

BELLEVUE EAST
TOM TOM



BELLEVUE EAST HIGH SCHOOL

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*Recent restrictions placed on expressions of school spirit
spark dialogue about respecting other cultures*



Seniors Syndey Chaney, Colin Hensel, Seriana Williams, Jordan Roberts and Brannon McIntosh cheer on the Chieftains in East's student section at the East vs. West varsity football game Friday, September 25. Five days later, restrictions on how students are allowed to show their school spirit were issued by school administration. "I feel that it's overblown and in no way would we want to offend anyone. I think we use it [paint and feathers] to honor Native Americans," McIntosh said.

Community responds to bans on feathers, 'war paint'

Cailin Tomsu
Editor in Chief

Bellevue East students were told by teachers on September 30 that "war paint," feathers, headdresses, spears and tomahawks would no longer be allowed at sporting events due to a complaint from a parent saying that the student section's actions during the East vs. West football game were considered disrespectful to Native American culture.

Students were puzzled and some were enraged by the new guidelines and the complaint because the restrictions were exactly how students showed school spirit. How the restrictions were communicated was also a problem because neither

students nor faculty members could explain how the students' actions were disrespectful and what the students could do to make the student section more appropriate.

"The administration just put it out to the teachers to tell the students, when the teachers didn't really know what to do, so students were not the only ones left in the dark. So I think what we're battling is the whole communication aspect," senior Colin Hensel said.

Colin Hensel was one of the students actively participating in the student section. He helped the cheerleaders with their cheers and kept the crowd pumped and supporting the team. He was puzzled by the quickly enforced guidelines on

the ways students can show school spirit and how the student section's actions could be perceived as disrespectful.

"I think there is a fine line and our district with the Native culture and everything, we haven't done as good of a job facilitating what that fine line is and where that crosses. People go against these kids when they don't know where that line is when even some adults in the community don't know where that line is," Colin Hensel said.

The lack of communication between administration members and the student body, and perceived inequality between the two schools is a deeply rooted problem. The original parent complaint was directed only toward East and not West. Many

students felt offended that their ways of showing school spirit were perceived as disrespectful and started to come up with ways to disagree, such as a petition.

"[The petition] should recognize the people of the building that support our Chieftains, more than what they see, more people do care," senior Katherine Gleason said.

Some students took even more direct measures and addressed the school board itself about the lack of communication, knowledge and equality. Parents and coaches spoke along with the students, showing that the guidelines affected much more than the student section's themes and face paint.

"I originally planned to speak

you to tonight about the irresponsible and incompetent way in which the topic of school spirit was addressed with the students of Bellevue East. The lack of perspective of students, teachers, staff and parents was, in my opinion, unacceptable and unforgivable," Colin Hensel's father Kevin Hensel said at the school board meeting Oct. 5.

The feeling of frustration was felt not only by the students, but the parents and staff as well.

"I think it would have been a great idea for some of this to be researched before this came out because then we could have had more background," instructor Patty Campbell said.

**See Question of spirit
on pages 6-7**

Teachers held responsible for grant writing

Thomas Casart
Opinion Editor

Some people may remember that last year, at the district board meeting concerning activity funding, the idea of grant writing was mentioned. To many, it seemed like a simple and helpful idea, but little to nothing has been done about it. The lack of action could be attributed to the many things, from the complexity of the grant writing process to the lack of assigned positions to do so. One teacher that has had experience with grant writing is David Bossman. He teaches English and sponsors multiple clubs at East.

“I think grant writing is an important skill that people need to learn, and that there are a lot of amazing grants out there. I do think that it often is kind of a bureaucratic nightmare, but I think there’s a lot of money that people don’t realize is out there for organizations, for groups, for schools, and I think the more educated we are about tapping into some grants, the better,” said Bossman.

A grant is a sum of money given by an organization to anyone for a particular purpose. Grants for East can go toward many different programs. Another teacher with grant writing experience is art instructor Timothy Bogatz,. He has written grants to fund supplies for his program.

“It provides a lot of resources for our department or our program... that we’re not able to get through our regular budget money, and so we’ve been able to buy some different equipment and different materials that we couldn’t otherwise get, and that allows our students to have a

few more experiences and do a few more projects that they wouldn’t otherwise be able to do,” Bogatz said.

Explaining the grant writing process for most federal and corporate-given grants would take a long time, as it involves many bureaucratic precautions and general considerations. The website for the Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance has information on how to write excellent grant proposals.

“There are eight basic components to creating a solid proposal package: (1) the proposal summary; (2) introduction of organization; (3) the problem statement (or needs assessment); (4) project objectives; (5) project methods or design; (6) project evaluation; (7) future funding; and (8) the project budget,” the website said.

Even with all this guidance, a lot of programs don’t secure grants for themselves. The biggest reason that they don’t is that program sponsors are either unaware of grant opportunities or they are unwilling to attempt the grant writing process. As it is set up now, our administration wants programs within our district to seek grants for themselves, as seen from the 2015-16 proposed budget cuts under the Summer Programs section.

“Science, Math & Tech Camp will need to become self-sufficient by decreasing costs, increasing fees or securing grant funding. If the program cannot pay for itself, it may need to be discontinued,” the proposition said.

The proposition suggests that sponsors of camps and clubs in need of grants should get them on their own, which

doesn’t seem as a viable option to many sponsors, as so many of them have not been trained in grant writing. One of these sponsors is Bossman.

“I don’t think most of us (teachers) are trained in grant writing, and I don’t know if it should be an expectation necessarily, you know, that everyone should write grants. I know a lot of organizations have grant writers that are hired (specifically) to write grants, look for grants, and find money that’s out there. We have school districts, and I know there are some that have that,” Bossman said.

At this point there is no professional training for grant writing and there are no professional grant writers working with the district. the district’s Executive Director for Teaching and Learning, Kim Bodensteiner, gives one reason for this.

“It does require an investment of district dollars to pay the grant writer’s salary. Often only larger districts or districts applying for many large-scale grants can afford to create these positions. It is also important to note that many of the large grant competitions are specifically intended for the start-up of new and innovative programs, not to maintain pre-existing programs,” Bodensteiner said

While It is true though that many of the district’s programs are not new and innovative, those pre-existing programs still would like additional funding. It is also true that the teachers that want funding for their programs would be willing to spend time writing grants, so maybe a teacher training program could be an option.

“I would like to see a training program

for grants. That’s a pretty valuable skill that can bring a lot of resources into our school and our departments, and as of right now there’s not enough guidance as far as how to do grant writing, where to go for grant writing, where to look for possibilities, and the teachers are pretty much on their own if they want to do something like that,” Bogatz said.

When asked about the idea of a grant writing training program for teachers in the district, Bodensteiner was not opposed.

“If there were enough interest, I’m sure we could develop or find workshops for teachers interested in writing small grant applications,” Bodensteiner said.

Some teachers though, feel that BPS doesn’t need training programs, and that teachers are more than able to write grants on their own. One teacher that doesn’t think training in grant writing is needed is instructor Cynthia Seeba.

“It’s not necessary. You just have to look. Sometimes they’ll [organizations] actually send you information on grants. Like, ‘Oh, you can get a grant for this, or you can earn money for that.’ I hope to do one this year,” Seeba said.

The way she puts it, writing grants should be something any teacher is capable of. The real issue could be that teachers are just not comfortable trying something new, or that they just don’t have time to write grants. In any case, there is still a want for more funding for our programs.

“If we’re going to have a budget crisis, then we’re going to need money, and we need to be in a creative place of getting money,” Bossman said.



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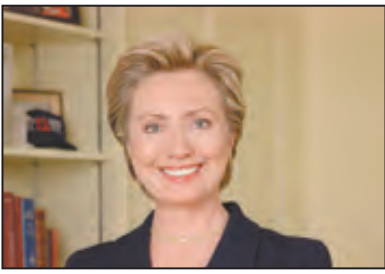
Meet the presidential candidates

The field of candidates seeking party nomination narrows

As the presidential election looms in the not so distant future, republican and democratic presidential hopefuls must first win their parties' nominations before they will have a chance at White House. With each passing day, it seems another face drops out of the race. Currently, there are now four Democratic Party cadidates, and five Republican canditdates. All pictures taken from presidential candidates websites, or media kits.



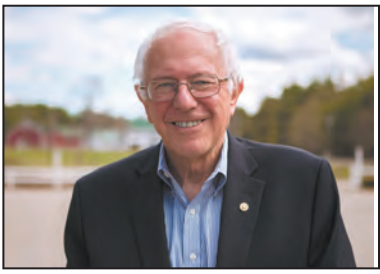
Willie Carter
Democrat
Air Force veteran
“Jobs with decent wages, job preparation programs to prepare those willing to be employed, and other programs to address those unable to work because of health reasons, all across our nation, let us put our nation back to work.”



Hillary Clinton
Democrat
Former U.S Senator
“I do not believe that it will detrimentally affect the economy by doing that. We used that tool during the 1990s to very good effect and I think we can do so again I am absolutely committed to not raising a single tax on middle class Americans, people making less than \$250,000 a year. In fact, I have a very specific plan of \$100 billion in tax cuts.”



Martin O' Malley
Democrat
Former Maryland Governor
“ Well, I believe that the people of our state and, also, the people of our country, want us to make choices on their behalf that yield results, results that make our economy grow by making our middle class grow.”



Bernie Sanders
Democrat
U.S Senator
“The issue of wealth and income inequality is the great moral issue of our time, it is the great economic issue of our time, and it is the great political issue of our time.”



Jeb Bush
Republican
Former Governor of Florida
“Restoring the right to rise in America requires accelerating growth, and that can't be done without a complete overhaul of the U.S. tax code”



Ben Carson
Republican
Director of pediatric neurosurgery
“It is too long, too complex, too burdensome, and too riddled with tax shelters and loopholes that benefit only a few at the direct expense of the many. We need wholesale tax reform”



Mike Huckabee
Republican
Former Arkansas Governor
“Instead of tinkering with the tax code, we need a tax revolution that helps every hard-working American and eliminates the IRS once and for all.”



Donald Trump
Republican
Co-Producer of “The Celebrity Apprentice”
“Tax relief for middle class Americans: In order to achieve the American dream, let people keep more money in their pockets and increase after-tax wages.”



Marco Rubio
Republican
U.S Senator
“My tax plan can be summed up in one word: simple. The core of my plan is to simplify the tax code and cut taxes dramatically”

Students stand against standardized testing

Adrienne Bruner
Entertainment Editor

Students and guardians across the nation protest against standardized testing; however, many students at Bellevue East do not know that they can opt out with written consent from their guardians.

“I understand the ‘protest element’ in opting out of standardized testing. Testing seems to have spiraled out of control in many areas. Yet, without full participation, the big-picture results of such testing will be lost,” instructor Sharon Kelly said.

Standardized testing are any tests that are graded in a consistent manner and have most of the same questions. They are usually large-scale and taken by large amounts of students. The tests track progress of both students and teachers and compare students’ scores to the standards of the rest of their districts and even national data.

“Everyone should have the option to opt out of these tests. Especially people who have test anxiety or just mental illness in general. It affects their stress level by creating unnecessary stress because a lot of things ride on one test score,” senior Amelia Pennell said.

Some students feel that they should have a choice in whether or not to participate in standardized testing. What’s not taken into consideration is that there are benefits to participating in standard-

ized testing as well as downsides. Many students do not take into consideration the upsides and downsides of standardized testing.

“Standardized testing is important for a variety of reasons, but it depends on the test. Generally speaking, standardized testing assists educators in making certain bigger picture decisions, measurement and planning of district-wide and building goals, sometimes funding, and identification for certain programming and services. Standardized tests provide an opportunity for a consistent ‘standard’ in which we can view student achievement and ability levels; this can be especially helpful when a student transfers from one district to another. Certain tests that are standardized, such as Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), also provide one of many data points for teachers to use with student goal-setting and demonstrating overall growth,” HAL facilitator Megan Kinen said.

Many people are choosing to opt out of standardized testing because they feel that it is unfair to students with test-taking anxiety, who may perform poorly regardless of knowledge of the subject. Some also feel that standardized testing does not take into account a student’s creativity or work ethic, among other things.

“Standardized tests are viewed as important because it places people in a spot compared to everyone else. It gives

us a number or touchable way to see our intelligence, which is not a physical thing,” senior Amelia Pennell said.

In Nebraska, parents can opt their students out of standardized testing without giving a reason and can inform the school of this with written consent, according to unitedoptout.com. Unitedoptout.com is a website dedicated to people’s right to opt out of standardized testing and “The Movement to End Corporate Education Reform.” In some states, there are laws that make this easier. However there are some states that do not recognize opting out of these tests as a right to students and their guardians. Assistant principal Susan Jensen is in charge of Nebraska State Accountability, or NeSA testing at Bellevue East. She was unavailable for interview, so it is unknown whether any students have opted out of testing at Bellevue East in the past and the specific rules dealing with opting out.

“Standardized test information is helpful only if students truly give their best effort on the test. Then results are something teachers can use to help guide and improve their instruction. Many standardized tests have little student ‘buy-in.’ If test results have no personal impact in terms of earning a grade, competing for a scholarship, being eligible for college admission, many students don’t take the test seriously and results are not a valid measure or their knowledge or ability,” Kelly said.

The benefits of opting out of standard-

ized testing include not having to deal with the stress that is associated with it or the competition that can distract from the main goal of school, which is student success, according to oxfordlearning.com.

“The benefits depend on the standardized test. Overall there are benefits for our school system, and depending on the test, it can provide insight for more targeted instruction. That being said, the standardized test being used is not the only aspect that should be taken into consideration. While we have standardized tests that are utilized for different reasons, it is important that assessment in general is used as one way to inform our instruction, and that the use of standardized testing does not force us to lose autonomy within our classrooms,” Kinen said.

Standardized testing allows progress to be tracked and compared. Students can see where they stand in comparison to national averages and if they have improved any. Teachers’ ability to teach effectively is determined in part based off of their students’ test scores as well.

“What I dislike about standardized testing is that we are judged by their outcomes. Some people have test anxiety, or don’t feel good that day, or just don’t test well. Our intelligence or our predicted success for college is based on one test which doesn’t really display what we know; it shows how well we take a test,” Pennell said.

Teacher recognized by community for accomplishments

Bobby Storck
Web Editor

Some know this person as Piper, others as Mom. Most of the students, however, call her Señora Porras. Instructor Piper Porras went to high school at Lincoln Lutheran in Lincoln, Nebraska. On September 22, 2015, the administration at Lincoln Lutheran looked at Porras’ accomplishments, and decided to name her one of Lincoln Lutheran’s Distinguished Alumni for 2015. This came as a big surprise to Porras when she received the news, and graciously accepted the award for being distinguished from the rest of her classmates.

“Distinguished to me is an elegant term that means set apart for having done something significant. It made me giggle when I saw my name next to that word,” Porras said.

As big as is it was to receive this award, she has this feeling before in the form of other awards.

“It is not the first teaching award I have received. I had received in my second year of teaching the Nebraska Young Educator of the Year and here at East I was one of the Bellevue Teachers of the

Year,” Porras said.

She is not the only one who is happy about these awards. Instructor Ashley Bender is both supportive of her fellow teacher and friend.

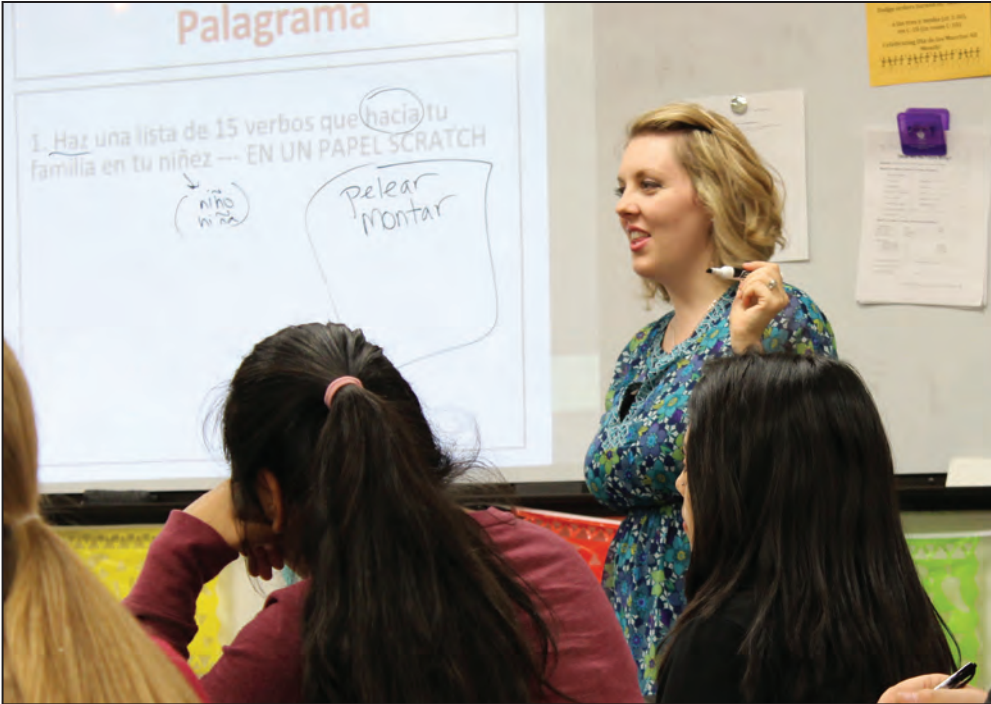
“I am not surprised that she received this award because she is amazing and has done and has just done amazing things with her life, both professionally and personally,” Bender said.

Students also are happy for Porras. After teaching at some other schools in Lincoln for a few years, Porras got a job as a spanish teacher at Bellevue East.

“Teaching is a career that sets you apart because there’s so much tied up into this job that if you truly didn’t believe that you want to work with kids, I don’t get why you’d do it. You’re sometimes a counselor, a social worker, lesson planner, you have conferences and papers to grade. There’s so much encompassing work, and if you’re not passionate about it, then I don’t get why someone would do it,” Porras said.

Many students believe she is making a huge difference whether it be teaching Spanish or helping teens with social problems. It is actions like this that won her Distinguished Alumni of Lincoln Lutheran of 2015.

“It makes me feel rejuvenated. Sometimes you can really feel way down if things aren’t going well for you or you feel like ‘Am I making a difference?’. And when you get an award like this, you feel that your recognized and you feel rejuvenated,” Porras said.



Excitement is key. On another busy day of work, Instructor Piper Porras teaches new verbs to her Spanish III students. Both teachers and students are repeatedly pleased with her enthusiastic style. “It’s important to be upbeat because it keeps the students awake and engaged,” Porras said. *Photo by Faith Wer.*

March for Michelle

Bobby Storck
Web Editor

You may have seen her in the hallway, she has black hair, brown eyes, and needs to be in a wheelchair and wears a facemask. She will never back down from a challenge and always strive for victory.

Her name is Michelle Ruzicka, and she has been diagnosed with a number of diseases and conditions including Grave’s disease, tic disorders, and sarcoidosis. That is why the Bellevue East Leadership Academy has decided to focus this year on helping Michelle and her family with economic and moral support.

“March for Michelle is a walk that takes place to help raise funds for one of our students, Michelle Ruzicka. This will be organized by our Leadership Academy service group,” Academy sponsor Sara Fjell said.

The Leadership Academy has been working hard to make March for Michelle a reality. Some events to raise money for Michelle’s family have already occurred and others still have yet to be planned, but all of these will make money for Michelle’s family.

“They are still working on the details on where it’s going to be and when it’s gonna take place, but they are hoping that this will just be another way to raise funds for the family,” Fjell said.

Like many other groups in our school, Leadership Academy is student led. One of the students in charge of March for Michelle is senior Missy Walther.

“We are just trying to help her out with money because medical bills are very expensive and we noticed that she needs help,” Walther said.

Activities such as the teacher-jean week where teachers pay \$10 to March for Michelle to wear jeans all week has already made Michelle’s family a lot of money. Leadership academy is still coming up with new ways to generate money to help pay for Michelle’s medical fees.

“We designed wristbands so we’re selling those. We did one Miracle Minute and we might do some more. We also plan on creating a spaghetti-type dinner sometime later in the winter for her and I also want to do a silent auction that will take a lot of planning, but I’m hoping we can do it because that will bring in a lot of funds,” Walther said.

Michelle is not the only person who is affected by her conditions. Her brother, junior David Ruzicka, is deeply concerned about her health.

“She is my sister, my oldest and only sister I’ve ever had. She is also the oldest sibling in the house and she is really important to me,” Ruzicka said.

It’s one thing to have a loved one diagnosed with one disease. It’s another when your loved one has about three.

“The first thing she was diagnosed with is Grave’s disease, a thyroid disease that, in her case, caused hyperthyroidism which accelerates her metabolism which resulted in a massive loss of weight. She is also diagnosed with a functional movement disorder aka a tic disorder. The most life-threatening thing she has is sarcoidosis which has caused her to cough up blood. It affects her lungs, her immune system, and her eyes,” Ruzicka said.

Fjell, Walther, and Ruzicka all want to help Michelle and you can too. Participating in the many activities Leadership Academy plans and buying wristbands helps the family more that one can imagine. Even if you can not help economically, moral support from giving positive comments to Michelle when you see her can go a long way. With your support, and a little luck, Michelle will be able to recover and live a normal life again.

“I saw someone that inspired me academically, inspired me to do marching band, to do JROTC, to keep working hard, and to show the strength to stand up for what’s right over what’s wrong. I saw that pretty much destroyed because these conditions just destroyed her as she was before that,” Ruzicka said.

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Camp focused on diversity changes lives

Samantha Collison
Editor in Chief

A seemingly random group of students and staff members gathered in a circle in B-03 during GPS and began a quiet discussion about plans to create more unity in the school. Others in the room paid little to no attention to this congregation of people from all ages, genders, ethnicities, identities, and walks of life, but the group was not as random as it appeared. Tying them all together was that they attended either the IncluCity camp two weekends previous or a camp the previous year. The meeting on October 1 was just one of many meetings that they have had and will have throughout the school year to talk about their experiences so they can work together to decrease discrimination in the school.

“My favorite part of the weekend was being able to connect with everybody, and the friendships I made with staff and with students have lasted and I still keep in contact with them,” Deans secretary Suzanne Osegueda said.

IncluCity is a 4-day retreat put on by the non-profit organization Inclusive Communities that invited 75 students and six staff members total from three schools (East, Burke and Omaha North) to participate in seminars and exercises with the goal of educating about different identities and increase empathy

towards people of similar and different identities which will, in turn, decrease bullying, discrimination and hate-related violence in schools and communities. East was fortunate enough to receive a \$4,000 grant to help pay for camp this year.

“I expected it to be boring because they took away my phone and there were rules, but it was amazing. I actually cried because I didn’t want to go home. It was probably the best four days of my life,” sophomore Hannah Pederson said.

Most people who attended the camp describe it as a “life-changing” experience. They now make an effort to use less harmful language in their everyday life, which has been one of senior Caylynn Lane’s main post-camp goals, and they are more aware of discrimination taking place in their schools, homes, and workplaces. Senior Kimberly Evers participated in an activity called “Labeling” that made her more aware of the discrimination that she faced every day that she didn’t even know about.

“It has changed my perspective on everything, but mostly it has made me brave and able to speak up when I hear something that’s not OK to say. This whole issue with the mascot, I feel way better equipped to talk about it now. Being a parent, it changes the way that I talk to my daughter. Teaching literature, it changes the conversations that I have

with my students. I also learned how to be an ally without speaking for people or having a white savior complex,” instructor Tina Sonntag said.

Altering habits and changing minds is not an easy process, however. Attendees of the camp struggled with some of the exercises and spent a good amount of time crying. Conversations were described as “challenging” and “eye-opening.”

“One of the most challenging things for me was realizing that there are children going through things that children should not have to go through. Through the exercises we got to experience what a lot of our students go through. When I was raised, everything was daisies and sunshine and blue sky and white clouds, but for a lot of the children that attended, I don’t know if I could handle life knowing everything that they went through,” Osegueda said.

The exercises and seminars addressed racism, sexism, ageism, heterosexism, and more. One of the most controversial and challenging conversations they had was about privilege.

“Instead of focusing on white privilege, they talked about how everyone has privilege, some more than others. They didn’t make you feel guilty, you felt humbled. The defensiveness and aggression from privileged groups comes from that guilt and we didn’t feel that way at all,” Sonntag said.

Sonntag said that many people do not make good choices because they do not know any better. Educating people on the discrimination that people face and how to be inclusive to all human beings is the main way to eliminate this problem, which is Inclusive Communities’ goal.

“My soul was ripped out of my body and shattered open and set free, and then they put it back together and let me go out into the world. Besides becoming a mother, this was the second-most life-changing experience of my life,” Sonntag said.

IncluCity has touched so many people that it has been supported almost entirely by volunteers, the majority of which attended camp or were involved in another program and have returned every year. Each volunteer dedicates more than 81 hours a year to make IncluCity a possibility. An evaluation is conducted at the end of every camp and the numbers have shown its effectiveness.

“Over 90 percent of participants have shown increased empathy or find themselves feeling more empathetic towards people with different identities than themselves, want to be more involved with their communities and their schools and identify as allies. All of the OPS schools, all of the Millard Schools, Westside, Ralston and Bellevue have had representation at some of our programing, whether that’s camp, workshops

or Table Talk programing. We’ve touched students in every corner of the Omaha metro area easily,” Chief Operations Officer for Inclusive Communities Krystal Boose said.

For students who would like to be involved in Inclusive Communities programs or related activities, interns who have previously been involved in Inclusive Communities programs are currently starting a diversity club at East to promote empathy between people of different identities and educate students and teachers. Students can only attend IncluCity camp once, so they are currently looking for new delegates for next year.

“IncluCity is only one of our programs and East has sent delegates to IncluCity the last two years, so we hope that they’re send delegates next year. If they are, see Mrs. McKinley about being a delegate next year. We also do a monthly program called Omaha Table Talk. People of all ages are welcome to come. It’s focused around different identity topics each month and we have a panel that speaks about that identity and there are small group discussions about that topic. We’ll be doing a one-day workshop called ‘Creating Inclusive Communities’ with about 40 Bellevue East students and faculty members this school year that students can ask Mrs. McKinley about,” Inclusive Program Associate Niki Jordan said.

Transgender regulation makes its way into Bellevue Public Schools

Destiny Soto
Features Editor

A new regulation on the treatment of transgender students was announced at the BPS board meeting on October 5 by the district administration causing shock and confusion throughout the community.

According to the Administrative Regulation, code 511, section 3, all transgender students have the right to be addressed and referred to by a name and pronoun that corresponds with their gender identity. Section 1 of the code says administrative staff will work with each transgender student to develop a plan that corresponds with the regulations. In the event that a staff member would need to contact a transgender student’s guardians, “school personnel should use the student’s legal name and the pronoun corresponding to the student’s gender assigned at birth unless the student, parent, or guardian has specified otherwise.” The code also states, in section 6, that any transgender student has the right to use any restroom that is in accordance with their gender identity: “a student shall not be required to use a restroom that is incongruent with the student’s gender.”

“The immediate reaction and feedback is fairly negative, but it’s based on a lot of misconceptions. The most common thing that got said was, ‘Well, now a boy can just dress up as a girl and go into the girl’s locker room and shower with the girls.’ However, if a student is identifying as transgender, it puts a process in place where they meet with the administration and we look at any accommodations that might be needed to help them feel safe

and secure and part of the community,” Superintendent Frank Harwood said.

Some of the community took the introduction of these new regulations as a negative change, but the majority who did, have been misinformed.

“All I know about these new regulations are with the bathroom policies. I don’t really know much more about it. Sex and gender are pretty much the same to me. I don’t mind the new changes, anyway. School is still school,” sophomore Nick Walker said.

Gender identity, gender expression and sex are all different terms with different meanings. According to the code, “gender identity is a person’s deeply held sense or psychological knowledge of their own gender, regardless of the sex they were assigned at birth.” Still in accordance with the regulation code, gender expression is the manner in which a person expresses their gender, such as clothing, activities or hairstyles. The final definition given in section 2 of the code states information regarding a person’s sex. A person’s sex is their physical makeup, referring to their biological or natal sex. Sex can also be referred to as “referred gender.”

“People often misconstrued the idea behind being transgender. They don’t understand that you identify as the sex you prefer, so it causes difficulty in public situations,” freshman Leo Picard said.

The information and definitions handed out with the new regulations were not pulled out of thin air. When making a regulations like these, the decision makers need to be well informed on the situation and all of its components.

“We actually used several different sources for the information given. There’s the U.S. Department of Education and the Office of Civil rights has some definitions. We also used some regulations from other districts and other states. There were a couple of other websites and a couple of other resources we used. It was a variety of different places that we took what information that we thought [was] up to date,” Harwood said.

The purpose of these new regulations and changes seem to be vague to the community. The new regulation was created to help clarify how to handle situations with transgender students.

“We’ve seen an increase in the number of students that identify themselves as transgender and because each of the situations are handled on a case by case basis, it’s really important to have a regular process that you use, so that, at the end of the process, if you are doing something different with different students, you could still say, ‘Oh well we were being fair because [we] went through the same process, but because of the situation, we might have ended in a different place.’ It was really kind of a way to formalize what’s been going on for the last several years with students who have identified as transgender,” Harwood said.

The difference between policies and administrative regulations is vast. One requires board approval, the other does not.

“A policy is approved by the board of education and requires two readings before it can be implemented. Policies tend to be fairly broad. An Administrative Regulation is present to the board but not

approved by the board. The regulation is meant to give more specific guidance and detail. In this case there is a Board Policy about equal access to education and this regulation is guidance for one part of the larger policy,” Harwood said.

The aim for these regulations were to provide feelings of safety and equality and also to provide a guide for future situations. Time will tell if the goal was reached.

“I feel they [the new regulations] haven’t been doing the best. Even though they have established a new [regulation], there are certain things that I’m not comfortable doing in fear of discrimination, like using the restroom or cross dressing in activities- so I remove myself from them completely,” Picard said.



Some transgender students at East prefer to use the restroom at the nurses office instead the gender restricted ones throughout the school.



At East vs. West, sophomore Gerrett Giesick waits on the sideline for his turn to play. “It’s an honor just to play on the football team because everyone looks up to you. It’s like everybody is thinking about you during the game and it’s really cool because you’re playing for your school, not just yourself or your team,” Giesick said. The Chietain varisity football uniform has feathers on the shoulders, and a spear on the helmet. *Photo by Destiny Soto*

Native Americans express concern

Cailin Tomsu
Editor in Chief

Edward Ventura Jr., a member of the Bellevue community, saw a picture of East’s student section during the East vs. West game on Twitter and sent an email to the administration regarding his concerns about their attire that resembled that of Native Americans. The email resulted in the immediate placement of bans on feather hats, “war paint” and weapons and mock weapons such as spears and tomahawks.

“A student dressed to look as a American Indian [can disrespect a Native American]. Multiple students were wearing headdresses and what seems to be war paint, others were doing a tomahawk action. The ‘Home of the Tribe’ banner includes a tomahawk with feathers

“These actions undermine the ability of American Indian Nations to portray accurate and respectful images of our culture, spirituality and traditions.” Ventura said.

Some people believe that the reason why students are being disrespectful in their actions and attire is the fact that students are not being taught proper Native American culture, history and traditions. Ed Zendejas, a Native American and an educator in cultural studies at the University of Nebraska Omaha, is opposed to any use of Native American imagery as mascots and supports the bans as a way to show schools that they need to improve the education on Native American culture and how to respectfully honor Native Americans.

“Most people don’t understand the significance of what we refer

to as regalia: the war bonnets, the feathers, even the face paint; everything that is associated with Indian warriors,” Zendejas said.

Regalia is defined as the emblems or insignia of royalty, especially the crown, and other ornaments used at a coronation. Common forms of regalia in the Native American culture are feathers, especially feather hats, certain types of paint and war bonnets.

“War bonnets were only worn by certain leaders and they had to earn them, and that’s one of the biggest misappropriations of Native history. Not only that, it’s the paint as well. There’s certain colors that were symbolic of what you did in battle, there’s certain signs that you put on there. It’s not just a matter of slapping some paint on your face or feathers in your hair,” Zendejas said.

The student section at the East vs. West game had no intent on being disrespectful. The problem is that students and faculty members do not know the history or culture of Native Americans and therefore cannot determine what is respectful and what is not. If students were educated, the bans might not have to exist at all because all students would be able to make educated decisions about what is appropriate to wear to games.

“Schools that have Native mascots end up doing what they think Indians look like, what they did and what they wore without having any knowledge of what it means or the historical, religious, military significance of what they’re doing. Would it be okay for, say, a student whose father’s in the military to go into his

closet and break out his military uniform with all his military regalia and wear that to school? In fact it’s illegal,” Zendejas said.

Some students were frustrated by the fact that the complaint was only targeted toward Bellevue East and not West.

“West uses a Thunderbird as their mascot. The school has an animal as their mascot. East uses an American Indian thus making us animals in the view of many. In the year my son attended BWHS I never encountered such actions by the student body,” Ventura said.

On the other side of the token, some Native Americans were proud of the student section and thought they showed only respect to Native Americans and pride in their school. Joshua Lively is a parent of a student at Bellevue East and part of the Cherokee tribe. He is on the opposing side of the guidelines and restrictions set on the student body.

“I actually thought it was something good. Being a Native American, to see non-Native Americans represent Native Americans with pride. I had been in a discussion with Harwood; I told him don’t put any policy restricting the use of Native American heritage items, don’t refer to ceremonial face paint as ‘war paint’ because it is a violation of civil rights,” Lively said.

Lively reached out to the superintendent of Bellevue Public Schools in hopes for a resolution that allows students to show respect for their school in the same ways as usual, without the bans.

“My take was it was racially discriminating to specifically target

A Question of Spirit

Mascot controversy remains national issue

Samantha Collison
Editor in Chief

In many schools across the country, from the smallest elementary schools to the largest colleges, administrations are opting to change mascots that are related to indigenous people.

This large movement began with protests by Native American communities but has gained momentum when the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) implemented a policy banning the displaying of “hostile and abusive racial, ethnic and national origin mascots, nicknames or imagery” during games starting in 2005.

In 2000, Millard South High School changed their mascot from the Indians to the Patriots, the first school in the Omaha Metro area to give into pressure from the community. Now the pressure is coming down hard on East since the complaint from a member of community was sent the evening after the East vs. West game.

Mascots such as the Chieftains and others related to indigenous peoples (such as indians, redskins and braves) are not uncommon. In 2005, schools with these mascots vastly outnumbered all other high school mascots in the country.

The following nine most popular mascots were Eagles, Tigers, Bulldogs, Panthers, Wildcats, Warriors, Lions, Cougars and Trojans (according to the Clell Wade Coaches Directory). A common theme among popular mascots is the characteristic of being predatory animals or predator-like people; some people are appalled by the fact that Native Americans, by association, are in any way considered violent or predatory.

Cultural appropriation, or the borrowing of symbols, ideas or traditions from one culture by an outside group of people in a way that is disrespectful and perpetuates stereotypes, has come into the light in the past 20 years and more schools are choosing to prohibit students from dressing up as caricatures of indigenous peoples and many are changing their mascots altogether.

While many schools that have decided to keep their Native American mascots have received permission and guidance on how to be respectful from local tribes, some groups still oppose the concept altogether.

One thing is for sure, the age of disrespect by celebrating the colonizing of America and the genocide of the native peoples via “Wild West” films and inaccurate recreations of Native American ceremonies is long over, and now some citizens of Bellevue are fighting for change in our area.



Bellevue East alumnae Patty Campbell was able to purchase a Chieftain tomahawk at the school store during her time attending Bellevue East High school. She is shocked by how many guidelines have been placed on the students. “Old traditions are hard to disregard,” Campbell said. *Photo by Destiny Soto*

Administrators search for balance between spirit, respect

Cailin Tomsu
Samantha Collison
Editors in Chief

After a complaint was sent out to the Bellevue Public Schools administration, the school board and principal of Bellevue East high made a list of new guidelines for students to follow while showing school spirit at sporting events.

“When anybody from any ethnicity feels that their culture or heritage is being disrespected in any way, that’s something we have to look at and come to a conclusion on and I think that’s why we moved as quickly as we did,” principal Brad Stueve said.

The complaint was sent by a concerned citizen, regarding the student sections apparel and decorations at the Bellevue East vs. West game. One point of confusion by the student body was why the guidelines were placed onto students so quickly and not prior to the football game.

“What we’ve asked is for students to not dress up as parodies of Native Americans, and that’s not really a change. Those changes were actually made 15 years ago. I think [educating our students] is something that we probably have not, as a district, done a very good job of since we brought a group in 12 years ago to come up with the displays and present the history; I think we’ve drifted away from that. I think one of the first steps is bringing some people in to teach students about the culture and the icons of the culture so that students have a better understanding of why something would be considered offensive to somebody else and why they would want to be doing things that would offend someone,” Superintendent Frank Harwood said.

As with any situation that gains much attention, there are always two sides to the issue. Making the decision on how to equally meet each side’s wants and requests puts many people into sticky situations.

“It’s just one of those situations where there’s never going to be a winner,” Stueve said.

Although a complaint was received by the administration, the faculty members do not believe it was the intent of the student section to be disrespectful. The administration is trying to work to find a resolution that is equally fair to the student body and the Native American culture. The student section will have to come up with new ideas for themes and ways to show Chieftain pride while still following the guidelines.

“We’re working with the leadership academy kids and having open communication about the next step. I think we’re going to get through this just fine, and hopefully it will unify us even more,” Stueve said.

For the most part, the students have been very civil and professional in the way they have adjusted to the new guidelines. Many showed their disagreement or frustration with either a faculty member, administration or the school board. The administration is taking all students views into consideration and is open to hearing alternate resolutions.

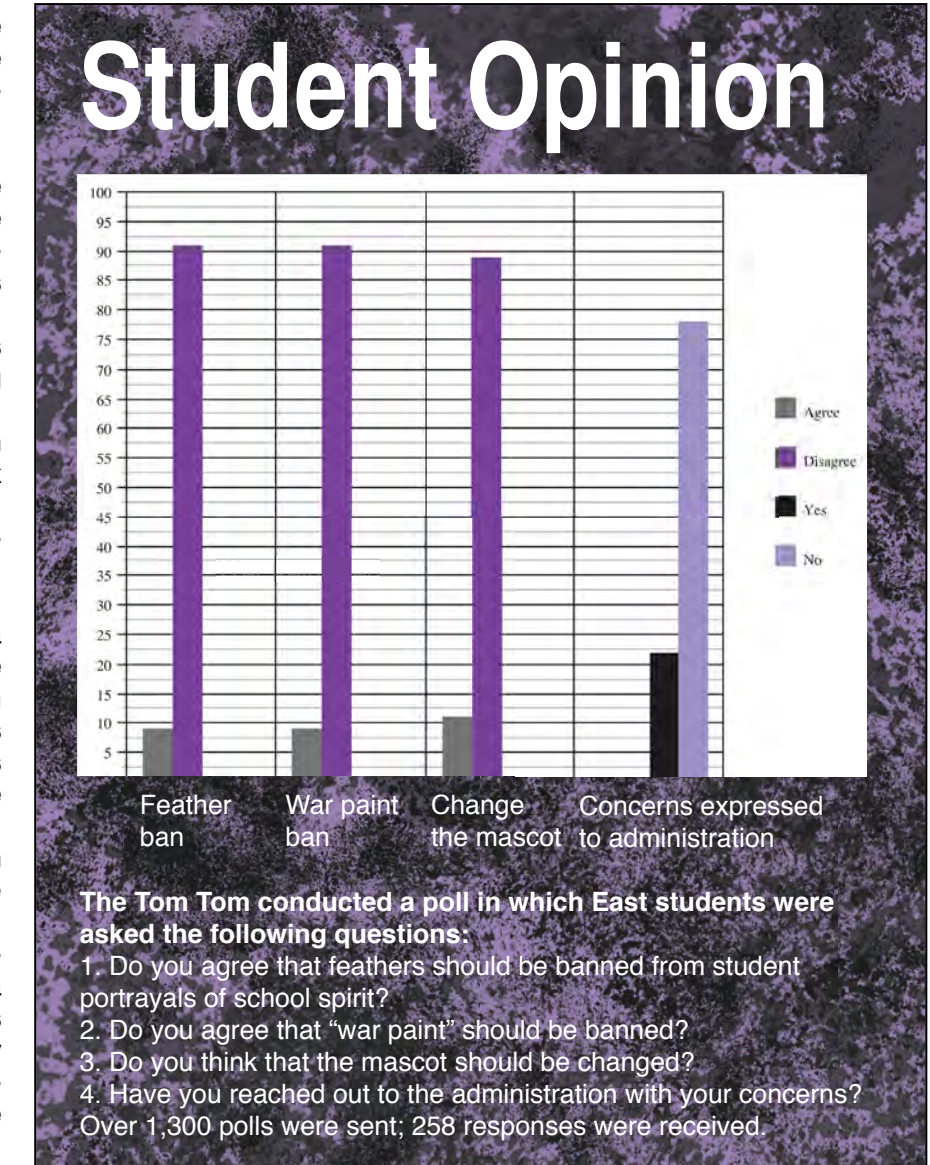
“We care a great deal about what you guys think about everything. The student body’s feelings are certainly taken into account when dealing with things,” Stueve said.

Harwood admits that since East students do not often dress up like they did at the East vs. West game, they could have, and should have, put more time into communicating the restrictions to students. He says meeting with the leadership academy was a good reminder that high school students do not respond as well to being told not to do things as opposed to things being carefully explained to them. He would like to consult with representatives from all schools when making decisions like this from now on.

“There are some things that should’ve been done differently when we worked with students. We met with the student leadership academy the day after the message went out in advisory and I think if we had had that meeting first, the message that went out would have been very different and been handled differently,” Harwood said.

The School Board was not involved in the decision and heard about the restrictions after the decision was made and the message was sent to the schools. Board member Phil Davidson thinks that the board and the students should have been more involved.

“We are proud of our history here in Bellevue, but we also have to make sure that we’re honoring them in the right way. Not everyone is going to agree with what that right way is, but I think we need to communicate with the students. We could have people from the Native American community come in and visit with them. I think that would’ve been a better approach than a blanket statement like the one that was sent out,” Davidson said.



Chieftains rally to support football team

Senior Dillon Hike performs at the East vs. West pep rally as part of the football and dance team collaboration. “It was fun to be in the cheerleader and dancer’s shoes for a couple weeks. Dancing with them took lot of energy,” Hike said. *Photo by Nia Booth*



Getting hyped with the crowd is senior Conner Wilson with his best friend, Dillon Hike, and his fellow team members. “It feels great to get pumped before our last East/West game with my ‘Day 1,’” Wilson said. *Photo by Destiny Soto*



Senior Jesse Farland is sprinting the football across the field in hopes of scoring for his team. “That game was just really fun. I was playing with my brothers and just having a great time,” Farland said. *Photo by Destiny Soto*



Senior Chris Davis rests on the sideline during his final East v.s West game to support his team. “I like that multiple people can come together as a team and cooperate as one to reach a common goal,” Davis said. *Photo by Destiny Soto*



Sophomore CJ Semanko races to win Chieftain cup points. “I was eating chicken with my friend Joey because that day in history Mrs. Fjell was like, ‘I need sophomores to help with the pep rally,’” Semanko said. *Photo by Destiny Soto*

Standing in the crowd is senior Sydney Chaney supporting her school. “It was a tear jerker because it was the last time I’ll ever be in the student section and be a student at Bellevue East,” Chaney said. *Photo by Destiny Soto*

Softball has best season Hike tears MCL during game

Megan Miller
Sports Editor

The Bellevue East Varsity softball players and coaches practiced all season to improve their skills and become a better team.

“The seasons have their ups and downs, but we are learning from our mistakes and progressing throughout each game and each practice,” sophomore Kaylee Ashley said.

The team had to face different challenges this season because they are now in tier one which means they are in the league with the best teams in Nebraska. They practiced all year to become better players and overcome the challenges that they faced this season.

“We’ve had a rough schedule because we are now in tier one. We’ve been playing the top ranked teams, but we are overcoming adversity,” senior Baylee Conley said.

The team had to play the best teams in the state all season. They played many Omaha and Millard schools. The team used the fact that they had to play some of the hardest teams in Nebraska as motivation to push themselves to win.

“Every day we asked our kids after

workouts, ‘did you train hard enough today to win State?’ It was a question each of them had to answer on a daily basis,” Head coach Thomas Horton said.

The team started the season with a 11-4 record, which is the best it has been in 20 years. The varsity softball team won the Omaha North tournament for the second time in six years.

“As a team we train very hard year round so that we can put the best team possible on the field each year. This year’s team, TEAM6, was a special group who had a very hard task ahead of them at the beginning of the season,” Horton said.

Each year, Bellevue East’s softball has improved. At the end of this season, the varsity softball team came out with the program’s best record in eight years, and it was the second best record that the program has had in the past two decades.

“I was very happy with the team’s efforts and approach to the game. When we hit the hardest part of the season our team stayed focused and competed well. We came up short in some of these tougher games this season. However, TEAM6, continued to raise the bar of expectation for the softball teams to come at Bellevue East,” Horton said.

Kaylee Robinson
Contributor

❖Senior Dillon Hike was the head quarterback for the varsity football team. Hike tore his MCL at the beginning of the East v.s. West football game. He was told he would be out for the rest of the season.

It was only the third play into the biggest game of the year, East versus West, and senior Dillon Hike had been hit and injured to the point that he was told he was going to have to sit out the rest of the game.

“Their defensive end dove in and hit the outside of my knee causing my MCL to tear,” Hike said.

Teammates and audience members who saw Hike go down were hoping for nothing more than for him to return to the game.

“I saw Dillon go down, and my first reaction was just hoping he was going to be okay, and hopefully be able to return as soon as possible to the game,” senior Bruce Windorski said.

Later on, Hike was told that he would be unable to play for the rest of the season.

“I would give up a lot of stuff just for one more game,” Hike said.

Even with his injuries he still has the support from others that he needs to help him remain positive and get to where he wants to be.

“It’s a minor setback, you know, but

he’s worked hard his four years, and I know for a fact he can play quarterback at the college level, he’s just got to find someone that believes in him, and will give him a shot,” varsity head coach Anthony Dunn said.

When others were told his injury would cause him to be done for the season, some felt as if they needed to keep the bigger picture in mind, of trying to win the game. Although, seeing him go was not necessarily easy for everyone.

“At the time I heard he was out for the rest of the season I tried to keep focus on the task at hand, which was the game. But after I felt pretty down about it, because seeing someone that you’ve been working on the field with for three years go down with a season ending injury is harsh, especially with how much Dillon has helped me with becoming the player I am today,” Windorski said.

Hike has confidence in himself that if he had been able to continue, it would have possibly lead to a better outcome for East.

“I believe had I been playing I could have lead our team to multiple touchdowns,” Hike said.

Though Hike was out for the rest of the season, the team still expected to do their best to lead the school to victory.

“Obviously it’s tough when you lose your starting quarterback, and the guy that’s leading the state in passing, and we just lost the guy that replaced him last game actually. But Levi Lariviere is taking over. He’s a good kid; he’s worked hard. He’s a really good athlete. You just have to step up and do your job and try to do well,” Dunn said.



Senior Baylee Conley pitches in a game against Omaha Marian. “We played a very clean game against Marian. We held them to a very close ball game, and they were ranked number 2 in the state, so its a big deal that we competed with them for so long,” Conley said. Photo courtesy of Merlin Eudy

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Freedom for the hungry

Staff Editorial

Of the eight hours a day for five days of the week that high school students dedicate to education, 30 minutes are given to them as free/lunch time each day. At Bellevue East, those minutes are confined to the inside of the school cafeteria for most students throughout the school year, even though they have the ability to leave, meaning that they have transportation. Some students who do not abide by the rules leave without permission anyway. We as the Tom Tom staff believe that students with the means to access lunch outside of the school should be allowed to do so all year around.

Currently there is a screening process that seniors go through to obtain the permission to leave the campus during their designated lunch period starting second semester. The problem with the screening process is that students do not receive permission to leave campus until during the second semester of their senior year and a lot of students prefer the foods that outside sources offer as opposed to the meals that the school offers.

It's not new to East that students have found ways to sneak out of the school to buy lunch elsewhere, regardless of the policies that are in place. Honestly, these rules are only followed by those who respect them, and those are the students who deserve the privilege to go off campus for lunch anyway! If making policies to stop students from leaving the school is not stopping them effectively, the rule might as well not exist.

According to Dean Tola Dada, the reason off campus lunch is restricted is so the seniors have a reason to maintain good behavior. This isn't fair to the younger students who are well behaved. If they have the means to get lunch why should it be withheld to make seniors behave? Some students at the school are not exactly fond of the choices that the school offers for lunch and why should they not be allowed to pay for a lunch that they choose for themselves and will actually enjoy? There

is the option to bring a lunch to school, but not everyone enjoys being limited to sandwiches or microwaved foods. The line for the microwave is also long, and who wants their soup to taste like the enchilada that the student before them just heated up?

One way to offer off-campus lunch to anyone is to require them to fill out an application. A student could get a form signed by their parents, giving the student permission to leave the school during lunch. The student would get their student ID stamped, much like the activity card, verifying that they are able to leave the school. The pass would be shown to the teacher monitoring the exit at the beginning of each lunch period and then they would be able to leave. Students would be expected to make it to their next class on time and attendance at that class would measure students' accountability. When a student shows that they cannot handle going off campus for lunch and get back to the school when needed, they will receive lunch detention. After three violations of the rule the student will lose the privilege and will not be reconsidered for it again until the next school year.

The ability to leave the campus could offer many new opportunities for students other than just new lunch options. Students could help family members, run errands, get lunch with a friend or family member who has graduated, pick up their forgotten homework from home, or go take a much needed 20 minute nap. Students should be able to do what they want with their free 30 minutes of the school day.

The best way to solve the problem of having too many students sneak out of the school for lunch is to just allow any students with the means and parent/guardian permission the ability to leave. This solution might also relieve the overcrowded lunchrooms and long lunch lines. Along with that, it would relieve the teachers stuck with the duty to check students back into the school along with giving the students the ability to have a bigger say in what they eat and the ability to do what they need to during the day.

Equal bathrooms for all



Nia Booth
News Editor

It's the beginning of third period and a certain student is in the nurse's office waiting for the only unisex restroom to be available. Between the kid in the corner rocking back and forth trying to hold back the puke that's seconds away from erupting out of his mouth and the girl moaning in the restroom for unknown reasons, the chances of the student being there for less than five minutes are very unlikely. There is a reason the student walked all the way to the nurse's office and chose to be late instead of going into the bathroom conveniently placed on the floor where the class is and making it to class on time. The student walked past both the boys' and the girls' restrooms and the others who easily walked into one or another without any thought. This certain student is transgender, meaning that the mind/gender of the student does not match with their body/sex. The fear and anxiety of using the genital-specific bathrooms in the school by the student are justified by the reactions of fellow students and administrators. It's because of this that schools should offer more single-stall unisex bathrooms for students that need them.

Gender-specific bathrooms cause issues in schools for any student that doesn't conform to the social norm for gender. According to the National Center for Transgender Equality, 75 percent of transgender youth feel unsafe at school, and those who are able to persevere had significantly lower GPAs. They were also more likely to miss school out of concern for their safety and were less likely to plan on continuing

their education. Honestly, that percentage is way too high! How are students supposed to focus on preparing themselves for the future when they can't even go 8 hours without feeling unsafe?

The problems that the students have to deal with everyday have affected their home lives in a negative way. The majority of transgender students who were verbally harassed or physically or sexually assaulted because of their gender identity have tried to commit suicide. Of those who were physically assaulted, 64 percent attempted suicide, and of those who had to leave school because of the harassment, 68 percent reported having attempted suicide, according to Lauren Frederico's "Dignity for all?"

The saddest part is that it's not just students who are making transgender students' lives difficult, but it's teachers too. Suicide attempt rates rose dramatically when teachers were the reported perpetrators: 59 percent of transgender and gender nonconforming youth were harassed or bullied by teachers in K-12 or higher education.

Along with safety issues, there are also health issues that transgender students face when they don't feel safe or comfortable using the bathrooms at school. Think Progress, an American political news outlet, states that "There were health consequences for respondents with 54 percent reporting physical complications like urinary tract infections, kidney infections, and other kidney problems simply because of the tactics they used to avoid going to the restroom during the day." The fact that a person would rather go all day at school holding in the need to use the restroom rather than face their classmates in the bathroom is a bit much.

A change needs to happen. There is no reason that students who identify outside of the social norms regarding gender should have to suffer through the school day when they have the right to a safe and comfortable environment like any other. They are just as human as any cisgender person (meaning that they identify with their sex). They have the right to urinate or defecate, wash their hands and leave without having anxiety about their safety or how they will be thought of by their peers and teachers. Offering more single stalled unisex bathrooms offers a relief for the student and eliminates the "worry" that any person opposed to using the restroom with a transgender person has.

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EDITORIAL POLICY

The role of the Tom Tom is not only to promote the accomplishments and highlights of the school, but also to inform the Bellevue East community of events and issues that will affect the students, faculty, staff, administration, and community. Its primary focus is to serve Bellevue East High School and cover issues that affect teenagers today. The Tom Tom does not necessarily represent views of the Bellevue Public Schools and strives to support itself through advertising. In order to achieve the optimum learning situation, as well as serve its audience to the best of its ability, the staff believes that the decisions should rest primarily with the adviser and editors, according to standards of journalism. Material judged to cause significant psychological harm, or that violates the privacy of a person, or that is libelous will not be printed. Obscenity or profanity will not be printed in the Tom Tom. Stories in the Tom Tom will be based on substantial facts with quotes clearly attributed to named sources whenever possible. The Tom Tom will not run gossip or stories or columns founded on rumor without facts. Any student appearing at a public event such as a sports event or music concert may be photographed, and that photo may be published without violating the privacy of that individual.

Student puts talents on Youtube for all to see



“The forefront of new media was a whole lot of asian americans and I wanted to be like them so I started making my own little videos,” Buttner said. *Photo from Youtube*

Adrienne Bruner
Entertainment Editor

Senior Luke Buttner sat on a stool on stage with a guitar in his hands and a microphone in front of him. A boy dressed as the character Juno from the movie stood next to him. Last year, he performed the song “Anyone Else But You” at the end of the year for the forensics presentation, which lead him to create videos on of him singing and just talking.

“Growing up in Millard, like, being a little kid, there weren’t too many mixed kids, and being one of the few Asian-Americans, I didn’t really feel like I had anyone to relate to, and I was introduced to Youtube and at the time Asian-Americans were all of the forefront, and I

wanted to be them. Because that’s how I thought I would end up, and I started trying to mimic what they were doing, kind of copying each of these little bits of the Youtubers, and just kind of putting them into my own videos and that’s how that stemmed out,” Buttner said.

Buttner has posted videos on Youtube of him singing and talking about all the things a teenage boy would post on Youtube, from college and driving with his Filipina mother. Youtube has brought about a new kind of celebrity, called Youtubers. People can now get money as well as fans and subscribers.

“I think [being a Youtuber] would be really rad because then everybody knows your name. It’s just like being famous, but you’re famous in a different view-

point. You’re not all like the cameras and everything, it just has your own personal style to it, so I think being a Youtuber would be rad,” senior Angelic Diaz said.

The most famous Youtuber is Sweden’s Felix Kjellberg, also known as Pewdiepie, with more than 30 million subscribers, over 7 billion views and 7 million in annual earnings, according to hlnv.com. Other well-known Youtubers include Miranda Sings, Jenna Marbles and Shane Dawson. There are a lot of Youtubers who get six digits in revenue, which is possible through a Youtube Partnership or a multi-channel network. According to Youtube, multi-channel networks can help content creators with funding, programming and promotion among other things. Youtube partnerships are when someone allows their page to be monetized, or when advertisements show up on your page and the person who posted the video can get revenue. Just like there are people posting there are still over a billion people watching, according to Youtube.

[What I like about Youtube is] that you can watch anything in the world, really,” sophomore Celia Abolafia said.

To this day, Youtube is still growing. As mentioned before, Youtube has one billion users and 300 hours of video uploaded every minute according to expandedramblings.com. Anyone can post a video on Youtube and anyone can access it from anywhere with the right technology and Internet connection. Youtube has also become a vehicle for posting talents and abilities without the necessity of an agent or producer.

“I think [Youtube] got that big because everyone finally figured out ‘Oh, you can post videos,’ and they want to get their musical abilities or talents out there so

they decided ‘Hey, you might as well make an app and call it Youtube,’ because it’s about you and it’s you just doing your own videos and putting yourself out there so everybody can know you,” senior Angelic Diaz said.

Most people start Youtubing as just a hobby, posting their opinions and simple things they made like parodies, skits and even reviews. People all over the world can do this. However, very few people become famous. This has not stopped Buttner from posting his videos.

“[I want] to keep this channel going, I just want to be consistent, I want to start regimenting myself more because that’s not something I’ve been doing as of recent. But, yeah, I just want start keeping up with my time line, for just the longest time, I want to have an audience that grows with me. That’s what I’ve had since the fifth grade. If I could influence kids to actually want to get into vlogging. I don’t know, my interest in film came through Youtube, I can definitely say that, and that’s what I wanna go to school for, if I could have that sort of influence on someone too, as other youtubers had on me, that’d be great,” Buttner said.

At this point, Buttner just wants to post content. He plans to post his own short movies on Youtube. According to Buttner, he cannot say that he doesn’t see himself being famous, but is still hopeful.

“Right now, I just want to make a timeline of myself growing up I guess, eventually, I do want to start putting on short films, because that’s what I want to end up doing on Youtube, and using that as my main deal. But right now, it’s just going to be a timeline of myself,” Buttner said.

‘The Martian’ brings positivity to space genre

Thomas Casart
Opinion Editor

At the end of the day, it’s not about what you’ve witnessed, but what you’ve taken away from it, and the moving displays of resourcefulness and endless hope demonstrated by characters in “The Martian” pushes viewers to take away as much as they can. Of these characters, the protagonist, Matt Damon’s Astronaut Mark Watney is easily the most influential.

Matt Damon has had some fairly dramatic roles recently, and compared to Max in Elysium and Mann in Interstellar, the drama in “The Martian” is surrounded by more lightheartedness. From his small jokes about botany, to his positive attitude, this movie is transformed from what could have been a lamentous journey into a rewarding adventure. This tone is expressed mostly by his ceaseless attempts to keep moving forward. At no point in his struggle does he ever give up, and that makes the movie what it is. The other characters fall into this mindset of perseverance throughout the film, one of which is a young astronomer.

Donald Glover’s astronomer Rich Purnell is quirky, energetic, and undeniably a natural genius. Rich is introduced in the film at a crucial moment, where the executives of NASA are having a struggle with finding a way to keep moving forward. He is found in his office, the place strewn with empty food boxes. The first bit of characterization as a worka-

holic is reinforced he when he immediately gets up and gets himself more coffee. He then paces around the room while he thinks about his solution to the problem that NASA faces. His addition to the story as a genius archetype is a must, especially since he adds so much to it’s overall attitude by alleviating stress with a positive attitude.

In fact, most of the characters in “The Martian” add to its attitude extremely well. From the hard-driving Director of NASA Teddy Sanders, to his loyal Director of the Jet Propulsions Laboratory Bruce Ng, they all add crucial flavor to the scenes and environments of the film as a whole. This excellent use of characters can be heavily attributed to the writing of the movie’s book by Andy Weir, but credit must be given to the screenwriter, Drew Goddard, for taking the massive amounts of characterization in the book and translating it into the movie adaptation without losing effectiveness.

Overall, cast and crew of “The Martian” have demonstrated effortlessly how they can combine their multitude of talents to create a delicious amalgam of raw drama and immersive screenplay, while preserving the lighthearted attitude that many space films lack. This movie takes a step back from the standard of dark, gloomy, scary space movies and takes an even bigger step in its own direction. I would recommend “The Martian” to anyone who likes the traditional space movie attitude, and pretty much anyone who likes movies, because it is a fantastic movie.



Social media: Love or hate it

PRO v s. CON

Destiny Soto
Features Editor

Sophomore Ben Dalton

“Social media can be a real positive thing but yet there can be a lot of bullying and cyberbullying and all that that goes on. So there can be some negatives to it but overall I feel like it positively affects the community and society in general.” *Photo by Nia Booth*

Sophomore Colton Patric

“I believe that social media can absolutely have a positive influence if it’s not used to hurt or slander or degrade others or create drama, then yeah, it can be a great tool.” *Photo by Nia Booth*

Instructor Sara Fjell

“Social media is great for getting information quickly. I think it can be used for positive messaging, getting things out there. I think it’s really nice to always kinda *know what’s going on, and have that right available to you.*” *Photo by Nia Booth*

Sophomore Jack Buglewicz

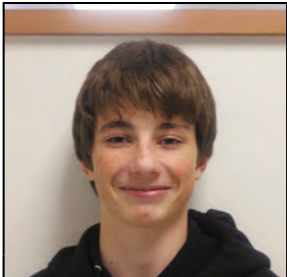
“I think that social media is sometimes needed but most of the time overused. People can use it but they need to pay attention to actual conversations instead of just texting each other and actually be social.” *Photo by Nia Booth*

Instructor John Campbell

“I’m not a big fan of social media, to be quite honest. I do think there certainly are applications that are very useful. There are obviously useful purposes for it. I think when it starts to take over all of the elements of our lives, when we’re constantly trying to update and inform people about our lives, that’s when I think it kind of poses as a problem.” *Photo by Nia Booth*

Junior Noah Sautter

“I feel that the internets have their ups and downs. It helps people learn about others are doing and possibly find new and better things that they might want to try. But on the other hand, it’s not completely necessary for you to be on your phone all day or always on social media because people are somewhat addicted to it.” *Photo by Nia Booth*



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