



BELLEVUE EAST
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BELLEVUE EAST HIGH SCHOOL BELLEVUE, NE (402)-293-4150 FEBRUARY 2017 ISSUE 4 VOLUME 66 1401 HIGH SCHOOL DRIVE

Middle school students compete in Challenge Day

McKayla Vermeer
Reporter

Students and teachers from Bellevue East hosted a competition at East to show students ranging from sixth to eighth grade the academic options here on Feb. 4 from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

"We thought that it would be a good idea to start to showcase some of the other things that Bellevue East does and does well as far as academic competitions," instructor David Bossman said.

Challenge Day was introduced to show the many academic options that East has to offer. Additionally, the organizers of Challenge Day were hoping to appeal to potential future members of East's academic clubs.

"We're trying to promote Bellevue East and show the younger kids 'hey look at all these things you can participate in' because we have some things that other schools in the area don't have," instructor Valorie Sailors said.

Challenge Day was an academic tournament specifically geared toward middle school-

ers. At Challenge Day, students were able to see what it is like to participate in clubs like Academic Decathlon, Science Olympiad and Quiz Bowl.

"I think it was a really good experience because we got to sample all the things they have at East, so that was pretty cool," seventh grade student from Mission Middle School Nadja Logans said.

Sixth through eighth graders were chosen as the targeted age group because many of them will soon be deciding which high school they plan to attend. Some middle school students may prefer academics over sports, and they might want to see the different activities they can pursue at East.

"We went with sixth through eighth graders just to try to get those kids that are thinking about high school to see what Bellevue East has to offer," Sailors said.

Throughout the morning, students rotated through each event, and, at the end, everyone moved to the auditorium to have lunch. Once everyone was there, ribbons and shirts were handed out to participating students and winners. Logans



Mini Math Day Bellevue East hosted a Challenge Day to showcase some of the competitive clubs and classes that they have to offer. Math instructor Valorie Sailors hosted a mock-math day for the students to participate in. "We're trying to help them see what we have as far as academic challenges," Sailors said. *Photo by Skyla Peter*

was one of the winners from the math competition and said that she would recommend this experience to others.

"If anyone else were to get this opportunity, I think they should take it, because it was

really fun," Logans said.

Bossman hopes to show that academics can be presented in a fun way and that, if they come to East, they can participate in activities that other schools don't have. Overall, the whole

day was just about having fun.

"Hopefully, even if just a few kids come and have a good time, then they can see that there are some kind of cool things happening at East," Bossman said.

East hosts second annual leadership summit

Cailin Tomsu
Editor in Chief

The Leadership Academy at Bellevue East held its second annual Leadership Summit for the members of the Academy and underclassmen selected by teachers, in the auditorium on January 13, 2017. The summit featured motivational speakers, along with a panel of East graduates and team building exercises.

"We wanted to bring in motivational speakers that our Leadership Academy students could learn from and hopefully take the speakers messages into the activities they are involved in. This year it also has a component of team building and having the kids work on challenges together through a variety of physical and mental activities," Leadership Academy sponsor Sara Fjell said.

The summit was split into two different sessions. The morning session was

lead by a variety of speakers, chosen by Fjell and co-sponsor Anthony Dunn, who had the chance to speak to the students. The afternoon session was lead by Team Concepts and consisted of team building exercises between Bellevue East and Papillion - La Vista South students.

"Team Concepts is a high performance leadership development and team building company. We help bring teams to their highest potential and teach leaders around the globe how to create and lead high performance teams, anywhere, with any team, for any objective," according to the Team Concepts website.

Team Concepts, led by Josh Erickson and assisted by local National Guard recruiters, guided students through a series of team and trust-building exercises. In each exercise, they emphasized the importance of cooperation in accomplishing a goal and the value in a group working together rather than individuals trying to

accomplish it on their own.

"It was such a great experience. I enjoyed meeting new people and listening to all the amazing speakers. It was engaging and I didn't find it hard to focus," junior Keondra Whisenhunt said.

Students that attended the summit found themselves to be very engaged with the speakers. All the speakers had different ways of interacting with the students and spreading their message.

"I learned a ton from the summit but the thing I have really implemented to my own life is Cory Demmel's advice about adding value. I never really thought about how much one positive thing can make someone's day so much better," junior Alexandria Welch said.

The speakers in order of appearance were: East graduate and Assistant Director of Forensics at UNO Cameron Logadon, Leadership Coach and Director for Bellevue Masters Commission Cory

Demmel and founder and CEO of Team Concepts Josh Erickson. Following these speakers there was a Chieftain Alumni Panel consisting of: Avery Elementary instructor Jordan Bald, Ward I city councilman Thomas Burns, chiropractor at Hooegeveen Chiropractic Brooke Harre and University of Iowa senior Jasmine Putney.

"The speakers were amazing; I loved all of them. They all had great things to say because they were in different stages of life and were able to give insight on how to embrace life and be as successful as possible," Whisenhunt said.

Fjell hopes to expand these summits and improve upon them. She wants to host a summit every year for the students and others attending.

"We want to have one every year and maybe eventually be able to add more students too," Fjell said.

CTE teaches students practical career skills

Brooklyn Anderson
Reporter

As students in Bellevue East prepare to leave high school and attend college or join the workforce, Career Technology Education (CTE) can help students in choosing a career path or get a head start in the field they've chosen.

"CTE to me is career focused education that allows students to expand their knowledge beyond core areas and to find an area that inspires them and will help them to pursue their future goals," health sciences instructor Jennifer Carda said.

CTE helps students choose their career path by using the Nebraska Career Education Model. The model has six areas that encompass numerous career paths, so students have a more broad perspective of what they can do after school. In addition to core academic subjects, the six pathways are health sciences; skilled and technical sciences; human sciences and education; business, marketing and management; agriculture, food and natural resources and communication and information systems.

"All students need to be well-versed in core area to help them advance into more specialized areas," Carda said.

Nebraska Career Education (NCE) helps students with their career path and gets them prepared for their future. Each state has different ways of providing career education to students. NCE helps students understand career possibilities and plan for post-secondary education.

"I believe that the career exploration pathway is important to allow students to experiment and see what areas are of interest to them. If a student doesn't cook at home, how do they know that they might have a passion for this and excel? Offering a variety of options allows students to explore. If a student wants to go on to medicine, but find

they become faint at the sight of blood, maybe they should look into other areas of healthcare, such as IT or rehabilitation sciences," Carda said.

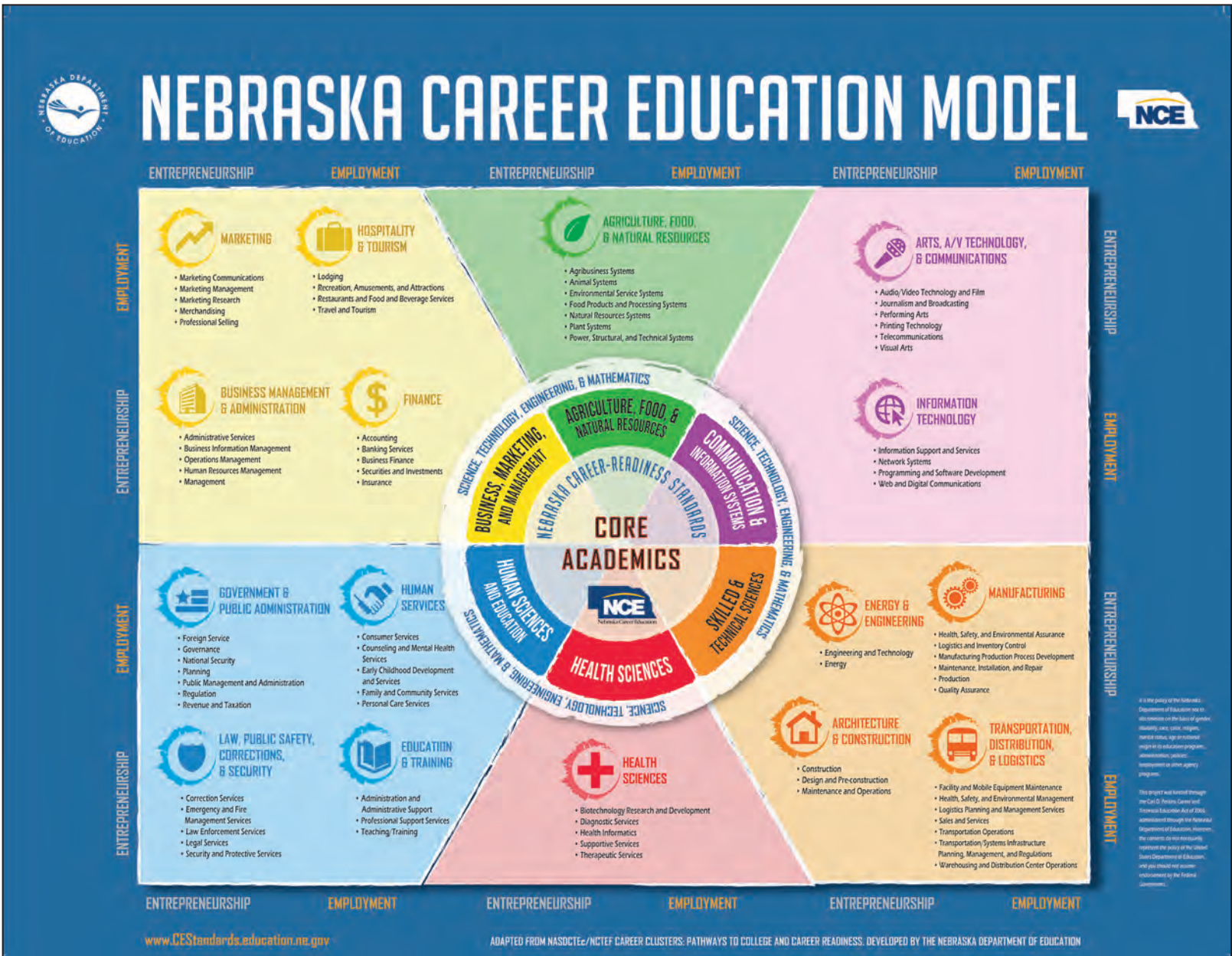
Pathways for students have a very wide range, so students do not feel the need to do something they do not want to do for a job after college. There are 11 complete pathways in Bellevue East. Some of the complete pathways are the finance cluster, hospitality and tourism

cluster and the information technology cluster. These complete pathways cover most of the jobs being given on the Nebraska Career Model and if a student completes the pathway, they will have the qualifications for their chosen field. Core academics are also a foundational part of the model.

"Bellevue covers all core subjects defined at math, English, science, and social studies," Carda said.

ReVISION is a critical approach for Nebraska schools to analyze their current Career Education system and make adjustments to more effectively prepare students for college and careers. ReVISION -- which Bellevue started in the 2016-2017 school year -- strengthens high school Career and Technical Educations programs to help students meet Nebraska's post-secondary education entrance requirements.

"We created reVISION five years ago to be a strategic school improvement process designed specifically for CTE. The process examines all CTE programs and school counseling to determine if the programs are meeting student needs, are aligned to projected labor market needs and economic priorities of Nebraska," State Director Nebraska Career Education Richard Katt said.



Career Clusters The above poster now hangs in classrooms and hallways throughout the district. The goal of the Career Technology Education (CTE) program is to offer students opportunities to learn applicable career or life skills through hands-on classes and programs. The program is designed to have students college or career ready by the time they are handed their diploma. *Graphic from the Nebraska Department of Education*

Practice ACT prepares students for April test

Nia Booth
Video Editor in Chief

Bellevue East students in grades ninth through eleventh took a PACT (practice ACT) on Dec. 12. Each student took the test in preparation of the new state-mandated test occurring in April 2017.

The test was to give students a look at how well they can take the ACT currently, but it was also an opportunity for teachers to look at what problem areas students are having. There wasn't a goal score-wise for students set by the administration as the test was just for progression.

"I feel like the practice ACT went well at East, especially since it was the first time our building had done it and we didn't have the most preparation. My own personal goal is to have each of my students raise their composite score a

couple points by the time they take the ACT again in April," instructor Kristina Sonntag said.

Though Nebraska has changed the state-wide mandated testing from the NeSA test to the ACT, there will not be any changes to the school's curriculum. The administration decided that the current curriculum will be adequate preparation for testing.

"[The curriculum] shouldn't need to change. We have our state standards, we have our district outcomes, so we shouldn't have to change curriculum because our curriculum -- if it's taught and taught well -- will align with the ACT. The ACT is a curriculum-based test. So if your curriculum is strong and sound--which I believe ours is--that will prepare students for the ACT without making curriculum changes. The ACT will not change our curriculum," Principal Jeff Wagner said.

While the ACT will not change the

curriculum, it will encourage teachers to practice more strategies within class time. The content that is taught will be the same, but the way it is taught may be altered.

"Can we do some different things in class, can we practice some of the formatting of the ACT and the things within the class? I think we can. Can we do some timed reading test, for example, can we write our math problems maybe a little differently so they look a little bit more like the ACT? Can we do some practice? Yes, we can, but that fits within our curriculum," Wagner said.

Many students, like junior Alex Welch, are using the score that they have received from the Dec. practice test to set a goal for the April testing. Along with that, the help of teachers and prep resources, students have a better chance of doing better in April.

"My goal for the April test is to raise my

ACT score by at least 3 points. I feel raising my score more than 3 points is totally achievable because the teachers are doing a great job of helping us prepare. I have also been preparing for the ACT in April by using different online tools and prep books," Welch said.

Having the ACT replace the NeSA test is giving students the ability to apply more of their high school career toward their future. Unlike the NeSA, colleges across the county look at ACT scores and use them to help make admission or scholarship decisions.

"I love that the ACT is now a mandatory state test because it is free and I feel like it is actually applicable to my life because I used to view the NeSA as a waste of time. Also, taking the practice ACT will help on the April test because any exposure to questions similar to the ACT questions will make test takers more confident," Welch said.

FBLA opens in-school, student-run coffee shop

Amya Hamerla
Reporter

BEast Brew coffee shop was added to Bellevue East’s library over winter break; the installation of the shop was organized by FBLA adviser Andrew Werner and the seven FBLA student officers.

“BEast Brew was the vision of Dr. Wagner and Mrs. Dunkel. They approached me and asked if FBLA would be interested in running it starting second semester,” Werner said.

BEast Brew was made for students to get a learning experience in working. The students deal with money and customers to give them a chance to understand how to work outside of school.

“[FBLA students] created this from scratch and the learning that occurred during this process was incredible. They continue to learn everyday business skills such as marketing, accounting, sales, management, problem solving, creativity, customer service, and teamwork,” Werner said.

BEast Brew gave students the chance to understand how to manage a business. They decided what would be best for the shop and the most productive way to build the shop.

“My FBLA seven student officer team as well as my freshman Introduction to Business class students started the research

in September. They looked at types of coffee machines, coffee products, supplies such as cups and lids, prices, profit margins, etc. They also determined how many employees would be needed, created job applications, and worked with the counselors to create a business management internship credit for them,” Werner said.

The shop gave students the chance to see what they will come across once they start to work outside of school. They can understand how to work with others in a more professional type of setting.

“I like that the shop provides an authentic learning experience for our students. Real-life scenarios, hands-on learning and having a personal stake in the learning makes it better and more enjoyable for our student,” Principal Jeffrey Wagner.

The shop was planned by the students. They also helped with paying for the shop by using their funds and getting donations from parents. Wagner was also a contributor to the funding that was needed for this shop to be made.

“Counters and some supplies/materials were paid for with funding from Dr. Wagner. Other supplies were paid for with FBLA funds. FBLA will work to repay him as soon as possible,” Werner said.

Wagner was the one who came up with the idea of hav-

ing a coffee shop in the school library. He asked the students to help with the making of the shop and figure out how much it would cost.. He wanted the students to experience what it was like to make a business while working with others.

“I researched the prices of drinks and materials that we would need for the coffee shop and compared prices to make sure we were getting them as cheap as possible,” FBLA treasurer Quiana Logans said.

Students deal with customers and handle money. They have the responsibility of deciding when to restock and planning for times when they will be busy.

“I enjoy working here. We tend to get a rush at the beginning and end of class. It is fun to work as a barista for an hour,” junior Ashlynn LeFrancois said.

Workers offer a variety of drinks for affordable prices to students. Students can pick from drink choices that range from being widely known to only known by few.

“It is a dollar for a small and two dollars for a large. If you want an ice coffee, it is usually a dollar fifty. We have a variety of cappuccinos, such as Caramel, French Vanilla and just a regular cappuccino. We also sell Krazy Cup flavors which are just random, bizarre kind of drinks. It ranges anywhere from Sweet Potato Pie to Death by Chocolate,” LeFrancois said.

BEast Brew allows students to explore things they usually would not have the opportunity to experience. They can try new drinks that had been introduced to them and show support for

the changes in East High.

“Give it a shot and try something new. You will never know what you will like, especially with the Krazy Cups,” LeFrancois said.



Coffee Shop As a new addition to Bellevue East, the coffee shop has given students like junior Joey Walther an opportunity to receive an intern credit for working in it for a class period.“It is really interesting and it is a good learning experience because I definitely learned how to deal with customers and make coffee drinks,” Walther said. *Photo by Skylia Peter*

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East enters Beast Games

McKayla Vermeer
Reporter

Almost every seat in the auditorium was filled with students, staff or family members, each one talking in excitement and getting ready for the upcoming event. The auditorium lights dimmed and the previously loud audience settled into a more hushed tone. Bright lights shone on the stage as act after act filed on, each displaying their talent whether it be singing, dancing, or any other type of performing. Finally, it was time to announce the winners.

“I was pretty shocked, there were a lot of good people who should’ve won, but I was definitely shocked, it was pretty exciting,” junior and talent show winner Nathan Colletta said.

The talent show was just one of the many events of Beast Games, which started on Monday, Jan. 30, went to Friday, Feb. 3. Beast Games was a week-long competition in which the different grades competed against each other in a series of physical and mental activities. The team heptathlon on Monday was overall won by the senior class with 54 points, and the juniors won the overall best theme at the basketball game on Tuesday night. On Wednesday, junior Nathan Colletta won the talent show and the senior group Team Chef won Thursday’s

trivia night. Then on Friday the points and winning class were announced, the seniors winning with 196.5 points, followed by the juniors with 165.5, the sophomores with 122, and the freshmen with 12.

“There’s going to be athletic activities on Monday, the talent show on Wednesday, trivia night on Thursday, so there is really something for everyone,” instructor and Leadership Academy sponsor Sara Fjell said.

The idea for Beast Games was first introduced by Dr. Wagner and Leadership Academy sponsors and students. Fjell said that previous school events inspired the creation of Beast Games.

“It’s just a really fun way of kind of utilizing what we saw - which was great about homecoming this year - a kind of week long celebration that ends in a parade, but making that in the winter,” Fjell said.

Beast Games was decided to take place in the winter to increase student involvement during these months, as students tend to lose morale as the year goes on and major school activities slow. Beast Games were also used to boost enthusiasm in the students, which senior and Leadership Academy member Baruch Gilmore says many are lacking.

“A lot of kids in this school don’t have very good spirit and I think this is a good way to get kids involved,” Gilmore said.

Some of the staff that sponsored and

helped out with Beast Games also have some goals for how they want it to affect students. Fjell hopes that Beast Games are something that students look forward to, and special education instructor Rachel Schutte said that she just wants a lot of student involvement.

“Everyone should come out and participate, and the more people that participate and have great energy, the more people will put themselves out there and have a great time,” Schutte said.

The future of the Beast Games is all

Hoops, there it is. Time ticks away on the scoreboard as junior Hannah Traster rebounds the ball at the Bellevue East Beast Games. “I always hear coach Anderson’s voice in my head saying ‘find somebody, box them out, and then go get the ball,’” Traster said. Photo by Briana Benak

ready being thought about by some staff, and to them it looks pretty bright. Schutte said that even though it might have a rough start, she believes that it will continue on.

“Like anything in the first year you kind of figure out the bumps, but we have a really committed group of students that even though some will graduate this year, those that continue on in Leadership Academy will continue to run and promote it next year,” Schutte said.

Seniors Justin Calixte, Xzayvion Smith, Zach Acamo and Jonathan Tichenor are at the Beast Games pep rally. “We’re just celebrating our win of the chieftan cup, hanging out and having some icecream,” Smith said. Photo by Carly Regnas

Forensic students find outlet through interpretation

Cailin Tomsu
Editor in Chief

Students of different races, genders and mindsets all wander the halls East and meet together in forensics, a class where every opinion is right and expression is praised. Students are allowed to write speeches, poems or perform acts.

“Forensics is often described as the art of competitive speech/acting. Participants collect published pieces (plays, movies, songs, books, etc.) that they wish to perform in their own interpretation. The categories to choose pieces for are humorous interpretation, dramatic interp., duo/duet, OI, POI and poetry. Students can also write speeches for the categories entertainment, informative, and oratory,” junior Adriana McKing said.

Students in forensics are able to choose what they would like to write about and how they would like to perform, with the guidance of instructor John Campbell. Some students have chosen to speak about pressing social issues they see in as wrong in society.

“Right now my poetry piece is about minorities in this country who don’t feel as if

they are welcome in America for reasons like police brutality,” sophomore Jadon Putney said.

Putney says he thinks of the issues or ideas he wants to write about by shutting himself away from everyone else, and thinking in his room. He enjoys forensics because it is a place where people have to listen to what is being said. Other students do tricks similar to practice

“I do poetry and I usually talk about black issues in America. This year I’m doing race issues from the perspective other than an African American. So I have a piece that’s kind of from the perspective of the killer of Trayvon Martin and obviously it’s not from him, but it’s just someone writing in his shoes,” junior Charity Williams said.

Williams chose to focus on race issues because she sees it as one of the main issues to her personally prevalent this year with all the police brutality. Williams has many pieces from a variety of perspectives, one of these being from the view of a skinhead. She considers that her hardest hitting piece emotionally and her most controversial because of the harsh nature of racism. .

Not all students chose race issues, however, and wrote about other interesting things.

“Currently I’m running a poetry program about intersectionality through one of the many experiences of black womanhood in America. ‘As you can see I am black, and a woman...’ Also I’m in a Duo with Jordan Bloom about a man who falls in love with a woman who never loved him and conducted an art experiment on him during the whole relationship. I also have a Dramatic Interp., ‘Fontaine’ by Whoopi Goldberg, a touching piece of a thief and junkie who encounters the eternal goodness of Anne Frank,” McKing said.

Students in forensics have almost complete freedom to speak and discuss whatever they find interesting or intriguing. The students have to make sure their pieces are school appropriate and adhere to basic school guidelines.

“If a student wants to argue a certain perspective, even if it’s controversial, that’s alright as long as there’s reasons,” Campbell said.

Forensics provides a creative outlet for students to express themselves and attempt

to get their points across, in an educational environment. They are allowed to bounce ideas off of other students and their teacher.

“I always want to represent myself and I kind of want to be that voice, and that’s what kept me in forensics because I want to make a change, no matter how small it is and I think just talking about something is the way to make a change,” Williams said.

Students are allotted time to work and improve their pieces until they are competition ready in class and in doing so can share their works with peers and classmates.

“Forensics allows for total freedom of expression. I’ve yet to encounter a class where I can yell with my peers about the issues I face in society. The great thing about forensics is that you can get your voice to be heard. Your words have the power to move an audience and it’s kinda liberating and reassuring to be around like minded people who don’t believe our society is just fine the way it is. And it’s even more thrilling to present my piece which begs the question about whitewashed feminism after a poetry piece tailored to whitewashed feminism,” McKing said.



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The truth about millenials

Skyla Peter
Opinion Editor

High school can be a very stressful time for some students like senior Jon Jenkins. Jenkins was in his junior year of high school and it was the week of finals when he went through one of the most stressful times of his life. Junior year is the year that colleges look to see what students are going to be like as young adults on their campus. Jenkins was enrolled in all Advanced Placement classes, which are college level classes in high school. The week of finals Jon was feeling intense anxiety about getting good grades on his finals and keeping his A's and B's. He stayed up all night studying and trying to prepare for his exams. He was running off of barely any sleep and was so determined to keep his grades as high as possible. He abandoned his physical and mental well being for a week straight. He was studying all night and doing all of his homework that he missed just trying to make sure that every little thing was turned in for his final grade.

“At times I felt like I was going to throw up and I was on the point of, I don’t even want to go

to the finals. I wanted to skip school just because I was not feeling physically well. It does not help that I did not sleep, but the fact that the stress kind of made me feel this pressure to do so well because college is right around the corner. It physically drains you and it is so exhausting. Then there is so much relief because after I am done, I can take a breather; I can re-focus and be ready for the next semester,” Jenkins said.

The stress that people from the millennial generation are feeling as they go through the process of moving into adulthood can make them appear, to other generations, that they do not know how to do things they should know how to do. According to motivational speaker Simon Sinek, older generations think of this generation as lazy and entitled, while students are developing anxiety disorders and depression.

“A lot more people nowadays are going to college and the price of college is going up every day. I know I am stressed constantly about paying for college, finding tuition, getting scholarships, and just grades in general. Classes are hard sometimes. You want to challenge yourself everyday, but

it is stressful; it is hard to stay focused. So yeah, I understand why people have anxiety,” Jenkins said.

The amount of people that have anxiety is increasing according to many different sources like Psychology Today. Schools do not require students to take any classes that will benefit them in the real world with skills like knowing how to pay taxes and balance a checkbook. Everything of that nature gets put on the parents who sometimes do not take on the responsibility, leaving a generation of people who were never taught how to be adults.

“The generation that we call the millennials, too many of them grew up subject to ‘failed parenting strategies.’ Where, for example, they were told that they were special, all the time. They were told that they could have anything they want in life, just because they want it. Some of them got into honors classes not because they deserved it. but because their parents complained and some of them got A’s, not because they earned them, but because the teachers did not want to deal with the parents,” Sinek said.

This generation is different from other generations in other

aspects as well. The rapid increase in advancement in technology can cause young adults to become addicted to social media, according to Sinek. Through social media young adults have a chance to talk to anyone they want to talk to and get any kind of instant gratification they want.

“There are two opinions, one opinion is that social media is beneficial. It takes people who are uncomfortable in groups and allows them to interact with people because it is not sort of face to face and they are not risking immediate feedback. There are others that have the opinion that it can be harmful and that people do not learn to interact with others. They are not forced to come out of their shells, they can just hide behind a computer screen,” psychology instructor Alan Albert said.

Studies shown that when people use social media, it releases a chemical in the brain called dopamine. This chemical makes people feel good, so in a way it is a numbing substance that makes people feel happy and can cause them to become addicted, according to Sinek.

“I think it is because we have a lot more going on, with social media and cyberbullying. Since there is so much social media, people do not go outside as much. People text each other in the same room, like sitting

across the table from each other. You are sitting face to face, what are you doing,” junior Lily Gillipsie said.

Aside from social media, another major conflict that millennials have with the real world is being able to successfully start a job. The work field is different from school life and not every student understands how to make the switch.

“What I would say at least for most people our age, get a fast food job right at the beginning because they’re not going to take it easy on you. I work at the Zoo and there it is always working, get your stuff done, you are accountable for what you are supposed to be doing,” Jenkins said.

Jenkins suggests that students start off with small step and stay focused and on top of their stuff so they do not become overwhelmed. College prices are going up and becoming less affordable for students just coming out of high school.

“For young adults from educated, middle-class families, the people who will find a way to get through college despite the costs, rising college tuition is a personal challenge. But the great national crisis is the fact that too many other young adults are not going to college or, if they do, don’t graduate, in large part because they can’t afford it,” New York times reporter Adam Davidson said.

Thomas Burns takes city council by surprise

Samantha Collison
News Editor

It’s a tense moment as Thomas Burns, drained from a final day of campaigning, waits in his home with his family and friends for the results of the election. He doesn’t know what to expect as his campaign manager calls him over to see the computer and says, “Congratulations Councilman.”

“[Election day was] draining. By that time, you’re burnt, you’re tired, and you just want to go home and sleep and rest, and I almost felt numb all day. I, in my mind, was just getting ready for the worst possible thing. We thought we had a chance to win, but we didn’t know we’d win significantly,” Bellevue City Council member Thomas Burns said.

Burns won the Ward 1 city council election against incumbent Steve Carmichael, 2,332 votes to 1,442. Originally, from LaVista, Burns moved to Bellevue when he began attending Bellevue East and graduated in the class of 2012.

“I feel like going through East is when I really figured out what I wanted to do. Originally, when I first came into high school, I really didn’t know that I was going to go to college, but teachers helping me out and being there for me really pushed me forward. Chris Kessel was huge in helping me figure out what I wanted to do, because I didn’t know. I just knew I wanted to go to college, but I didn’t know what for. After taking his government class, I fell in love with government and moved on to college, and now I’m majoring in political science,” Burns said.

Burns said he enjoyed the class because it was challenging and he had to put effort into studying in order to pass the tests. His interest in government con-

tinued outside of high school: majoring in political science, working on local campaigns and, eventually, running for city council.

“When you’re out there volunteering for other campaigns or working on other campaigns, eventually you think, ‘You know, maybe I could do this for myself,’ and it was around the end of 2014--and in politics, timing is very important--I started throwing it out there: asking people what they thought, asking if I should go for it, and some people were really supportive and some people said I should wait, and I said, ‘screw that, I don’t want to wait,’” Burns said.

For Burns, one of the most important parts of campaigning was meeting people and listening to them. He began going door-to-door in Ward 1 as early as December 2015 and continued through the summer before the election. In addition to promising more tangible changes like helping small businesses in Olde Towne succeed and boosting the area’s economy, Burns--only 22 in comparison to fellow council members who are all 58 or older--wants to bring a fresh perspective and a new openness to city council by, according to an interview with voter-information.org, “[making] City Hall more taxpayer-friendly and responsive, [by] rolling out the red carpet more often than red tape.”

“I feel like there’s a huge gap between our elected officials and the newer generation, and I feel like one of the advantages [of being younger] is being able to bridge that gap, because [the elected officials] have lived a lot of their life and [younger people] are just starting theirs, and I’m also in that beginning stage and figuring things out, and I feel like bridging that gap is pretty huge,” Burns said.

Being young with very little experience in politics puts Burns in a unique position, but he hopes that the advantages that his perspective will outweigh the potential disadvantages. He is also in a unique position with his schedule: going to school and working two jobs at the same time, but he has no complaints and no regrets.

“[Going to school and being on city council] is a little hectic; I’m kind of getting used to it. I took last semester off to finish the campaign so I wasn’t putting one foot over here and one foot over there be-



At only 22 years old, Thomas Burns challenges Steve Carmichael for the Ward 1 seat. “The most important part of campaigning is meeting people, never taking people for granted and just being accessible to people while you’re campaigning. It’s all about going door-to-door and shaking as many hands as you can and reaching as many people as you possibly can. Honestly, I feel that what it takes is energy and being able to get out there and knock on doors, ask people what they think and what they want. With that, you also have to be able to listen. When you go door-to-door, it’s not just about talking to people, it’s about hearing their concerns and making them important,” Burns said. *Photo by Briana Benak*

Understanding Bellevue administration, faculty

Upcoming plans and opportunities for the district to grow

New superintendent plans to help BPS

Hailey Hendry
Reporter

Imagine working for an company for over 20 years, working your way up and looking forward to finally being able to work in the position you want to be in. You have so many great ideas to make the organization better and now you finally get to put them into place. That’s exactly what happened to Superintendent Dr. Jeff Rippe this year.

Rippe started out as a dean of students, became an assistant principal, moved up to the district central office, and when the superintendent position opened up, he just couldn’t pass up the offer.

“So, [I had] kind of a good idea of kind of what the district’s all about and had some ideas about where I believe the district needs to go in the future,” Rippe said, “so when the position opened up, obviously I was interested in it and just having that background.”

After he received the promotion, he has been working on trying to put his ideas into place and make the school district an even better district than it already is.

“There’s some things that I talked about at the beginning of the year of better communication, more transparency, making sure we’re working as a team better than what we were before and obviously academics are obviously our number one goal and number one priority and that won’t change,” Rippe said, “but there’s some things that I think we need to work on that we’re doing right now of trying to make sure we’re communicating better with staff members, with parents, with community members, but then also just that transparency piece.”

The district administration had recently sent out a survey of all of the staff members of what the district is doing well and what they could work on and now they are starting to share that feedback.

“That will kind of give us some more indication of areas that we need to continue to work on,” Rippe said.

One of the items that Rippe has been trying to put into place is a unity plan to try to bring together the Bellevue Public School district.

“Towards the beginning of the year, Bellevue West hosted the Unity Day which was a great event, as well,” Rippe said. “Bellevue East had a Homecoming Parade which is different, so I think the schools are doing some different things, again, trying to unite not just Bellevue East, but the entire district.”

There are people saying that Bellevue East and Bellevue West are true rivals, and there’s people who disagree that this unity plan will not work.

“Well, they are rivals when they play each other, but beyond that they really are pretty similar schools,” Rippe said. “A lot of the kids know each other, when I was there [at the East/West game] the great thing is after that game is that students are either on the East side or the West side, but after the game, the students intermingle because a lot of them know each other, they get along.”

Rippe has some very high hopes for the district, so when everything is all said and done, Bellevue Public Schools will be an even better school district than it is now because of the plans Rippe has for it.



Bellevue East has spent money to redesign the senior commons,including new tables and TVs .“I think the changes made to the senior commons make the school seem nicer, but I think that we could’ve used the money on more necessary things,” junior Mackenzie Krumland said. *Photo by Skyla Peter*



One thing that students believe should be fixed is some of the walls that look like this one around Bellevue East. The bond money might be used to restore the school to make it appear better. “I believe that we need to fix the water damage before we use grant money to get anything else.We’ve had water damage ever since I’ve been here and I’ve witnessed it first hand as an aide for the gym. I’ve spent many times running to find janitors to clean or try and stop the water for destroying the brand new floor,” senior Colleen Ballinger said. *Photo by Skyla Peter*

School board works on bettering community; new plans, policies

Skya Peter
Opinion Editor

The Bellevue Public school board works to help solve problems in the community for every-one; the 2015 fall election has given people a chance to make a difference around Bellevue.

“There are six of us and we are in charge of setting the vision for what we want to happen in the district. Our main job is to hire a superintendent and he is in fact our only employee, all the other school district employees work for the superintendent and he works for us. Our assignment is to set vision and policy. The day to day operation of the district we leave to the superintendent. If we have concerns then we talk to him about how we can address those concerns,” vice president Nina Wolford said.

There was recently an election in the fall of 2015 for positions in the school board. One person who ran for a position in the school board was Sarah Centineo. She ran for a position and is now one of the Trustees.

“I ran for the school board because last year. I attended the facilities master plan community meeting and, for the first time, heard about the, at the time, possible bond issue. I was listening to the issues with the buildings and I wondered how so much maintenance had gotten deferred. During that same time period, our seventh grader was experiencing difficulties adjusting to the new school and our fourth grader was witnessing frequent violent outbursts at his school. I joined a parent group and we worked very hard to make some positive changes in the district. I ran for the Board to try to ensure the forward progress we started would continue,” Centineo said.

One item that the school board is working on is to figure about a way to help the enrollment that takes place between Bellevue East and Bellevue West. Students are not going to the school that they are supposed to go to or they will transfer to the other high school.

“Now we are trying to figure out what we as a board can do about the disparity and the enrollment between East and West. That is a thorny question because right now we do not have frozen boundaries. We have been thinking and discussing our concerns about that and we do not know what we are going to do,” Wolford said.

At the beginning of the 2016-2017 school year, the school board wanted this year to be the year of unity. They wanted all the schools in Bellevue to come together as whole community and form more successful bonds with businesses.

“The things we are working on to better the community include working on getting the bond projects up and running. I have only had one meeting so far, but one of the things I would like to see is a better partnership with businesses in the area. For example, being able to offer mentor-ships/apprenticeships. I would also like to see a stronger relationship with Bellevue University and Metro,” Centineo said.

They are working on those relationships with those businesses as well as using the bond money they received. Bellevue Public schools has bond money to use at Bellevue East and Bellevue West. The money was needed to help shape up both of the schools with things like a coffee shop in the Bellevue East library.

“When we were in the middle of a bond effort we were very busy. We are so grateful that the people of Bellevue voted yes to the bond. Working up to the bond, we tried to tell people the reason why we needed that money and one of the biggest reasons is right here at East. The age fact is the original is forty years old and to replace that and do the whole thing is about six or seven million dollars. There was just no way we could find that in the budget, there was no way we could do it. That was the message that we were giving to people and it was a busy time to work up to the bond,” Wolford said.

| | Director of Communications | Director of Fiscal Affairs | Director of Assessment & Accreditation | Director of Student Services | Coordinator of College & Career Education |
|--------------------------|---|--|--|--|--|
| | Amanda Oliver | Susan Brooks | Laurie Hanna | Kevin Mills | Brad Stueve |
| Official Job Description | The Director of Communications is responsible for directing the internal and external school-community information programs for the school district. The director will prepare or assist in preparing informational material and publications for the Board of Education and members of the administrative staff. | The Director of Fiscal Affairs has been delegated the responsibility for managing the fiscal affairs and accounting procedures, assisting with the preparation and administration of the various budgets of the district. | The Director of Assessment and Accreditation is delegated the authority and responsibility for conducting the planned activities in the assessment model of the school system. The Director is also responsible for the development and coordination of the accreditation process. | The Director of Student Services is responsible for developing and coordinating positive behavior supports programs; including budget development and implementation for the school district. The director also serves as a primary contact for parent communication, student attendance and discipline, as well as the district school safety program. | The Coordinator of College & Career Education is responsible for developing and coordinating college and career pathways programs. The director also serves as a primary contact for parent communication regarding dual enrollment, alternative programs, and secondary student enrollment concerns. |
| Plain English | The director acts as a liaison between the school board or the administration and the public, the district or the press. They coordinate all official communication to and from the district, and they represent the district on an official level. | The director coordinates any and all money transferred to, from or within the district. They write budgets, oversee the application for state, federal or external grants, advise the administration or school board on financial matters and keep the district apprised of legislation pertaining to financial affairs in the area. | The director develops and implements assessments and accountability standards to help the district meet state standards and local objectives. They also organize staff development/training programs and events. | The director ensures that programs and activities in the district are within regulation. They develop positive behavioral support programs and work with school principals in the area of student discipline. They oversee the district safety program, coordinate the school counseling program, and recommend policies related to student safety or attendance and discipline. | The coordinator serves as a resource regarding dual enrollment, college and career readiness within the district. They coordinate night school credit recovery programs and develop college/career pathways programs. The coordinator oversees the CTE program, including the implementation of the program and the management of grant funds. |

The MVPs chosen at Bellevue East

Maria Mwita
Reporter

This year’s winter sports have been hitting it off with a bang. We have basketball, wrestling and swimming. On every team there is that one person (or a few people) that add that special something to their team. The player could be the leader and an active participant or just be that role model that does everything right and makes the team better in small subtle ways. This year’s MVP’s for winter sports have been chosen by their coaches and are great players both on and off the court, mat and pool.

For wrestling, coach Todd Porter chose his three MVP players: seniors Joel Anstine, Doug Cheek and Justin Larson.

“They lead by example. They are hard workers and treat their teammates with respect,” Porter said.

“I was a little surprised being picked as an MVP because of being out with an injury for the past couple weeks. I am an accountable teammate and you can count on me in tough situations. I am a

clutch player,” Anstine said.

“I am a senior captain on the team, but not the best wrestler so I was surprised I was chosen as an MVP. I am a good leader and am pretty good at mental preparation,” Cheek said.

“I was sort of surprised because I see a lot of people work hard but I’m glad to be MVP because I feel like I work hard as well. I see myself as a leader and I try to make sure everyone is working hard. I am also a hard worker and I hope that motivates people to work hard as well.” Larson said.

All three of these players have worked substantially hard on and off the wrestling mat. They are all seniors and they will be missed by their team, but their contribution to the team will not be forgotten.

Girls basketball this year has had its ups and downs, but there’s one player that has helped the team incredibly and kept them going: senior Justina Epting.

“Justinna relieves the pressure and the load people have to do. She handles the ball 90 percent of the time and usually guards the better person on the op-

posing team,” Anderson said.

“It is cool knowing that hard work doesn’t go unnoticed. I am honored and motivated. I’m pretty good at being a player maker and keeping a good pace going during games. My dance moves also make practice super fun,” Epting said.

Senior Justinna Epting has been playing all four years at East and will be missed next year along with the other seniors. Boys basketball has had one of its best seasons this year. The chosen MVP was junior Austin Slie.

“Austin Slie makes everyone around him better. His energy and effort combined with competitive spirit takes his game and those around him to another level,” Mustard said.

“No, I am not surprised. This is because I know what coaches expectations are for me and I always give 110 percent to strive past those expectations. Coach and I have a very good relationship. A few qualities that I’d say I have are not really skills, they’re more of in the effort and hustling categories. Those are my best qualities in my opinion. Also, being



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a leader for my team,” Slie said.

Swimming had a very unique and special year. Not only were there Bellevue East swimmers, but they combined with some of the Platteview swimmers. Coach Gregg Beeman chose three MVP’s. One boy and girl from East and a Platteview swimmer.

“If I had to pick the MVP I would have one for the guys and one for the girls from East and a girl from Platteview. Logan Wood, Alex Welch and Kaitlynn Kaniglia. All three of the students make great efforts to better not only themselves during practice,” Beeman said.

Wrestlers stalled by weather stay the night

Kendra Dragon
Contributor

❖Wrestling ends the season by placing third.

As the wrestlers finished their last match of the day, they were soon awarded for placing third out of the 16 teams they competed against.

“We got third out of sixteen teams, so [it went] pretty well. We have won four meets this season, so would have liked to be higher,” coach Todd Porter said.

Soon after, the team was informed that they would have to stay in Wichita, Kansas overnight due to weather and icy roads. Even though such weather incidents are rare, coaches must consider the

safety of their team when making decisions. Porter is familiar with such decisions from past experience.

“Not here at East, but at one of my last schools we had to once; it is what it is. Safety is always number one concern,” Porter said.

The wrestlers enjoyed being able to stay in Wichita for the night. The main reason that they liked the overnight stay was because they got to enjoy the hotel and its necessities.

“Like most high school kids, they thought it was great. They got to get in the pool and jacuzzi, but were not able to the night before,” Porter said.

The wrestling team competed against 15 different teams that day. The wrestling meet was held at Bishop Carroll Catholic

High School. This was also the school that coach Porter had taught at previously before Bellevue East.

“[We competed against] 15 different schools that day. The host school was my old high school I had taught at before coming to Bellevue East 18 years ago: Bishop Carroll Catholic High School. So it was pretty special for me to take my good team there to show off to my old buddies,” Porter said.

Senior Justin Larson explained that students have to take responsibility for their own actions and not to blame it on a teammate. He also said that whenever going on the mat to compete, wrestlers should always have a good attitude.

“Wrestling is all about you. You can’t blame a teammate if

you perform poorly; it’s just you on the mat. Also with wrestling, you have to have a positive mindset,” Larson said.

Larson mentioned that these experiences can be very fun and memorable. He said he

feels this way because then he has the opportunity to create a connection with his teammates.

“I would say it’s memorable because I bond more with my teammates,” Larson said.



Freshman Darius Williams works hard to take down opponents and score wins for the team. *Photos by Destiny Soto*



Junior Josh Francois tries his best to beat his opponent and bring in points for the team. *Photo by Destiny Soto*



Practicing to win, junior Tyler Nawrocki and senior Harley Zimmer try new moves on each other. *Photo by Destiny Soto*

East battles West in basketball once again

Above left Junior Sydnei Norwood, jersey number 22, plays defense against Bellevue West. “Before a game I just think about leaving everything on the floor and going all out for name on the front of my jersey and for my team,” Norwood said. *Photo by Carly Regnas*

Bottom left students of all grades stand up on the bleachers, cheering loudly for all the teams to hear during the game. Seniors Josh Godwin and Jackson Abe show pride and happiness for East’s basketball teams. *Photo by Carly Regnas*



Above right Focused and driven, senior Eric Linear keeps his eyes locked on the basket, hoping to score a shot against Bellevue West. *Photo by Carly Regnas*

Bottom right Warming up before the game senior Tyla Bishop prepares to play on the court against rival school Bellevue West on January 20. *Photo by Carly Regnas.*

Bottom Middle Determined and motivated junior Keondra Whisenhunt strives to stay on defense and block Wests players. “I think about being confident,” Whisenhunt said. *Photo by Carly Regnas*



Brenden Rice (12)

Our toughest workout is tryouts where we will be playing 9 holes outside as long as there's no snow on the ground. We've had tryouts in 25 degree weather in the past

Nariah Angell (12)

We do 40 minutes of running, sprinting, and speed drills in the morning and then have a regular practice in the afternoon.

Jakob Haubjerg (12)

The hardest workout we've done consists of 30 different stations that include exercises like: sprints, squats, box jumps, push ups, and one leg burpees.

Levi Lariviere (12)

We run a mile and a half then we go in the tunnels and hit. Then after we get done we have to go through a core work out.

Quiana Logans (10)

In a day, we do push ups, squats, walking lunges, calf raises, and squat walks. Usually we rest for 15 seconds in between sets.

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Black History not recognized at East

Staff Editorial

February has come and gone, but there's something important that hasn't been mentioned within the halls of Bellevue East; Black History Month. Bellevue East is home to many ethnicities and cultures, all of which contribute greatly to the atmosphere and pride that comes distinctly from East, and yet these students are not taught about their heritages or cultures throughout the year much less within their month of recognition. We as the Tom Tom staff believe that Bellevue East should celebrate and participate in ethnic months of celebration.

It is understood that these months,

such as Black History Month, that celebrate distinct races are seen as divisive by some, but it's just simply not the case. By educating students, both within the race being celebrated and outside of it, can lead to better understanding of the history and hardships of a minority. Learning about important people and dates won't cause students to hate or separate themselves. It is not racist to promote education.

These months of celebration can be used to bridge the gap of education about minorities. In most history classes, each minority group receives a paragraph to a chapter briefly speaking about the struggle

to gain rights or freedoms before moving on to a new topic, but does not branch out to the important people or events. These chapters also fail to mention a lot of social and cultural influences that people of color have added to the United States of America, much less detailed information about them before they came in contact with white culture.

There are many ways that the school as a whole and teachers individually can go about celebrating Black History Month. During the morning announcements there could be a mention of a lesser known impactful African American and their accomplishments, this could serve as an almost effortless way to spread positive and helpful information. Like Ridge Junior high in Ohio, our school could put up displays acknowledging different accomplishments of black people. The displays could be in our library next to different biographicals books that can be checked out as well as pictures in the halls with short descriptions underneath. English instructors can find books within the curriculum to teach from and history classes can spend a day focused heavily on black history.

Throughout a student's high school experience they are required to write re-

ports and essays about multiple people and or books and having one or two be about a person of color wouldn't hurt. The same way that East hosts speakers about leadership and core courses, we can invite someone to speak to students about black history. It could be a seminar on a Wednesday or simply a GPS (guided personal study) in the auditorium. There are many people who can come and speak in character, read poems, or just give information and answer questions about black history.

These suggestions do not apply just to Black History Month; they are meant for all. Recently there has been alot of outrage over the lack of a respect shown toward the Chieftain mascot, yet Bellevue East does not celebrate and educate its students during November, also known as Native American Heritage Month. It is no secret that our country has come a long way concerning racial equality, but there is still more that can be achieved and it starts with educating everyone about the history that is not mentioned in class. With students, teachers, and administrators working together we can make East a more understanding and educated public school.

Stop being sexist

Destiny Soto Features Editor

Do you remember the boys basketball game you attended? What about a girls' games? If you do, do you remember how many people were there? Or do you remember the difference in attendance to the games? What about promotions for the girls and boys games? Surely you have noticed how the boys games get more publicity or that the attendance more than doubles for the boys games than for the girls. If not, have you noticed that the student section does not typically stand for girls games? They are eager to show their support for the boys with posters, but when it comes to a girls game, whoever is there will more than likely have a seat and wait for the boys game to start. Why is it this way? Well, because from a very young age we are taught to be sexist.

I can already hear the objections, "What? No! We're not sexist!" Unfortunately, you may have been since you were little. Maybe not on purpose, but there is this subconscious belief that boys are better than girls in most aspects. Now, that does not make you a chauvinist, it just means that our society

teaches and does things that would lean toward men being the "better" sex.

Believe it or not, sexism is still an issue throughout the United States and many other countries. From the workplace to school, standards are set to give men the upper hand. According to USA Today, a survey by consultancy McKinsey and Facebook executive Sheryl Sandberg's LeanIn.org group found that women are 70 percent less likely to be promoted from entry level to manager. This forms a workforce in which men and women are given equal opportunity at entry level jobs, but as you climb up the ranks, the gap widens. Fifty-four percent are men and 46 percent of women are holding positions at lower level jobs, but at the manager level, 63 percent are men and 37 percent are women and at the vice-president level 71 percent are men and 29 percent are women.

Women are not often given the same opportunities in the workforce and are not taken seriously and while men are held to different professional or work standards, a woman's physical appearance is much more important. I mean, think about it: When is the last time you heard a woman tell a man to smile because it would make him look better? When is the last time you heard the president of the united states tell a man he only has his job because of his looks? Men are taught to strive to be great, to be adventurous and to never take "no" as an answer. This is what

we call sexual inequality and it has been an issue for many many centuries.

So, how else is sexual inequality distributed to the many women and not straight or cisgender men? It starts way back in elementary school, where you learn the real important things like: girls play with Barbies and boys play with trucks and that if a boy wears pink, well, he's probably gay. Around the same time we begin to learn addition and subtraction, we also begin to learn that a girl is not meant to be as smart or as tough or as fast or as good as a boy. Girls are supposed to look pretty, but not too pretty, because then she might distract the boys from learning, which is obviously the real issue.

Once we finish the sixth grade, in some schools, we move into middle school. There, prepubescent teenagers begin to receive the little sex education that public schools offer. Students also learn how to find square roots, the layers of the atmosphere, and, once again, that boys are superior to girls. Now, before you object, here is my personal experience. In my middle school, we took "Wait Training" class where the entire P.E. class was herded into one classroom and taught about the importance of waiting to engage in sexual intercourse. Well, what actually had happened left a lot of young girls confused. Our instructors had four boys come up to the front of the classroom to serve as part of the demonstration. The instructor took a piece of

tape that would represent a young woman, named Sally, and stuck it on one of the boy's arms. After the teacher ripped "Sally" off of the boy, the instructor said that the dirty film that was left on "Sally" represented girls after having sex with that one boy. She then went on to place the tape on another boy and the next and mentioned that "Sally" will just keep getting dirtier every time she has sex. This sent the message to all of the girls and boys that a girl becomes dirty and useless after having sex, but a boy will be fine. Maybe it does not seem to be a big deal, but it is just another way that we are taught that boys are better.

In high school, it's a little less extreme and a little more subtle. Things like the dress code and even the way we support our athletic teams can be and are sexist. So, think back to the questions I originally asked. Do you remember the differences in the way that we treat our boys and girls teams? Or that at boys games, hundreds of people show up, but maybe half would show for a girls game? If not, you'll surely notice it now. We need to support women just as we do men because there is no better sex. Girls are just as good as boys, despite being taught otherwise for our entire lives, we can choose to believe it. It is up to us to end sexism, and since we have limited control over the world, we can start in this high school by being more supportive of girls.

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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.

The meme nation cashes the internet outside

Bobby Storck
Entertainmet Editor

How bow dah. The internet was created in 1983 as a form of communication that could withstand a nuclear war. Its creators believed it was impenetrable. They were wrong. Whole forums became toxic when pictures with bold, white text became more and more prevalent and all other forms of humor seemed to disappear. No one was safe. Whole websites were swept under this tidal wave of bad jokes and puns, and even the mighty Google had to bend its knee to the new ruler of the World Wide Web: memes.

“Memes have created a world where no one is safe to post pictures online. Anyone can make a meme out of any photo, and they can make the most innocent photo the most terrible meme,” instructor William White said.

According to Google Trends, searches for memes have increased by over 800 percent since 2012. Being in college from 2010 to 2015, White had learned of memes from his classmates, and now his students are continuing to introduce him to new memes.

“Memes haven’t affected the world like economically or politically, but they create a situation where everybody thinks they are a comedian, and 80 percent of the time those people aren’t funny to begin with. It just doesn’t work,” White said.



Harambe was a gorilla in the Cincinnati Zoo. After an encounter with a 3-year-old child that had fallen into his enclosure, Harambe was put down, to the dismay of many people.

The term meme originated from the Greek word mimeme which means “one that is replicated.” Many of the ones used today follow a similar format, but others can stand out from the rest, which become some of the most well known.

“A meme to me is any stiff photograph that has bold, white text on the top and bottom, making a joke out of it in some way. I think when Donald Trump announced his run for president, that’s when the meme nation attacked,” White said.

Many memes have been made since President Trump’s run for president, but the first memes were not even in the 21st century. One of the first was used by Allied troops during World War II.

“I remember hearing of this one thing that originated in the military during World War II where a specific picture was found across western Europe where American GI’s had been. It was called Kilroy and featured some cartoon guy looking over a wall,” freshman Noah Feemster said.

According to www.kilroywashere.org, at the time no one knew who started the Kilroy meme, just like few people know who started various memes today. Many people use memes as life advice.

“I think memes make me a way better person. Learning lots of things from memes can make my personality more open and I can connect with other people through them,” Feemster said.



Featured in “Spongebob Square Pants” episode “SB-129,” Primitive Sponge began in 2016, despite “SB-129” premiering on December 31, 1999.

Most people share memes through social media sites such as Twitter and Facebook. Others create chatrooms for the sole purpose of sharing memes.

“I actually enjoy memes because they are a way to mess around with my friends by just sharing them and laughing with my friends. I have about 8 or 9 friends in a ‘meme chat’ online where we all find and post our favorite memes,” sophomore Graham McVicker said.

As fun as this may sound, memes are not always happy and inspiring. Some have actually been branded by the American Defamation League as hate symbols.

“I think memes have made this world worse, because the make me learn about things I don’t want to learn about. This is mostly due to people posting inappropriate memes in our meme chat,” McVicker said.

Between good memes, bad memes, salty memes, gorilla memes, and many others, there are thousands of memes across the internet. Some memes are used more than the rest, but all these memes are equal, although some are more equal than others.

“Memes in my opinion are a kind of structured joke. My favorite is probably ‘Never speak to me or my son again,’ mostly because it is self-explanatory,” senior Tim Trojanowski said.

The internet has entered a new age of humor and picture-editing. Whether



Featuring actor Kayode Ewumi, Roll Safe became a meme in early 2017. Often Roll Safe memes are used with fail memes, implying the people in the picture were not thinking.

or not you look to them for inspiration or believe they are the scum of cyberspace, the hostile takeover of memes has changed the online world, today and for all time.

“I used to enjoy memes, but I now think that they were a mistake. I’d be lying if I didn’t think most of them are funny for a while, but I get sick of them after they get to be really widespread, just because seeing the same joke over and over again gets really old,” Trojanowski said.



Created by Samantha Collison, this meme features Principal Jeff Wagner, with his supposed reaction to the lack of televisions in other schools’ commons areas. *Photo by Skyla Peter*



Nusret Gökçe, a Turkish chef, is more well known by his meme, Salt Bae. His style of seasoning steaks, mutton, and other meats became a internet sensation in January, 2017.

Lego Batman builds a great film, brick by brick

Bobby Storck
Entertainmet Editor

Breaking the fourth wall in movies is when the characters admit or make reference to the fact that they are characters in a movie. Sometimes, characters talk directly to the audience or their dialogue may include shots at the directors and other production managers. This brings a sense of humor and can lessen the tension in a situation while developing the characters at the same time. Many people appreciate these moments and love it when the writers are creative in their fourth wall breaking. If you are one of these people, then I have a film for you.

Returning for his appearance in “The Lego Movie,” Batman (Will Arnet) must defend Gotham City in his recent film, “The Lego Batman Movie.” As the

name implies, and unlike other “Batman” films, Batman and his world are made of LEGOs, the building blocks all Americans have bought or played with at least once in their childhood. Although the movie’s relevance to a children’s toy may make it sound childish, the plot, like the knight, is dark.

The Joker (Zach Galifianakis) is on the loose, and plans on defeating Batman with a scheme that is no laughing matter. They clash and although Batman defeats the Joker, the Clown Prince of Crime is able to escape once again and also is able to learn Batman’s greatest weakness, giving him a card up his sleeve. Even more worrisome, Batman is in the dark about (or refuses to admit) his own weakness, making him more susceptible to the Joker’s barrel of laughs he has planned for the Caped Crusader. Will Batman be able to team

up with Robin (Michael Cera), Alfred (Ralph Fiennes), and the new police commissioner, Barbara Gordon (Rosario Dawson), to save Gotham, or will the Joker get the last laugh?

Speaking of laughs, this movie was full of them. The fourth wall breaks combined with great lines and homages to the other Batman films and the DC Universe created a laugh in every scene. The three-dimensional characters were interesting to uncover and reminiscent of the same characters in other films.

The characters were fun to interact with, but others were a bit difficult to understand. Sometimes they made decisions that were almost random, went against what would have made sense. The exception to this was the Joker, whose character design was to be unpredictable and crazy so it made sense when his actions didn’t. Other than that, this was a truly flawless movie.

Even with its cartoonish nature, this is still a Batman movie. It has great action sequences and stars the same vigilante in cloak and cowl we all know and love. It may seem silly that the superhero played by Ben Affleck, Christian Bale, George

Clooney, Adam West, and many more is now made of plastic bricks, but the great writing and the original plot make up for this, giving the movie a 9.5/10. This masterpiece of animation is a good watch for comic book lovers, LEGO builders, Batman fans, and anyone who wants to go see a what good writing is like. Regardless of how the movie turns out, you will guaranteed have the last laugh.



2017 brings new fads and trends

Cailin Tomsu
Editor in Chief

Witnessing upcoming fads and trends is an inevitable part of high school. Teenagers are able to come up with some of the most fascinating fashion statements and trends that spread like wildfire to other students or peers. One of the many new fashion statements or trends is an obsession with shoes. I, personally, have experienced this first hand. I would consider myself a shoe fanatic. I am addicted to buying shoes, especially Vans. Vans are my favorite type of shoe. They are the only shoe that look super gnarly and keep my feet comfortable all throughout the day.

I have very odd feet; they are flat and make it hard to find shoes that offer support or don't hurt my feet. In 7th grade, I received my first pair of grey Vans, and ever since then I have not been able to control myself when it comes to buying shoes. Vans were the only shoes that did not make my feet hurt throughout the day. I would come home and not even think about wanting to take them off. I fell in love with Vans four years ago and never looked back.

My obsession did not kick in full throttle until this year. Do not

get me wrong, I bought Vans and enjoyed it but I did not buy them as excessively as I do now. I am drawn to all the different styles of shoes Vans makes and the designs and colors. Vans has a wonderful collection to offer its buyers. My favorite styles are: authentic lo pros, sk8 hi's, old skools, and slip ons. I have the majority of authentics, but I really dig the others as well. Vans also has customizable options, where you can basically design your own shoe in the style that you like most. They have a variety of other shoe styles that I did not list above as well. With almost every shoe style they have, there are mixtures of colors and patterns to choose from. If there is a certain color or design you are looking for, Vans has probably made it.

Now, I have talked up my obsession and have yet to explain it. I have a job and work everyday, with doubles on the weekends. Why is this relevant? Well so, you can see that I have my own money and can buy all these things for myself. One Monday, I was casually looking at the Vans website, thinking about how I have not bought a pair of shoes lately. I proceeded to buy a pair of old skools that day. Tuesday, I did the same thing. Wednesday, I bought

a pair of slip ons. Thursday, I bought a pair of sk8 hi's. Finally, on Friday I bought another pair of slips on. I bought a new pair of shoes everyday that week. I have over 25 pairs of shoes. My obsession is not as bad as it could be, but if I had it my way I would buy new shoes every single day. I would buy multiple pairs too. I want every color and design of Vans there is.

Throughout my high school, however, there are a variety of different favorite shoes. Vans are still popular and worn often, but many other people bring about their own styles in shoes too. Many of my friends are die-hard Converse fans and, like myself, collect every color. I, personally, don't think that Converse have as big of a variety as Vans, but to each their own.

Another popular shoe brand is Nike. A lot of athletes will be the ones wearing Nikes, but other students wear Nikes too because they find them to be comfortable. Sperrys are another fan favorite, mainly with the female students. I even own Sperrys, they are cute and comfortable to wear. Some poeple wear Jordans or these real radical light up shoes that change colors when the person walks. There are so many fascinating and creative ideas for shoes.

Pictured are some of Cailin's favorite pairs of Vans. She owns eleven or more pairs of Vans, but over 25 pairs of shoes total.



Students make New Year's resolutions for 2017

Nia Booth
Video Editor in Chief

It's the beginning of a new year, which means it's time for New Year's resolutions. To share in the excitement of the new year, students around Bellevue East have shared their New Year's resolutions. Students who have been featured in this will be interviewed again at the end of this school year to see if they're still keeping up with their resolution.

"My New Year's eesolution is being able to exceed in all my different talents and abilities I have going on in and outside of school right now. I really want to do it by not by being selfish but focusing on myself and what i need to improve on personally before i start focusing on what I need to help other people with. So you know working out harder, studying harder, being more attentive in class and stuff like that. My motivation for my resolution was looking at my gpa last year and realizing had a 3.1 when i need a 3.5 and then I got hurt last year during football so I didn't get a lot of film for my junior year so for my senior year I really want to bump it up some," junior Dezmon Lindsey said.

"My new year's resolution was to procrastinate less and focus on my future. I chose this goal because I don't want to work at Mcdonald's for the rest of my life. So far I've failed at this goal but I plan on getting back on track. [Students should have new year's resolutions] only if you want to because you can't really force a resolution and

a lot of people just stop," senior Trevor Nevius said.

"My new year's resolution is to be more organized and I've done that this year by buying a journal and writing down all my thoughts, homework, and anything else I need for school so I can stay on track. [I chose this resolution] because throughout the years I have not been to organized and I always procrastinated on assignments and things so writing everything down and making sure to look back at it so I know what needs to be done really helps. I think this is something that I can use throughout my life because people need to make it a habit of writing stuff down and putting all your plans and documents in one space to look at is best," senior Chris Duran said.

"My new year's resolution is to run below a 4:40 in the mile and I'll do this by training harder because I want to run for UNL (University of Nebraska Lincoln). [I think it's important for students to have new year's resolutions because] It gives them goals to reach for," senior Miguel Rikli said.



See the video on the Chieftain Spear!

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