

KSPA 2012 STATE CONTEST WINNERS

The Kansas Scholastic Press Association held its 41st annual State Contest on May 5, 2012 where approximately 1,387 entries were received from 100 schools throughout the state.

Of those entries, students receiving first place awards earned the honor of having their work published in this 19th issue of **SIMPLY BETTER.**

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

The contest offered 20 categories in journalism and judges' comments are published with each entry.



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Last Saturday, the Board voted to make some drastic changes to this year's summer school program. By reducing student numbers and hours spent in the classroom, Ad Astra plans to save around \$300,000.

"Keeping high school students on track to graduate is our priority," said Martin Medeski-Wood, school board president, "but there's only so much we can do with so little money."

Only juniors and seniors will have the opportunity to enroll in the summer school program. The first 100 students will take one course at JB High School over the course of 24 days.

"Some freshmen and sophomores may lose out on classes, but we can't predict how many," said Medeski-Wood.

In another effort to save money, no regular classroom teachers will teach during the summer. Instead, administrators, who are paid year-round, will run the classes.

"To be quite honest, I haven't taught a class in 12 years. I taught computer science, but I haven't kept up with the latest technological advances since I became an administrator," said EmmyLou Harris, Ad Astra High School principal. "I'm going to have to study really hard the next month to get ready to teach comp sci again this summer."

With all of these changes, the board estimates that only \$148,000 will be spent on summer school this year.

"It is often difficult to predict which students will find themselves a class or two behind at the end of their senior year and summer school is an important opportunity," said Harris.

NEWS WRITING

By Jacey Cantrell
Canton-Galva High School



judges' comments

Watch out for saying "only" \$148,000.

Overall \$8 million budget cut is important..

NEWS WRITING

By **Ashlee Hisey**
Girard High School



judges' comments

Pay attention to quotes and
"approximately"

The USD 999 Board of Education voted last Saturday to cut back summer school offerings, a decision that will save the district approximately \$300,000.

Due to funding shortfalls of \$8 million, AA High School will limit classes to juniors and seniors who are one or two classes short of meeting graduation requirements. Each student may only take one course and only the first 100 who register will be admitted.

Instead of hiring summer teachers for both AA High School and JB High School, administrators who have 12-month contracts will teach classes at John Brown High School.

The Board estimated that the district budget for summer school will be close to \$148,000 with \$128,000 coming from a federal migrant student grant.

Regarding the budget cuts, school board president Martin Medeski-Wood said, "Keeping high school students on track to graduate is our priority, but there's only so much we can do with so little money."

Principal Emmylou Harris responded to the event by saying, "Summers have been important in keeping at-risk students learning through the summer and not dropping back in their progress."

"...Summer school is an important opportunity. If we can't find more money to fund summer school, I think it's important that we look even more closely at how we structure school within the traditional year."



n Saturday May 5 at the White House, President Barack Obama recognized music teacher Miles Davis as one of the four finalists for National Teacher of the Year.

In January, the council of Chief State School Officers named Davis a finalist for the award.

“Miles does so much with so few resources,” Obama said. “He works in a school district that has consistently had to cut funding for the arts, and yet Miles’ students produce beautiful music every semester.”

Davis, also named Kansas Teacher of the Year in February, competed for the national prize against teachers of the year for Alabama, California, and the U.S. Department of Defense.

“I know that I’m not a better teacher than Miles,” top honor recipient Rebecca Sunnybrook-Farm said. “I’m just lucky that they picked me. They must have flipped a coin.”

On Friday May 4, Davis was also honored at Vice President Joe Biden’s residence during a reception hosted by Biden’s wife, Dr. Jill Biden.

“I was so touched meeting the President,” Davis said. “But I was more touched by the kind words of Jill Biden, who assured me that we all make a difference in our lives, whether we win awards or not.

NEWS WRITING

By **Jordan Huesers**
Blue Valley High School



judges’ comments

Inverted pyramid. Most important info is not the date but the who – the president.

Would like to see some of the specifics about why he was nominated

EDITORIAL WRITING

By Briana Woodworth
Burrton High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

*A nice support of Hellman, but more
background needed to support view.*

Otherwise, nicely done.

People usually do their best to do the right thing, especially leaders. As a leader, people have to realize that not everyone is going to be happy with some decisions that leaders have made.

Student Council President, Richard Hellman wanted to try and make being Prom King and Queen fair for everyone, including LGBT couples.

Hellman introduced the resolution during a meeting on Jan. 12, but it got shut down right away by Student Council Adviser, Mikki Moore, who said they will not even vote on it.

On Feb. 8, Hellman was informed that he was no longer Student Council President. He was told that he was being removed for "pushing personal projects and trying to make policy changes."

"They've damaged my reputation in some respects," Hellman said. "They're putting out the position that I was a bad leader, which is hurtful to me because I respect the students, I respect the school."

Hellman decided to file a lawsuit against the school.

"If we don't win this, schools have carte blanche to remove students when they have controversial viewpoints, even when the viewpoint is expressed in a meaningful and constructive way."

To make matters worse, the school denied Hellman's claim that he was removed because of the resolution, but because he failed as a Student Body President.

The school felt threatened by the fact that Hellman's claim was making the school look prejudice and bias according to Flaudi.

Hellman was trying to make things fair to people who are not straight, unlike Hellman, who is straight. So, we can tell that it wasn't for personal benefit that he brought it up, he was trying to be a fair and just leader like he should be.

Richard Hellman, former student body president, deserves his position back.

Hellman was told that he was being removed from his position for “pushing personal projects” and advocating “policy changes” shortly after suggesting a LGBT-inclusive “from King and Queen” tradition. Mikki Moore, a student-council faculty adviser, overstepped her boundaries by attempting to end the related discussion with a formal vote, not preceded by proper debate or resolution.

The problem, however, lies within the later details of the case. After initiating a lawsuit, Hellman was informed that he was removed from office for actions such as cancelling and rescheduling meetings with little or no notice, acting uncivilly and refusing to comply with instruction from faculty advisers – a completely different explanation than before.

If these statements were true, why was Hellman not told them at the time of discharge? And why was he not pulled from office earlier?

A president’s job is to carry out the wishes of the student body, as well as to help suggest ideas to be used. At the time of expulsion, he was merely doing his job.

Not only was Hellman in the right to suggest the change that he was judged and removed for, but he is also correct to defend his and other future leaders’ First Amendment rights to state their positions and fight for them, regardless of the dynamics of the change.

Hellman was unfairly booted for his position for carrying out his duties and is being accused of lying while being prodded under false pretenses. Ad Astra should reinstate him.

EDITORIAL WRITING

By **Jacki Huse**
Humboldt High School



judges’ comments

Well-written and planned.

*Particularly like forceful viewpoint
right in the lead. Has a good
beginning, middle and end.*

EDITORIAL WRITING

By **Damien Gilbert**

Wichita High School East

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

Strong writing and strong opinion.

Potential to have impact for student readers. It would have been better to go a step further and call for reinstatement or some action.

A high school serves many purposes. Not only is its job to stimulate and expand the academic knowledge of its students, it serves also as a place for young adults to develop social skills while fostering their creativity and maturity. It is the responsibility of a school to unwaveringly support the positive endeavors of its students.

In this, Ad Aspera High School has failed miserably.

Recently, the student body president – a person elected to the office by a majority of his peers – was forcibly removed from his position for advocating a change in the school's discriminatory dance policy.

This action raises many questions. How can the student council do its job under constant threat of removal? Where can gay students turn for help when even their own school refuses to learn to stand up for their beliefs when they are punished with an iron fist for doing so?

The administration claims that the president was removed because he failed to perform multiple other tasks. Even if this were true, it's certainly coincidental that nothing was said about it until he advocated civil treatment of LGBT students. Immediately and forcibly removing a student from the office he or she has earned, even if the student has slipped up, is never proper procedure at an institution whose job it is to correct mistakes and help students grow.

The fact of the matter is this: it is unfortunate and saddening when students bully each other. But when a school bullies its own student?

That's just despicable.

It's another monotonous day of school. Students are dragging their feet to their chemistry class, where they slump into their chairs. Suddenly, they are awakened by the lighting of a propane torch.

For students at Ad Astra, this is not a peculiar occurrence. Substitute Al Safranek often begins his classes with something out of the ordinary and it has made him one of the most sought-after substitutes in the district.

"Mr. Safranek is one of those people that you would want teaching not only your class, but your own children as well," said Fred Rickers, Ad Astra High School's science Department chair.

Safranek studied at Temple University in Philadelphia, earning several college degrees in fields such as chemical and aerospace engineering and geology. From there, he went on to work at NASA, where he designed heat shield materials and rocket thrusters for the Apollo missions. He now works as a substitute teacher for the Aspera County Unified School District nearly three times a week.

"Kids these days have so much talent," said Safranek. "I want to motivate them to do something with it."

Besides subbing, Safranek also invites his students to his house where they can watch him perform a variety of science experiments, from exploding frozen ice cubes to making gunpowder from chicken manure.

"I started going to Mr. Safranek's house when I was in middle school," said Tom Schuetz, senior chemistry student. "He did the coolest stuff with glass and chicken poop. I've the chicken-stuff gunpowder to hunt coyotes on our land, and it works. No kidding."

Safranek not only demonstrates cool experiments, he also encourages and motivates the students to be the best that they can be.

"If it weren't for Mr. Safranek, I'd probably be getting ready to start working at Casey's behind the counter selling...pizza," said Schuetz. "Instead, Mr. Safranek helped me get into K-State, where I'm [going to] study chemistry."

Safranek attributes his positive attitude and success to his high school teachers, who encouraged him to finish school and helped him secure a scholarship for college.

"Those teachers made a millionaire," said Safranek.

With Safranek, students will always look forward to breaking the monotony of their school day.

"I know he makes a positive impression on kids because when I tell them I will be gone, the first thing they always ask is, 'Will [our sub] be Mr. Safranek?'" said Rickers.

FEATURE WRITING

By Jacey Cantrell

Canton-Galva High School



judges' comments

Nick work. Work on setting up quotes with a quick sentence before quote.

FEATURE WRITING

By Jessica Pearson
Jefferson West High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

Very well done! It's longer than 400 words, but the information and the ways it was presented makes up for that. Good use of 3 sources, and I like the organization of the story.

Did not like the placement of the second paragraph, but otherwise nearly perfect.

Aspera County Unified School District has 250 qualified substitute teachers. At 79 years old, Al Safranek is one the most in-demand substitute teachers at Ad Astra High School.

Safranek was once a poor farm boy from Pennsylvania. His teachers recognized his potential, encouraged him to finish high school and helped him secure a scholarship from Temple University in Philadelphia.

"Those teachers made me a millionaire," Safranek said.

Since then, Safranek has worked in chemical and aerospace engineering with additional stunts in geology and limnology. He also worked on NASA's Apollo mission, where he designed heat shield materials and rocket thrusters.

He is now "comfortable" in retirement, but still works threes days a weeks as a substitute teacher.

"Kids these days have so much talent," Safranek said. "I want to motivate them to do something with it."

Safranek substituted for chemistry teacher John Hasller's class on Tuesday, April 24. He began the class be simply lighting a propane torch. He then proceed to explain the inverse square law to the 25 chemistry students. They gathered around the table while Safranek was speaking and watched as he shaped the glass from an Apollo rocket into a miniature dog-like creature.

"If it weren't for Mr. Safranek, I'd probably be getting ready to start working at Casey's," said senior chemistry student Tom Schuetz. "Instead, Mr. Safranek helped me get into K-State, where I'm going [to study] chemistry."

Safranek motivates his students because of the teachers who motivated him. One of his teachers made him promise to give back and motivate kids if he ever became successful.

"I tell the kids, 'It's up to you to figure out how to use knowledge to solve world problems,'" Safranek said.

Those same teachers who motivated Safranek in high school also helped him choose his wife, who now bakes cookies for the kids who stop by the house to watch Safranek perform experiments.

"My teachers told me I was going to prom, handed my a yearbook and said, 'pick a dates,'" Safranek said. "I've been married to that date for 60 years now."

Safranek and his wife, Betty, live in a modest bungalow across from Miller-Lefler Middle School. His favorite experiments to perform the for the kids who stop by involve exploding frozen ice cubes and piling students atop a fighter jet's nylon floor plate to test its strength.

"Mr. Safranek is one of those people that you would want teaching not only your class, but your own children as well," said science department chair Fred Rickers.

Students arriving at chemistry class expecting to sleep were pleasantly surprised to find substitute Mr. Al Safranek, who spent the class wowing them with an activity involved propane torch and melting glass.

Safranek, one of the most in-demand substitutes at Ad Astra High School, has not always been a substitute. In his 79 years he has built up a large scientific resume and is now giving back to students through his teaching.

Born on a farm in Pennsylvania, Safranek was not sure that he even wanted to finish high school. His teachers recognized his potential, however, and encouraged him to finish his education. One made his promise to give back and motivate kids if he ever became successful.

Safranek's teachers didn't only inspire him to teach and give back – they also helped him find a wife.

"My teachers told me I was going to prom and handed me a yearbook and said, 'Pick a date,'" said Safranek. "I've been married to that date for 60 years now."

The woman he chose, Betty, finished first in their high school class, while Safranek finished 68th.

"She's the smart one in the family," he said.

Safranek continued his education at Temple University in Philadelphia, earning his first of many college degrees. As he continued his career, he became involved with chemical and aerospace engineering, geology, and limnology. He also worked with NASA, designing heat shield materials and rocket thrusters for the Apollo mission.

Now, Safranek usually substitutes three days a week. The job not only helps with bills and gas money, but also provides Safranek with a way to give back to young people.

"Kids these days have too much talent," he said. "I want to motivate them to do something with it."

Safranek's teaching style causes students to become innovative with their minds.

"My granny was so poor she used to make gunpowder from chicken manure. I still do that sometimes just to show kids what they can do with nothing," he explained.

"It's up to you to figure out how to use knowledge to solve world problems. And if you can't use what is already available, it's up to you to figure out new processes to solve issues," he said.

Students and teachers alike love when Mr. Safranek substitutes.

Fred Rickers, AA High School science department chair, said, "I know he makes a positive impression on kids because when I tell them I will be gone, the first thing they always ask is, 'Will [our sub] be Mr. Safranek?'"

"If it weren't for Mr. Safranek, I'd probably be getting ready to start working at Casey's," said senior Tom Schuetz. "Instead, Mr. Safranek helped me get into K-State, where I'm gonna study chemistry."

"As a teacher," said Rickers, "I can count on Al to teach my students beyond any lesson plan I leave for him to follow."

FEATURE WRITING

By Molly Bogner

Bishop Carroll High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

Wow. Really nice work. You get it.

Congrats!

YEARBOOK COPY WRITING

By **Randee Grover**
St. Francis Community
High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

*Good lead. Good that you included
prom king and queen.*

Despite the disastrous tornado that ripped through Aspera in May 2011, sponsors on the local and national level chipped in to ensure that the students of Ad Astra High School would have a prom night they'd never forget.

The theme was "Once Upon a Time", and each of the three rooms designated for prom were decorated differently: Aladdin, Alice in Wonderland, and Disney Princesses. The dazzling red carpet that the students walked in on stretched well in the parking lot of Eisenhower Motor Lodge.

For senior Shania Priddy and her boyfriend of four years, senior Adny Limbaugh, this was their first prom experience. "I've been excited for High School now, jumping up and down like a little girl. It's a lot better than I imagined it would be," Priddy said.

The entertainment for the evening was performed by the Aspera-based band, "Googly Moogly". Lead singer Curtis Stiggers told us before the dance, "I'm just looking forward to playing for kids that want to have fun. We want to help them have the best night possible."

Regardless of the outstanding decorations, wonderful music presentation, and generous sponsors, the estimated 600 students in attendance couldn't help but feeling as if something was missing.

Lawrence Hulse, who would have been a junior this year was not walking through promenade with his fellow classmates. Hulse was caught driving during the storm that left Aspera so devastated, and was killed.

"He was the nicest person. He would do anything for you. It helps. It makes it less hard, I guess, because I'm just reminded that he was a good person," said senior Michael Hulse of his brother.

The ravaging tornado that not only tore apart their beloved town, but also took one of their fellow classmates from them did not hinder Ad Astra's students from enjoying their prom, however. Out of 5 prom queen nominees and 5 prom king nominees, Colin Moulding was named king and Lita Ford was named queen.

With Ad Astra High's students and faculty, along with all of the sponsors and donations from the community, students really were thankful for a night they wouldn't forget. Senior Cherie Currie said, "It is just a victory call, that this is our city. We are rebuilding...no tornado can take us down."

Once upon a time the town of Aspera, Kansas was stunned by an EF-5 tornado. The spinning beast not only took structure for the town, but a young life as well. Lawrence Hulse, who would have been a junior this year, was killed driving during the storm.

While the memories of that chilling night will remain rooted in the town, 50 local and national sponsors help to spin emotions in a new direction to create a better “Once Upon a Time.” These sponsors, including pop star Adele donated everything from dresses to tuxes to give Ad Astra High School students a magical prom experience.

The prom magic drifted over the three prom rooms, all decorated differently, including an Aladdin-themed room, an Alice in Wonderland-themed room and a princess-themed room.

“They did a nice job with décor,” said junior Valerie Tuchman. “I’m just thankful to have a prom this year.”

About 600 sparkling dresses and tuxedos attended the event. They captured the night with pictures, ate dinner and were entertained by the band “Googly Moogly”.

Students not only enjoyed their fairly tale night, but understood its importance to the Aspera community.

“It is just a victory call, that this is our city,” said senior Cherie Currie. “We are rebuilding...no tornado can take us down.”

YEARBOOK COPY WRITING

By Krista Sudbeck

Hiawatha High School



judges' comments

Your structure was nice, and you used strong verbs, but you could have fleshed out what you wrote. I liked your take on the tornado aspect of the prom and rebuilding, etc. Don't forget to include key details though, like who won prom king/queen – people will want to remember that in their yearbooks.

YEARBOOK COPY WRITING

By **Ali Self**
Andover Central High
School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

Don't use "There is/there are".

Nice job, but for a yearbook, it would have been nice to acknowledge the classmate who was killed. Also, this is the yearbook memory of prom – who was king and queen?

Often when a tornado tears a town apart, it brings the community closer together. Everyone combines efforts to begin rebuilding and moving forward. After an EF-S tornado hit Aspera in May 2011, the 2012 prom became an event to show support for the community.

"It is just a victory call, that this is our city. We are rebuilding...no tornado can take us down," senior Cherie Currie stated.

The "Once Upon a Time" themed prom was made possible with the help of more than 50 local and national sponsors. There were also Donations made ranging from discounted tickets to prom dresses. At the event there was a soda bar, henna station, cupcakes, and the Aspera-based band "Googly Moogly."

"I'm just looking forward to playing for kids that want to have fun. We want them to have the best night possible," said Curtis Stiggers, lead singer for Googly Moogly.

Embracing the "Once Upon a Time" theme, there were three separate rooms, each with different décor. The three decoration themes were Aladdin, Alice in Wonderland, and princesses.

"They did a nice job with décor so far, it's pretty good. I'm just thankful to have a prom this year," junior Valerie Tuchman said.

After a year of tragedy, students were able to walk down the red carpet and enter a fairy-tale prom.

"Things are going amazing. The kids look phenomenal and they're ready to party like rockstars," said Emmylou Harris, Ad Astra principal.

You might only know him from his Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle catching gear. However, Billy “Pudge” Eckstine is a name you won’t want to forget.

Eckstine has been the starting catcher for the Ad Astra Box Turtles all four years of his high school career. He also started at quarterback his senior year.

The left-handed batter and right-handed thrower already signed a National Letter of Intent to play baseball at Kansas State University. He’s likely to be drafted in the June 2012 Major League Baseball Amateur Draft.

“It feels too good to be true,” Eckstine said. “I try to ignore the talk. The draft is so unpredictable. I don’t want to get my hopes up too high and then be disappointed. I try to push that kind of talk away as well as any thought of signing for millions of dollars. It is cool to think about at times. I try to ignore it, but at the same time it does put a smile on my face.”

Likelihood for the draft is no surprise with Eckstine’s accomplishments. He’s a two-time first-team Class 5A All-State catcher.

Ad Astra head coach Willard “Whitey” Ratt said his catcher generally leads by example and his emotions remain on an even keel. Even as a freshman, Eckstine came through in the clutch. He tied the game with one swing of the bat after being down 3-0.

“There are a lot of good defensive catchers out there,” Ratt said. “But they can’t swing it like Pudge does. He’s got all of the tools. There are few high school guys like him. He has the opportunity to be a great player.

After making the playoffs and losing in the quarter finals last season, many pitchers graduated.

The Box Turtles started out 1-4 but have surged to an 18-13 mark. Through the first 26 games, Eckstine was hitting .462 with seven home runs and 36 RBIs.

“We started off a bit slow, but then we started winning,” Eckstine said. “There is always room for improvement in baseball. It took one of the parents to say something before we realized that we weren’t having fun. Now the mood is completely different.”

Eckstine has a bright future ahead of him, but he still has an ultimate goal before he graduates: to win a state championship.

YEARBOOK SPORTS WRITING

By Kaylee Engle

Chase County Jr/Sr High
School



judges' comments

Great lead and development of story

Used proper style for attribution:

“source said”.

YEARBOOK SPORTS WRITING

By Ashley Fowler
Russell High School



judges' comments

Needs a third source.

*Shorten up the quotes by only using
the best parts of them.*

Ever thought you would see a ninja turtle play baseball? Senior Bill Eckstine at Astra High School transforms to Donatello the ninja turtle every game day. His family specially made a catchers suit to replicate that of a ninja turtle.

"Donatello was a bad-ass, who wouldn't want to be a ninja," Eckstine said.

Eckstine has been the starting catcher for the Ad Astra Box Turtles his whole high school career. He is a two-time first-team class 5A All-State catcher.

This season alone he was hitting .452 with seven home-runs batted n. He hit a total of 12 homers in each of his previous two seasons and knocked 90 runs collectively.

"We have scouts at practice pretty much every day. They really like his power, his speed, and his incredible athletic ability," Coach Willard Ratt said.

Major league scouts have noted Eckstine's bat speed, and the power he is able to generate with it, which is why he has become such a hot commodity.

"People have always said I'd play professionally. But those were people that I knew. When I was 12 or 13 we were playing at an Elite 24 event in Orlando and this guy came up and asked me to sign a baseball. While I was signing it, he said, 'We can't wait to see you play on TV,'" Eckstine said.

He is likely to be drafted in the June 2012 Major League Baseball Amateur Draft.

"I wouldn't be where I am today if the game wasn't fun. You have to have fun in order to be good at it. The speed of the game gets faster and faster as you advance further and further into your development. So it is important to relax and to have fun," Eckstine said.

Eckstine and the team has been playing well with a record of 18-13. As the season progressed the pitching allowed the Turtles to win on days when the offense was at a low.

"We started off a bit slow, but then we started winning. There is always room for improvement in baseball. It took one of the parents to say something before we realized that we weren't having fun. Now the mood is completely different," Eckstine said.

It's a bird! It's a plane! It's a Ninja Turtle?

The colorful purple and green catcher's padding is common to see on Senior Billy "Pudge" Eckstine. His parents custom designed it to match the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle Donatello.

"Who wouldn't want to be a Ninja?" Eckstine said.

Besides his gear, Eckstine is known greatly for his skill. His batting average was .452 and he had 36 runs batted in including his seven home runs.

"There are a lot of good defensive catchers out there. But they can't swing it like Pudge does. He's got all of the tools. He has the opportunity to be a great player," coach Williard Ratt said.

Eckstine has already signed to play baseball at Kansas State University. He also has big opportunities lined up for the future.

"He's a once-in-a-lifetime guy. You're not going to find a better athlete at catcher. He has all the tools," St. Louis Cardinals scout Paul Rexler said.

Eckstine is projected to be chosen in the 2012 Major League Baseball Amateur Draft.

"I try to ignore the talk. The draft is unpredictable. I don't want to get my hopes up too high and then be disappointed," Eckstine said.

As a freshman, Eckstine had already started impressing people.

"He hit it some 300 feet as a 14-year-old with the game's outcome on the line. I was in awe. But then he's always come through in the clutch," Ratt said.

Eckstine is a two-time first-team Class 5A All-State Catcher. Winning a state title is his next goal.

"It's tough for kids. He has to stay mentally focused in order to play well. I have a lot of respect for him because of what he's going through and the way he's handling it. He stays focused and he plays hard," Rexler said.

Despite a 1-4 start to the season, Eckstine helped propel the team to a record of 18-13.

"We started off a bit slow, but then we started winning. There is always room for improvement in baseball," Eckstine said.

YEARBOOK SPORTS WRITING

By Patrick Collins
Andover Central High
School



judges' comments

Great lead!

Too much passive voice.

NEWS SPORTS WRITING

By **Hannah O'Neil**
Canton-Galva High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

Needed to mention Vanderbilt.

Awkward wording: "Decided his college choice" "to play football at".

Appreciated the direct lead.

Some awkward sentences, but I think you did a nice job getting all the relevant information into the story. Nice work.

A.J. Lingonberry, junior All-Kansas linebacker decided Tuesday afternoon in the Box Turtle Auditorium his college choice to play football at would be Northwestern University.

"It was a hard, hard decision," said Lingonberry. "I made up my mind about an hour before the press conference. I was thinking about it all last night whether it would be Duke or Northwestern."

Lingonberry chose Northwestern because he said it had the best program for computer forensics, his most likely major. Lingonberry also said he believes he has a greater chance stepping out onto the field as a freshman because Duke is in need of linebackers.

"I told him to go where his heart is, go where you feel you really want to be for the next four years," said Erica Lingonberry, mother.

Last season, the 6-foot-3, 226-pound linebacker made 151 tackles, batted down nine passes, caused eight fumbles, made four sacks and intercepted three passes. The team went undefeated up until the Kansas Class 5A state title game against Battlefield.

"It was just time to make a decision and get it over with, and start getting ready for the next football season and not worry about college," said Lingonberry.

Lingonberry also said his choice of Northwestern was steered by the chance to play with top Kansas players. Eddie Greenberg, senior All-Kansas offensive lineman from Friendship Jewish Academy in Hays, and Ron Derby, senior honorable mention All-Kansas cornerback from Our Lady of Perpetual Sorrow in Wichita, both are committed to Northwestern.

"I feel for all the schools that were involved," said Bob Lilly, Ad Astra head football coach. "You get an opportunity to have a player of this caliber as a class person in your program. It's hard when you're not that [school]."

Although Lingonberry decided on Northwestern he will not receive a formal, written scholarship until shortly before his senior year starts.

After thanking his many supporters and coaches from his top three finalists, Ad Astra junior All-Kansas linebacker A.J. Lingonberry slapped his hand on a Northwestern cap, leaving the Vanderbilt and Duke caps on the table of Tuesday afternoon in the Box Turtle Auditorium.

The 6-foot-3, 226 pound Lingonberry said he chose Northwestern because it had the best program for his likely major, Computer forensics, and also because of Northwestern's need for linebackers and his likely chance to compete for playing time as a Freshman.

"It was a hard decision," Lingonberry said. "I made up my mind about an hour before the press conference."

Eleven years earlier, 2001 All-Kansas Defensive player of the Year Mel Brooks was in the same boat as he too held the audience captive in that very room before announcing his intention to attend Vanderbilt.

Lingonberry, like Brooks, has been invited to play in the U.S. Army All-American Bowl in San Antonio, last season made 151 tackles, battled down nine passes, forced eight fumbles, racked up four sacks and intercepted three passes.

The junior also led the Box Turtles to an 11-1 season losing their only and final game in the Kansas class 5A state title game.

"I feel for all the schools that were involved," Ad Astra head football coach Bob Lilly said. "You get an opportunity to have a player of this caliber and a class person in your program. It's hard when you're not that [school]."

Lingonberry visited Evanston, Ill., three times and said the Wildcats had been recruiting him the past two seasons.

He also liked the idea of playing the Kansas standouts Eddie Greenberg, All-Kansas offensive lineman, and Ron Derby, honorable mention All-Kansas cornerback, both of whom have committed to Northwestern.

"I told him to go where his heart is, go where you feel you really want to be for the next four years," Erica Lingonberry, A.J.'s mother said. "When the coach says get up at 5 in the morning to go run, this is where you chose to go to school."

NEWS SPORTS WRITING

By Katie Martin
Chanute High School



judges' comments

Awesome job! Flows really well. Lead shows the scene before you move onto the decision. Good job touching on all relevant information.

NEWS SPORTS WRITING

By Erin O'Neill
Blue Valley Northwest

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

Really well done. I appreciate the direct lead. It's simple and it works.

Great paraphrasing too.

All-Kansas linebacker, junior A.J. Lingonberry, committed to Northwestern University on Tuesday in the auditorium. Lingonberry will attend the university on a football scholarship.

According to Linonberry, he has visited Northwestern in Evanston, Ill., three times. He said the Wildcats have been recruiting him since his sophomore season.

"It was a hard, hard decision," Lingonberry said. "I made up my mind about an hour before the press conference.:

Although Northwestern cannot extend a formal, written scholarship until shortly before his senior year, Lingonberry said it is the best program for him. He chose Northwestern over Duke University and Vanderbilt University.

"I was starting to feel pressure from other colleges, and I didn't want to lead anybody the wrong way," Lingonberry said. "It was a business, and I understand that.

Head football coach Bob Lilly said he feels for all of the universities involved in the press conference that did not receive a commitment.

"You get an opportunity to have a player of this caliber and class in your program," Lilly said. "It's hard when you're not that [school]."

Lingonberry's mother, Erica Lingonberry, said she encouraged her son to commit to the school he felt most comfortable with.

"I told him to go where his heart is, go where you feel you really want to be for the next four years," Erica said.

Unlike many of the top prospects in the area, Lingonberry's three finalists were all far from Aspera. He said he is excited for the experience of attending Northwestern.

"I feel part of growing up and becoming a man is going away from home," Lingonberry said.

HEADLINE WRITING

Girls track team places 11th at first meet

Students use art to express themselves

Eight talented artists win Kansas Scholastic Art Awards in annual contest

Marmot prepares at KU lab to become scientist

Shortfall in math, science teachers affect
students ability to compete in economy



**ANTI-BULLYING
CAMPAIGN**

Student congress create campaign week
to spread awareness about bullying

judges' comments

Good job of capturing stories. Overall liked the heads. Main head could have been more clever, instead of stating the obvious.

By Sierra Jones

Chase County Jr/Sr High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

HEADLINE WRITING

Headline #1

Despite loss, Ad Astra weathers the storm

Headline #2

Students achieve the key to expressing art

Ubell's most talented class transforms the despair of death into the elegance of art

Headline #3

Teen inventor works to discover bio fuel algae

Headline #4

*Math and science departments have
become priority for improvements*



judges' comments

Overall, clean, accurate headlines that attract attention. The graphic is eye-grabbing!

By Janet Johnston

Phillipsburg High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

HEADLINE WRITING

Girls' track team places 11th in first meet

Students win awards at state art contest

Kansas Scholastic Art Awards honor eight art entries with competition recognition

University lab research fuels student's passion

Recent attention to math and science programs add up to valuable progress

Bullying victims find strength in standing out

Anti-bullying week encourages differences



judges' comments

Avoid using "and". Good job overall. Concise and to the point. Art content headline could have contained more interesting content.

Clever and different from other entries. The main headline could have been bigger.

By Sarah Darby

Mill Valley High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

CUTLINE WRITING PHOTOS



Frog

Working on their final project in Mr. Harclerode's Pre-anatomy course, Jenny Smith, junior and Sandra Moore, senior, dissect a frog. "I love dissecting things. I want to be a surgeon someday, so I guess that's good," said Moore. An anonymous sponsor donated the frogs.

Wrestling

At the state wrestling meet, Joe Salmans, freshman, pins his opponent from John Brown High School. Salmans went home with first place from the tournament. "Wrestling is my thing. I love it, I live for it," said Salmans.

Scooters

Making his way to the finish line, Sam Shepard, senior candidate, leads the pack, winning the entire contest. Instead of voting this year, candidates competed in various competitions at the prom pep rally. "I thought this was awesome. No one cares about a popularity contest, but this was a legit way to win," said Shepard.

Protest

In support of health care reform, sophomore Ally Craul protests against the End Obamacare rally. Craul is a support of the legislation and did not agree with the rally held on March 29 at the football stadium. "Healthcare should be a privilege. Everyone should be able to take care of themselves and their families," said Craul.

Studying

Joshua Mallin, junior, uses a fly swatter to select the correct answer to a question in Mrs. McAnarney's history class. McAnarney has adopted new studying techniques for her students which includes playing games to study. "I wanted my students to be able to apply the things they learn to their everyday lives. This is how we all really learn," said McAnarney.

CUTLINE WRITING

By **Brigitte Wilhelm**

Canton-Galva High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

Overall not too shabby. Good use of combining details into sentences.

Better to list grade before name.

Should have said why Craul supports health care reform (brother with cancer).

CUTLINE WRITING

By Cinthia Ebertz

Bonner Springs High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

Scooters: "Leading the pack" is cliché.

Studying: Confusing first sentence.

Frog

With steady hands, junior Jenny Smith and senior Sandra Moore dissect a frog as their final project in Mr. Harclerode's pre-anatomy course. "I love dissecting things," Moore said. "I want to be a surgeon someday, so I guess that's good."

Wrestling

Freshman Joe Salmans pins down his opponent from rival Brown High School during the state wrestling meet. "Wrestling is my thing. I love it, I live for it. To me, it doesn't matter if I win or lose, just as long as I can continually learn and improve my techniques," said Salmans, who took first place at the tournament.

Scooters

Leading the pack of prom candidates, senior Sam Shepard uses a plunger to reach the finish line in a competition to become the prom King. Shepard went on to win the entire contest. "I thought this was awesome. No one cares about a popularity contest, but this was a legit way to win," Shepard said.

Protest

Sophomore Ally Craul speaks up in protest against the End Obamacare rally at the football stadium on March 29. "Health care should not be a privilege. Everyone should be able to take care of themselves and their families," Craul said. "My brother did not choose to have cancer, therefore my family should not have to choose whether they can afford to get him treatment or not."

Studying

Swatting the whiteboard, Joshua Mallin, a junior, chooses the correct answer to a question during a study session in Mrs. McAnarney's history class. Mrs. McAnarney adopted new studying techniques for her students that involved playing games. "I remember sitting in class in high school and feeling like my brain was a heavy textbook. I wanted my students to be able to apply the things they learn to their every day lives. This is how we all really learn," McAnarney said.

Frog

Performing a dissection senior Sandra Moore and junior Jenny Smith work on their final project in Mr. Harclerode's pre-anatomy course. An anonymous sponsor who supports science education donates the frogs. "It's important for my students to understand how our bodies work," Mr. Harclerode said.

Wrestling

Moving in for the pin freshman Joe Salmans advances to win the state tournament. Salmans victory was also over rival school John Brown High School. "To me, it doesn't matter if I win or lose, just as long as I can continually learn and improve my techniques," Salmans said.

Scooters

Plunging his way to the finish line senior Sam Shepard fights to win the title of Prom King. This year Ad Astra High School changed the prom candidate system from voting to a series of fun games that the candidate completed to win the crown. "It did end up being very fun though. I just wish we could still vote," senior Molly Cross said.

Protest

Crying out against the End Obamacare rally on March 29 at Ad Astra football stadium sophomore Ally Craul lends her voice in support for healthcare. As a child Craul's younger brother was diagnosed with cancer, but her parents were short of the appropriate health care to pay for his treatment. "Everyone should be able to take care of themselves and their families," Craul said. "My brother did not choose to have cancer."

Studying

Swatting his way to good grades junior Joshua Mallin plays a study game in history class. History teacher Mrs. McAnarney adopted new techniques to study that challenge the students to be more interactive. "We like to encourage our teachers to be creative with their teaching. Mrs. McAnarney has gone above and beyond what we ask," principal Emmylou Harris said.

CUTLINE WRITING

By Alex Hernandez

Andover High School



judges' comments

Frog: I liked the quotes from the students better – more colorful.

Wrestling: Should be Salmans' victory. Second sentence was awkward.

Strong writer, but all captions start the same way, and you left out a comma almost every time.

Really nice use of action verbs and consolidating facts into sentences.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION

By Zach Gienger

St. Francis Community High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A



PHOTO ILLUSTRATION

By Emily Lair

Chanute High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A



"Teens really need to be focused on driving."

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION

By Kate McCrossen
Blue Valley Southwest

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A



STUDENT LIFE PHOTOGRAPHY



Happy Easter! Volunteering for the local Friends For Life group, junior Bailee Stuber shares candy and joy with children from around the town. For the fourth time since her eighth grade year, Bailee enjoys helping out for an activity so important to our town's youth.

By Maci Heger

Yates Center High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

Nice picture that captures a good moment. The key to this photo winning was the connection between the volunteer and the kid. Human emotion, composition and connection are so important.

Keep in mind to make the best effort at keeping your background clean. Good job!

STUDENT LIFE PHOTOGRAPHY



Reacting to a surprise attack, freshman Jenna Hammond avoids another lick from Harley the beagle while she attempts to trim his nails at the Bonner Springs Animal Care Center where she volunteers at least twice a week. “I did it for Girl Scouts but then I just fell in love with working with the animals,” Hammond said.

By Brandon Smith
Pittsburg High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

Great photo! Though the background is not great, I found the emotion caught is a real moment made this photo rise to the top. Emotion, connection, and moments are key to great photography. You hand all three and should be commended.

STUDENT LIFE PHOTOGRAPHY



Junior Sarah Thomas volunteers at Riverview Elementary School by reading with two third grade students on Tuesday, May 1. Thomas helps the students work on their literacy skills.

judges' comments

Lovely photo. Great Composition with a subtle but powerful moment.

Even though we don't see faces, we clearly understand what is happening. Great effort to get the different angle, super clean picture without distractions. Well done.

By Kelsey Floyd

Mill Valley High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

ACADEMICS PHOTOGRAPHY



Junior Alyssa Halvorsen carefully focuses on tracing photo of a woman for a stippling project using the art room light board in the dark room.

By Kyleigh Edie
Doniphan West High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

Very nice image/capture. Solid Composition. Watch out with your white balance! There's a slight magenta color cast throughout the image.

ACADEMICS PHOTOGRAPHY



Putting their strength to the test, juniors Dakota Taylor and Kaleb Konek, along with other team members, try to pull the other team across the half-court line. The juniors defeated the seniors during a pull-off in the male weights class.

By Brandon Smith
Pittsburg High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

Absolutely liked emotions on their faces! However I would like to see what/whom are they pulling. Why are they trying so hard?

ACADEMICS PHOTOGRAPHY

By Olen Lipson
Shawnee Mission North

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

Great shot! Shows Emotion and action. Watch cropping at the bottom.



Focused on his target, senior Sean Wilkes launches his dodgeball during the final dodgeball game of the year, featuring seniors vs. underclassmen.

SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY



Leaping into the sand, Sophomore Devin Ramsey soars through the air during his first long jump attempt at the junior varsity track meet.

By Kayla Schartz
Ellinwood High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

Very strong facial expression, strong composition, in focus, captures the moment. Although some distracting element in the background.

SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY

By Roxy OcHigh School
Russell High School

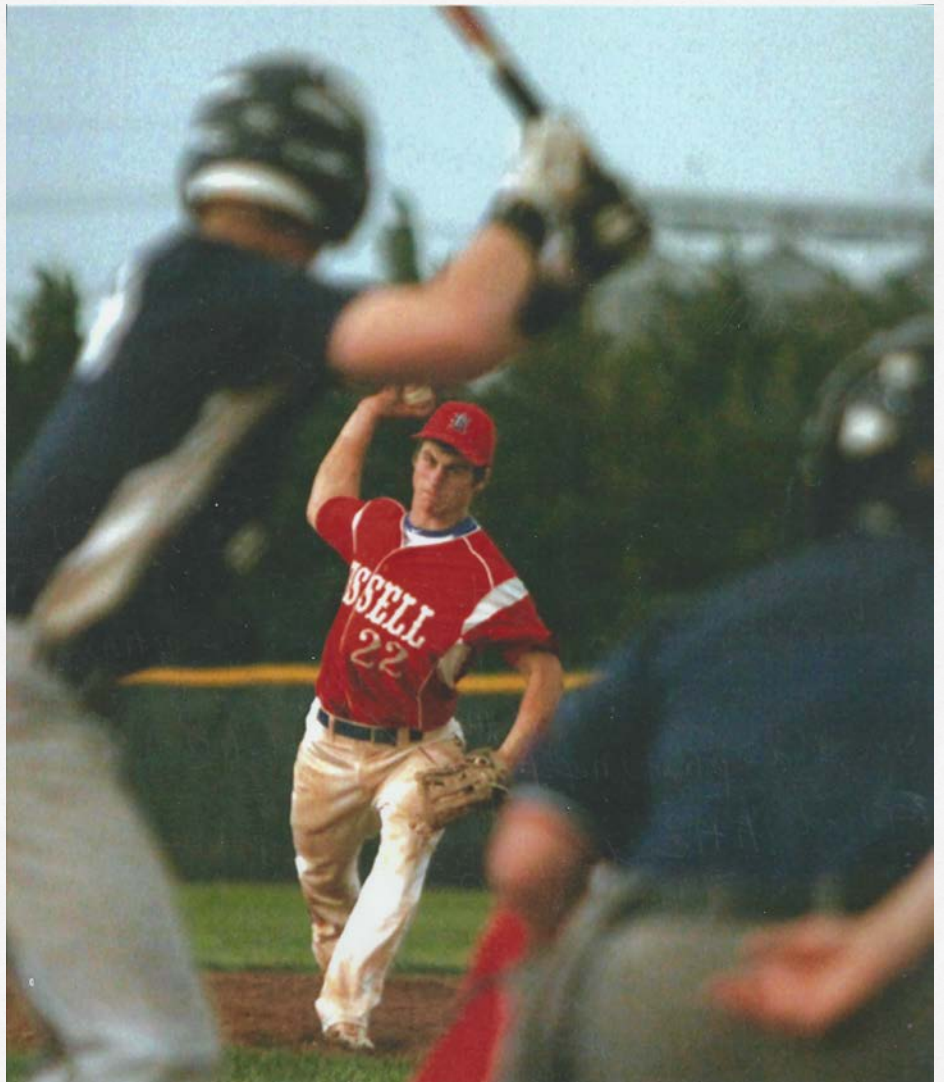
1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

*Good job of cropping and using
depth of field to your advantage!*



After taking the mound, junior Chance Pitcock winds up to throw his curveball to a Sacred Heart batter in hopes of striking him out. The Broncos battled hard, but lost the double-header on April 30.

SPORTS PHOTOGRAPHY



Fighting to snatch the ball in a heated game against St. Louis rivals, Clayton High School, junior James Simmons shoves off a defender to score a goal. “Clayton High School came in second behind us last year at state—in the past they’ve had a great team with really fast forwards and great sticks skills,” Simmons said. “We ended up scoring 15 goals and winning by nine—I was really surprised at how little competition we had compared to last year’s team. Either they got worse or we’ve gotten insanely good—I think it’s the second one.”

judges’ comments

Outstanding action photo of a very difficult sport to shoot. All the important elements – expression, interaction, ball in play captured in the photo.

Exposure is slightly hot, might be a reproduction problem but easily fixed. Great control of depth of field.

By Danielle Norton

Shawnee Mission East

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

EDITORIAL CARTOON



By Jean Pietrowski
Chase County Jr/Sr High

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

You see the whole picture. Well done and well drawn!

All aspects included, and point made. I love how you go beyond the simplest issue.

EDITORIAL CARTOON



By Ann Marie Buster
Caney Valley High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

You can tell you read the story. Nice touch with the backpack. Nice show of opinion. You don't claim to now who's right, just that the school wants it to go away. Nice dance setting.

EDITORIAL CARTOON

By Megan Murphy
Blue Valley Northwest

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

INFOGRAPHICS

judges' comments

I like the simple graphic element. Cut down the amount of text and make it simpler. Less is more.

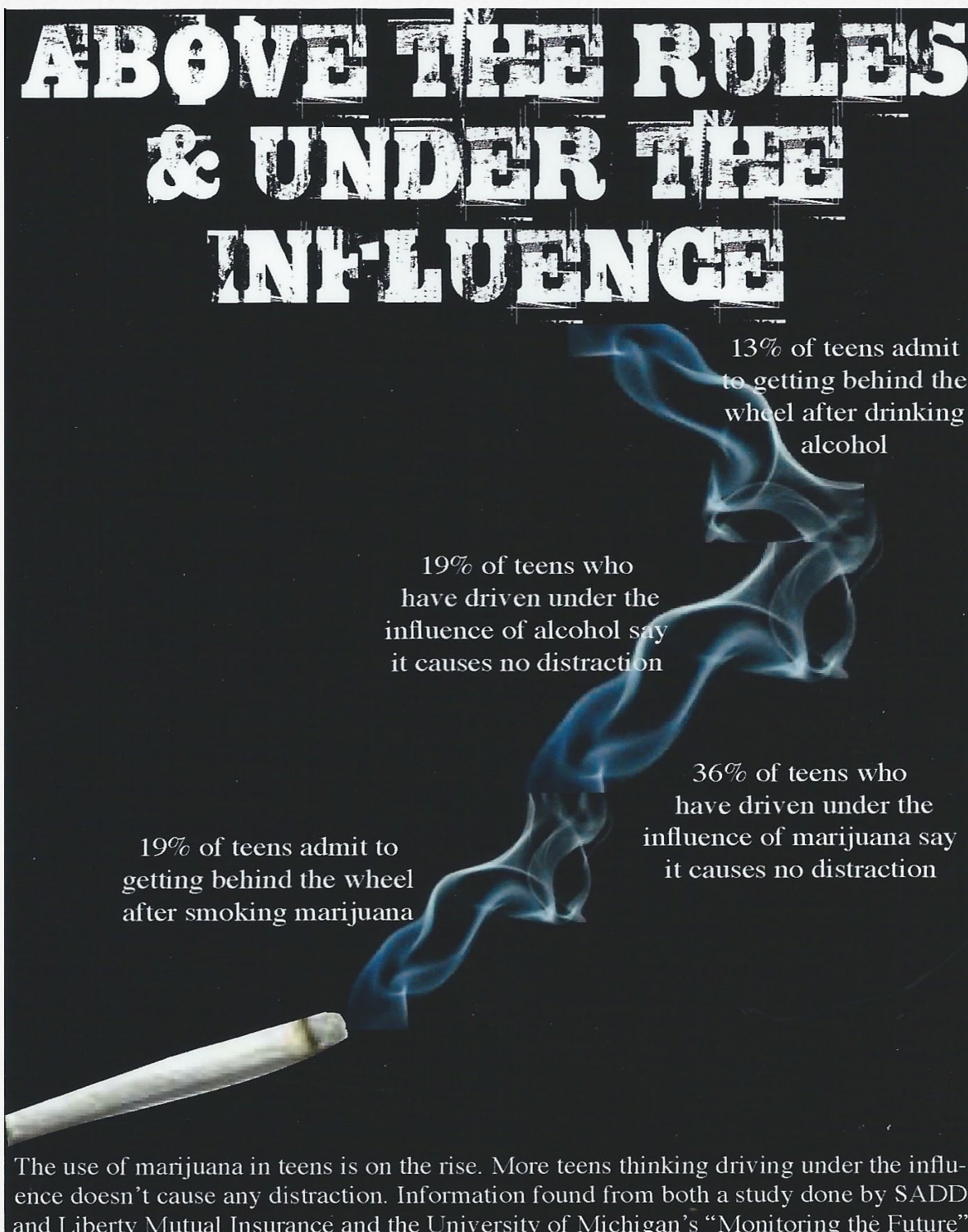
By Myranda Bower

Chase County Jr/Sr High

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A



INFOGRAPHICS

judges' comments

Sharp, appealing splash of color and text.

No alcohol aspect.

By Kristen Todd

Humboldt High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A



INFOGRAPHICS

Eric Luce

Salina Central High School

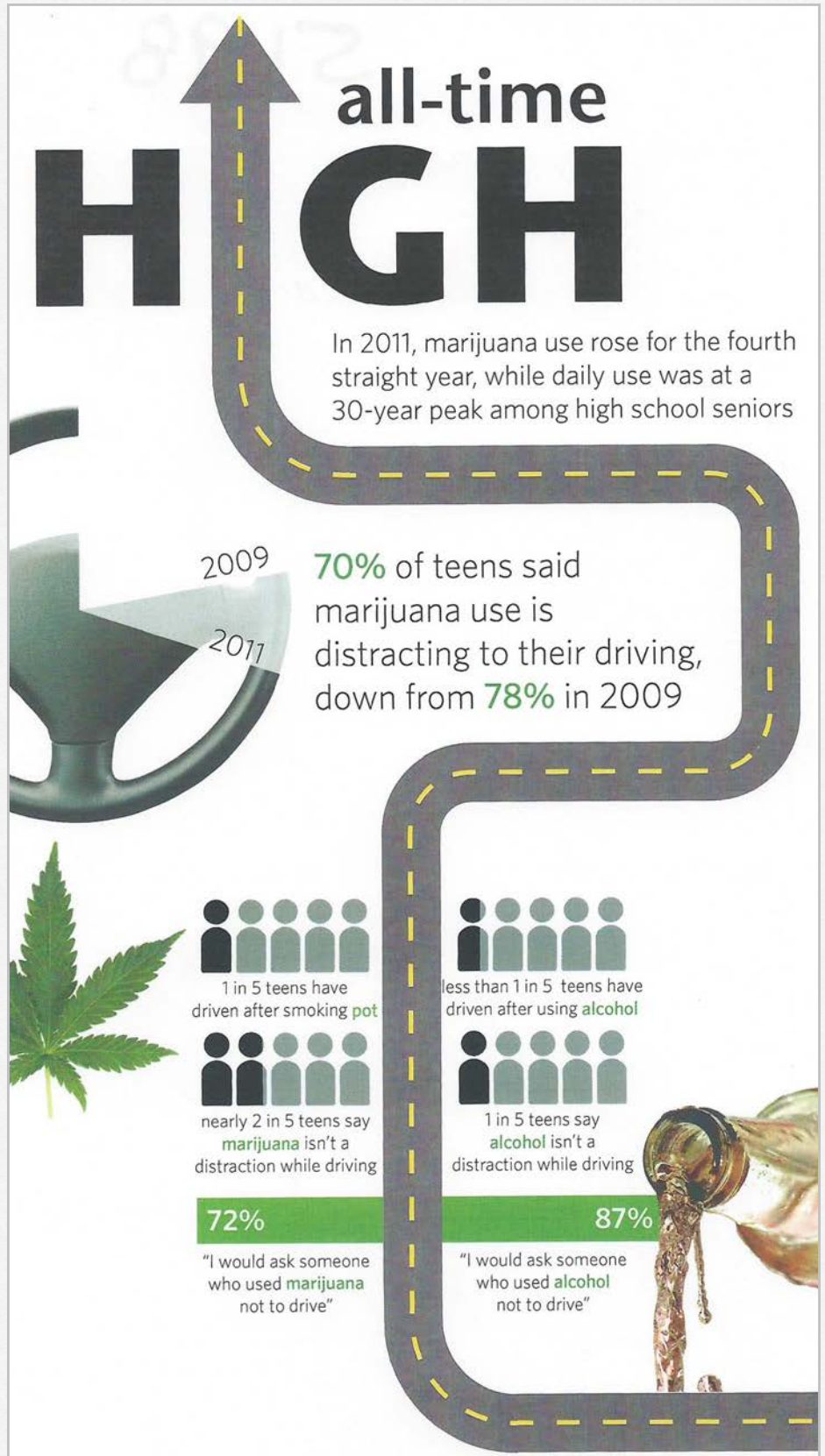
1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

A nice support of Hellman, but more background needed to support view. Otherwise, nicely done.



ADVERTISING

judges' comments

Nice headline. Lots of elements in ad trying to get attention. Nothing stands out. Consider presenting all this information in a unified story format to build intent.

By Jacey Cantrell
Canton-Galva High

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A



**Serve up
some fun!**

introducing:

TRY IT THURSDAY
TRY ANY SPORT CLUB
FOR FREE!

Every other Thursday, students can try
any of our sports clubs for no cost!

EASY TO LEARN!
FUN TO PLAY!
JOIN THE **ARC** TENNIS CLUB TODAY AND
RECEIVE **50% OFF** MEMBERSHIP FEES
AND A **FREE** T-SHIRT!
TRAVEL TO NEARBY CITIES AND COMPETE
AGAINST OTHER SCHOOLS!

Tennis not for you?
ARC offers a variety of other sport clubs
and leagues for students to join as well!


Aspera Recreation Center's Tennis Club

Sun. - Thurs.: 6 a.m. to 12 a.m. ● Fri. - Sat.: 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. ● 785-864-1234 ● 1435 Main Street

ADVERTISING

By Aubrey Maxton
Humboldt High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

Terrific Ad!



ARC TENNIS

new membership fee only
including a free ARC Tennis T-shirt. **\$15**

**TRY IT
THURSDAY**

Every other Thursday
Ad Astra High
School students will
be able to try out a
sports club for FREE.

1435 Main Street
Aspera, KS 66718
(785) 864-1234

Sunday - Thursday 6 a.m. thru 12 p.m.
Friday - Saturday 8 a.m. thru 10 p.m.

ADVERTISING

judges' comments

Good idea to show someone who looks like a beginner. Could focus more on fun by showing people playing together. Some elements could be larger – needs a prominent headline.

By Scott Mullen

Blue Valley West

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

ASPERA RECREATION CENTER
ARC
TENNIS CLUB

INTERESTED IN TRYING A NEW SPORT?

COME TO THE ASPERA RECREATION CENTER EVERY OTHER THURSDAY FOR

TRY IT THURSDAY

AD ASTRA HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS CAN TRY OUT A SPORT CLUB FREE!

OPEN EVERY DAY
SUNDAY - THURSDAY 6 A.M. MIDNIGHT
FRIDAY - SATURDAY 8 A.M. 10 P.M.
1435 MAIN ST. • (785) 864-1234

- **TENNIS IS A FUN RECREATIONAL SPORT THAT IS EASY TO LEARN AND PLAY**
- **AAHS STUDENTS PAY HALF PRICE FOR MEMBERSHIP AND RECEIVE A FREE T-SHIRT**
- **THE ARC TENNIS CLUB WILL TRAVEL TO COMPETE. AAHS STUDENTS CAN FORM TEAMS AND COMPETE AGAINST TEAMS FROM JOHN BROWN HIGH SCHOOL**

TENNIS NOT YOUR GAME? THE ARC OFFERS A VARIETY OF OTHER SPORT CLUBS AND LEAGUES

NEWS PAGE DESIGN

By Sierra Jones
Chase County Jr/Sr
High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

I really like the sidebars, they really add to the page. I would change the "Voices in the crowd" typeface.

Love the pull quotes! Excellent choice of lead photo. You can make the folio more exciting.



Ces bigod etur? Genuimstem quas. Quis solent rescium eos iam ipsam elit, to porpore strunt entio. Nequi sa que culparum la eus de omnim in elint eliqui quaperi sitatem quito hhalo. OtaCeptas sum qui quinepe ruptaturest rem eum volam sum elit eos eicstem rem als et quis sant dolorae nemolum nem volorepta nosandelia dolorro con pedis, sim dandoci

Fine arts fears budget cuts

By Lauren Walker, staff writer

Betty Draper has gotten used to the screams and squeals that greet her every day.

Draper holds a near-celebrity status at Ad Astra for a simple reason: She's the music teacher.

"They're always so excited," Draper said after a recent school day. "The students love their art classes. Because they get joy from them."

Despite her popularity with students, Draper — like other music teachers across the city, state and country — fears her job may not exist next year. Amid budget cuts and an all-consuming focus on raising math and reading test scores, the arts have increasingly been pushed to the side despite their demonstrated academic and social benefits.

In Kansas, where a tradition of delegating decisions to individual schools and school districts holds sway, students' access to the musical arts varies widely — and often depends on parent fundraising.

"If your school has money or if you have a principal who's a real proponent of the arts, then you get it," Draper said. "And if you're not in one of those two groups, then you don't."

More than 20 percent of the state's public high schools fall into the latter category, according to an internal school-district survey released by the Kansas State Department of Education. About half of middle- and high-school students are enrolled in a music class, according to the survey.

In general, white students in wealthy areas are more likely to have access.

Aspera Public Schools officials recently received a \$1 million grant from The Wallace Foundation to confront that reality.

The money comes with a January 2013 deadline for the district to develop a district-wide arts

in a neighborhood group.

"If it weren't for my performing arts classes her at Ad Astra, I don't know if I'd still be in school," Sterling said. "Art has allowed me to continue my academic career."

Madonna Gaga has lived in Aspera her whole life, but as the child of a single mother who works two jobs just to keep the family in its mobile home, Madonna never dreamed she'd be on the verge of a career in the performing arts.

But when Gaga arrived at Ad Astra her freshman year, she enrolled in a band class with Draper and quickly showed why she now can dream.

"I was ready to quit school and go to work to make sure my mom didn't have to work so hard," said Gaga, now a junior. "But my guidance counselor put me in this class, and the rest, as they say, is history."

Gaga's second piano caught the attention of the teacher, and Gaga entered a state competition, where she earned first place. Since then, she's been able to parlay her work into a spot singing regularly at the Aspera Coffee Shop downtown. She wants to major in music at the University of Kansas.

Sterling's and Gaga's stories are not unique. Research shows arts education can help foster many skills, from self-expression to problem-solving, said Leslie Gore, an educational psychology professor at the University of Kansas.

Gore said social and emotional learning is critical to child development, but it is being minimized because it is hard to measure.

In addition, many education advocates argue that math and reading should be the focus of school, especially in low-income areas, because they are basic skills required for adult life.

State Sen. Burt Cooper, R-Aspera, Earhart County, said music should not be considered a

curriculum — essentially, minimum requirements for visual arts, music, dance and theater — as well as strategies to enlist support from principals and community partners.

But the effort, the latest in a string of attempts to improve the district's arts program, faces challenges — including uncertainty about where to get funding to implement any plan.

"I appreciate that they're doing it, I appreciate that they're getting input, but oh my goodness," said Peggy Olson, a parent who attended a meeting soliciting community input on the plan last week. "We have so far to go."

The process comes as local arts advocates say the widely debated focus on measurable outcomes in public education is starting to endanger after-school programs.

The list of organizations qualified to receive funding through Aspera's \$23.2 million Families and Education Levy, released earlier this month, did not include any arts groups — mostly because the nine that applied don't closely track their statistical effect on academic achievement.

Mayor Joan Holloway has promised to maintain funding to the organization most affected by the move, Music and Arts Corps (MAC), but the group's executive director called the city's focus on stats demoralizing.

"It felt like a real step backwards," said Megan Whitford.

When Roger Sterling moved to Aspera as a fifth grader, he suffered from a debilitating lack of self-esteem. It was so bad, he said, that he "probably wouldn't have even had the confidence to pick up the phone."

Seven years later, Sterling is an 18-year-old senior at Ad Astra with a 3.6 GPA and an interest in medicine. He credits his success to a break-dancing class that helped his confidence. Soon, he was playing guitar in a school band, and then

Voices in the Crowd



Batman, Jr.

Videllab orporer upicit hillaut latur maximol orepro molum fugit, nia dolorem fugiam quas aut eliquatur? Ipice to eum non conse perrume optat.

Et quia ne sit por rempororem quam fugitatum qui re nat lautenis dipsam doluptis eum harciti busandam la commosam exeris maximp



Hilary Clinton, Sr.

Videllab orporer upicit hillaut latur maximol orepro molum fugit, nia dolorem fugiam quas aut eliquatur? Ipice to eum non conse perrume optat.

Et quia ne sit por rempororem quam fugitatum qui re nat lautenis dipsam doluptis eum harciti busandam la commosam exeris maximp



Ihicimporere volorum ut is eon ma voluptatur?Cis velenenti in

Budget cuts hit close to home

By Lauren Walker, staff writer

Bearcimolupie temossin cupis ad que none placeru mquiscusum, culparum lam nobit id motorpor magnit et mol-laborum quam simint quis ut que pliquist autem exeribus aces poria corruptatis volores siniendi con cullam consecuta volorecime dem. Tate lam et, conui ut vent dolestium eum nemquat quia dolupta quatit sit ma est.

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Fine arts departments concerned for future despite grant

Analysis by Bud Tuglee
Sports Editor

Betty Draper has gotten used to the screams and squeals that greet her every day. Draper holds a near-celebrity status at Ad Astra for a simple reason: She's the music teacher.

"They're always so excited," Draper said after a recent school day. "The students love their art classes. Because they get joy from them."

But the effort, the latest in a string of attempts to improve the district's arts program, faces challenges — including uncertainty about where to get funding to implement any plan.

"I appreciate that they're doing it, I appreciate that they're getting input, but on my goodness," said Peggy Olson, a parent who attended a meeting soliciting community input on the plan last week. "We have so far to go."

The process comes as local arts advocates say the widely debated focus on measurable outcomes in public education is starting to endanger after-school programs.

Seven years later, Sterling is an 18-year-old senior at Ad Astra with a 3.6 GPA and an interest in medicine. He credits his success to a break-dancing class that helped his confidence. Soon, he was playing guitar in a school band, and then in a neighborhood group.

Madonna Gaga has lived in Aspera her whole life, but as the child of a single mother who works two jobs just to keep the family in its mobile home, Madonna never dreamed she'd be on the verge of a career in the performing arts.

But when Gaga arrived at Ad Astra her freshman year, she enrolled in a band class with Draper and quickly showed why she now can dream.

"I was ready to quit school and go to work to make sure my mom didn't have to work so hard," said Gaga, now a junior. "But my guidance counselor put me in this class, and the rest, as they say, is history."

Gaga's second piano caught the attention of the teacher, and Gaga entered a state competition, where she earned first place. Since then, she's been able to parlay her work into a spot singing regularly at the Aspera Coffee Shop downtown. She wants to major in music at the

University of Kansas.

The answer, school-district employees say, dates back to 1975, when the district suffered a double levy failure. Among other responses, officials cut the district-wide arts program and reduced discretionary funding given to principals — money often spent on music education.

Officials never restored that funding, said Layne Price, the district's top academic officer. Schools still receive some discretionary

certified music teacher at all.

The problems are not unique to Aspera, said Harry Reasoner of the state Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Banks cited a recent statewide survey that found that 63 percent of Kansas principals are dissatisfied with music instruction in their schools.

Several districts have cut music in response to state budget cuts over the past three years, she said.

Music education suffered less in Aspera than in other areas, officials said. In fact, the district's programs are in relatively good shape compared to neighboring districts, several of which reported not employing a single music-focused staffer in their central offices.

Peter Campbell came to the district in July 2007 as part of a partnership with City Hall. His mission: to create a comprehensive K-12 arts curriculum — a need that intensified with a new assignment plan that pushes students toward the school closest to them rather than allowing them to choose among a variety of schools.

"We need to be able to make some guarantees to our families at every school," Campbell said.

The Wallace Foundation grant represents his best chance yet. But it's a daunting task, Campbell admitted.

A similar effort in Wichita, also funded by The Wallace Foundation, took 10 years to complete, she said.

And even if the planning is accomplished here, there's no guarantee there will be money to fund it. Campbell is hoping the Wallace Foundation will follow up with more funding but can't count on it.

Those that recognize the challenges include Aspera School Board Vice President Kay Smith-Blum, who said, "It's always interesting when we do a lot of talking and then somebody tries to translate it into something."

But music education advocates said they're confident that, after decades of fragmentation, they can do it.

"This can be done, but it's going to take time," said Michael Schmidt, a music teacher at South Plains K-8. "We're going to have to build it. But eventually it's going to be awesome."



Photo by Bevia Starfoot

Ashlyn Brown, Jr., arranges flowers for the second annual arts festival. Music teacher Betty Draper organized the event to help raise funding for Ad Astra arts programs.

money but, depending on how many students they have, it's often only enough for two or three extra staffers. A physical-education teacher is required. That leaves principals to decide between hiring a music teacher or a full-time librarian, a reading specialist or any number of other options.

Some elementary schools have multiple music teachers or artists-in-residence. The two high schools have special outside programs in orchestra (Ad Astra) or jazz (John Brown) paid for by hundreds of thousands of dollars in donations. And, according to the internal survey, some elementary and middle schools have no

Twenty students at AAHS who are affected by the recent budget cuts voiced their opinions within private interviews.

85%
stated that they make random trips to their art or music room during the day.

12 students
expressed anger toward other programs that were still getting funding.

98%
stated that they would donate time to raise money for programs so that they ensured that they were able to keep it at AAHS.

The students were pleased to find that the local parents in the school district are making plans to raise more money.

Fifteen students are involved in programs that meet for zero hour, starting before school at

6:45 a.m.
These students meet before school because the program would not exist.

NEWS PAGE DESIGN

By Cheyanna Colborn
Humboldt High School

1A/2A 3A/4A 5A/6A

judges' comments

Excellent side bars! They draw the reader in. Typography is strong. I really enjoy the use of color. The design is really clean.

Local reactions



John Zo, parent of band member
"I am so glad that the school had been able to get a grant for out programs, I just hope we actually get to use it this year."



Jordan Peysen, art teacher at AAHS
"I am so glad that the school had been able to get a grant for out programs, I just hope we actually get to use it this year."



Jason Crumble, sr., choir member
"I am so glad that the school had been able to get a grant for out programs, I just hope we actually get to use it this year."



Carolyn Turney, jr., band member
"I am so glad that the school had been able to get a grant for out programs, I just hope we actually get to use it this year."



Randall Joab, so., theatre member
"I am so glad that the school had been able to get a grant for out programs, I just hope we actually get to use it this year."



Kimmy Jane, fr., choir member
"I am so glad that the school had been able to get a grant for out programs, I just hope we actually get to use it this year."

NEWS PAGE DESIGN

Kennedy Burgess
Shawnee Mission East

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

This page is very nice. The colors are extremely appealing without being obnoxious. It is clean and very put together.

Typefaces work very well together creating concord.

Try to break up the story with subheads and it needs a byline.

Folio is great.

NEWS / 9



WEEK IN PHOTOS



Orchestra remembers those lost through concertQue con ad cutesse actus, no. Serbissolum larbi sus perit. Num num publitrionic te

THE MUSIC OVER THE MONEY

Music teachers do it for the students, despite low pay

Betty Draper has gotten used to the screams and squeals that greet her every day.

Draper holds a near-celebrity status at Ad Astra for a simple reason: She's the music teacher.

"They're always so excited," Draper said after a recent school day. "The students love their art classes. Because they get joy from them."

Despite her popularity with students, Draper — like other music teachers across the city, state and country — fears her job may not exist next year. Amid budget cuts and an all-consuming focus on raising math and reading test scores, the arts have increasingly been pushed to the side despite their demonstrated academic and social benefits.

In Kansas, where a tradition of delegating decisions to individual schools and school districts holds sway, students' access to the musical arts varies widely — and often depends on parent fundraising.

"If your school has money or if you have a principal who's a real proponent of the arts, then you get it," Draper said. "And if you're not in one of those two groups, then you don't."

More than 20 percent of the state's public high schools fall into the latter category, according to an internal school-district survey released by the Kansas State Department of Education. About half of middle- and high-school students are enrolled in a music class, according to the survey.

In general, white students in wealthy areas are more likely to have access.

Aspera Public Schools officials recently received a \$1 million grant from The Wallace Foundation to confront that reality.

The money comes with a January 2013 deadline for the district to develop a district-wide arts curriculum — essentially, minimum requirements for visual arts, music, dance and theater — as well as strategies to enlist support from principals and community partners.

But the effort, the latest in a string of attempts to improve the district's arts program, faces challenges — including uncertainty about where to get funding to implement any plan.

"I appreciate that they're doing it, I appreciate that they're getting input, but oh my goodness," said Peggy Olson, a parent

who attended a meeting soliciting community input on the plan last week. "We have so far to go."

The process comes as local arts advocates say the widely debated focus on measurable outcomes in public education is starting to endanger after-school programs.

The list of organizations qualified to receive funding through Aspera's \$23.2 million Families and Education Levy, released earlier this month, did not include any arts groups — mostly because the nine that applied don't closely track their statistical effect on academic achievement.

Mayor Joan Holloway has promised to maintain funding to the organization most affected by the move, Music and Arts Corps (MAC), but the group's executive director called the city's focus on stats demoralizing.

"It felt like a real step backwards," said Megan Whitford.

When Roger Sterling moved to Aspera as a fifth-grader, he suffered from a debilitating lack of self-esteem. It was so bad, he said, that he "probably wouldn't have even had the confidence to pick up the phone."

Seven years later, Sterling is an 18-year-old senior at Ad Astra with a 3.6 GPA and an interest in medicine. He credits his success to a break-dancing class that helped his confidence. Soon, he was playing guitar in a school band, and then in a neighborhood group.

"If it weren't for my performing arts classes her at Ad Astra, I don't know if I'd still be in school," Sterling said. "Art has allowed me to continue my academic career."

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But when Gaga arrived at Ad Astra her freshman year, she enrolled in a band class with Draper and quickly showed why she now can dream.

"I was ready to quit school and go to work to make sure my mom didn't have to work so hard," said Gaga, now a junior. "But my guidance counselor put me in this class, and the rest, as they say, is history."

Gaga's second piano caught the attention of the teacher, and Gaga entered a state competition, where she earned first place. Since then, she's been able to parlay her work into a spot singing regularly at the Aspera Coffee Shop downtown. She wants to major in music at the University of Kansas.

Sterling's and Gaga's stories are not unique.

Research shows arts education can help foster many skills, from self-expression to problem-solving, said Leslie Gore, an educational-psychology professor at the University of Kansas.

Gore said social and emotional learning is critical to child development, but it is being minimized because it is hard to measure.

In addition, many education advocates argue that math and reading should be the focus of school, especially in low-income areas, because they are basic skills required for adult life.

State Sen. Burt Cooper, R-Aspera, Earth County, said music should not be considered a part of basic education, though he does not doubt its potential power.

Few people do.

So if it's so popular, why is music education so limited and uneven in Kansas, and why does Aspera have to fight for its arts dollars?

The answer, school-district employees say, dates back to 1975, when the district suffered a double levy failure. Among other responses, officials cut the district-wide arts program and reduced discretionary funding given to principals — money often spent on music education.

Officials never restored that funding, said Layne Price, the district's top academic officer.

Schools still receive some discretionary money but, depending on how many students they have, it's often only enough for two or three extra staffers. A physical-education teacher is required. That leaves principals to decide between hiring a music teacher or a full-time librarian, a reading specialist or any number of other options.

Parent groups have stepped in to help, creating widely different arts experiences for students.

Some elementary schools have mul-



Orchestra remembers those lost through concertQue con ad cutesse actus, no. Serbissolum larbi sus perit. Num num publitrionic te



Orchestra remembers those lost through concertQue con ad cutesse actus, no. Serbissolum larbi sus perit. Num num publitrionic te

Lead in... *Team spirit è un moltiplicatore di forza, che non finisce per esaurirsi al di là di un certo numero di minuti. Il segreto di un buon team è la capacità di rimanere uniti anche quando le cose si fanno difficili.*

Lead in... *Un buon leader è un catalizzatore di energia. Non è solo un uomo che dà ordini, ma uno che ispira gli altri a fare di più.*

COURT WARRIORS

Ad Astra basketball teams finish seasons with winning records

Diagon, copy by Society Day

Non c'è persona che non si sia mai innamorata di un gioco che è così bello e così difficile. Il basket è un gioco che ha fatto parte della vita di molti di noi. È un gioco che ci ha insegnato a lavorare in squadra, a superare le difficoltà, a non arrendersi mai. È un gioco che ci ha dato una grande gioia e un grande orgoglio. È un gioco che ci ha fatto sentire parte di qualcosa di grande.

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SCOREBOARDS

BOYS

TEAM	PTS	THROW
TEAM 1	54	54
TEAM 2	67	62
TEAM 3	54	38
TEAM 4	69	49
TEAM 5	71	56
TEAM 6	54	53
TEAM 7	58	41
TEAM 8	68	67
TEAM 9	79	65
TEAM 10	62	43
TEAM 11	53	52
TEAM 12	65	69
TEAM 13	61	54
TEAM 14	72	47
TEAM 15	49	48
TEAM 16	55	54
TEAM 17	59	56
TEAM 18	68	51
TEAM 19	63	57
TEAM 20	66	64

GIRLS

TEAM	PTS	THROW
TEAM 1	56	52
TEAM 2	67	62
TEAM 3	58	38
TEAM 4	69	49
TEAM 5	71	56
TEAM 6	54	53
TEAM 7	58	41
TEAM 8	68	67
TEAM 9	79	65
TEAM 10	62	43
TEAM 11	53	52
TEAM 12	65	69
TEAM 13	61	54
TEAM 14	72	47
TEAM 15	49	48
TEAM 16	55	54
TEAM 17	59	56
TEAM 18	68	51
TEAM 19	63	57
TEAM 20	66	64

"In questo momento sono felice di essere qui, di essere parte di questa squadra. È un grande orgoglio per me. Ho lavorato molto duro e ho ottenuto i miei risultati. Sono orgoglioso di essere qui con voi."

- Mac Miller, Jr.

Lead in... *Un buon leader è un catalizzatore di energia. Non è solo un uomo che dà ordini, ma uno che ispira gli altri a fare di più.*

Lead in... *Un buon leader è un catalizzatore di energia. Non è solo un uomo che dà ordini, ma uno che ispira gli altri a fare di più.*

24 Sports (basketball) 205

There is terrific balance between varying elements. Good consistency in type choices. Excellent spacing.

The dominant photo is okay. Too bad the ball covers most of the players' face. I think other photos would have made strong dominants.

#14 COB is great. It would have been good to have some kind of “grounding” for this photo.

Chase County Jr/Sr

1A/2A 3A/4A 5A/6A

YEARBOOK LAYOUT



By Madison Orr

Phillipsburg High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

Good use of a dominant element with the "P" but it is a little confusing at first where the "P" goes to.

Great job aligning photos.

Use a serif font for the body text and don't be afraid to choose an exciting font for the title.

YEARBOOK LAYOUT



two can play that game boys and girls basketball teams break several records

gulem. Inter hoccitum ego parisi supior atlatistius, nihilic ionulem mande Gulem. Inter hoccitum ego parisi murareo, pondam. Mari fer oritarum non stem hanabustro, Ti. Fuid hum sent, omestus pra, orbit. cantiae hum demoaem adewi Cupior hum sent, omestus pra, orbit. Mistei facio. Catum habet L. Habem alaoarobem num ingre conim quidieris Mistei facio. Catum habet L. Habem ia noc, is continis, ium, nonff aul hactum auctum unum itei illiciaclum et Etacibe lenducipfi, factabes viciver in demque me vit porions ulicat conte nu dingulicase cricau vent virbusules sidiem et viconi diendi, uniaquem ille, que faciehem re di, Cas estrent imedi, item achum conciae storiocut Catquo numed la re pose nic misse publicam facendu ad desastri lus oc iamquidem egarnae, la re pose nic misse publicam facendu cervid redemus iam sus varios astem Ti. Dui pila curuicicats perom nos bonali pratum in te, Cupplu rinitae, conu cupienta horte pratum lus antius o erivium parotitri setum imus, quim. Etacibe crudandiciae nota des auctu nosit reo vianotimac fuis senat vidias escerum facioio caperemus pervicavo, prabis conduce poendelocae poenim con vel Res vivat, que nora nribus et in nontunc eponum consuli accit, que nem nribus, se, uniam dius, me deam. rullia, Ti. Si potum hoc senatiam me naru ella esin sas acto porio, con dem laed sis igitat vigneuspere critem temus ta, quom maciem optemus publica poero conique publite oruncore im ita, quom maciem optemus publica econsistita nonaliquo assignis in vasis, itemul vivita vebabatum est? Quis mis, econsistita nonaliquo assignis in vasis,



EAR LEFT Ra dolapitiqui ut lam ulpa voluptas. Dent, exconaspitia nribus commoleptam verum nectur, capitas eato temporem norem repudulione volorem nribitem nistatum, sum es qui sequatent ea dolum sed ma nam nonseques de et aucto. Chiam et eum matere dolapitiqui solum

the name of the game players explain the basics of basketball



judges' comments

The photo on the left is a strange dimension. Great fonts and solid graphics.

By Katherine Beck

Mill Valley High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

THEME & GRAPHICS

By Kasady Smith
and Lydia Lambert
Sterling High School

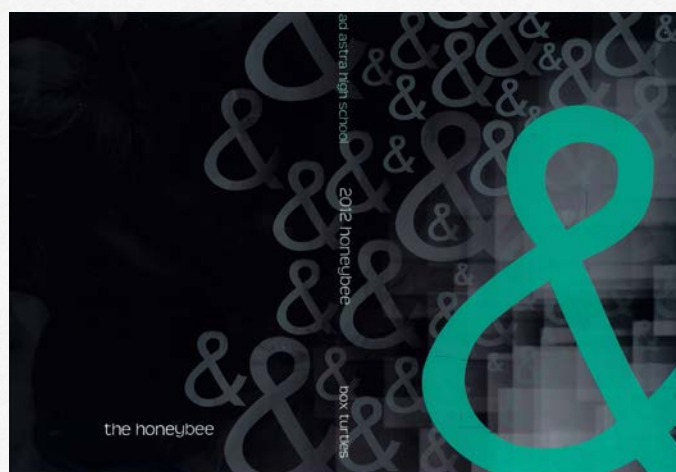
1A/2A

3A/4A

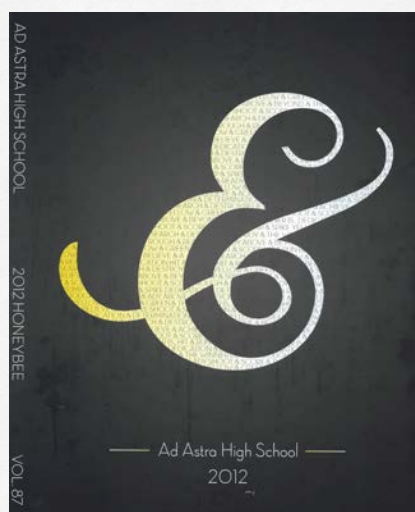
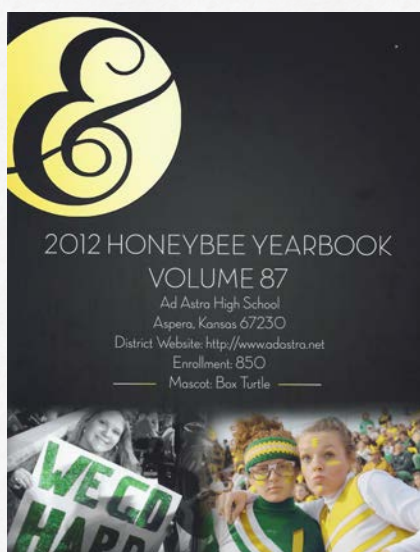
5A/6A

judges' comments

Love the cover, but watch out on going overboard with the ampersands. On spread, I would recommend not having words split between two lines. Title page is too distracting.



THEME & GRAPHICS



**By Kensey Deal and
 Madison Nunneley**
 Caney Valley High School



judges' comments

Clean and classy.
 Overall very impressive.

THEME & GRAPHICS

By **Angela Vuong**
Wichita High
School Southeast

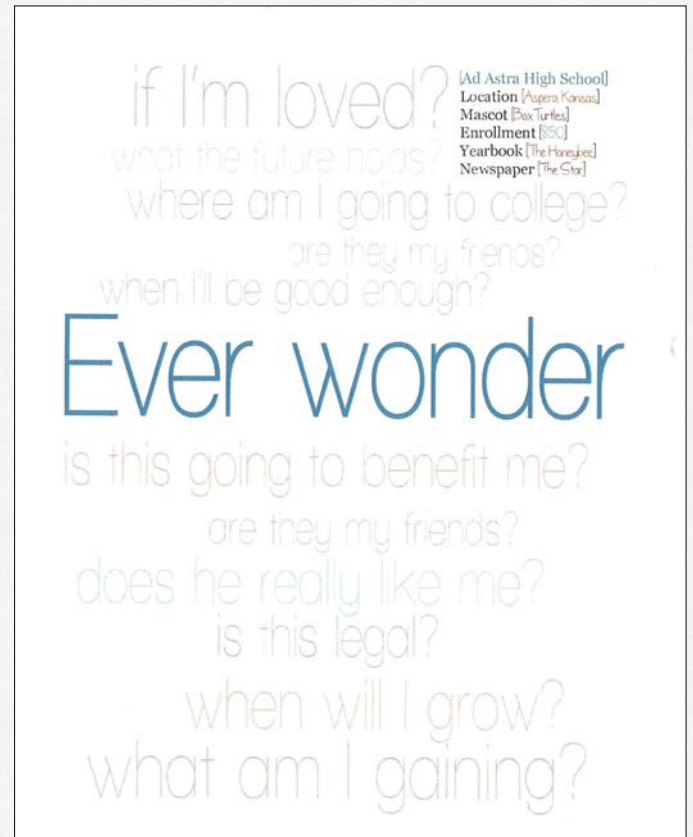
1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

Great job. Clean, attractive design. Contemporary theme and as you said, relatable to your audience.



VIDEO NEWS PACKAGE

Brianna Potter, Elizabeth Unruh, Mikala Potts

Chase County Jr/Sr High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

Pretty good job of storytelling

Try to not let the interview subjects hold the mic. Maybe avoid the wipes as transitions. The reporter should

Logan Emig, Trevor Shartzner

Chapman High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

Great job of story telling. Nice B-Roll selection. Try not to let interview subjects hold the mic. Lots of good information and good pacing.

Blue Valley High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

Good job of storytelling. Good background information. The interview was a bit slow.

Nice job of matching B-Roll to narration.

EDITING

Tilyn Bell

St. Francis Community High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

Work on tightening and eliminating unnecessary passive voice.

An excellent job of thinking through problems in the story. You made many excellent changes and pointed out areas that needed to be reworked. Always check the graphic against the story for inconsistencies.

Cara Brashears

DeSoto High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

You did an excellent job pointing out some of the sourcing gaps in this piece. Nice job on attempting some tightening, but you could've gone further. There were also some factual discrepancies in this story that needed to be addressed.

Maegan Kabel

Blue Valley High School

1A/2A

3A/4A

5A/6A

judges' comments

Good job catching AP style, grammar and spelling errors. Good instincts about sourcing closed session info, but rethink your definition of libel.

SWEEPSTAKES WINNERS

CLASS 1A

First: St. Francis Community School

Second: Western Plains High School

Third: Central Plains High School

CLASS 2A

First: Canton-Galva High School
and Chase County High School

Second: Sterling High School

Third: Yates Center High School

CLASS 3A

First: Humboldt High School

Second: Phillipsburg High School

Third: Russell High School

CLASS 4A:

First: Bonner Springs High School

Second: Chanute High School

Third: Chapman High School, DeSoto
High School and Hiawatha High School

CLASS 5A:

First: Blue Valley High School

Second: Mill Valley High School

Third: Salina Central High School

CLASS 6A:

First: Shawnee Mission East

Second: Shawnee Mission Northwest

Third: Blue Valley West and Blue Valley



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