

SIMPLY *Better*

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The Kansas Scholastic Press Association held its 39th annual State Contest on May 1, 2010 where a total of 1,150 entries were received from 109 schools throughout the state.

Of those entries, students receiving first place awards earned the honor of having their work published in this 17th issue of SIMPLY BETTER.

Students qualified for the KSPA State Contest by placing at regional contests throughout the state.

The contest offered 21 categories in journalism and judges' comments are published with each entry.



News Writing & Infographics

Judge's Comments

News Writing

You have a nice handle on the important pieces of information.

Infographics

Cool graphic.

I like how the information is displayed in different parts of the glass.

Some font choices are a little odd—the title font and “in the past month.”

Cassy Parry • IA/2A • Kinsley HS

An attempt to eradicate “freaking” from Ad Astra High School sponsored dances has been thwarted. Administrators asked students to sign a “Clean Dancing Pledge” before the winter Formal, resulting in cancellation of the dance due to lack of interest.

Sexually explicit dancing at October’s Homecoming Dance caused complaints from faculty and parents.

“After this year’s homecoming dance became a display of wanton sexual energy and inappropriate ‘grinding’, I had to do something,” Principal Emmylou Harris said.

“Several parents approached me about instituting a pledge that the students could take, and I thought it was a great idea.”

After approval from the PTA and Student Government, Harris began working with the junior and senior class officers to develop the pledge. Harris thinks the pledge was a fair compromise between the parent-created plan banning all dancing with touching, and the student’s wishes to dance however they want.

Harris will attempt to pass a resolution at the May 31 school board meeting. The Prom, scheduled May 8, would be the first dance affected by the resolution. Students speak out about their

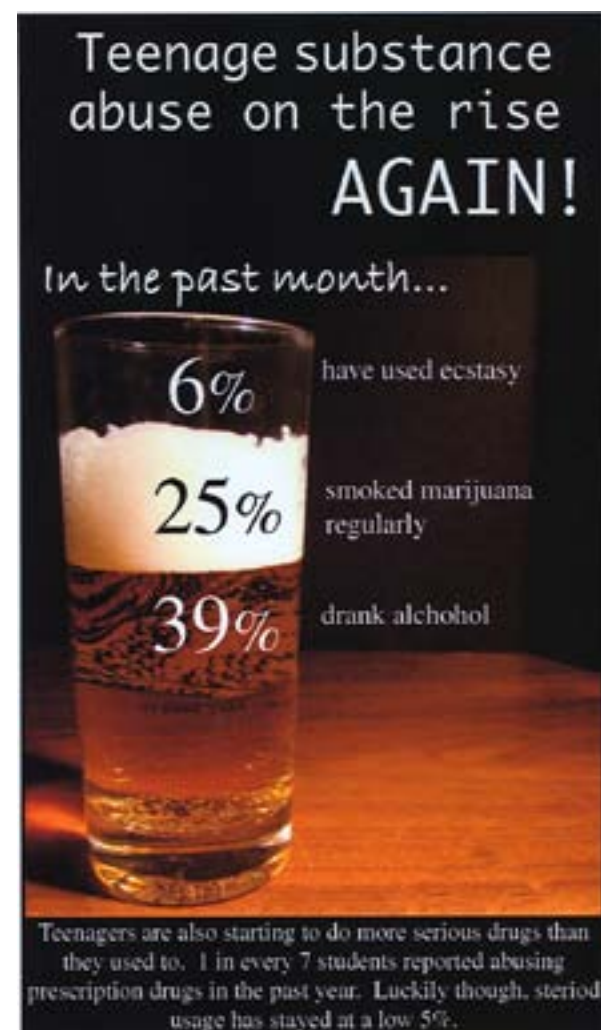
freedom of expression.

“What the principal’s doing now is too much,” said Van Morriosn, junior class president. “We’d like a chance to help sell the students on the idea of a pledge before next year’s homecoming.”

Ad Astra’s dancing conundrum is reminiscent of this year’s May 8 musical “Footloose”. Teenagers begin uprising against a town’s adults, who banned all dancing.

“I’m going to freak my face off at the next dance,” Sophomore Bill Monroe said. “It doesn’t matter what the rules are, I’m going to do what I want.”

Sarah Luder • IA/2A • Chase County HS



Something “freaky” is going on at Ad Astra High School.

Faculty and parents have complained about a sexually explicit dance called “freaking” that students performed at the Homecoming Dance last October. A “Clean Dancing Pledge” was promoted as a way to solve the problem but failed due to a lack of interest by the student body.

“Finally, after this year’s homecoming dance became a display of wanton sexual energy and inappropriate ‘grinding,’ I had to do something,” said Emmylou Harris, the high school principal. “Several parents approached me about instituting a pledge that the students could take, and I thought that was a great idea.”

The pledge was formed between Harris and the Student Government.

“Principal Harris worked closely with us on drafting the pledge, and we appreciate her thoughtfulness in doing that. We think it was a good pledge, but we didn’t do a good job of selling it to the rest of the student body,” said Van Morrison, the junior class president.

However, the students clearly disagreed.

“In the end, only eight student bought tickets to the Winter Formal, so we shut it down in order to save money on buying a band, getting soft drinks, stuff like that,” said Morrison.

Students claim that they didn’t attend because

they didn’t want to limit their ability to dance in a way they felt appropriate.

“I’ve been appalled at student dancing at most dances I’ve attended,” Joan Armatrading, senior. “While I don’t support the principal’s attempt to dictate behavior, I do want to stand up for student rights, especially when it comes to free expression.”

Not only would student dancing be in danger but also the school’s production of “Footloose” based on the 1984 movie of the same name.

Harris’s solution of banning all sexually explicit dancing from all school sponsored dances will be presented at the next Ad Astra Board meeting on May 31st. The students plan to plead their case for freedom of expression at the meeting as well.

“I think if the school board can finally pass a resolution outlawing ‘freaking’ and other inappropriate behavior at dances, then we can get this problem behind us and move on to more

important issues,” said Harris.

But for some students, that still won’t stop them.

“I’m gonna freak my face off at the next dance. It doesn’t matter what the rules are, I’m gonna do what I want,” said Bill Monroe, a sophomore. “I mean, it’s just dancing, right? We have our clothes on, you know.”



Kyla Ellison • 3A/4A • Caney Valley HS

Judge's Comments

News Writing

Good lead with basic facts.

Good end quote and set-up.

Infographics

Really creative. I like how you call attention to the fact it's a reversed trend.

At the May 31 School Board meeting, Principal Emmylou Harris will propose to the board a resolution banning all sexually explicit dancing- also known as “freaking”- at school-sponsored dances. The ban would be in effect for Prom, scheduled for May 8, and is expected to be met with controversy from students, who plan to plead their case for freedom of expression at the meeting.

“I think if the school board can finally pass a resolution outlawing ‘freaking’ and other inappropriate behavior at dances,” Harris said. “Then we can get this problem behind us and move on to more important issues.”

The proposed ban follows attempts by Harris to work with students to generate a solution after faculty and parents complained about “freaking” at the Homecoming Dance in October.

“Finally, after this year’s homecoming dance became a display of wanton sexual energy and inappropriate ‘grinding,’ I had to do something,” Harris said.

Harris worked with junior and senior student government officers to draft a “Clean Dancing Pledge,” which students were asked to sign before the Winter Formal. However, the Winter Formal was cancelled because of a lack of interest, and many students attributed their lack of interest to the limits the administration wanted to impose upon their dancing. Many students, including junior class president Van Morrison, supported the idea of a pledge, but believe Harris is now taking the wrong kind of action to combat the issue.

“Freaking got out of hand last year, no doubt,” Morrison said. “And I think it’s the students’ duty to stop each other from doing stupid stuff. I don’t think it’s the principal’s right to tell us how to dance.”

The “freaking” issue has ignited controversy between students and the administration, which is likely to culminate at the board meeting later this month. Senior Joan Armatrading doesn’t support “freaking” at dances, but also feels the need to stand up for her and fellow students’ rights.

“I’ve been appalled at student dancing at

most of the dances I’ve attended,” Armatrading said. “While I don’t support the principal’s attempt to dictate behavior, I do want to stand up for students rights, especially when it comes to free expression.”

The board’s decision will settle a long-standing rift which Harris believes is associated with the school’s laxity of instilling in their students proper standards of decency.

“The school board supports education the whole person and not just the brain,” said school board president Martin Medeski-Wood. “That’s all I can say at this point in time.”



Judge's Comments

News Writing

Really, really good job!

Infographics

I like the red circles around information.

Need to explain percents and what they represent.

Good, cohesive graphic.

Is it ironic that Ad Astra High School chose to do the spring musical “Footloose”? It seems that way to many at the school because of recent controversy over the dance moves at school sponsored dances. A style called “freaking” has caused some issues and even resulted in a “Clean Dancing Pledge”.

Bonnie Raitt, Ad Astra’s dance teacher and co-director of the musical says, “It’s just a coincidence that we decided to perform Footloose.”

In the movie, the main character, who is played by Kevin Bacon, leads and uprising in his small town due to a ban on all kinds of dancing. A situation similar to Ad Astra High’s, where instead of an uprising, students showed a lack of interest in the Winter Formal.

But no matter what anyone thinks about the irony of this situation, the show must go on, and it is sure to be an entertaining performance.

“Our production is very high-energy with colorful dance numbers. We wanted to keep it to the 1980s time frame, when the original movie was released, but we’re bringing it to the present. We have 70 students on stage at one point or another and 30 more working behind the scenes,” said Raitt.

Lots of work has gone into this play according to Christina Aguilera, a student director for the musical.

“Practices take up between 12 and 15 hours per week for everybody involved. Most of that is taken up learning the choreography, which is really cool.”

Maybe the interest of the students in this play is due to the common situation of the characters.

Senior Donald Fagen says, “I get to play Kevin Bacon’s character, Ren McCormack. “The musical is an ironic choice; I get it. But that’s a good thing too because people are talking about our play and the controversy. We’re OK with that. We have put so much work into this production, and we’re anxious to show it off to as many people as possible.”

It’s not just Donald who feels passionately about the success of this show either. Junior Bebel Gilberto says, “I’m Ariel Moore, the rebel’s

girlfriend...we’ve been rehearsing pieces of this since January, so it’s going to be an awesome show. We give up 12 hours on Saturdays alone these days just to make it look perfect. There are times when people want to walk out because they’re tired, they have homework to do, their boyfriend’s getting pissed at them... but the show must go on.”

The musical “Footloose” will open Friday, May 7 at 7:30. Just one day before Principal Emmylou Harris will attempt to have a resolution passed by the school board that bans sexually explicit dancing from school-sponsored dances.

Sandra Richmond • 1A/2A • Natoma HS



Senior Caliegh Johnson carefully adds the precise amount of a chemical to her beaker in order to proceed with her experiment in her chemistry class.

Judge’s Comments

Feature Writing
Nice lead, watch the question though.
Organized and concise.
Be careful about editorializing.

Academics Photo
Outstanding effort with excellent composition.
Use of visual framing is well-considered and effective.
Depth of field is just right.

Jena Sauber • 3A/4A • Southeast of Saline HS

They’ve been banned from “dirty dancing,” but that won’t stop Ad Astra high school students from “getting their groove on” in this year’s spring musical, “Footloose”.

“[Footloose] incorporates two contemporary dances that are clean enough for school dances, but they also show the striking contrasts in dancing style from the 1980s to now,” co-director Bonnie Raitt said.

The musical, which is based on the 1984 movie starring Kevin Bacon, aims at bringing the 1980s to 2010.

“We wanted to keep the 1980s time frame, when the original movie was released, but we’re bringing it to the present,” Raitt said.

Bringing it “to the present” may have a larger impact on Ad Astra

students in light of the “freak dancing” controversy that started this year. Faculty and parents complained about sexually explicit dancing at Homecoming and asked for the Winter Formal to be “clean.” The Winter Formal was later cancelled due to a lack of interest.

For senior Donald Fagen, however, the controversy is a positive thing.

“The musical is an ironic choice; I get it.

But that’s a good thing, too, because people are talking about our play and the controversy,” Fagen said.

Beyond the controversy, Christina Aguilera, student director of the musical, believes the musical will send an important message.

“I think it shows how the loose morals some people had back then compare to the loose morals some people have now in dancing,” Aguilera said. “Getting that contrast in there really helps show the differences between the two kinds of styles of dancing and the types of people using them.”

Footloose opens May 7 at 7:30 p.m. at the Aspera Center for the Performing Arts and runs through May 11.

Judge’s Comments

Feature Writing
Nice complete circle with the story.
The summarization of the controversy is excellent, but maybe needed a little higher in the story.
Overall, very strong story.
Nice lead—to the point and attention capturing!

Academics Photo
Great moment, student has facial expression which captures reader’s interest.

The pig intestine is in good focus and student focus is still clear enough to see reaction.
One thing to think about: reflection of student at bottom of frame can kind of be distracting.
AWESOME WORK!

Jake Robison • 3A/4A • Phillipsburg HS



Fetal pig dissection spirals out the intestines in Anatomy.

Imagine 100 high school students sacrificing 12-15 hours each week, including Saturdays, all to perfect a performance that has been a part of much controversy in the past few weeks.

In the wake of numerous complaints about students' inappropriate dancing, the production of "Footloose" the musical has become the center of attention.

"It's just a coincidence that we decided to perform 'Footloose' this year," said dance teacher and co-director Bonnie Raitt. "It incorporates two contemporary dances that are clean enough for school dances, but they also show the striking contrasts in dancing styles from the 1980s to now."

Student director Christina Aguilera commented on the value of having the different types of dancing.

"Getting that contrast in there really helps show the differences between the two kinds of styles of dancing and the types of people using them," she said. "It's important."

The musical opens May 7, the day before Prom. Even though Principal Emmylou Harris has begun efforts to ban certain forms of dancing beginning with Prom, students with roles in the

musical all stress the merit of the musical in and of itself.

"We've been rehearsing pieces of this since January, so it's going to be an awesome show," said junior Bebel Gilberto, who plays Ariel Moore. "We give up 12 hours on Saturdays alone these days just to make it look perfect."

Senior Donald Fagen, who claimed the lead role as Ren McCormack, agreed.

"We have put so much work into this production, and we're anxious to show it off to as many people as possible," he said.

As an actress who has been in every musical during her time at Ad Astra, senior Liz

Barnez said this show is by far her favorite and likes the statement it makes. She said that "'Footloose' is about a kid who comes to town and wants to dance, and that's what we as students want to do as well."

After all the hard work of the students and their dedication to the show, Raitt just wants them to be able to perform and be "portrayed in a wholesome light."

"Our production is very high-energy, with colorful dance numbers," she said. "We have 70 students on stage at one point or another and 30 more working behind the scenes. They do marketing, props, sound, sets, everything. It's really going well."

Judge's Comments

Feature Writing

Good organization.

Nice use of quotes.

Concise writing! Gets right to the conflict of the story!

Provides excellent background and context for the reader

A pleasure to read.

Academics Photo

Great capture!

Focus is on the subject, viewer can still see student's reaction.

Perspective is good and at eye level of subjects in photo.

Color, tonal quality is great and as true to colors and lighting as you can get.



A sudden eruption during a dry-ice lab caused this chemistry student to be startled by the reaction's explosion.

Aspera Presbyterian High School's days of being a 4A school could be coming to an end next year as Ad Astra High School proposes a plan to KSHSAA that would move private schools one classification higher than their enrollment could dictate Ad Astra and one of its main rivals, Presbyterian to 5A. Ad Astra coaches and administrators believe change is needed because it would make it fair when it comes to the number of state championships and state-tournament berths. Ad Astra athletic director Aimee Mann quotes, "Some people want to make this into a thing that's only about Ad Astra and Presbyterian. It isn't. We have the support of all the schools in the Eisenhower League, and other public school leagues are going to be providing their support of our plan."

In class 5A, the four private schools, Aquinas, Carroll, Kapaun, and Miega make up 12.5 percent of the classification. However, in the sports that conduct bracket or pool-play state tournaments (baseball, basketball, football, soccer, softball, and volleyball), those four school combined for 24 of the potential 64 postseason berths. Tony Sharpe, Aspera Presbyterian principal state "I've spent time in private and public schools, and the same factors go into successful programs, good



Sliding into home, Sierra Lenard scores a run for the Lady Cats. The cats won against opponents Burlington by one run.

coaching, supportive parents, community expectations and strong youth programs."

Due to this controversy over public and private schools, a study was created in 2007 that showed private schools won 21 percent of the state titles in volleyball, 11 percent in football, 14 percent in girls basketball and 19 percent in boys basketball. Brent Parsons, KSHSAA director told reporters "I think, nationally, this dialogue has ratched up, not just in Kansas. It's a small world in terms of communication and exposure. High school sports gets more attention than they used to and its' more in the limelight." Private schools make up 26 school of the KSHSAA 360-school membership. No action will be taken by KSHSAA until September 2010 at the earliest.

Judge's Comments

Sports Writing

No comments available.

Sports Photo

Great job cropping this!

Great moment, good use of your technical skills.

Sharp focus and excellent crop make this image stand out.

Very solid image.



Newspaper Sports Writing & Sports Photography

Sam Rourke • 3A/4A • Paola HS

The dream of having playoff success and winning a state title is what every high school athlete plays for.

However, many feel this dream is becoming increasingly unattainable for athletes at public high schools. Private schools continue to rack up post-season success at an unproportional rate.

Recently, Ad Astra High School submitted a proposal to the Kansas State High School Activities Association to help remedy this issue. Their proposal calls for all private schools to be placed one classification higher than their enrollment would dictate.

"We feel there is an inequitable playing field, and we need to discuss the issue and make the necessary changes," said Ad Astra principal Christine Williams.

Their proposal follows recent findings by a panel studying the issue, which found that private schools have won approximately 16 percents of the state titles in four major sports despite only making up 7 percent of the KSHSAA membership.

The response to the proposal from local rival private school Aspera

Kevin Palmer • 3A/4A • Piper HS



Junior Matt Wooley pitches in a league game against Basehor-Linwood April 27. The Pirates went on to win 7-5.

Presbyterian portrays a slightly different viewpoint.

"The same factors go into successful programs-good coaching, supportive parents, community expectations, and strong youth programs," said principal Tony Sharpe.

The main argument Ad Astra athletic director Aimee Mann counters with is the fact that private schools can pick and choose only the best athletes.

No matter which side your on the issue certainly has become a prominent one state and nation wide.

"Everyone has an opinion on the issue and this has certainly heated up the dialogue across the nation," said KSHSAA assistant director Brent Parsons.

KSHSAA will continue considering the proposal and will not take any action until at least September 2010.

Judge's Comments

Sports Writing

Lead is a little dramatic, reporter is a little biased, it took too long to get into proposal.

Good story setup.

Does the proposal follow the study or is it because Ad Astra is getting dominated? You need to address this issue.

Sports Photo

Great eye. This composition is unique and solid.

Great timing and the composition really adds visual interest and makes it compelling.

Good job keeping the ball in the shot.

It seems well thought out, nice job.

Newspaper Sports Writing & Sports Photography

Slade Burns • 5A/6A • Shawnee Mission South HS



After hitting the game-winning run, senior Chris Gilkerson is greeted warmly by his teammates. The Raiders defeated their rival school, I I-I0 in extra innings. The game was played as a part of the Frank White High School Baseball Classic at Kauffman Stadium.

Andrew Goble • 5A/6A • Shawnee Mission East HS

In a new proposal to the Kansas State High School Activities Association (KSHSAA), Ad Astra has called for the reclassification of private schools, raising them one level higher than their enrollment would dictate.

This effort to make competition equal comes from recent stats showing private school dominance across the state. In a 2007 survey, it was found private schools took 21 percent of state volleyball titles and 19 percent of boys' basketball titles; they only make up 7 percent of the KSHSAA Ad Astra principal Christine Williams believed Ad Astra should take a stand.

"At some point, we had to discuss this issue," Williams said. "There's an inequitable playing field, and we need to change it."

Ad Astra athletic director Aimee Mann insists the proposal has nothing to do with the school's rivalry with Aspera Presbyterian High. Presbyterian, who has beaten Ad Astera in 9 out of the 10 last football games, would be push Presbyterian to compete in 5A.

"Some people want to make this into a thing about Ad Astra and Presbyterian," Mann said. "it isn't. We have the support of all the schools in the Eisenhower League, and other schools are going to be providing their support for our plan."

Coaches and administrators both believe this proposal would go to equalize private school's ability to "pick" athletes and win a disproportional number of state championships. The four 5A private schools-Aquinas, Carroll, Kapaun and Miego- combined to hold 37.5 percent of the post season berths despite only being 12.5 percent of 5A schools. Mann says this ability to "pick and choose" as a disadvantage to public school students.

"We are a public school, and our athletic programs exist to give everybody a chance to compete, not just the ultra-talented."

Still, others see the advantage as marginal. Aspera Presbyterian principal Tony Sharpe has spent years in both public and private schools and sees the

same elements of success; "good coaching, supportive parents, community expectatons and strong youth programs." Dominant public programs like Highland Parks, Wyandotte in basketball, SM Northwest in cross country, and Emporia in wrestling also show the line may not be clean cut, according to KSHAA, assistant director Bren Parsons, Sharpe thinks a lack of understanding may light a fire under the issue.

"It's hard to say we're on a normal curve," Sharpe said, "but when you take every Presbyterian kid in town, you're really on a normal curve."

KSHSAA will not take action until at least September 2010. For Principal Parsons, the ultimate goal would be to provide a fair, competitive field- not necessarily to try and make a state championship easier.

"For me, it's about the journey and the chance to maybe win a sub-state," Parsons said. "In some areas, there are more roadblocks with private schools, and these kids just get tired of getting beaten down."

Judge's Comments

Sports Writing

No comments available.

Sports Photo

Couldn't be any better at telling the story.

It's a great moment.

Great timing, and the facial expression of the guy in the air really makes it stand out.

Good cropping off the top; pulls the viewer in.

Cheyanna Colborn • 1A/2A • Humboldt HS



Judge's Comments

Advertising

Great focus!
Great use of a dominant photo, nice picture choice.

Your design does a good job of leading my eye through the ad.
The background is a little busy for newspaper.
Be careful with reverse type (white on color).
The background colors are a little light to read white type.

Headline Writing

Great graphic!
Head is somewhat hard to read.
Head two: He is a former teacher.
Ad Astra not necessary in any head.

Taryn Nelson • 1A/2A • Canton-Galva HS

Drowning out anti-gay message with respect
Ad Astra students, faculty unite to show their support for diversity with big numbers

Competing for Pepsi grant, former Ad Astra teacher strives to 'refresh' teaching skills with technology at high school level



Students, faculty take part in anti-protest

Hundreds unite to counteract the Westboro Baptist Church's message

Judge's Comments

Headline Writing
Great job at capturing the essence of the story.

Former teacher vies for votes to win grant that will support Box Turtle Web, an educational tool for Ad Astra teachers

Advertising
Good identification with target audience by using mascot.
The photo, however, directs the eye out of the ad, not in.

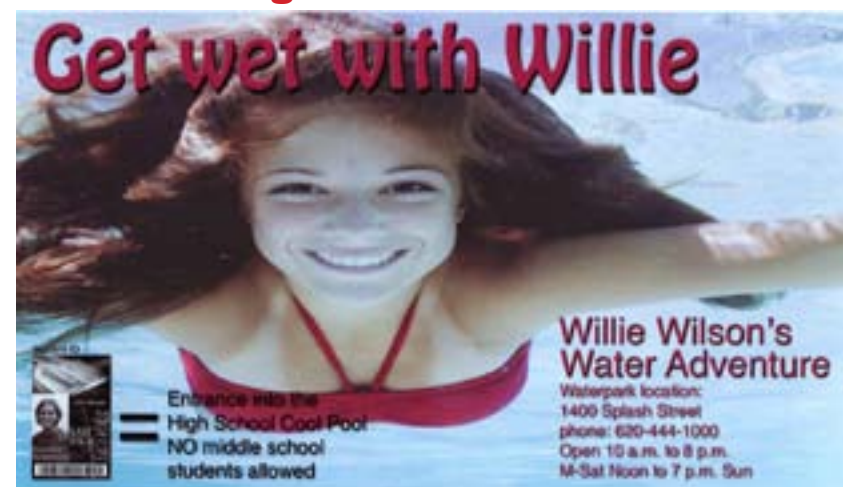
Pretty in Pink
WICKED AT SEWING

Amanda Roberts and other sewing students save money and worry by sewing own prom dresses while making a statement

Courtney Bailey • 3A/4A • Chanute HS



Heather Borg • 5A/6A • Andover Central HS



Judge's Comments

Advertising

Good consistent color between headline & swimsuit.

Good student ID.

Be careful about distancing the picture.

Copy should be larger and not lost in background.

Headline Writing

Great WBC head.

Graphic and its deck are good.

Deck conveys the aspects of story well. Head two is wordy—"in competition to receive" could be "competes for"

Anti-gay church group pickets Ad Astra

Counter-protest event attracts hundreds despite school administration's reproval

Former Ad Astra English teacher in competition to receive Pepsi grant for online toolbox he developed for teachers

A fashion statement



Girls at Ad Astra save money, show off talent by sewing their own dresses for prom

Nathaniel Zoschke • 5A/6A • Shawnee Mission North HS

Judge's Comments

Editorial Writing

I'm not sure it's Harris vs. everyone...be careful not to assign her total fault..

Good job in offering suggestions.

Be careful with expression of emotion.

Editorial Cartoon

Good job on editorializing the issue.

Allen Johnson • 1A/2A • Uniontown HS

This year's prom may become more formal than students think. Principal Emmylou Harris is over-stepping her bounds and proposing to the board that "freaking" should be banned from all school dances starting with prom on May 6.

The controversy started when parents and faculty threw a fit about the way students were dancing at the Homecoming Dance in October. Then Harris felt that it was her duty to resolve the situation by presenting the students with a ridiculous "Clean Dancing Pledge."

The pledge was a joke. Students obviously want to "freak." If they didn't want to then they wouldn't do it at every dance. Asking students to sign a pledge to not dance the way they want is the same as making a rule forbidding it. The pledge the senior and junior classes offered the student body was nothing more than an ersatz attempt at diplomacy.

Van Morrison, junior class president, even admits that they were careless in the way they presented the pledge.

"We didn't do a good job of selling it to the rest of the student body," Morrison said.

In revolt toward the pledge, students boycotted Winter Formal, causing it to be cancelled. Now Harris is asking the board to pass a resolution prohibiting "freaking." Her fault in all this is she didn't pay any mind to the opinions of the students. If the voices of parents and faculty are heard, then so should students'.

"I don't support the principal's attempt to dictate behavior. I do want to stand up for student rights, especially when it comes to free expression," senior Joan Armatrading said.

The proper route for Harris to take would have been asking students to create a compromise, ask the students to submit suggestions. Then, use those suggestions to make a fair compromise. The situation concerns the student so let them help sort it out.

"I think it's the students' duty to stop each other from doing stupid stuff," Morrison said. "I don't think it's the principal's right to tell us how to dance."

Hopefully, when Harris meets with the board they will see the error in her ways. The administration is being stubborn by not allowing students to express their thoughts.



Kaellie Kendall • 1A/2A • Haviland HS



Lindsay Ballard • 3A/4A • Chanute HS

Judge's Comments

Editorial Cartoon

Great.
Creative, well drawn.
The point of how the innocent lose is good.
Solid work and idea.

Editorial Writing

An excellent effort—
fair to all with good
suggestions.
Very direct, with strong
suggestions—the
essence of any good
editorial.
Great organization of
argument.

Sarah Poland • 3A/4A • Chapman HS

Traditions like dances are meant to be a fun and safe break for students. Though the dancing may get out of control, the solution to “freaking” is not regulation and cancellation of the event but monitoring of the students at the dance.

It has been recognized by a variety of people that “freaking” is a problem at Ad Astra High School dances. Junior class president Van Morrison said he thought “freaking” had gotten out of hand last year. Because of complaints, parents and the administration decided something needed to be done, but the actions they have taken are only pushing some students away. The plan to monitor “freaking” needs to be more appealing to students and easy to use.

First, a committee of parents, students, administrators and school board members need to meet to find a compromise that is favored by every committee member and outlines dancing that is appropriate and inappropriate. This committee would be open to anyone wanting to help come to a decision.

Next, an all school assembly needs to be held to show students what dancing the committee decided is appropriate and inappropriate. Students

would also be able to ask questions that would help clarify the new guidelines.

Finally, a program needs to be implemented at all school dances. Upon entrance, all students would receive a wrist band similar to those at concerts or amusement parks. Each dance would be monitored by faculty and parents that have a clear understanding of the guidelines set by the committee. If these monitors find that a student is not following the guidelines, they would cut off their bracelet. If the same student has another offense, they would be forced to leave the dance. Details of this program would also be explained to students during the assembly outlining dancing guidelines.

Instead of eliminating the school-sponsored dances that offer a safe environment to students, all the parties involved including administrators, school board members, parents, and students need to work together. By educating the students about new programs and guidelines, the “freaking” problem can be solved and students can get back out on the dance floor.

Ephraim Chaney • 5A/6A • Shawnee Mission North HS

School dances have long been the tradition of allowing students to “live a little” inside the school doors—a social education that extends beyond the classroom. It is a shame that reputation of this tradition at Ad Astra has come under fire by the actions of students and adults alike.

Ad Astra’s Homecoming and Winter Formal dances have been failures. The sexually-explicit “freaking” style of dancing has upset a great many parents and teachers who think it is explicit. The Star applauds Principal Harris, the PTA and Student Government for their efforts to create the Clean Dancing Pledge and ensure all Ad Astra students have an enjoyable evening.

The Star agrees with Harris, who “thought it was a fair compromise between the parents and students.”

However, the Star board has some reservations about Harris’s plan to ban sexually-explicit dancing from school-sponsored dances, beginning with the Prom on May 8.

There is a great need for students to engage in appropriate behavior at school-sponsored events, but that responsibility should be the burden of the individual student. Any resolution passed by the school board must have

clear language, which would infringe on the rights of the students.

And without clear language, who has the right to decide? Some parents have already advocated to “straight-up ban all dancing,” which is no way to enhance the education and experiences of Ad Astra students.

The Star emphasizes it is the responsibility of the student to behave appropriately. The Student Government did the proper thing by cooperating with Principal Harris to create a resolution. Now the Student Government must get the student body to stand behind the Clean Dancing Pledge and their student rights.

These rights should not and cannot be taken away by the school board. The Star has confidence the Ad Astra student body can take responsibility for itself, with one caveat.

As Ad Astra students, it is important to recognize that students’ actions reflect the school. It is imperative that Ad Astra students engage in appropriate behavior in order to promote the general wellness of every student, the school, and the community. The Clean Dancing Pledge is a step in the right direction.

Judge's Comments

Editorial Writing

Could use more
news about upcoming
meetings.
Good plan.
Balanced approach.

Editorial Cartoon

This is what an editorial
cartoon is.
Perfect.

Donnie Pepoon • 5A/6A • Wichita East HS*

*Unfortunately, the KSPA does not have a copy of the winning 5A/6A Editorial Cartoon.

Photo 1 • Coach



Photo 4 • Trust



Photo 5 • Donating



Photo 2 • Flip



Photo 3 • Musical



Cesilee Weatherhead • IA/2A • Republic County HS

Coach:

At Ad Astra's rival John Brown Gymnasium, Junior Varsity basketball coach Will Belf shouts out against a referee's call. Guard Henry Xavier is given a foul for charging. Despite the controversial call, the Junior Varsity team won 75-68 in overtime. "We had some trouble at the beginning, sure, but the boys really pulled through for a satisfying win. They gave 110 percent," proclaimed Belf.

Flip:

Jessica Kay, junior, flips off the lifeguard stand at the end of her shift at Aspera Community Pool. "I've been working on my flips all summer. Some of the guards have been having a contest, actually, so I've been working on my technique," said Kay. The pool was one of the more popular summer jobs for Ad Astra Students. 10-15 students usually work there each summer.

Musical:

In the theater of Ad Astra High School on April 29 was the opening night of Life on the Frontier. Senior Lewis Staples played Bill Pilgrim. Staples belts out the first song about starting a new life in Kansas, titled "This Prairie". Ad Astra student, Billy Hays wrote the play for a Advanced Theater class project. "It was a feel good kind of play. I mean, it was kind of cheesy sometimes, but overall it was a lot of fun. I love doing stuff like this," described Staples.

Trust:

After a week of bickering about the Spring Fling dance theme, student body president Al Remblerore decided to take matters into his own hands. Students in Student Council took a day to work on team building and trust exercises. During sixth period in the field behind Ad Astra High sophomore class representatives Jenny Weesley and Harriet Potter and freshmen class representatives Isabell Kwan and Jacey Black participate in a partner trust exercise. "It reminded me again why I wanted to do StuCo in the first place. I just love the people," exclaimed Potter.

Donating:

On April 16 in the gymnasium of Ad Astra High, Senior Keith Day awaits a nurse to draw blood. This was Day's sixth or seventh time donating. 55 students donated blood to the Red Cross Blood Drive. Day was not nervous, but more excited. "The nurses were all really nice. I mean, they always are. It was really chill. They even brought me some Oreos right after I was done," said Day.

Judge's Comments

Cutline Writing

Overall, they are very strong.

Good use of information with clean, declarative sentences.

I would suggest consistently leading with the action, so the reader's first question, "What am I looking at?" is answered.



Coach: Junior Varsity boys basketball coach, Will Belf makes his feelings known about a call during the team’s rivalry game at John Brown High School. Henry Xavier had been given the foul for charging and Belf disagreed. In the end the Box Turtles pulled out a win 75-68. Afterwards Belf explained, “We had some trouble at the beginning, sure, but the boys really pulled through for a satisfying win.”

Flip: During the warm months of the year a popular job for students is to lifeguard at Aspera Community Pool. Junior, Jessica Kay is doing just that and enjoys taking flips off the diving board at the end of her shifts. “I’ve been working on my flips all summer,” explained Kay. Her practice is all in anticipation of an upcoming flip competition with her co-workers.

Musical: Senior, Lewis Staples sings along with the chorus in the Ad Astra High presentation of “Life on the Frontier”. The musical was written by Billy Hays, a current Ad Astra student. The show opened April 29 with Staples singing “This Prairie”. He said, “overall it was a lot of fun. I love doing stuff like this!”

Trust: Sophomore class representatives, Jenny Weesley and Harriet Potter (front), accompanied by freshmen class representatives, Isabella Kwan and Jacey Black, participate in a trust exercise as a part of the Leadership Practicum class. “We did leaning back exercises and then did trust falls,” explained student body president Al Rumbledore.

Donating: Senior, Keith Day donates blood during the Ad Astra blood drive for the Red Cross on April 16. Overall, fifty-five students donated. Day explains, “this was like the sixth or seventh time I’ve given blood so I wasn’t really nervous, more excited really. I love feeling like I’m helping out.”

Judge’s
Comments

Cutline Writing

Nice job summarizing facts and conveying them in clear, clean sentences.

For print, put attribution in the middle or at end of quotes.

Coach: Yelling in frustration, junior varsity basketball coach Will Belf contests a charging foul called on guard Henry Xavier at John Brown High School April 16. Despite what Belf considered a terrible call, the team was able to win the game 75-68, boosting its record to 5-3.

Flip: Junior Jessica Kay combines work and play by performing a flip off of a lifeguard stand after work at Aspera Community Pool May 20. “I’ve been working on my flips all summer,” said Kay. “Some of the guards have been having a contest, actually, so I’ve been working on my technique.” Kay worked at the pool as a lifeguard with several other Ad Astra students.

Musical: As he sings the first notes of “This Prairie” April 29, senior Lewis Staples brings the play, Life on the Frontier, to life. This play, written by Ad Astra student Billy Hays, was performed in the Ad Astra theatre and tells a story of starting a new life in the Kansas prairie. “For a first play, it really had a lot of merit,” said director and Advanced Theater teacher Sally Johnson. “The characters were well-developed and the songs were superb.”

Trust: In an attempt to create a closer team bond, sophomore class representatives Jenny Weesly and Harriet Potter (front) and freshman class representatives Isabella Kwan and Jacey Black (back) participate in a trust-building activity in the field behind Ad Astra Jan. 10. Student body president Al Rumblerore decided that, after a week of disagreement about the theme of the Spring Fling dance, the Leadership Practicum class needed to work on building trust. “It reminded me again why I wanted to do [Student Council] in the first place,” said Potter. “I just love the people.”

Donating: With feet up, face stolid and arm out, senior Keith Day donates blood in the Ad Astra Gymnasium April 16. “This as like the sixth or seventh time I’ve given blood, so I wasn’t nervous,” said Day. “More excited really. I love feeling like I’m helping out.” Fifty-five students helped the American Red Cross by donating blood.

Judge’s
Comments

Cutline Writing

Good job overall.

Nice use of information and effort to write engagingly.

A few trouble spots were evident—primarily for redundancy/ambiguous wording.

Lindsay Ballard • 3A/4A • Chanute HS



While attending a leadership camp, seniors Jesse Cole and Jim Lauer construct a floating device that they would use in a boat race. Cole and Lauer were only allowed to use a limited amount of supplies including cardboard, scotch tape, scissors and one trash bag.

Kayla King • 1A/2A • Kinsley HS

As everyday life can be so busy, a lot of us may not have time to walk our dogs. That's where "CSK Dog Services" comes in. The service walks dogs on the weekdays for \$40 a week for people who do not have time to walk their dogs or do not want to deal with picking up after them.

"I work as an investment banker for the First Bank of Aspera, so I have long days where I can't always get home to walk my dog, Bela," said CSK customer, Ry Cooder.

The business started as senior Michael Stipe and juniors Ali Campbell and Mark Knopfler walked through Aspera City Park last summer. The students noticed dog feces laying around all over the park. As a solution was sought out, the students spoke with park manager, Benny Green, for an answer. A conclusion was made with fingers pointing to the dog owners that didn't think it was their responsibility to

pick up after their dogs.

"We've been LARPing (live-action role-playing) at City Park for the past three years, and we've never seen so much poop," said junior co-founder, Ali Campbell. "The park manager was nice when we complained, and he explained to us that most dog owners don't carry plastic with them and don't bother picking up after their dogs."

The idea of the business came about between the three students and customers started rolling in. The business started in September 2009 with three customers. Since then, the business has grown to 20 customers and 25 dogs.

"The parks have never been cleaner, especially regarding poop. I think they've also sparked people to clean up after their picnics and stuff like that too," said Green.

Judge's Comments

Student Life Photo

Good angle.
Good use of depth of field.
Interesting subject.
Guy using tape is a bit blurry.
Overall excellent!

YB Copy Writing

Would have been good to include money the student made.
Overall great job.
You took a refreshing, new angle that others did not.

Jena Sauber • 3A/4A • Southeast of Saline HS

It was a stinky situation that led Ad Astra juniors Ali Campbell and mark Knopfler and senior Michael Stipe to a down and dirty solution, and their own business—CSK Dog Services.

"I love coming up with inventive solutions for what might seem like major problems," Stipe said.

The inventive solutions began when the students noticed and increased amount of dog feces at the Aspera City Park. They decided to talk to park manager Benny Green about the problem.

"...we could've complained more, but we thought we would come up with a constructive solution instead of just complaining. That's how CSK Dog Services started," Campbell said.

Since the business started in September 2009, they've grown from three to 20 customers.

"Our first customers were our parents," Campbell said.

Now, by walking 25 dogs daily, the three make about \$1,000 a week. In addition, according to Green, the students are making a positive impact.

Jena Richardson • 3A/4A • Ottawa HS



With pure concentration, senior Maggie Thyr puts her work ethic to the test as she makes the perfect swirl to top off the cone on April 19. Thyr is currently working at Dairy Queen and has been for the past three years.

Judge's Comments

YB Copy Writing

Overall good story
Nice organization

Student Life Photo

Good job capturing this from a unique angle that allows the viewer to see her face and what she is doing.
Exposure could use a little work, but the fluorescent lights make that harder.
Need to focus a little better.

With a roar, junior Ali Cambell charged at the Hooded Gorgon. Racing through the grass, Cambell was just about to drive his lance through the beast when the unthinkable happened: his foot landed in a giant pile of dog poop.

Cambell, along with senior Michael Stipe and junior Mark Knopfler, spent many days at the city park, role-playing. Unfortunately, scattered throughout the park were piles of dog feces, left there due to a

cutback on maintenance workers, and because of negligent pet-owners.

“We thought we could come up with a constructive solution instead of just complaining,” Cambell said. “That’s how CSK Dog Services started. We figured we could offer walks with the added bonus of scooping poop wherever it happened to land.”

Glenn Karnes • 5A/6A • Andover HS



Juggling the ball, junior banger John Phitsanoukanh prepares to toss the ball to another player during a Saturday rugby match. Despite the fact that rugby is not a school-sanctioned sport, Phitsanoukanh keeps up his skills by playing the game on a club team every weekend.

The pet-walking service, founded by Cambell, Stipe and Knopfler, grew from three customers to 20 throughout the year, pulling in about \$1000 per week for the group of students.

“The parks have never been cleaner,” assistant to the regional park manager Benny Green said. “...I think they’ve also sparked people to clean up after their picnics and stuff like that, too...It’s nice that there’s private business that can take of this for me and encourage others to keep the parks a nice place.”

Judge's Comments

YB Copy Writing

No comments available.

Student Life Photo

Almost cropped too tight.

Great show of expression.

Very interesting.

Nice action.

Ben Neitzel • 1A/2A • St. Francis Community HS



Judge's Comments

Photo Illustration

Great job on creating a strong center of interest.

The placement of text really helps in the strength of the concept.

Keep it up!

YB Sports Writing

Important info was all in the lead, Nice!

Nice flow.

Way to get the fact about gymnastics early in the story.

First quote could have been more flavorful, the one you used is kind of bland.

Stephanie Murray • 1A/2A • Onaga HS

Twas a new addition to the sidelines at Ad Astra High School’s sporting events this year: three boys on the Ad Astra cheerleading squad. Peter Beckett, Colin Moulding, and Dave Gregory all lent their voices and enthusiasm to support AAHS athletics this year.

When Peter Beckett moved to Kansas, he was disappointed to learn that the Kansas State High School Activities Association had stopped sponsoring boys gymnastics as a varsity sport after the 1988 season.

“I moved to Aspera form suburban Chicago before my junior year. I was at Ditka High in Winnetka. I competed on the varsity gymnastics team my first two years, and was number 1 on the rings and the team’s third-best all-arounder,” said Becket.

Opportunities to practice gymnastics were scarce in Aspera, and Beckett saw his dream of getting a gymnastics scholarship “flying out the window real fast”, so he asked cheerleading coach Sue Sylvester if he could join the cheerleading squad his senior year.

“In my 15 years as a sponsor, I have never had a boy on the squad,” said Sylvester, “but I knew about Beckett’s history in gymnastics and when I asked him to join, he was super excited.”

Colin Moulding and Dave Gregory joined Beckett on the cheerleading squad. The trio cheered at games and competed at camps and competitions, where they won several awards for their spirit and athleticism.

“My cheers are known for athleticism and spirited routines that require a great deal of strength and balance,” said Sylvester. “Peter is clearly the best of the three boys. He helps out Colin and Dave quite a bit. He’s a pretty strong dude for someone who’s just 17years old.”

Sylvester wasn’t the only one who thought Beckett was a great addition to the squad.

“I think it’s great that we finally found some boys to be cheerleaders,” said junior cheerleader Bessie Smith. “Their deeper voices really help us cheer louder and Peter is super strong. He lifts me like I’ve never been lifted before. Sometimes I think he’s going to throw me through the roof.”

Though this was the inaugural year for boys cheerleading at Ad Astra, Peter Beckett, Colin Moulding, and Dave Gregory certainly made their mark.

28 • SB 2010

SB 2010 • 29



Clustered photos look good, but it creates big clumps of text that look daunting.

Nice side bar. Don't be afraid to tighten it up some. That will give space for other elements or more information.

Good job.



Graphic has nice
design.

Judge's Comments

YB Layout

Dominant photo could be larger.
This is the winner in this category based on overall design quality.
You add some graphic touches that enhance the overall design.
Main headline on the spread could be a bit more dominant.

Katie Hull • 3A/4A • Ottawa HS



Emily Kulaga • 5A/6A • Shawnee Mission East HS

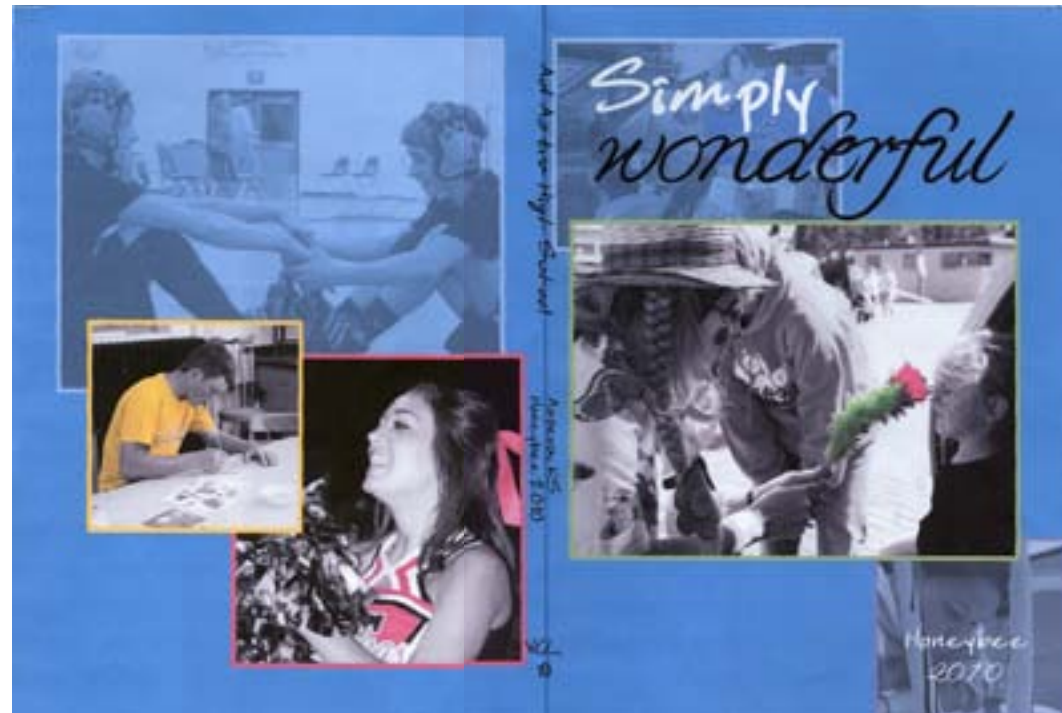


Judge's Comments

YB Layout

Nice clean design, everything works well together.
Captions on top right a little too much text.
I like the graphic on left.
Good use of space.

Dani Bower & Nichole Yette • 1A/2A • Chase County HS



Judge's Comments

YB Theme & Graphics

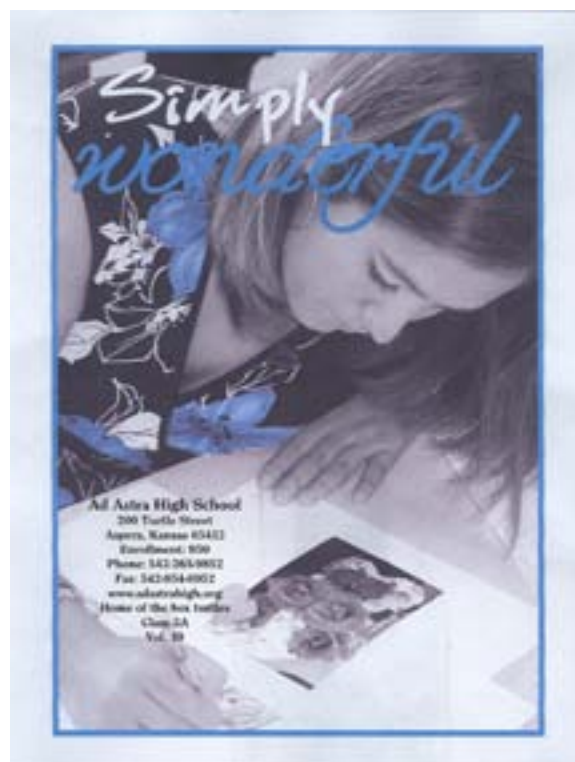
Nice use of color—well done.

Love the title page—*simply wonderful!*

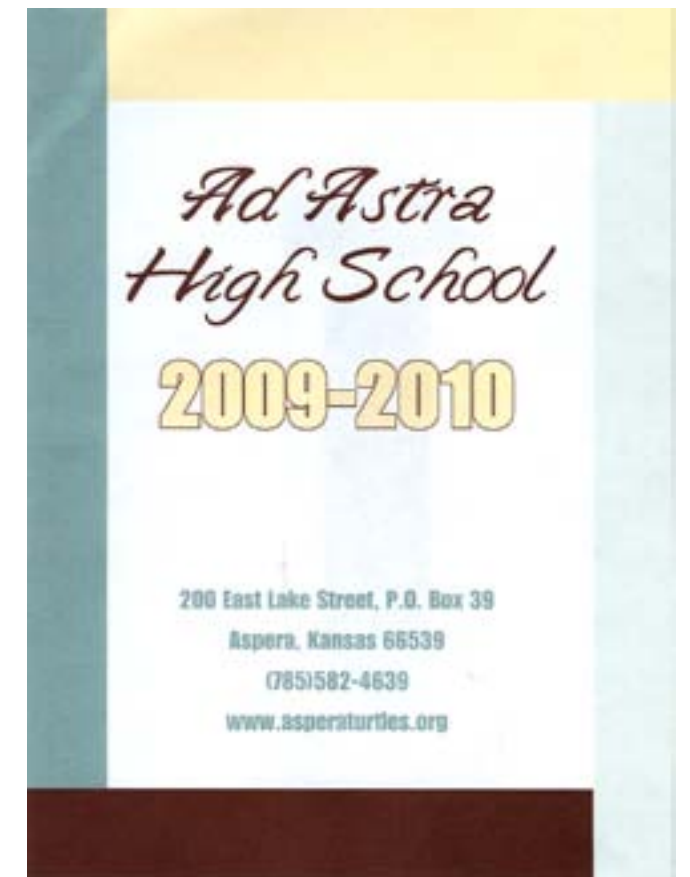
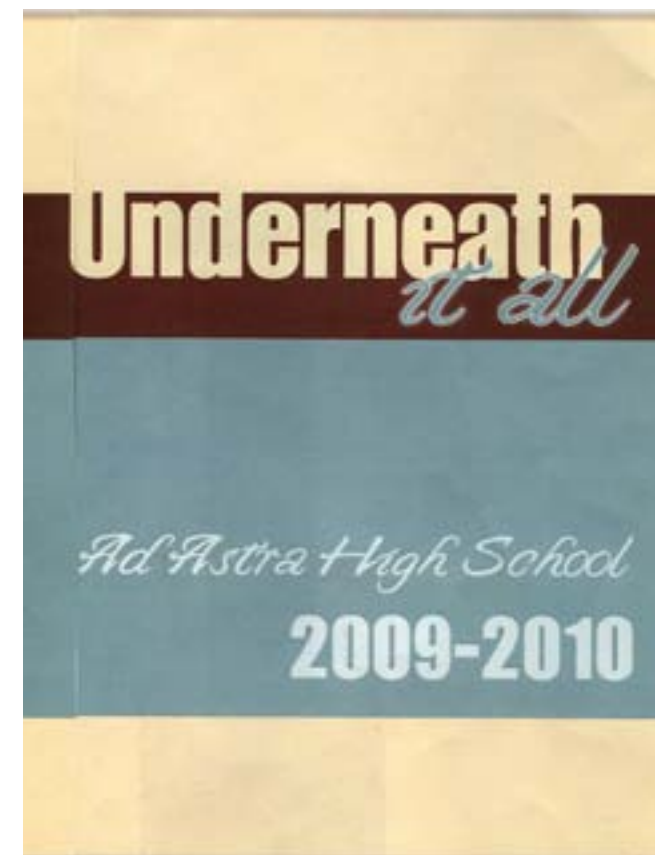
Cover is a little bit busy.

Front of the cover works well with the color in the black and white photo.

Back cover—the two color pictures vie for attention.



Lindsay Taylor • 3A/4A • Silver Lake HS

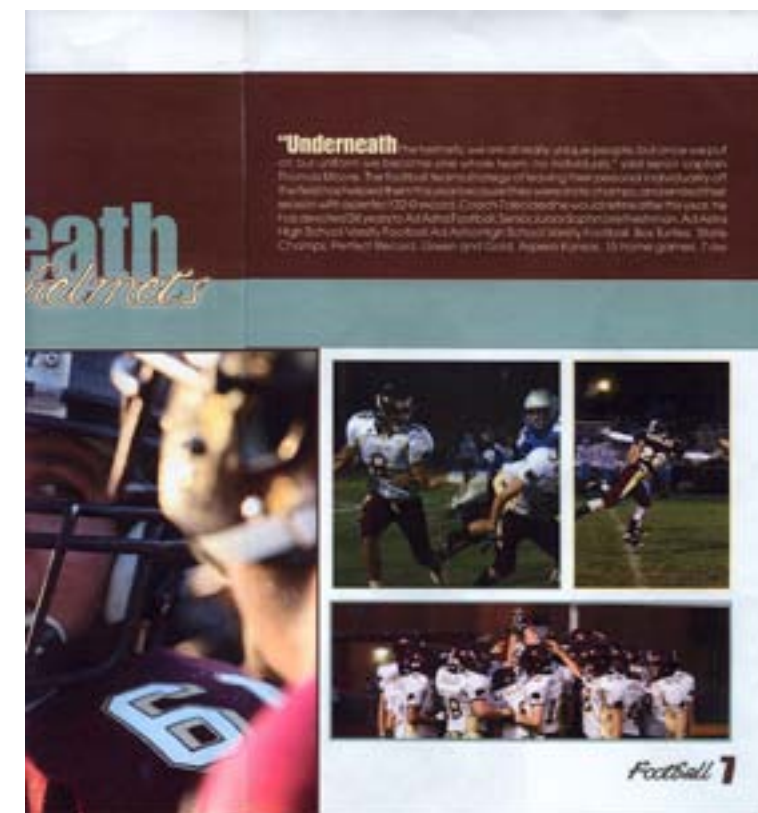


Judge's Comments

YB Theme & Graphics

Cover and title page are very simple, yet attractive—nice layering effect with type.

Nice dominant photo. Interesting color choices.





Judge's Comments

YB Theme & Graphics

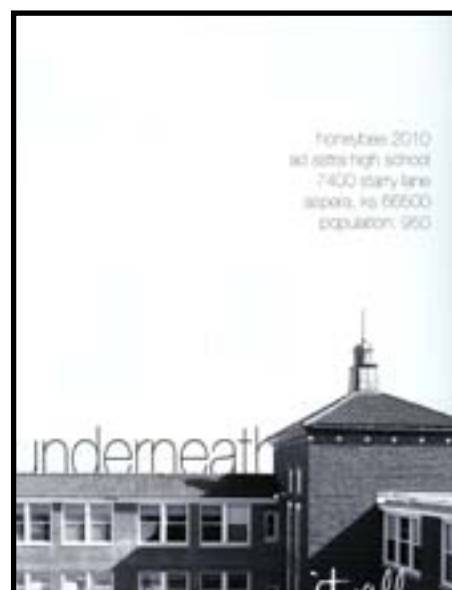
Overall, this is a very good entry.

Be very exact when using cutouts—take your time.

Consider a very subtle drop shadow when using a cutout on a white background.

Use a higher-quality photo when printing so large as on the theme spread.

Always consider real handwriting in place of handwriting fonts.



Winners in Editing

Alexis Hosack

• 1A/2A • Humboldt HS

Maggie Hylton

• 3A/4A • Independent HS

Labrina Kelley

• 5A/6A • Manhattan HS

Winners in Video News Package*

Jordan Hatcher, Kelly Hannigan & Manny Bennett

• 1A/2A • Chase County HS

Audri Monteith

• 3A/4A • Silver Lake HS

Brooke Hofer, Brandon Duran & Sarah Broddle

• 5A/6A • Olathe Northwest HS

*No comments available for Video News Package.

Judge's Comments

1A/2A Editing

A phenomenal job on a difficult story.

You show an excellent grasp of the fine points of editing but also an excellent understanding of the need to think through the story.

I'm impressed with your work.

3A/4A Editing

Very strong entry—great work here.

Your edits were solid.

Good comments on the pieces of the story that were opinionated and libelous.

Be sure to check your AP Stylebook for entries on times, dates and addresses.

Good job overall.

5A/6A Editing

An excellent job of editing a difficult story.

You caught the big issues and truly worked at editing without trying to reconstruct the story.

You missed some small things, but your paper stood out for its levelheaded, logical approach.



Sweepstakes

1A

1st Place

Lincoln
Satanta
Yates Center

2nd Place

Haviland

3rd Place

Natoma

4A

1st Place

Piper

2nd Place

Silver Lake

3rd Place

Chanute

2A

1st Place

Chase County

2nd Place

Humboldt

3rd Place

Saint Francis

5A

1st Place

Mill Valley

2nd Place

Bishop Carroll

3rd Place

Andover

3A

1st Place

Phillipsburg

2nd Place

Caney Valley

3rd Place

Southeast of Saline

6A

1st Place

Shawnee Mission East

2nd Place

Shawnee Mission North

3rd Place

Shawnee Mission Northwest



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