

# Photo Illustration

KSPA STATE COMPETITION 2010

PAGE 1 OF 3

THIS IS A CARRY-IN CONTEST. PLEASE ATTACH THE CONTEST NUMBER ASSIGNED TO YOU ON THE UPPER RIGHT-HAND CORNER OF THE BACK OF EACH PHOTO. DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME ON THE ENTRY. IF YOU DO, YOUR ENTRY WILL BE DISQUALIFIED.

STUDENTS ARE NOT TO REQUEST HELP OR ADVICE FROM ANYONE OTHER THAN THE KSPA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR. ALL WORK MUST BE THAT OF THE CONTESTANT.

## OVERVIEW

You are a staff member of Ad Astra High School's newspaper, *The Star*. Your editor has asked you to create a photo illustration based on the story provided.

### School Info

**Name:** Ad Astra High School

**Location:** Aspera, Kansas

**Enrollment:** 950 (grades 9-12)

**School Colors:** Green & Gold

**Mascot:** Box Turtles

**Name of Yearbook:** *Honeybee*

**Name of Newspaper:** *The Star*

## DIRECTIONS

Using the information provided in the story (which you will find on page 2 of this entry), design a photo illustration that is not wider than 8 inches and no taller than 10 inches. The photo illustration may be submitted in color or black and white, and should be printed on 8.5 x 11-inch paper.

**You must include** a brief paragraph describing the effects applied to the photo and explaining how your photo illustration helps tell the story.

**ARTICLE****Colleges Don't Like Senior Slump in High School****By BETH HARPAZ****The Associated Press**

OK, mom and dad. Remember your last semester of high school? Chances are you weren't freaking out about your AP chem class. Your prom plans may have mattered more than your 12th-grade GPA. And if you were headed to college, you were probably waiting to hear from just a couple of schools.

It's not like that today for college-bound high school seniors. They're cramming in AP classes for college credit. They're waiting to hear from 10 or 12 schools. And they can't shrug off homework, because many colleges make admission contingent on decent final grades.

"We have a policy to do 100 percent verification to ensure that final high school transcripts are received and reviewed," said Matt Whelan, assistant provost for admissions and financial aid at Stony Brook University in New York. "While it has been the exception, unfortunately, I have had the experience of sending letters to students informing them that because they did not successfully complete high school, they could were no longer admitted, and we rescinded both admission and financial aid."

College administrators around the country echoed Whelan's sentiments, from the University of Southern California, to Abilene Christian University in Texas, to Dartmouth, an Ivy League college in New Hampshire.

Not only do 12th graders feel pressure to keep up academically, but many also dedicate themselves to beloved teams, clubs and the performing arts.

"For sports and things like that, the coaches count on you. You're a better player and you're supposed to show leadership and maturity, whether it's sports or a club," said Carly Shields, 18, an Ohio Wesleyan University freshman who played basketball and field hockey through 12th grade in high school in Wilton, Conn. As a high school senior, she also played violin in the orchestra, took part in a play, and kept up her GPA.

Andrew Selesnick, principal of Horace Greeley High School in Chappaqua, N.Y., an affluent suburb where 90 percent of the students apply to college, said the school has "a lot of remarkable kids who work as hard as ever until the end."

That said, he added, "We do still talk about senior slump. I don't want to give the impression that it's gone away. It's not like it's not there. We do see some drop-off in terms of performance and attendance, but we don't see a lot of kids who go from 60 to zero."

Don Dunbar, of Dunbar Educational Consultants, which has a half-dozen offices here and overseas, said that while colleges focus on grades from first semester of senior year, "the most competitive colleges will check with guidance counselors to see how students are doing just before their acceptance letters go out."

Once a student has been accepted, Dunbar said in his experience it is rare for an offer to be rescinded purely on academic grounds, though schools may send out warning letters if a kid's grades are dropping.

But Dunbar says colleges don't hesitate to rescind offers if students get into serious trouble — including incidents involving cheating, violence, drugs or alcohol.

"The colleges cannot afford to take students who are immature socially and morally," said Dunbar, who is also the author of the book, "What You Don't Know Can Keep You Out of College."

Laurie L. Hazard, who oversees several programs to help freshmen successfully transition from high school to college at Bryant University in Smithfield, R.I., says a "last hurrah mentality" can distract seniors too.

**ARTICLE CONT'...**

"They have this core group of friends who are going to be here, there and everywhere, and they're thinking, 'This is the last time we will be together.'" That means more socializing," she said.

But Hazard noted that a productive senior year is not just about impressing college admissions offices. Keeping up reading and critical thinking skills can also improve the transition from 12th grade to college.

"It's like exercise — if you stop exercising every day, you get out of practice," she said. "Students who don't experience senior slump are exercising until June."

Danielle Montero, a senior at Beverly Hills High School, said first semester of senior year was "definitely the worst semester of high school," between college apps, essays, SATs, getting teacher recommendations and keeping up regular grades.

Now that it's second semester of senior year, though, kids are starting to kick back a little.

"It's really hard to want to come to school," she admitted. "The teachers even make jokes about it. There will be five kids absent from class. Some students aren't doing the reading assignments."

She added that the guidance counselor "has constantly reminded me to maintain my grades and continue my extra-curriculars, but it is much harder to actually do, than say."

Even Shields, the Ohio Wesleyan student who stayed busy her senior year of high school with sports and performances, recalled feeling the pull.

"When the warmer weather comes," she said, "everyone wants to go outside, play Frisbee and hang out."

— — —  
Beth J. Harpaz is the author of several books including "13 Is the New 18."

Copyright 2010 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten, or redistributed.