

**TOPS
in TEXAS**

HERE!
and now

iLPC
**SPRING
CONVENTION**
April 19-21, 2024
University of Texas Austin



PHOTO OF THE YEAR

A large, teal-colored speech bubble with a white outline, containing the word "Yearbook" in a bold, dark grey font.

Yearbook

A smaller, light grey speech bubble with a white outline, containing the text "Tops in Texas" in a dark grey font.

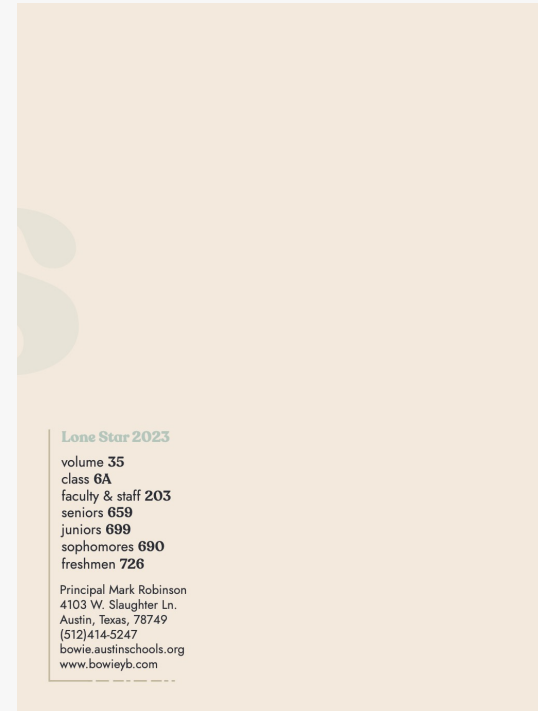
Tops in Texas

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Madison Garro	Ridgeview Middle School
2A	Staff	Thrall High School
3A	Chevy Helton and Kerrigan Love	Elysian Fields High School
4A	Staff	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Abby Mandel, Hannah Schiller and Wes Warmink	James Bowie High School
6A	Katie Gerbasich	Kingwood Park HS

THEME SELECTION AND DEVELOPMENT

Abby Mandel,
Hannah Schiller
and Wes Warmink
James Bowie High School



ACADEMICS 26, 44, 96, 138, 158	CROSS COUNTRY 38	SILVER STARS 16, 36, 46, 88, 100
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Theme selection and
development

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Kallie Almaraz, Charlie Pfertner and Tigerlily Taylor	Kelly Lane Middle School
2A	McKinley Chandler, Sierra Hancock and Kayeli Sigsbee	Burton ISD
3A	Nicollette Arabie, Kaylen Sanchez and Yuliet Gonzalez	Buffalo High School
4A	Staff	Seminole High School
5A	Staff	Hendrickson High School
6A	Staff	Bellaire High School

HEADLINES

Staff

Bellaire High School

While away on his trip, Vincent Lin* admires the Eiffel Tower. "I saw the Arc De Triomphe, Eiffel Tower and lots of parks." Lin said. PHOTO COURTESY OF VINCENT LIN

On the first day of their trip to Paris, Ariana Ispahani* and Lala Ispahani* explore the city. "The biggest thing I learned was the difference in cultures between the U.S. and France," Ariana Ispahani said. PHOTO COURTESY OF ARIANA Ispahani

Touring the monuments of Athens, Andrew Liu* and his friends pose for a picture in front of the Parthenon. "Greek culture was very different from the U.S. I would go there with an open mind," Liu said. PHOTO COURTESY OF ANDREW LIU

Five thousand miles across the Atlantic Ocean was Mathilde Sevene Flare Altiss* from Strasbourg, France. She came to America with the goal of learning English for her dream career. "I wanted to learn English for a future job in medicine as an international doctor," Altiss said. "I expected more freedom because our school was super strict. At Bellaire, we didn't have a dress code, and at lunch, we could go out wherever we wanted." However, not everything was smooth sailing for Altiss. "It was easy to talk to people, but hanging out outside of school was hard," Altiss said.

This barrier was a sentiment shared by a fellow exchange student, Benjamin Harkie*. "In the first few weeks, I would go to bed after fourth period because my brain was so tired of the new language," Harkie said. "Both of my parents were also exchange students many years ago." Despite being far from his home in Homburg, Germany, Harkie was able to experience many of Houston's greatest attractions. "The first day when I was in Houston, my host family took me to Buc-ee's," Harkie said. "It was a pretty awesome store. I had such good food, especially the Mexican food, Tex-Mex."

STUDENT LIFE
Student life in your favorite section

045

VINCENT LIN* KATE GRIFFITHS* HANNAH GOODWIN*

"Since I was already taking French, I thought it would be cool to go to Paris. Typically there would've been French classes with a teacher until the afternoon, then some planned activities like going to certain monuments. The Colosseum in Paris were the best. To think that there were just that many skulls under the city was pretty cool. After a month or so, it just kind of felt like living at home."

"I went to Greece with EF Tours. I learned some words and phrases in the Greek language along with the unique culture and foods they ate. Specifically, on the trip, we did a cooking class, and we made baklava and tzatziki. I definitely felt immersed in Greek culture. One interesting thing was a prayer in the streets in Athens, though I wasn't sure what it was about."

"There was an art program in Rome, Italy that I went to for three weeks. We went to most of the monuments in Rome like the Vatican and the Trevi Fountain. We got the opportunity to learn about these archaeological sites as well as Roman aqueducts and water systems. Although it wasn't a language program, I ended up learning a bit of Italian."

IMAGE BY ANDREW EXPRESS

WHERE DO YOU WANT TO STUDY ABROAD?

59% wish to study abroad
37% JAPAN
29% FRANCE
19% ITALY

DATA COLLECTED FROM 186 STUDENTS THROUGH GOOGLE FORMS AND IN PERSON SURVEY.

winds of EXCHANGE
TRAVELERS SHARE THEIR FOREIGN EDUCATION
PHOTOS BY RYAN BEYFORD, EMILY HE AND RIA NANJUNGAN

Headlines

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Evelynn Wilford	Kelly Lane Middle School
2A	Avery Applewhite	Burton ISD
3A	George Viña, Grant Roberson, Morgan Howard	Geneva School of Boerne
4A	Mackenzi Cox	Brownsboro High School
5A	Tegan Konesheck	Liberty Hill High School
6A	Nayelli Ramirez	McKinney High School

AD DESIGN

Mackenzi Cox

Brownsboro High School

RILEY TEMPLETON

"She is clothed with strength and dignity, and she laughs without fear of the future." Proverbs 31:25

To my daughter:
I pray that you always have the strength to face your challenges with confidence along with wisdom to choose your battles carefully. I wish you adventure on your journey and may you always stop to help someone along the way. Always pray first and listen to the Lord. Remember how much you are loved! We are so proud of you!

Love Mom, Kalon, Ty, Taylor, Dad, Crystal and your angels in heaven.



Ad design

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Jacqueline Flores and Sophia Marinelli	Pearland Junior High West
2A	Avery Applewhite	Burton ISD
3A	Juliana Flores, Naiya Swientek, Brynn Riebel and Victoria Allen	Geneva School of Boerne
4A	Mollie Hemphill	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Kyndall Johnson	Cedar Park High School
6A	Abby Mandel	James Bowie High School

INDEX SPREAD

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Bella Gonzalez, Brittyn Earley and Harper Heath	Kelly Lane Middle School
2A	Noelia Casas	Burton ISD
3A	Makayla Crist/Abby Hudgins	East Bernard High School
4A	Kristin Doebele	Episcopal School of Dallas
5A	Erin Pish	Cedar Park High School
6A	Hannah Schiller	James Bowie High School

CAPTIONS

Erin Pish

Cedar Park High School

CAN'T HIDE *our* PRIDE

cheer finishes seventh at nationals, dance team competes, prepares for spring show

LOUD AND PROUD
Representing the school, the cheer team competes at the state competition in Dallas on Jan. 13. The team finished sixth at the competition. "The night before finals, we made and practiced all the changes, so that the judges would like our routine better," senior **Canynyn Henderson** said. "Our finals performance went very well. With us being in a competitive division, we are so proud of how well we did!"
Photo Courtesy of Jill Goslay

IN THE ZONE
Following behind the band, seniors **Claire Jahns** and **Katelyn Orozco** lead the team at the send off for the cheer state competition on Jan. 12. At the send off, students gathered in the courtyard to show their support for the team. "As we walked through the crowd of supporters, I remember that feeling of 'oh shoot, it's real now,'" Jahns said. "No longer was our team only practicing in the gym, but now we were about to travel to another state and represent our school. It was honoring and humbling, but mostly a memory I won't forget."
Photo by Paisley Schalles



Captions

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Madison Garro	Ridgeview Middle School
2A	Jynisha Randle and Karly Weyand	Burton ISD
3A	Jordin Boulware	Hill Country Christian School of Austin
4A	Julianne Naples	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Izzy Stanley	Kingwood Park HS
6A	Jose Luis Heredia, Diego Cruz and Kiana Sanchez	El Dorado High School

FEATURE SPREAD

Jordin Boulware

Hill Country Christian School of Austin

PARNER IN CRIME: As the innocent captures the Duke, the other side of the coin is a perfect trap for getting caught. "I was Whiteboard from the movie. I was the one who was the morning and one of the two King's partners. It was just the one who got to look like an idiot without being of character. So I thought it would be funny." Photo by J. Horvath.

DEEP IN THE GUT: As a starting character in the play, it was a little bit of a challenge. "I was Miss Fortune and the scene is when my character and the other character are in the 'Mama' scene. I remember on the first night of our show, the hat fell and there's the kind of magic that happens with me." Photo by J. Horvath.

IN CHARACTER: At the start of the performance, I was a little bit nervous. "I was on the base side of the house. My favorite part of the play is the 'Mama' scene. I was able to sing more of the heavy type of music. I just said, 'I was able to sing more and get away with it, I was because because the hat so much with it.'" Photo by J. Horvath.

Gabby Valenzuela (6) Alastair Pollock (8), Kai Toledo (8) Samson (8) Photos by J. Horvath; Gideon Green (7), Leah Balagla (8), Bennett Tolman (8), Nathan Barton (7), Owen Tooley (8) Photos by J. Horvath; Alexander Kowak (7), Nathan Barton (7) Photos by J. Boulware; Alastair Pollock (8), Sydney Wilson (7) Photos by J. Horvath; Neela Sharpley (7) Photos by J. Horvath; Leah Balagla (8), Alastair Pollock (8) Photos by J. Boulware; Morgan Lorraine (7) Photos by J. Horvath; Jordyn Cantine (7) Photos by W. Kowak; Hannah O'Connor (7), Morgan Lorraine (7), Zachariah Hanna (7), Seth Burmann (8), Chloe Gorman (8), Gabriel Sochin (8), Ayden Thiel (8), Kamryn Lawrence (7), Justin Marx (7) Photos by J. Horvath.

NO matter how SMALL

Theater reminds us a person's

Seussical The Musical
"I really think he was just there to give emotion and maybe just emphasize how tiny the world really is. You could have a whole society on the floor and it can show that there's more than one town and that means something."
Janus Orsbeck (7)
The Grinch

Best Christmas Pageant Ever
"My character really showed how someone can take the time and change. At first she is a really crazy person and doesn't believe in Christ as much. Then towards the end of the play she starts believing in Christ more and is a little less crazy."
Eazy Puckett (6)
Gladys Herdman

56 Semester One Middle School Theater 57

Feature spread

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Arlett Rosales	Pearland Junior High West
2A	Amerie Martinez and Jaylynn Tijerina	Ozona High School
3A	Kate Dusek	White Oak High School
4A	Lliani Lopez	Seminole High School
5A	Camilla Escobar	Kingwood Park High School
6A	Skylar Mateo and Kiana Sanchez	El Dorado High School

STUDENT LIFE-FOCUSED SPREAD

Kate Dusek

White Oak High School

Student life-focused spread

hooray

it's time to play
kids experience joy
of physical activity

"Four square is my favorite because I'm good at it," **Isaac Taylor** [3] said. "Sometimes I stay in the first square a lot. There's a lot of people who are good at playing, too." *photo by Kate Dusek*

Soaking up the sun, **Isis Walbers** [1] hangs upside down from the jungle gym. Walbers emphasized her love greatly for her favorite playground equipment piece. "I think I could hang upside down for two hours because it's so fun," Walbers said. "It's easy to get down, and it's my favorite thing to play on." *photo by Kate Dusek*

Taking full advantage of the friendship bench, **Kinsey Baxter** [2] reads **Kinsey Baxter** [2] hair as they watch their friends play during recess. The two often do their hair if they are not in the mood for playing. "Kinsey is my best friend," Baxter said. "She likes to do fun stuff and crazy things with her hair." *photo by Devin Raphael*

Pulling the ball back, **Meritt Merritt** [1] prepares a strong throw against the other players along with many wins. Merritt has gained a sense of toughness with playing the game. "Tetherball is my favorite because I get to throw the ball," Merritt said. "I win a lot, and I usually play with my friends. I've gotten hit with a tetherball before and I didn't even cry." *photo by Kate Dusek*

"I play on the merry go-round," **Sam Miller** [18] said. "I like hanging out with my friends at recess too. They are fun, but I'm funnier." *photo by Kate Dusek*

"I love to play with my friends at recess, and we like to play on the swings," **Isaac Taylor** [18] said. "We will sometimes play tag when we go to recess. My favorite game to play is tag because I am fast." *photo by Sarah-Jane Willey*

"I love playing a round of tetherball," **Isaac Taylor** [4] said. "Once I played against a really good tetherball player, and I won against him because I know the secret to getting the ball high." *photo by Sarah-Jane Willey*

Dodge, duck, dip, dive dodge

Fourth graders master basics

Releasing the ball from his grasp, **Isaac Taylor** [4] has his intended target. "I like dodgeball because I can throw as hard as I can," **Isaac Taylor** [4] said. "I also enjoy it because I get to let other people get hit." *photo by Isaac Taylor*

Eyeing his target, **Isaac Taylor** [4] throws the dodgeball across the gym. "Thompson used his athletic ability and practice to his advantage in various PE games. PE is my favorite because I get to play things like dodgeball," **Thompson** said. "I'm good at dodgeball because I play hard." *photo by Isaac Taylor*

"Joyfully boosting up, **Isaac Taylor** [1], classmates **Isaac Taylor** [1] and **Isaac Taylor** [1] steadily hold the stunt. As she has enjoyed cheering at recess, **Isaac Taylor** truly enjoys the time with her friends. "It's my favorite thing to do at recess," **Isaac Taylor** said. "I'm not sure if I want to cheer in high school, but I love to cheer. My friends taught me how to cheer." *photo by Isaac Taylor*

Enjoying their friendship, **Isaac Taylor** [18] pushes classmate **Isaac Taylor** as high as he can. **Isaac Taylor** and **Isaac Taylor** strengthened their friendship through their time spent together. "I like being pushed before than pushing other people," **Isaac Taylor** said. "When I go really high, I feel happy because **Isaac Taylor** pushes me super high. **Isaac Taylor** usually pushes me because we are best friends." *photo by Isaac Taylor*

At recess, **Isaac Taylor** [2] works up his speed before back flipping off the swing. After his perfect landing, he worked on showing his friends how to flip. "The swings are my favorite things to play on at recess," **Isaac Taylor** said. "My best trick is doing the back flip. I can also do a back flip between the swings." *photo by Isaac Taylor*

16 student life

recess 17
photo by Kate Dusek

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Aaron Reyes	Kelly Lane Middle School
2A	Madelyn Dixon and Victoria Wiesepape	Burton ISD
3A	Eli Alegre	Hill Country Christian School of Austin
4A	Mylee Blain	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Nataley Cook	Whitehouse High School
6A	Blake Hinerman and Rhys Riddle	Legacy High School

sports-FOCUSED SPREAD

Blake Hinerman and Rhys Riddle

Legacy High School

29.54

Swim

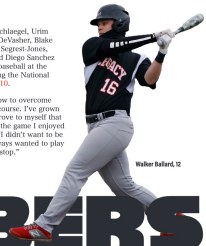
Senior Robi Amichie Habbo swam the 20-meter race in 29.54 seconds, setting a new personal record.

"The support from my team and other friends gave me made me stay in swimming," Habbo said.

7 **Baseball**

Seniors Dylan Schlangel, Udim Ibrahim, Luke DeVosier, Blake Fuller, Dominick Segrest-Jones, Walker Ballard and Diego Sanchez committed to play baseball at the collegiate level during the National Signing Day on Nov. 10.

"Baseball taught me how to overcome adversity and stay the course. I've grown up with it. It's cool to prove to myself that I belong and get to play the game I enjoyed so much," Ballard said. "I didn't want to be just a kid in college. I always wanted to play baseball. I didn't want to stop."



Walker Ballard, 12

by the **NUMBERS**

Track

5:30.27



At the Mansfield Maberry Invitational on Feb. 17, junior Monica Sanchez ran the 1,600-meter race in 5 minutes and 30.27 seconds, setting a PR and finishing second within her division.

"It's my first year doing track, so I'm proud of my progress," Sanchez said.

Golf

66 At the Southern Oaks Winter Showcase on Jan. 25, junior Alyssa Stewart shot a 66, a personal and school record. "Focus on your game," Stewart said. "Your mental game has to be straight."



Boys' Basketball

2,120

The varsity boys' basketball team scored 2,120 points before advancing to district play in the first season as a 6A team.

"In 5A, you would only have three or four teams that are competitive, but now every team is good. Every game has that distinct championship feeling," Head Coach Cornelius Mitchell said. "That's been the hardest adjustment, knowing you have to play every game and there are no nights off."

The team advanced to the fourth round of playoffs, losing 69-67 against North Oak at LaFkin High School on March 2.

"We started the game off really slow, lacking the energy that makes us who we are," senior Isaiah Manning said. "Once we found our identity and put pressure on the defensive side of the floor, we opened up the game and were able to come away with the win."



Football

The varsity players received all-district recognition: Juniors Landyn Henley-Cleveland, Jonah Podroza, Stacy Johnson, Seth Ward, Jayson Smith, Marcus Hays and seniors Paul Summers, Fela Okadinde, Parker Crawford and Jonah Hillis.

"When I found out, I legitimately teared up, because I didn't anticipate being selected going into the season. A few days before it was announced, we set goals for next season, and I wanted to be an all-district player," Podroza said. "I was extremely grateful, but it also motivated me to get first team next year."

10

Volleyball

Junior Jordan Henderson led the varsity team with 91 total blocks during the regular season.

"We were fighting for a spot in district play, and that was a huge factor for my improved stats in our last three district games," Henderson said. "My team was supportive in keeping the energy on and off the court, and I did the same for them."



Jordan Henderson

Boys' Soccer

Seniors Mohamed Al-Sufi, Gerardo Abasade-Otero, Nedim Fasilic, Arnel Castro, Miguel Vera, and were recognized by UIL for their all-state academic achievements.

"It felt good to be acknowledged for the hard work I put in. I just wish it could've been better because obviously COVID year messed with everybody," senior Miguel Vera said. "Soccer made me work harder because with UIL, it's mostly grade-based, so you have to be on top of your grades. Over the years, my parents pushed me to be better, and that motivated me in the classroom."

5

Girls' Basketball

2,226

Senior Savannah Catlow hit 2,226 career points in her time as a high school basketball player.

Catlow influenced freshman Madison Crawford throughout the season. "Savannah pushed me to where I am, especially starting as a freshman," Crawford said.

Girls' Soccer

The girls' soccer team recorded eight clean sheets where the opponent scored no goals throughout the game.

"Soccer has given me lots of friendships and helped my mentality," junior Emilia Lawson, co-captain, said. "It's taught me life lessons."

"Soccer" has given me lots of friendships and helped my mentality," junior Emilia Lawson, co-captain, said. "It's taught me life lessons."

Softball

The varsity softball team advanced to playoffs for the 16th consecutive season.

"We have a really good program here," sophomore Ryleigh Sizemore, pitcher, said. "I feel like this will really motivate us in future seasons."

Tennis

The varsity tennis team placed third in the district during the fall season.

"The competition in 6A was tougher, but I think we stepped up to the challenge," sophomore Davis Collier said. "To get better next year, we need to get better next year, we need to get better and work outside of school more."

3 **Sports Statistics**

Sports-focused spread

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Caroline Le and Paityn Perlinger	Ridgeview Middle School
2A	Makenzi Sullivan and Noelia Casas	Burton ISD
3A	Lilly Kaiser, Macy Jamison and Chloe Caulfield	Geneva School of Boerne
4A	Mylee Blain	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Lily Driggers	Whitehouse High School
6A	Andrew Sampson	James Bowie High School

ACADEMIC-FOCUSED SPREAD

Andrew Sampson

James Bowie High School

culinary third quarter 101

INGREDIENTS for a bake sale

THE LINE OF CULINARY PREPARING FOR BAKE SALES
Sponsored by Andrew Sampson

DRESSED FOR BAKING, Hugh Greenleaf's career...
TESTING MONDAY
PREPARING TUESDAY
BAKING WEDNESDAY
SELLING THURSDAY

ready for RAMEN

QUICK, EASY & DELICIOUS
 100% RAMEN RECIPE

- Poke a small hole into an egg, and add enough hot boiling water for seven minutes.
- Cool the egg in ice water, and once cooled, peel the shell off of it.
- Add one tablespoon of soy sauce, one tablespoon of oil, and one teaspoon of sugar to a small pan and mix over low heat.
- When bubbles form in the bottom of the pan, add the egg in the pan and let it simmer for four or five minutes or until cooked in the mixture.
- Get two pink half-cups of water on the stove and boil - one for the noodles and one for the sauce.
- Add a tablespoon of soy sauce, a teaspoon of chicken stock powder, sliced green onions, grated ginger, and one and a half teaspoons of oil.
- Once water is boiling, add ramen to one of the pots and cook according to the instructions provided with the ramen.
- Once ramen is almost done, add 200ml of hot water from your other boiling pan into the bowl with the other ingredients and stir the mix.
- Once ramen is done, strain the water out of the noodles and add your ramen with your egg and toppings, and enjoy.

Recipe courtesy of WJL Lewis

DO YOU PREFER SWEET FOODS OR SAVORY FOODS?

35% SWEET
65% SAVORY

Academic-focused spread

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Blake Guajardo and Melody San Juan Cepeda	Ridgeview Middle School
2A	Kody King and Andre Ortiz	Burton ISD
3A	Lilly Kaiser and Chloe Caulfield	Geneva School of Boerne
4A	Madison Davis and Lauren Hornsby	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Geina Khela and Osiah Taylor	Saginaw High School
6A	Hunter Gibson	Round Rock High School

CLASS SPREAD

Hunter Gibson

Round Rock High School

Myra Johnson
Nichole Johnson
Cadenia Jones
Sanyou Joo
Shawn Joseph
Sara Joseph
Victor Joseph

Ulyana Joseph Espino
Samuel Joseph
Sanaul Jounng
Cherlin Jovino
Danhui Jung
Dasha Jurek
Arihana Kairat

Akhi Kulkarni
Amor Kuhn
Akhana Kumar
Sahika Kumar
Nandika Kanchala
Ikon Kowari
Nita Kowariporn

Akhilak Kozman
Isaac Kozman
Shawar Kozman
Sahana Kurlikayev
Hakhyun Kurlikayev
Sahana Kurlikayev
Lagan Kwey

Jake Kulkar
Mica Kully
Kingsley Kurbane
Maryam Khazi
Kash Khatoon
Soyun Kibini
Kareem Konde

Adnan Kim
Be Owan Kim
Dana Kim
Hyeon Kim
Jinhua Kim
Khandis King Earle

Kennedy Kralchak
Frederick Kirby
Sofia Kirgo
Kaplan Kirgizovich
Ryan Kirgizovich
Benjamin Kiser
Joan Kiser

Josiah Knox
Myles Knox
Jasmin Kuch
Addison Kucher
Dasha Kuepp
James Kuznetsov
Alexis Kuzko

Lola Kuznetsov
Oliver Kuznetsov
Anson Kuznetsov
Serjenn Kuznetsov
Jackson Kuznetsov
Tommy Kuznetsov
Ajay Lakshmi

my name is a big deal

“It’s kind of cool having a long last name! until a substitute says it out loud, and everyone judges you for having a really long last name.”
Cole Greenbacher
freshman

“Teachers never talk about my last name. They would be like ‘why, this is hard to pronounce, I need help.’ Then I’d ask if they’ve talked about me.”
Jaggawong
freshman

“I mean, it’s like annoying sometimes to have people call me ‘Fried’ but I got used to it.”
Sarah Frazier
freshman

“I think it’s quite nice having a short last name, actually, because when I have to write my name on assignments, it’s super easy to just scribble out.”
Nathan Lu
freshman

“I’ve seen all the names of the freshmen who have long last names, and that’s the one I like to see. Rodriguez to my dad, I like going by one because my dad felt when I was a kid.”
Brian Rodriguez-Andrews
freshman

“Teachers try to pronounce my name and I’m just like oh, yeah that’s close enough. That’s me.”
Hemal Bommaboina
freshman

“I got mixed up with a lot of people, especially blondes. Since I’m a blonde, I feel like people always say ‘are you kidding?’”
Maximilian Williams
freshman

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Nathan Lu
freshman

188 freshmen
by Hunter Gibson

Class spread

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Amelia Macias and Elledy Keraghan	Ridgeview Middle School
2A	Aiden Epperson	Thrall High School
3A	Addison Clinkscales	White Oak
4A	Cassidy Rogers	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Kamden Furlough	Forney High School
6A	John Walton	James Bowie High School

CLUB/ORGANIZATION-FOCUSED SPREAD

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Sophia Dela Cruz and Isabel Acosta	Ridgeview Middle School
2A	Aiden Epperson	Thrall High School
3A	Lilly Kaiser, Macy Jamison, Chloe Caulfield	Geneva School of Boerne
4A	Staff	Episcopal School of Dallas
5A	Kyndall Johnson	Cedar Park High School
6A	Hannah Brown	Legacy High School

BLENDED COVERAGE SPREAD

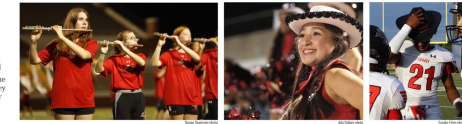
Hannah Brown

Legacy High School

Moving to 6A

Football team comes back after switching classification

On Aug. 25, the football team played their first 6A game against Richland High School in Birtville at 7 p.m. They lost, 44-17. Moving to 6A affected UIL competitions for academics, sports and fine arts.



Back again! Left: During the team's huddle, coach Kase Jackson '12 gave a pep talk before the game against Richland. Middle: Cheerleader Kaitlyn Hines '12 shows a cheerleader to a cheerleader. Right: Jackson '12 says he's excited to be a 6A football player. Photo by Hannah Brown.

SENIOR SUNRISE

Seniors celebrate their final year of high school

Student Council hosted the annual Senior Sunrise on Aug. 20 at the football fields. Chick-dick on Walnut Creek provided chicken nuggets, sausage and chicken biscuits and chicken mitts for breakfast as well as donuts and drinks provided by parents when students entered.

Senior Class President Andrew Hanes spoke at the event, encouraging students for their final year of high school.

"I think senior sunrise was important to seniors because it's an established tradition that gets people energetic [about] what will happen their final year of high school. Our underclassmen [officers] arrived early and had everything set up for us when we arrived," Hanes said. "I was able to see how tired everyone was [about] senior year and just seeing such a great turnout. I'm looking forward to all the great events seniors have."

Photo by Hannah Brown



Senior Class President Andrew Hanes spoke at the event, encouraging students for their final year of high school. Photo by Hannah Brown. Right: Seniors enjoyed breakfast at the event. Photo by Hannah Brown. Middle: A student enjoys a chicken biscuit. Photo by Hannah Brown.

Held at ransom
Cyber attack shuts down all technology use district wide

MSD was a victim of a ransomware cyber attack on Aug. 22. This led to the shutting down of all district equipment for two weeks. With the help of the FBI, the district was able to access many of the school's resources like Canvas.



MSD was a victim of a ransomware cyber attack on Aug. 22. This led to the shutting down of all district equipment for two weeks. Photo by Hannah Brown.

I was doing matching cards for autistic students with only one because the cyber attack happened and we couldn't use electronics. I was happy because I got to do less work!

Brigitte Stecker, 12

MAKE AN ENTRANCE
Theater welcomes newcomers, auditions for new improv troupe

269 people in theater

35 people acting in the show "A Midsummer Night's Dream"

38 people auditioned for improv

15 people chosen for the improv troupe



MSD was a victim of a ransomware cyber attack on Aug. 22. This led to the shutting down of all district equipment for two weeks. Photo by Hannah Brown. Middle: A student enjoys a chicken biscuit. Photo by Hannah Brown. Right: Seniors enjoyed breakfast at the event. Photo by Hannah Brown.

HOWDy

StuCo hosts activities, games during lunches

During the week, students and staff dressed up according to the theme of the day. Clubs passed out informational flyers at lunch. On Aug. 22, Priority Overeaters represented AVID clubs as the president.

"I had to make a poster that I felt would stand out to people," Goverghese said. "On the table, I set up pens, stickers, and lollipops to get people to come over. The biggest struggle was getting people to understand that AVID club is nothing like the class. People can gain leadership skills so that they share it with others. Then they can build others up with their leadership."



Priority Overeaters represented AVID clubs as the president. Photo by Hannah Brown.

Help out during lunch
Students showed their support for the school during lunch.



Students showed their support for the school during lunch. Photo by Hannah Brown.

Locking back dancing to the music
Students enjoyed dancing to the music during lunch.



Students enjoyed dancing to the music during lunch. Photo by Hannah Brown.

Aug. 22-26

Blended coverage spread

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Athena Daly	Ridgeview Middle School
2A	Colby Beck, Noelia Casas, Jynisha Randle and Makenzie Sullivan	Burton ISD
3A	Carly Gargiulo	Hill Country Christian School of Austin
4A	Kathryn Bakewell	Episcopal School of Dallas
5A	Tia Webb	Whitehouse High School
6A	Chris Ho	Bellaire High School

INFOGRAPHIC

Kathryn Bakewell

Episcopal School of Dallas



“It’s fascinating to see how the different major world religions interplay with the geography.”

Mary Hansell
Director of History and Religious Studies

Freshman Abby Stacy banged her gavel and called the trial to order. The class quickly gathered their last minute notes and questions ready to begin the trial on the Aboriginal Stolen Generation on Sept. 12.

Students in Philip McCarthy’s World Cultures class were either assigned the role of defense or prosecution lawyer, witness, judge or juror. Stacy, who was the judge overseeing the case, kept track of the time that the lawyers had to cross examine and ask their witnesses questions.

Stacy had two days to prepare and research both sides of the case. “I think the trial overall went well. It went really smoothly,” Stacy said. “But I think it probably would have been nice if he would have given us a little bit more time to prepare in class.”

On the day of the trial, defense lawyer Chaz Frederiksen entered the classroom only to find out that his second appellate lawyer was absent. As a result, Frederiksen and his whole team had to regroup and prepare questions for the second part of the trial as well as a closing statement. Frederiksen was on the

side arguing for Neville Bonner, the chief protector of the Aboriginals, who ordered the mass removal of Aboriginal children from their tribes and families in Australia from 1910 to 1970.

“I was very panicked because I was fully prepared for the first half,” Frederiksen said. “And then the second half came, and I was not.”

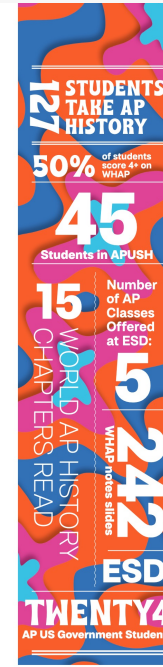
But Frederiksen and his team completed the trial because they made their closing statement similar to their opening one.

Frederiksen-Harrison Adams, who was a lawyer for the prosecution, combated the claims that the relocation of Aboriginal children to white homes was better than if they had remained in their own families.

“I was arguing for Aboriginal people,” Adams said. “And then I focused on getting restitution for the harm caused by the Australian Government.”

In McCarthy’s class the students learned about the cultural struggles of the Aboriginals through a mock trial that made them step out of their comfort zone for a learning experience.

“It helped us learn about exactly what went on during that time,” freshman Boone Appolon, who was a witness in the trial, said.



Infographic above



Above: Charlotte Wilson, Caroline Foster and Marissa Alvarado are in a World History class. They are preparing for a history they will be taking next year. Instead of the typical textbook they are using a digital World Cultures textbook. Abby Stacy gave her last minute questions regarding the Aboriginal trial on Sept. 12. This student gave the testimony of the Aboriginals. They got to experience being lawyers or running arguments, and having to cross examine and ask their witnesses questions. “I think the trial overall went well. It went really smoothly,” Stacy said. “But I think it probably would have been nice if he would have given us a little bit more time to prepare in class.”



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Infographic

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Clarke Lewis, Brooke Marshall	Pearland Junior High West
2A	Staff	Burton ISD
3A	Ryan Brown	Buffalo High School
4A	Heidi Giesbrecht	Seminole High School
5A	Ashlyn Poole	Aledo High School
6A	Skylar Mateo	El Dorado High School

STUDENT LIFE FEATURE STORY

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Bella Gonzalez, Brittyn Earley and Harper Heath	Kelly Lane Middle School
2A	Madelyn Dixon	Burton ISD
3A	Hailey Leon	Sabine High School
4A	Nayla Hernandez	Seminole High School
5A	Ashlyn Poole	Aledo High School
6A	Abigail Breyfogle	Westlake High School

ACADEMIC FEATURE STORY

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Maren Davis, Mariah Perez	Pearland Junior High West
2A	Avery Applewhite, Reece Mahlmann and Crysta Smith	Burton ISD
4A	Mylee Blain	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Maya Ortiz	Kingwood Park HS
6A	Gabriella Valmoria and Lillian Pszonowsky	El Dorado High School

SPORTS FEATURE STORY

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Steven Sternad, Eli Householder and Joseph Winn	Kelly Lane Middle School
2A	Lorelei Cessna and Karly Weyand	Burton ISD
3A	John Jackson	Sabine High School
4A	Elaina Shellogg	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Brinklee Stegall	Aledo High School
6A	Savannah Armitage	Richardson High School

CLUB/ORGANIZATION FEATURE STORY

Elaina Shelllogg

Pleasant Grove High School

Club/organization feature story

band competition 040

With glasses to block the early morning sun, Coach Fritz (2) gives the marching band the motivational address as the two bands march in their shows before heading to rehearsal. He made sure everything was different from marching rehearsal but it still felt like "at one point" (Shellogg)

band finishes year at area, barely misses state contest

Raising her mother, Alicia Turner (12) is the first marching band member to play in the National Marching Contest in September on Pleasant Grove High School.

Leading the drum section, Bruce Jenkins (12) stands and plays during the 75th rehearsal. He is the section leader. "I had the drum with marching, anything they need during the show and anything outside of school," Bruce said. "I'm not first, but I know what I'm doing but they're a little nervous. I'm glad that I'm here and I'm here." (Shellogg)

In the September show, Hunter Digby plays his trumpet as the drum and percussion section performs. "The band did a really good performance in each of the 75th rehearsal Marching Contest. It was during the day, it was hot, and we had the full uniforms, I wore a jacket and a hat," Hunter said. "And afterwards, some of us were nervous for a couple of days, but we were nervous, and we were nervous at all day." (Shellogg)

It was more than that. Band announced three songs for the show, plus a medley "mash" and a percussion medley. (Shellogg)

+more...

Parties

A short notice that they already went so much time together practicing. Each section had to get together. The weekend went to Casa Luna, and percussion went to Car's and also had to go to Casa Luna.

Mascots

The percussion section had a very funny character. "We took him to every competition," Coach Digby (12) said. "He got to go to Casa Luna and to go to Casa Luna." (Shellogg)

Awards

While I wasn't exactly a trophy, a different band member was named "king of the week" each week. The drum majors picked one person and got to be an announcer in the stadium. By December, he had a coffee, a hoodie and a crown.

Rain

The downpour at the 75th game in Shreveport didn't stop the band from marching — at least most of them. "The band members didn't get to march the show because of the electronics," Abby Fricks (12) said. "It was just brass and basic drum and brass. The rest of us just stood on the sideline and watched."

family time

"Percession is kind of different because it has a drum room. To me we're kind of like a family. The seniors are kind of adopt you when you come in as a freshman and make you feel really welcome."

— Abby Fricks (12)

Our points. Our place.

That's all that separated the band from a trip to state marching contest in their first year under director Jay Sutton.

It was close.

After finishing with straight first division ratings at Regional Marching Contest, the band advanced to area where they would need to place in the top five to be able to lead the bus to state.

After preliminary of area, they were in sixth place.

Just one place away.

"We didn't do too well at prelims, but that almost always happens," Abby Fricks (12) said. "With how young our band is, they doubt themselves and they don't give it their all the first round, but I was really happy we could move up a place. I feel good about it."

Marching next to last in the final, band members watched the last band perform, and then drum majors Miguel Rodriguez and Maggie Pukler led the band onto the field for the announcement of awards.

Flash back two weeks.

On the bus back from district contest, Mr. Sutton and assistant director, Josh Digby, Ed Grison and Kevin Sutton decided to completely rewrite the second movement of the show.

"We decided we needed to make a drastic change," Mr. Sutton said.

"The drill didn't stage well so we called our rewriter and got a whole new middle part of the show."

And over the next two weeks, band members were on the field and in the band room learning the new drill and performing it for area.

"They were a little apprehensive, but they bought it," Mr. Sutton said.

"They all knew that's what we needed to do."

Flash forward.

On the field, the band was as the rankings are announced. Twelve bands, five spots.

Down to number 7.

And then 8. "Pleasant Grove High School Pride in Motion Band."

Band members stood at attention until the last band was announced.

With celebrations happening around them, brass streamed down Maggie Pukler (12) face.

"When I heard that we got sixth place the only thing I could think was, are you kidding me?" Maggie said. "It's all of things in band changed this year, so I knew that if we did the best we could even with everything thrown at us the performance would be amazing."

And it was amazing.

Just one rating point short of where they wanted to be.

getting a reaction

band members anticipate results from area contest

We were sitting in the stands waiting for the results, and we were kind of nervous because the performance wasn't too bad. When they announced the top ten bands that would advance to state, we weren't nervous because we had made it and had a chance to go to state.

The contest was scary, but at some time that the everything part of it was being everything all night and everything we were waiting for and getting to get their division and region to us. It was scary because we had missed a couple of things we were waiting for.

When they announced the bands perform in the area final, the students were excited that they had made it out and were excited for them, but had to get their division and region to us. It was scary because we had missed a couple of things we were waiting for.

041

photo by E. Shelllogg

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Brinn Rhodes	Burton ISD
3A	Haileigh Garrett	Sabine High School
4A	Rachel Froese	Seminole High School
4A	Paisley Schalles	Cedar Park High School
6A	Winter Winsett and Sydney Hawkins	Chisholm Trail High School

PERSONALITY PROFILE STORY

Winter Winsett and Sydney Hawkins

Chisholm Trail High School

THE STADIUM LIGHT SHINED ON DARION REED, 12, AS HE WALKED OFF THE FIELD FOR THE LAST TIME.

After dozens of games on this very field, restriction dawned on him as he left the turf behind. He took off his helmet and waded the sweat off his face from the loss against Bob. The end of his senior year season. Done, just like that.

The loss brought back the memory of the negative emotions Darion had felt when he started his football career, but as he left the field with the Friday night lights behind him, the bigger part of him knew that he had come too far to let the loss get to him.

"I came here, [and] I was the new dude," Darion said. "No one knew who I was. I didn't even know who I was. I didn't speak for the first four months."

The isolation over the pandemic had led him to a dark place. He didn't want to live. He didn't want to feel this anymore, and after half a year alone, Darion tried to end his life. To him, it wasn't worth living anymore. It was only after being hospitalized three times that he finally started to believe that there was more beyond his pain.

Slowly things started to change for Darion. He said he was drawn to sports. During a basketball game, a football coach saw him watching the game and knew he had potential.

"He has made a major impact on our program," football coach Jared Acton said. "I have seen him develop as a person; he's become a great young man."

His become a really good athlete that will one day do great things."

Acton said Darion will "continue to leave a long-lasting legacy" on the school, though Darion said that connection to campus didn't happen overnight.

"Once I joined football, I still wasn't there mentally," Darion said. "I hadn't realized that I started being weight, but I started to get stronger. I was able to run more, so I feel like getting together physically helped me get healthier mentally. I realized that because I wasn't actually alone physically, mentally I wasn't alone either."

With every interaction with his team, he started to feel more comfortable. At the fieldhouse before sunrise, pushed to the limits by his teammates on weight days, and hundreds of miles on the road with his team brought them together.

"He was quiet, so he wouldn't talk to anybody," Israel Kalou, 11, said. "It wasn't until later on that we became friends. When I scored a touchdown, he ran towards me and picked me up."

As Darion's high school career has ended, Israel said, "It's not the same when he's not there," and his impact is felt amongst his teammates. Darion said those friendships will carry him for the rest of his life, and he said being more social helped him to realize that he wanted to be someone his younger teammates could look up to.

"Realizing that I had people that cared about me made all the difference," Darion said. "That's what helped me to get out of my own head and realize that I was really hard on myself. My goal was just to set an example for those kids."

According to Darion, his mom has been there for him every step of the way.

"She supported me every time—she stopped teaching and coaching to support me," Darion said. "She put all of that to the side. She makes every game and that obviously means a lot to me. She made it to watch my first high school football game and that really means a lot to me."

As a single mother, Michi Atkins said it was difficult to manage two sons, but she did what she could to help Darion reach his full potential.

"To know that he looks up to me, it's humbling and it's telling me maybe I did a couple of things in an OK manner," Atkins said. "That's my baby. All I knew was to constantly remind him that his life has purpose, his life has value and God loves him."

Atkins said she is excited for him to move off to college, but more than anything, she's glad her son knows his value.

After he earned eight D1 offers to play college ball, Darion said he looks forward to pursuing his passion in college as an athlete for Tulane University in Fall 2023.

When he steps onto the field, he said he can feel all of it—the pressure, the excitement, the anticipation. No matter how many people are in the crowd, or if the band is playing, Darion said once he's on the field, the only thing that matters is a game well played.

"As a player, you learn your job," Darion said. "You know your job and you just do it, you don't think about anything else. It complicates me in a sense."

Story by Winter Winsett, 12, & Sydney Hawkins, 11, photos by Dylan Castillo, 11, spread by Isiah Murphy, 12



LOOKING FOWARD
Senior shares how football team built community, encourages to give back to others

Personality profile story

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Malachi Vermillion	Chapa MS
2A	Bailey Gober	Burton ISD
3A	Lucas Riggs	Sabine High School
4A	Chloe Sanders	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Kaylee Halfmann	Aledo High School
6A	Claire Zhang	Bellaire High School

SPORTS ACTION PHOTO

Claire Zhang

Bellaire High School



Sports action photo

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Madison Garro	Ridgeview Middle School
2A	Bailey Gober	Burton ISD
3A	Kooper Bogenschutz	Sabine High School
4A	Madeline Smallwood	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Arleigh Doehring	Kingwood Park HS
6A	Jesus Serrano	Richardson High School

SPORTS FEATURE PHOTO

Jesus Serrano

Richardson High School



Sports feature photo

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Amber Mejia	Chapa MS
2A	Samarin Mokry	Thrall High School
3A	Isabella Olson	Hill Country Christian School of Austin
4A	Chloe Sanders	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Abrielle Kate Maddison	Midlothian Heritage High School
6A	Abby Mandel	James Bowie High School

ACADEMIC PHOTO

Abrielle Kate Maddison

Midlothian Heritage
High School



Academic photo

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Zack Resendez	Chapa MS
2A	Maria Monsivais	Ozona High School
3A	Hailey Leon	Sabine High School
4A	Gracie Kennedy	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Holden McBerty	A&M Consolidated High School
6A	Isabel Suarez	Marcus High School

STUDENT LIFE PHOTO

Gracie Kennedy

Pleasant Grove High School



Student life photo

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Hayley Ashworth	Chapa MS
2A	Alyssa Johnson	Thrall High School
3A	Evan Brenner	Sabine High School
4A	Chloe Sanders	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Morgen Dozier	Kingwood Park HS
6A	Mich Omwony	Richardson High School

CLUB/ORGANIZATION PHOTO

Mich Omwony

Richardson High School



CLUB/ORGANIZATION PHOTO

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Jake Kokernot	Chapa MS
2A	Staff	Burton ISD
3A	Chloe Raabe	East Bernard High School
4A	Gracey Tucker	Brownsboro High School
5A	Madi Poston	Aledo High School
6A	Conrad Denton	Westlake High School

PORTRAIT

Madi Poston

Aledo High School

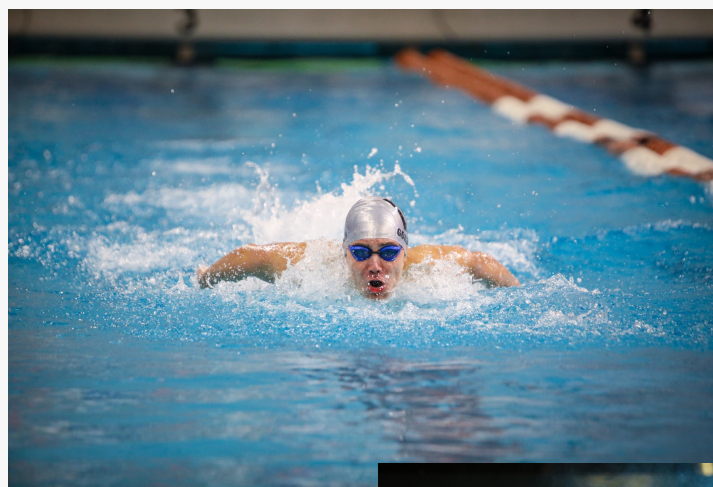


PORTRAIT

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Esther Gutierrez	Chapa MS
2A	Bailey Gober	Burton ISD
3A	Abe Rheinheimer	Hill Country Christian School of Austin
5A	Arleigh Doehring	Kingwood Park HS
6A	Kaya Kinsey	Vandegrift High School

PHOTO PORTFOLIO



Kaya Kinsey

Vandegrift High School



Photo portfolio



Newspaper



Tops in Texas

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Jaci Chapman	Albany High School
4A	Katherine Ayers and Mika Emphasis	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Priya Thoppil	McCallum High School
6A	Mazzy Warren	James Bowie High School



FINALISTS

Apples get sliced out of budget

Chromebooks replace Macs in classroom

BY JACI CHAPMAN
Staff Writer

MacBooks and Chromebooks have become relatively similar to operate, but there is still a big discrepancy in price, prompting technology director Matthew Howard to switch to Chromebooks this year.

Several years ago, all students were provided MacBooks, but the school has been phasing out their use by only allowing upperclassmen to still use Apple products prior to this year.

"We decided to issue

Chromebooks to all students and transfer to classroom sets of MacBooks for those classes that still need them," Howard said. "The reason that we have MacBooks in the first place is to utilize the Adobe software. Outside of that, all the Google Classroom and Google Docs stuff can be accomplished on Chromebooks."

MacBooks are still required in classes such as yearbook, newspaper, photography, as well as the new broadcasting class. Those classes rely on Adobe software that can't be accessed on a Chromebook.

"The other reason is we noticed that most of the usage of the MacBooks took place in the classroom rather than away from school," Howard said. "We are upgrading some iMacs which are being used

as stationary units, as well as getting some sets of new MacBook Airls for those classrooms that need them. We think that will provide the best product in the environment where it's used the most."

Some students have even decided to bring their personal laptops instead of using the school provided Chromebooks.

"I prefer using my own computer," senior Houston Heatly said. "It gives me the freedom to do whatever I want. It also helps make assignments easier to do on my own computer but I have to use my own hotspot instead of the wifi."

MacBooks could serve as a distraction to some students in the past, according to Howard.

"Where we use that func

SEE "CHROMEBOOKS" Pg 8

News writing

Jaci Chapman

Albany High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Gabby Lopez, Sidney Russell	Albany High School
4A	Arjun Poi, Hilton Sampson	St. Mark's School of Texas
5A	Evy Hairell and Trinity Craig	A&M Consolidated HS
6A	Sahasra Chakilam, Anvita Bondada	Coppell High School



FINALISTS

Rodeo students compete at highest level

Peterson commits to roping for Tarleton State University

BY GABBY LOPEZ &
SIDNEY RUSSELL
Staff Writer and
Copy & News Editor

Eleven-year-old Cort Peterson eagerly watches Richard LeMay through the fence that separated the neighboring property line as he quickly ties the rope to secure the calf.

He can hear his mom calling in the distance from the house that dinner is ready, but nothing else matters. His eyes were glued to the scene of cowboys practicing round after round of cattle, and he knew right then that this was his passion.

Noticing that he was being observed, Richard LeMay invited Peterson over and taught the excited 11-year-old how to rope for the first time. Little did LeMay know that six years later, Peterson would become a division one team roper.

After years of Saturday night rodeos and many short nights of sleep, Peterson has officially committed to rope for Tarleton State University next year as a member of the rodeo team. An interview and several videos of his performance were required to receive acceptance into the program.

"I didn't have a signing or anything like that," Peterson said. "I just went over there and talked to the instructor for a couple hours, and he said that if I came to Tarleton, I would be on the team."



Junior Will LeMay (above) competes at the Junior NFR for a tenth consecutive year. LeMay, along with Jack Nail, is part of the Nail Ranch team that competes in the wild steer race, doctoring, trailer loading, and branding. PHOTO PROVIDED

rodeos," Nail said.

Maintaining a horse's stamina for the next rodeo takes time, effort, and patience.

"I keep my horses in shape by riding them three times a week, and I just recently got a new horse," barrel racer Madalein Beard said. "I'm in the process of getting her trained."

Girls involved in rodeoing are limited in the number of events such as barrel racing and pole bending.

"I prefer barrel racing, but all of my horses prefer pole bending," Beard said. "So I just go along with it for them."

As Beard prepares for the season, she has a goal of qualifying for the high school finals.

"I would like to go to finals against others who competed in high school rodeo from across the state," Beard said.

Beard's accomplishments during her rodeo career have varied. "In Glen Rose, I won some leg protectors for my horse and \$250," Beard said.

Due to an injury, junior Will LeMay is not able to rope after suffering a torn ACL. He will undergo surgery that will keep him out of rodeoing until healed.

Although he is currently injured, LeMay has had numerous accomplishments in his years of rodeoing.

"I've been rodeoing all my life because I wanted to follow after my dad," LeMay said.

He often spends hours practic-

News Feature

Gabby Lopez
and
Sidney Russell

Albany High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Collin Wheat	White Oak
4A	Rawya Hazin	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Kate Hayes	Hendrickson High School
6A	The Sidekick Editorial Board	Coppell High School



FINALISTS

Staff Editorial

Discrimination continues despite passage of bill, lacks enforcement

Last May, the Texas legislature took an important step towards realizing racial equality in our state. Unfortunately, their work is far from over.

House Bill 567, otherwise known as the CROWN Act, received massive bipartisan support in the Texas legislature, was signed into law by Gov. Greg Abbott, and officially took effect on Sept. 1. The law, which stands for the "Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair Act," bans race-based hair discrimination in Texas workplaces, education, and housing. The CROWN Act has seen adoption in 21 other states, first beginning with California in 2019.

This is an unequivocally positive development in Texas politics, praised by activists and lawmakers of all political orientations, and for good reason: hair discrimination continues to be a pressing social issue for the Black

community in the twenty-first century. Even though discrimination based on race has been outlawed for decades, what constitutes a racial characteristic is open to legal interpretation. Therefore,



violation of the CROWN Act and that Abbott and Attorney General Ken Paxton are failing to enforce the law to begin with.

George's school told him he would have to cut his hair or face disciplinary action. Not only is this a gross overreach of school authority, but it is also culturally insensitive. Protective hairstyles have long been considered a symbol of resistance by the Black community because enslaved people were forbidden to wear them. Furthermore, Black boys are more likely to actually see the consequences of a ban on long hair; in schools, Black students are disproportionately subject to disciplinary violations compared to students of other races. This is a well-researched phenomenon known as the school-to-prison pipeline, and Barber Hill ISD's suspension of George is just another example of the system at work to marginalize Black students. Ending hair discrimination

won't completely abolish the pipeline, but it can at least dismantle a part of it. George was suspended despite the existence of a statewide law, however. This suggests that the best path forward is the implementation

Editorial
writing

Kate Hayes

Hendrickson High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Faith Woodall	Union Grove ISD
4A	Charlotte Tomlin	Episcopal School of Dallas
5A	Lena Abdelwahed and Elyssa Nicholson	College Station High School
6A	Ben Tillisch	James Bowie High School



FINALISTS

New Athletic Director brings excitement, big plans

Thad Lepcio shares his passion for ESD sports, plans to upgrade facilities

By Charlotte Tomlin | Sports Editor

The clock runs out and the scoreboard buzzes, signaling the end of the game. As the varsity field hockey team jogs off the field to get water, new Athletic Director Thad Lepcio meets the girls halfway, raising his hands for high fives. He congratulates the girls on a hard-fought win over Fort Worth Country Day and then goes to shake hands with the referees. An active presence on the sidelines throughout the game, Lepcio makes sure to interact with parents, players and coaches alike. At his previous school, Lepcio missed only one football game — a feat he hopes to repeat at ESD.

"I was looking for a school that really wanted that balance of their students that wanted to push themselves academically and push themselves athletically," Lepcio said. "I think ESD fits that bill." Every single day, game day or not, Lepcio works to make himself available for students, supporting them in both their academic and athletic endeavors.

"My door is always open," Lepcio said. "I am your athletic director. I still have a lot to learn about ESD, about Dallas, about the SPC. And I want to hear about your experiences. I want to hear about what you thought has been great, what you didn't think was great, so that we can slowly make improvements. Because I truly believe we are really, really close to having a lot of success."

In terms of achieving the aforementioned success, Lepcio has plans to have all teams compete in the 4A division and have program directors working at ESD full-time.

"I want to work with Mr. Baad to try to come up with opportunities to make sure that all of our program directors and varsity head coaches are employed on campus," Lepcio said. "I think it's important for the athletes to have their coaches on campus. I would love within the next three to five years that every ESD team compete at the 4A level. Even though it might not make sense by

size, we've built up our programs so that we're so competitive that we want to play against the highest level in everything we do."

Additionally, Lepcio plans to improve facilities, especially the fields across Merrell, in order to maximize space.

"I think [it's] the fact that we try to do so much [on the fields]," Lepcio said. "Whether it's starting with the fellowship, through middle school, and the high school, plus PE classes, [with] the wear and tear on the fields across the street, we need turf. I know there are schools within our peer network that are making significant improvements. We have to do what's best for ESD."

Lepcio's enthusiasm for his job has not gone unnoticed

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There are times you can't control how the media treats sports, but internally, I want all of our teams to feel like they're getting good support

Thad Lepcio
Athletic Director

by student-athletes and his colleagues.

"His priorities have been getting to know the school and community," David Tollison, Associate Director of Athletics, Facilities and Grounds, said. "He has been very intentional in observing departmental operations, coaches and practices, getting to know the student-athletes, and learning as much as possible about our involvement in the SPC. As many have noticed, he

is very detail-oriented and already knows a great deal about our programs and student-athletes."

Lepcio's zeal and dedication to the Athletic Department has bled into the ESD community, fostering excitement for student-athletes.

"Mr. Lepcio introduced himself to me the first day we met," junior football captain Vaughn Langston said. "He promised to me that he would do everything in his power to make my sports seasons the best they could be. This has brought me and my team's positivity up tremendously. Mr. Lepcio has been consistently engaged with the football program, attending games, practices and staying involved in getting to know the players."

Even though football games are one of the most highly attended sports events at ESD, Lepcio has plans to raise attendance at all athletic events across campus.

"I despise the concept of a major sport," Lepcio said. "There are times you can't control how the media treats sports, but internally, I want all of our teams to feel like they're getting good support. There are ways we can try to incentivize [attendance]. Food and T-shirts are always a good way to get people. I can walk any day and see a 'Beat HP' shirt. I can see a 'Beat Jesuit' shirt. I've never seen a 'Beat Hockaday' shirt. They might be out there, but I haven't seen them. So I think that's low-hanging fruit. Every female athlete on this campus should have a 'Beat Hockaday' shirt.' I think the burden, though, how classmates support classmates, falls on y'all. We can support it. It's more authentic coming from student to student."

Student-athletes are excited to collaborate with Lepcio and the Athletic Department to improve attendance at games, as well as the day-to-day experience of being a student-athlete.

"He places importance on every sport at ESD, not just the most well-known ones such as lacrosse and football," senior varsity volleyball captain Ellison Mattocks said. "I'm excited to see

a growth in attendance to the less recognized sports and watch his support encourage the student body. Last year Mrs. Burke helped lead a Women In Athletics club that would meet in the morning, and I think more support and growth in that club would be amazing."

Lepcio vows to lead by example and plans to attend every single sports game that he possibly can.

"[At games], I love giving high fives and fist bumps," Lepcio said. "I love just checking in with parents. But I'm usually a moving target. A lot of times some of that is nervous energy, but I think it's important that everyone feels supported. I love going to watch you guys. Like I said, if I can't get excited about going to watch you guys play, I should probably look for [a different job]."

Athletes appreciate the example Lepcio sets, striving to create more school spirit around less-attended sports.

"[I'd like to see] more people coming to wrestling meets," Langston said. "I am excited to see Mr. Lepcio unify and bring the community together through encouraging attendance at all sporting events this year. Mr. Lepcio is our spokesperson, so I believe if he listens to our problems and ideas to make each sports program better, the Athletic Department will see success. I would like to cooperate in bringing attention to sports that may not get as much attention as others."

Lepcio is excited for the journey ahead of him with the ESD community and for the successes he foresees in its near future.

"I want success because I think it's huge," Lepcio said. "Not just for the participants, but I think how that trickles down and just changes campus morale. With school spirit, I think we could get this place rockin' and rollin'. I've loved working with you guys and getting to know you guys. Because I think the ceiling is very high. The fact that you guys want to improve and want to get better, that's huge."

Sports news story

Charlotte Tomlin

Episcopal School of Dallas

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Landon Balliew	Albany High School
4A	Neil Yepuri, Lawrence Gardner	St. Mark's School of Texas
5A	Lanie Sepehri	McCallum High School
6A	Rhea Choudhary	Coppell High School



FINALISTS

Vaulting over the hurdles

Senior committed to collegiate diving after switching from gymnastics

Lanie Sepehri

co-editor-in-chief

Senior Asa Rosenberg is used to sticking the landing. Ten years as a gymnast taught him that much. But now, there's no solid ground to catch him. There's just the free fall from three meters up and the breaking glass of the pool's surface. He switched to diving just over four months ago, but Rosenberg is ready to dive from new heights after committing to California State University at Bakersfield.

Switching sports was a matter of practicality for Rosenberg. Although he had been competing as a gymnast, he realized there were few opportunities to do so in college. But there are hundreds of different diving programs across the National Collegiate Athletic Association's three divisions. Rosenberg knew what he had to do.

"A lot of divers are ex-gymnasts," Rosenberg said. "It's a big thing to switch from gymnastics to diving."

Many of the skills utilized in diving are similar to those employed in gymnastics. Rosenberg began taking gymnastics classes at Crenshaws Athletic Club when he was 4 years old.

"It just kind of snowballed into something I had a passion for," Rosenberg said.

That devotion grew when the coaches at Crenshaws picked 7-year-old Rosenberg out of the classes to join the club's competitive team.

"It was intense," Rosenberg said. "Gymnasts have to train really hard. But ... I liked how hard it was. In my eyes, it is the hardest sport. I liked being able to do it and do it as one of the best in the country."

Male gymnasts compete in six events: floor exercise, pommel horse, still rings, vault, parallel bars and horizontal bar. Until sixth grade, Rosenberg regularly attended meets and competed in all six events. Though Rosenberg's passion for the sport stemmed from its intensity, competing eventually became so stressful that in sixth grade, Rosenberg decided to quit the sport.

"I never even thought that I would want to go back to it," he said.

For three years, he didn't. But his interest in gymnastics was rekindled after meeting another gymnast from the Crenshaws team at summer camp. He decided to get in contact with his old coach, who offered to let him come in and train together for a day.

"I was like, 'I want to come back tomorrow,'" Rosenberg said. "And I never stopped."

So it was back to the intense workouts,

the arduous training—back to the sport he loved. The year after he returned, Rosenberg qualified for the 2023 USA Gymnastics Developmental National Championships in Oklahoma City.

"That was a big accomplishment for me," Rosenberg said. "It was a really good feeling to make it."

With Nationals under his belt, Rosenberg knew he couldn't continue gymnastics into college. One sport, however, would allow Rosenberg to hit the ground running: diving.

"The skills in diving come super naturally to [gymnasts]," Rosenberg said. "Everything, like the air awareness and all that, I just already had."

Once he decided to switch, it was time to find a coach and a place to train. After hearing that sophomore Iris Burns-Trahanovsky dove with the Longhorn Junior Aquatics Program at UT, Rosenberg reached out to her to learn more.

"He asked me where I practiced and who my coach was, and he emailed my coach to set up a tryout," Burns-Trahanovsky said.

Rosenberg said the UT coaches seemed to recognize that diving was Rosenberg's way ahead. But at that point, at the start of his senior year, most athletes were already looking for colleges to commit to. He was only just starting the sport.

"I had to kind of fast-track my way to the top," Rosenberg said. "So it wasn't even a tryout in my head. It was like, 'OK this is where I'm going to be for the next year. How can I start learning really quickly?'"

The Longhorn Aquatics diving program has three teams with increasing levels of skill. High School, Talent ID and Podium. Rosenberg initially began on Talent ID but was moved up to Podium after just a few days. So far, Rosenberg has competed in three meets—and took first place at his first

one.

"[One of the last] competitions I went to was really fun," Rosenberg said. "Everyone was cheering. When someone smacked, which is when you belly flop or mess up really hard, everyone cheered. It just made it fun."

Rosenberg mainly dives off the 1- and 3-meter springboards, although some athletes dive from as high as 10 meters. "I have jumped off the 10-meter, and it's really nerve-racking," Rosenberg said. "I can't imagine diving off it. But I like jumping off high stuff. I just like the adrenaline."

In October 2023, Rosenberg was contacted by diving coaches at California State University, Bakersfield, a D1 school. They invited him to come out for an official visit in early November. A few days after that, Rosenberg committed to diving at CSUB. It was a perfect fit for a myriad of reasons.

"CSUB is a really ideal place for me to go," he said. "I have a lot of family from California, and I was born there myself. Not only the location, but the coach was awesome. She used to be a gymnast, so she knows how to teach ex-gymnasts."

While Rosenberg looks forward to diving in college, he doesn't see himself going pro.

"It's just something I'll enjoy during college and maybe give up after," he said. "I think, nonetheless, it'll teach me a lot of lessons. My dream is not to go to the Olympics or anything, but we'll see. Maybe I will want to go."

Even if Rosenberg isn't aiming for deeper waters after college, the hard work and dedication he's put into both gymnastics and diving in turn have secured him a spot on a D1 diving team. Neither sport has been easy. But that is what he loves about them.

"I guess I like the challenge," Rosenberg said. "I'm an ambitious person. It's just how I am. I shoot high, and I'll get there one way or another."

Rosenberg twists in the air during his floor routine at the 2023 USAG Developmental National Championships. Rosenberg said that because it was his last meet, no matter what, his only goals were to do his best and have fun. Photo courtesy of Rosenberg.



Photo courtesy of Asa Rosenberg

Sports feature story

Lanie Sepehri

McCallum High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Landon Balliew	Albany High School
4A	Linyang Lee, Dawson Yao	St. Mark's School of Texas
5A	Maya Ortiz	Kingwood Park HS
6A	Sri Achanta, Sameeha Syed	Coppell High School



FINALISTS



Gina, Hugo and Alejandro Sanchez take a photo at the hospital together in January 2021. Photo submitted by Gina Sanchez.

A Family United

The Sanchez family relies on friends, family and faith

By Maya Ortiz
Editor-in-Chief

Counselor Gina Sanchez watched her husband as his doctor gave the diagnosis.

Cancer. Stage 4 colon cancer.

To Gina, everything stopped – and Hugo stopped listening.

Gina instantly noticed the change in her husband's behavior. She realized she had to focus to learn what was next.

"I just had to go full force and say, 'All right, I need to take control because he can't do it,'" Gina said. "When you hear anything like that, you're unable to process it. So for me, it was like, I have to figure out how to do the next step."

Gina was back at work at Kingwood Park the next day.

It was 2018 and the first couple of days after the diagnosis Gina struggled to talk about it. The support she received from her colleagues, the administration and the counseling team helped her open up about the situation.

At home, she avoided crying to maintain her strong front, but at school with her friends she was able to shed needed tears.

"Of course she was scared, but she never showed it at home or at

work," English and debate teacher Aline Theriot said. "She never wavered with her positive outlook."

Gina and Hugo's son, Alejandro Sanchez, was a 17-year-old senior at the time and telling him was stressful.

His shock turned to anger because the family had already been through so much. Gina's mother had recently

been diagnosed with Alzheimer's, her father had West Nile virus and the family had just moved to Texas.

Gina realized she had to be strong for her family.

At school, Gina continued to dive into work as the at-risk counselor, primarily helping the kids who needed the most support.

At home, everything was changing. Hugo had to retire early from his career in law enforcement. Alejandro decided to enroll at the University of Houston to stay close to his dad instead of pursuing his dream of studying aerospace engineering at Embry-Riddle in Arizona.

Hugo's long hours of overtime had kept him out of the house often, but all of a sudden father and son found time they never had before.

"I finally got to know him," Alejandro said. "It's a completely different dy-

amic, and I love hanging out with him."

Hugo and Alejandro bond over TV, and Hugo made it a priority to start teaching Alejandro life skills, like working on cars.

"He's doing it all now," Gina said. "He doesn't know how much more time we have. None of us do."

The family creates as many memories as they can. They go on road trips to New York and California. They go to the beach or Lufkin to spend a day in nature. Movies and family dinners are now part of their routine.

In between the adventures, dealing with the diagnosis is a constant.

Originally, Hugo had a golf ball-sized tumor in his intestine. Doctors were able to remove it, but not before it metastasized, which

"I see the lives that she has affected. I want to be like that one day. I want to be able to help people the way she has."

Alejandro Sanchez on his mom Gina Sanchez



Maya Ortiz

Kingwood Park High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Emma Holder	Union Grove ISD
4A	Hilton Sampson	St. Mark's School of Texas
5A	Lanie Sepehri	McCallum High School
6A	Jonathon Wilson	W. Charles Akins High School



ENTERTAINMENT
REVIEW

FINALISTS

Entertainment review

Menu secrets and hacks

Across social media platforms, people have been sharing their own restaurant menu tips and tricks, creating a trend that has uncovered tons of mouthwatering orders. I've chosen and tried three offerings from popular restaurants around the city to see if the trends live up to their hype.

BY Hilton Sampson



Starbucks Cookies and Cream Frappuccino

Order and Instructions:
Grande Java Chip Frappuccino
Substitute heavy cream for milk as the base
Substitute three pumps mocha sauce for three pumps white chocolate mocha sauce
Add cookie crumble



Chick-fil-A Buffalo Chicken Mac & Cheese

Order and Instructions:
Six Chicken Nuggets
Medium Mac & Cheese
Zesty Buffalo Sauce, Garden Herb Ranch Sauce
Empty salad container
Add components to the container, mix well



Chipotle Quesarito

Order and Instructions:
Burrito
Substitute shell for a cheese quesadilla
Server will open the cooked quesadilla to add filling
Choose your favorite components

PHOTOS / HILTON SAMPSON

Hilton Sampson

St. Mark's School of Texas

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Cambree Clegg	Albany High School
4A	Akash Manickam	St. Mark's School of Texas
5A	Maya Tackett	McCallum High School
6A	Kate Davis	James Bowie High School



FINALISTS

A life on stage: Palys' opera journey



BRAVO! Palys sings in front of an audience during a recital at the Schmidt Vocal Institute at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio.

PHOTOS / COURTESY LUKAS PALYS

Lukas Palys has spent his life perfecting his performing, but it hasn't always been easy. There have been plenty of roadblocks on his journey through school, sports, extracurriculars and his passion for singing.

Entertainment Feature

Akash Manickam

St. Mark's School of Texas

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Lucky Woodard and Faith Woodall	Union Grove ISD
4A	Riley Richardson & Mika Emphasis	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Annabella Molina and Abby Fernandez	Port Neches-Groves
6A	Noah Bihan and Nick Wood	James Bowie High School



FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Jamie Russell	Union Grove ISD
4A	Rawya Hazin	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Levi Walters	Hendrickson High School
6A	Asher Hagan	James Bowie High School



PERSONAL COLUMN

FINALISTS

Anti-LGBTQ attacks in Texas need to stop



The recent spike in anti-trans and LGBT legislation in Texas is overly harmful

Asher Hagan
Commentary Editor
Questioned Consent Email: bowie.journalism@gmail.com

I did not learn about gay people in a classroom. The first time I saw a gay flag was when I was seven years old. It belonged to my neighbors, my neighbors who were two men. I did not know what the flag was, just that it was pretty and it was not until years later that I even realized my neighbors were queer. Now, I have that flag on my wall. I identify with it and it feels like my state wants to take it away from me.

Texas is a historically conservative, Republican state as proven by the fact that Texas has not voted Democrat in a presidential election since 1976. Over their time in power, the Republican party has slowly devolved into hateful rhetoric and a corrupt version of the "American way."

It is hard to pin down when the higher powers in the GOP started to turn against every minority under the sun, but for many people it can be traced back to the election of 2016 with Donald Trump. Since this election, there have been movements such as Black Lives Matter, an increase in demands for gun control, and more bills than ever restricting LGBT individuals.

According to PBS, as of mid-March over 400 anti-LGBT bills have been proposed in America in the year 2023

alone, and, according to the Human Rights Campaign, Texas is one of the states leading this sudden push for anti-LGBT legislation.

This year Texas lawmakers have made a major push for things such as limiting gender-affirming health care as well as limiting the teaching of LGBT subjects in both public and charter schools. These bills are overly harmful and incredibly destructive. They will quite literally kill children and will absolutely not stop the rising number of people in younger generations that identify as LGBT. Not to mention that the worst part of these bills is the fact that these lawmakers don't actually care about the people they are affecting.

According to the Human Rights Campaign, despite bills like these becoming more common, of the 315 anti-LGBT bills proposed in 2022, only 9% of them became law. So now the question: if so many of these bills aren't becoming law then why have them? It's simple: to make a statement. Many lawmakers don't care if these bills become law because they don't actually care about the people and/or children these bills are affecting. They care about the fact that people on the far right can rally behind these ideals. It is not about legislation, it is about proclaiming your hatred for a group of people.

There are six main bills in both the House and the Senate in Texas that prohibit those under 18 from receiving gender-affirming healthcare such as hormones, surgeries, and puberty blockers. One of these bills is Texas House Bill 1686, which, as of March 27, has passed in the Texas House of Representatives. The bill had public testimony on March 24 and, according to an estimate from the Texas Tribune, there were more than 2,800 people signed up to testify in regards to this bill. Of the 2,800 people just under 100 of them were there to actually support the bill's potential passing. The testimony was abruptly cut off before many people got to speak in the House.

If the people of Texas truly wanted this bill to be passed, if they truly wanted to "protect the children," they would be there testifying in favor of HB 1686, but they weren't there. Instead, parents, doctors, and young children testified for their right to be who they are in the state of Texas. Banning transgender healthcare can have massive effects on a child's mental health. According to the Trevor Project, suicide is the leading cause of death among people 10-24 and LGBT youth are four times as at risk of committing suicide than their peers.

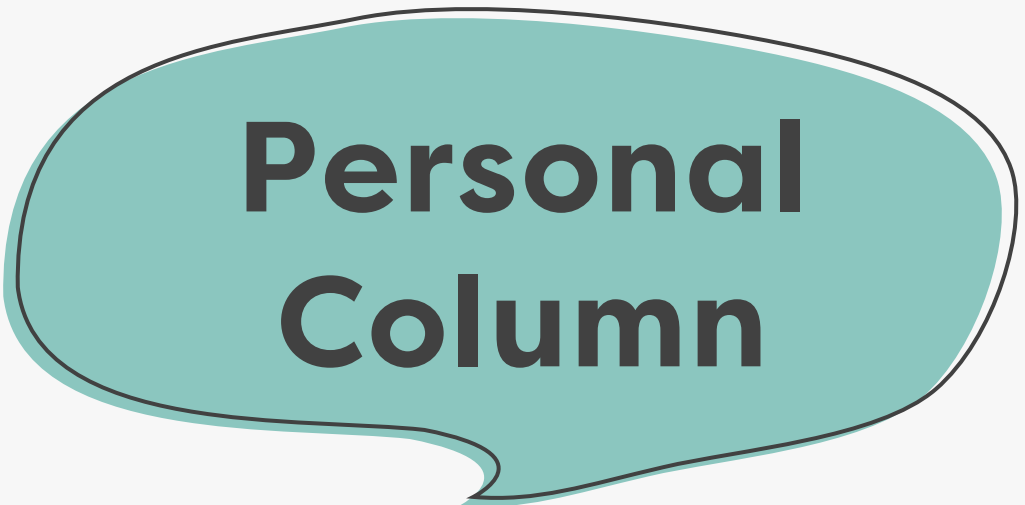
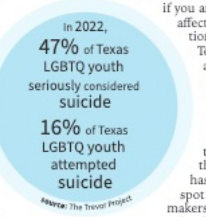
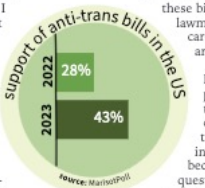
Many Republican lawmakers have taken this to say that because of the higher suicide rates among trans and LGBT youth, parents should not encourage their children to transition nor should children be allowed to transition for fear of decreased mental health. However, in 2021, the American Medical Association stated that taking gender-affirming care away from people is what leads to decreased mental health. If these lawmakers in Texas wanted to

actually do what is best for children, then they would let gender-affirming care be available instead of pushing trans children out of Texas then advocating for parental choice.

Parental choice is one of the big pushes from Governor Greg Abbott as of late. It is a push for it to be the parent's decision as far as where their child goes to school, disregarding the cost of tuition or zoning district. I find it very ironic that Abbott thinks that parents should have a say in where their children go to school and what they learn but doesn't think that parents should have the right to decide what is best for their children medically. Even if you are not transgender or affected by these restrictions, some proposed Texas bills still may affect you.

Currently in Texas there are three main bills that talk about restricting the education of LGBT topics. Education and the queer community has been a particular soft spot for conservative lawmakers in recent years. Even outside of Texas, particularly in states such as Florida, mentions of the LGBT community have been removed from many curricula with things such as "Don't Say Gay" bills. Similar bills have been introduced to Texas legislatures. Proposals like House Bills 1155 and 1541 would ban the teaching of LGBT subjects and people from Kindergarten to eighth grade. Both have very similar wording to that of Florida's "Don't Say Gay" bill which passed last year. Arguably the most terrifying of these kinds of bills is Texas Senate Bill 8, a 27-page bill that would set up savings accounts for every student in the state of Texas and boost parental choice in schools. This bill would not only allow students to go to schools with tuitions more easily but also, according to one singular paragraph in the document, ban the teaching of LGBT subjects from kindergarten to 12th grade. This is scary to me because it is simply slipped into this document with one, four-line paragraph and is the most restrictive of Texas' attempts to limit queer education.

Overall, this should not be happening. That's the simple truth. There are so many other things going on in the world that the government, both federal and state, should be concerned with. They should be concerned about issues like deadly mass shootings instead of worrying about children's sex organs. Lawmakers can't hide behind the pretense of "it's all for the children" then be silent when children lose their lives to gun violence. These are children's lives, not political statements. I can only hope that lawmakers start to realize the people they are actually affecting and focus on more important things.



Personal Column

Asher Hagan

James Bowie High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Raylee Gajewsky	White Oak
4A	Sophia Sardiña	Episcopal School of Dallas
5A	Kyan Adams	McCallum High School
6A	Andrew Liu	Bellaire High School

PERSONAL OPINION
COLUMN

FINALISTS

Saving the Earth by proxy

Invasive monk parakeet does good for local ecosystem, other bird species

Kyan Adams
staff reporter

Within Austin lies (or files) a large population of monk parakeets. Many Austinites are aware of them and value these little, green parrots for their energetic behavior and colorful appearance.

But their natural habitat is southern South America, so why are they here? Well, a small number of them were released in the 1980s near Zilker Park, and since then, their population has boomed, spreading their wings across all corners of the city. In fact, monk parakeets are now known to be in Houston, San Antonio and even across state lines. While they have a pretty basic origin story, I believe these little parrots could be useful to the United States and fill a role that's been vacant for 104 years in the American Midwest, Northeast and South.

Because monk parakeets are an invasive species, it is imperative that we determine whether these parakeets are a threat to our ecosystems or way of life. Gathering information from European countries, we know monk parakeets can be agricultural pests at times. We also know from experience and reports in neighboring cities that their nests are hazards to electrical structures. Like little apartments, monk parakeets make 400-pound stick nests housing multiple birds and eggs at the same time. This is something completely unique to monk parakeets, but as cool as it is, it's still a threat to infrastructure, causing power outages and even fires. This is rare, however, and it seems to be an issue that's either unrecognized within Austin or just so infrequent that it's not worth discussion. Besides this uncommon phenomenon and occasional damage to crop fields, which should not be of concern in an urban area like Austin, monk parakeets have been a largely

unproblematic addition to the community. With our understanding of the known negatives, we can safely say that they do not bring any dangers to our native wildlife and way of life, so we can focus on the positive contributions of these feathered friends instead.

The role of parrots is to spread forests, and while many bird species do this, parrots have proven much more efficient at it. Additionally, the exceptional strength of their beaks allows them to crack open a wide variety of seeds when they eat, including those native to Austin. Timothy Keitt, a UT ornithology professor, has observed monk parakeets eating the crucial and native mesquite tree seed pods. This observation is important as it shows that monk parakeets can be a reliable seed distributor and that they can survive off of native plants. They've also been observed foraging off the ground, further illustrating their unflinching adaptability.

Another illustration of the monk parakeet's unflinching adaptability is their skill of ecosystem engineering, of which their aforementioned giant nests are an example. An ecosystem engineer is a species that can modify habitats, which can be done in several different ways. Monk parakeets fall into the allogenic engineering category. This is when a species modifies its ecosystem physically.

building structures such as beaver dams, leaf shelters or in the monk parakeet's case, their massive nests.

Many different animals have been observed taking residence within the monk parakeet's nest, but primarily birds. And a great diversity of birds there are, even including birds of prey.

Mammals, reptiles and invertebrates can also be found in their nests, but they probably would not cooperate quite as well if met with the monk parakeet whose home they were invading.

The only drawback to the monk parakeet sharing its nest with other bird species is that invasive species can also seek refuge in the roopty nest. Luckily, strategic placement of monk parakeet populations in locations free of invasive species can prevent this outcome.

So what is a proxy species, anyway? Proxy is a term commonly used when a species has gone extinct and a closely related species with a similar ecological role is introduced into an area to fill the hole in the ecosystem. One example besides the monk parakeet is the Bolson tortoise. From fossil records, we know that these tortoises used to be in large numbers around the United States in the Pleistocene and Holocene eras but decreased substantially later on. These tortoises help support grassland and shrubland simply by their way of life, which in turn creates soil humidity needed for said biomes.

This method of rewilding can be an extremely positive way to restore the health of ecosystems, but the reason this is necessary is quite unfortunate. We are at a point on Earth where we have to resort to using the extinct to save

our living species. But this is the reason we should be in favor of the monk parakeet, which proxies for a species known as the Carolina parakeet. This was the only widespread North American parrot species we know of since the Miocene era. Yes, other parrot species have lived in America, namely the thick-billed parrot that used to roam today's Western United States, or the green parakeet that resided in a small region of Texas, but no other parrot species had spread its wings as far and wide as the Carolina parakeet. The Carolina parakeet was a small, brightly colored parrot whose green, yellow and orange feathers made it unable to hide among the trees, and thus its extinction in 1918 was traced to both mass hunting and the major deforestation of the 18th and 19th centuries.

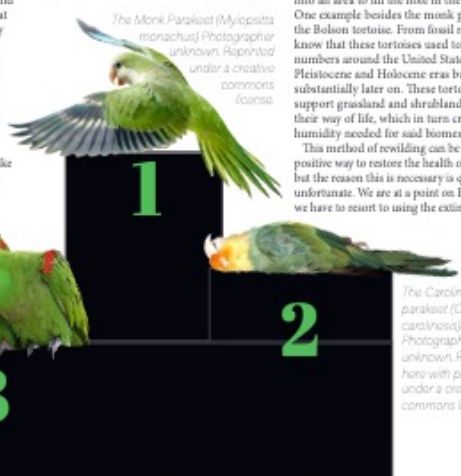
While deforestation was a contributing factor to the Carolina parakeet's extinction, the Carolina parakeet's extinction also played a role in increased deforestation. Because they were a seed-dispersing species, their absence slowed the spread of new seedlings, leaving ecosystems unable to replace the lost tree cover.

While de-extinction isn't impossible, it is difficult. This is where the monk parakeet comes in. The monk parakeet's role and behavior are similar to the Carolina parakeet's, making it the best candidate for a proxy. Additionally, their large nests can act as a substitute habitat for other bird species in areas where there aren't enough trees to meet the demand for homes.

If this idea were to be taken into full effect, and monk parakeets were to be introduced in high volume to regions where Carolina parakeets once roamed, the best start would be to pinpoint an adequate area, most likely a state in the Central Southern area of the United States. The next step would be chipping the monk parakeets so that if anything doesn't go according to plan the species' location is tracked for recapture, as well as monitoring of the individual birds to see how they interact with the ecosystem.

We have the ability to rejuvenate our dying planet, but this can only be accomplished if the human race can cooperate. Too many species have been lost in our wake, and each loss has tipped us further into our own extinction. But there is hope thanks to proxy species.

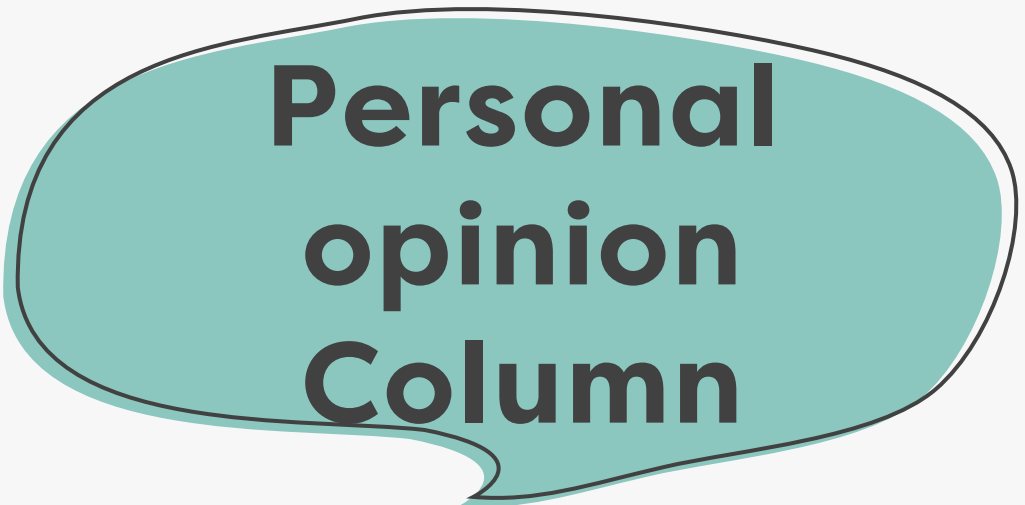
“Too many species have been lost in our wake and each loss has tipped us further toward our own extinction.”



The Monk Parakeet (*Myiopsitta monachus*) Photographer unknown. Reprinted under a creative commons license.

The Carolina parakeet (*Conuropsis carolinensis*) Photographer unknown. Reprinted here with permission under a creative commons license.

Thick-billed parrot (*Myiopsitta pachyrhyncha*) Photo by Joe Mazzola. Reprinted here with permission under a creative commons license.



Kyan Adams

McCallum High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Tyler Chapman	Albany High School
4A	Nolan Marcus	St. Mark's School of Texas
5A	Callen Romell	McCallum High School
6A	Luke Heinze	Bryan High School



FINALISTS

LOOKING UP
Younger athletes often idolize professional athletes without realizing a potential negative influence.



PHOTO / WILL CLIFFORD

The man behind the jersey

As professional athletes garner attention for their athletic endeavours, many succumb to the spotlight, failing to take responsibility for their actions, letting their fans, coaches, teammates and organizations down.



NOLAN MARCUS
Health & Sports Editor

Half-court 3s, mind-boggling one-handed catches and flashy dribble moves — all maneuvers thousands of athletes of all ages emulate after seeing their professional sports heroes pull off flawlessly.

And just as they command attention on the playing field or court, they also do when they are off of it. Because of that, no group has a bigger impact on nation-wide culture than athletes.

Philanthropy, community service and leadership can be found ubiquitous in sports figures. However, for every great athlete it feels like there's an equally prominent figure doing everything but the right thing.

Athletes who abuse women and promote the usage of firearms are often spotlighted because they draw more eyes on talk shows or bring in more readers for a publication. General managers and coaches will frequently deny and turn the other cheek to star players breaking laws and running away from morality to avoid suspending athletes who can help the team win games. Reporters and General Managers who don't treat situations properly only encourage public opinion toward unconditional love and support for a fan's favorite athlete regardless of any crime he or she has committed.

The same kid who shoots logo 3s sees the wild fires burning down morality, and instead of trying to put it out, pour gas on the fire. It's not his fault. He just feels like it is the right thing to do because everyone around him is doing it too.

I know how hard it is to alienate myself from my favorite public figures. Kanye West was my favorite artist of all time and pulling myself away from his music has been and still is a mountainous ordeal. I know I

shouldn't listen to his music because he has shown time and time again how ugly he is on the inside, but I can't just unlove his music at the drop of a dime.

No matter what he has done to destroy his reputation, I can't change how much I have listened to him over the years and how much his words have made impacts on my world perspective. I have listened to his albums over and over and over again and those experiences and memories I made while playing his music don't go away.

At the same time, I have to dissociate myself from Kanye because I can't support him no matter what I thought of him before based on how he presents himself to the world now. I have to try to accept that he's changed for the worse until he has given me enough evidence that he's improved his character to a satisfactory level. I don't know what that level is or when that will happen, I think it's just going to be something that I realize when the time comes.

Similarly, I am the biggest Cowboys fan I know and the Dallas Cowboys are notorious for employing athletes regardless of background good or bad. I also know that I have had to stop supporting certain players on my favorite team because of what they have done and it's hard, but it needs to be done because we as sports fans cannot treat athletes any differently just because they play for our favorite team.

Even beyond the Cowboys, I have grown up watching and admiring icons like Tyreek Hill and Alvin Kamara who have both committed physical and violent crimes and I have had to work to stop supporting them because what would it say about me if I wore their jersey promoting their brand. It doesn't matter that they are pro-bowl and all-pro caliber players if they refuse to adhere to the same social standards non-professional athletes demand out of each other.

As fans we have the right and bear the responsibility to hold our favorite teams and athletes accountable for their actions. Without fans paying for tickets, merchandise or drawing in views, sports notoriety would dwindle exponentially.

We have the power and obligation to do that. Fans have to keep the same standard for everyone and hold those standards dearly.

The only way we can stop the spread of destructive sports culture is by fully committing to stopping it with no exceptions.

At school, all athletes in every program are constantly reminded they are standing on a hill with nothing to hide behind and everyone in the community is looking up. We are always aware that everyone is watching even when we think no one is, so that we always think twice before acting.

Being an athlete here is very similar to wearing the blue shirt. The blue shirt sets each senior apart from the rest of the student body and it highlights their every move. Good or bad. Right or wrong. Athletics should be the same.

I am not demanding perfection — that would be impossible to achieve and it would ruin all aspects of life if perfection was the standard. I am just asking for accountability for actions and a fair response to those actions. If an athlete needs people in their corner helping them make better choices then they should be encouraged to get all the help they need so that way the athletes we look up to will fully deserve our admiration.

But still, being in the spotlight does not mean you are invincible. In fact, because of the spotlight athletes should be extremely aware and expected to do the right thing. That is something the world of sports seems to have strayed away from, and its time to get back on track.

Sports Column

Nolan Marcus

St. Mark's School of Texas

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Robyn Trail, Avery Everitt	Albany High School
4A	Iris Hernandez, Beau McKnight and Lauren Shushi	Episcopal School of Dallas
5A	Kate Boyle, Evie Barnard, Sally Butler, Chloe Lewcock, Alice Scott and Francie Wilhelm	McCallum High School
6A	Raksha Jayakumar, Hyunsung Na, Harrison Hamre	Marcus High School

IN-DEPTH NEWS/FEATURE
PACKAGE

FINALISTS

Vol. 37 Issue 4 • March 8, 2023 • Edward S. Marcus High School • 5707 Morriss Road Flower Mound, TX 75028

The Marquee

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ONE DEADLY MISTAKE

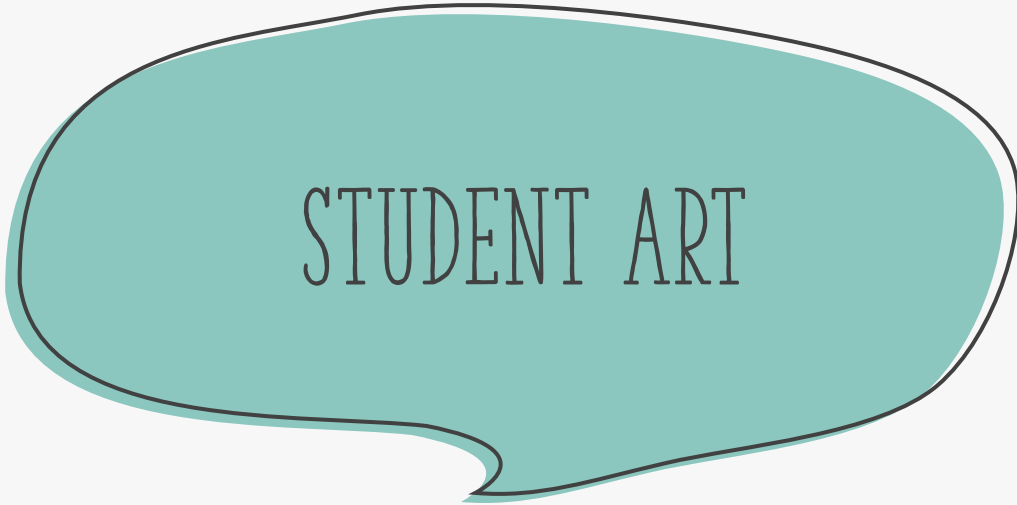


In-Depth News/Feature Package

Raksha
Jayakumar,
Hyunsung Na and
Harrison Hamre

Marcus High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Emma Holder	Union Grove ISD
4A	Charlotte Traylor and Charlie Massoud	Episcopal School of Dallas
5A	Diana Salazar	Hendrickson High School
6A	Jennifer Banh	Marcus High School



FINALISTS

HANGING OUT ON A BUDGET

story
Aishani Raju

Have you ever texted your friends asking to hang out and gotten hit with the text, "well what should we do?" What is there to actually do? Plans may be thrown into the group chat about brunch, local concerts and parties.

Even though the ideas are fun in theory, there's one common problem: almost all the plans are too expensive. This guide will help people who don't have any money find low-budget, Instagram worthy hangouts.

THEME PARTY

A themed party is an excuse for all your friends to get dolled up without blowing all your money on concert tickets just to dress up. The first step is to pick a theme, which will make it a serious party.

Second, decorations! Even though we're on a budget, we're still going for the Pinterest girly vibe, even if it only looks like that in pictures. Ask all of your friends to bring any old birthday or past party decorations and stop by the dollar tree for some last minute items. The main areas to decorate are the living room and kitchen, no one should be going anywhere else lol.

To stay organized, create a spreadsheet of the appetizers, entrees, and desserts for people to sign up for and hope that people will actually fill it out without the host having to badger them. Third, set up! Roll out the tablecloth onto the kitchen countertop, set out the food, and hang up the decorations for your themed party. Make sure to play a hype playlist or one that fits the mood, or you'll bring down the vibe of the party. Last, enjoy with your friends and hope that the pictures that you take are Instagram worthy.

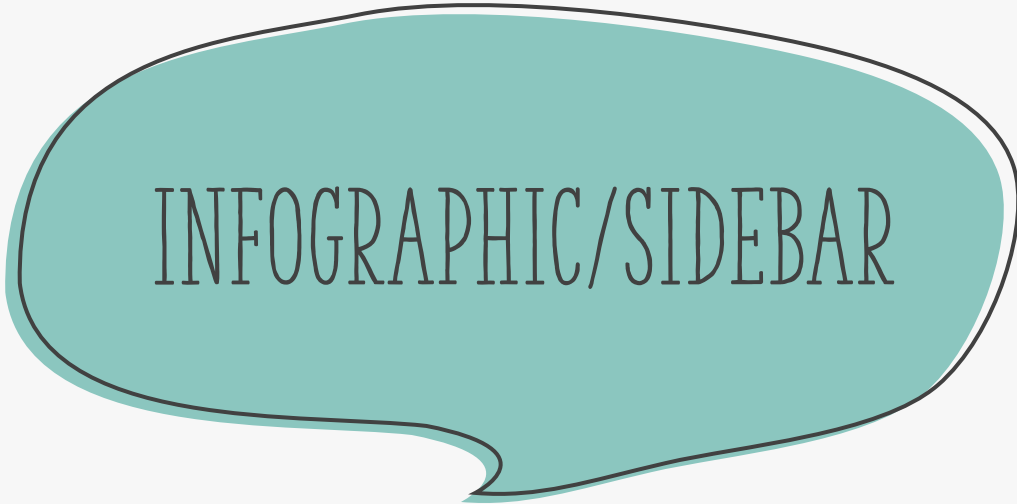


Student art

Jennifer
Banh

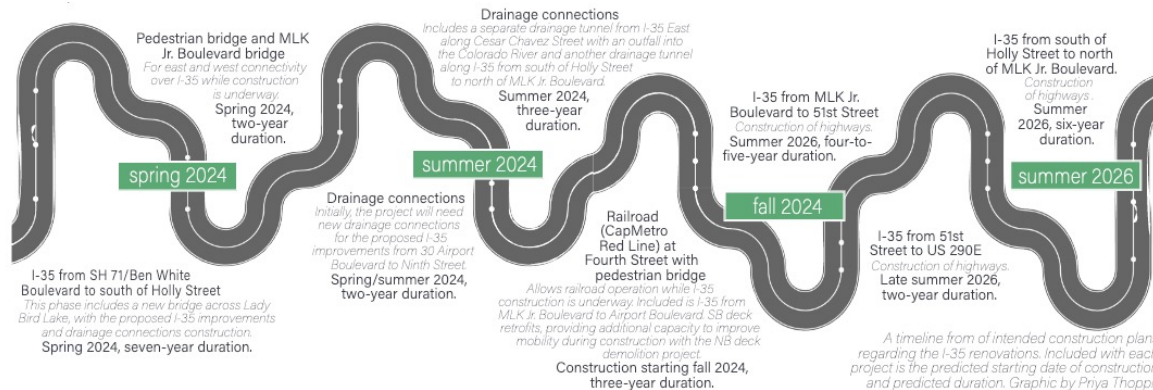
Marcus High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Faith Woodall and Emma Holder	Union Grove ISD
4A	Riley Richardson	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Priya Thoppil	McCallum High School
6A	Mazzy Warren	James Bowie High School



INFOGRAPHIC/SIDEBAR

FINALISTS



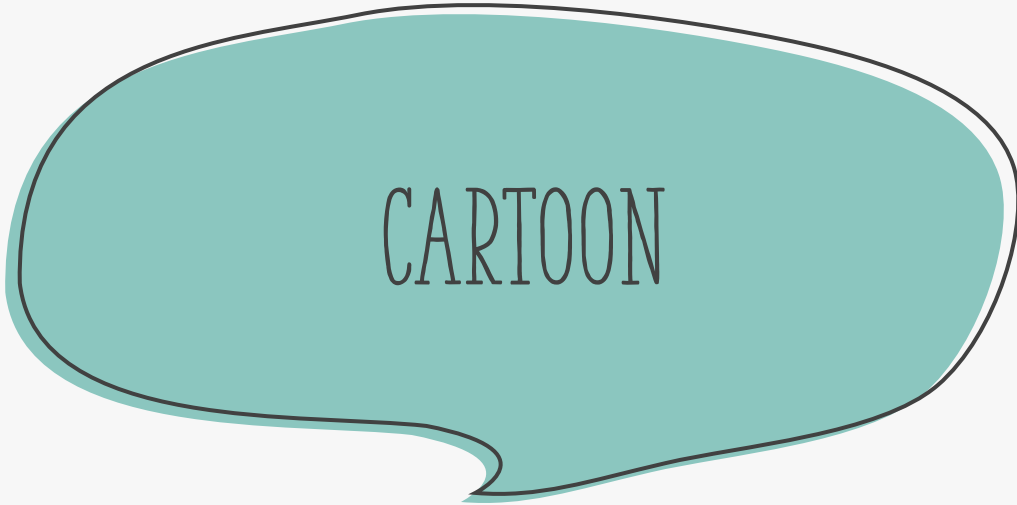
I-35 expansion evolves

Changes to infrastructure plan met with mixed opinions; project to begin in spring

Infographics/
sidebar

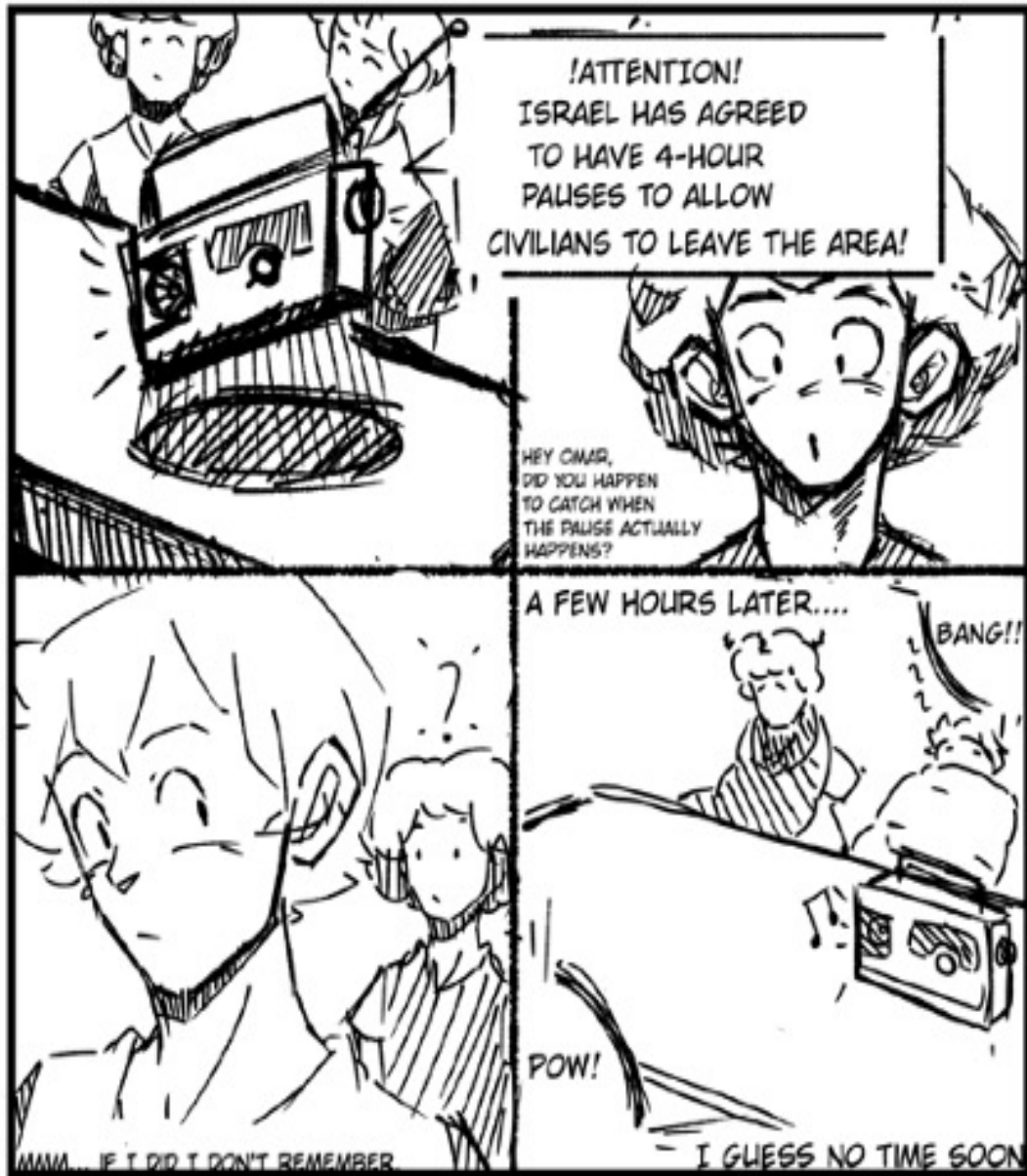
Priya
Thoppil
McCallum High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Lucky Woodard	Union Grove ISD
4A	Garrant Hill	Seminole High School
5A	Nate Williams	McCallum High School
6A	Kayla Vu	Plano East Senior High School



FINALISTS

"Hurry Up and Wait" by Lucky Woodard



Cartoon

Lucky
Woodard

Union Grove ISD

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Jamie Russell and Lucky Woodard	Union Grove ISD
4A	Ben Adams, Nolan Marcus	St. Mark's School of Texas
5A	Lanie Sepehri	McCallum High School
6A	Ashton Lux	Tomball High School



SPORTS PAGE/SPREAD
DESIGN

FINALISTS

A tale of two commitments

Explore the constant daily struggle of balancing both club and school athletics. See coverage, [page 30](#)



STRAIGHT OUT THE DIVING BOARD Lions varsity swimmers start fast as they dive into the pool beginning the race at senior right. PHOTO / COURTESY ASHER SINGLA

SPORTS IN BRIEF

ON THE ROAD The lacrosse team went on a trip to Arizona, where they faced off against two challenging opponents, Notre Dame Prep and Bishop Prep. Despite an longer drive travel, the team had a dominant performance, coming right off the plane. They won 11-8 against former state champions Notre Dame Prep. The powerful performance allowed for the younger members of the team to gain valuable experience on the field. The following day, the team took a well-deserved break to watch the San Diego Padres vs Oakland Athletics spring training game. Refreshed, the team returned to the field the next day to face the defending state champion, Bishop Prep. The team emerged victorious with an 11-7 win, thanks in part to stellar performances from senior captain Henry Boykin and senior Luke Hildage.

INTERMURAL LEAGUE PLAYOFFS The Junior Basketball League, formerly known as the Sophomore Basketball League, is back for another season and is currently in the heat of the playoffs which opened with a play-in game between the No. 7 and No. 8 seeds March 20. Currently, the No. 1 seed, Tru and Theron, is set to play the No. 5 seed, The Dukes Club, after upsetting the No. 8 seed, The Dorian Team, winning the semi-2-0 League Championship. Justin Alex Barrett and Bryan Graham plan to finish the playoff by the end of the season.

ALUMNI UPDATE As spring sports kick off for college athletes around the nation, alumni athletes are proving they can keep up with the season. Evan McCreary '22, a runner for the Cornell Bears, had his first spring regatta with the team

April 1. They went up against the Harvard Crimson and got beat out, but not without a strong effort. Blake Hildage '21, a rower for the MIT Rowers, performed strongly with his boat at their most recent regatta, placing first against the Coast Guard and Army crew.

THE NEXT LEVEL Soccer Head Coach Kelly's passion for coaching has led him to Bates College where he will continue coaching at the same level. Despite visiting other colleges, he was drawn to Bates' family-like community and the supportive culture of the team. Throughout the recruitment process, Kelly had a strong connection with the coaches and soccer, making it an easy decision to choose Bates as his home for the next four years. With his determination and dedication, Kelly is prepared to make a significant contribution to the team and pursue his goals both on and off the soccer

INSIDE

28 Sports culture
How sports can change the culture of a community.

29 Hayden Meyers
Hayden Meyers shares his experience playing airsoft.

30 Club versus school sports
Athletes describe their experiences and struggles balancing school and club sports.

Tennis adds individual competition

BY Eric Yi

Since 1958, the SPC has hosted tennis tournaments annually for athletes of conference schools to compete at. Individual titles and competitions for athletes independently representing themselves were never organized until this year.

Since the individual competitions are brand new, they are quite small with only a few competitors from each school.

"Each school can send up to two singles players and one doubles team to enter into a bracket with the other teams," tennis coach Cameron Hillier '13 said. "For singles, it would be a bracket of 16, while doubles would be a bracket of eight. The idea being a mixed bag of North Zone and South Zone all over."

Although the main goal for the individual tournament is to increase competition within the conference and provide a new challenge for the players, Hillier still plans to prioritize the team over the individual aspirations.



CAMERON HILLIER '13
Tennis Coach

"My hope is in the future this tournament grows, but I still want to emphasize the team aspect," Hillier said. "If these guys have plans to play in college, it's still a team sport. I feel like a lot of guys that travel around and play singles all the time, get a little burned out. It's nice to have the energy of a team during an individual competition."

Even though this new addition to tennis is one of the biggest changes to SPC tennis since its start, Hillier believes that it won't affect the team aspect much at all.

"The guys that go into this tournament are going to be the most competitive players on every team," Hillier said. "The most competitive players on every tennis team are playing year-round. They're doing clinics, they have a coach, they're traveling around Texas playing and maybe even the nation if they're really good."

In the future, if the competition grows, Hillier's opinions may change but as of now, he wants to emphasize the importance of the team aspect in SPC tennis.

"If talking these guys down there in the future would mean missing time with the team or missing team matches, I'm not interested because they're probably playing year-round already," Hillier said. "Now, that tournament is not a big enough deal that you think, 'Hey, you gotta go get into it so that scouts and recruiting coaches will look at you. Those already exist completely apart from SPC.'"

2-MINUTE DRILL

A quick glance at the stats, scores and schedules heading Lions athletics.

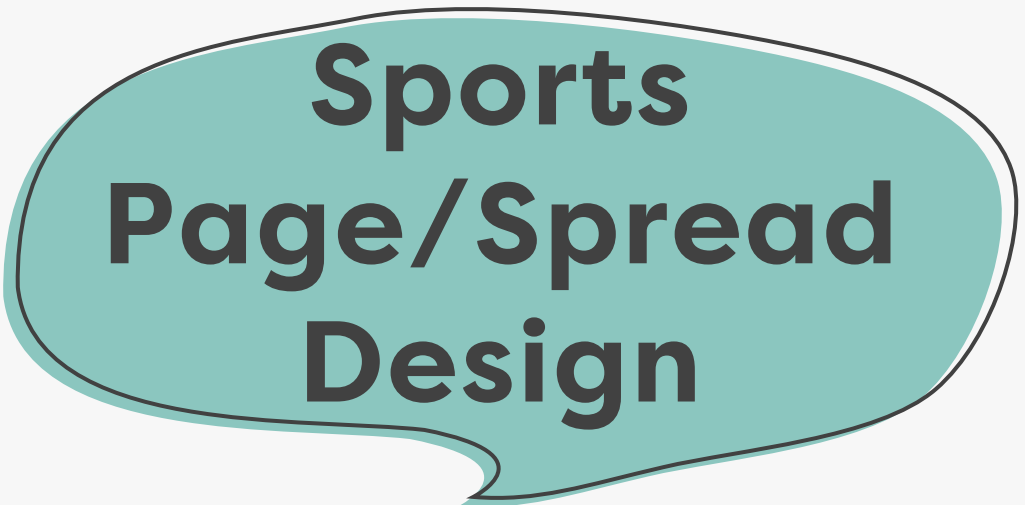


PHOTO / COURTESY PATRICK FLANAGAN

ACE Junior Patrick Flanagan has not lost a tennis match all season long. He looks to continue his dominance as the Lions approach the SPC tournament.

Scoreboard	
Varsity baseball 4/5/23	
13	0
St. Mark's	Cassidy
Varsity lacrosse 4/1/23	
9	8
St. Mark's	St. John's
Varsity tennis 1/28/23	
3	2
St. Mark's	Cassidy

22 sets won by the tennis team this season			
43'9" distance senior Julian Carlson threw in shot put			
10 games in a row won by the lacrosse team			
On Deck			
Today: Trade at St. John's School	4/18: Baseball vs. Trinity Valley	4/18: Tennis vs. Trinity Valley	4/18: Lacrosse vs. Highland Park
4/22: Crew at Wake	4/22: Golf at Greenhill	4/22: Baseball at Greenhill	3/21: Trade at Greenhill
● Away ● Home			



Ben Adams and Nolan Marcus

St. Mark's School of Texas

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Lucky Woodard and Faith Woodall	Union Grove ISD
4A	Riley Richardson	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Alice Scott	McCallum High School
6A	Mazzy Warren	James Bowie High School



FEATURE PAGE/SPREAD
DESIGN

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Faith Woodall and Daytona Vaughn	Union Grove ISD
4A	Abigail Thrash and Mika Emphasis	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Elisabeth Stewart	College Station High School
6A	Angela Lumbreras	Alief Kerr High School

ENTERTAINMENT
PAGE/SPREAD DESIGN

FINALISTS

Abigail Thrash
reporter

What Not To Watch

You've heard of all the best movies, but what about the worst ones?

Shabbyboy & Losergirl

Rotten Tomatoes Rating: 20%
Budget: 50 million
Genre: adventure/fantasy

Description:
Bullied by classmates, young Max escapes into a fantasy, conjuring up the action-packed lives of Lavagirl and Sharkboy. But one day, Lavagirl and Sharkboy suddenly come to life —and their world, Planet Drool, needs a hero named Max.

"It's terrible 3-D. I think the story is terrible as well. The characters were annoying and I didn't get the meaning of the movie," sophomore Tia Wright said.



Mega Marvel Mishap

Rotten Tomatoes Rating: 15%
Budget: 75 million
Genre: action/fantasy

Description:
Dangerously ill with a rare blood disorder and determined to save others from the same fate, Dr. Morbius attempts a desperate gamble. While at first it seems to be a success, a darkness inside of him is soon unleashed.

"Morbius is the worst Marvel movie ever in my opinion; it's horrible. The storyline was garbage," freshman Treyden Greene said.

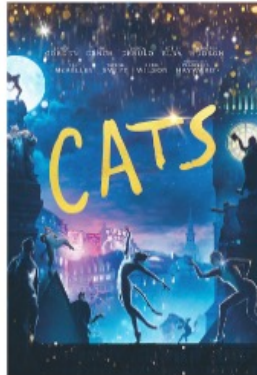
A Feline Frenzy Fail

"It was really awkward and uncomfortable. It was badly made, so I just didn't like it," sophomore Trinity Chase said.

Rotten Tomatoes Rating: 19%
Budget: 95 million
Genre: musical/comedy

Description:
A tribe of cats compete during the annual Jellicle Ball, where one lucky feline will be chosen to ascend to the Heaviside Layer and be granted a new life.

"I heard a lot of negative responses about CATS, it was just not what many were expecting," senior Lucian David said.

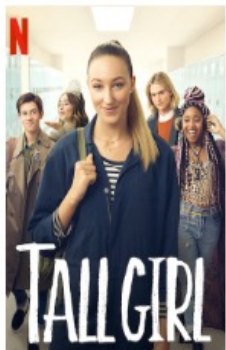


Tall Girl, Short Era

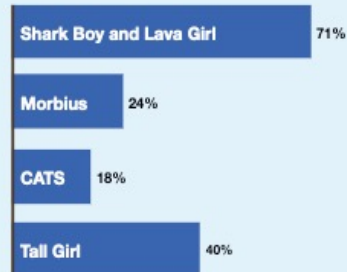
Rotten Tomatoes Rating: 38%
Budget: 13.6 million
Genre: romance/comedy

Description:
When the tallest girl in high school falls for a handsome foreign exchange student, she becomes embroiled in a love triangle and realizes she's far more than her insecurities about her height have led her to believe. [reviews]

"Tall Girl was not necessarily a flop but it wasn't the best either. The whole movie was very predictable, so it kind of made the movie stale for me. But the acting was good, so I would rate it a 5/10," junior Lauren Walker said.



Have You Seen It?



[45 students surveyed]

Entertainment Page/Spread Design

Abigail Thrash and Mika Emphasis

Pleasant Grove High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Jamie Russell and Lucky Woodard	Union Grove ISD
4A	Caurie Beck and Mika Emphasis	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Sashah Elabd	College Station High School
6A	Mazzy Warren	James Bowie High School

NEWS PAGE/SPREAD
DESIGN

FINALISTS

STUDENT READERS: SHOVED OFF THE SHELVES

Local bookstore files lawsuit against authors of HB900, a bill that would potentially ban hundreds of books from school libraries for sexual relevance.



ART BY Amber Ingber

MOODY MENORS

Julian Green

Reading about a new proposed law, Justice Amy McMillan was shocked. As the president of the Book End Book Club, she was diagnosed. Reading further, she couldn't believe it. All right, she thought, it's not a bad idea. But when she read about the proposed law, she realized that it would ban hundreds of books from school libraries. She had never seen the proposed law of House Bill 900 before. She had never seen the proposed law of House Bill 900 before. She had never seen the proposed law of House Bill 900 before.

Books are powerful. Because they reach us about the world and our lives in it. McMillan said. "There are no exceptions to this rule. It's not just about the content of the books, but about the way they are written. It's not just about the content of the books, but about the way they are written. It's not just about the content of the books, but about the way they are written."

THE BOOK BAN

HB900 was scheduled to take effect September 1, already over 770 new laws passed in the Tennessee legislature. This law requires bookstores to remove books from their shelves that are sexually explicit, obscene, or otherwise inappropriate for school libraries. It also requires that the books be removed from the shelves of school libraries.

The bill prohibits the sale of books to school libraries that are sexually explicit, obscene, or otherwise inappropriate for school libraries. It also prohibits the sale of books to school libraries that are sexually explicit, obscene, or otherwise inappropriate for school libraries.

Read defenses have too much to do with the content of the books. The law is not about the content of the books, but about the way they are written. It's not just about the content of the books, but about the way they are written. It's not just about the content of the books, but about the way they are written.

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SENSILING STUDENT READERS

Julian Green

The moment she heard about HB900, Justice Amy McMillan knew something was wrong. This bill could have major implications for the school library. She had never seen the proposed law of House Bill 900 before. She had never seen the proposed law of House Bill 900 before. She had never seen the proposed law of House Bill 900 before.

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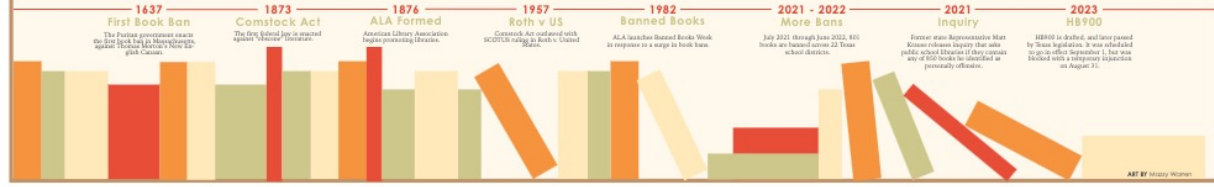
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THE LORD OF THE FLIES
TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD
HARRY POTTER
THE BLUEST EYE
Me and Earl and the Dying Girl
THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO
OF MICE AND MEN
THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN
BELOVED
THE ANARCHIST COOKBOOK
SCARY STORIES (SERIES)
THE COLOR PURPLE
THE BIBLE
JANE FANN'S DIARY
TOPIC OF CANCER
THE CATCHER IN THE RYE
LOLITA
GREEN EGGS AND HAM
THE GRAPES OF WRATH
HOW TO BE AN ANTIRACIST
All Boys Aren't Blue
THE SATURDAY SERIES
1984
DRAMA: A GRAPHIC NOVEL
BRAVE NEW WORLD
ULYSSES
THE DA VINCI CODE
FIFTY SHADES OF GRAY
Gender Queer
THE ABSOLUTELY TRUE DIARY OF A PART-TIME INDIAN
THE PEAKS OF BEING A WALLFLOWER
I FOR VIRGINIA
AMERICAN PSYCHO

WHY BOOKS GET BANNED:

- Offensive Language
- Sexual Content
- Anti-Semitism
- Violence
- Homosexuality
- Religion/Theology
- Occult/Satanism
- Philosophy of Mind
- Drug/Alcohol/Smoking
- Gender
- Anti-Law
- Anti-Literary

ART BY Maddy Warren

MAKING IT DIFFICULT FOR STUDENTS TO READ CLASSICS

Katherine Kuster

Reading is a skill that is essential for success in school and in life. However, many students find it difficult to read classic books. This is often due to the complexity of the language and the unfamiliarity of the subjects. Teachers can help by providing support and encouragement. They can also help students find books that are interesting and relevant to their lives.

ART BY Maddy Warren

RETURNING BOOKS TO THEIR SHELVES

Julian Green

Books are a treasure trove of knowledge and entertainment. They have the power to transport us to other worlds and to help us understand ourselves and the world around us. However, many books have been removed from school libraries in recent years. This is a disservice to students and to the community. We need to get these books back on the shelves so that all students can have access to them.

ART BY Maddy Warren

BOOKS ARE POWERFUL

Julian Green

Books are powerful. Because they reach us about the world and our lives in it. They are not just about the content of the books, but about the way they are written. They are not just about the content of the books, but about the way they are written. They are not just about the content of the books, but about the way they are written.

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Jamie Russell	Union Grove ISD
4A	Aaron Augustine	St. Mark's School of Texas
5A	Staff	Texas High School
6A	Vivi Lopez-Stern	James Bowie High School

EDITORIAL
PAGE/SPREAD DESIGN

FINALISTS



SHATTERED
With a rise of off-campus behavioral issues and cheating, the school's reputation is at risk of fracturing.

The role of a Marksman

The pressures of final exams, AP tests and the looming freedom of summer create the perfect storm for falling diligence and integrity.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION / AARON AUGUSTINE

With the school year nearly drawn to a close, there is a tendency among students to grow more lax. With finals and summer looming over the horizon, many things begin to be caught in the chaos. Assignments, attendance and off-campus behavior have increasingly worsened, reflecting poorly on the school's reputation and the strict culture of integrity.

With the development and popularization of AI technology, such as ChatGPT, cheating has never been easier. With a simple prompt of a few sentences, the AI can output responses that would take students hours of work. With simple techniques such as paraphrasing the AI responses and inserting sporadic words of text, the AI responses can be passed off as original content. The pressure of finals and the closeness of summer in addition to the relative ease of ChatGPT has led cheating to become more enticing. Some classes have seen a double-digit number of suspensions in the last several weeks, culminating in a crisis of integrity.

This cheating violates the trust

between the students and the school, and it inhibits character growth.

Outside of moral implications, cheating also can perpetuate itself: what may begin as a deceptively small usage of outside materials on an ungraded assignment can very easily turn into an elaborate scheme to sneak devices into examination rooms. The longer one goes without being caught only makes the house of cards fall faster; if one reaches his professional life with illegitimate credentials,

he will find himself both underqualified and insecure in his ability.

By emphasizing the significance of ethical behavior and its impact on personal growth and the school's reputation, discussions on the consequences of cheating and misbehavior can give Marksmen a deeper understanding of the long-term effects of their actions.

In addition to the increase in cheating, off-campus behavior has suffered as well. Both in and out of uniform, students represent both the school and each other. During a field trip to a local history museum, several students entered an off-limits corridor and played with historical artifacts, resulting in the cancellation of other planned trips. While appearing as an isolated incident, this affair is

part of a larger wave of misbehavior, which reflects poorly on the school's reputation. Whether in uniform or not, Marksmen are responsible for representing both the school and each other, especially off-campus, because just a few occurrences can result in a permanently scarred reputation.

The solution does not lie in a form of punitive justice or a top-down reprimand, but rather in pride. Students need to understand how special both the school and its members are, and they need to take pride in it. This pride would show itself in how students communicate with each other. Instead of tacitly encouraging foolish behavior by treating it as a joke, students need to take responsibility for each other and treat these inane acts as what they are: an attack on what it means to be a Marksmen.

In addition to forming a culture of responsibility, the implementation of student-led peer mentoring programs, study groups, or academic integrity workshops can foster a sense of camaraderie and encourage students to uphold high standards of honesty and accountability.

By developing a sense of pride, responsibility and ethical awareness, students can become the guardians of their own integrity, shaping a positive and honorable learning environment for themselves and future generations of Marksmen.

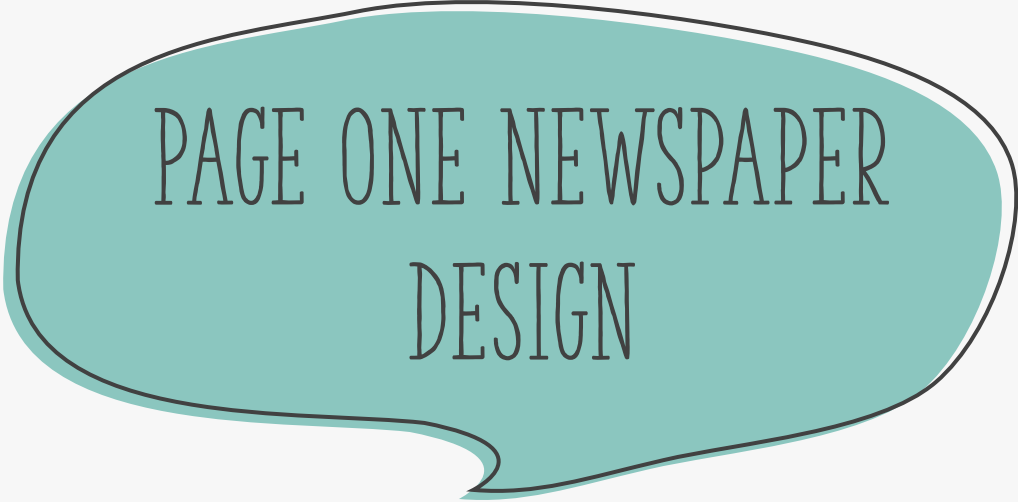
Instead of tacitly encouraging foolish behavior, students need to treat these inane acts as what they are: an attack on what it means to be a Marksmen.

Editorial Page/Spread Design

Aaron Augustine

St. Mark's School of Texas

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Robyn Trail	Albany High School
4A	Abby Baughman, Easterly Yeaman and Charlotte Traylor	Episcopal School of Dallas
5A	Kayla Le	Liberal Arts and Science Academy
6A	Avani Munji	Coppell High School



PAGE ONE NEWSPAPER
DESIGN

FINALISTS

THE LIONS ROAR

"The pride of Albany High School in print"



HIGH SCHOOL VOLLEYBALL:
Lady Lions enter playoffs as second seed.
See Stats Page 7

Friday, November 10, 2023

Albany High School

Albany, Texas

Vol. 21, No. 2

New nurse hired

From rodeo queen to Canadian medical field to school nurse, Nitschke brings variety of experience to job

BY SIDNEY RUSSELL
Assistant Editor

After renewing her nurse's license after it had expired while living in Canada, Heather Nitschke returned to the United States to fill the role of the school nurse position for the 2023-2024 school year.

Nitschke was raised in Canada where she grew up on a third generation ranch in Rocky Mountain House, Alberta. During this time, Nitschke developed rodeo skills that would lead her to Texas.

"I was from a rodeo family and I ended up getting a rodeo scholarship in Texas," Nitschke said. "That's how I got here and where I got my nursing degree. I went to Odessa College first, then I got into Texas Tech where I got my nursing degree."

After completing nursing school, Nitschke returned to Canada until her husband was offered a job near Albany six years later.

"When we first got here, we found out that we were pregnant with twins, so I wasn't working for a while, and now the twins are in kindergarten," Nitschke said. "I am not as busy taking care of them, so I took the school nurse job when there was an opening."

Before taking the job, Nitschke had to complete online course work and



ASID nurse Heather Nitschke checks 2nd grader Dixie Gardenhire's hearing levels. Nitschke spends most of her time at the elementary campus, but tries to come to the secondary schools at least once a day. PHOTO BY JULIA VEGA.

observance hours in order to make up for the expiration of her United States license while living in Canada.

"I just did my hours with the previous nurse and a couple of other nurses, so it ended up being perfect," Nitschke said. "I was able to receive orientation and really get the lay of the land at the

elementary school."

Even though Nitschke is working as a nurse now, it was not always her dream job.

"It kind of sounds funny, but I thought I was going to be a professional barrel racer forever, was like, well, maybe I should get a side-gig that is flexible," Nitschke said. "I can handle blood, so I chose

SEE "NEW NURSE" Pg 8



Senior Adam Hill sits in the library to make a sign for Red Ribbon Week. Hill serves as the Student Council vice president. PHOTO BY JULIA VEGA

Student council to be more involved

StuCo releases new projects, activities for the school year

BY BROOKLYN ABBATE
CO-EDITOR

Student council has hit the ground running with projects starting in the fall and continuing throughout the school year.

Advisers and officers have scheduled multiple activities for the year. "We will start the year off with Trick-or-Treat for Change the last week of October," co-adviser Jenny Scott said.

"We also have committees, each headed by officers who will be in charge of things including Drugs, Alcohol, Safety, Health (DASH) program, Pride and Patriotism Program (P&P), and Outstanding Community Service Program (CS). We will also be honoring students and staff with a student and staff of the month."

The council is striving

to increase involvement throughout the school. First-year president and former student council member, Robyn Trail, has more activities planned.

"I have been a part of the student council for six years, but this is my first year as president," Trail said. "The council meets every Tuesday and is in the process of planning more activities this year."

On the other hand, senior Adam Hill is a first time student council member with an important role.

"I feel great about holding the position of vice president," Hill said. "I am going to have Robyn's back on the decisions she makes and support her. I am excited to see students get involved in the community and lead the school."

SEE "STUCO" Pg 8



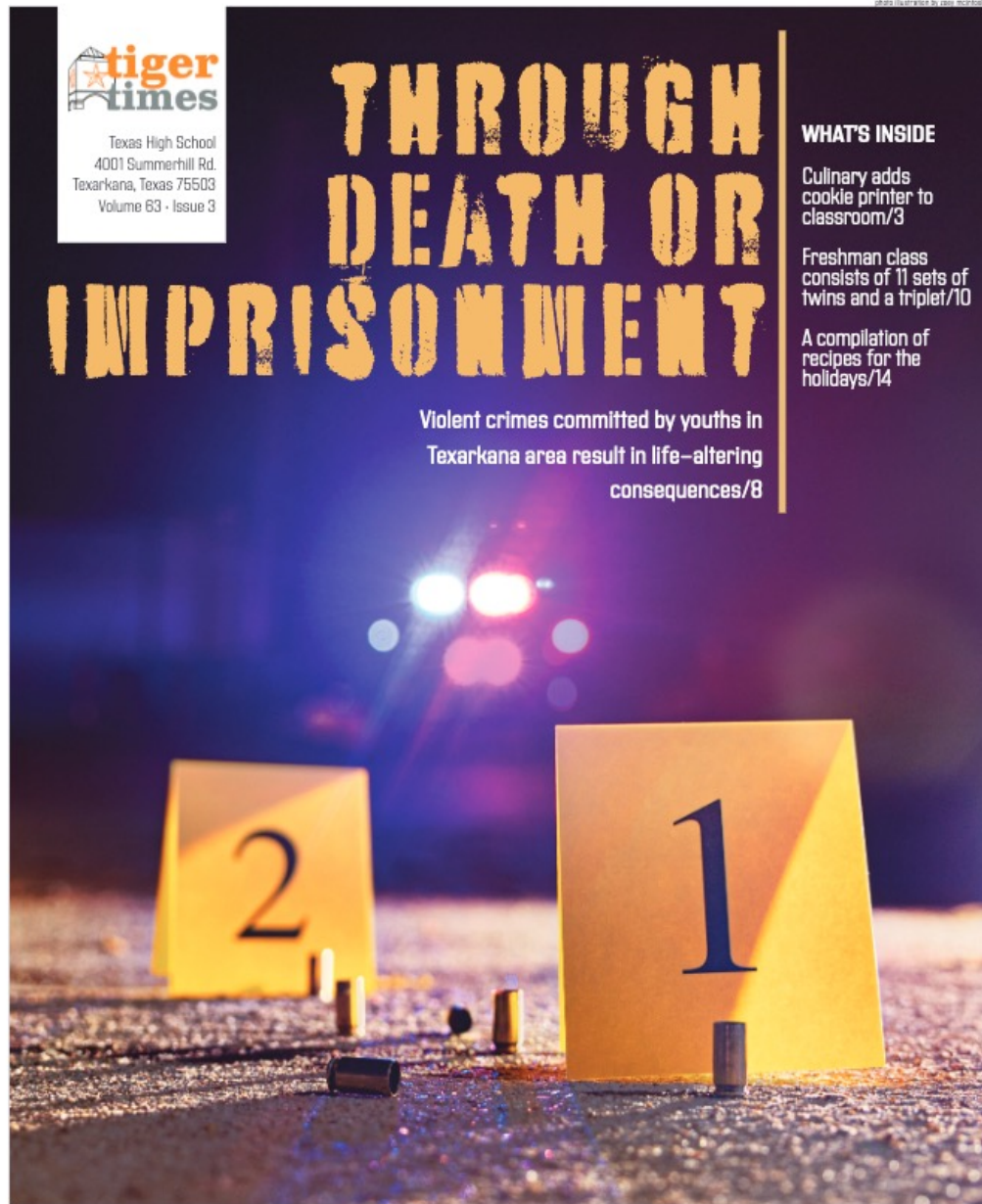
Robyn Trail

Albany High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Bre Reynolds	Union Grove ISD
4A	Riley Richardson & Mika Emphasis	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	Zoey McIntosh, Sophie Keller, Nashita Kalam	Texas High School
6A	Lydia Tong	Bellaire High School

PAGE ONE NEWS
MAGAZINE DESIGN

FINALISTS



Page one news magazine design

Zoey
McIntosh,
Sophie Keller,
Nashita Kalam

Texas High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Julia Vega	Albany High School
4A	Dakota Decker	Lampasas High School
5A	Jacob Valcarce	Kingwood Park HS
6A	Kairi Natal	W. Charles Akins High School



FINALISTS

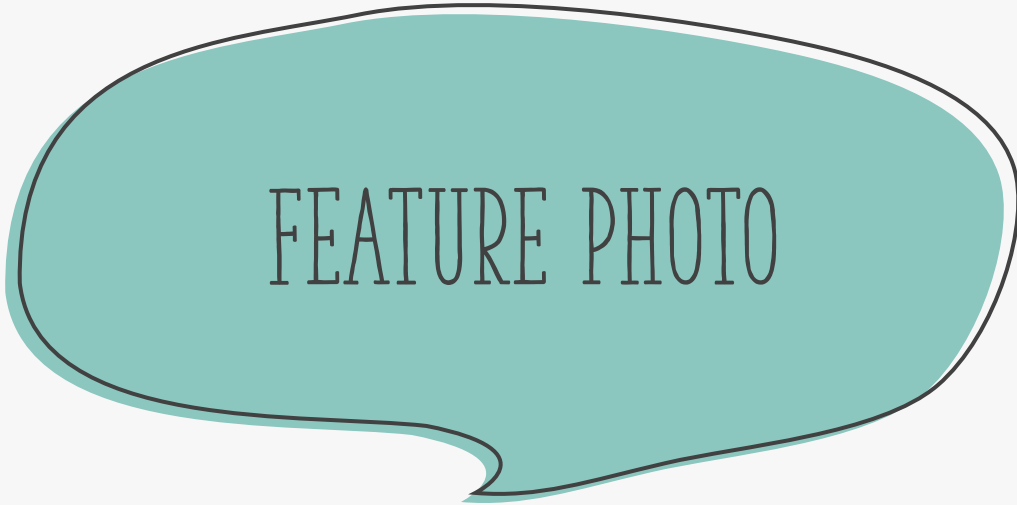


**General
news photo**

**Jacob
Valcarce**

Kingwood Park High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Chloe Raabe	East Bernard High School
4A	Chloe Sanders	Pleasant Grove High School
5A	James Pham	Kingwood Park HS
6A	Kaya Miller	Prosper High School



FINALISTS



Feature photo

Kaya Miller

Prosper High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Cambree Clegg	Albany High School
4A	Mikey Cavazos	Seminole High School
5A	Syndi Hatchel	Port Neches-Groves
6A	Isabella Diaz	Midway High School



FINALISTS



**Entertainment
photo**

**Cambree
Clegg**

Albany High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Julia Vega	Albany High School
4A	Winston Lin	St. Mark's School of Texas
5A	Annabella Molina	Port Neches-Groves
6A	Nick Wood	James Bowie High School



FINALISTS

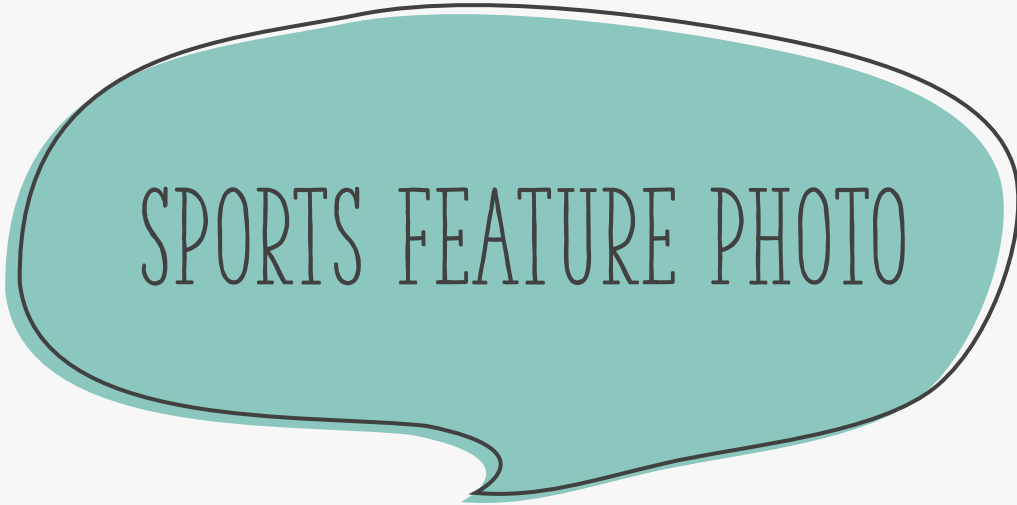


**Sports
action photo**

**Annabella
Molina**

Port Neches-Groves
High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Abidail Ruiz	East Bernard High School
4A	Winston Lin	St. Mark's School of Texas
5A	Jordan Ochoa	Port Neches-Groves
6A	Austin Ikard	James Bowie High School



FINALISTS



**Sports feature
photo**

**Jordan
Ochoa**

Port Neches-Groves
High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Chloe Raabe	East Bernard High School
4A	Winston Lin	St. Mark's School of Texas
5A	Gergo Major	McCallum High School
6A	Heather Curtiss	Midway High School



FINALISTS



Portrait

Winston Lin

St. Mark's School of Texas

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Julia Vega	Albany High School
4A	Winston Lin	St. Mark's School of Texas
5A	Annabella Molina	Port Neches-Groves
6A	Nick Wood	James Bowie High School



FINALISTS



Photo portfolio

Winston Lin

St. Mark's School of Texas

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
2A	Staff	Union Grove ISD
4A	Madeline Terry, Mackenzi Cox	brownsboro high school
5A	Noah Braun, Sophie Leung-Lieu, Alice Scott and Lanie Sepehri	McCallum High School
6A	Norseman Staff	Bryan High School



FINALISTS



Broadcast

Tops in Texas

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Avery Motl and Cooper Lindsey	Willow Springs Middle School
5A	Tyler Medeiros and Emma McQuitty	Walnut Grove High School
6A	Nolan Barnard, Maddie Dunn, Owen Bartosh and Sarah Barker	Waxahachie High School

GENERAL NEWS STORY

FINALISTS



General news story

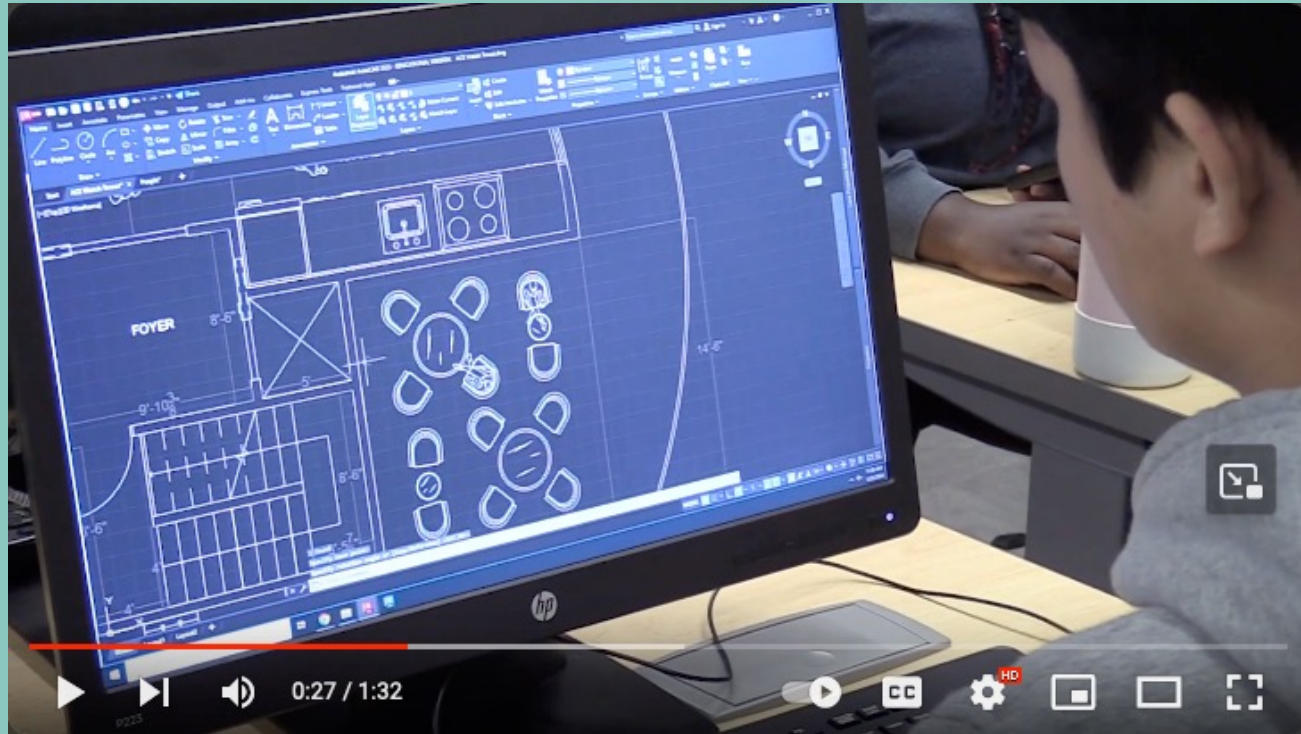
Avery Motl
and
Cooper
Lindsey

Willow Springs
Middle School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Connor Covert & Finn Smith	Fairfield High School
5A	Karina Grokhovskaya	Liberty High School
6A	Dylan Spiegelman, Elissa Takkouch and Lujayn Ahmed	Carroll Senior High School

GENERAL NEWS WRITING

FINALISTS



General news writing

Karina
Grokhovskaya

Liberty High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Nicollette Arabie	Buffalo High School
5A	Joaquin Perez	Liberty High School
6A	Sadie Klement, Shreya Jadhav, Rachel Chang, Parker Jones, Chloe Kryzak, Issac Mercado	Coppell High School

GENERAL FEATURE WRITING

FINALISTS



General Feature Writing

Joaquin Perez

Liberty
High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Makayla Liebl, Kamran Fatehdin	Willow Springs Middle School
5A	Aidan Rouse	Leander ISD
6A	Jordan York	Claudia Taylor Johnson HS

GENERAL SPORTS WRITING

FINALISTS



**General
sports
writing**

**Jordan
York**

Claudia Taylor
Johnson High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Cora Coughlin, Makayla Liebl, George Paulraj, Drew Crum	Willow Springs Middle School
5A	Shaarika Kaul and Emma McQuitty	Walnut Grove High School
6A	Maddie Dunn, Sarah Barker, Owen Bartosh, Nolan Barnard	Waxahachie High School

FEATURE STORY

FINALISTS



Feature story

Shaarika
Kaul and
Emma
McQuitty

Walnut Grove
High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
5A	Avaleigh Miller, Ryan Jones, Elysabeth Edwards, Bryce Rapp	Argyle High School
6A	Sadie Klement, Shreya Jadhav, Rachel Chang, Parker Jones, Chloe Kryzak, Issac Mercado	Coppell High School

DOCUMENTARY

FINALISTS

Documentary

Avaleigh Miller,
Ryan Jones,
Elysabeth
Edwards, Bryce
Rapp

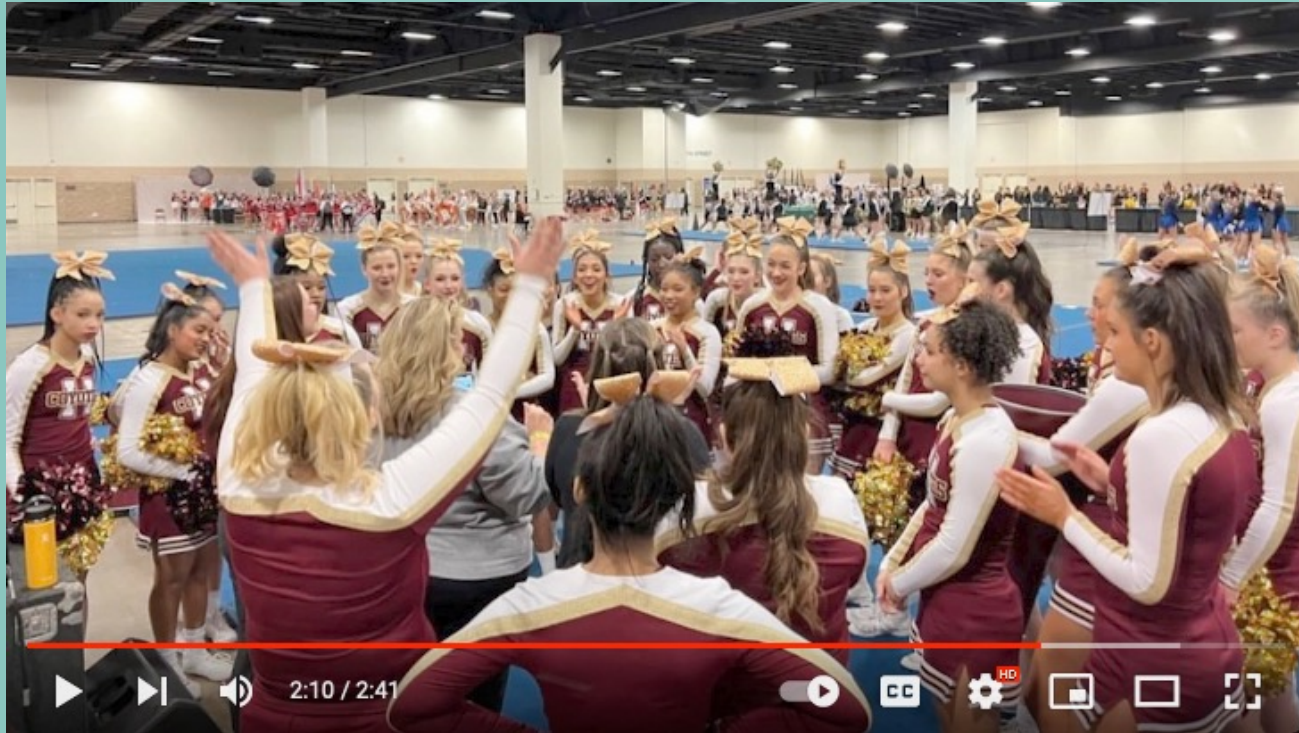
Argyle High School



CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Alyncia Jackson	Buffalo High School
5A	Emma DeRemer	Heritage High School
6A	Bunker Harris, Ruma Yi, Archis Ukidwe	Coppell High School

GENERAL SPORTS STORY

FINALISTS



**General
sports story**

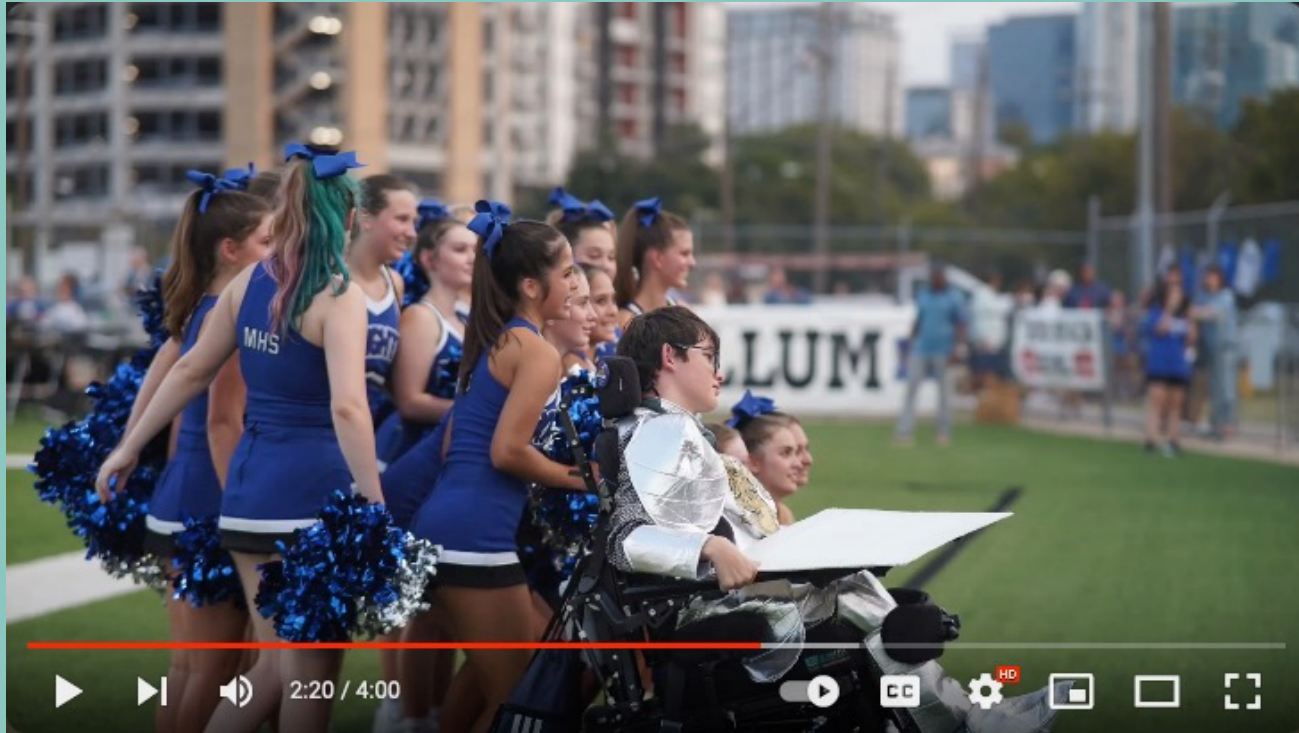
**Emma
DeRemer**

Heritage High
School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Beau Thomas, Roman LaTorre, Bradyn Galloway	Willow Springs Middle School
3A	Alyncia Jackson, Yuliet Gonzalez	Buffalo High School
5A	Alice Scott	McCallum High School
6A	Owen Bartosh, Sarah Barker, Nolan Barnard, Maddie Dunn	Waxahachie High School

SPORTS FEATURE STORY

FINALISTS



**Sports
feature
story**

**Alice
Scott**

McCallum
High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Mady B Mitchael and Ava Gallegos	Fairfield Junior High
5A	Staff	Cedar Park High School
6A	Landry Long & Parker Reynolds	Prosper High School

Anchor team presentation

FINALISTS

Anchor team presentation

Landry
Long and
Parker
Reynolds

Prosper High School



CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
4A	Segiv Eldridge	Salado
5A	Kennedy Davis & Lilly Segura	Port Neches-Groves
6A	Staff	McKinney High School

GRAPHICS

FINALISTS



Graphics

Staff

McKinney
High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Mason Edwards	Fairfield High School
5A	Laila Mitchell	Heritage High School
6A	Jimmy McGowan	McKinney High School

PROMOTION/
COMMERCIAL/PSA

FINALISTS



Promotion/
commercial/
psa

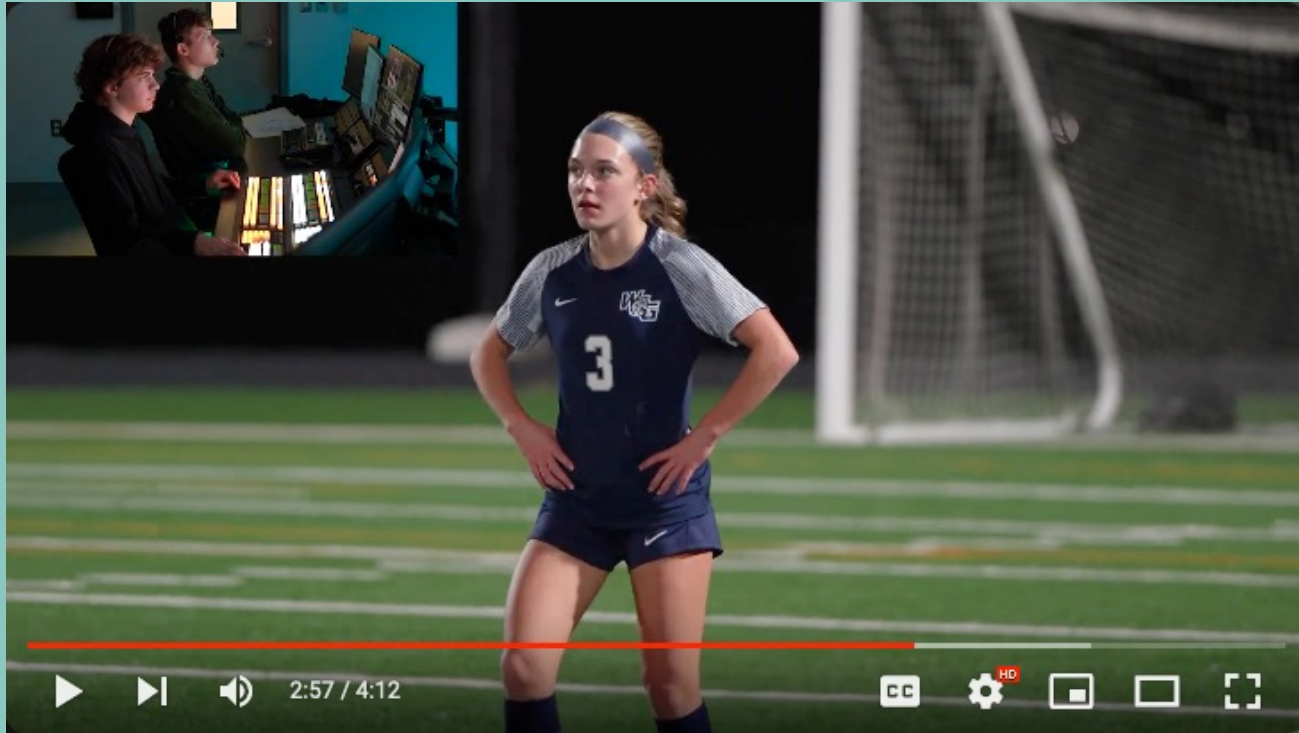
Mason
Edwards

Fairfield High
School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Staff	Willow Springs Middle School
5A	Blake Schallmo	Walnut Grove High School
6A	Coleman Meier	Prosper High School

TECHNICAL DIRECTING

FINALISTS



Technical directing

Blake Schallmo

Walnut Grove
High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Staff	Hallettsville High School
5A	Aidan Rouse, David Moon, Natalie Erzal	Rouse High School
6A	Landry Long & Parker Reynolds	Prosper High School

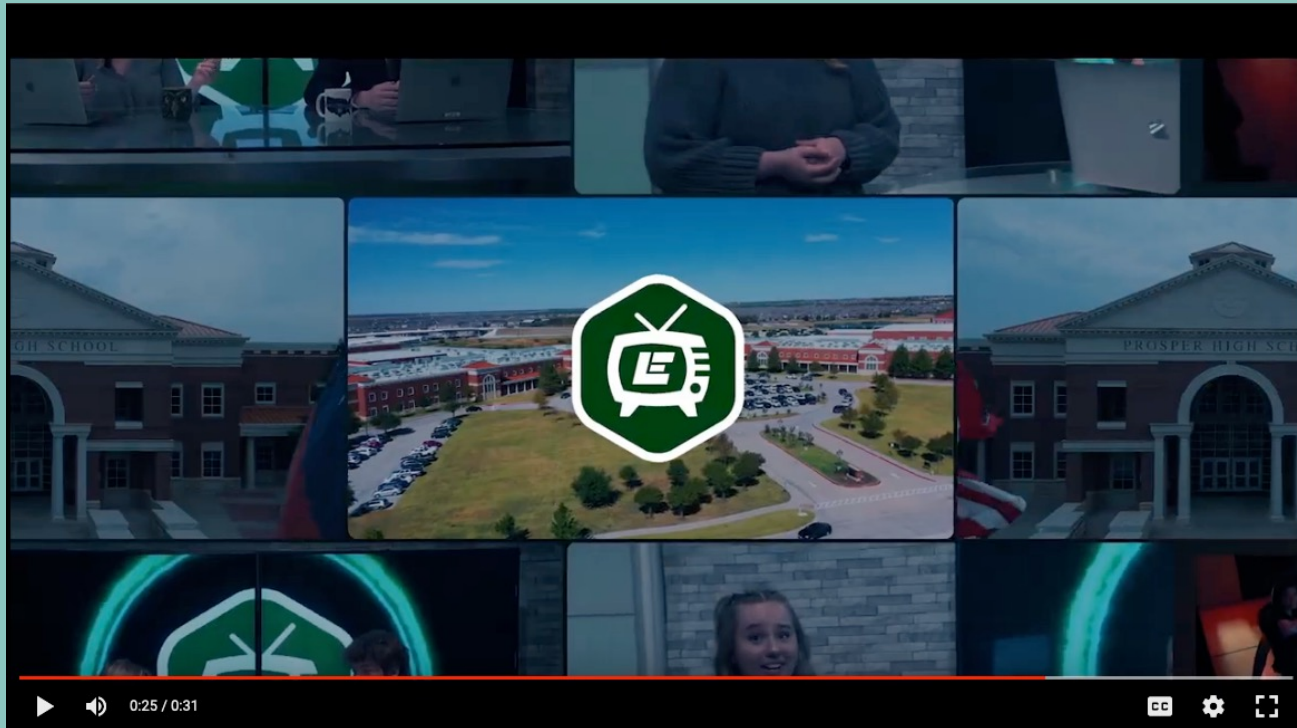
INTRO SEQUENCE

FINALISTS

Intro sequence

Landry Long and Parker Reynolds

Prosper High School



CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
4A	Brianna Cato, Katherine Edbe, Braylon Sandifer	Palestine High School
5A	Nishanth Pedarla, Nathaniel Jefferson, Rohit Padmakumar	Rouse High School
6A	Coleman Meier	Prosper High School

DAILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

FINALISTS



Daily announcements

Brianna Cato,
Katherine
Edbe, Braylon
Sandifer

Palestine High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Venya Raju	Willow Springs Middle School
5A	Shaarika Kaul	Walnut Grove High School
6A	Landry Long	Prosper High School

INDIVIDUAL ON-AIR TALENT

FINALISTS



**Individual
On-air
Talent**

**Landry
Long**

**Prosper High
School**

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Natalia Vizcaino	Willow Springs Middle School
5A	Joaquin Perez	Liberty High School
6A	Coleman Meier, William Norris, Bradston Swick, Colton Boston	Prosper High School

SPECIAL COVERAGE

FINALISTS



Special coverage

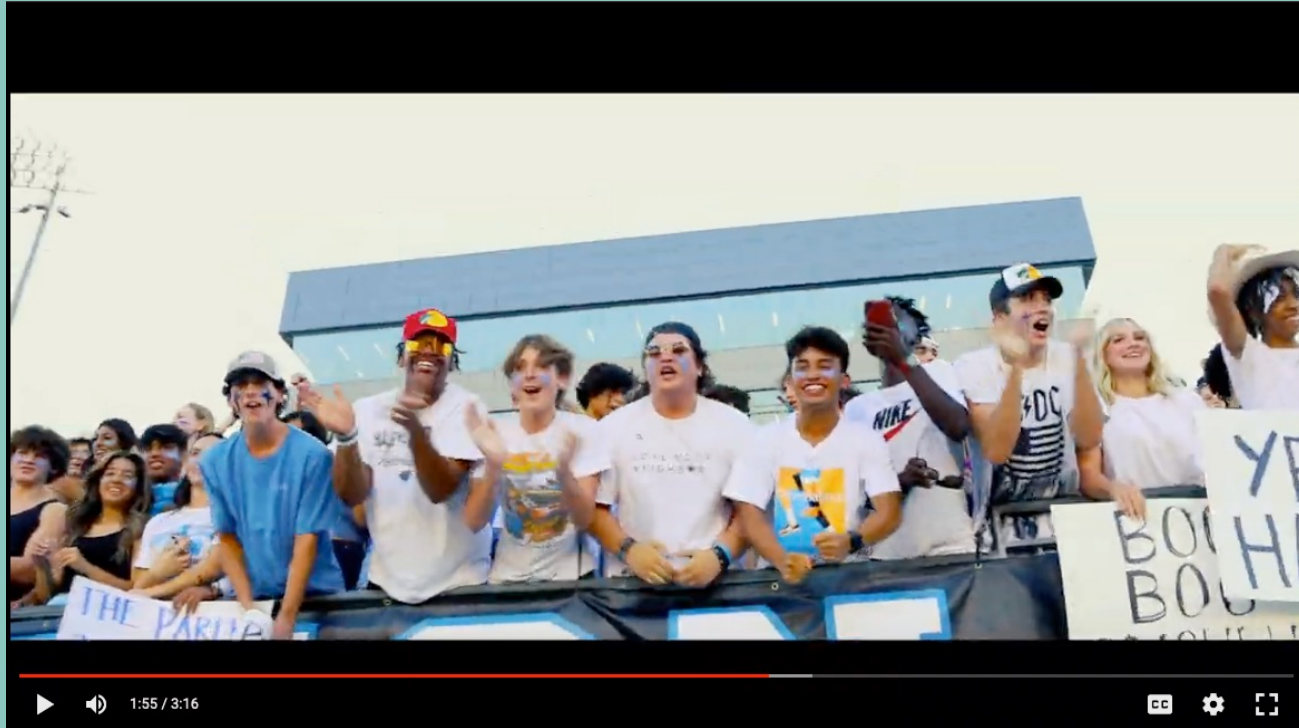
Coleman Meier,
William Norris,
Bradston Swick,
and Colton
Boston

Prosper High School

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
MS/JH	Lauren Giordano	Willow Springs Middle School
5A	Alexander (Liam) Pagano	Princeton High School
6A	Alexander Jones	Rock Hill High School

HYPE VIDEO

FINALISTS



Hype Video

Alexander Jones

Rock Hill
High School



Online News

Tops in Texas

FINALISTS



NEWS WRITING

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Ryan Brown	Buffalo High School
4A	Hilton Sampson, Arjun Poi	St. Mark's School of Texas
5A	Francie Wilhelm	McCallum High School
6A	Tanvi Dubey	Bellaire High School

FRANCIE WILHELM

MCCALLUM HIGH SCHOOL

**News
writing**

**Mac community takes a
stand against hate group
agitators**

*Demonstration met with anger, showing of love to
LGBTQ+ community*

By **Francie Wilhelm**, McCallum High School • November 7, 2023

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Yuliet Gonzalez	Buffalo High School
4A	Grayson Redmond, Zack Goforth and Eric Yi	St. Mark's School of Texas
5A	Ingrid Smith	McCallum High School
6A	Anisha Mandem	Prosper High School



NEWS FEATURE

ANISHA MANDEM

PROSPER HIGH SCHOOL

**NEWS
FEATURE**

**Students share personal
experiences from Allen mall
shooting**

Officers, family members, others offer resources

By **Anisha Mandem**, Prosper High School • May 25, 2023

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Jocelyn Salazar	Fairfield High School
4A	Jennifer Sanchez	Stephenville HS
5A	Noah Braun	McCallum High School
6A	Hailey Gorzell	Samuel Clemens High School



EDITORIAL WRITING

NOAH BRAUN

MCCALLUM HIGH SCHOOL

**EDITORIAL
WRITING**

Live and let go

Resenting our enemies only makes them stronger

[Shield editorial board](#)

August 29, 2023

FINALISTS

SPORTS NEWS STORY

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Mayrin Espinoza	Fairfield High School
4A	Amaris Casarez	Seminole High School
5A	Haley Ward, Sadie Johnson	Liberty High School
6A	Sam Vane	James Bowie High School

SAM VANE

JAMES BOWIE HIGH SCHOOL

**SPORTS
NEWS
STORY**

Rise in underage sports betting

*Increased accessibility has allowed Bowie
students to gamble on sports*

By **Sam Vane**, James Bowie High School • March 15, 2023

FINALISTS

SPORTS FEATURE
STORY

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Yuliet Gonzalez and Alyncia Jackson	Buffalo High School
4A	Keren Lee and Madison Barnes	Lindale HS
5A	Maya Ortiz	Kingwood Park HS
6A	Katherine Dale	Vandegrift High School

MAYA ORTIZ

KINGWOOD PARK HIGH SCHOOL

**SPORTS
FEATURE
STORY**

Staying relentless

Cancer doesn't stop Eric Covert from coaching or teaching.

By **Maya Ortiz**, Kingwood Park High School • October 25, 2023

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Nicollette Arabie, Ryan Brown	Buffalo High School
4A	Jade Arzola	Lampasas High School
5A	Lanie Sepehri	McCallum High School
6A	Krista Fleming	Hebron High School



FEATURE WRITING

KRISTA FLEMING

HEBRON HIGH SCHOOL

**FEATURE
WRITING**

The next destination

Junior shares mental health journey

By **Krista Fleming**, Hebron High School • October 12, 2023

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Ryan Brown	Buffalo High School
4A	Aiden Alexander	Lindale High School
5A	Eliza Jensen	McCallum High School
6A	Marli Field	Coppell High School



ENTERTAINMENT
REVIEW

MARLI FIELD

COPPELL HIGH SCHOOL

**ENTERTAINMENT
REVIEW**

For the record: A look into
some of DFW's most
beloved music stores

Marli Field, Staff Writer

OCTOBER 5, 2023

FINALISTS

ENTERTAINMENT
FEATURE

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Callie Morgan and Bailey Holland	Fairfield High School
4A	Salome Villarreal	Seminole High School
5A	Ingrid Smith	McCallum High School
6A	Nrithya Mahesh	Coppell High School

NRITHYA MAHESH

COPPELL HIGH SCHOOL

**ENTERTAINMENT
FEATURE**

**Determination, dedication,
devotion**

Depew riding through rhythm of marimba

By **Nrithya Mahesh**, Coppell High School • December 20, 2023

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Yuliet Gonzalez	Buffalo High School
5A	Arav Neroth, Madison Sheilds, Anthony Luparello, Kyra Plas	Cedar Park High School
6A	Caleb Wright	Hebron High School



PHOTO SLIDESHOW

YULIET GONZALEZ

BUFFALO HIGH SCHOOL

PHOTO
SLIDESHOW



FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
4A	Alexis Martinez	Canyon High School
5A	Ingrid Smith	McCallum High School
6A	Taylor Sumner	Lewisville High School



PERSONAL COLUMN

TAYLOR SUMNER

LEWISVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

**PERSONAL
COLUMN**

Column: My old friend Jennifer

‘Recovery isn’t a straightforward path, it’s bumpy with potholes and boulders.’

Taylor Sumner, Staff Writer | May 5, 2023

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Jocelyn Salazar	Fairfield High School
4A	Lucy Mantilla	Lampasas High School
5A	Alice Scott	McCallum High School
6A	Lourdes Hernandez Peraza	Vandegrift High School

PERSONAL OPINION
COLUMN

ALICE SCOTT

MCCALLUM HIGH SCHOOL

PERSONAL
OPINION
COLUMN

Opinion

AI isn't near, it's here

Instead of fearing what is ahead, educators should embrace the benefits of artificial intelligence



Alice Scott, co-editor-in-chief

January 19, 2024

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
4A	Slade Harvey	Seminole High School
5A	Nate Williams	McCallum High School
6A	Jonah Pedroza	Legacy High School



SPORTS COLUMN

JONAH PEDROZA

LEGACY HIGH SCHOOL

**SPORTS
COLUMN**

Bronco Nation, Now What?

[Jonah Pedroza](#), Sports Editor • 495 Views

November 30, 2023

FINALISTS

IN DEPTH
NEWS/FEATURE
PACKAGE

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
4A	Zoe Tanner and Aiden Alexander	Lindale High School
5A	Staff	McCallum High School
6A	Anisha Mandem and Gracie Archibeque	Prosper High School

Anisha Mandem and Gracie Archibeque

PROSPER HIGH SCHOOL

**IN-DEPTH
NEWS/FEATURE
PACKAGE**

**In wake of Allen shooting,
experts give advice on
personal protection**

By [Gracie Archibeque](#), Prosper High School • May 31, 2023

FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Bethany George and Jocelyn Salazar	Fairfield High School
5A	Mira Patel	McCallum High School
6A	Minori Kunte	Coppell High School



COMPUTER ART

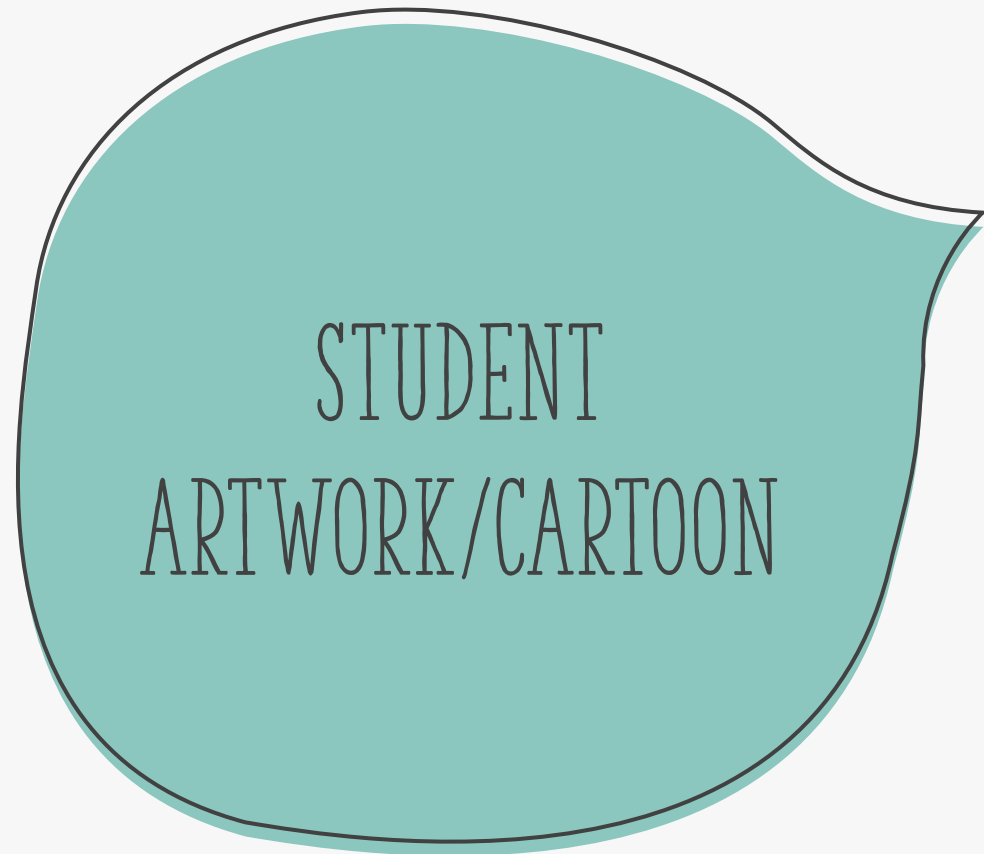
MINORI KUNTE

COPPELL HIGH SCHOOL

COMPUTER
ART



FINALISTS



CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Bailey Holland	Fairfield High School
4A	Garrant Hill	Seminole High School
5A	Shelby Townsend	Kingwood Park HS
6A	Minori Kunte	Coppell High School

MINORI KUNTE

COPPELL HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENT
ARTWORK/
CARTOON



FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Yuliet Gonzalez	Buffalo High School
4A	Zoe Silva	Stephenville HS
5A	Maya Tackett	McCallum High School
6A	Charlotte Koellner, Sophia Sepulveda and Will Olenick	James Bowie High School

INFOGRAPHIC/
SIDEBAR

Charlotte Koellner, Sophia Sepulveda and Will Olenick

JAMES BOWIE HIGH SCHOOL

INFOGRAPHIC/
SIDEBAR



FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
4A	Madison Barnes	Lindale High School
5A	Lyric Curtis, Kailyn Williams, Truth Dukes, Michelle Lopez, Annie Smith, Anna Bell Lee, Chassidy Davis, Anna Haley	Texas High School
6A	Alex Edwards, Mars Canepa, Nick Wood, and Noah Bihan	James Bowie High School

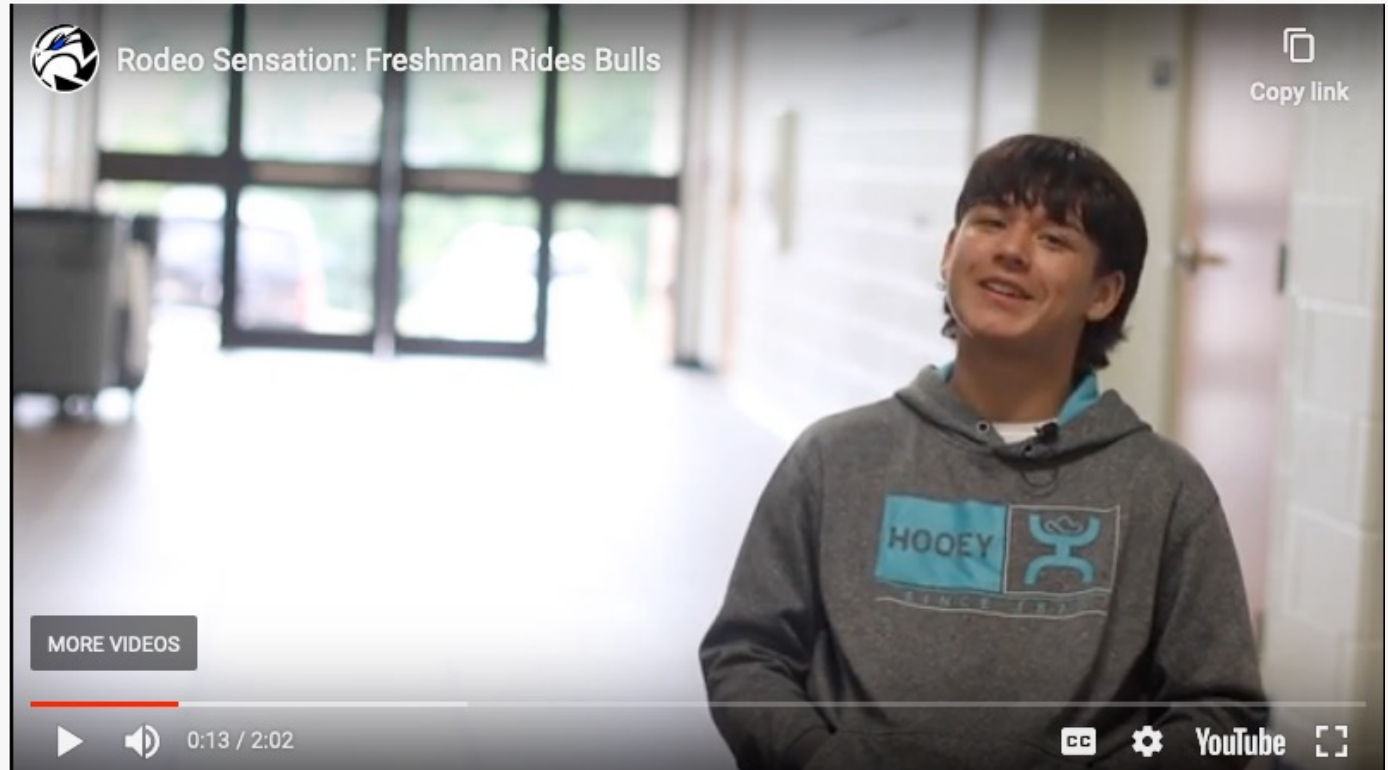


MULTIMEDIA
PACKAGE

MADISON BARNES

LINDALE HIGH SCHOOL

**MULTIMEDIA
PACKAGE**



FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Nicollette Arabie, Ryan Brown, Mason Ayles	Buffalo High School
4A	Karen Cabanas and Cielo Puerta	Stephenville HS
5A	Kailyn Williams	Texas High School
6A	Sameeha Syed, Sri Achanta	Coppell High School



VIDEO STORY

Nicollette Arabie, Ryan Brown AND Mason Ayles

BUFFALO HIGH SCHOOL

VIDEO
STORY



FINALISTS

GENERAL NEWS
PHOTO

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Mason Ayles	Buffalo High School
4A	Sumiko Lemari	Lampasas High School
5A	Anna Bell Lee	Texas High School
6A	Caleb Wright	Hebron High School

ANNA BELL LEE

TEXAS HIGH SCHOOL

GENERAL
NEWS
PHOTO



FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Alyncia Jackson	Buffalo High School
4A	Joseph Neuenschwander	Lampasas High School
5A	Morgen Dozier	Kingwood Park HS
6A	Rhea Choudhary	Coppell High School



FEATURE PHOTO

Rhea Choudhary

COPPELL HIGH SCHOOL

**Feature
photo**



FINALISTS

**Entertainment
photo**

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
4A	Esveydi Reyes	Seminole High School
5A	Kristina Colburn	Texas High School
6A	Krista Fleming	Hebron High School

KRISTINA COLBURN

TEXAS HIGH SCHOOL

ENTERTAINMENT
PHOTO



FINALISTS

SPORTS ACTION
PHOTO

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Kadance Britt	Buffalo High School
4A	Mikey Cavazos	Seminole High School
5A	Jozlyn Oglesbee	Port Neches-Groves
6A	Cristina Orozco	Vandegrift High School

JOZLYN OGLESBEE

PORT NECHES-GROVES HIGH SCHOOL

**SPORTS
ACTION
PHOTO**



FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Kandace Britt	Buffalo High School
4A	Winston Lin	St. Mark's School of Texas
5A	Anna Bell Lee	Texas High School
6A	Riley McConnell	Prosper High School

SPORTS FEATURE
PHOTO

ANNA BELL LEE

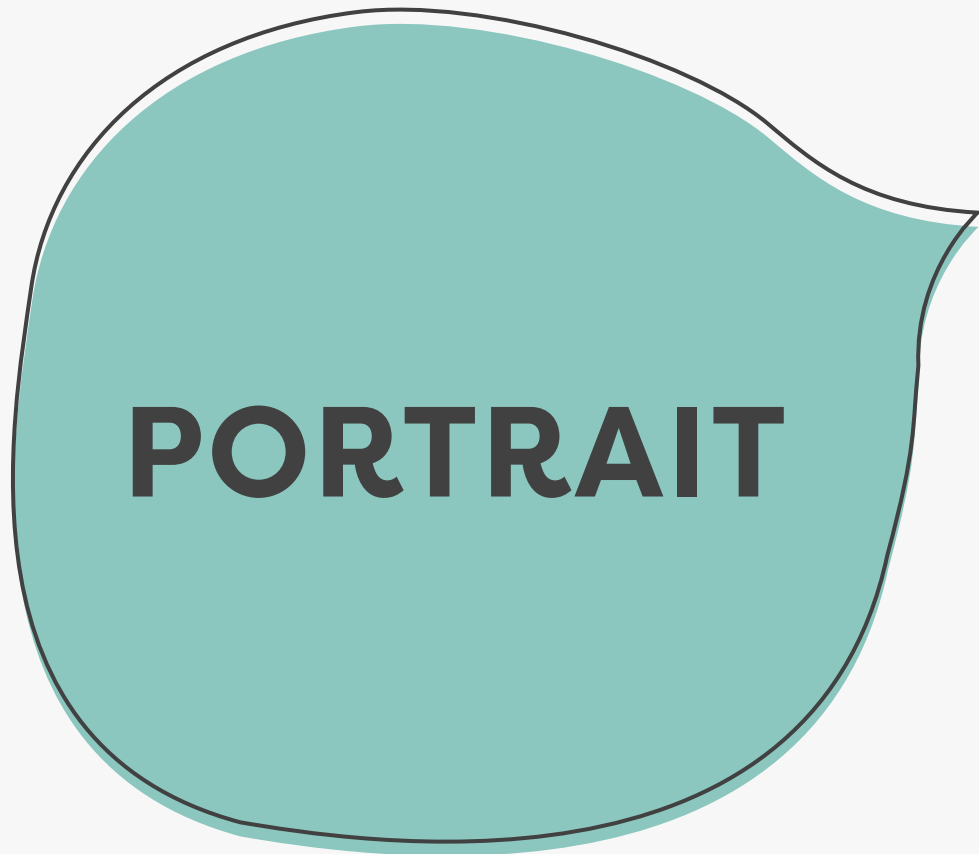
TEXAS HIGH SCHOOL

**SPORTS
FEATURE
PHOTO**



FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Bethany George	Fairfield High School
5A	Truth Dukes	Texas High School
6A	Olivia Evans	Hebron High School



PORTRAIT

TRUTH DUKES

TEXAS HIGH SCHOOL

PORTRAIT



FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
4A	Esveydi Reyes	Seminole High School
5A	Truth Dukes	Texas High School
6A	Jade Slaughter	Lewisville High School



PHOTO PORTFOLIO

TRUTH DUKES

TEXAS HIGH SCHOOL

PHOTO PORTFOLIO



FINALISTS

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Ryan Brown	Buffalo High School
4A	Karen Cabanas and Cielo Puerta	Stephenville HS
5A	Staff	Cedar Park High School
6A	Erica Deutsch	Prosper High School



HEADLINES

RYAN BROWN

BUFFALO HIGH SCHOOL



HEADLINES

Cooking up a storm

Culinary Arts students hit the kitchen

No bones about it

Art students create sugar skulls

FINALISTS



CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
4A	Ava Haddock & Natalie Finke	Canyon High School
5A	Ingrid Smith	McCallum High School
6A	Jake Radcliffe, Christian Alfano, Paul Popovich, and Tyler Medeiros	Prosper High School

Jake Radcliffe, Christian Alfano, Paul Popovich, and Tyler Medeiros

PROSPER HIGH SCHOOL

PODCAST

THE GAME ROOM



Hosted By:
Jake Radcliffe, Will Ligon,
and Christian Alfano

Podcast Episode

The Game Room Season 2 - Episode 2 - Mods

Eagle Nation Online

FINALISTS

**Social
media
story**

CONFERENCE	STUDENTS	SCHOOL
3A	Callie Morgan	Fairfield High School
4A	Chloe Birnbaum	Canyon High School
5A	Naomi Di-Capua, Lillian Gray and Francie Wilhelm	McCallum High School

Naomi Di-Capua, Lillian Gray and Francie Wilhelm

MCCALLUM HIGH SCHOOL

**SOCIAL
MEDIA
STORY**

macjournalism
McCallum High School [View profile](#)

BREAKING NEWS

“MY HEART HURTS FOR OUR STUDENTS TONIGHT WHO HAD TO ENDURE THE VILE THINGS BEING SAID THIS AFTERNOON. I LOVE MCCALLUM IN PART BECAUSE OF ITS CULTURE OF KINDNESS AND ACCEPTANCE. WE WILL NOT ALLOW THE HATEFUL THINGS SAID BY A SMALL GROUP OF PEOPLE TO DERAIL OUR VIEWS AND BELIEFS.”

— PRINCIPAL ANDY BAXA

AGITATORS DISRUPT EIGHTH PERIOD, DISMISSAL

On signs and in speech, adults at front of school spread falsehoods about trans students, abortion



PHOTO OF THE YEAR

ANNA BELL LEE

TEXAS HIGH SCHOOL



Congrats!

HERE!
and now


**SPRING
CONVENTION**
April 19-21, 2024
University of Texas Austin