



Editorial Writing Evaluation Sheet

contestant #

In order to make this a complete learning experience, judges are asked to complete the evaluation sheet for students.

	FAIR	GOOD	EXCELLENT
The situation or problem is explained in the first two or three paragraphs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The writer takes an obvious stance in the first few paragraphs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The writer supports the stance through specific examples.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The writer presents a logical solution or conclusion.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What were the strong points of the editorial?

What were the weak points of the editorial?

What suggestions do you have for improvement?

Judge's Signature _____



Editorial Writing

A+ Fall/Winter • 2021-2022

You are a reporter for the Leaguetown Press, the student newspaper of Leaguetown Middle School. From the given information, write an editorial as you would for the middle 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 this sheet or entry. Put your number in the upper right corner of each page of your entry.

STATEMENT OF SITUATION

Leaguetown Middle School is located in Central Texas and has an enrollment of 1,000 students in grades 6, 7 and 8.

For the past 20 years, students have elected Student Council officers and Student Council class representatives. Each second period class elects two Student Council representatives, and the entire school votes on Student Council officers.

After meeting with teachers, Principal Harrison Akins announced this week that next year second period teachers will select the two Student Council representatives from their class, instead of the class voting on them. Students will continue to vote on the officers.

Student Council officers must be in eighth grade and must have served as a class representative for at least one year.

“Several teachers and parents expressed concern that the Student Council representatives were always the most popular students, not necessarily the students who wanted to do the work to be a part of the Council,” Akins said. “I think that is one of the reasons our Student Council has not been as effective as it could be.”

Sixth grader Mina Shirmona said she agrees with the change.

“I want to be a Student Council officer when I am in eighth grade, but I am not popular,” she said. “I didn’t win class representative this year. A cheerleader and football player from my class won. They haven’t even gone to a single Student Council meeting.”

Several seventh grade Student Council representatives and the eighth grade officers said they do not agree with Harrison’s change. They have asked him to reconsider his decision for next year.

“I’ve been involved in Student Council since third grade, and I want to continue,” seventh grade Sam Guyton said. “I always ask my classmates to vote for me, and I attend every Council meeting. Now, if teachers pick the representatives, they will choose their pets. I am never the teacher’s pet.”

Student Council sponsor and English teacher Gwen Nguyen said she plans to create an application for class representatives and share it with the Student Council officers. “We will look at the whole student — grades, attitude, drive, etc.,” she said. “Students should earn this position.”

Principal Akins said he will meet next week with the Council representatives who do not agree with this new selection policy. “If they have other suggestions, I am willing to listen, but I am not happy with continuing with our current process.”

STANCES

Supporting

Students elect Student Council officers, and they do that after a week-long campaign and hearing the candidate’s speeches and promises. That makes sense. It doesn’t make sense for second period classes to vote on class representatives without any campaigning or speeches. Students simply nominate their friends, and then two minutes later, the class votes. As a result, it’s simply a popularity contest. Class representatives should be students who are willing to commit and do the work to improve the school.

Opposing

If Principal Akins wants to change how students select Student Council representatives then he should work with the Council to make those changes. Student Council represents the student body so the student body should select the representatives. With this change, teachers will choose their favorite students who may not represent all students.

UIL Editorial Writing Contest • A+ Fall/Winter • 2021-2022

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JUDGING INSTRUCTIONS

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Remember that for purposes of the contest these students go to Leaguetown Middle School. Contestants should not have to specify Leaguetown Middle School, because everyone reading the school paper knows where they go to school. Also, when they refer to the school board they do not have to say "Leaguetown School Board." Again, they know in what city they live.

Judging criteria has been developed to help you score the papers. The criteria are intended to help you evaluate the writing, not as a control over your background in editorial writing or the writing process.

SAMPLE EDITORIAL

This week, Principal Harrison Akins announced that second period classes will no longer elect Student Council representatives. Instead second period teachers will select the representatives.

Principal Akins need to rethink this change and allow students to vote for their Student Council class representatives.

Allowing teachers to select the representatives means that only "teacher's pets" will be on the Student Council. The Student Council is supposed to represent the students, not the teachers. Students should be able to select the students who will represent them.

Principal Akins said he thought this change would make the Student Council more productive, but that doesn't make a lot of sense. Student representatives are not the ones who make the big plans and decisions for the Student Council. The officers do that. Students will still vote on officers.

Plus before announcing the change, Principal Akins didn't ask the Student Council officers what they thought. He simply listened to teachers and a few parents, whose children probably didn't get elected. This new plan should have been discussed with the Student Council officers.

Those who support the change complain the current system is just a popularity contest. Maybe it is, but at least it's a student popularity contest. The new plan will be a teacher popularity contest. That is not any better.

Principal Akins said he is open to suggestions. If he is, then he should allow students who want to be class representatives to campaign for a week, like the Student Council officers. Then, students would have a chance to get to know the students who want to represent them.



Editorial Writing

A+ Invitational • 2021-2022

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You have 45 minutes.

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STATEMENT OF SITUATION

Leaguetown Middle School is located in South Texas and has an enrollment of 800 students in grades 6, 7 and 8.

Currently the school has one 45-minute lunch for students. The cafeteria has three lunch lines and has seating for 700 students. Students also may eat in the outside courtyard and on the basketball courts in the back of the school. Both areas have picnic tables.

Principal Leesa Gupta announced last week that the school will move to two 30-minute lunches after winter break due to overcrowding the cafeteria.

“On nice days, the cafeteria is fine, but when it rains or it’s cold outside, we can’t fit all of the students in the cafeteria,” Gupta said. “We have students sharing chairs and sitting on the floor. This is not acceptable.”

Students also have complained to Gupta about the long lunch lines. Some students stand in line for 20-30 minutes to buy a lunch.

Student lunch periods will be determined by the location of their fourth period class. Students in A wing will eat A lunch, and students in B wing and the gym will eat B lunch.

Student Council officers and many students are opposed to the new lunch plan.

“Our lunch time is being cut in almost half,” Student Council President Josh Bookmyer said. “We won’t have enough time to eat or hang with our friends. Our days are stressful, and we need that time to hang out with our friends and let off steam.”

Junior Tamika Brown said she doesn’t want two lunches because she won’t have lunch with any of her friends. She said she is in the B wing for fourth period, and her friends are in A wing.

“Lunch is when I get to see my friends,” she said. “I barely have any friends in my classes, so lunch is our time together.”

However, freshman Juan Moreno said he supports the move to two lunches.

“Whenever it rains, the cafeteria is crammed pack,” he said. “I’ve had to eat on the floor more than once. I would rather have a shorter lunch and a seat.”

Principal Gupta said she is open to new ideas, but the school needs a solution to the lunchroom overcrowding issue.

STANCES

Supporting

Students should not have to eat lunch on the floor, nor should they have to wait in 30-minute lunch lines. Lunch is a time to decompress, but that is hard to do standing in a line or sitting on the floor to eat. Two lunches will solve both of these issues. While the lunch is shorter, students will actually get more time and space to relax and hang with their friends.

Opposing

Lunch is a time to eat, but it’s also time for students to hang with friends. Cutting 15 minutes off lunch and separating students from their friends eliminates two of the main functions of the lunch period. Instead of breaking students into two lunches, Principal Gupta should look for an alternative lunch area when the weather is not good. In Texas, that’s not too many days.

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over your background in editorial writing or the writing process.

SAMPLE EDITORIAL

After winter break, the school will offer two 30-minute lunches, instead of one 45-minute lunch. Principal Leesa Gupta said she made the change because of overcrowding during lunch.

Principal Gupta needs to ditch this plan and allow students to have one 45-minute lunch.

Lunch is a time for student to decompress, relax and hang out with friends. With two lunches and 15 minutes less time, that will be harder for students. A 30-minute lunch is too short for students to get their food, eat and chill with friends. Everything will be rushed, and students will have no down time.

Plus, students will be separated from their friends during lunch. With half of the school eating at one time and half eating at another, everyone will miss out on friend time. The two lunches are not even divided by grade level.

Two lunches also means twice as much work for the cafeteria staff and the custodial staff. That doesn't seem fair for them.

Those who support two lunches say the cafeteria is too crowded and the lines are too long. Simple solutions exist. Students could be allowed to eat in teacher classrooms, and the cafeteria staff could set up satellite lunch lines either outside or in the halls when the weather is bad.

Principal Gupta said she is open to other ideas that will solve the lunch overcrowding problem, but she didn't bother to ask students before announcing her plan. We hope she listens now. Students need their 45-minute lunch.



Editorial Writing

A+ Spring District • 2021-2022

You are a reporter for the Leaguetown Press, the student newspaper of Leaguetown Middle School. From the given information, write an editorial as you would for the middle school newspaper. Remember that as an editorial writer you should support or oppose policy or action; you should not sermonize.

You have 45 minutes.

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STATEMENT OF SITUATION

Leaguetown Middle School is located in North Texas and has an enrollment of 1,300 students in grades 6, 7 and 8.

After repeated requests from club sponsors and student club members, Principal Davis Stephens has proposed adding a 30-minute club period after lunch on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Students would either attend a club meeting or go to a silent study hall in the cafeteria. Class time would be shorted by 5 minutes on those days to accommodate the club period.

Next week, students will vote on the club period in English class. If a majority of students vote for the club period, the new schedule will begin the following week.

Principal Stephens said he believes a club period would encourage more students to join clubs. "Research shows that students who are involved in school activities, other than regular classes, do better in school," he said. "I think a club period is a win-win situation for everyone."

Student Council club sponsor Glen Muñoz said he hopes students will vote for the club period. "Student Council needs this," he said. "With after school activities it is hard for our group to meet and accomplish our goals. We would like to plan a dance for the end of the school year, but that is hard to do when only a third of the club shows up for meeting because of other conflicts."

National Junior Honor Society President Jennifer Nickles said her organization would use one of the days to offer tutoring for students. "We would meet as a club on Tuesdays and then offer individual tutoring on Thursdays," she said. "We hope all of the students vote for the club period."

Sixth grade student Jessie Martinez said she doesn't think she will vote for the club period. "I am not involved in any clubs, so I would have to go to a silent study hall twice a week," she said. "That sounds like a punishment."

English teacher Beth Sykes also doesn't support the club period. "Teachers who don't sponsor a club will have to monitor the study hall," she said. "I won't know most of the students, and I suspect I will spend the entire 30 minutes telling students to be quiet. We need a better option for students who do not belong to a club."

Athletic Director Devon Trusse said he thinks the idea of a club period is a good one, but he would like to be able to meet with his athletes during that time. "It would be great if we could get another 30-minute workout twice a week," he said. "Right now, the plan is too restrictive."

STANCES

Supporting

Students who are involved in clubs are often involved in multiple activities making it harder to attend club meeting because of schedule conflicts. This club period would allow students to meet with two of their clubs once a week. Clubs would be more productive and beneficial for the school and students if they were meeting regularly with the students.

Opposing

Not every student is involved in a club, and those who are not should not be punished with a 30-minute silent study hall. Basically, students who are not in a club have a 30-minute detention twice a week. The club period also takes away class time, and while five minutes doesn't seem like much, students would lose 40 minutes of class time per class every month. That's a lot of time.

UIL Editorial Writing Contest • A+ Spring District • 2021-22

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SAMPLE EDITORIAL

Students will vote next week on a 30-minute club period on Tuesday and Thursdays. Principal Davis Stephens proposed the club period after repeated requests from club sponsors and students.

Students should vote for the club period.

To create the time for the club period, Principal Stephens will take five minutes from each class period on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Students who don't want to attend a club meeting would attend a silent study hall.

The idea of this club period came from students and club sponsors. They requested it, and Principal Stephens listened.

The club period also would allow students to attend two different club meetings each week without having to come to school early or stay late. That is easier for students and parents. Also clubs could be more productive with this plan. The clubs would have more time to plan events for students, like a school dance. That would benefit all students.

Finally, a club period would encourage more students to join a club. Right now, clubs have to meet before or after school, and that doesn't work for some students. Having a time dedicated just for clubs would allow all students to find a club that they could join.

Those who are opposed to the club period say that they don't want to sit in a silent study twice a week. They don't have to. They can join a club. If they don't like the clubs that exist, they could even create a new club.

A club period could benefit all students and the school. Students shouldn't hesitate to vote "yes" next week.