



## TEACHER TO ADMINISTRATOR CHAD BRADY JOINS THE LOY NORRIX STAFF

**ZACH SKINNER** STAFF WRITER

Chad Brady came to Loy Norrix unsure of what the school year would hold. After 11 years at Kalamazoo Central as an AP U.S. History teacher, Brady decided to move on to a new role. He has joined Loy Norrix this year as an interim assistant principal and will be located in the B wing, working mainly with 9th and 10th grade students.

Being a school administrator will tap into a new skill set for Brady. Brady became a teacher because he loves working with kids and wants to make a difference in their lives. Brady is passionate about teaching government, history and geography and wanted to be a teacher since he was a child.

“My first love will always be teaching,” said Brady.

Despite this, Brady decided to step up and take on this new role as a challenge to himself. He has always wanted to touch as many lives as he can with his work and change them for the better. As an administrator, Brady feels that he will be able to guide more students in the right direction.

“My goal is to see these kids graduate on time with their class,” said Brady.

As an assistant principal, Brady handles business with the 9th and 10th grade students. Most of the issues he deals with are behavioral, but he is also there to help and support any students struggling in school or students that

just need someone to talk to. His main role is to figure out how to keep kids in classrooms while minimizing disruptions.

Brady believes that although he is jumping into a very demanding role, all the stress will be worth it when he sees the students he’s worked with walking across the stage at graduation. Brady hopes to work with teachers, as he has a deep understanding of the classroom because of his prior teaching experience.

Due to his many years of experience teaching in the Kalamazoo Public School District, Brady believes that he can relate well to teachers and understand what they need help with.

Atiba Ward, the business teacher here at Loy Norrix and a former colleague of Brady’s at Kalamazoo Central shared his thoughts about Brady.

“I used to work with him at Central. He’s a hard worker. I’m excited that they hired someone who knows the district,” said Ward.

Brady was inspired by his own teachers as a child and said, “I’m still very close with many of them today,” which is not common among most adults today. The same teachers he adored when he was young, showed him the importance of an education and all the doors it can open. These are the people that inspired Brady to follow in their footsteps and make a difference in young people's lives.

**SEE BRADY PAGE 5**



**PHOTO CREDIT / ZACH SKINNER**

Interim assistant Principal Chad Brady talks and laughs with students before the pep assembly. The assembly was held outdoors due to heat.



**PHOTO CREDIT / OLIVIA ELY**

Juniors Rebecca Thompson, Aria Kleber, and Ophelia Smith chat while leaning against the brand new windows and wall. They usually stand outside the cafeteria and talk during third lunch.

## RENOVATIONS LEAVE LOY NORRIX WITH A FRESHER AND CLEANER LOOK

**OLIVIA ELY** OPINION EDITOR

Walking into Loy Norrix High School at the beginning of the 2017 school year, student’s noticed an abundance of changes including the new windows that are more ecofriendly and leave the school more insulated.

“The district [KPS] is pushing and doing what it takes to keep our school up and going,” said Principal Rodney Prewitt.

The renovation includes brand new three-paned windows with blinds placed within the glass, that will help minimize distractions, keep the sun out of students’ eyes, help cool rooms down during warmer months, and give better visibility when teachers are using projectors.

All windows throughout the school will be replaced, as well as the 92 exterior doors and a change of appearance of the outer walls. The outer walls will be halfway built with brick and the top half will be glass. The windows in “The Tower” will be replaced with blue tinted glass to complement the color changes. These changes are scheduled to be completed by the summer of 2019, that started with the back of the building in the B and C wings.

At the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year, some of the exterior walls have already been redone, and the B and C wings are on their way to being completed. Although some classrooms have new windows, there aren’t blinds placed within the glass of the windows yet, which forces

teachers to get creative in regards to blocking out the sunlight in their classrooms.

History teacher Jimmy Johnson says that he misses being able to open his windows and that the new windows don’t give his classroom enough insulation or wind flow. With no blinds, it makes it harder for Johnson’s students to focus while being able to see the beautiful scenery just outside of his classroom. Along with being distracted, the sun can cause Johnson’s students to struggle to see the board.

“We didn’t get what was promised to us,” Johnson said with a frown on his face.

Although some students and staff aren’t satisfied with the renovation, Prewitt is happy with what has been completed so far. He is excited to see how the new renovations are coming along and the overall transformation of Norrix. Prewitt was concerned that Norrix wouldn’t be ready to open for the first day of school, but luckily the construction company’s [Skillman Corporation] ability to work quickly eased Prewitt’s concerns.

A survey of two hundred Loy Norrix students found that many students feel that replacing the glass with brick makes the school more prison-like. Students wish that the renovations could have been finished all over the school so that the building could have a more cohesive look.

**SEE RENOVATIONS PAGE 9**

## TEACHER CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS PUT A STRAIN ON KALAMAZOO PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND ITS TEACHERS

**ANNA KUSHNER** FEATURE EDITOR

If you were to walk into Miller Auditorium on August 28, 2017, you would have seen a sea of black-clothed teachers sitting in silent solidarity.

Every year the Kalamazoo Public Schools District adopts a budget for the upcoming fiscal year. From this budget the district then adopts a teacher salary contract, which is negotiated with a group of teachers called The Bargaining Team.

Normally, this negotiative process remains private between teachers and the district. This year the issue of teacher salary negotiation was made public and gained the attention of multiple news media outlets in Kalamazoo. The Kalamazoo Education Association (KEA) decided to go public when they disagreed with what the Kalamazoo Public Schools (KPS) proposed for the 2017-2018 teacher salary schedule.

“Approximately eighty-four percent of spending is in employee compensation. Accordingly, it is impossible to avoid impacting employees when making financial decisions,” said Gary Start, Deputy Superintendent of Business for Kalamazoo Public Schools.

According to the teacher salary schedule, every year teachers in the district are slated to receive a salary increase every year up to their 15th year. This is called a pay step. This year the district proposed a 1.38 percent employee salary increase which was later changed to 1.8 percent without the contractually obligated step raise.

The step raise would be frozen, so for example, five year teachers would still be paid as four year teachers this year, and then next year they would be paid as fifth year teachers and so on, continuing to be paid a step below where they truly are for the rest of their careers in KPS. Without the step increase, teachers could lose up to \$20 thousand over the course of their career.

“That [the step freeze] would cost almost a year of [college] tuition for my daughter,” said government teacher Michael Wright.

For younger teachers the step freeze could have had more immediate effects. English teacher and member of the KEA Joint Crisis Committee Brianna English said, “Personally, as a younger person I have a lot of expenses. Each dollar on my paycheck makes a difference. This pay check would effect me now and for future years.”

Many teachers such as English and Wright found out about the possible step freeze in June of 2017 from a mass KEA email. However, most

initial reactions weren’t angry or frustrated, but rather disappointed and shocked. Enrollment and test scores have been consistently going up over the past ten years which means the District should be endowed more money from the state.

“It felt like a punishment for something we didn’t do or weren’t aware we did,” said drama teacher Paige Carrow.

Teachers and staff of KPS then began to take action.

“Knowing that a district I have put a lot of time into, my life into, [it] felt like they were devaluing me by not giving us our contractually promised paycheck,” said English.

English followed a similar path to many other teachers in the district. She attended the district’s school board meeting on on August 3, 2017 where teachers voiced their frustrations with the proposed contract. The District recited a pre-prepared statement.

“Continued inadequate state revenue to local school districts has greatly restricted the ability of local districts to compensate employees.”

“It [the statement] made me feel powerless,” said English.

After the meeting, English joined the Joint Crisis Committee, which informs union members about future plans to push forward the goals KPS teachers have set forth.

Carrow, along with social studies teacher Jay Peterson, took a different approach, they reached out to family, students, and other union members about the district’s intentions and asked them to attend the August 3rd meeting.

Carrow, who took notice that many of her colleagues were leaving the district due to these relationship conflicts wanted to encourage students to join the cause.

“When teachers they [the students] care about leave because they are treated unfairly, it disrupts the learning environment. Students want to have their teachers’ backs just as the teachers have theirs,” said Carrow

An agreement was finally reached on August 25, 2017. The teachers would receive their step increase after seventeen days of the school year. Many teachers believe the agreement is fair but are still frustrated with the conditions under which the agreement was reached.

“I feel damage to the relationship between teachers and administration has been done, but I hope we can rebuild that relationship,” said



**PHOTO CREDIT / AMANDA MILLER**

KPS employees meet at Miller Auditorium for the beginning of the school year kick off on August 28th. KEA members wore black and remained silent in an effort to show their displeasure with contract negotiations.

Peterson.

It was because of this strained relationship that the Joint Crisis Committee encouraged union members to wear all black to the annual Miller Auditorium District Meeting on August 28, 2017. According to an eyewitness, roughly 70 percent of teachers showed their support for the cause.

Contrary to what other news media outlets portrayed, for many teachers this issue isn’t as much about pay as it is about how the KPS district treats its employees.

“I hope in future years the district finds better solutions to solve budget problems than cutting teacher pay and benefits as those are essential to recruiting and retaining quality teachers,” said English.

When reaching out to the district about this issue, Start, a member of the negotiation team said that teachers make the schools.

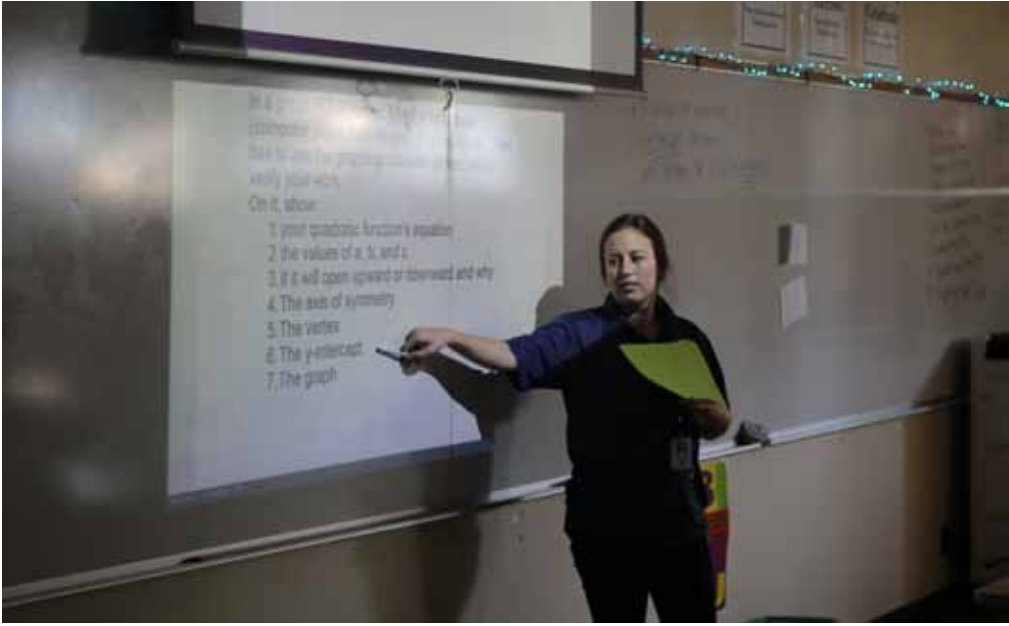
“District decision makers, including the

superintendent, the school board and me, greatly value our teachers. Without our teachers, we wouldn’t be the high quality school district that we are,” said Start.

As the school year has already started, and now that teacher are receiving their pay step again, hopefully teachers and district administrators can begin to create a more transparent and open relationship.

“It’s going to continue to be a struggle to provide appropriate compensation for teachers with our current political climate, and it’s my hope that the district is willing to work with the teachers union more collaboratively and earlier in the negotiation process in years to come,” said Peterson.





**PHOTO CREDIT / ZACH LIDDLE**  
Sarah Thomas, the new Algebra II teacher, gives instruction to her class. Thomas uses skills learned from teaching in Africa to help her class understand the classwork better, like speaking clearly.



**PHOTO CREDIT / BRANDON SCHNURR**  
Jeffrey Pickell, the new 9th Grade English Language Arts teacher, works on grading papers during his lunch. Pickell took over for John Kreider, who was relocated to the library.

BRANDON SCHNURR NEWS EDITOR

It’s been a nice long summer, but the time has come to return to school. Time to wake up and get to the bus at 6:00 a.m., come home to a beautiful bed, and return to your usual school year routines. But most importantly, it’s time to meet the teachers you’ll spend the next 180 days of your life with. If you’re attending Loy Norrix, there is an abundance of new staff members to meet.

Loy Norrix is in the middle of huge changes, everything from new rules to a \$5.5 million school renovation. Every year, one of the biggest changes is new staff members.

This year, Loy Norrix has a total of 23 staff members who are new to the school (this number does not include new campus security officers). These jobs include, but are not limited to, teachers, assistant principals, special education personnel and even a new head coach for the football team.

Of course, with new teachers coming in, there are other teachers that had to step down. Several teachers decided to retire or move to different areas over the summer, leaving plenty of open positions.

“All the teachers’ positions, with the exception of a couple ... were filling vacancies,” said Dean of Students, Christopher Aguinaga. “All the teachers had to be hired. It really wasn’t a choice because there were vacancies, either retirements or people moved to other places.”

To fill these vacancies, the staff went through, what Dean Aguinaga described as, a “community process.”

“They [the applicant] all start with a group of administrators, maybe someone from the Human Resources department, and in some cases we include teachers in this process,” said Aguinaga.

During the process, staff went through a series of questions and demonstration lessons, either here at Loy Norrix, or at a summer school program. Then the candidates were graded on a numerical scale by different staff members to decide how qualified they were for the position. This ensured that the best of the best were chosen for the open vacancies.

When asked whether or not he believes the new teachers will live up to their expectations, Dean Aguinaga simply replied, “I think they will,” quickly adding, “In fact, I think they might even exceed them.”

Despite being new to Loy Norrix, many of these staff members are experienced in their fields. Only several

teachers are brand new to teaching. Many of the teachers are local or have been here for some extent of time, but a few have lived far away from Kalamazoo.

Sarah Thomas, the new Algebra II teacher, talked about her previous teaching position in Tanzania, Africa, where she worked for two and a half years. She was not only teaching the children there, the children taught her as well.

“It’s been a lot different. My students there all had English as their second or third language, so they really taught me to speak slow and explain,” said Sarah Thomas.

According to sophomore Drake Olson, “She [Sarah Thomas] is a very good teacher. She’s new, so she doesn’t have all of her things [lesson plans] set how she wants it yet, so it’s a new experience each time we come into class,” Olson continued, “Everyone’s really into what she’s talking about and everyone participates in class.”

Jeffrey Pickell, the new 9th grade English teacher also had previous teaching experiences. Pickell taught college freshman Writing Composition, a college sophomore level class, a college senior level creative writing class, and a college sophomore level American Literature survey. He mentioned the work here at Loy Norrix as plentiful, but refreshing and always keeping you ready.

“You’re always encountering new problems. You’re always finding new solutions. You’re always solving problems. There’s always something that’s on your plate,” said Pickell.

“The staff here at Loy Norrix is populated by the most compassionate, the most generous, the most talented, the most capable and, I think, the best morally all-around people I’ve ever encountered. I keep getting surprised very day by the generosity of the staff,” said Pickell.

Thomas has also had a great start to her time at Loy Norrix. Like Pickell, she has found the staff extremely supportive

“It’s a very supportive school, there’s a lot of supportive staff members. It seems like there’s a lot going on at this school,” Thomas continued, “Another Algebra II teacher is Mr. Greeley, so I’ve been able to get some help from him with the curriculum and get a better idea from him. The teachers in the hallway have also been very helpful, especially Ms. Young. She’s my mentor teacher, so she’s been really helpful in understanding how this school works.”

Students and staff have taken their new teachers into consideration and have decided that helping and supporting them is a good first step. If this behavior continues, Loy Norrix will show how open it is to new ideas and people.

Pickell puts full focus into his thoughts, ending with a beautiful and important message.

“I think the most important thing to do for each other is to love each other. I think that we need to be good people to each other,” Picknell continued, “We need to raise each other up. We need to realize that we are of many different makes and models, that we come from many different backgrounds, but that we’re all part of the same family. We’re all part of the same community, we’re all brothers and all sisters, and we need to reach out and love each other like brothers and sisters.”

LIST OF NEW STAFF  
(EXCLUDING CAMPUS SECURITY OFFICERS)

April Alexopoulos	Secretary
Carol Bouabdellaoui	ESL Bilingual
Chad Brady	Interin Assistant Principal
Melanie Burke-Sanic	ELA-Reading
Eric Davis	Biology Freshmen Academy
Christie DeHaan	Dean’s Secretary
Tamara Elliott	Special Education
Terry Farmer	Physical Education
Trisha Fires	Special Education
Cheryl Knight	Principal’s Secretary
John Kreider	Librarian
Andrew Loy	Special Education
Aaron Mirakovits	Band
Jeffrey Pickell	ELA Freshmen Academy
Zachary Rickli	Attendance Interventionist
Samantha Simpson	Special Education
Beth Soisson	Business Education
Jonathan Sollinger	Special Education
Li Sun	Chinese
Sarah Thomas	Math
Chaoying Wang	Chinese
Donald Webster	District Security Chief
Alexandria Williams	Physics



**PHOTO CREDIT / SEBASTIAN RODRIGUEZ**  
Top row, left to right: Drew Strand, Izzy Wickle, Abby Hauke, Victor Moss, Celeste Moss. Bottom row, left to right: Riley Dominianni, Lydia Achenbach, Bonnie Bremer, Amarra Lyons, Sidney Davis II. The cast of “Lend Me a Tenor” pose for a group picture.



**PHOTO CREDIT / SEBASTIAN RODRIGUEZ**  
Cast member Lydia Achenbach hugs fellow performer Bonnie Bremmer. The cast of “Lend Me a Tenor” is extremely supportive of each other and care for each other like family.

LOY NORRIX DRAMA DEPARTMENT WELCOMES NEW PERFORMERS AND BIDS ADEIU TO GRADUATING SENIORS

SEBASTIAN RODRIGUEZ ASSISTANT WEB EDITOR

The Loy Norrix Drama Department is going to perform “Lend Me a Tenor,” written by Ken Ludwig. There are only eight character roles “In Lend Me A Tenor.” This meant that auditions for the play were more selective. Twenty-five people auditioned for the roles, but only eight were cast.

The play follows Tito Merelli who is a famous opera singer coming to Cleveland in 1934 for a performance. Merelli can’t perform as expected and the play follows the events after that.

This will be the first Norrix theater performance for Riley Dominianni. When asked how she relates to her character she said, “She’s an Italian, which I am as well. She also likes to talk and is very passionate about a lot of stuff. Her family is also important to her.”

Dominianni is a sophomore this year and she performed most recently at Maple Street Middle School. The plays and musicals at Maple Street help young students get an understanding of how a theatrical performance should run and also prepares them for the dramatic productions at the high school level, which are typically more difficult due to the more professional aspect of the show.

“The ones [theatrical performances] at Maple Street were always a big cast, while this one is only eight people. The performance space is also much bigger here at Norrix. The plays and musicals here also feel more professional and sophisticated,” said Dominianni.

Bonnie Bremer also has experience from Maple Street and has performed at Loy Norrix, but unlike Dominianni, this is Bremer’s senior year and one of her last chances to act in a Loy Norrix performance

“I’m excited that this is my last show at Norrix because

I think it’s a really good show to leave off on. Obviously I’m gonna be sad because I won’t be able to work with all of the same people again, and I won’t be able to be on stage again. It’s bittersweet,” said Bremer.

This is also seniors Victor Moss, Amara Lyons, and Lydia Achenbach’s last show at Norrix.

On the other hand, “Lend Me A Tenor” is the first show at Norrix for Dominianni and freshman Sidney Davis.

Much like his castmates, Davis feels that he relates to his character in a lot of ways. “He’s silly, funny, and makes random jokes. That’s pretty much me in a nutshell,” said Davis.

Davis is one of the few underclassmen in the cast, Therefore he is constantly surrounded by people who have already had experience in the theater here at Norrix.

“I’m a little nervous but also really excited because I’m around a lot of talented and experienced actors who I can learn from,” said Davis.

“Lend Me A Tenor” has a small cast, and since they have to spend after school hours together everyday after school, they are all like one big family.

Cast List

Max - senior Victor Moss  
Maggie Saunders - senior Bonnie Bremer  
Tito Merelli - senior Drew Strand  
Julia - senior Lydia Achenbach  
Diana - senior Amarra Lyons  
Mrs. Saunders - junior Abigail Hauke  
Maria - sophomore Riley Dominianni  
The Bellhop - freshman Sidney Davis II

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# STRESSFUL SCHEDULES: STUDENTS FACE UP TO THE CHALLENGE OF ADVANCED PLACEMENT CLASSES

AUDREANNA DUNTON ASSISTANT BUISNESS MANAGER

Many students returned to school this fall with high expectations set for themselves to succeed in their classes. The start of school gives students a variety of different feelings, ranging from a rush of adrenaline to summer withdrawal from such a huge schedule change.

While some students may enjoy catching up with peers and getting back into the groove of things, many students’ first steps into the school year can become a huge whirlwind of stress and responsibilities. Honors and Advanced Placement classes play a huge role in this stress.

“Once school started up, I had to deal with practices everyday and three games a week and sometimes even four, and with all the work from school coming in, it was hard especially on away games when we would be coming back around eight or nine,” said sophomore Jack Cruz.

The number of students enrolling in Advanced Placement (AP) classes has increased majorly over the years. As reported on MLive, “In fall 2008, KPS (Kalamazoo Public Schools) increased AP enrollment by more than 100 students, to 402, and the numbers have been on a steep upward trajectory ever since. Now KPS has released its latest report on AP participation. It indicates more than 850 students at Loy Norrix and Kalamazoo Central high schools are taking AP courses this fall, almost triple the number four years ago and up 20 percent from fall 2010. That’s more than a quarter of the district’s total enrollment at the two high schools”.

Students love to challenge themselves by signing up for prestigious courses and involving themselves in multiple extra-curricular activities, both for pure enjoyment and to make a difference in the community.

However, when the first day of the new school year rolled around, some of these ambitious learners soon started to re-think and even regret the classes that they gladly signed themselves up for last spring. The overwhelming amount of work and commitments can lead students to have a negative mindset from the get-go. The main factor that is the trigger for all of these characteristics? Stress.

Students who voluntarily enroll in Advanced Placement, Honors, Kalamazoo Area Math and Science Center, Academically Talented Youth Program and even Early



Junior Tiana Boyd taking notes in AP Biology. Boyd is also a student in AP European History and AP Language and Composition.

PHOTO CREDIT / AUDREANA DUNTON

Middle College classes experience different levels of stress throughout the school year. These students face new challenges daily, including managing time spent on homework and studying, which in turn can absorb their personal life at an increased rate. Some students end up not getting enough sleep due to their abundance of homework. Having such a challenging schedule can have a huge impact on students mentally and physically.

Junior Ismael Enriques is enrolled in Honors Chemistry, Physics, AP Biology, and Psychology.

“It is exhausting to have such a hard schedule. I just want to go to sleep,” said Enriques. “I just wish I had easier classes. My sleep schedule is really messed up because I’m used to staying up late. I feel like there is too much stress on my shoulders.”

Many students sign up for more prestigious classes purely to brag about their achievements to their friends, teachers, and especially parents.

“Being in APUSH (AP U.S History) is really fulfilling. I get to push myself and learn tougher material. Another thing that is great about AP is it teaches you good time-management skills, note taking and studying skills,” said sophomore Emma Hilgart-Griff.

Nevertheless, the huge transition from summer to stressful school life takes a heavy toll on students, especially those in rigorous courses.

Most students come back to the usual, review for the first half of the class from the previous year, signing syllabi, discussing rules and classroom guidelines, and rushing to get to their new classes for the first few weeks.

However, for advanced students, they come back to school ready to learn. They walk into school with no doubt that they will be getting straight to work. Also, all AP students were mandated to complete summer assignments this year, and most assignments were due on the first day.

“There’s no time for anything. I am up for the challenge because it will look good on my transcript and for college and stuff like that, so I think it’s worth it in the long run,” said junior Ella Klute, who is enrolled in Sociology and American History at Kalamazoo Valley Community College.

The majority of these students with high expectations for themselves feel as if their classes are difficult and time-consuming. Nevertheless, they are still able to manage their grades and keep up with demanding extra-curricular activities, such as sports and rehearsals.

“I’m definitely not getting enough sleep already. Not really a great transition for me. I don’t really have any time to do my homework after soccer,” said sophomore Emma Scheele, who is enrolled in AP U.S. History.

There are so many students at Loy Norrix who are always up for new challenges who don’t always have the best transition from a summer full of sleeping-in and lounging all day, with the occasional extra-curricular, to a full-blown hectic school schedule. School takes a heavy toll on the lives of teenagers within the short time span of the end of summer.

However, students at Loy Norrix are always ready to tackle the new and upcoming challenges that they get faced with, voluntarily or obligatory. Some simple tips to help manage the stress of school are to prioritize, organize, study with friends or study groups and listen to music.



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Contact Bob Jorth with questions at (269) 337-0037 or [bjorth@kalamazoopromise.com](mailto:bjorth@kalamazoopromise.com)







HENRY SNAPP WEB EDITOR

Imagine moving across the world to a new country. You would face a whole new set of challenges; learning the culture, finding a house, getting a driver’s licence, the list goes on, but most important of all, learning the new language.

For people coming from Arabic-speaking countries, learning English is especially difficult. English has roots in Romantic languages, while Arabic is a Semitic language. This



Hasan Al Hasan

**Q:** How old are you?  
**A:** 17 years old.  
**Q:** Where did you live before you moved to the US?  
**A:** First we lived in Syria then we moved to Jordan then we moved here.  
**Q:** Why did your family move to the US?  
**A:** My dad moved for his job and he wants us to learn English and get a good education.  
**Q:** What’s your favorite class at Loy Norrix?  
**A:** I like ESL, biology and algebra.  
**Q:** What do you like to do after school?  
**A:** I do homework, watch TV, play soccer and help my dad work. Me and Abdul are good swimmers.  
**Q:** Do you want to join the swim team?  
**A:** We want to, but we have no one to drive us to practice in the morning and after school.  
**Q:** What job do you want after high school? Do you want to go to college?  
**A:** I want to go to college to be a doctor or scientist.  
**Q:** Do you like Kalamazoo? What do you like about it?  
**A:** I like Kalamazoo because many Syrian people moved here and there is a mosque.  
**Q:** What do you miss about Syria and Jordan?  
**A:** I miss the big cities. In Syria, we had a big house, now we live in a small house. My dad owned a grocery store. I miss my family.

From the first question I asked Abdullah, to the last question I asked Mohamad – this group of students exuded friendliness and happiness. They welcomed me with hugs and left me with selfies. The interviews themselves, while difficult to translate, were full of laughter and jokes. These three are some of the happiest people I’ve ever met, despite the

means that everything is different; many Arabic letters don’t even have an English equivalent sound.

Thankfully, programs are available to help immigrants learn to read and write English.

English as a second language, or ESL, is a common name for programs that teach English to non-English speaking U.S. citizens. Due to Kalamazoo’s recent influx of Syrian refugees, these programs are in high demand. Most of these programs



Abdullah Al

**Q:** How old are you?  
**A:** 17 years old.  
**Q:** Where did you live before you moved to the US?  
**A:** Jordan.  
**Q:** What’s your favorite class at Loy Norrix?  
**A:** I like ESL the best.  
**Q:** What do you like to do after school?  
**A:** I help my mom with my brothers and sisters, and I play soccer with friends.  
**Q:** What job do you want after high school? Do you want to go to college?  
**A:** I want to go to college to be a mechanic.  
**Q:** Do you like Kalamazoo? What do you like about it?  
**A:** I like Kalamazoo. It’s a lot smaller. Jordan has many more people.  
**Q:** What do you miss about Jordan?  
**A:** I have family in Jordan and Syria: uncles, aunts and two half-sisters. We cannot visit them anymore because it’s too far.  
**Q:** What should people know about Jordan?  
**A:** In Jordan, we have everything that you do. We have stores, schools and houses. We have big cities with many beautiful people.

challenges they face everyday, in particular learning English. Meeting them for the first time felt like I had always been part of the family.

“I’m happy when I’m around my friends and family,” said Abdul.

While these three students still have a long way to go

are run just like any other class at school.

You may not even realize that there’s an ESL class right here in Loy Norrix. Carol Bouabdellaoui, a new teacher at Norrix, teaches this LN program.

Here’s a quick Q&A with three of her Arabic-speaking students:



Mohamad Mohamad

**Q:** How old are you?  
**A:** 14 years old.  
**Q:** Where did you live before you moved?  
**A:** Turkey.  
**Q:** What’s your favorite class at Loy Norrix?  
**A:** I like everything; math, English and computers [apps].  
**Q:** What do you like to do after school?  
**A:** I go home and do my homework, then I eat and watch TV.  
**Q:** What do you miss about Turkey?  
**A:** I miss my family: my uncle, brother and nephew.

with learning English, all of us could learn something about happiness from them.

So, in the spirit of Abdullah, Mohamad and Hasan, continue to be joyful, friendly and kind even when facing enormous challenges.

DREAM BIG OF BALLET

A BALLET PRODIGY’S PLAN TO DANCE PROFESSIONALLY



PHOTO COURTESY OF GRAND RAPIDS BALLET COMPANY

Julia Rudlaff dancing the part of Wendy during the 2016 fall tour of “Peter Pan,” put on by Grand Rapids Ballet Company.

ALEXA DAVIS GRAPHICS EDITOR

Her feet hurt and she’s tired. It’s 6 o’clock on a Saturday, and she’s been dancing since nine in the morning, not to mention every other night that week. She settles down to do some homework after a healthy dinner to keep her energy up. Before she can call it a night, she decides that it’s time for her cross training session on the elliptical before bed. Sunday will be a fun day of study groups with friends and relaxing before Monday hits, and her ballet training regime begins again.

Julia Rudlaff is currently a junior at Loy Norrix who intends to graduate early in 2018 so she can pursue her lifelong dream of ballet dancing. She has competitively danced for years and believes she is ready to try her chances in the elite ballet world. Her goal is to dance for a professional ballet company for as long as she can after high school. Most professionals dance for about 10-15 years.

“[Dancing] has been my whole life,” said Julia.

Julia started dancing at the age of three. As a kid she was diagnosed with ADD (Attention-Deficit Disorder) and

through dance she has been able to learn a variety of skills, including analytical focus and discipline that she was able to carry over into improving her focus at school. Dancing also challenged Julia to think creatively on the fly. Julia found that the more she danced, the more she fell in love with it.

Before ballet she had been competitively dancing in modern, tap and jazz. Early on in her dance career, Julia decided that she wanted to dance competitively at a higher level, and because ballet is the base of all dance, Julia began taking more ballet classes at age nine to further her skills.

Alexey Kulpin, a ballet instructor from the Grand Rapids Ballet school, was teaching in Kalamazoo at the time Julia declared dance her serious passion, and it was once she began to take classes with him that her love for ballet really blossomed.

Julia said “[I] realized that I really loved it [ballet], and was fortunate to have . . . [physical] attributes better suited for ballet.”

By the age of 9 she was dancing 20-25 hours a week and even began to travel down to Chicago a couple times a week to take classes to strengthen her ballet skills. Julia explained how ballet varied from her previous dancing style.

Julia said, “It was very different than what I was used to, but I also liked that it was extremely challenging.”

Six years later Julia has taken classes all over the country, including New York, Houston and at the Washington School of Ballet. She also consistently dances for the Grand Rapids Ballet. By having all her credits in order, Julia has been approved for early graduation and plans to take one or two gap years after high school to get settled into a ballet company.

“I really want to stay at Grand Rapids Ballet for a year or two and stay home. . . but it’s a really competitive field, so you have to audition as many places [ballet companies] as you can,” said Julia.

This coming winter Julia will start to audition for various larger ballet companies, both by sending audition videos to companies further away and dancing in person for a representative in audition hotspots, such as Chicago. These auditions will include technique classes, a contemporary solo or variation of a dance solo, showing pointe and bar skills, amongst a few other things big companies want to see.

“There are nuances that change based on the company and what their reputation is,” said Julia.

Some companies look more at bar work and skill while others may include technique and a personal variation of a well-known solo dance.

Her audition videos will be sent out to various companies, including the San Francisco Ballet, the Boston Ballet and the Cincinnati Ballet. She’d like to be in a traveling company that will allow her to see the world at the same time.

After settling into a company, Julia plans on taking some online college classes and would like to transfer to a college campus later on because she loves the classroom setting. Currently, Julia is not applying to any colleges because she isn’t sure where she will end up dancing.

“This year will be crazy because I’m gonna be doing some ballet competitions, auditions, and applying to college

is basically equivalent to what I’m doing except for [ballet] trainee programs, “ said Julia. “So this will also require me to get together my resume and start making audition videos.”

When asked why she decided not to finish out her senior year of high school, Julia explained that 16-17 is prime age for many professional ballet dancers because a ballet career typically lasts only about 10-15 years due to the natural wear and tear the body experiences.

“I didn’t want to have any extra worries, I wanted it [high school] all tied up in a bow and done,” said Julia.

In preparation for upcoming auditions, Julia’s schedule is filled with a mix of school and constant dancing. She drives to Grand Rapids Ballet studio six times a week after school and dances from about 4-7:30 p.m. When she gets home around 8:30 p.m., she works on her homework for a couple hours before cross training on an elliptical around 10 o’clock at night. On Saturdays she dances in Grand Rapids from 9-5 and Sundays are reserved for friends and studying.

On top of her busy dance life, Julia is also a Kalamazoo Area Math and Science Center (KAMSC) student. Her favorite classes are biomedical science and anatomy because they allow her to learn about her body and how it moves, which fits perfectly with her ballet interests.

As a busy year looms ahead for Julia, she expresses her parents’ side of the story, along with her fears about taking such a huge leap into the real world. She explained that a ballet career can be over in an instant because of an injury caused from something as simple as landing a jump wrong. Julia’s parents have been supportive but share the same concerns regarding a career ending injury.

“They like to know that I’m invested in both [academics and ballet] and they’re happy to know that I have a backup plan, so if something were to happen, I still have a strong academics background that I could use,” said Julia.

Lisa Rudlaff, Julia’s mom was initially on the fence about Julia’s ambitious goals.

“I wanted her to experience the senior activities, senior moments and graduation with her friends,” said Lisa Rudlaff.

Now, she is in full support of Julia’s early graduation plans to start her ballet journey. She’s less nervous about her starting college later than usual because she knows her daughter gives everything she has to both dancing and academics, but worries this will affect Julia’s ability to apply for scholarships and The Kalamazoo Promise.

“When the time is right, I have no reserve about Julia going to college and completing a degree in her next career path,” said Lisa Rudlaff.

As the time grows nearer Julia’s family grows excited for their daughter’s opportunity to further her dance career and have confidence in her abilities to reach professional dancing.

“Julia has a sweet personality with a smile, stage presence and beautiful technique that draws an audience to her,” said Lisa Rudlaff.

With a big smile on her face and lots of enthusiasm, it’s easy to tell that Julia is excited to start her journey towards a professional ballet career.

“Not everyone’s version of success looks the same, so don’t be afraid if yours is especially unconventional,” said Julia.



PAY NO ATTENTION TO THE MAN BEHIND THE CURTAIN

AN INSIGHT INTO LOY NORRIX STAGE CREW

GLENNALDAG GRAPHICS EDITOR

The auditorium is dark and crowded, many eyes are focused on the events unfolding onstage. No one is paying any attention to the booth at the back, from which a barely noticeable light glows.

Two people wearing headsets sit in silence in front of a counter with two intimidating control panels. The smell of quickly consumed fast food still emits from the crumpled paper bags between them. The silence is temporarily broken by the utterance of a command. The words of this command seem meaningless to those unfamiliar with what’s going on, yet almost immediately afterward the lights on stage change, indicating that the act has ended.

The people in the booth are members of the Loy Norrix Stage Crew. Currently the stage crew consists of

only two members, seniors Emma Fergusson and Griffin Abbot.

This is not a “club” that you sometimes hear announcements for from the drama department, but one that exists even when there is no production in the works.

“We do very different things and it’s important people understand the difference,” said senior Emma Fergusson, when asked about stage crew. This is Emma’s third year in the program.

The scene that was just described is what most people associate with stage crew. The quiet man behind the curtain, silently pushing the show forward. Yet the role of stage crew members is so much more than that.

“It’s important for the upkeep of the auditorium. I don’t know who else would do it,” said Fergusson.



Here is the Loy Norrix Auditorium. It is currently maintained by seniors Emma Fergusson and Griffin Abbot.

If you were to observe stage crew on a much more average day, you would find them participating in the most mundane of tasks: moving wood, changing light bulbs, sweeping, etc.

“There’s a lot of sitting around, lots of order following, moving heavy things,” said Fergusson.

PHOTO CREDIT / EMMA FERGUSSON

Yet stage crew offers lots of opportunities to learn new skills, such as set production and lighting, which helps offset the sometimes tedious and repetitive tasks that one performs as a part of the organization.

“I’ve learned a lot of skills that I wouldn’t have learned any other way.

Fall-out spot [spot light] is the most interesting, and the most painful skill I’ve learned. I’ve done sound and light board, which I’m kinda bad at,” said Fergusson.

The entire program is designed to allow students to have real hands-on experience in the backstage workings of a show and really be interactive in the workings of the auditorium. Students are partly responsible for the auditoriums upkeep and to set up for the programs that use the space.

These programs include school assemblies, club ceremonies, school concerts, drama productions and productions put on by outside groups that rent the auditorium. The latter of which students actually get paid for. This allows students to experience how a real auditorium runs and what it really means to be on a crew.

Recently though, stage

crew membership has decreased dramatically. This has been quite problematic for the group’s efficiency.

“When I first joined there were like, ten people, and now that there’s only two. It seems really unlikely that we’ll get anything done. There’s always something that needs to be done, and we need a lot of people to do it,” said Fergusson.

It is clear that the Loy Norrix stage crew is in somewhat desperate need of able bodies, whether it receives the help it needs remains to be seen.

If you are interested in joining please contact the auditorium director Doug Blicke at blicklewd@kalamazoopublicschools.net.

WHAT TEENS DO TO

ANNOY THEIR PARENTS

MIAMAY ASSISTANT PHOTO EDITOR

Through all the ups and downs of a relationship between a parent and their teen, they will always love each other. A couple of teens confess what they do to annoy their parents.

TY OVERHISER JUNIOR



Loy Norrix junior Ty Overhiser says he annoys his parents when he does not return their calls. Ty’s parents aren’t the only ones frustrated by this. London based entrepreneur, Nick Herbert, was so tired of his 12 year old son not answering his texts, he created the app ReplyASAP, which puts an alert on children’s phones until they answer their parent’s texts.

On a day to day basis it is clear parents and their teens clash head to head, no matter where they are located.

BRILEY KRUGER JUNIOR



Junior Briley Kruger eagerly replied “yes” when asked if she annoys her parents. Kruger purposely annoys her parents by asking questions she already knows the answer to.

“Like asking where something is when it’s right in front of me,” Kruger said, laughing. Kruger considers it her job is to annoy her parents daily.

“The influence that you have over your child is more dependent on a trusting relationship than it is on how much authority you dish out and how many lectures you give,” according to the website “ReachOut Parents.” Sometimes there needs to be less ruling over teens and more trust towards teens.

CJ WASHINGTON SENIOR



Senior CJ Washington shrugged his shoulders in agreement when asked if he annoys his parents.

“I ask them for something until they say yes,” said Washington.

If they say no, he will continue to ask until he gets what he wants. Nevertheless, he knows when he needs to stop.

“I get cussed at then I know to stop,” said Washington.

According to Professor Sarah-Jayne Blakemore, teens tend to be persistent because of specific activity in their brains.

“This is not down to the developing of the prefrontal cortex (which is associated with impulse control) but also due to enhanced activity in the part of the brain that seeks out novelty and reward,” said Blakemore.

Washington’s relentless nature is the reason why he keeps persisting until he gets what he wants.

MADISON MORGAN JUNIOR



Junior Madison Morgan said she annoys her mom with a sense of humor that her mom doesn’t exactly enjoy.

“I say stupid stuff that annoys her... I repeatedly say something until she gets angry,” said Morgan.

According to Psychology Today, the emotional part of the brain is more developed than the logical part in teenagers. This explains why teens, such as Madison, do seemingly random things that annoy their parents.

KAYLAN ROBINSON SENIOR



Senior Kaylan Robinson admitted he annoys his parents and he doesn’t care.

“I turn on real loud music when they sleep. . . they annoy me, gotta return the favor,” said Robinson.

According to author Sara Goudarzi, teens sense of empathy and guilt are not fully developed which could be why Kaylan doesn’t care if he annoys his parents.

Teens annoying their parents is probably the most common thing. Every teen does their own thing to annoy them, like not texting parents back, asking stupid things or “returning the favor.” Parents will still love their teens through it all though.

FROM BRADY PAGE 1

Brady intends to point students in the right direction. “I want them to think about what they want for themselves in the future,” said Brady.

Brady wants students to set goals and hopes to help them achieve these goals, “I’d like to pave a way for kids to reach their goals,” said Brady.

Brady plans to keep students on the path to success and hopes to see every student at Loy Norrix graduate with their graduating class.

Brady said, “If they start slacking off now, they get caught in a vicious cycle that spirals downhill.”

Student attendance and behavior are also on his to do list. He plans to get students to understand how important their actions now are for their future.

Brady tries to relate to students by talking with them and understanding their needs. He counsels students that have been in trouble and tries to keep them in the classroom and give them the tools they need to succeed. Brady plans to work with with staff very closely in the coming years finding out what they need and how he can help them to help their students.

“I might have changed titles, but I’ll always be a teacher,” said Brady.



PHOTO CREDIT / ZACH SKINNER

Interim assitant principal, Chad Brady talks with his colleagues. He is checking to see if there is any problems that need his attention.

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# STUDENTS GO BACK TO SCHOOL WITH J-BIRD VINTAGE

IZZE FAHL SOCIAL MEDIA TEAM

Rise and shine! These old-school students open their heavy eyelids and rush to put on the most spiffy outfits in their closet before the school bus arrives. Luckily they'll show up to their first day and look like the bees knees with all the snazzy ensembles they bought from J-Bird Vintage located on 511 W. Vine St.

JOSIE SMALL  
JUNIOR

\$24

\$20

Josie Small wears vintage, high-waisted Wranglers with a mid-century Chinese silk button-up. Small laces up her white high top Converse and is ready to take on the school day.



CAIN SANDOVAL  
SOPHOMORE

\$5

\$18

Cain Sandoval is pictured wearing a casual graphic tee with camo pants and a pair of printed low top Converse. Even though Sandoval is equipped with camouflage pants, this is a look you can't miss.



\$20

JOE MOESLY  
SENIOR

\$30

\$20

When the winter season hits, senior Joe Mosely will be ready for the cold with this multicolored, striped ski suit. Mosely can trudge through the snow with these classic snow boots which happen to go with this warm and cozy attire.



WILLA KUTTNER  
SOPHOMORE

\$20

\$18

Even though the seasons are changing from warm to cool, sophomore Willa Kuttner can hold on to the summer by wearing this bright and cheery outfit. Kuttner's wearing high waisted jeans with a vibrant, pink turtleneck and a groovy pair of flower printed sneakers.



\$16

LILLY GULLIVER  
SENIOR

\$24

\$18

\$14

Lilly Gulliver brings back denim on denim. This button up denim shirt will bring spring to mind, paired with a pair of wide-legged jeans, a yellow knitted belt, and white heels.



CAIN SANDOVAL  
SOPHOMORE

\$5

\$12

Sandoval is finally prepared to end his first day with gym class. This sporty outfit features a graphic tee, nylon track pants, and a pair of old school sneakers.



\$14



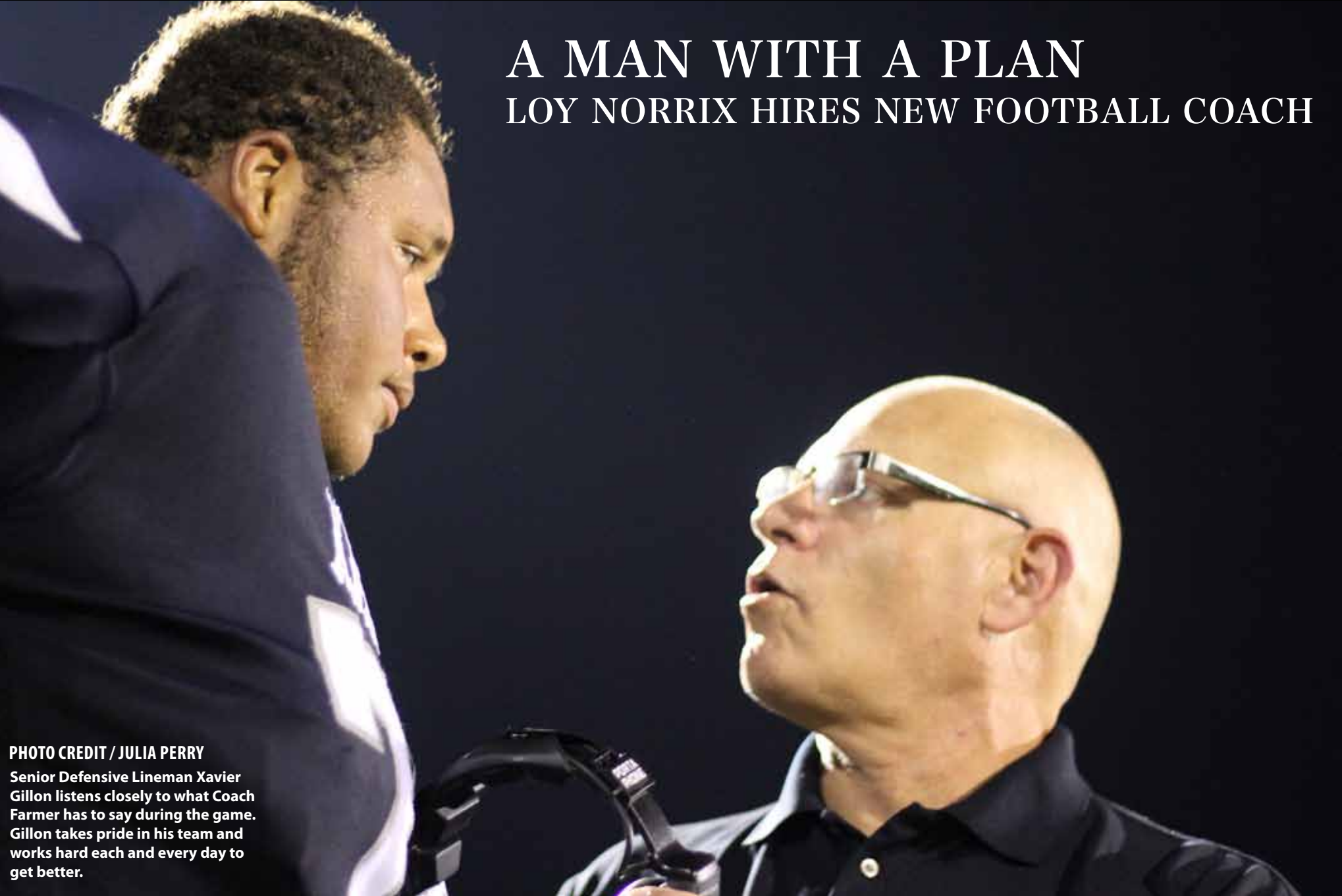


PHOTO CREDIT / JULIA PERRY  
Senior Defensive Lineman Xavier Gillon listens closely to what Coach Farmer has to say during the game. Gillon takes pride in his team and works hard each and every day to get better.

JORDAN COX SPORTS EDITOR

It’s no secret that the Loy Norrix Football Program has struggled to win. In the past 4 seasons, LN Football has posted a record of 3 wins and 33 losses (3-33).

After coach Jason Porter resigned in 2016, the program was in need of a savior. The LN Football Program needed a man with extensive knowledge of the game and a will to win. The athletic department found exactly that when they hired this year’s new head coach, Terry Farmer.

During the football meeting early in the school year, senior Cody Wilkins said, “From day one, Farmer’s presence in the locker room was something we’ve lacked in all the years I’ve played football here [at LN].”

Farmer played football at Aurora University in Aurora, IL. After his playing days were over, Farmer started his coaching career at Oswego High School in his hometown Oswego, IL. He later went to South Lafourche High School in Louisiana and turned the team around in his first season.

Before Farmer’s time as head coach, South Lafourche finished back-to-back seasons with a 1-9 win-loss record. In his first season, the team finished with an outstanding 10-2 record. After the 2009 season, Farmer was honored with the Louisiana Coach of the Year Award.

Farmer later moved to England High School in Arkansas. In each of the 5 seasons he coached, the team made the high school

football playoffs. Farmer was also awarded with the 2015 Arkansas Coach of the Year Award and 2016 Arkansas Coach of the Year Award.

When asked what made Farmer want to coach these struggling programs he said, “If you go to an already established program, the expectations are unrealistic. They expect you to win every year. When you come to a program like here [LN], the expectations are low and when you do something positive it means a lot more to the school.”

Coach Farmer has given many players on the football team guidance, “The game of football is more than just wins and losses. It’s about these players growing as men and increasing their skill level along the way,” said Farmer

Farmer has given our school a sense of hope. The one game this school cares the most about is against “the other team from Kalamazoo,” Kalamazoo Central.

It was a hard fought game. Both teams played their hearts out until the final whistle blew.

With standout performances from quarterbacks Lee Jones and Romario Williams, which led Loy Norrix to victory.

“The play [hook and ladder] was a thing of beauty. It felt like nothing could go wrong in the game that night. We were destined to win” said Jones.

One key play in the game was the

“hook and ladder” that led to a touchdown. Quarterback Lee Jones threw a 5 yard pass to receiver Yohaness Ademodi who pitched it to Derrel Mabon and ran for a roughly 75 yard touchdown. This gave Norrix a 7-6 lead in the first quarter, and gave the Knights a major confidence boost for the rest of the game.

Norrix would go on to win the game by a score of 21-14. Senior Running Back Josh Lipsey said, “Defeat was a word that was not in our vocabulary that night. We were determined to win.”

As Farmer has had such success with struggling programs, some fans are looking

ahead and expecting a lot. As for Farmer’s expectations for the rest of the season, “Our expectations are the same every day: we work hard and do everything right every time,” said Farmer.



PHOTO CREDIT / JULIA PERRY

Coach Farmer goes over the game plan with his offensive line before they go out on the field. Senior CJ Washington (73) and Junior Elijah Anderson (75) listen closely as Farmer explains their roles.

# HOMECOMING AND SPIRIT WEEK 2017



Senior Homecoming court listed from left to right: Daniela Garcia, Connor Wilger, Amarra Lyons, Jackson Couch, Tony Lopez, Jayden Ubl, Tre’Vonn Collins, & Lauren Johnson.

PHOTO CREDIT / JULIA PERRY



PHOTO CREDIT / JULIA PERRY

Freshmen Madison McNair and Annika Flores pose together in their twinning outfits for Spirit Week. “We’ve been best friends since 6th grade and we always unintentionally twin” said McNair. “We work at the same summer camp,” said Flores explaining the matching shirts.



PHOTO CREDIT / JULIA PERRY

Loy Norrix students cheer on the football team in the Hawaiian themed homecoming game against Benton Harbor. The Knights experienced a tough loss, but the student section had a good time.



PHOTO CREDIT / JULIA PERRY

Teachers Samantha Maxwell, John Kreider, Patrick Greeley, and Andrew Loy all pose for a picture during the homecoming pep rally outside. These teachers are the “life of the party.”



PHOTO CREDIT/ JULIA PERRY

Freshmen Claudia Ligman, Ellie Lepley, Samantha Vandepole, Carson Williams and Tieran Rafferty all pose together in their school pride for “Blue and White Day” of Spirit Week. “We wore blue and white today because we’re excited to be knights,” said Vandepole.



# BIG INDUSTRY BUST: HOLLYWOOD STRUGGLES TO CREATE NEW MATERIAL

JORDYN CARLTON STAFF WRITER

Do you ever have the problem of paying too much at the theater to see a movie and feeling disappointed when the so-called “spine chilling” thriller causes you to fall asleep? Or when the only decent movie to watch is just another remake of an old movie?

If you were to go and ask people their opinions on the movie industry, most would probably say that the past few years have been really big for Hollywood blockbusters. This is true in a sense, however, some would also argue that lately film studios haven’t been doing much when it comes to movie creativity, seeing as how major movie corporations keep recycling the same movies just to release them on a different year.

2015 was an astonishing year for box office numbers, with three of the highest grossing films of the year in the form of sequels to major film series. The success of sequels in 2015 has brought up the debate on whether film studios are lacking



PHOTO CREDIT / “IT” MOVIE  
Pennywise the clown seeks his next victim in the new updated release of Stephen King’s “IT”..

creativity or just being lazy when it comes to creating new stories to project on the big screens across the country.

Instead of having a groundbreaking year for cinematic storytelling, 2015 seemed to be more like a “best of” compilation for movies that have already had their place in Hollywood; with movies such as “Star Wars: The

Force Awakens,”“Jurassic World” and “Furious 7.”

In the last couple years, studios have put most of their investments into large-scale sequels or remakes to basically insure that there will be a substantial financial return. A major recent reboot that has been receiving bad reviews is Stephen King’s “IT.” The 1990 release of the movie sent box office numbers

through the roof, but the film’s 2017 counterpart hasn’t held up to the same standards as the original film. According to “The Atlantic,” “IT” “feels eerily like “Stranger Things,” albeit with considerably more gore splashed around.”

While some didn’t have as high regards for the new film “IT”, Andrew Barker, a reporter for Variety, had a more positive review on the film.

“Focusing entirely on the childhood-set portions of King’s book, it’s a collection of alternately terrifying, hallucinatory, and ludicrous nightmare imagery,” stated Barker. Unlike many others, this review reflects what the movie was built up to be.

“I think film studios should try focusing on appealing to their audience more instead of securing their financial gain. That’s when the best movies are made,” said senior Alex Johnson.

Instead of working on their creativity, they have decided to milk the same plots, characters and sometimes even soundtracks of

their predecessors in hopes that updated special effects and audio will be just enough to cover up the fact.

According to BoxOfficeMojo, four out of the top five highest grossing movies in 2017 so far have been sequels or reboots of movies previously made. “Beauty and The Beast.” “Guardians of The Galaxy 2,” “Spider-Man: Homecoming,” and “IT” are just a few of the reboots.

This just goes to show that the movie industry is lacking creativity in all aspects of film and is not intent on changing directions soon.

Forty-Four of the movies that will be released or have already been released in 2017 will be recreations of already made movies. It’s safe to say that within the up and coming year we deserve better story plots and some new material. Hopefully 2018 will be the year for movies to come.

# THE NILES HAUNTED HOUSE SCREAM PARK BEHIND THE SCREAMS

ALEX VONHOF LAYOUT EDITOR

I entered the main house of the Niles Haunted House Scream Park. After being led through a completely dark maze, I followed a path across moving bridges that go through foggy forests and over dark ponds. After that, I come out of a short maze and into an ancient Egyptian themed path where I had to walk under spikes and over shifting floors to get to the other side. Once through, there are over 100 different paths that the visitors can take, which would require seven or more trips to go through all of them.

Loy Norrix junior Josie Smalls recounted her experience at the Nile Haunted House Scream Park and said, “Yeah, it was fun. Really scary. I actually think I started crying.”

The Niles Haunted House Scream Park began in the mid 1970s when, according to legend, the Greater Niles Jaycees, a group of leaders in the Niles community, started a haunted house. This first house was located in the Carnegie Library in downtown Niles and was run as a community event and a fundraiser for local charities.

Eventually, the Niles Chamber of Commerce requested that the Carnegie Library building be given up, so the Niles Haunted House was forced to move. In 1980, the house was located in two semi truck trailers parked on the St. Joseph River, but they needed to find a bigger location.

The search for a permanent location continued for 17 years until in 1997, when a 44 acre piece of land was purchased by Scare, Inc., a for profit company that is owned by Pete Karlowicz and Joe Leach. The freedom that came along with the Niles Haunted House’s ability to have a permanent location was tremendous. The owners were able to plan their own attractions, change them as they wanted and create new attractions. In addition to the main house, there are 4 other current attractions that visitors can go to see.

In the attraction “Possessed,” visitors use an Ouija board to communicate with the spirits that inhabit the area. In “Incarcerated,” guests go through a prison scene, enhanced with victims’ dead bodies and chain fences with sparks flying off of them.

The “Field of Screams” is a gigantic maze in the Niles Scream Park and is very easy to get lost in. The workers who are out in the “Field of Screams” prey upon visitors who have been lost for a long time, which makes them much easier to scare.

“The people in costumes looked really real and they kept running around and chasing people,” said Smalls.

In order to get out of the “Field of Screams,” guests must go through the Voodoo Bayou, the Castle torture area and the floating Cannibal Island. Once the visitors



PHOTO CREDIT//JORDYN CARLTON  
THE NILES SCREAM PARK REPLICATES A SCENE FROM THE MOVIE “SAW.”



PHOTO CREDIT / JORDYN CARLTON

reach this point, however, they must figure out how to escape the attraction.

“They kept calling my name, it was really creepy,” said Smalls about the workers in the Niles Haunted House.

If someone isn’t feeling up to running through a haunted house or a maze, the Niles Haunted House Scream Park also offers the “Dark Terror-tory Haunted Hayride.” In this attraction, visitors ride a trailer that goes along a mile long trail, complete with over 30 different scary sets that culminate in the chase of the Route 66 killer. There are also 3 small escape rooms located at the Niles Scream Park, similar to Escapology in Portage. In an escape room, the participants must solve a puzzle in a set amount of time in order to successfully escape from the room. The difference, however, is that these escape rooms are “speed escape rooms,” meaning that visitors must solve the puzzles and escape the room in just 5 minutes instead of 45-60 minutes as per usual.

The Niles Haunted House

Scream Park is also adding a new attraction this year: “Hooded.” In this attraction, the participant goes in alone with a hood over their head and must follow a path with multiple scares and workers on the inside. It is described as an “intense sensory experience,” because of the noises and sound being played in the background, as well as the fact that the workers are able to touch and grab the visitors. This greatly increases the scare level of this attraction. The prerequisite, however, is that the visitor must be an adult to participate and must sign a waiver beforehand allowing them to be touched and grabbed by the workers. Oh, and don’t worry, the hood is washed after every use.

The Board of Directors for the Niles Haunted House consists of President Don Kirkendall, who has been with the attraction since 1984; Vice President Jim Smith, started in 1988; Mike Kessler, with the event since 1987; Joe Leach, involved with the project since 1982; and Pete Karlowicz, a member of the project since 1980.

The Board of Directors got the

idea for multiple attractions in their haunted house from a man named Leonard Pickel when Karlowicz and Leach were in Atlanta for an International Association for Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) meeting. In one year the Niles Haunted House had constructed another attraction, and then split that one into another one the year following. Each year, the sets of the haunted house are torn down and changed for the next year, in order to add excitement and encourage people to come back.

The workers that make the Niles Haunted House run, however, are not paid workers, but rather volunteers. Once the park opens, the Niles Haunted House has approximately 700 total volunteers, with 200-250 working each night. Instead of a salary, the volunteers are given money to donate to charities and organizations of their choice. In 2016, the Niles Scream Park donated almost \$125 thousand dollars to 80 different charities. These charities included the Make A Wish Foundation, Pets Connect,

and Boy Scout Troops.

One of the biggest aspects of the Niles Haunted House is their security. Before they open in the fall, the Niles Haunted House volunteers spray everything in the building with Inspecta-Shield™ Fire Retardant. From the fabric in the rooms to the dummies themselves, everything is sprayed. In addition to the fire retardant spray, the Niles Scream Park has made designated paths for both the visitors and workers so that they can exit quickly and efficiently.

In 2016, the fire alarm went off twice, although there was no actual fire. In both instances, the entire building was evacuated and completely clear of people in approximately 45 seconds.

The Niles Haunted House Scream Park is now open for visitors, so make sure to check them out! The dates and times are available on their website, located at [www.haunted.org/plan-your-visit/dates-times.html](http://www.haunted.org/plan-your-visit/dates-times.html).





MAXWELL LINK SPORTS EDITOR

Technology these days has thrown people off their feet with crazy inventions such as hoverboards, 3D printers and the Google Glasses. But there is one invention that tops all of those, the new Apple AirPods. With bluetooth technology, you can now listen to music with no cord and even better sound.

There are many features to the AirPods that make it one of a kind. Some of these special features include the one tap power activation to turn them on, or the double tap to talk to Siri (an artificial intelligence personal assistant for Apple products). The AirPods are able to sense when they are in your ear and pause when you take them out, and they are always powered on and connected.

Mitch Mansfield, a senior at

Loy Norrix High School, is one of the few students in the school who own a pair of the Apple AirPods. He has owned them for about two months and believes that they are a great asset.

“They're really good. My favorite feature on the AirPods is the double tap feature on each earbud and the 30 yard connection,” said Mansfield. “I think they have better quality than the normal ones and it solves my pet peeve with the iPhone 7.”

The iPhone 7 comes with one port that can either play music or charge your phone. The Apple AirPods solve this problem with its bluetooth connection, and you can now do both at the same time.

The AirPods cost \$159 plus tax, which is quite expensive for a pair of headphones, but with the unique features and the great sound, it's



PHOTO CREDIT / MAXWELL LINK

Senior Mitch Mansfield sits in Mr. Hoslers classroom during lunch listening to his new Apple AirPods. he has owned them for about two months and brings them everywhere he goes.

a fair price and you will get your money's worth.

“The price was super expensive, but the more and more I use them, the more I believe that it was worth the price,” said Mansfield.

Music is a large part of our society nowadays, and the AirPods have made listening to music a better experience. Apple products have shot through the roof in sales since the Apple AirPods were released.They have taken a large chunk out of the beats share of the wireless headphones. They have people back on the edge of their seat waiting to see what unpredictable invention will come out next.

RAP MUSIC COULD HELP US BETTER UNDERSTAND MENTAL HEALTH

EMILY LEWMAN  
ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT EDITOR

You shoulda filled that black revolver blast a long time ago  
And if those mirrors could talk it would say, ‘you gotta go’  
And if I told your secrets  
The world’ll know money can’t stop a suicidal weakness,”  
lyrics from rapper Kendrick Lamar’s song “u.”

When you think of Hip-Hop/ R&B music you typically think of classic artists such as 2pac or Outkast. You think of the rhythm and lyrics that talk about gangs, money, degrading women and other Hip-Hop stereotypes. What doesn’t come to mind when trying to remember that catchy lyric you heard on the radio, is an artist opening up the conversation on the reality of mental health disorders.

According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, mental illness affects one in five American adults and 9.8 million people in the U.S. are suffering from a serious mental disorder. Depression, Anxiety, Bipolar Disorder, Schizophrenia and hundreds of other illnesses are daily realities that many people have to deal with, and nowadays these realities are being acknowledged.

Rappers like Gucci Mane, Kid Cudi, Kanye West, Kendrick Lamar and many other popular artists use music as their platform to discuss mental illness and talk about their own personal experiences.

For example, in October 2016, famous rapper Kid Cudi announced to his fans over Facebook that he was putting himself in rehab due to his “suicidal urges.”



PHOTO CREDIT / MERLIJN HOEK

Rapper Kendrick Lamar is hyping up the crowd by telling them to put their hand in the air. Lamar's concerts have been known to be an overall exciting yet liberating experience.

“I am not at peace. I haven't been since you've known me. If I didn't come here, I would've done something to myself,” Cudi said via social media, “I simply am a damaged human swimming in a pool of emotions everyday of my life.”

Cudi isn't the only rapper that faces these issues either. Kanye West admitted that he suffered from depression in 2007 after the death of his mother. Future and Kendrick Lamar both incorporate their battles with mental health into their music to share with fans

by talking about the troubles of growing up in poverty and how it affects them to this day.

Senior Reilly Malpass, who is strongly influenced by Kendrick Lamar, thinks that he has a different approach on bringing awareness to the rap game.

“In ‘To Pimp a Butterfly’ he had poems, a line of poems at the end of every song and it created a very dark scene,” Malpass said.

Chance the Rapper recently opened up about living with Anxiety and told “Complex Magazine” that mental

health hasn't been a topic the mainstream media was open to talking about until recently.

“For a long time that wasn't a thing that we [society] talked about. I don't remember people talking about it... when I was growing up. I'm starting to get a better understanding of that part of my life,” said Chance.

These artists are making a difference in their fans' lives everywhere by sharing their problems, reaching students in our own school.

Senior Donovan Powell, fan of

Kanye West, thinks that these artists are using their platforms to vent and talk about their everyday problems that fans can relate to.

“They're just normal people, a lot of people like to say they're higher or treat them like they are [famous], that's not the case at all,” Powell said, “They'll have the flashy clothes and the chains. They'll have the look, just the look doesn't matter, it's what going on in their head.”

Childish Gambino is another artist that uses music to discuss his inner demons and in his new album “Awaken, My Love!” he uses more of instrumental beats to describe what he's feeling than just focusing on his lyrics.

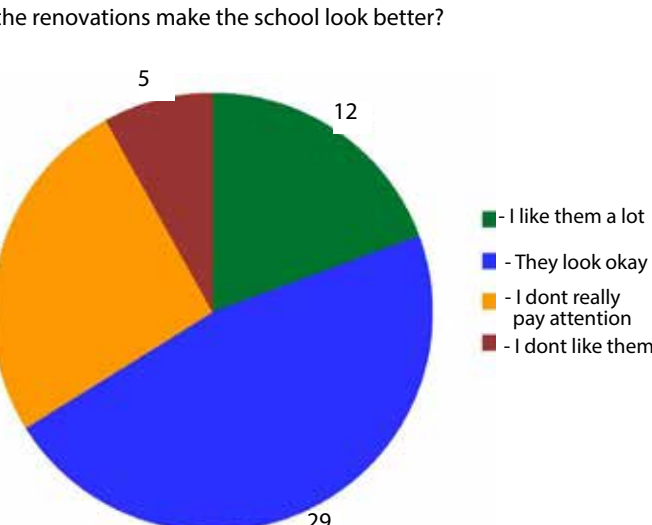
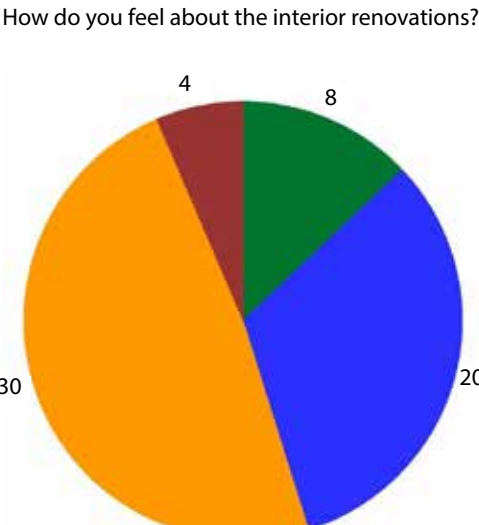
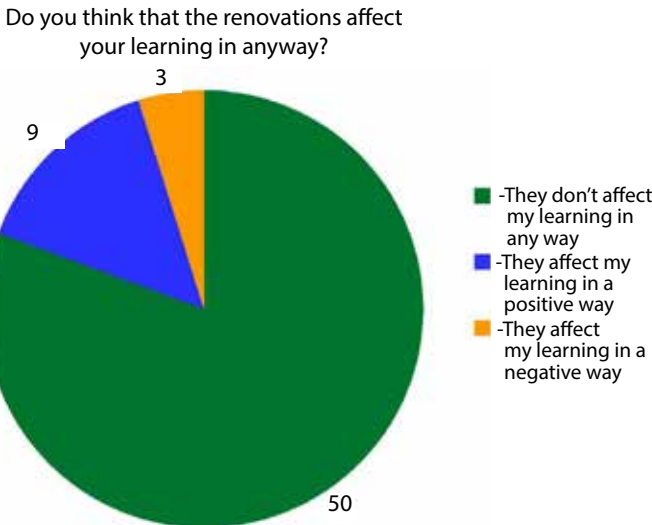
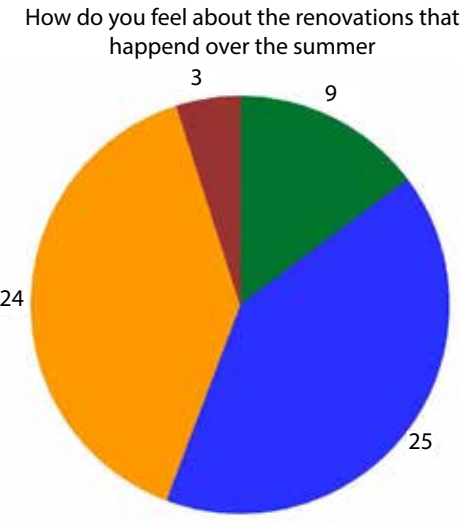
Senior Abigail Lindblade, fan of Gambino, thinks that the album is very influential and relatable when addressing mental health.

“It's really easy to see and understand the different emotions, the different stages, different experiences than in his other albums,” Lindblade said.

Mental health disorders are real and affect millions; for Hip-Hop and R&B artists, it's a big conversation that they are ready to discuss with the world through their music and public platforms. All of these rappers want to tell their fans that it's okay to struggle and need help, and that even those with amazing talent have their own dilemmas and are ready to take a stand against the illnesses that affect millions.

FROM **RENOVATIONS** PAGE 1

In the graphs below, students were asked their opinion about the school’s recent renovations. Here are their responses:



Many students are disappointed and feel that the renovation has changed the school’s curb appeal.

Loy Norrix has always had a reputation of looking like a “glass castle” and is known for its teal paint.

Through the survey, junior Acacia Harper said, “They didn’t do everything that they said they would. Bringing the brick up in the hallways eliminates the “glass castle” look that Norrix is known for.”

Junior Ophelia Smith said, “The renovations make it feel as though we are imprisoned with the walls built halfway up, instead of windows from floor to ceiling.”

Lots of work was completed

over the summer of 2017 to begin renovations with even more scheduled for summer 2018.

Coming from someone who saw it all happen, Campus Safety Officer Jacqueline Hampton said, “I worked this summer doing security for the renovations. I think they are really nice. I like how they changed the color, I like how they made the windows wider, and how the hallways are wider. I think the renovations are a great idea.”

# Mi Puebló

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Knight Life will publish a formal correction of any factual error made in a previous issue.

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Check out the independent voice of LNHS at knightlifenews.com

MUSIC AND HOW IT AFFECTS PEOPLE WHILE STUDYING

SEBASTIAN RODRIGUEZ ASSISTANT WEB EDITOR

Imagine listening to your favorite song while doing a task. Do you ever stop to wonder whether the music you listen to while studying is beneficial to your studying?

Throughout the years, there have been many different debates on music. Most people see music as beneficial, which it is in most circumstances. But, like most things in life, where there are good things there are usually bad things.

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart is commonly regarded as one of the most influential figures and composers in the Classical Era. According to the Free Dictionary by Farlex,

the Mozart Effect is the theory that listening to classical music, such as Mozart and Beethoven, can help people focus and raise their intelligence. Although this effect has had varying results when tested on different groups of people, it’s still interesting to see what the effect of music is on students. Most major studies have focused on classical music and it’s effect on the brain; however, most students, nowadays, listen to pop or rap music.

In a study conducted by West Connecticut State University, eleven participants watched a violent music video

that contained aggressive behavior as well as degrading behavior towards women, eleven watched a nonviolent music video and eleven participants did not watch any video. The study determined that watching violent music videos does make individuals feel and react in a violent matter, which does negatively affect behavior. This study is suggesting that too much exposure to violent music can cause people to have violent thoughts.

LET’S SEE WHAT PEOPLE AT NORRIX THINK ABOUT MUSIC AND ITS EFFECT ON PEOPLE

MUSIC TEACHER JULIE PELLEGRINO



Do you think that classical music could help a person focus while they’re studying?

“Yes definitely. There have been a lot of studies that have shown that listening to instrumental music, whether it be classical or electronic, can help minimize distractions while studying.”

FRESHMAN ROWAN PIPE



Do you think that classical music could help a person focus while they’re studying?

“Depending on the artist, like Mozart, classical music has been scientifically proven to help a person study.”

FRESHMAN ROZALYN FARMAN



Do you think that classical music could help a person focus while they’re studying?

“I think that listening to classical music can help someone focus while they study. I’ve seen an article saying that it was.”

FRESHMAN LUCY WALLIS



Do you think that classical music could help a person focus while they’re studying?

“Yes, sometimes I will listen to it [classical music] to study. It’s not distracting, yet it drowns out the extra background noise.”

SENIOR JT MITCHELL



Do you think that too much exposure to violent music could make a person have violent thoughts?

“I don’t think so...I listen to ‘violent’ music all the time, but I have no desire to cause harm to anyone or myself.”

SENIOR IZZE WIKLE



Do you think that too much exposure to violent music could make a person have violent thoughts?

“I think that it’s [violent music] capable of normalizing violent behavior. But ultimately people still have free will.”

LOWER WAGES WOULD ENCOURAGE EMPLOYERS TO HIRE MORE TEENS



JAELYN ANDERSON  
BUSINESS MANAGER

In the U.S. most jobs require previous experience, however, in order to get that experience, you need a job. Every year jobs become harder to get because of the many recessions we’ve had. This means teens in America are having an even harder time getting a job when there is also an adult candidate to compete against.

According to CBS News, “In 1986, 57 percent of Americans ages 16-19 were employed. The percentage stayed over 50 percent until 2002 when it began to drop. By last July, only 36 percent were

working.”

At Loy Norrix there are students who work jobs both during the summer and during the school year. However, there are many more that are trying to get a job and having a hard time finding one because of their age and lack of experience.

“I’ve been looking for a job since freshmen year, and I’ve seen people older than me get hired just because of their age. My parents have told me that having a job would help me learn life skills and I would really like one, but [jobs] are so hard to get at my age,” said junior Paula Zuniga.

There is a struggle for high school students to get a job because there are certain age restrictions that limit the amount of physical work a student can do and hours that a students can work. For example, at a grocery store, students under 18 can stock shelves and bag groceries, but the federal law doesn’t allow them to operate a cardboard-box compactor, so

the employer would have to find another person to do that job.

Lowering the minimum wage for teens would help more teens to get a job. It would encourage the employer to hire someone at a younger age. The employer can ignore the fact that the teen has restrictions and less experience because they won’t have to pay them as much as an older, more experienced worker.

Even with lower wages, working as a student in high school has many benefits. Not only does it give students work experience that’ll help them get higher paying jobs in the future, but it shows them how to be on time and be professional in a work environment with the risk of potentially losing their job.

“[Working] showed me that jobs aren’t all fun and games and jobs should be taken seriously. Working has really taught me how to be responsible and made me learn how to balance life,” said sophomore Skylar Clay.

“Sometimes working can be very hard; however, I would recommend that the teens who are ready for a job and can handle the pressure should get one.”

Many students today don’t get the benefits of having a job because when an employer is hiring and has the option of hiring a teenager or an adult for the same wage, an employer would rather pick the older, more experienced worker, which leaves teens struggling to find a job. Unemployed teens struggling to get a job are often willing to work for less money just to have a job and gain more experience.

“It can be really hard for students in high school to get a job. I don’t necessarily want to make less money, but if that means that I have a higher chance of getting a job that’s fine with me.” Zuniga continued, “It’s better for students to have a job that pays less than no job at all.”

KNIGHTS SPEAK

“Do you think that teens and adults should get paid the same for doing the same job?”



Sophia Mazei, 9th grade  
“Yes because it’s the same job.”



Fati Diallo, 12th grade  
“I say absolutely because teens work just as hard as adults.”



Lillia Bistrek, 11th grade  
“I believe they should because its the same job. If it wasn’t the same job then I can understand a different pay based on rankings. But if its the same job then they should be paid the same amount.”



Jose Solis, 12th grade  
“Yes becasue kids are doing the same amount of work. Just because they’re younger doesn’t mean they can get paid any less if they’re ready to work the same they’re ready to get paid.”



# DON'T BE A BYSTANDER STAND UP AND HELP



**JULIA PERRY**  
SOCIAL MEDIA TEAM

Two female students were meeting in the K wing bathroom. When I walked in, they were already fighting. I whipped out my phone to catch all the action and realized that one of the girls had stopped hitting back. I could hear her wheezing and out of breath, and she still managed to get a faint “stop” out. The other girl grabbed her by the neck, started punching her in the face, and it wasn’t until then that I ran to get help. Campus safety officers come flying into the bathroom and when they asked me what happened, I said, “I don’t know.” They asked me, “Why didn’t you get help before then? What was going through your head? Why didn’t you intervene?”

I believe that we as people don’t interfere in potentially dangerous situations because we have been taught from a young age that if it’s not our business, we need to stay out of drama and chaos. However, in many situations, help is needed.

It is very important that we do something and play a part in severe situations where there’s no help around even though were not trained, we are humans and could potentially save someone’s life. This is important now more than ever because within our society, times are changing and things are getting more dangerous by the day. There may come a day you may need that help and no one will help you. You’re going to wish someone may have called the police or said something to save your life or the life of someone else, possibly a person that you love.

So why don’t people take action? It is due to something called the bystander effect. Usually individuals don’t intervene in an serious situation where they’re discouraged

to get help or intervene. The most famous case of bystander effect was with young lady named Katherine Genovese. She got off from work at about 1:00 a.m. She saw a man on her way home, and he stabbed her multiple times. The perpetrator got away and she tried to get help. He came again, raped her, and stabbed her for 30 mins until her death. Thirty-eight people witnessed the man attack Katherine, but only one person called for help.

This assault is a more serious situation than just a fight or an argument, but these little situations, for example, like arguments or kids fighting, can escalate to a more serious situation. At Loy Norrix, campus security officers are hired to maintain order in the halls and to prevent dangerous escalations between students in class and in the halls. Devin Palmer, Kalamazoo Public Safety Officer, is assigned to Loy Norrix High School and wears his uniform every day to work. When he sees a fight, he stops and addresses it.

Officer Palmer’s response is from an adult point of view, and as an officer in uniform. Loy Norrix junior Gabrielle Davis had a different perspective from Palmer. Instead of addressing situations, she wants to see who is winning and doesn’t think about her surroundings.

“I wonder who it is, who’s winning the fight, and by the time it’s over, I walk away.” said Davis. If I were asked the same questions, I would’ve said nothing because most of the time when something is wrong, I just walk away. We’re all fascinated by drama, and that’s what is important to us, no matter if it’s a TV show, a movie, or people. Even if the dramatic situation goes bad, we tend to only care about the action, not the consequence. In real life, would you like someone to help you or abandon you while you’re in danger? Could you bear the outcome? Be more aware of the situation, take action and speak up.



# SCHOOLS NEED TO BE MORE REALISTIC REGARDING ADVANCED PLACEMENT CLASSES



**GAIA BOGAN**  
STAFF WRITER

Pushing kids into the deep end of a swimming pool was once a socially acceptable method of teaching them how to swim. Today, this ‘sink or swim’ point of view is obsolete in most circles, so why does the education system continue to deal with Advanced Placement (AP) courses in this light?

From their freshman year, students are told that AP classes equate success. In theory, these classes create a rigorous curriculum for those who would like a challenge, but it can be extremely overwhelming for students who are not ready for the workload and responsibility. Too much pressure can be detrimental to student’s academic performance as well as their self esteem.

According to a 2012 study from the American Psychological Association, when 131 sixth graders were given difficult anagrams, those who were reassured that learning was difficult did significantly better, as well as felt better about their own achievement. This is just some of the mounting evidence that indicates the dangers of over-pressuring students.

When students are led to believe that they should be able to immediately excel in this difficult environment, they will perform and feel worse about themselves than those who have realistic expectations.

“AP classes are definitely helpful for preparing students for more rigorous education,” said Loy Norrix senior Lili Mead, who is currently taking two AP classes. “They definitely can be harmful to some... stress piles on and students tend to give up naturally.”

However the pressure isn’t only on the students, AP classes all lead up to a large final exam, which determines whether a student passes or fails, despite having no

basis on the students’ in class performance. Meanwhile an NEA study showed that 72 percent of teachers experience “moderate” to “extreme” pressure to improve their test scores. The same survey also reports that 45 percent of educators have actually considered leaving the profession because of standardized testing. In a higher stakes environment, these stresses are only exacerbated. Because AP classes are supposed to model a college course, most teachers would understandably like to move through the material quickly and efficiently. Expectations are high and when students struggle, it can lead to tense relationships between the teacher and student. Those who are having genuine trouble with the amount of the work may see the teacher as unfair, while the teacher might view the student as lazy. In actuality, neither of these things are certain, but it can be hard for both sides when they are mutually dealing with negative blowback, teachers who are being constantly evaluated by administrators, and students with their grades. Ultimately, there are many benefits to AP classes, but the current handling of them needs to be reevaluated. Classes would run smoother and more efficiently if every student was encouraged to take the courses that matched their ability, rather than cram their schedules with what looks superficially good. Schools should acknowledge the difficulty of these courses instead of shaming students who cannot handle this environment. Pushing oneself is healthy, but putting yourself in a situation that you are totally unprepared for will inevitably lead to anxiety issues.

If you are considering an AP class, understand the level of difficulty and be sure you are committed enough to the subject and the course to follow through. Otherwise, find a class that will push you, without making you feel like you’re drowning.



**Kanejia Conner, 12th**  
“I think they should get paid the same amount because they can work as hard as an adult can and minimum wage is honestly pointless. Teens save up for cars and sometimes college. They may need the money as much as adult.”



**Taya Mackenzie, 12th**  
“If kids are doing the same work as adults, I don’t see why they should be paid any differently. It would be wrong to pay them less. It would be almost as bad as the gender wage gap.”



**Isaiah Hobson, 11th**  
“I think teens and adults should get paid the same amount of money because teens can work just as hard as adults, and they might need the money as much as adults.”



**Chris May, 9th**  
“Yes, because kids are just like adults and also some kids can be more mature than adults. But some kids are also already further in life than some adults.”



# POSITIVITY PREVAILS

## LOY NORRIX NEW VARSITY VOLLEYBALL COACH PUSHES PLAYERS TO SUCCEED ON AND OFF THE COURT

ANNA KUSHNER FEATURE EDITOR

The score is 25-26, it’s the championship game of the Battle Creek Central Volleyball Tournament on September 16th. The Loy Norrix Knights Varsity volleyball team has gone undefeated all day and they are now one point away from taking home the gold. The ball is set, hit and bounces off the opponent’s block bringing the Lady Knights to victory. The team storms the court cheering in a huddle, and at the center of that huddle is Coach Victoria Najacht.

The volleyball program at Loy Norrix has seen its share of coaches. Over the past few years, Coach Victoria Najacht will be the third head coach the senior volleyball players have worked with during their time at Loy Norrix. Najacht, originally from Hartford, Michigan, started playing volleyball in the fourth grade and played as a Defensive Specialist throughout high school. She then moved to Kalamazoo to attend and play softball for Kalamazoo College.

From K College, Najacht became one of the head coaches for the Loy Norrix softball team. Najacht, learned about the open position for varsity volleyball coach from a parent of one of her softball players, who also plays volleyball.

Najacht always loved her coaches growing up and said she wanted to become a coach to be a support network and bring guidance to other players, as her coaches did for her.

Najacht wants to bring positivity and a culture that promotes hard work and

dedication above anything else. She has also created an environment for her athletes to grow in both volleyball and life by holding study table and weight room sessions between school and practice times. She hopes through these methods she will be able to encourage a positive mentality and increase the confidence the team members have in themselves.

Senior Maddy Guimond is ecstatic with the new improvements Coach Najacht has initiated,

“There’s definitely a lot less punishment, and the drills are less intense, but that doesn’t mean they’re any less effective,” said Guimond.

Najacht’s favorite part of the season has been getting to know her players and watching the team members grow and develop. She feels like her players have reminded her to have fun and enjoy the sport.

“I feel like sometimes I learn more from them than I teach,” said Coach Najacht.

Najacht wants her players to finish this season with a newfound confidence on and off the court.

“I want them to remember this season as one where they worked hard, learned a lot from volleyball, had fun, and made memories,” said Najacht

Outside of volleyball, Najacht loves traveling and dogs. She hopes to adopt two rescue Golden Retrievers after the season is over.



PHOTO CREDIT / JORDAN COX

Coach Victoria Najacht, senior Evie Bartley and senior Leah Dunham watch the varsity team play Battle Creek Lakeview. The match ended with scores 16-25, 14-25, 5-25 for each game.

The season isn’t over yet, and as the Knights get ready for their upcoming games, Coach Victoria Najacht will be in the gym pushing them to perform at their best.

“I think we have a group of really great coaches and phenomenal athletes,” said

Coach Najacht. “I think with continued hard work and commitment we are headed in a really positive direction.”

# SPORTS EQUIPMENT: THE COST OF WHAT THE PLAYERS ARE WEARING

ALEX VONHOF LAYOUT EDITOR

Sports are a big deal at any school and one of the factors that go into playing a sport is the equipment. Players have to worry about what kind of equipment and how much it totals with each sport they participate in. Loy Norrix offers a variety of different sports that anyone can try out for, but with each sport comes different equipment. The two pictures below give an estimate on how much it the average soccer and volleyball player’s equipment costs.

## SOCCER



Total cost  
\$245-550

Jersey  
(paid for by school)  
\$70-100

Shorts  
(paid for by school)  
\$40-50

Socks  
\$10-15

Shin Guards  
\$25-35 (pair)

Shoes  
\$100-350

## VOLLEYBALL



Total cost  
\$260-305

Jersey  
(paid for by school)  
\$20-30 each

Spandex  
(paid for by school)  
\$30

Knee Pads  
\$30

Ankle Brace (optional)  
\$50

Socks  
\$10-15

Shoes  
\$100-150

## WINTER TRYOUT INFORMATION

**In order to try out, students must have:**

- Physical (Dated after April 15, 2017)
- \$25 Insurance Fee (Pay once per school year)
- Consent Form (One needed each season)
- Code of Conduct form signed (Once per school year)
- Academic Eligitiibiity Check (Current trimester, meet minimum GPA)

**Try out dates:**

- Hockey - October 30
- Girls Basketball - November 6
- Competitive Cheer - November 6
- Boy’s Basketball - November 13
- Wrestling - November 13
- Skiing - November 13
- Bowling - November 13
- Men’s Swimming/Diving - November 20

## 42nd Annual Ski & Snowboard Swap!

- |                        |          |
|------------------------|----------|
| Friday November 3rd:   | 3pm-8pm  |
| Saturday November 4th: | 10am-5pm |
| Sunday November 5th:   | 12pm-4pm |



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