



# Take a Stand with Editorials.

UIL News Writing  
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# Editorial Writing

An article that states the newspaper's stance on a particular issue. Basically, it's a persuasive essay that offers a solution to a problem.



# When you get the prompt ...

01

**Look for the dates.**

When will a decision be made? What is the future event?

02

**What's the central issue?**

What is the main concern for your readers?

03

**Who supports the pro and the con?**

Think about who is supporting which side. Which side do you think is right?

04

**What difference can you make?**

What should happen next?

05

**Who is the audience?**

What will they care about the most?



# Editorial Writing

District Meet • 2023

## The Prompt



You are a reporter for the **Leaguetown Press**, the student newspaper of Leaguetown High School. From the given information, write an **editorial** as you would for the high school newspaper.

Remember that as an editorial writer, you should **support or oppose** policy or action; you should not sermonize. You have **45 minutes**.

Do not write your name or the name of your school on

Leaguetown High School has 3,600 students enrolled in grades 9-12. Since 1900, the high school's mascot has been the Leopards. After Title IX was passed in 1972, the athletic department made the decision to name all girls teams the "Lady Leopards," and for the past 40 years, that has not changed.

The "Lady Leopards" logo is on a wall-sized mural in the gymnasium. It's on jerseys, T-shirts and bumper stickers throughout campus and the community.

While attending a basketball tournament in San Antonio this December, varsity girls captain and senior Nicole Moutry observed the other teams in attendance and took note of their mascot names and logos. Over the next month, Moutry wrote a proposal and produced a petition to formally drop the word "Lady," so all high school teams would be known as the "Leopards." Her petition has more than 2,200 signatures from students, parents and community members.

Moutry presented her proposal and petition to the school board in February and the board will vote on the proposal at its meeting Monday, March 27. You are writing for the issue of the Press to be distributed Thursday, March 23.

### **THOSE SUPPORTING THE MASCOT CHANGE**

There is no reason to distinguish between the gender of each mascot. A Leopard is a Leopard. Adding the word "Lady" diminishes the ferocity and power of female athletes and makes the name of the team sound diminutive. Female athletes are just as strong as their male counterparts and should not be treated differently.

### **THOSE OPPOSING THE MASCOT CHANGE**

The Lady Leopards mascot has been around for more than 40 years and is ingrained in the tradition of the school. There is no plan in place to pay for this change. The expense it would take to repaint the mural in the gym, purchase new jerseys and equipment and replace every iteration of the words all over the school is not worth the effort just to make some students feel better about the name of the mascot.



# The Prompt

## ■ NICOLE MOUTRY, senior varsity basketball captain

“When I was at a tournament in San Antonio, I wrote down every mascot of the teams in attendance, and more than 60% of the teams had some sort of feminine qualifier to their name like ‘Lady Dragons’ or ‘Bisonettes.’ And I looked out on the court and saw all these tough girls taking elbows, playing through injuries and sweating all over the court and I thought, ‘this ain’t it.’ We are not Lady Leopards. We are Leopards. We are every bit as competitive and tough as the varsity boys. So, I want us to change our our name to the Leopards.

“As far as paying to make all these changes, some of the other members of my team as well as members of the volleyball and soccer teams have made a group chat, and we are coming up with a list of local businesses we could contact to sponsor our jersey replacements. So hopefully that would give us a starting point to pay for some changes.

“Every girl on all three teams signed the petition, as well. This is something that is really important for our mindset, especially as our season is winding down and as my team looks ahead to next season. I want to leave a legacy for the girls coming after us. I want them to know that they are athletes, and they are no different from the male athletes at the school.”

## ■ VICTORIA MOMOA, athletic director and varsity girls basketball coach

“Nicole has been a tremendous athlete for us all four years of her high school career, and I’m proud to say that she earned a scholarship to the University of North Texas to continue playing in the fall. It was no surprise after her grit and leadership throughout our season that she would want to make a change like this and send a clear message to our community that our female athletes are here to dominate just as much as our male athletes. As athletic director, I have some concerns about the budget and how those details would be worked out if the school board does decide to accept her proposal. But regardless of the decision, I’m proud of Nicole’s team. I’m proud of the season they had and now I’m proud that here at the end of her career, she is choosing to make a stand about something she believes in.”

## ■ CJ POCOCK, junior boys soccer player

“I know lots of girl athletes, and we do lots of events and team-building stuff with the girls soccer team. They practice hard and play hard, so I don’t have any issues with a change to the mascot name. I’ve never thought of them as any different than us.”

## ■ CEDRIC MACK, principal

“I understand and empathize with the students looking to change the name of the mascot. The problem is, when you have such a long-standing tradition like a mascot name, people don’t realize the expense that the school community will have to go through in order to enact these changes. All our forms will need to be re-created. We’re talking about changes to our facilities and changes to our website. It’s not a simple switch we can just flick and change the name of a mascot. This is something that will need to be done over time. I’m not convinced that now is the right time to take on some of these monetary expenses and additional challenges.”

## ■ JACK BLAKEY, junior

“This seems like a waste of time and money. Our school needs a computer lab and new science equipment. I don’t think it should be the school’s responsibility to waste money on these superficial things when what we have is fine.”

# The highly capable and hardworking human

**Intro:  
Present the  
problem or  
situation.**

**Take a stand!**

**Opposing viewpoints are rebutted.**



**Reason #1 for position**

**Reason #2 for position**

**Reason #3 for position**

**Evidence for all 3 points.**



**Present  
a logical  
solution.**

**Recap  
the staff  
stance.**



**No quotes!**

# The head

The lead

**Intro:  
Present the  
problem or  
situation.**

Girls sports teams could have an adjustment to their mascot if the school board approves a petition by senior Nicole Moutry to drop the word “Lady” from the Lady Leopards team name at its March 27 meeting.

**Don't be afraid to drop your opinion in the lead. Be creative. Get the time element in the head or neck.**



# The neck

Take a stand

**Take a stand!**

The school board should vote to change the names of girls sports teams so that all school teams are known as the “Leopards.”

**Be clear and concise. Set the stance apart in its own paragraph.**

# The body

**Reason #1 for position**

**Reason #2 for position**

**Reason #3 for position**

Give three reasons why you're taking this stand.

- The word “lady” diminishes the power of female athletes.
- It's common for teams to experience mascot changes.
- They have a fundraising plan.

**TIP: Include thoughts that aren't given to you in the prompt.**



# The arms

Opposing viewpoints are rebutted.



Evidence for all 3 points



Support your argument with evidence and examples.

If huge organizations with large fan bases can make such changes to their names to be more respectful of marginalized communities, the school can make the effort to consolidate the boys and girls teams into one mascot.

While it may take time, fundraising and hard work, changing the names of the girls sports teams is possible. Moutry has even suggested reaching out to local businesses to sponsor jersey replacements as an option.

**Refute the opposition and tell us why the other side is wrong. (Can be its own paragraph)**

# The legs

**Recap  
the staff  
stance.**

**Present  
a logical  
solution.**

*(Call to action)*

Every girl on the volleyball, basketball, and soccer team has signed the petition. It is imperative for the school board to listen to its athletes and how they want to be represented in their community. Teams should drop the “Lady” and all be Leopards together.

**TIP: Propose your own solution from outside the prompt.**

**TIP: ROAST**





# ROAST



# ROAST

There's nothing wrong with being a lady. The school board should reject this proposal and keep the traditional name the way it is — the way it has been since 1972.

**Make it memorable.**



# Sound advice:

- Get the time element in there.
- No whining “it’s not fair.”
- Don’t over–stretch.
- Keep it third person or first person plural.
- Double check spelling and grammar.
- Use active voice.
- Offer a good solution or call to action.
- Develop your own recipe for a salty, spicy ROAST.

# What went wrong?

- You didn't take a stand or it wasn't clear enough.
- Your argument was too general. Be specific to this situation.
- You asked too many rhetorical questions without stating an opinion.
- You used quotes. Don't do that.
- You turned into a preacher.
- You got off-topic.
- You lacked credibility or didn't use evidence.
- You used stereotypes or made personal attacks.



# On contest day...

- Read the entire prompt
- Decide on a stance
- Using the prompt, write three supportive statements
- Highlight the evidence in the prompt
- Think about a roast, reasoned solution or call-to-action.
- Write it



A large crowd of people, mostly young adults, is seated in bleachers, likely at a school event or competition. In the foreground, a close-up of a woman with brown hair and glasses is visible. The background shows a large audience of people sitting in bleachers, some looking towards the camera and others looking away. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting an indoor arena or gymnasium.

# Happy writing!

Contact me any time.  
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