hannah Pittman.

The KRESA website states that after a student's thirteenth year they can have an associate's degree in graphic design and machine-tool technology or a certificate for graphic design, machine-tool technology, welding or personal computer technician.

The Early Middle College program has been gaining attention in Kalamazoo County and is a great opportunity for high school students to

gain a free associate's degree. Although this program does mean another year in high school, which some students might dread, there are many benefits to participating in this program.

As a Kalamazoo Promise school, some students may not want to stick around another year just to get an associate's degree when they have free college tuition waiting for them. Seniors especially may not be very interested in the program because they're already getting free college because of the Promise.

"If I had the Promise, I would not be interested, but since I live in Vicksburg and don't have the promise I would consider the program," said senior Kirsten Haines.

This may be why the program hasn't gained very much attention in Kalamazoo Public Schools. People probably want to get out of high school and get started with college that is already paid for by the promise.

Although the Early Middle College is a great way for high school students to get two years of college paid for, it may not be the right fit for KPS because there is a great program like the Kalamazoo Promise.

FROM TRAFFIC PAGE 1

to keep moving," as he handed passes to students late for class. "Every year it's just those three halls where traffic stops."

Another campus safety officer, Officer McFletcher, is positioned outside the B-Wing of Loy Norrix. His route frequently requires him to help guide traffic in the bottleneck.

"It's a bad place, where those four hallways are coming together. It's a social hub," said McFletcher.

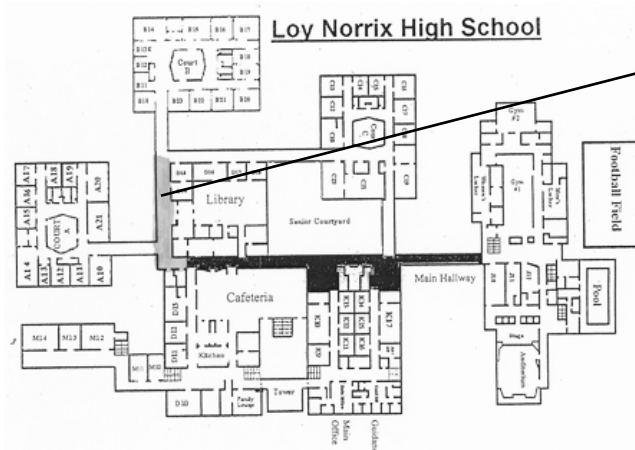
A set of doors connecting the A-Wing to the B-Wing leads outside, but the doors are locked during the day because they lead outside the campus. Only during fire drills can the students traverse directly from A-Wing to B-Wing, and there are no apparent plans to build another hallway. "The halls are packed like sardines in a can. It's ridiculous," said Ben Byrd, a senior at Loy Norrix who has to traverse the bottleneck twice every morning to get to his classes.

"People going to the C-Wing don't take the other route," said Officer McFletcher.

For those in the C-Wing, an alternative route leads from the main hallway into the C-Wing across the Senior Courtyard. However, many students prefer the main hallway due to quicker access to the A and B Wings, even though it's a longer route to the C-Wing through the bottleneck. Officer McFletcher noticed students preferring the bottleneck in his rounds through

the hall.

His final piece of advice for students needing to go from wing to wing: "Take the alternative route. You can be social, but keep moving," said McFletcher.



This is an Aerial Map of Loy Norrix High School. The light gray strip is the bottleneck.



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DONALD TRUMP: MAKING AMERICA WHITE AGAIN



Donald Trump gives a speech at one of his rallies.

Jaidyn **Kynaston**

“Make America Great Again” or “Make America White Again?” Donald Trump is a real estate developer, business author, billionaire and republican presidential candidate with a strong stance on immigration.

“The U.S. has become a dumping ground for everyone else’s problems.

When Mexico sends its people, they’re not sending their best, they are sending people that have lots of problems. They’re bringing drugs, crime. They’re rapists,” said Trump.

Trump’s solution for this is to repeal the 14th amendment, retracting citizenship from “anchor-babies” or children born to undocumented immigrants residing in America. Trump would proceed to round up and deport 11 million Mexican immigrants.

Trump then plans to build a wall rivaling that of China’s on the Mexican-American border. He would fund this project by intercepting money sent to the families in Mexico from their relatives living and working undocumented in the United States.

Roughly nine million people live in mixed status households or homes that include persons with varying immigration status, and the majority are Latin America. Univision, a Spanish language broadcast television network, conducted a study showing 80 percent of Latino voters consider Trump’s remarks offensive.

“I was just shocked. I just felt like worthless, as if I wasn’t supposed to be here. What he said about Mexicans doesn’t concern all of them,” said an

anonymous Loy Norrix student who identifies herself as Latina.

Following Trump’s incendiary and xenophobic comments, Latinos unified and retaliated. Striking back, social media was engulfed with Latino individuals and organizations addressing Trump. Nearly 200 different petitions opposing Trump were started on Change.org, the largest of which was started Guillermo Castañeda and received 318 thousand signature in 3 days.

Univision refused to air “Miss Universe,” an annual international beauty pageant formerly partially owned by Trump, due to the response of its viewers. NBCUniversal and Televisa, also multibillion dollar media companies, cut ties with Trump, Macy’s dropped Trump’s clothing line and the PGA is no longer holding the Grand Slam on Trump’s LA golf course.

Latino Americans are clearly standing in solidarity against Trump, showing a zero tolerance for hateful speech. According to a survey by Gallup, 82 percent of the U.S.-resident Hispanic adults that know who Trump is hold a negative view of him, so they probably won’t vote for Trump in the 2016 presidential election.

AN INSPIRING CLOCK TRIGGERS RACISM

Cindy **Bravo**

Most schools are learning environments that try to push students to become better people in the future. What happens when racism interferes with education? Sometimes it’s not even noticeable because it’s so well hidden in the system.

September 14, at MacArthur High School in Irving Texas, freshman Ahmed Mohamed showed up to school with a clock he had built himself. He wanted to impress all of his teachers, specifically his engineering teacher. Once Mohamed showed his teacher the clock, she told him it was nice but that he should put it away for the rest of the day. He ended up plugging it in later during his English class. Mohamed put an alarm on and when it started to beep during class, the teacher asked to see it.

“It looks like a bomb, don’t show it to anyone else,” said MacArthur High School English teacher.

The teacher confiscated the clock and reported it to the office. Both the principal and a police officer led Mohamed to a room where four more Police officers waited for his arrival. He was questioned, and they realized the clock was not a real bomb, but they still viewed it as a hoax bomb. Mohamed stated that he was not allowed to call his family during the time he was being questioned. He also said the principal told him to sign a written statement, if he didn’t he would be expelled from school.

Mohamed was arrested and handcuffed out of the school. He was taken to a juvenile detention center where he went through the mugshot process, followed by more questioning. The authorities ended up announcing that there would be no charges against him, but of course this story became a worldwide sensation.

As soon as people heard about what had happened they went straight to social media using the hashtag #IStandWithAhmed and shared their opinions. Even President Obama decided to share what was on his mind.

“Cool clock, Ahmed. Want to bring it to the White House? We should inspire more kids like you to like science. It’s what makes America great,” said U.S. President Barack Obama.

Many schools should inspire students to want to learn and be intelligent people. Don’t cut off their wings when they’re barely learning how to fly. Every child needs an opportunity to show their great skills.

KANYE RUNNING FOR PRESIDENT IN 2020

Luis **Juarez**

On August 30th, 2015, the 32nd annual Video Music Awards were hosted by Miley Ray Cyrus. People ranging from Fetty Wap to Taylor Swift attended the VMA’s. A highlight that people discussed was Kanye West’s standing ovation. As Kanye stood on the stage for a good couple of minutes without saying a word, the people cheered and clapped. But the most memorable highlight that had everyone talking was his bid to run for president for the 2020 election year.

When Kanye made his announcement, everyone started tweeting away about how they felt about his candidacy. Kanye’s announcement went so viral that the 2016 presidential front-runner of the Republican party Donald J. Trump was asked to give his input on West.

“He goes around saying ‘Trump is my all time hero’,” Trump said. “He says it to everybody. So, Kanye West, I love him. Now, maybe in a few years I’ll have to run against him, I don’t know. So I’ll take that back.”

A lot of people are happy for Kanye West because he’s pursuing political office, but there are those who can’t imagine West in the Oval Office.

“I don’t think Kanye West would be a good president because he has no political experience,” said senior Megan Zabik, “But he is a better candidate than Donald Trump.”

Even though the 2020 Presidential elections involving West may be interesting, U.S. citizens still shouldn’t get sidetracked from seeking out political knowledge for this upcoming election in 2016.

“I think [Kanye West’s candidacy] it’s a joke, circus, and a sideshow. The only thing positive about Kanye West is, despite his public persona, he is a family man and that’s an attribute I’d look for in a president,” said government teacher Michael Wright, “But that’s as far as it goes.”

Whether or not the Kanye West Presidency is true or not, a lot of people talk about Kim Kardashian as well.

“Kim Kardashian being First Lady means we’ll all look good, and maybe we’ll get better food in school,” said senior Rellisha Jackson.

There are supporters and there are haters of the couple, but aside from that what is important is to stay open minded and be informed of what’s going out in the world.



Illustration / Luis Juarez

NEW ADVISORS, NEW NAME, GSA REBRANDS ITSELF TO INCLUDE MORE STUDENTS

FrankieStevens

The Gay-Straight Alliance has been going on at Loy Norrix for 16 years and was founded by former teacher Katherine Williamson. The program has been a community where all students, genders and sexualities are accepted. It helps students talk about their challenges, spread peer awareness and make friends.

“When you work with students that are different than you, you look at the world differently,” said new GSA advisor and math teacher John Larson.

After Williamson left, the advisor was former government teacher Art Williams. This past school year, Williams retired and people were wondering who was going to fill his shoes. That’s when Larson stepped in.

“One of the things we do is try to be supportive of people who are either questioning their sexuality or their gender. We are meant to be a support group and a safe space,” said Larson.

Larson has been a teacher at Loy Norrix for three years, and this year he took on the role of the GSA’s advisor.

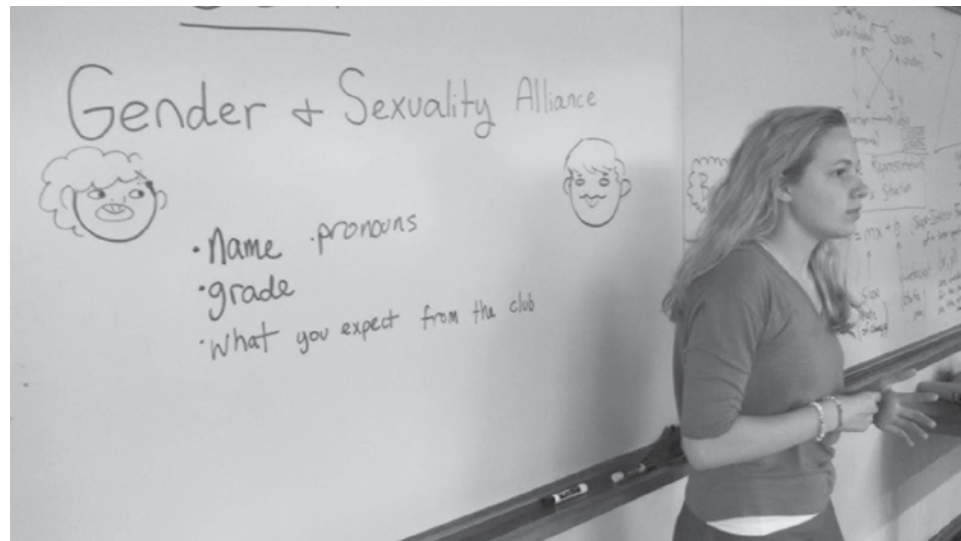
At his side is fellow math teacher Sarah Jenzen as the co-advisor.

“It’s a great way to learn more about my students, other students, and learn more stories about what is a really important issue right now,” said Jenzen.

2015 President of the GSA Sophia DeRango, and new president, Emily Wilger, along with other members decided it was time for a name change. The official name change is now the Gender and Sexuality Alliance, which means that they accept all genders and sexualities in the club.

“We chose Gender and Sexuality Alliance this year because it’s more inclusive, and it’s not just the gays and the straights, it’s all the LGBT youth,” said Wilger.

This year the GSA hopes to do more in the school. They will be spreading awareness and educating people using announcements on LN Radio. They will also have days of visibility in the school, which is a day to spread awareness about transgender people and “GSA week,” which will be a week to celebrate



Junior and president of the GSA, Sophia DeRango, talks to the club members about the new name change. DeRango has been president of the GSA for two years. **Photo Credit / Frankie Stevens**

The GSA meets every Friday in room B23 from 2:30-3:30

the LGBTQ+ community and many more. The changes in the GSA reflect the changes in the world as people become more accepting of diversity in gender and sexuality.

TEENS FEEL THE BUZZ: THE EFFECTS OF COFFEE

SophiaBoismier

Caffeine is a drug, and just like any drug, you can get addicted to it.

According to the “Yellowstone Recovery” website, teenagers are actually more prone to addiction because their brains aren’t fully developed. Out of the 600+ drinks that contain caffeine, as said on the “Caffeine Informer” website, coffee is a growing trend that results in more caffeine consumption with teens. Some can’t even leave the house in the morning without it.

“It makes me jittery, but gives me enough energy and focus to get through the day,” said junior Olivia Mears who drinks black coffee.

In moderation, straight coffee can actually be beneficial to your health.

According to Renee Jaques from the “Huffington Post,” coffee can reduce your risk of developing type 2 diabetes, can be good for your liver and can help your brain be healthier for a longer period of time. Jaques said that even smelling coffee can make you less stressed (only the stress caused from lack of sleep).

Even the caffeine in coffee can have some health benefits when consumed in moderation.

As said by Erin Brodwin and Kevin Loria from Business Insider’s article “Health Benefits of Caffeine,” caffeine can boost your memory, increase your attention span, and a “mild dose” can improve your mood.

The article does, however, mention that the amount of caffeine taken in can become too much.

According to a report from “Kids Health” by a team of pediatricians and other medical experts, “Teenagers should try to limit caffeine consumption to no more than 100 mg of caffeine daily.”

While adults should be taking in 200-300 mg, if a teen takes in more than 100 mg of caffeine a day, they run the risk of becoming addicted to it.

“[When I don’t drink coffee] I get a headache and I’m really tired and irritable,” said Mears.

Even though it is very rare for caffeine consumption to result in fatality, getting addicted may cause a variety of withdrawal symptoms if the user decides to stop. Symptoms include fatigue, flu-like symptoms, anxiety, having a hard time concentrating, and more.

“[When I don’t drink coffee] I feel tired and unfocused. I feel like I’m going to fall asleep,” said sophomore Grace Erway.

There’s nothing we teens enjoy more than a morning Starbucks Vanilla Latte or a hot French Roast from Biggby. And there’s absolutely nothing wrong with that, as long as we keep it in moderation.



Senior Cameron Goodale poses for a photo illustration to bring awareness about teen caffeine consumption. Goodale admits to drinking coffee when he needs a boost. **Photo Credit / Sophia Boismier**

NEW COUNSELOR QUICKLY WELCOMED

JonathanLo

An unfamiliar figure sat in a comfortable swivel chair, her desk a bit disorganized and loaded with student schedules and requests. Pam Robinson is the new Loy Norrix High School counselor. She is outgoing, competitive, and has a humble mannerism and posture.

The students with last names from A-Eh have Robinson who now replaces, former LNHS counselor, Alicia Curry. Robinson's daily routine consists of conversing with students about grades and academic schedules as well as giving advice on classes and future post-secondary schooling options.

Robinson has at least 20 years of experience in the education field and many positions under her belt ranging from being a teacher to an assistant principal.

Her former position was at Battle Creek Central High school as a counselor then she recently moved to Kalamazoo. Because Robinson's daughter is in the Kalamazoo school system she decided to work at LNHS.

"I believe the place I live is the place I should work at," said Robinson.

Robinson has a deep and profound support for student passions and seems to respond well to the idea of students petitioning for things they deem necessary. She also considers counselors a strong pinnacle to a student's high school career meaning that counselors are one of the most important figures to a student's high school success.

Robinson said that if you don't have a positive relationship with a student, the mutual respect and trust isn't there and then gaining a relationship will allow a student to come to you for assistance whether a personal problem or an academic issue.

According to Robinson, this relationship allows one to be fully in tune with another person's wants and needs.

"I would say I have a positive relationship with Mrs. Robinson which allowed us to finish our business



Pam Robinson is cool, calm and collected. She is respectful and kind to the people she meets at the school. **Photo Credit / Caitlin Commissaris**

quickly and easily," said senior Mariah Brown.

Robinson as a new counselor to Loy

Norrix will be another useful resource for students to depend on.

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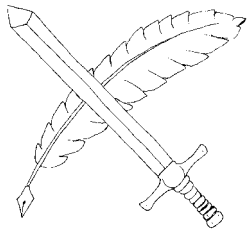
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STAFF EDITORIAL: METAL DETECTORS SHOULD NOT BE IMPLEMENTED AT LOY NORRIX

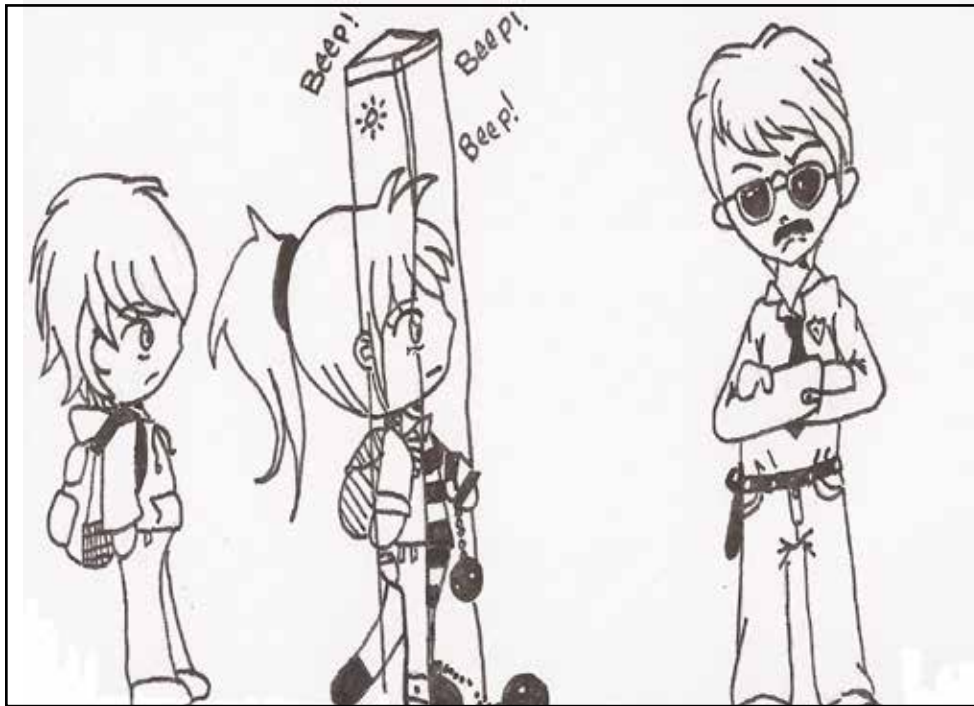


Illustration / Taylor Krupinak

School, a place of education or a holding cell for our generation of young students. The debate on whether or not metal detectors should be in schools is very controversial. While many parents and teachers want metal detectors, students aren't so sure about them and for good reasons.

According to CNN there have been over 74 school shootings in the past 18 months, scores of teachers, students and parents believe it is imperative to implement metal detectors.

Installing metal detectors in public schools at glance seems like a good idea. Put them in schools and just have kids walk through them before entering school. Except it's not that simple.

The idea of metal detectors in school is vague, where will metal detectors go and who will work them. When thinking of such an idea one needs to understand organizational efforts to fully secure the school. Will students and teachers only be able to enter through one door at Norrix?

The school presumably has to lock

all the other doors in the school besides the ones with the metal detectors to further the safety of the institution and assure that the metal detectors can be used to their best ability. Students aren't prisoners though. Locking all the doors in the school is seen by many as "insulting."

The National Clearinghouse for Educational Facilities states "Doors shall be arranged to open readily from the egress side whenever the building is occupied." This means it is illegal to lock all the doors from the inside. If students wanted, they could let somebody in through another door thus eliminating the effectiveness of the metal detectors.

If the students of Loy Norrix are only to enter through one door, then Norrix needs to lock all the windows too. For classrooms without air conditioning, windows can be lifesavers, but with windows locked many classrooms will become saunas.

Organizational efforts at Loy Norrix are a major concern with metal

detectors. Another possible problem is bottleneck. Bottleneck explains itself, imagine Loy Norrix students attempting to walk through the tip of a bottle all at once. The Loy Norrix students would be shoulder to shoulder in an uncomfortable early morning mess as they wait for their turn to go through the metal detectors.

Another problem with metal detectors is cost. On the website metaldetector, walk-through metal detectors cost between \$3 thousand to \$5 thousand. That's a lot of money especially if Loy Norrix needs multiple walk-through metal detectors. To add on to the cost of that there would need to be multiple security guards manning them, which in the end could cost Loy Norrix ten of thousands of dollars.

Metal detectors would also give Loy Norrix a scruff reputation, making Norrix look a lot worse than it is. This is not needed as metal detectors overall would bring a negative environment. Disruption would happen more often with them, as students and others entering the school make remarks on the metal detectors.

Understanding what metal detectors would bring to Norrix is key in this argument. At the end of the day, students at Norrix don't need to feel inundated by the fact that they have to go to school. If KPS really wants to improve Loy Norrix, instead of spending thousands of dollars on machinery, spend money on humans. Bring in more counselors and others who can help at-risk students with problems they're facing that might lead to them acting out.

Metal detectors should be a last resort option at Loy Norrix. Invest in supportive staff and loving individuals to change the overall culture at Norrix for the better, and teach students the right path in life. When we as an institution can say we have taught students on morality and shown them how to be better people, metal detectors will seem preposterous.

KS

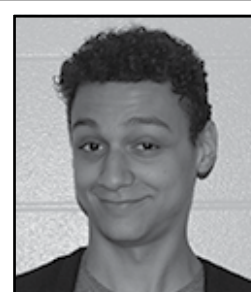
KNIGHTS SPEAK

Should high school be optional? Why or why not?



Junior Shane Harrelson

Yes, because high school is trapping my inner soul.



Senior Cameron Goodale

No, because many jobs require a high school diploma.

POINT

HIGH SCHOOL SHOULD BE OPTIONAL



Sophia **DeRango**

I love education, but I hate going to high school. I have learned how to cope with the pains of public school for eleven years of my life and so has almost everyone else I know. It's not just learning how to deal with waking up early, hours of homework, finals week, and more, it's learning how to survive things that most people don't think about.

Students have had to learn how to deal with being indoors for seven hours of the day. They've had to learn how to manage with a deprivation of sunlight or breathing fresh air. I, and many I know, have had to learn how to put our own mental health on hold for school.

Public education doesn't sit well with me. It's not something I need to live the life I want in the future, which won't involve precalculus and college readiness. High school promotes a loss of individual autonomy. Instead of growing as a person through education, you become trapped in an institution for your entire youth.

According to the website PsychCentral, one in every four teenagers experience a major depressive episode during high school, and the average age for this to begin is as young as 14. Many adolescents go undiagnosed and untreated which leaves them to suffer in silence.

The World Mental Health Survey found that "in high-income countries, like the United States, fewer than half of adolescents with a mental health problem receive treatment." Depressive episodes and other mental health issues often affect performance in school and can lead to failing grades, poor attendance, lack of interest in classes

and the absence of enjoyment of school.

Being a student and prioritizing mental health is almost an oxymoron. When a student has, for example, two tests on Friday, practice after school every day, a paper due Thursday and homework every night, when do they have time to address a mental health problem and work to get better?

When the Centers for Disease

I'm free



Control conducted a survey of students in 9th through 12th grade in the United States, they discovered that "16 percent of students reported seriously considering suicide, 13 percent reported creating a plan, and 8 percent reported trying to take their own life in the 12 months preceding the survey."

According to "Psychology Today", in the United States, "High school and college students are five to eight times as likely to suffer from depressive symptoms as were teenagers 50 or 60 years ago."

So many high schoolers have sacrificed so much just to do well in

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COUNTERPOINT

HIGH SCHOOL: SORRY, YOU NEED IT



Max **Offerman**

opportunities.

Many argue that those who wish to work an entry-level job until retirement, pursue a self-sustaining farm based lifestyle, or simply don't want to go to school should have the right to do so.

In the past, Michigan allowed students to quit school and pursue these lifestyles but only after the age of 16. At that point, a student could legally drop out with parental consent. However, in 2010, the age requirement for mandatory attendance was bumped up to 18, creating more arguments about the necessity of education.

While some students have a purpose behind dropping out, many would take the opportunity to stop attending school for their own leisure. It's a moral responsibility of government to help ensure and enforce equal opportunities for education. By keeping high school mandatory, students are given more opportunities for a successful future.

Students without a high school diploma have significantly less opportunities than a student who at least gets their GED (General Equivalency Diploma). A study from the Center of Public Education found that employers that do not require high school diplomas commonly do not offer retirement, health benefits, or other support to low-level employees. Graduating will also benefit students financially; statistics from C.P.S. surveys show that 16-24 year old drop-outs only have a 46 percent employment rate. The National Center of Statistics reports that high school graduates on average earn \$143 more per week than those who drop out, adding up to almost an additional 75 thousand a year.

Another detail that should not be overlooked is the correlation between drop-outs and incarcerations. Approximately 1 in 10 high school drop-outs will end up in jail or prison, whereas the fraction for high school

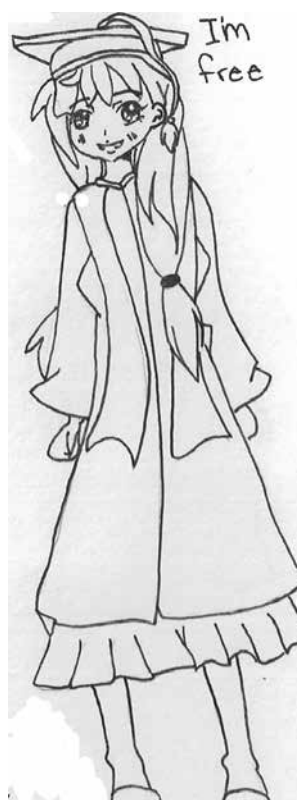


Illustration / Taylor Krupianik

Let's be honest, if students were given the choice to stop attending high school with no legal consequences, a vast majority would take the opportunity. While life without high school may seem appealing, education has an extremely important role in our life and it's a necessity in society that cannot be overlooked.

High school should remain mandatory until a student becomes legally independent as it is essential for the development of adolescents into productive adults, and extremely important in securing future

SEE COUNTERPOINT PAGE 11



Senior **Kendra Curtis**

No, I don't think it should be optional. Kids need high school in order to grow up.



Junior **Quay Evans**

No, education is key, a key to success. What are you gonna do, \$8.50 an hour?



Junior **Sierra Waddle**

I think it should be optional. You're old enough to already know that you don't want to go to school.

GAY MARRIAGE CHRISTIANS CAN'T CONTRADICT EQUAL MARRIAGE



Clayton Barker

Love is finally ubiquitous, at least in the USA for that matter, as the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of gay marriage on June 26th, 2015. The 5-4 Supreme Court ruling didn't come as a surprise either, as the LGB (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual) community has had growing support over the years tremendously influencing the equality which has swept the nation in this regard.

It is rather rash to say Christians, as one, oppose the gay marriage ruling because that truly is not the case, but many, if not most, fundamental or strict Christians, did not support the legalization of gay marriage. Included in this article are five examples of other guidelines presented in the Bible that are rarely followed by Christians at large.

Leviticus is infamously quoted by many Christians to disregard LGB people as people who deserve civil rights. It is notable that many

Christians don't follow the old testament for various reasons, yet one common verse from Leviticus constantly resurfaces in arguments opposing gay marriage by Christian standards.

"If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination; they shall surely be put to death; their blood is upon them," Leviticus 20:13.

Abiding by Leviticus 20:13 is on your own behalf, but here are a few biblical quotes that many Christians don't follow, or even know exist.

1) Wearing flashy material such as gold or pearls and braiding your hair is against Christianity.

"Likewise, I want women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold or pearls or costly garments." Timothy 2:9

2) Don't eat pork either, as this is seen as an abomination of Christian faith.

"There are some that only chew the cud or only have a divided hoof, but you must not eat them. The camel, though it chews the cud, does not have a divided hoof; it is

ceremonially unclean for you." Leviticus 11:4

3) Tattoos can be interpreted as an abomination of faith as well.

"Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am the Lord." Leviticus 19:28

4) Hopefully you partake in an abstemious lifestyle, gluttony is not cool in the kingdom of God.

"And put a knife to your throat if you're given to gluttony." Proverbs 23:2

5) Christians probably shouldn't be wearing any type of polyester or mixed clothing material because again, the Bible condemns such acts.

"You shall not sow your field with two kinds of seed, nor wear a garment upon you of two kinds of material mixed together." Leviticus 19:19

The point of this article is to understand that although religion is phenomenal and beneficial in many ways, people should not use Christianity or the Bible as an excuse to discriminate against others. As we see above, there are many guidelines provided by the Bible that aren't

followed nearly as strictly. This is very contradicting, with situations like Christians using Leviticus 20:13 as an excuse to not acknowledge gays, with utmost respect, but disobey Proverbs 23:2, and not stab themselves in the throat with a knife while they feast on Thanksgiving.

The Bible has been around for thousands of years and for good reasons. Understanding that the Bible wasn't written in this time period and how societal construct has changed is the first step to accepting the whole of the LGBT+ community.

Love in the Bible is transparent through time and this is the idea which we need to seize from it. Jesus would never turn his back on anyone, as he had an altruism unlike any and always showed unconditional positive regard.

Christians using the Bible to hate simply shows how faith in religion can be flawed and not followed through properly. It's best to love everybody and throw away the hate in the name of Jesus Christ and God. If you do decide to disdain homosexuals in the name of Jesus Christ and God, please don't be hypocritical and eat bacon for breakfast with your polyester Nike shirt on.

THE KIM DAVIS CONTROVERSY REVEALS FUNDAMENTAL FAILURES IN THE GOVERNMENT



Jake Heasley

Around the country, gay couples are acquiring marriage licenses from almost all of the county clerk offices in the nation. Until recently, there has been one last holdout who vowed to defend "traditional marriage."

Kim Davis, a Kentucky county clerk, refused to hand out same-sex marriage licenses. After a significant backlash, Davis then refused to issue any marriage licenses to appear impartial. Recently, Davis spent five days in jail and is now back in office and still refuses to issue licenses, but she allows her deputies to issue the licenses she refuses to sign.

While many people call Davis a hypocrite saying that she has no right to complain about same sex marriage when she has been divorced multiple times, I feel like this is going for the low hanging fruit. Focusing on Davis's previous marriages ignores the

worst part of this situation. The really scary part of this story is the government's inability to fire Davis.

Unlike a worker at McDonalds or a person working in a business, Davis literally cannot be fired for not doing her job.

Davis is an elected official, meaning that the only way she can be forced to resign is if she's impeached by the state senate. Not even the governor of Kentucky can fire Davis. The state senate of Kentucky does not convene again until this January so it is theoretically possible for Davis to be in jail for 3 more months before she could possibly be impeached. This also assumes that the traditionally conservative senate of Kentucky would follow through with impeachment.

Another element of this story is Davis's elevation to martyrdom in the eyes of the religious right. Presidential candidates like Mike Huckabee have rallied behind Davis, claiming that this is proof about a "war on religion."

"I think that people need to wake up and realize that the people of faith in this country are genuinely under attack. This is not about giving certain people their rights — it's about denying others theirs," Huckabee said.

According to a Pew study, nearly 92 percent of congressmen in the House and Senate identify as Christians. If the vast majority of the leaders in a

country are part of an "oppressed" group, then the conspiracy that it would take to persecute these people would have to be enormous. Turning a woman who got rightfully jailed for breaking the law into a martyr for Christianity exemplifies how ridiculous this argument is.

At long last, Davis has seen reason and is allowing her deputies to create marriage certificates without her consent. Same-sex couples in that part of Kentucky will be able to marry and Davis will hopefully slide into obscurity. This entire controversy has done nothing other than show how determined some people are at restricting the rights of others. While some people use this controversy to show the institutionalized oppression of Christians, Davis has only shown how much work there still is to go.

DETRIMENTAL DEFINITIONS:

“POWDERPUFF” FOOTBALL & “MACHO” VOLLEYBALL ILLUSTRATE HARMFUL STEREOTYPES IN SPORTS AND SOCIETY



Nora Hilgart-Griff

You’ve all heard the morning announcements: Junior and senior girls, who’s ready to play powderpuff football!?, or it’s that time of year again, boys! Sign up for macho volleyball in the athletic office today!

These games are school traditions going back a long time. There are photographs of “powderpuff” football being played in schools as early as 1931. Our parents attended these quirky, gender-flipped games when they were in school, but it may be time to consider what we’re really saying with the addition of adjectives like “macho” and “powderpuff.”

What’s in a name? Well, actually, a lot. The terminology used in day-to-day expression may seem mundane and for the most part, unimportant. The phrasing of what we hear influences us subconsciously in regards to the meaning and implications of a term, and therefore, how we internalize it.

In an excerpt from the book “I’d Rather Be Dead Than Be a Girl,” a collection of scholarly articles by John Marcus Sweeney, he quoted Whitehead’s Philosophy of Organism and Language: “Given the connectedness of each sequence of events...then what occurs in language influences thought, perception, and behavior in some way,” writes Whitehead.

We don’t consider the bulk of what we say. Consequently, the attitude arises that “it’s been that way forever.” We see it as no big deal. Knowing this, it’s up to everyone to examine the things we say and carefully consider how they may be inaccurate, careless, and even damaging to equality and standard of life in our society.

When the girls play football, we call it “powderpuff,” a nod to the tool used to apply cosmetic powder to the face. There are a multitude of associations we have with this word.

“Cute, superficial, snotty, old fashioned, weak,” said junior Lily Dehollander-Bird when asked what “powderpuff” meant to her.

Junior Emma Greschak agreed, saying that the word signified “...possibly weakness, or general fluffiness.” Greschak continued, “I think the word does a disservice to the ability, strength, and endurance to

the female athletes who fall under its label.”

In a world where women still struggle to assert their strength, independence, and capability, it hardly seems appropriate that the very idea of girls playing football must be pared down to a something laughable, as though it’s outlandish to think that girls could be serious about (and play well) a traditionally male sport. Such popular female football leagues as the Women’s Football League and the Independant Women’s Football League prove this notion wrong every game they play.

Sherryl Kleinman, a sociology teacher at the University of North Carolina, of Alternet.com agrees.

“Words are tools of thought. We can use words to maintain the status quo or to think in new ways -- which in turn creates the possibility of a new reality,” said Kleinman.

On the other side of a similar coin, we have the yearly boy’s volleyball game, or as it’s better known, “Macho Volleyball.”

“[When] I hear the word macho, it makes me think muscle[d], strong, tough,” said sophomore Amarra Lyons.

This association isn’t accidental. The word “macho” is a purposeful modification, lest volleyball-interested boys be embarrassed by playing a traditionally female sport. It implies that volleyball in itself is inherently not any of the things “macho” means to us; big, powerful, tough, or strong.

This dichotomy illustrates clear divisions that exist in society today and how problematic these conceptions are. Not only does the assumption of weakness or lack of capability hurt women, but the pressure of “macho” harms men as well.

Sophomore Lily Mead commented on the word, saying it makes her think of expectations of hyper-masculinity



and the fear of displaying emotion. When, as a society, we communicate to our boys that they must shy away from traditionally feminine traits or pursuits, it leads to insecurity, body obsession, and an inability to display or discuss emotions, all of which are harmful.

Junior Hannah Lee summed up the issue of these two modifiers nicely. “It’s just another way to separate girls and guys and make guys more superior,” said Lee.

It begs the question: is it really appropriate that in this day and age, we are still telling girls that when they play football, it’s no more than a joke? And similarly, why are we so afraid to associate men with a woman’s sport that we feel the need to remind them that hey, even if you play this volleyball game, don’t worry; you’re still “macho”.

It’s obvious, then, that it’s high time we reconsider the language of tradition, and ensure that what we say really communicates what we mean, instead of accidentally promoting trite and damaging stereotypes.

FROM COUNTERPOINT PAGE 9

graduates is closer to 1 in 35. These correlations must be acknowledged so that efforts will be made to improve these numbers, efforts such as keeping high school mandatory.

Additionally, there are psychological reasons for high school to remain mandatory. A significant amount of important mental development occurs from ages 14-18 making high school crucial to proper development and to increasing chances of success.

Psychologist Erik Erikson states in his theory of psychosocial stages that around ages 13-20 people focus on self-actualization, and acknowledging their identity (gender, sexual orientation,

etc). High school allows students to find a sense of belonging by bringing them to the same place day after day and leading them to establish

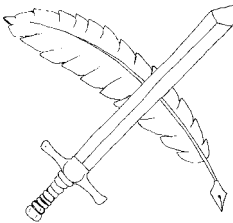
“1 IN 10 HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUTS WILL END UP IN JAIL OR PRISON”

themselves in a localized community, thus beginning to answer the question “who am I?”

According to data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health, results of various studies are consistent in showing that perceiving a sense of belonging

with one’s school is related to positive academic, psychological, and behavioral outcomes throughout adolescence. Also, participating in school provides a sense of belonging in society and provides a daily schedule, which are both necessary experiences in properly transitioning to adulthood.

By not allowing a student to drop out until they are legally an adult, Michigan shows they will not sanction “educational suicide,” and this should be a standard followed nationwide. Students that do not complete high school will have a rough time becoming an active, tax-paying citizen in our society. Don’t become another statistic.



PUBLICATION POLICY

Got an opinion? Disagree with something we’ve said? Just want to be in the paper? Write us!

Direct Lettitors to:
Loy Norrix Knight Life
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Kalamazoo, MI 49001

OR
Submit to Room K6

OR
pankoptl@kalamazoo.k12.mi.us

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- 250 words or less
- Must contain author’s name, 3rd period & ID number

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STUDENTS REFLECT ON FALL ACTIVITIES

Taylor Krupianik

Imagine the lush green leaves forming into crisp, beautiful colors of orange, yellow and red. The muggy Michigan weather is starting to cool down and being outside isn't torturous. Fall is a time of the year that many people love and look forward to. There are many things that the fall may inspire such as activities, warmer clothes, and events.

Fall activities are another part people look forward to. Haunted houses, harvest festivals, hunting, corn mazes, apple picking, carving pumpkins or even telling ghost stories at a bonfire with friends and family can be fun.

"My favorite fall activity is going to bonfires and drinking Pumpkin Spice Lattes," said senior Kayleigh Dyer.

Along with several seasonal activities to enjoy, the weather starts to get more brisk outside. This means layers upon layers of clothes become popular once again.

"My favorite thing about fall is the clothes. The plaid sweaters, leggings, and boot warmers," said freshman Nadia Johnson.

Spooky nights and free candy. It's a night for kids to believe in ghouls and ghosts and give themselves a great scare. Tricks, treats, and pranks bring delight (even to teenagers).

"Halloween is my favorite part of fall. The leaves add a great effect to it all," said sophomore Gaia Bogan.

Halloween has many different meanings for everyone. It may be an important holiday for Wiccan's or just a fun night to collect candy and get some scares.

"It's my favorite holiday. It's also the time of year when I can have more fun like dressing up and carving pumpkins. It's also simply a time of year that means a lot to me spiritually because I'm Wiccan. It's the equivalent to the New Year for me," said senior Tate Spooner.

Wicca is about acceptance, harmony and a balanced way of life. It branched off from pagan beliefs.

The season is full of fun and great memories. This time of the year is a great time to get together with friends, go to haunted houses, hay rides, or celebrate holidays with each other. All that matters is the memories made and smiles shared.



Skull carved in a pumpkin for the spookiness of the Halloween Spirit.
Photo Credit / Taylor Krupianik



Beautiful scenery at the Comstock park. People enjoy taking a breathtaking view of fall. Photo Credit / Cindy Bravo

POINT COUNTER POINT ON PAGE 9

this environment. When there is so much pressure to attend high school daily and perform well in school, students mental health is not a priority to themselves or the school they are attending.

Why did this happen? For many people high school is an extremely toxic environment in which they can end up losing their sense of self and direction. School can be toxic when sexual harassment, bullying, peer pressure, and more all occur in the same building. Many teenagers do not find school a healthy environment. Why are we forcing all teenagers into this kind of an institution?

Many students simply do not have enough time or energy when school ends to live the life that they wish they could. According to a study by Indiana University, 22 percent of high school students have considered dropping out of school. Out of those students, 73 percent considered dropping out because they didn't like school, 61 percent considered dropping out because they didn't like the teachers, and 60 percent said they considered dropping out because they didn't see the value in the work they were being asked to do.

High school should be optional in the same way that college is optional.

There should never be a time when people must attend school. Traditional high school education does not always coincide with the lifestyle someone wants to live.

There are even alternative schooling options, like unschooling, that still enables people to go to college the way graduated high school students do. Unschooling is a form of homeschooling and a learning philosophy that emphasizes learner-directed education.

These alternative options prove that high school is not at all necessary to prepare students for college.

According to a study from "Psychology Today", a majority of the unschooled college students they interviewed reported "no difficulty doing the academic work" and were even at an advantage because of "high motivation and their high capacity for self-initiative, self-direction, and self-control."

Because of unschooling and statistically better alternative schooling options around the world, our current public education system seems obsolete.

If I could be unschooled or live in a country with alternative learning options, I would enjoy my youth more and be a healthier, whole person and at the same time be prepared for

college. Living in the United States where high school is not an option is infuriating when I know I would do better living much differently. There's no question that education is definitely a requirement for any society to function. People need to know how to read, write and perform specialized tasks in order for the United States to flourish.

As one of the many people who does not want to live their life in the way most people do in the United States, when are we ever going to find the kind of education promoted in public high schools useful?

Ideally, choosing a job for the future is similar to choosing the lifestyle a person wants to live, given that the person is even able to choose their job.

If someone feels best being outside, they can become a park ranger.

If a student likes traveling and seeing new places, they can become a flight attendant or work in business. But as a teenager, I am not given the option to live the life that would fulfill me and make me the most content, which would be educating myself through self directed learning.

The same is seen in the adult world. Many are forced into lifestyles/ careers that they would not have

chosen if they had been given more opportunities.

Around the world, many children don't even have to opportunity to get an education or live the life that would make them happy. A lot of the flaws of the education system parallel flaws in the adult career world.

Donald E Heller is the dean of the college of education at Michigan State University. Four years ago, he supported his daughter's decision to drop out of high school. On why he and his wife let this happen, he said, "We wish that public schools could provide a better learning environment for children who are square pegs and who do not fit into the round hole of a traditional, test-centric educational environment."

Instead of attending traditional high school, Heller's daughter took two years of classes on literature and composition at Michigan State. While this is not an option for most students whose dad is not a dean of college education at a university, these options should be available for all students.

High school should be optional so teenagers are more empowered to make decisions about how they want to live their lives.

STROMAE BRINGS A BELGIAN SOUND TO THE U.S.

Carsten**Strand**

Timeout.com calls him “the most famous pop star you don’t know.” He has won numerous awards, including Best Male Singer at the Globes de Cristal Awards (Crystal Globes Awards), and is the Best Selling Benelux Artist of 2015.

Although, it is very hard to find someone at Loy Norrix that knows who Paul Van Haver, (Stromae) is, but when you do their reaction is priceless.

Stromae is a self described hip-hop and electronic artist from Laeken, Brussels. He garnered critical acclaim for his first single, “Alors On Danse,” or “So We Dance.” At the time, Stromae worked as an intern at NRJ, a french radio station, where the music manager liked his single and put it into the radio cycle. Only a few weeks later, Stromae’s song was sitting at number one in Belgium as well as 18 other countries. And practically overnight, Stromae went from a radio station intern to a superstar.

Many Americans will find it hard to connect with Stromae’s music because, well, it’s in French. This creates an

extensive barrier to anyone who is accustomed to listening to music in English. However, when you look at translations of all of his hit songs, you can see how the themes and messages are the same in any language.

Stromae’s hit song “Papaoutai,” or “Dad, where are you?”, is about the absence of his father during his childhood (His dad was killed in the Rwandan Genocide of 1984).

“Formidable” is a song about a man going through a breakup and turning to alcohol. “Carmen” is about the dangers of social media, particularly Twitter. “Quand C’est,” one of Stromae’s darker songs, is about cancer and how it pollutes lives and families.

Stromae’s songs have a powerful message accompanied by a fun exciting sound. Think of him as the Belgian Macklemore.

French teacher Rachel Larner is familiar with Stromae and his music

“I listen to french music with spotify, and it’s not all Caffe violin music,” said Larner.

She gives examples of songs in different languages that have integrated

themselves into American culture, like the Christmas song “Feliz Navidad” or the French “Frère Jacques.”

Stromae launched his first North American tour in 2015, and played a show in Auburn Hills, Michigan on September 25th. It was an incredible showing of visual and vocal performance. The energy that Stromae brought to the crowd was incredible, and he was able to showcase all his talents to make one coherent show.

Stromae knows how to work a crowd, no matter what country they come from or what language they speak. I was lucky enough to be standing in the second row that night, and was amazed at all the people that showed up to see this guy from Belgium. Stromae’s influence has been ever expanding across the pond, and this first North American tour is really only the beginning. He only has one big-budget album out, and has already attracted attention from people like Kanye West, Lorde, and Pentatonix.

American listeners will have to be able to manipulate their musical ear a little to be able to listen to Stromae, but



Stromae Performs in Auburn Hills. He incorporates an elaborate light show into his performance.

Photo Credit / Ava Wood

it is very worth it. His musical talent is undeniable, and his messages are very important.

SENIOR DANCERS FOR THE WIN

Audra**Penny**

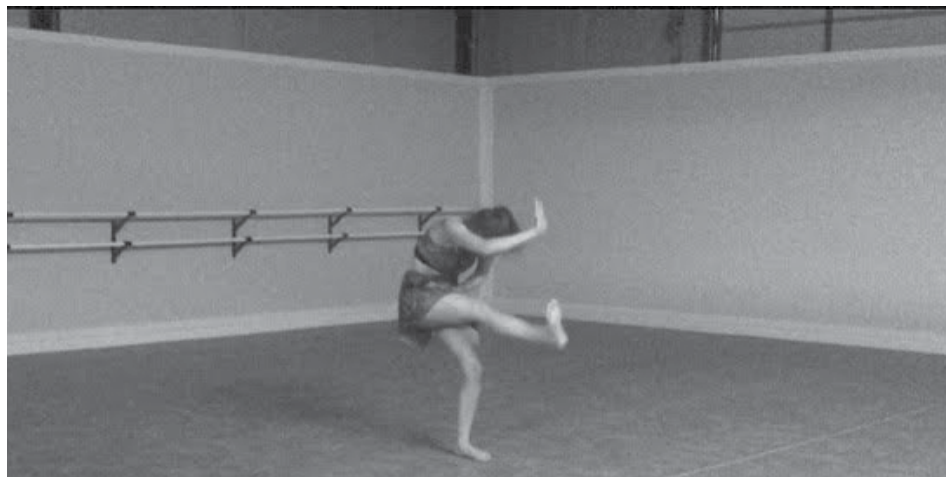
Summer has come to an end, students are returning back to school and getting asked the same question: what did you do this summer? Some respond with getting their driver’s license and working a massive amount of hours, while others respond with going on vacation and hanging out with friends.

However, not many can say that they won a prestigious dance awards, like seniors Mariah Brown and Isabella Cowles did.

Brown and Cowles have both grown up dancing and are used to giving up several days of their summer vacation dedicated to their dance careers. Even though they both received respectable awards in dancing, their stories are far more different than what people would expect.

Brown has been dancing for 7 years and is currently dancing with Traci Phelps Studios. This past July, Brown was given the opportunity to perform a solo at Cathy Roe’s Ultimate Dance Competition and compete against 20 other esteemed individuals. This dance competition is very challenging to get into.

To prepare for the competition, Brown practiced her solo, a contemporary dance of Jasmine Thomson’s cover of Sam Smith’s “La, La, La,” everyday for over a year.



Mariah Brown practices her contemporary dance solo of Jasmine Thomson’s cover of Sam Smith’s “La, La, La.” **Photo Credit / Traci Phelps**

“It’s always fun to learn my solo, but it sometimes can get overwhelming with all the new choreography being thrown at you constantly,” said Brown.

Brown also had to learn seven other dances along with her solo over the year in preparations for Nationals, which added even more stress to make sure she was perfect in all dances, including her solo.

After practicing daily for over a year and competing in other competitions in April and May, Brown was ready to take the stage at Nationals in Mason, Ohio in Mid-July. Even through all the nerves she felt for her solo, she nailed it.

“I felt good afterwards, especially

since my team was screaming for me from the audience. I was really relieved that it was finally over, and I believed it was my best performed solo, but I still was doubting that I would place,” said Brown.

Brown stayed in Mason, Ohio for a week for the competition since the competition also had workshop days and performance days. It wasn’t until the end of the week that the results were revealed. Brown placed second at her first Nationals competition.

Brown continues, “I was really surprised because the girl who got third was very good, and after she was announced in third, I didn’t think I would place. I was completely in awe



Isabella Cowles practices one of her three dances for the Solo Seal Award.

Photo Credit / Julie Renner

and filled with pure joy when I heard my name announced.”

Brown also placed in 5 out of 7 other dances that she participated in at Nationals.

She wishes to pursue dancing in college and will see if she wants to continue dancing after college.

Isabella Cowles has been dancing for 12 years

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VARSITY BASEBALL COACH DECIDES TO RESIGN



Varsity Baseball Coach Brian Neel poses for the team picture in 1999. Now after 20 seasons he decides to resign. **Photo Credit / Yearbook 1999**

Paul **Vallier**

After 20 years, 200 plus wins, and hundreds of great friendships, Head Varsity Baseball coach Brian Neel has decided to resign. Neel had been the head coach for the varsity baseball team for the last 15 years, and before that he spent 5 years as an assistant coach.

As a coach Neel has won and lost, but he says his favorite memories include winning the Greater Kalamazoo tournament in 2010, and most of all, building relationships with his players and making a positive impact on them.

"It was a tough decision, but it was the right one," said Neel. The decision was made final by Neel on September 8th after giving it some serious thought over the summer.

The decision was a back and forth thought running through Neel's mind all summer, between continuing coaching or using the time to spend with his family and watching his sons Brady (10th grade at Mattawan) and Parker (7th Grade at Mattawan) play baseball.

"It's important for a father to be at their son's games, and watch them perform," said Neel and this ultimately led to his decision to resign.

Junior baseball player James Rinehart said, "I'm disappointed that I only got 1 year with him, but it was really great having someone around (Neel) who had a lot of experience." Rinehart along with many other players are sad that Neel is leaving.

"I'm going to miss him a lot, but I really appreciated his dedication to work with us and his desire for us to be successful," said senior baseball player Traver Parlato.

Neel plans to stick around and help out if players and coaches ever need anything to make the transition a little smoother. A new coach is yet to be hired, but Neel plans to have some input on the decision. Whoever the new coach may be, they certainly will have some big shoes to fill.

Top 5 Accomplishments

1. Seeing kids be successful after they graduate.
2. Building relationships with players and their families.
3. Coaching athletes that are dedicated to the program.
4. Having athletes be role models for his own children since they were young.
5. Winning the Greater Kalamazoo tournament in 2010

RUNNING WITH ASTHMA HOW THE SUPERWOMAN OVERCOMES

Dagnija **Tomsons**

At the meets, there is such a diverse group of runners. Those that have been through the chaos for four years straight and those that have just started. There are runners with injuries and illness and also a select few who have asthma or exercise induced asthma who are very hard to point out unless they are seen taking an inhaler before they have to be at the start.

"When I think of asthma, it brings to mind really heavy breathing with wheezing in between," said sophomore Alexa Davis, who has exercise induced asthma.

As Davis runs beside her teammates during the warm-up after school, her breathing is more off beat than those that flank her from all sides. She tries her best to control the way she breathes, but it is not as easy as it looks.

"Focus on controlling your breathing, slow down, or stop," said Davis, who is more used to breathing troubles than most.

Experts, such as Budd Coates and Claire Kowalchik, say using a breathing pattern of three's and two's are good for long and easy runs, and two's and two's for hard workouts and sprints.

"I've tried it, but I lost focus. When I can find a breathing pattern, it gives my brain something to

think about rather than my ragged breathing," said Davis.

Some runners who are less experienced in the art of running may have a mental block on asthma, thinking they might pass out if they stretch past their limits. They decide the second before they run, to go long and easy. Once halfway there or more than halfway, they experience issues and turn back even if they're almost to their goal. Davis, on the other hand, has a hard grip on her running style. She takes on a positive outlook whenever she runs and does her best to stay out of the pessimistic hole some runners have often visited.

"Have a positive attitude. It's going to be okay. You've done this before, you can get through this again," said Davis.

There are many ways to get a better grip on running with asthma or exercise induced asthma. Talk to a doctor or trainer. There may be other things that haven't been tried that might help. Do breathing exercises at home or before practice. Most importantly, don't give up. These things are frustrating, but that's bound to happen. Make this a strength, not a weakness.



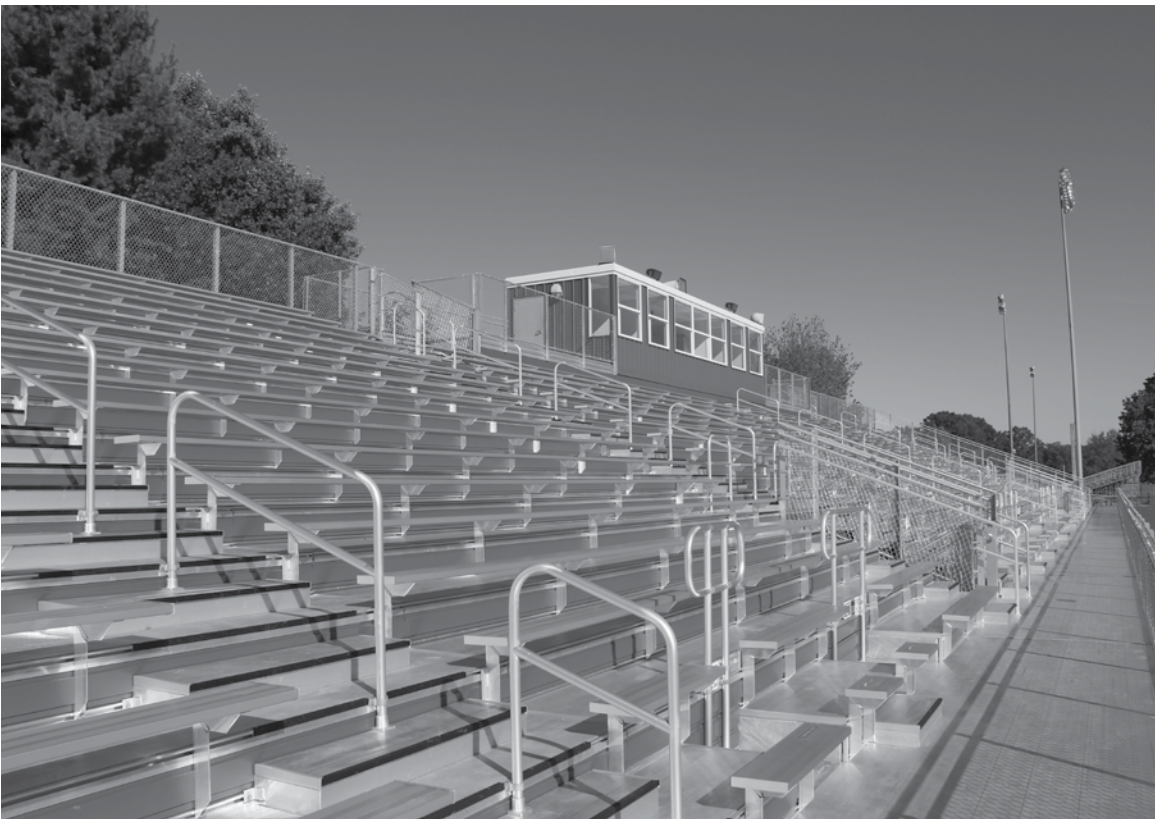
Sophomore Alexa Davis running at a Mattawan sponsored Cross Country meet at Portage West Middle School. She is the number one Varsity girl for Loy Norrix. **Photo Credit / Jenny Dantes**

FANS GET TREATED WITH NEW FOOTBALL STADIUM



Football players admire the new away bleachers at a home game against Portage Northern. The Knights later lost to the Huskies, 42-7.

Photo Credit / Chris Hybels.



A view of the new home bleachers. They were completed in August, four years after they were approved. The new bleachers will hold three thousand people, compared to the six thousand seat capacity of the previous structure. **Photo Credit / Chris Hybels.**

Chris Hybels

Loy Norrix's football field experienced a complete overhaul during the summer of 2015. With renovations starting May 4th, and just finishing August 26th, the remodel included a new main entrance, box office, concession stand, bleachers, pavilion area and bathrooms.

Students will quickly recognize the cut in seating from a capacity of six thousand to three thousand. The bathrooms will include 25 stalls for women and 12 for men.

According to Athletic Director Andrew Laboe, the remodel of the stadium was paid for from a bond that was approved by Kalamazoo taxpayers in 2011. Voters in 2011 had the choice on where tax dollars would go, and they decided to renovate the football stadium along with other projects at Norrix.

Senior Ahmed Younis commented about the updates to the football stadium and said, "I think they're fantastic!"

"They seem to be better structured," said senior offensive lineman Joe Fette when asked about the new bleachers. He was very relieved to find out the old bathrooms had been replaced, calling the old restrooms an "atrocious."

The public will also have the ability to purchase commemorative bricks with their names on it which will be placed in the ground near the main pavilion.

The men's varsity team will play a total of four games at home this year in the new complex, including a homecoming match against the Portage Central Mustangs on October 16th, which ended in a 56-0 blowout by the Mustangs.

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and is currently dancing with The Ballet Academy. Earlier this year in May, Cowles got the opportunity of a lifetime; to perform some of her solos in hopes of winning the "Royal Academy of Dance Solo Seal Award." This distinguished award is only presented to three dancers in Canada, Cowles being one of the possible candidates since she is with Canadian company in competitions.

In order for Cowles to prepare for the Solo Seal exam, she chose three dances for the competition, one she learned two years prior to the exam. She practiced for a year until the Solo Seal in May. Once May finally arrived, Cowles traveled to Toronto, Canada for the exam. Filled with nerves, she was unable to sleep the night before, but that did not affect her performance on stage.

"Once I got on stage, I felt amazing and powerful. After the exam, I knew that I had done my very best and it had gone as well as I had hoped," said Cowles.

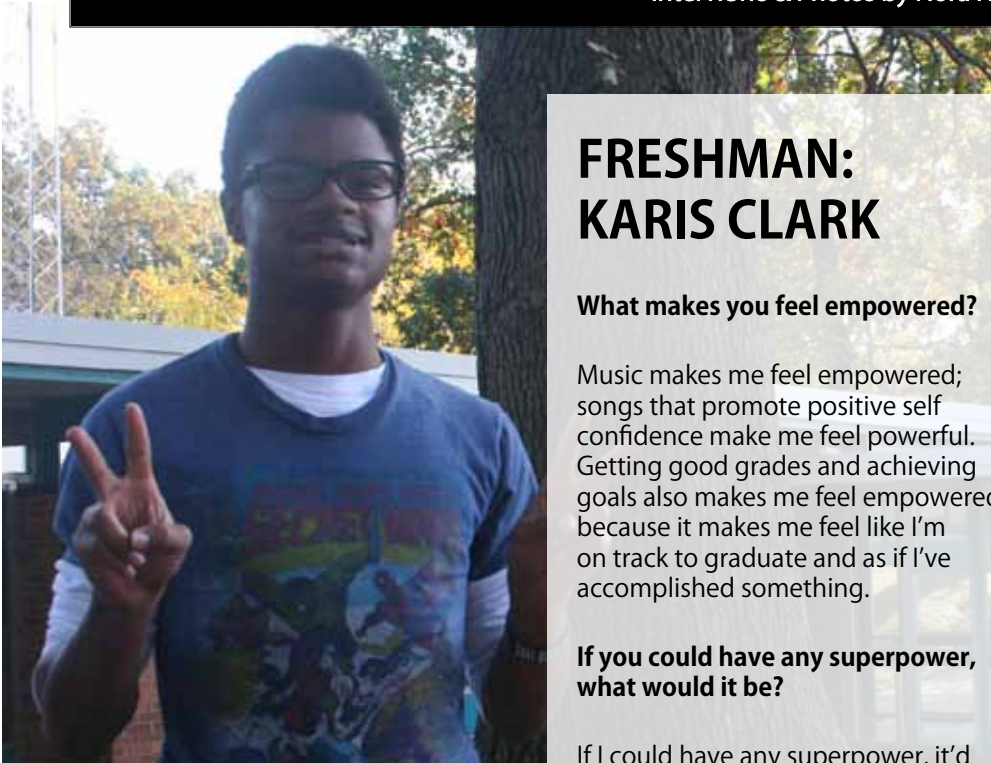
Once Cowles finished her performance, she waited for six weeks with anticipation, wonder, and patience. Cowles won the "Royal Academy of Dance Solo Seal Award" in Mid-June, but could not accept the award personally at the ceremony due to being in Chicago for the Joffrey Ballet International Summer Intensive.

"When I won the award, I felt really accomplished because I worked hard all year for it, actually, my entire dance career for it," continued Cowles "and I never thought it would be something I could get since it was always so high up there."

Cowles looks forward to putting this accomplishment on her resume, as it will help her be recognized by several favorable dance companies. She will continue to pursue dance hoping to sign with a company and dance for as long as she can. She's also convinced she will teach dance later in life.

STUDENT Q+A

Interviews & Photos by Nora Hilgart-Griff



FRESHMAN: KARIS CLARK

What makes you feel empowered?

Music makes me feel empowered; songs that promote positive self confidence make me feel powerful. Getting good grades and achieving goals also makes me feel empowered because it makes me feel like I'm on track to graduate and as if I've accomplished something.

If you could have any superpower, what would it be?

If I could have any superpower, it'd be the power to read other people's thoughts, even if I'm not in their presence. That way, I could act in their favor and get what I want easier.

JUNIOR: MAGGIE LAGER

What makes you feel empowered?

I feel empowered when people know my name. Like, when I'm not just someone's girlfriend or someone's sister or the girl who looks like this or wears that. When I'm Maggie and when people know I'm Maggie, that's honestly something that means a lot to me. I just want to be treated as an individual.

If you were to be famous for something, what would it be?

I guess if I was famous for anything, I'd want it to be for something good I did for someone, or a group of people. But I hope I can do that anyway. I don't really know how yet, though. So, if I'm not acknowledged for it, that's okay, that's not what matters. Fame isn't really something I think about.



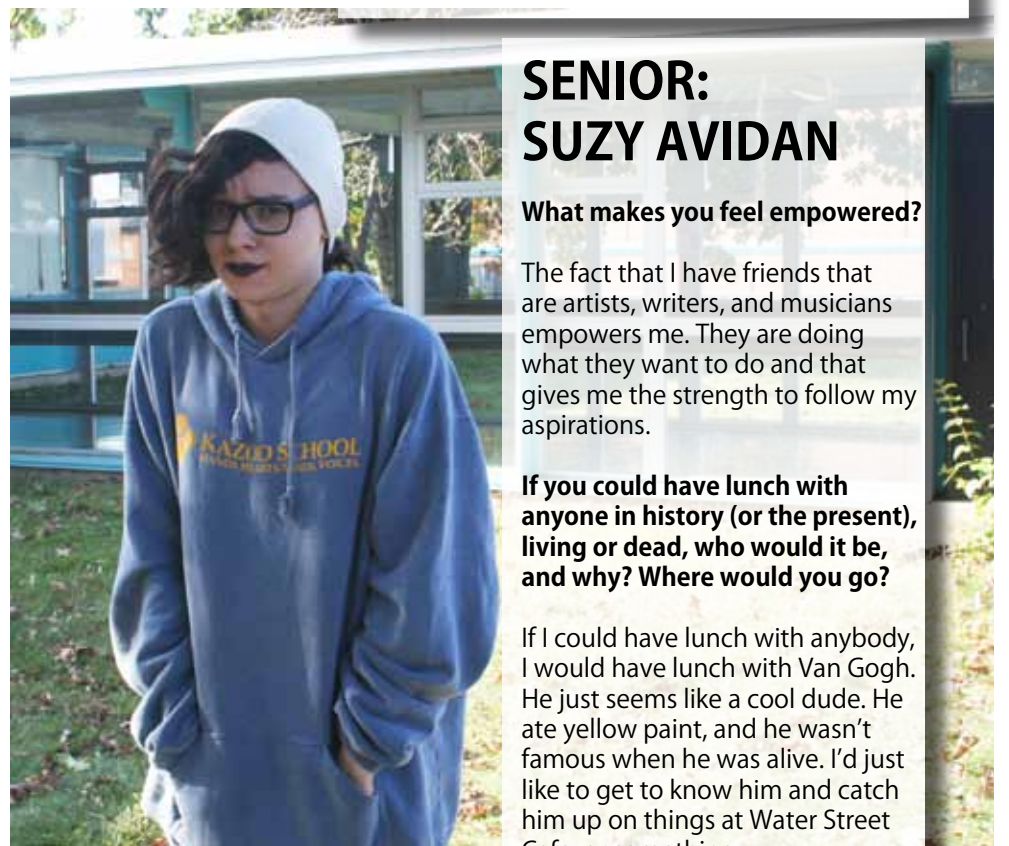
SOPHOMORE: JOEY MICHAEL

What makes you feel empowered?

I [...] feel empowered on stage, I guess. The rush and everything. Afterwards I feel great about it, and it makes me feel able to do anything.

What would you eat for your last meal on Earth?

I'd like to eat pancakes! Like, pancakes are my favorite food, so can I just get, like, a pancake bar or something? Please?



SENIOR: SUZY AVIDAN

What makes you feel empowered?

The fact that I have friends that are artists, writers, and musicians empowers me. They are doing what they want to do and that gives me the strength to follow my aspirations.

If you could have lunch with anyone in history (or the present), living or dead, who would it be, and why? Where would you go?

If I could have lunch with anybody, I would have lunch with Van Gogh. He just seems like a cool dude. He ate yellow paint, and he wasn't famous when he was alive. I'd just like to get to know him and catch him up on things at Water Street Cafe, or something.