

# News Writing

## Invitational B Meet • 2022



You are a reporter for the Leaguetown **Press**, the student newspaper of Leaguetown High School. From the given information, write a **news story** as you would for the high school newspaper. You may use statements attributed to individuals as **direct or indirect quotes**. You may not change the meaning of a statement. You have **45 minutes**. Do not write your name or the name of your school on this sheet or your entry. **Put your number on your paper.**

Leaguetown High School has 1,200 students enrolled in grades 9-12. In January, Superintendent Mickey Jagget announced that the district would renovate the cafeteria and create an outside courtyard for students during lunch. This month, Jagget released the plans and has faced backlash from some parents. In the remodel plans, Jagget included an area for outside fast food vendors like Pizza Hut or Taco Bell. The district has not secured contracts with the vendors yet, but it is in negotiations. Jagget is proposing that vendors rotate into the cafeteria on a monthly basis.

Students overwhelmingly approve of Jagget's plan. The Student Council even gave the superintendent a list of fast food places that students would love to have at school. After hearing complaints from parents, Jagget surveyed students in their English classes about the renovation. The survey showed 95% of the 1,095 students who completed the survey support the use of outside vendors.

The renovation will begin in early June and is scheduled to be completed before the 2022-2023 school year begins.

The president of the PTSA will hold a forum in the lecture hall at 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 16, to discuss the new cafeteria plans. Several parents have expressed concerns about fast food being served during school hours. Jagget will attend the PTSA forum to answer questions and gather feedback.

You are writing for the issue of the Press to be distributed Monday, March 14.

### ■ MICKEY JAGGET, superintendent

"When we released the renovation plans, I did not expect backlash, and I have not received any from students. I understand that parents are concerned about outside vendors, but until two years ago, our students were allowed to leave campus for lunch. We stopped that after too many students were involved in car accidents. During that time, though, I didn't have a single parent complain about allowing students to drive to fast food restaurants for lunch. Bringing the vendors to the students is a much safer option.

"I certainly will listen to the parent feedback at the PTSA forum, and I welcome it. We haven't signed any vendor contracts, and we haven't started any construction. There is time to revisit the plans, but I also will listen to our students. Our cafeteria should serve their wants and needs."

■ **CARLY WATTS, junior**

“Off-campus lunch ended my freshman year before I could drive. I have never been able to leave campus for lunch. The new cafeteria plan is lit. If we can’t leave campus for my senior year, then it would be great to be able to have good food in our own cafeteria. I don’t mean to upset our cafeteria workers. They are the nicest ladies, but the food is not exactly great.”

■ **STEVIE TYLER, freshman**

“I love the new plan for the cafeteria. I can’t wait to eat Taco Bell or Pizza Hut for lunch. I never pack my lunch, so I would love to have new choices. I can’t understand why the parents are upset. No one is going to force any student to eat fast food for lunch. And really, what high school kid doesn’t eat fast food every once in a while?”

■ **JOANIE PERRY, PTSA president and parent**

“I thought the school district was trying to create a healthier path for students. The district removed all soda machines, and the gardening club has been giving fresh herbs and vegetables to the cafeteria. Bringing in fast food vendors is the complete opposite. Students will flock to that food instead of the healthier options made by the cafeteria. I don’t think the majority of parents approve of the renovation plan, and next week parents will have the opportunity to tell the superintendent. I encourage all parents to attend the meeting.”

■ **RICK JOURNEY, parent**

“My concern is about students who can’t afford to buy the fast food. About 30% of our students qualify for free- or reduced-lunch. Those students won’t be able to buy from the vendors. Once again, they will stand out and be different from their peers because of money.”

■ **VANNA HALEN, school cafeteria manager**

“Dr. Jagget shared the renovations plans with me a month ago. I support them. Adding a vendor like Pizza Hut actually helps us. It’s hard to serve our students with only the cafeteria lines. Opening up another line and another source of food will be beneficial for everyone.”

■ **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Five local fast food restaurants have expressed interest in selling food in the cafeteria.

**DO NOT DISTRIBUTE TO STUDENTS BEFORE OR DURING THE CONTEST!**

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### NEWS WRITING CONTEST TIPS AND SAMPLE STORY

Contest Director: Give one copy to each judge to use during critique/judging. Also, staple one copy of the contest and one copy of the contest tips to each student's returned entry. The purpose of the tips is to provide immediate feedback to students. However, it is not meant to replace written comments from the judge.

1. Open with a future lead under the present circumstances. In this instance, the story comes out before the PTSA forum.

The PTSA will hold a forum at 7 p.m. Wednesday to discuss the cafeteria renovation plans that would add an area for outside fast-food vendors to the cafeteria. While several parents expressed concerns over vendors selling fast food during school hours, the majority of students support the renovations and the use of outside vendors.

2. Use direct quotes and get those quotes early in the story. After you introduce quotes, use the transition/quote formula. Be sure you attribute after the quote. An attribution should be: subject of attribution followed by the verb of attribution ("Rogers said," not "said Rogers.") Avoid stacking quotes. Avoid putting two or more quotes from different people together without placing a transition between them. Also, make sure transitions provide information to help the action of the story and the quote does not repeat information revealed in the transition.

**transition**

Jagget said the district has time to revisit the plans, but he also will listen to students.

**direct quote**

"Our cafeteria should serve their wants and needs," he said.

**transition**

The plan is popular among students. Of the 1,095 students who answered Jagget's survey, 95% of them support bringing in outside food vendors.

**direct quote**

"I never pack my lunch, so I would love to have new choices," freshman Stevie Tyler said. "I can't understand why the parents are upset. No one is going to force any student to eat fast food for lunch."

3. Use third person. Don't say "our students" or "our principal" or "Some of our students..." Also, do not editorialize. For instance, you should not say "This new cafeteria will be so cool..." without attributing that quote to someone or "The school should ..." These statements are personal opinions and cannot be made in a news story.

4. Note how in the earlier example of transition/quote, each quote is its own paragraph. Don't be afraid to use one- and two-sentence paragraphs. Journalistic writing consists mostly of one and two-sentence paragraphs.

## **SAMPLE STORY**

The PTSA will hold a forum at 7 p.m. Wednesday to discuss the cafeteria renovation plans that would add an area for outside fast-food vendors to the cafeteria. While several parents expressed concerns over vendors selling fast food during school hours, the majority of students support the renovations and the use of outside vendors.

“When we released the renovation plans, I did not expect backlash, and I have not received any from students,” Superintendent Mickey Jagget said. “I certainly will listen to the parent feedback at the PTSA forum, and I welcome it.”

Jagget said the district has time to revisit the plans, but he also will listen to students.

“Our cafeteria should serve their wants and needs,” he said.

The plan is popular among students. Of the 1,095 students who answered Jagget’s survey, 95% of them support bringing in outside food vendors.

“I never pack my lunch, so I would love to have new choices,” freshman Stevie Tyler said. “I can’t understand why the parents are upset. No one is going to force any student to eat fast food for lunch.”

Until two years ago, students were allowed to leave campus for lunch, but due to the number of students involved in car accidents, the school ended off-campus lunch.

“Off-campus lunch ended my freshman year before I could drive,” junior Carly Watts said. “If we can’t leave campus for my senior year, then it would be great to be able to have good food in our own cafeteria.”

PTSA president Joanie Perry said the renovations undermine previous decisions from the district aimed at “creating a healthier path for students.”

“The district removed all soda machines, and the gardening club has been giving fresh herbs and vegetables to the cafeteria,” Perry said. “Bringing in fast food vendors is the complete opposite. Students will flock to that food instead of the healthier options made by the cafeteria.”

Parents also expressed concern over the cost of fast food.

“About 30% of our students qualify for free- or reduced-lunch,” parent Rick Journey said. “Those students won’t be able to buy from the vendors. Once again, they will stand out and be different from their peers because of money.”

School cafeteria manager Vanna Halen said that adding fast food vendors would help the cafeteria workers.

“It’s hard to serve our students with only the cafeteria lines,” Halen said. “Opening up another line and another source of food will be beneficial for everyone.”