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Champion: Oliver Sorrensen,
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**#2 Newspaper Column Writing
Champion: Chelsea Mahloch,
Elkhorn North**

Chelsea Mahloch

We live in a generation where technology immensely affects our learning environment. Schools twenty years ago would not have believed the high level of learning that students can achieve with the help of technology. Artificial intelligence is the newest of these technologies, but school systems don't know exactly how to deal with it yet. Artificial intelligence has taken on an extremely influential role in society and, therefore, has made its way into education—but not to the extent that it should be.

High school students are taught to avoid AI in their work and are often reprimanded when they are caught using it. While I see how this becomes an issue when students heavily rely on AI to complete their daily assignments, the education system needs to acknowledge the importance of AI in high schoolers' futures.

AI is an extraordinary tool for creating ideas and aiding in everyday tasks. Software like ChatGPT can aid in making budget plans and itineraries, writing important emails, and crafting unique marketing strategies. My mom is extremely involved in the business and sales world and uses ChatGPT for creating sales pitches and reaching out to potential clients. Although she got a late start to the world of technology, high school students have the opportunity to learn now.

Students should be taught to correctly use AI to enhance their work and prepare them for their careers. Whether a student wants to go into medicine, business, journalism, or education, AI can find a way into their field of choice.

Providing students with a curriculum that includes AI would give them a leg-up when they enter the workforce. Majority of my schoolwork is done online with the help of Google Classroom, Canva, and a variety of databases provided by the school district. Students should be taught how to use AI software the same way they do for other technologies. There are different kinds of AI that include unique features that could be more easily explored with the help of an AI lesson.

I cannot discount the misuse of AI by students, but it shows that they are already recognizing its capability. It is inevitable that high schoolers find a way to cheat and it just so happens that AI can be a helpful tool for finding answers; but rather than creating a stigma around the use of AI, schools should redirect students to correctly using it. The priority of education systems should be the success and future of its students; discouraging the use of artificial intelligence would be a negligence of that priority.

#3 Editorial Cartooning
Champion: Easton Crouse,
Mt. Michael Benedictine



#4 Editorial Writing
Champion: Brayden Hansen, Gretna East

Brayden Hansen

Changes are coming to the curriculum after a survey sent to students shockingly concluded that only about 11% of students have ever written in cursive. Due to this statistic, the district is implementing a new requirement for graduation: the study of cursive handwriting for one quarter per school year during a student's English class. This policy is on the right track but requires adjustments to the curriculum to prepare students for graduation more effectively.

When thinking about preparing students for after high school life and careers, being able to write and print your name in cursive is a life skill that needs to be taught. Whether someone is signing documents or doing anything that requires a more professional writing style, knowing how to write in cursive is necessary to complete these tasks adequately.

"We have students who do not yet know how to sign their names in cursive," Principal Missy Curry said. "We are teaching them a life skill they will use for the rest of their lives."

That being said, in an age where everyday tasks are becoming more and more online-centered, cursive writing is not being used. This is not to say cursive writing is a useless skill, but cursive writing won't be utilized as frequently. The freshly implemented cursive writing curriculum takes up vital learning time when other necessary skills are missing from the graduation requirements.

"I can't make it through the curriculum the district already expects me to teach," an anonymous English teacher said. "Now we are adding something new, but what have we taken away is the question."

To make this curriculum more appropriate for today's students, the district should require only two-quarters worth of cursive writing throughout the four years of high school. Then, they should require lessons on other vital life preparations like financial literacy, computer science, laundry or even cooking. It is unfair for one skill to be a graduation requirement when others are just as vital. With these suggested changes, students get a taste of everything instead of focusing on one topic.

"Today's kids have it easy and I think technology has a lot to do with that," parent Pat Porter said. "They need to learn the ways of the world."

While this new requirement is progress for student's education, there are ways to make it even more effective. With a little adjustment, we would have a curriculum that teaches students the life skills necessary to live successfully.

#5 Entertainment Review Writing
Champion: Brooklyn Pierce, Omaha Westview

Brooklynn Pierce

“Steal the Show” by Lauv, composed by Thomas Newman and Michael Matosic, has the basic format of a modern Disney music song. It’s easy for a listener to follow, especially younger children, and it keeps things mostly light when it comes to the lyrics. It does a great job at doing just that but compared to the past pieces of music composed for Disney movies, I think it could be more.

It wasn’t too long ago when Disney put music into their movies that sparked magic for the listener, think back to the movie *Moana*. The music was still easy for a younger audience to follow while keeping the integrity of it. The creativity of the instrumentals would ring in people’s ears to the point where they couldn’t stop humming the song for weeks.

The song contains your average pop beat that mostly is a quarter note rhythm and using what sounds like a synth for the melody, also potentially extremely reverbed vocals to add to the melody. It has a light and happy sound that you can listen to casually without thinking much. It has a very similar sound to the song “Youth” by Troye Sivan. If summertime driving next to a beach with the sunroof open was a song it would be this.

“Steal the Show” could be a beautifully crafted song with a rework of the instrumentals. Switching the score to use real instruments, or at least better electronically made ones, could take the song to a whole new level. It would give it depth and bring back the Disney magic it should have. The best thing musically I heard in that song was the tom drums at the very start that really lean into the movie this song was made for, *Elemental*. I thought those brought that jungle, wilderness type vibe that I would expect from a movie about elements. I also loved the accelerating, music scale-like synth that was added once into the song which I was not expecting to hear. I would have adored the song if it had more of that.

Alternatively, if the love message of the song was the priority, I would suggest bringing a better beat to the song. Most happy love songs don’t need intense instrumentals but having a nice beat to follow rather than a Garage Band sounding kick drum would make this song more fun to listen to and a little more musically challenging. There is another side

of the coin that says not every song needs to be some well-thought out and difficult piece and I'm not wanting that either, but for Disney this should be special for the audience's ears. There were many things that could have been done to this song to make it more immersive and less like any song you could hear on the radio.

As far as Lauv's vocals, I see the potential in them if, again, the music was a little more intricate. His voice reminded me of Kahlid, popular singer-songwriter from 2019, which I found fitting for the song itself. It is a very calm and soothing approach to singing but I would have absolutely loved to hear some full-on belts come from Lauv. I could hear in the chorus that he was holding his voice back, most likely to maintain the calmness of the music. I think that this would add to the music rather than take away from it, especially for it being an end credit song which seals up the movie. A vocal run from Lauv would have been the icing on the cake for me.

Overall, I would say the song is fairly basic, which is okay in some instances but for a Disney movie I expect more to the score when its being composed. I would give the song a 3 out of 5 because, while I do wish that it was more enchanting and fun to listen to, it is still a good, simple pop song that is perfectly fit for a younger audience to enjoy.

#6 Headline Writing

Champion: Onnika Moore, Gretna East

1. Article #2
 - a. Troubles among homeowners: how rising house costs affect Americans
 - i. Reasons why citizens must sacrifice luxuries to keep up with modern real estate; how it needs to change
2. Article #4
 - a. Kissing “Kiss” Goodbye with digital future possibilities
 - i. 80s rock quartet delights audience at farewell tour with dazzling musical holograms, partnering with Swedish pop sensation, ABBA
3. Article #6
 - a. Once in a lifetime planetary spectacular
 - i. What to expect for upcoming eclipse viewers

**#7 Newspaper Feature Writing
Champion: Kelly Knutson, Elkhorn**

Kelly Knutson

Double Jeopardy

Edgemont High English teacher and quiz bowl advisor competes on the trivia game show 'Jeopardy!' for the second time.

Edgemont High is certainly not putting any learning in jeopardy this year, as their star English teacher and quiz bowl advisor, Daniel Barker, is competing on the game show 'Jeopardy!' for a second time.

Qualifying twice wasn't easy for Barker, and came after much hard work. Barker had to fight for his spot even in prior appearances, which took place just last spring.

"I am so proud of Daniel being invited back to the show. He has been a steadfast learner of history and facts for as long as I can remember." Roberta Barker, Daniel's mother and fellow English teacher said.

Barker's mother isn't the only one who is proud of him. The English teacher has already left his mark on Edgemont High, as he has served as quiz bowl advisor and facilitated lots of growth within the program. Barker has impacted countless students and strives to make connections with them to encourage growth.

"His personality is infectious and his love for students apparent." Edgemont principal, Mallory Dean said.

Barker aims to have his appearance broadcasted in the Edgemont High school theater, in an effort to inspire students. He will be participating in the prestigious 'Champions Wildcard' tournament, which will segway four lucky winners into the 'Tournament of Champions'. Barker has even made an effort to work around all students' schedules, so they may be included in the viewing and watch as he competes.

"My original plan was to have a viewing party, provided all the students can attend. [However,] the show airs at 7 p.m. when the spring musical takes place, so I was able to ask 'Jeopardy!' to give me early access to the episode..." Barker said.

Barker's appearance on the game show means the world to the Edgemont quiz bowl team, as it is a personal reminder for them to remain ambitious and believe that their dreams aren't trivial, and can come true.

"He does so much for this school and our team." Brittany Beekerman, student and Quiz Bowl Student President said.

Barker's second appearance in the competition simply highlights what an asset he is to the Edgemont High Quiz Bowl program. With Barker competing in one of the most prestigious trivia competitions in the world, his knowledge is clearly showcased for all students to see.

"As quiz bowl sponsor, you can see why our team is very competitive with Mr. Barker at the helm." Dean said.

Barker's double jeopardy has even managed to become the image of success, literally, for the team, as the teacher has become quite the mascot.

"My fellow quiz bowlers and myself will be at the theater for the special viewing party. We will be selling Barker Barks t-shirts and desserts." Beekerman said.

Students, staff, and quiz bowl members alike are all excited to observe Barker's double jeopardy as he attempts to qualify for the 'Tournament of Champions', which will be held this December.

"We are just so proud of our teacher." Beekerman said.

#8 Newspaper News Writing
Champion: Elisabeth Hoegemeyer, Elkhorn North

Ellie Hoegemeyer

The NSAA's Student Advisory Committee (SAC) is a group of upperclassmen students that serve to represent all six NSAA districts across the state of Nebraska. Consisting of 10 seniors and 10 juniors, these students act as a bridge between the students and the administrators, staff, and Board of Directors at the NSAA.

This organization was first approved for the 2016-17 school year by the NSAA Board of Directors, and has held strong since then. The students selected for the SAC consist of students who often participate in interscholastic athletics or activities, and are given the opportunity to provide education and leadership for their peers across the state.

"The number one benefit of this program would be resume building, but also it not only benefits them but it benefits us, being able to know what's going on in schools around the state." Assistant Director Colton Wierzbicki said, "The issues going on in one district are totally different than what's going on in another, and those students are able to provide unique perspectives for us."

The leadership application for this program is said to be rigorous, and over 50 students apply each year, with only 10 from each grade being selected. Once a junior is selected, they are automatically on it until the end of their senior term.

"The application opens March 1st, and students have to fill out an application, answer 3 or 4 questions, and provide 3 letters of recommendation." Wierzbicki said, "Then we go through all the applications and look at candidates and their activities, gpa, etc."

After being selected for a leadership position within this program, the students have many different opportunities to help provide a voice to the student community. They are able to implement a positive change within their districts, serve as student leaders during the Nebraska Coaches Association's annual Student Leadership summit, and get involved with different types of volunteer work.

"This year, we held a coin drive at the State Dual championship to donate to the Kearney food bank." Wierzbicki said, "Then we had a blood drive at State basketball, and a Halloween trick or treat with the Nebraska Sports Hall of Fame."

Colton Wierzbicki, who is the Assistant Director of the NSAA, helps oversee many different activities, such as girls/boys bowling, tennis, and baseball along with Taryn Retzlaff. With this position, Wierzbicki is able to interact with/work with the students, and connect with them.

"My goal is to make an impact on as many lives as I come in contact with." Wierzbicki said, "This job has given me the opportunity to do that."

#9 Newspaper Sports Feature Writing
Champion: Kirsten Sucha, Scotus Central Catholic

Spring sports seasons see success

Some people climb hills, trees, and even mountains, but the athletics department at Northeast Nebraska Community College has been working toward climbing something greater. With the men's soccer team, women's soccer team, and NECC baseball team all climbing ranks towards the top, the players, coaches, and staff all have eyes to achieve success for next season.

This past year, the Northeast Men's Soccer team was ranked No. 1 in the nation, marking the first time any program has been ranked first nationally. Their secret? Working hard in the classroom, attending practice, and encouraging one another to get better. With the national ranking, the school is now looking to have not only regional recruits, but also national for next year.

Sports Information and Athletic Event Coordinator Bobby Frost has been a factor in the success of the athletic department.

"We have a saying raise the bar. Every year you have to try to be different. Last year we were the best team in the country. The real question is how we stay at the top, we have to rely on the players and rely on the coaching," Frost said.

Staying at the top is exactly what the woman's soccer team has been doing. The team has now made their fourth-straight appearance at the national tournament to end off their season, but they are nowhere near satisfied.

"Every team is different. We lost in the final four, which a lot of people would say is a successful season. We have to set goals. The main thing we try to harp on is getting better every year, you want that arrow pointing up," Frost said.

Not only did they play as a team successfully, their individual skills are just as good as their team play. In fact, they were the only NJCAA school to have six soccer All-Americans this year. A stand out being freshman Eduardo Nys who came from Belgium to play soccer for the Hawkeyes. The goal of the coaches is to get these kids to a four year school, and with opportunities like this their goal looks more promising.

"Here at a junior college, our head coaches pretty much run the show. The little things like booking hotels, going to eat, what jerseys we are going to where. I think good coaches are the key to success," Frost said.

Following the suit of soccer, the NECC baseball team looks to be having a promising postseason. Going into the tournament ranked No. 20, they hope to climb their way to the top. Weather sets up a challenge for all the teams, and being homesick is always an issue. Having players whose families are in Belgium and even France can be hard on them, but with the coaches trying to set up a family-like team with supportive teammates they are trying to avoid this issue.

"This has been the most rewarding job of my life. I love having the opportunity to coach these athletes," Frost said.

#10 Sports News Writing
Champion: Peyton Parker, Gretna East

For the first time in school history, the Jackson Rabbits are State Champions. With an almost perfect record of 12-1, the Rabbits cemented themselves as legends following a 17-16 victory over the Summit High School Hawks.

The Rabbits' only loss this season was in their first contest, and they didn't look back. After going undefeated the rest of the season, there were high hopes for the Rabbits. Defeating Lincoln (24-6), Adams (31-21), Jefferson (27-20), and Filmore (17-14) led them to the bright lights of Memorial Stadium, to compete for their first-ever State Title.

The opening drive for the Summit was an uneventful three-and-out. However, Jackson's first possession was a hard-nosed Class B football showing as Running Back Dan Smith carried the ball seven times for 56 out of the 73 total yards and a touchdown.

"We had more running room the first half," Smith said.

Summit responded quickly with a seven-play drive that resulted in a field goal. But on Summit's next possession, a fumble set Jackson up for a touchdown drive making the score 14-3 at half.

The momentum shifted when Jackson lost the ball on their first drive of the second half. Summit took the ball to the Jackson 24-yard line and cashed in on 3 making the score 14-6. Jackson was once again unsuccessful in the 3rd quarter with another 3 and out. Summit then drove 85 yards down the field, with Larry Brown capitalizing throwing a 23-yard touchdown pass to leave the Rabbits with a two-point lead heading into the 4th quarter.

"We finally were able to stop them the second half and got our offense going," Brown said. "We're crushed that we lost in the last minute, but were also proud of how well we responded in the second half."

Halfway through the fourth quarter, Summit Kicker Joe Welch hit a devastating 31-yard attempt to put the Rabbits down by 3. The Rabbits battled their way back into the game and on 4th & 1 on the Summit 27, it seemed that they would play another series until the Yellow flag was thrown. What seemed like a first-down rush was negated, instead they would have to kick a field goal.

“When coach said we were going to kick it, I got a big lump in my throat,” Smith said, “I’ve only made a few kicks over 40-yards in practice.”

The Junior trotted onto the field out of the huddle and set up around the 37-yard line. The snap and hold were clean, and he knocked it right through the uprights to give the Rabbits a one-point lead with 58 seconds to play.

“I just tried to stay focused and keep my eye on that equator on the football,” Smith Said “I knew it could be good. I was just hoping it would stay inside the right upright and it did.”

Summit briefly went back on the field, threw 4 incomplete passes and Summit then kneeled to seal the deal.

“What an amazing football game. Summit’s kids played a whale of a football game.” Jackson Head Coach Jeff Wittry said.

Wittry has been the head football coach at Jackson for 21 years, this win is bittersweet. “I just told the kids in the locker room that I’m retiring after this game,” Wittry said. “I couldn’t ask for a better way to end a 25-year career.”

For all the players, this game also meant so much more.

“When Coach Wittry told us he was retiring, we all got teary-eyed,” Smith said, “We couldn’t have asked for a better way to send him out.

Though their record may not have been perfect, the Rabbits feels as if there was a more perfect way to end the season.

**#11 Yearbook Feature Writing
Champion: Brooklyn Lul, Lexington**

Brooklyn Lul

Opened pails of paint cluster a playground and well-used brushes litter the ground alongside scraps of building material. The shine of the low sun kisses the arms and legs of 14 Cornerstone International Baccalaureate students working at the hospital of a small local community located in Vietnam-Mai Chau. As the day wraps up, students leave having made an impact much more precious and rewarding than initially perceived.

“This experience was life-changing,” said CAS President and Cornerstone student Benny Chavez.

Along with fourteen students, two chaperones from Cornerstone High, Dr. William Smith, CAS Sponsor and Cornerstone High History Teacher, and Jeffrey VanWesten, CAS Parent Chaperone, traveled to Vietnam on a CAS trip during winter break to better understand the culture and give back to the communities who would provide them with such eye-opening experiences.

“In Mai Chau, our group refurbished and built additional structures for the village’s hospital playground with a focus on social and cultural sustainability,” Dr. William Smith said.

In light of the hospital’s need for some renovation students volunteered to clean and build new structures for the hospital’s playground. Their tasks included sweeping, creating layouts, painting, and designing games that could be played on the playground’s floor. This was a service to more than 60,000 residents of the Mai Chau Hospital.

“...we were able to offer something that the hospital needed and wouldn’t have had an opportunity to redevelop on their own through the playground,” Dr. William said.

Besides the service they contributed to, these students also spent their time immersing themselves into the culture of the country by participating in dances, hikes, classes, and museum tours. From the vastness of Vietnam's countryside, to the clamor of its most populated cities, these students and their chaperones saw it all. Warm, bustling, sporadic, and overall “life-changing”. All these phrases characterize Cornerstone’s eleven day tour of Vietnam-a place rich with culture and history.

**#12 Yearbook Sports Feature Writing
Champion: Lexi Benson, Hastings**

38 minutes.

38 minutes of joy, socialization, and friendships.

Since 2014, Sage River High School has administered a new way for students to socialize, learn, and relish physical activity all in one. This event became known to the school as lunch volleyball. The overall reasoning behind this activity was to provide a place for all students to socialize with each other while getting the chance to improve their volleyball knowledge and skills.

As for the creator of this newly founded activity, Coach and Physical Education teacher, **David Savage**, was given the chance to implement this in the school gymnasium during lunchtime.

“Volleyball is one of those sports that’s kind of underrated, so to give them the opportunity to play it and try something new is really fun and enjoyable,” Savage said.

Savage believes it’s important to try something out of your comfort zone and to do something out of the ordinary. He also claims it’s nice to promote activity, rather than sitting around doing nothing.

And 38 minutes is all it takes.

As for the students at Sage River High School, they come with positive feedback about the activity and claim to have learned more, gained friendships, and improved skills while being there.

“I made a ton of new friends that share the same interest in volleyball as me. A lot of the other players that are a part of the lunch volleyball are really good, so sometimes they give me tips that help me improve too,” Sage River student **Amanda Cru** said.

Not only does Cru state she met new friends, but **Bently Norton** of Sage River also agrees that new connections with people were made.

“It’s been a great experience, and I’ve been able to connect with some new people,” Norton said.

It can be seen that lunch volleyball has been a hit amongst the school and created an environment other schools may not receive.

Principal **Monica Powers** of Sage River High School explains how impacting this program has been to the students at Sage River, and has seen a change in the behavior and domain in the school.

“This has been a fantastic outlet for students over their lunch period. We used to have school issues that would happen over lunch because students would be bored and get into trouble”, Powers said. “Since we started lunch volleyball, we’ve seen a trend of better behavior from our students.”

With only 38 minutes, new emotions, new friends, and new memories are formed with something just as simple as the combination of lunch and volleyball.

38 minutes.

#13 Yearbook Theme Copy Writing
Champion: Natalie Prichard, Lincoln Pius X

Opening

Edgar Allan Poe High School at a glance is a high school filled with people and education but...

The school year was more than an education it was a time filled with **experiences**.

Past the first day jitters came last day goodbyes.

The freshman embarked on a new **Journey** at Edgar Allen Poe.

Behind championships were athletes who put in hard work before and after school.

We **Broke New Ground** as our school made a reduced meal program.

Under the Raven mascot we bleed Black and White.

We **Embraced** new cultures at our Diversity Fair.

Beneath the Surface of Edgar Allan Poe High School there were cultures, programs, successes, and people that made the school who it is.

Closing

Edgar Allen Poe High School at a glance is a high school like any other in the state but...

Past all the hard work we studied for finals.

The seniors celebrated their past 4 years **Below** the sun at the senior Worlds of Fun trip.

Behind our grades were teachers making fun learning experiences in the classrooms.

We **Broke New Ground** with the best graduation rate in the state.

Under the schools name we celebrated our annual Poe Parade.

We **Embraced** new cultures at our Diversity fair.

Beneath the Surface of Edgar Allan Poe High School there were students, teachers, activities, awards, stories, and memories that filled the air of our school.

Sports

Past the sidelines were the students and parents cheering loud for their players.

The school **enjoyed** a sweet victory against the Richardson Rockets.

Behind the girls cross country state championship team were 2 senior girls leading them to victory.

We **Broke New Ground** as our Track and Field team set new school records.

Under the stadium lights the boys football team won their first State Championship.

The boys golf team **Embraced** the district runner-up plaque.

Beneath the Surface of Edgar Allan Poe High School there were hard workouts, sweaty athletes, game days, long bus rides, and tears of joy that filled the eyes of our athletes.

CHEERLEADERS FLY HIGH

AND SO DO THEIR RISKS

#14 Info Graphic
Champion: Kamila Cuevas R.,
Adams Central

More than
30,000
cheerleaders visit
the ER every year

Concussion rates have
risen since 1998

26%

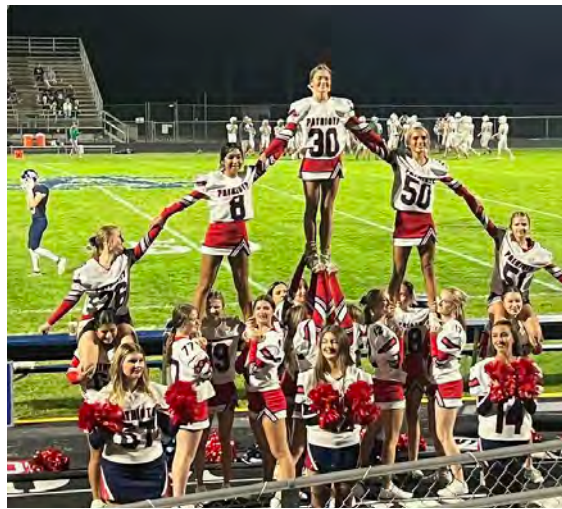
Only **31** states
recognize cheer as
a sport



The NCAA
does not
recognize
cheer
as a sport

Because it's
not a recognized
sport, reporting
an injury is
not required

Cheerleading
has the 2nd highest
rate of catastrophic
injuries in both
high school
and college
athletics



Top: The cheerleaders pose of they show off their “pyramid” which involves three full stunt groups and two shoulder sits. Photo by Dante Boelhower. **Bottom Left:** The cheer team in action at an away football game. **Bottom Right:** The first time the cheerleaders showcased their new stunt was during the homecoming game in September.

Kicking It in Gear

BY KATIE CARVER

This fall, the Adams Central High School Band is kicking it in gear. The band has officially started their competition season and will continue through the end of October. The band had their first competition on September 30, 2023, which was Melody Roundup.

Senior Lucy Fago said, “Being able to make beautiful music out of ink on a piece of paper is really a special part of being in a band.”

Band is a really great activity to be in, especially for those into music and making lots of great memories. The band got one of only three superiors handed out at their performance at Melody Roundup.

Dr. Rhodes, band director, outlined the biggest goal for this year’s band. “The first is relational, where we work together as a team, supporting and encouraging one another.” Band takes a lot of teamwork and the willingness to own up to your mistakes.

The band is looking forward to competing with their field show, “Into The Heart of the Machine.” Junior Savannah Wilkerson commented on her favorite part of marching season. “Performing the field show the last time is the most rewarding part of putting in all the time to learn all of the components that go into the show.”

On October 7, 2023 the band competed in the parade competition at Harvest of Harmony in Grand Island.

The following week, on October 14, 2023, the band competed at Minden Bandfest in both the parade and field competition. This marked the first time the band competed with their field show. The band earned superior ratings in both parade and field.

The band will end their season by competing their field show in the Nebraska State Band competition on the 21st in Kearney. The AC band puts in lots of time and cold mornings to make their show the best it can be.

“Being able to make beautiful music out of ink on a piece of paper is really a special part of being in a band.”
- Lucy Fago

Twisting It Up

BY KAMILA CUEVAS

Adams Central sports have added a new twist this year. The Adams Central Cheer team has been working extremely hard to add stunting to their routines for each sport that they cheer at. They have been working since the beginning of June and continue to work hard every Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday mornings at 6:00 A.M.

This year the cheer team’s goal was to include stunting at each activity. There was some stunting last year but with only a team of 11 girls, many of which were involved in other activities as well, there was not much that they could do. Since you need 4 girls per stunt group, there was usually only one stunt group stunting.

However, that is not the case this year. The 2023-

2024 cheer team includes 16 girls, which results in four stunt groups during a game. Having more girls on the team has allowed the cheerleaders to throw up more stunts in their cheers. Girls are still involved in other activities but there are at least two stunt groups at every game this year instead of just one. Senior Kaitlyn said that, “It’s amazing to see how far we’ve come in just a few short months.”

“It’s amazing to see how far we’ve come in just a few short months.”

You can watch the cheer team at the state competition this year on February 16th. In the past they have only participated in the Game Day and Non-traditional competitions, neither one of those involved stunting or tumbling.

This year they will be competing in the Traditional category which involves a lot of complex stunting and tumbling.

19thnews.org

CHEERLEADERS FLY HIGH AND SO DO THEIR RISKS

More than
30,000
cheerleaders visit
the ER every year

Concussion rates have
risen since 1998

26%

Only **31** states
recognize cheer as
a sport

The NCAA
does not
recognize
cheer
as a sport

Because it’s
not a recognized
sport, reporting
an injury is
not required

Cheerleading
has the 2nd highest
rate of catastrophic
injuries in both
high school
and college
athletics

19thnews.org

Graphic created by Kamila Cuevas



I created my infographic, "Cheerleaders fly high, and so do their risks," to inform people who aren't familiar with cheer about the dangers of cheer. For my infographic, everything on there I created from scratch. I used photoshop for the majority of the graphics and used shapes to create the different sizes of circles. The dots on there are also just periods that I arranged in different lines and orders. The megaphone, the cheerleader, and the US image were image traced and colored by myself on illustrator. It took me about one month to complete this project as I had to look up statistics and other information on cheerleading in the US.

Kamila Cuevas, Adams Central High School

Leggings now required with skirts

Students and administrators take different sides on new leggings rule

Roxie Prunty
Staff Writer

Pius X released a new policy this summer for girls' uniform attire. This new rule requires girls to either wear leggings under their skirts and skirts or to wear uniform shorts.

"Admin changed the policy for skirts because the skirts length was causing uncomfortable situations

principal Kelsey Bugarin said.

introduced, girls were not required to wear leggings under their skirts.

increasingly concerned with the amount of modesty in skirts and now require leggings under skirts.

"There has always been a big discussion around the girls dress code, but nothing was ever

and I think it's a big change for girls especially upperclassmen," senior Caroline Fortenberry said.

During the summer of 2023, information about this policy along with a letter from the administration was released to students and it has caused a variety

of reactions from Pius X students and parents.

"Many of my friends still don't understand why this policy was put into place and are looking for answers," sophomore Abby Dickinson said.

The new policy has been enforced to keep the uniforms modest and up to the standard of the Catholic Church.

"The church teaches women that by dressing modestly we are respecting what Jesus gave us," Bugarin said. "This policy isn't to punish girls or cover them up, it's to help them."

When information about this policy came out, Pius X

positive and negative reviews about the policy emails from students and parents.

"I have received a wide spectrum of responses to the new policy, but not all were bad," Bugarin said. "I even received a handwritten letter of gratitude from a grandparent of a Pius student expressing her love for the policy."

Students met with administrators to voice their concerns with the

new policy. Fortenberry challenged the policy and gave a student's

"It's important to consider who

don't think they took the student view into consideration while compiling this policy."

These meetings were set up by students with the goal of changing

on how the students were viewing this new policy.

"Many girls met with us to discuss the policy, but our goal

problems and not to change the policy," Bugarin said.

Although the administration's minds weren't changed and the policy still stands, parents and students hope administrators take their views into consideration.

"I'm glad we got to meet with administration and even though nothing changed at least they won't have our perspective on the matter," Fortenberry said. "Maybe things will change, maybe they won't, but at least I know I've done everything I could to help."



Seniors Caroline Fortenberry and Cora Halverson show off their required leggings. Photo by L. Schinstock

DRESS CODE DILEMMA

Hair length and shaving policies for boys create disputes over fairness

JD Stempson
Staff Writer

One of Pius X's most noticeable differences when compared to public schools is its hair policy, particularly the rules towards boys.

"It states that guys who are students cannot have hair that touches the collar of their shirt," said teacher Mike Katalenich. "And they must be clean shaven."

Despite it being in effect since Pius' founding, the rule has received much resistance and criticism from students, especially those with longer, darker hair. Mullet-sporting junior Nicholas Steuter is one of those students.

"You know, Jesus had long hair so I think we should be able to as well," said Steuter.

While Katalenich admits this is true, he feels as though it's not a good comparison, considering Jesus is God and Nick is sadly not.

"I think it helps people choose things that they wouldn't choose if given their own preference," says Katalenich. "That is integral to living a non-selfish life, being able to choose good things that we don't naturally want, which we call detachment. It requires you to die to your self will and follow someone else's will in a way that isn't sinful."

A student of his, junior Hudson Schulz is very familiar with the rule.

"I've been told on multiple occasions I need to get a haircut, I've been threatened with demerits before, and I've recently needed to get a haircut due to that," said Schulz, explaining his new, shorter cut.

Katalenich is aware that he, with his long beard and ponytail, is often used as justification for why the rules should be changed. However, he wants to clear up this misunderstanding.

"In the eastern Christian tradition, celibates don't cut their hair because it's the tradition," says Katalenich. "It isn't my normal preference, I actually really like having a shorter beard and hair, but it's not about what you want, it's about accepting that there are things bigger than yourself and living your life in accordance with those things."

Despite these explanations from both sides, the rule is unlikely to change, as is many students' disdain for it.

"The girls at this school are allowed to have any style and length of hair that they want, and the guys are forced to have short hair," says Schulz. "The rules are very unfair."



Example of accepted hair length (left) and unaccepted hair length (right). Photo by J. Stempson

Formal dance dress code leads to discrepancies

Blair Bergevin
Staff Writer

At Pius X, students are expected to meet all dress code requirements to attend any formal dances including homecoming, winter formal and prom.

If students fail to meet these expectations, they

"Here at Pius, we want our students to meet the standards we set to model after the Catholic faith," assistant principal Erin Masur said.

in the 2023-24 student handbook.

Compared to any Lincoln public high school, Pius X has many more requirements for a formal

I had to make sure I wasn't going to get dress coded," sophomore McKenzie Becker said.

These requirements focus more on the females who attend the dances due to the style of dresses that are now popular.

"Our rules are set in place to enforce modesty and accentuate the beauty of being a daughter of Christ," Masur said.

Male students who choose to attend any dance must follow two rules, no jeans or shorts and no tank tops.

"I've never been dress coded nor seen a boy get dress coded," junior George Casady said. If students are stopped at the doors of a formal

"If you're dress coded, you will be sent to the room and will be asked to add to your

you choose to discard this added fabric, you'll be asked once again to get back in dress code before you're asked to leave."

These rules were put in place because the administration believes they align with Pius X's core values and beliefs.

"We have these rules in place because as a parochial school we want to honor God in all our actions, including the way we choose to dress," Masur said.



Sophomores Maddie Bixenmann and Charlotte Shotkoski display their modifications to meet the dress code for homecoming. Photo from C. Shotkoski

Dress requirements present at activities and events too

Easton Beekman
Staff Writer

With new changes to Pius X uniform and guidelines, one thing that has not changed is dress codes on spirit days.

"Dress code on page 34 of our handbook has a section called spirit days it makes a reference as a minimum for what can be worn," Principal Terry Kathol said.

Following the handbook, a school wide email is sent out informing of the rules and theme.

Multiple students claimed how they felt like they were dress coded for a minor problem within the dress code during spirit week and at games.

One such student sophomore Gracie Czyz said, "I was dress coded at a football game because the end of my shirt reached the line of my shorts and mid drift was showing when I raised my arms."

With each game having a theme and provoking a unique outfit, it begs the question if dress code should remain as it has at games.

"Our game dress code is the same as our informal dance dress code," Kathol said. "The biggest problems

are torn shirts or shirts that are too short."

The enforcement of dress coding at games is largely due to the fact NSAA rules talk heavily about the importance of full covering clothes.

"I am not saying we need to dress super inappropriately, but a little bit of skin showing should not be as big of a deal as it is, and our generation needs to understand that," Czyz said. "Dressing like that is a trend nowadays and is not super out of place."

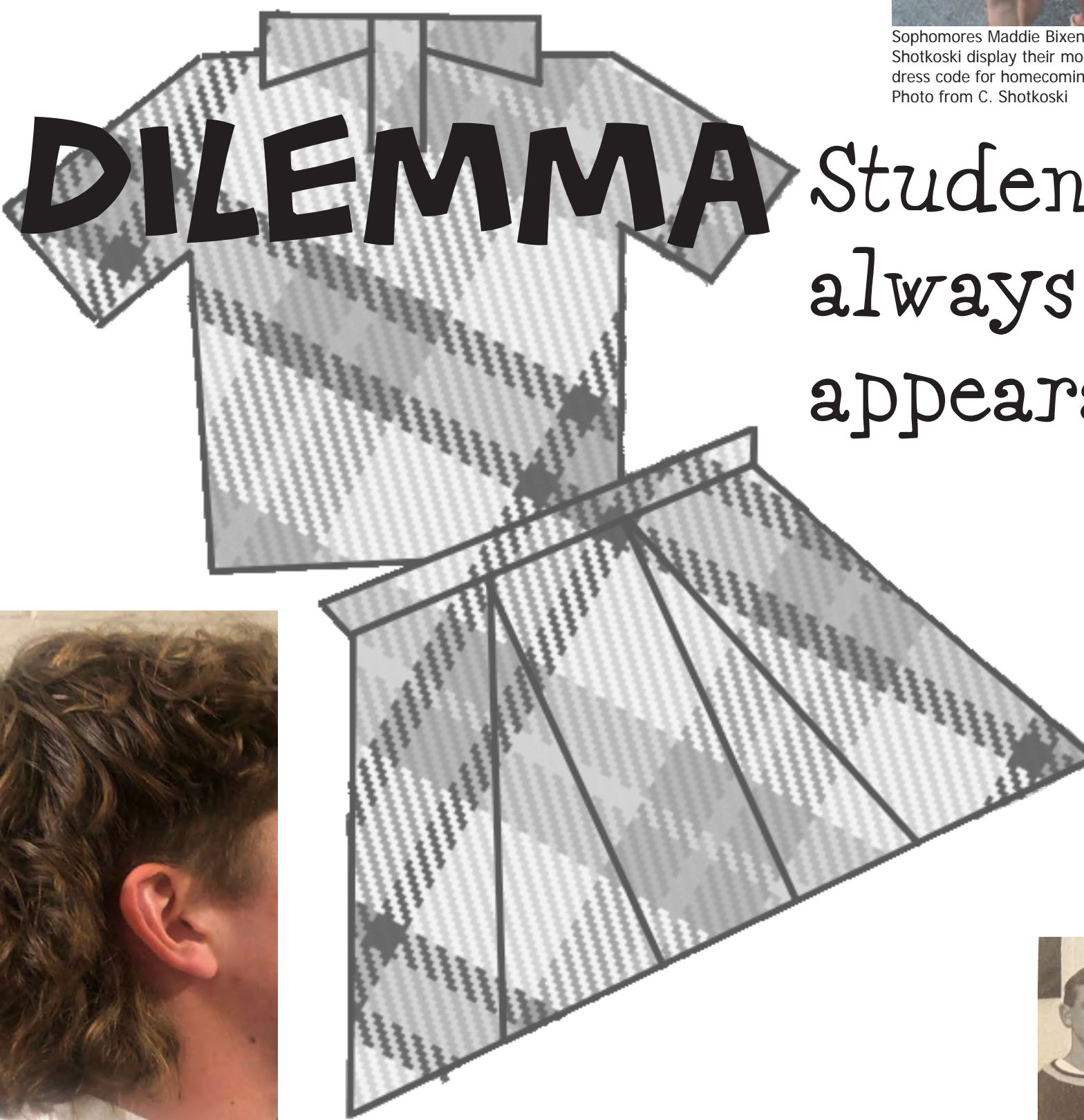
A similar occurrence is the dress code on non-uniform days.

"I got dress coded on pajama day during homecoming week because my outfits shorts were too short," junior Maya Kane said.

This prompts the question of whether dress codes should be more lenient outside of regular days in general with changing trends.

In recent years the dress code for spirit days has been altered to allow not only jeans but also sweatpants.

"I am open to adjusting the dress code on non-uniform days," Kathol said. "We will not allow something just because it is a trend, it should still be presentable."



Students and staff don't always see eye to eye on appearance rules

Uniform and dress code policies have changed throughout the years

Cassie Schlautman
Staff Writer

There have been many changes to the dress code throughout Pius X's history. In fact, while Pius X has always had a dress code, the school has not always had uniforms.

"It was a dress code, but not a uniform," Activities Director and former assistant principal When Pius X announced they would be integrating uniforms into the dress code in 1998, students and faculty were divided in their views. While some students argued that uniforms would take away their choice, administrators believed them to be a way to unify the school.

"Why does a sports team have a uniform? It"

school, we are all part of the same team. It breaks down class barriers that can be in a school."

Though the uniform is very similar today, it has changed in small ways throughout the years. Such as adding bands to the bottoms of shirts so that students wouldn't have to tuck them in.

not have banded bottoms, so we made the compromise," teacher Amy Shonka said. "We made shirts that you didn't have to tuck in."

Another change that has been made is that women can now wear plaid skirts to school, which was not originally in the uniform. This change was made because of a student who had the option of wearing a skirt at her previous school.

"I can still remember the girl that came to me and asked if we could add skirts," Lesiak said. "So, we found a skirt that would work."

Skirts are still part of the Pius X uniform today, but this year it is required to wear leggings underneath.

While small changes may be made to the dress code, uniforms aren't going anywhere.

"My experience has been that most students prefer a uniform in terms of

day," Korta said. "There is also a bit less of social pressure because everyone is wearing the same polo. Dress codes are helpful to give boundaries."



Some of the accepted dress code attire from the 1996 student council. Photo from 1996 Thunderer yearbook

Lincoln Pius X

Topic: Dress Code Dilemma

Cassie Schlautman, Easton Beekman, Roxie Prunty, Blair Bergevin, John Stempson

MAKING A COMEBACK

ONE STUDENT'S EXPERIENCE DEALING WITH INJURY RECOVERY

BY KAITLYN MOUSEL

Coming back from an injury is always very hard with going through setbacks and just waiting to heal. During his junior football season, Derrion Walther faced a season-ending injury. He broke both his tibia and fibula in the battle against McCook. It was a heartbreaking way for him to end his junior season. But with proper rest and rehabilitation, Derrion is back and better for his senior year.

Going through recovery can be tough. Many obstacles may stand in the way. Athletes may be limited in the things they do in their everyday life. For Derrion, he had a few of them. He noted that he doesn't move that well. He can't squat as much as he used to and doesn't run as fast as he could before his injury or bend like he used to. Head football coach Mr. Lewis said, "All major injuries impact athletes mentally to some degree. He still struggles with some movements and playing in space but he has definitely cleared the mental 'hurdle' that would hold him back. He's getting stronger and more mobile every day. He's playing as hard as he ever has and he is not holding himself back."

"The hardest part of going through recovery was seeing what it did to my parents and myself," Derrion said. "My parents were my saving grace and they did a lot of things for me."

"THE HARDEST PART OF GOING THROUGH RECOVERY WAS SEEING WHAT IT DID TO MY PARENTS AND SEEING WHAT IT DID TO MYSELF"

Coach Lewis also said "It makes Derrion appreciate playing the game. Missing out on playing makes any athlete value the game more and this is true of Derrion. On the other hand, injuries present a new view of life without sports and force you to understand that as a person you are so much more than just a 'football player' or athlete. Usually, this forces personal growth and I believe Derrion grew outside of his athlete's comfort zone."

Doing everything he needed to do, supporting and helping coach from the sideline, Derrion was back and healed right in time for his senior year; he is even a team captain. The football team is very close and has a lot of heart for one another.

"As a team, I feel like we all care deeply for each other and especially our coaches," he said. "For me as a person, it is going great. I feel like my old self again being able to play my favorite sport again!" Both his coaches and teammates are very happy and excited to have Derrion back and cannot wait to see what he accomplishes this year.

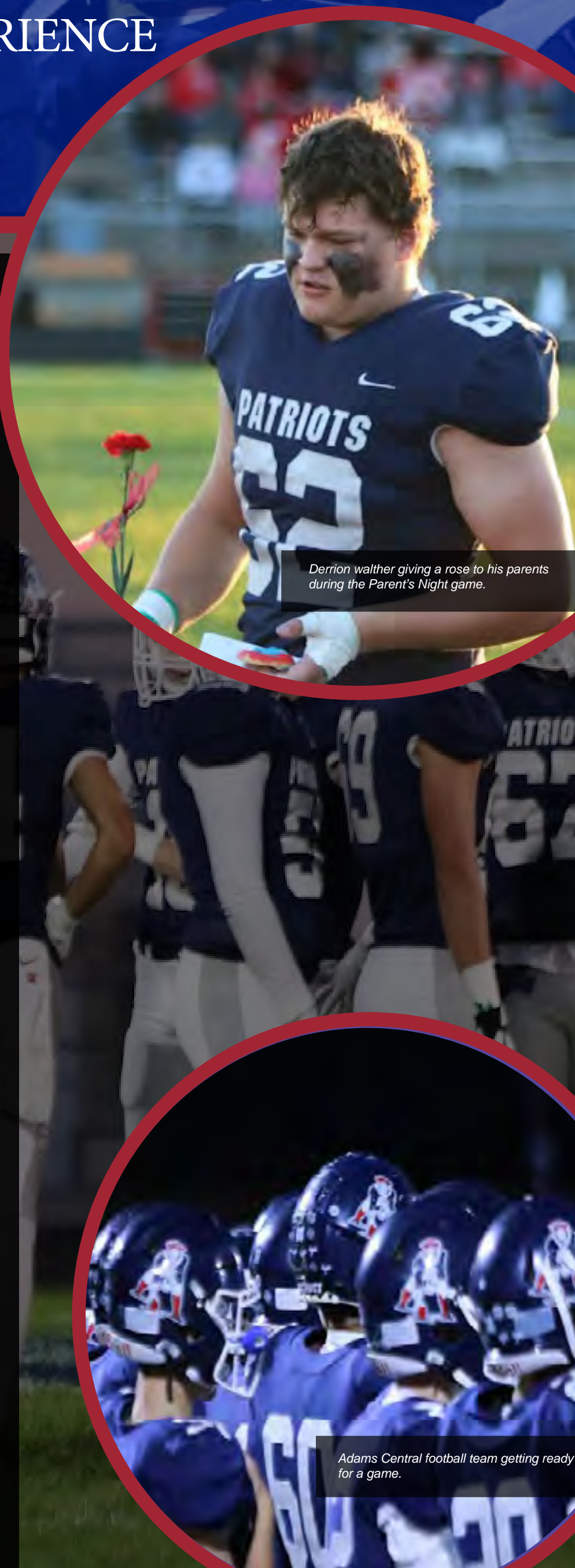
His teammates and coaches both expressed that it is fantastic to have a reliable and experienced leader return to the field, especially on the O-Line where extra depth is always needed.

Coming back from this injury, Derrion was very excited. "I am looking forward to playing McCook again and to playing as tough as I can," said Derrion.

The ending stages of recovery can be very exciting. Athletes finally get to get back to doing the things that they love. When Derrion reached the end of his road to recovery he said he was very excited to be done with physical therapy. "I would say I am at 95% right now, but I was told I would never be able to get back to 100%," Derrion said. "You need to work hard in physical therapy."

While going through these stages of recovery, he learned some things. Some advice Derrion has to give to other athletes struggling with an injury and going through recovery is important. "Let people help you find someone to lean on, and do not be afraid to ask for help."

Going through this injury and recovery process makes athletes realize that they should not take any chance to compete for granted, whether it is just practice or in the live game environment.



Derrion walther giving a rose to his parents during the Parent's Night game.

Adams Central football team getting ready for a game.

#17 Photo/Artistic Illustration

Champion: Sam Schwartz,
Mt. Michael Benedictine



In this graphic, my main goal was to highlight Max McCoy '23 and his excellent performance at state track. With a small track program, our school sees little success at state, so it was important to recognize his top ten finishes. I used two photos I had taken, one during a media day and the other during an earlier meet. These photos showcase Max's determined and hard-working mentality. I put these pictures into Photoshop, cut them out, and applied a layer mask. I also edited the images in Camera Raw to adjust light, color, and effects. Next, I placed the photos on a grey background and added a transparency gradient to the larger image. I created the rectangle shapes within Photoshop and placed them around the border for design purposes. Then, I made an oval shape and duplicated it until it made a shape similar to a track and filled in the final oval with black. I then added a red gradient and a transparency gradient to the main rectangles, respectively. Next, I added the text and gave the smaller photo a shadow to give the image depth. Because our school colors are red, white, and black, I chose to feature these colors. Max's track spikes also add a flare of neon color to contrast the grey background and the black and white uniforms. This graphic was posted to the school's Instagram and Twitter accounts, where it received lots of interaction from students, alumni, and parents.

#18 Action Photography
Champion: Maggie Mullin, Norris



#19 Feature Photography
Champion: Daisy Gomez, Lexington



SUMMER

EXPECTATIONS

WINTER



SENIORS DEDICATE THEIR MORNINGS TO SUMMER WEIGHTLIFTING

courtesy photos

Discipline is all it takes. "This award really shows those people who are committed to making themselves better nonstop, all the way through," said Strength and Conditioning **Coach Burson**.

The four-year attendance award was created to recognize students who dedicated themselves to the summer weight room three days a week for eight weeks all four years of high school.

One of the athletes that received this award was **Kayleigh Cetak, 12**. "The hardest part was waking up each morning," Cetak said, "but it was worth it because I got to stay in shape and be stronger for the sports I play."

Earning the award requires a tremendous amount of commitment and dedication. Burson noted that not only does this demonstrate a real devotion to being a better athlete, but it also shows tons of progress.

TIME CRUNCH

DIFFERENT ACTIVITIES FILL THEIR SPARE TIME



BAND

"My band practices were kind of boring to be honest. A lot of times I was late. It was really hot outside and we were there for like four hours. The heat was the worst part. I always felt like I was gonna pass out. I had to wake up early in the morning but it didn't really affect any of my other activities."
-**Sebastian Duarte-Benavides, 10**



SOCCER

"Soccer practices were fun but there were some days where it was kind of difficult. The summer heat affected me a lot. Sometimes it killed me and I needed water like every second. I was running out of breath and it was very humid. Practice took about an hour and thirty minutes. There were a few times where I had a hard time making time for soccer practices but it was pretty rare."
-**Juan Roymundo-Jesus, 10**



SUMMER SCHOOL

"It wasn't very hard to make time for summer school because I didn't really have anything else to do. I took Algebra 1A so I could advance my class before my sophomore year. I was kind of scared before the class because I didn't know who I was going to talk to but it was fine after the class started!"
-**Yareli Lopez-Molina, 10**

IS IT REALLY THAT GOOD?

WHICH BLOCKBUSTER MOVIE WAS WORTH THE HYPE?

illustrated by Mackay Armstrong



"It was a good movie. It was really interesting. I liked how there was a lot going on at once and it was very action packed. There were a lot of colors and sounds."
-**Dulce Arendondo-Ceja, 10**

"I watched the Barbie movie. I thought the movie was pretty good. I liked the message behind it. It was actually really entertaining and I would recommend watching it!"
-**Alexa Cordenas, 10**

WAITING FOR THE DROP

WHO WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE IN CONCERT?

illustrated by Emily Day



DRAKE
IT'S ALL A BLUR TOUR

41.6%



THE WEEKND
AFTER HOURS TIL DAWN TOUR

30.6%

TAYLOR SWIFT
ERAS TOUR



27.8%

*36 STUDENTS POLLED

#21 Yearbook Theme Development
Champions: Madeline Armstrong & Brooklyn Lul,
Lexington

JUST WAIT ...
THERE'S
MORE

JUST
WAIT...

LEXINGTON
HIGH
SCHOOL

THERE'S

MORE



THE MINUTEMAN
LEXINGTON, NEBRASKA
VOL. 98

THE MINUTEMAN 2024

Walsworth

EVERYBODY
KNOWS US.
WE ARE

Lexington is very different from other schools because it's fun. We do a lot of activities like during homecoming week and other things. I moved here from Mexico this year. It's smaller but prettier in Lexington. The sports are better here. There's a lot more opportunities." -Emily Bueno, 10

"I've lived in Lex my whole life. The main way I would describe it is diverse. Everyone here has their own unique abilities so it's cool to see how the town has grown." -Jesse Ibarra, 9

"In Lexington, everyone supports each other even though we participate in different things. Having this support feels good because I know I have people no matter what I do. I feel like it's extra motivation to do good not just for yourself but for the whole town." -Jonathon Vasquez, 11

YOU CAN'T HELP BUT LOOK AT THE 47 FLAGS THAT HANG ABOVE OUR HEADS DURING LUNCH.

CLASSES ARE NOW MAXED OUT. OPEN ENROLLMENT IS CLOSED. IF YOU WANT TO GO HERE, LIVE HERE.

WE DON'T DO IT YOUR WAY, THAT PROBABLY WON'T WORK FOR US. WE GOTTA DO IT OUR WAY. LIKE EACH MONTH WHEN WE HAVE COFFEE WITH OUR COUNSELORS AND LEARN ABOUT SCHOLARSHIPS AND UPCOMING OPPORTUNITIES.

DIVERSE GROWING ATYPICAL



BUT THERE'S ALWAYS MORE THAT YOU DON'T SEE.

WITH 925 STUDENTS
CROWDING OUR HALLS,
WE LOOK FOR MORE IN
EACH OTHER.



MORE KINDNESS

Kindness is found everywhere in our school. One student who is known for her generosity is **Alendra Areaga, 12**.

"I always make sure I support others and since I'm a D.C. ambassador I make sure I hold the historian accountable," says Areaga.

She participates in various activities and sports and always ensures positivity is being spread no matter what she's doing.

"I've seen a lot of people who just spread positivity and keep a positive energy even when they're having a bad day and it can really improve other people's attitudes," she says. "I always encourage kindness in sports and activities to support each other."

Areaga has made an impact unmatched by most students and takes pride in the kindness she spreads.




MORE COMMUNITY

Moving from a new state is a big adjustment for students. **Zina Mohamed, 10**, has adjusted well and found her place in our community. The main effort she has made to adopt her new community is by volunteering.

"I volunteer at Masjid Theater, the library, and sometimes I help with concessions," said Mohamed. "I like to volunteer because I have a lot of free time and it feels good to help people."

She hasn't let anything get in her way and she continues to talk to new people and try new activities.

"I've made a lot of new friends moving here," she added. "I'm also in soccer and FCCLA where we do activities with the elementary students."



MORE SUCCESS

For his last three years of high school, **Dominik Villalon, 11**, has been top three in his class.

"We never had a final grade below an A," Villalon said. "So I'm really proud of that."

He participates in various activities such as tennis, math club, powerlifting and track.

"My key to success would be focusing on what you're doing and keeping your attention on one thing at a time," he added.

He mentions balancing tasks and dividing them is something that has helped him throughout the years.

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Illustration by Madaly Armstrong



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Illustration by Emily Kim



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30.6%

TAYLOR SWIFT

ERAS TOUR



27.8%

#16 STUDENTS POLLED!



PERFECT 10

FRESHMAN STARTS OFF STRONG

With a time of 16:43.9, **Isac Portillo-Munoz, 9**, placed first in the 8-9 district race. His first place finish earned a ticket to the NSAA Cross Country State Championships.

"I didn't expect to win, like I thought I was probably going to get second, but then I saw the Garmin kid leading the race, I'm like, you know what, I'm going to pretty to whatever grade with him," Portillo-Munoz said.

Portillo-Munoz has been running since the summer of his sixth grade year. Being a freshman hasn't stopped him from pushing even harder.

"For my first year running district, it was a good experience," Portillo-Munoz said. "I was pretty happy and excited to go out and run."

RUN TO REMEMBER

In the middle of her race on Aug. 31, **Chastelyn Mendoza-Pablo, 9**, pushed her pace. Mendoza-Pablo started the opportunity to compete at district in her first high school season. "For my first year, I thought running district was fun," Mendoza-Pablo said. "But at the same time I felt confused by myself that I was actually able to make it to district even though I didn't make it to state."



NECK AND NECK On Aug. 31 **Edardo Duarte-Benavides, 11**, and **Anthony Tarcena, 12**, ran through the finishing line, hoping for a PR. "I expected to bring my time down by 20 and I did. I passed a lot of people this race, really pleased me and forward," Tarcena said.

LESS IS MORE

WHAT WORKOUT IS NOT WORKING OUT?



"I can't do thousands because it feels like a forever run, like it never going to stop."
-**Melanie Meljo-Galston, 10**



"The mile repeats because you have to go at a really fast pace, it's just too long."
-**Isaac Portillo-Munoz, 10**



"I didn't like the thousand repeats because we have to do the mile in between the thousands."
-**Nixon Vargas-Urbina, 9**

FOR THE FIRST TIME

Erick Grijalva-Barra, 9, finishes his first race of the season at the Lexington Invitational on Aug. 31. Grijalva's goal for the season was to run a sub 18:00, just by taking out the negative stuff and just keep being positive," Grijalva said.



PHOTO BY JIMMY ZAN

BIG AND BOLD JERSEY DEBUTED AT DISTRICT RACE



"I like them they're nice and clean. We have orange which really represents who we are."
-**Parthenia Converse, 10**

ONE LAST TIME At the class 8 State Cross Country Championships **Susana Calmo-Calmo, 12**, finishes the race with the time of 20:50.0. This summer my nephew started twice. He was about to be three years of age. He didn't have the opportunity to do cross country so I ran for him," Calmo said.

TOP 4

BOYS' TEAM TAKES TOP PLACES AT B5 DISTRICT

PHOTO BY JIMMY ZAN



Out of breath and almost blind, **Isac Portillo-Munoz, 9**, turns around after every race to see his teammates finish. At the 8-9 district finish line Portillo-Munoz's heart was filled with joy to see the next finishes:

"I turn around and I see Miguel, Laz and Hestley going 2, 3, 4. Bro, there's no way we're doing this right now," Portillo-Munoz said.

The team scored a 10, a perfect score. This accomplishment didn't happen overnight. **Lazaro Adame-Lopez, 12**, **Miguel Cruz-Mendoza, 12**, **Herson Rodriguez, 11**, and **Isac Portillo-Munoz, 9**, dedicated their time, patience and energy to the sport.

Cross country has been an avid interest of theirs since they were middle schoolers. They quickly fell in love with the idea of long distance races and unending courses. The boys progressed tremendously throughout their high school years.

"I was really nervous, it was my last high school race ever and I was also excited too because it's an opportunity that not a lot of people are able to get and I was grateful for that," Adame-Lopez said.

At the district race Portillo-Munoz won the 8-9 district champion with a time of 16:43.82. Cruz-Mendoza placed runner-up with a time of 17:01.26, a six second

improvement from his district run previous year.

"I was definitely excited and nervous at the same time," Cruz-Mendoza said.

Team members look forward to every grueling practice because afterward, they leave with a clear and focused mindset. "I try to get into a mindset of like, I'm a champion, I'm a winner," Rodriguez said.

Cruz-Mendoza and Adame-Lopez were primary contributors, helping to advance the team to the Class 8 State Championships for the past two years.

Cruz, Adame-Lopez, and Rodriguez have been an inseparable trio this season running every practice and race within seconds of each other.

"To get better you need to train with people who are better than you," Rodriguez said. "But we're not alone yet."

Six of the Minuteman competed at the NSAA State Cross Country Championships where they earned a runner-up trophy with a score of 42. Two female runners ran at the State Champions **Susana Calmo-Calmo, 12**, with a time of 20:50.0 and **Parthenia Converse, 10**, with a time of 23:11.4.

"A team goal for the Minuteman was to run a smarter start to their races," head coach **Sam Jilka** said. "They were able to achieve their goal and have successful results."

“Bro, there’s no way we’re doing this right now.”

-Isac Portillo-Munoz, 9

TAKE THE STAGE



VIGIL PAYS TRIBUTE TO IDOL ELVIS PRESLEY THROUGHOUT NEBRASKA

Ruby gems and silver glitter catch light, shining against the deep black material of an Elvis-inspired jumpsuit. The soft cadence of freshman Chad Vigil's voice echoes throughout the Church of Iglesia de Dios Septimo Dia enriching the tune "Can't Help Falling in Love" (1961) as the audience sits still but moved. As Vigil's most recent performance comes to an end, applause ensues and an older reminiscing woman wipes tear tracks from her cheeks.

"It made me happy to think that I—a 14-year-old, can bring back memories of Elvis Presley back in the day," Vigil said.

Vigil is a talented yet not widely known singer and performer of solo songs. His true talent and passion shines in his master impersonation abilities of Elvis Presley when he sings. Vigil first gained attention within the school district from a performance he did last year in the middle school variety show. However, his influence doesn't just stop in Lexington.

Vigil has toured all around Nebraska to share his love of Elvis Presley with others. "I just really wanted to pay tribute to him," Vigil said. He has been to churches, retirement homes, and all types of events, singing a variety of "The King of Rock and Roll's" famous songs. His performances mean more than just gaining some recognition though. "Elvis is my hero. During 2019, I was very depressed and on the verge of suicide. Elvis pulled me out of the depression. Singing was a way of coping and since then I've found that people pay tribute to him—I was like I wanna do that too," Vigil said.

Vigil's favorite song to perform is "Suspicious Minds" (1969). His most memorable performance is when he was able to sing this with another, more popular, Elvis Tribute.

"It wasn't originally one of his shows but instead Hall's in which Hall invited him on as a guest performer. I went to his meet and greet and asked him if he would mind me joining him on Suspicious Minds. Later, his manager agreed and pulled me on stage to sing. It was fun and he's a really great guy," Vigil said.



- Sagda Abdelbogi
- Shamake Abdi
- Mohamad Abdulhali
- Ruben Aguilar
- Hannay Campos
- Enrique Cano-De Leon
- Leobardo Cardenas
- Gabriela Carlson
- Broly Cole
- Bradley Castaneda-De La Rosa
- Gabriela Aguilar-Tomas
- Jasmin Aguilera
- Harroo Ahmad
- Sukaina Ahmad
- Ely Castellanos-Gonzalez
- Kevin Castillo-Banton
- Miguel Castillo-Solache
- Kennedy Catak
- Dev Chaudhri
- Khushi Chaudhri
- Isis Alcha-Rentana
- Aleysha Alvarado
- Damien Alvarez-Gonzalez
- Jordin Alvarez- Nunez
- Yazelle Chavez
- Ronyararo Chiumba
- Adam Colon
- John Cortez
- Byron Cisostomo-Velasquez
- Nowal Daud
- Mia Avelaz
- Kassandra Andazola-Gomez
- Moranna Anderson
- Juan Andres-Diego
- Fahima Dayib
- Imaad De Lara-Periz
- Feliciana De Leon-Bernal
- Aubree Deal
- Yanifer Diaz-Periz
- Dawid Diaz-Antiga
- Nahalia Andres-Miguel
- Kevin Arbolaz-Aguilar
- Emilio Ascencio-Cardenas
- Jaricho Ascencio-Cardenas
- Marquez Diaz-Janez
- Katherine Dabon-Balan
- Adrian Encarnacion
- Hayden Encarnacion
- Ervin Escobar-Hernandez
- Marcus Espinoza
- Enrique Avina-Ramirez
- Alexander Barrazo-Sorez
- Yasmin Barrios
- Walter Barrios-Chavez
- Christina Esthada
- Lupita Eyoque
- Jesus Flores
- Cristian Franco-Chicas
- Angel Friedrichsen
- Angel Galvan-Urbina
- Zuzyma Banton-Reyes
- Owan Base
- Juan Bautista
- Edson Bolivar
- Joselyn Garcia
- Marlon Garcia
- Iwin Garcia-Gallardo
- Ibael Gomez-Rodriguez
- Jacqueline Gomez
- Nathan Gomez-Prado
- Jesse Boman
- Sean Brown
- Sophia Burns
- Presley Burton
- Margarita Gomez-Raymundo
- Destiny Gomez-Zamudio
- David Gonzalez
- Sebastian Gonzalez
- Lovys Gonzalez-Abreu
- Josue Gonzalez-Navarro

- 1- COVER
- 2- OPENING 1
- 3- OPENING 2
- 4- SUMMER
- 5- CROSS COUNTRY
- 6- FRESHMAN PEOPLE PAGE

THE THEME “JUST WAIT THERE’S MORE” IS OUR WAY OF HIGHLIGHTING ALL OF THE THINGS YOU MIGHT OVERLOOK. YOU MIGHT THINK YOU KNOW US BUT WAIT... THERE’S MORE.

Class B

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Champions: Brayden Hansen & Madeline Petrick, Gretna East

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#24 Broadcast Feature Story

Champions: Cassie Schlautman & Lillian Wesely, Lincoln Pius X

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Champions: Reid Fahrenholtz & Gracie Weichman, Adams Central

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sg2xwHzYca4>