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# THE SLATE

ALL YOUR BULLDOG NEWS... UNLEASHED!

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The Voice of Northern Lehigh High School

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## NL casts a spell for Putnam County



Photo by Caitlin Kirk for The Slate

Katie Ryba and Camryn Torres run through lines for this year's musical opening March 10. See ad on page 5.

BY GIANA ROSARIO  
STAFF WRITER

It has been a rough time for in-person events. A long time has passed since we have been able to come together and present a live show. Finally, we are able to perform on stage again, so Northern Lehigh is proud to present this year's musical, *The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee*.

This musical is somewhat different from the past productions put on stage. It has its own originality, which makes it unique. Northern Lehigh Little Theatre wanted to bring something special to the stage. This is not a very known musical, but the cast is very excited to present it to everyone on March 10-13.

This musical comedy is about six spellers fighting for the top spot in the 25th annual spelling bee. The story follows the spelling-hopefuls Chip Tolentino, played by Owen Levan-Uhler who is a young Boy Scout struggling to make it through puberty. Jackson Hunsicker plays William Barfee. His only goal in life is to win the spelling bee, bullies and attempts to make his way to the top. Olive Ostrovsky, is a quiet, shy girl with a gentle personality. Though it is only her first time at the bee, do not let that fool you, this girl can spell. She is played by Cydney Krause.

Marcy Park, played by Giana Rosario, is an uptight and judgmental kid with a few hidden talents up her sleeve. The role of Logainne

(Schwarz) Schwartz and Grubenierre is played by Jessica Erkinger. She is very open about her political views and is the youngest kid at the bee. Finally, Leaf Coneybear, played by Aiden Scanlon, is the second runner-up at his district bee. He finds anything and everything incredibly intriguing. Throughout the story, they show off their competitive skills in an attempt to take the Putnam Bee.

Each of them has their own weird personalities and shows them through their interactions with each other while they are on stage. Rona Lisa Peretti, a fellow spelling bee champion herself, had returned to host the Putnam bee to relive her glory days.

See **MUSICAL**, page 2

## Block classes could topple after next year

2022-23 schedule might be the last with 86-minute frame

BY MADDY MACK  
STAFF WRITER

As this school year starts to come to a close, many questions are being asked about what the future will look like. There has been an ongoing discussion about implementing a new schedule.

While it may resemble the middle school's schedule, many students enjoy block scheduling, which includes four classes a day, each roughly 86 minutes long, with a 30 minute lunch period built into the third class of the day. After many years of this routine, some believe a new schedule will be best for students.

**"A key motivation in creating a new schedule is to help best adapt to our students' needs."**  
Robert Vlasaty, principal

The new schedule, being implemented for the 2023-2024 school year, would consist of eight classes, but rotate on an eight-day cycle, allowing for six classes, an activity period, and a lunch period each day.

Year-long classes will be worth one credit and meet 135 days a year, while half-credit classes will meet for 68 days a year. The activity period

See **SCHEDULE**, page 2

## 1,000 + 41 = Quite a Season



Photo by Lifetouch for The Reflections Yearbook

A RECORD-BREAKING SENIOR YEAR! Emma Niebell is ending her final year at Northern Lehigh with some numbers for the books. A look behind her work ethic, page 9.

## Closing the books on homework

Should the final bell end the day for school studies, assignments and practice?

BY DELANEY SZWAST  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Upon hearing the word "homework," what is the first thing that comes to mind? Stressful graded assignments? Time-consuming papers? Worksheets with confusing questions? For students, homework is usually not associated with positive thoughts.

Most view it as a stressor or a source of frustration. However, despite its unpopularity among students, many people believe that homework is a critical component of quality education. Whether or not the benefits of homework outweigh the negative effects it has on students remains controversial and questionable.

It can be argued that homework is beneficial to students' academic success because it provides them with additional practice on the topics that they are learning in school. Repetitive practice can help them retain the information that they are studying and improve their understanding of the material which will help them when their knowledge is later assessed on a test.

Homework can also allow teachers to monitor students' understanding of what they are

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# Asst. principal's dream comes true

BY LILY GROOVER  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

In 2016, Northern Lehigh School District lost one of its beloved elementary teachers. However, in the beginning of the 2021-22 school year, NL had the pleasure to welcome back Mr. Strohl after a long hiatus from the district.

Mr. Michael Strohl taught at Slatington Elementary from Nov. 2010 to July 2016, all while being a football coach and getting his master's degree at Wilkes-Barre University. The current juniors and seniors were the last students he taught in NL.

Mr. Strohl is a family-guy, and at the time, his son was 2 years old, and his daughter was a newborn. His commute to work, every single day, was 50 minutes, so with two children below toddler age, it was difficult having to be so far away from home. An opportunity arose at Easton Area School District, and his daily commute went from 50 minutes to 8 minutes, which brought him closer to his family.

Before becoming a teacher, Mr. Strohl attended LCCC from 2001-2004 in a liberal arts program. Then, he transferred to Wilkes-Barre University in the fall of 2004, and majored in K-6 education. After graduating, his first job was at KidsPeace Children's Hospital.

"I was a unit counselor, where we would provide programs after school for students," he said. "I was promoted to a senior position called Mobile Support Staff. My main responsibility was to provide counseling for students in crisis, and I would have to intervene and get them

out of crisis."

At Easton, he started out teaching fourth and fifth grade for a couple of years, until he was promoted to an administrative position. This gave him a taste of what he truly wanted to do at NL. He says, "Every decision that I made at Easton was to guide me back into this school district [NL] as an administrator."

"Being at NL again is a dream come true. You ask if this is my dream job? It absolutely is. I graduated from Northern Lehigh in 2001, in the same year as Mr. [David] Hauser. I played football, baseball." Mr. Strohl feels a great connection with the football program at NL. He says, "[The football program] guided me in the right direction. It taught me how to be responsible and respectful and just a good citizen in general. The philosophy hasn't changed, and continues to create young, successful men, and women if they happen to join the program."

Because Mr. Strohl was lucky enough to graduate from NL, he knows the area, and the people, and the businesses. He feels, now, that it is his time to give back to his community in every way possible.

He says, "The teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, have shaped me into the person I am today, and because of that, there is no other place I would rather be."

Because he graduated from NL and built many relationships with members of the community, it is easy to communicate with parents and other residents in this area. He also appreciates this area's business owners as well, providing opportunities for students to succeed, whether it's a part time job, or having those businesses



Photo by Faith Lorrain

Like his predecessor, Mr. David Hauser (who became principal of NLMS), Mr. Michael Strohl (above) is another NL graduate who has become an 'alma-mater administrator.'

come in and discuss career pathways.

"Obviously, this community has done so much for me, so I would like to give back," he says. Now, for Mr. Strohl and his family, the timing is perfect for

his dream job. With his son being in second grade, and his daughter in kindergarten, they have full-time care. He says, "I feel like I'm finally where I should be." 🐾

## Classes to increase in number, decrease to 50 minutes

**SCHEDULE, from page 1**

od and lunch, both 30 minute periods, split the school day in two.

The activity period would provide an opportunity for students to meet with clubs, participate in band, work on Xello assignments, and get a jump start on school assignments, among other things. Along with the activity period, the new schedule will allow for new classes.

Ms. Elizabeth Hannon, a high school and middle school teacher, works with both a block schedule and an eight-period schedule. "I am hopeful that the new schedule will offer benefits for both faculty and students. I like that it has the possibility of increasing the diversity of classes during the day for students," Hannon said. "I have grown accustomed to the middle school schedule. I currently teach three periods at the middle school and one full block at the high school. The 43 minute periods at the middle school move very quickly, but that aids in sustaining students' attention. The only downside to shorter class periods is that longer activities need to be broken up over several days."

A key motivation in creating a new schedule is to help best adapt to students' needs. "Year-long classes will allow our students more time to absorb content

and provide more flexibility to move ahead or catch up; 135 class meetings per course will give natural breaks from each class since they do not meet every day," Northern Lehigh High School Principal Mr. Robert Vlasaty said. "Variety in class sequence is shown to positively impact behavior and reduce minor discipline infractions. Fifty minutes per class works out to 123 instructional hours per class, which is within the recommended best practice," Mr. Vlasaty said. The 50-60 minute classes are shown to offer the best learning experience while maintaining the best use of instructional time, while still providing enrichment and support.

"I feel the advantage of the new schedule is that students will be able to take a variety of classes throughout the day. A shorter class period could help students maintain focus. As human beings, we can concentrate for approximately 20 minutes," Ms. Hannon said. "In addition, since the new schedule will require some classes to be year long, students and faculty will be able to develop a closer relationship. I am hopeful that the new schedule will help both students and teachers."

Despite the benefits, many challenges may face both students and faculty. "I feel change is challenging. The current schedule has been in place for years. Both

students and teachers have grown accustomed to the arrangement," Ms. Hannon said. "There are some classes that currently benefit from longer learning periods. Each department requires a different structure. However, over the past several years, change has been constant in education. Sometimes there can be an uneasiness that accompanies change."

The new schedule will take some time for both students and staff to adapt to. "Scheduling the 60-minute lunch dividing the AM and PM schedule rotations will also be a challenge. Students will have 30 minutes of lunch and 30 minutes of activity/support. Faculty will have 30 minutes of lunch and 30 minutes of assignment, which includes hall coverage, clubs, student support and help, department meetings/PD, IEP concerns, training, building committees, and more," Mr. Vlasaty said.

Most importantly, the faculty need time to prepare their classes to fit a year-long schedule instead of the current schedule. "In addition, with the implementation of the new schedule, teachers need sufficient time to rearrange curricula and course requirements to ensure academic success," Ms. Hannon said.

High school sophomore Aricka Creyer feels that the new schedule brings many advantages and disadvantages. "I'm

not totally sure how I feel about it," Creyer said. "I heard that there will be a study hall some days, which I'll enjoy. However, I don't like how this schedule will not allow students to double-up on classes to get ahead."

On the other hand, high school freshman Marisa Maehrer is not as excited about the new schedule. "Changing the schedule will not be beneficial to students," Maehrer said. "Despite the possibility of the new schedule offering more classes, I do not personally like the new schedule that is supposed to go into place." However, the increase in the number of subjects being studied at the same time may not be an issue. "I don't feel like a period schedule will make students any more stressed than we are already with the four-class schedule we currently have," she said.

Despite its challenges, the new schedule will hopefully provide more opportunities for the students and staff. "I am excited about creating more opportunities for our students to learn and to get more choices in their schedule," Mr. Vlasaty said. "This results in providing our staff more opportunity to do what they love to do: help students learn. More opportunity breeds success, and that is what we are all about at Northern Lehigh." 🐾

## Can you use it in a sentence? Yes. Go see this musical

**MUSICAL, from page 1**

Doug Panch is the vice-principal of the school. Parker Musselman plays this character. After his five years of absence, he finally returns to the judging table. And, Mitch Mahoney, played by Camryn Torres is the comfort counselor at the bee. He was ordered community service at the bee, which he was not happy about, but eventually comes to enjoy being a part of the event.

"This production is definitely an interesting one. It's something that is not as mainstream as other productions NL has done, but it is still a great show and has so many good moments in it," said Susan Gilsbach, who plays the role of Rona Lisa Peretti. "My experience in the theater here has always been different. My first musical production here was *Nonsense*, which was a completely virtual show and was very different from what the school has done in the past. It's so awesome to have live theater back on the stage, and I love playing Rona. I am so excited for the show."

Though it may just sound like a regular, boring school spelling bee, it is much more. We are all so excited for an audience to see the time and effort put into this musical. Come witness the spelling fun at 7 p.m. on March 10, 11, 12, and at 2 p.m. on March 13, at the high school auditorium. Tickets are available on the high school's website and at the door. 🐾



Photo by Caitlin Kirk for The Slate

Members of this year's musical work tirelessly after school to prepare their scenes, songs, and spellings for audiences March 10-13.

# Why women still need feminism

BY SUSAN GILSBACH  
STAFF WRITER

Imagine going to work and getting paid less than your coworkers, even though you're doing the same job. This is a harsh reality for women in many countries where they are denied the right to an education, equal pay, and even the right to choose what happens to their own bodies.

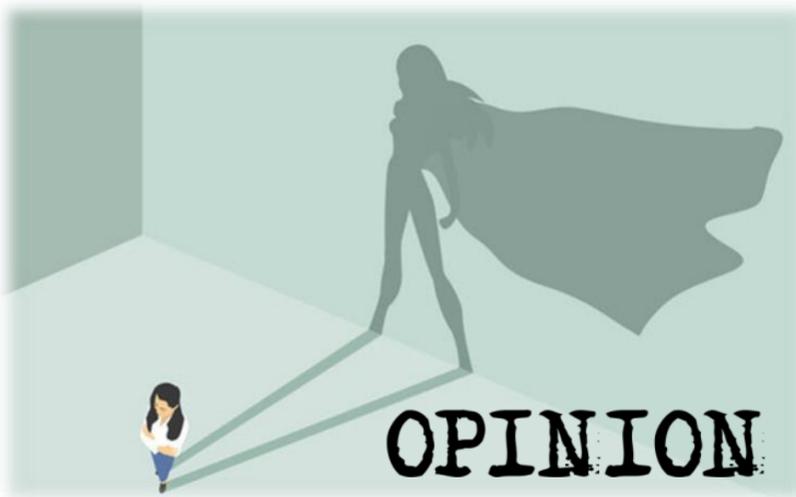
These violations happen just as notoriously in the U.S., though many are disinclined to accept this fact.

Women around the world have been petitioning for the same rights as men for decades, *centuries* even, and they have been unsuccessful in many aspects of the fight. Constant losses in these uphill battles can be, and are, disheartening for women. That's where feminism comes in.

Through the support of other women, those that are tired are inspired to keep going and to keep fighting for their rights to be made equal to men.

Women of all types need to see reflections of themselves in the media. Today, almost all women are affected by internalized misogyny in some form. This occurs when women subconsciously project misogynistic ideas onto themselves or others.

These ideas come from all kinds of environments: religious institutions, media standards, and peer comparison, just to name a few. When women see them-



selves in comparison to other women that they hold to be 'more beautiful,' they see themselves as unworthy or less than these other women.

Not only do most women experience internalized misogyny, many experience it almost daily. Women see photos on social media that are heavily edited and show unrealistic standards. The media portrays the 'average woman' as a heavily-edited model that seems to have her entire life organized and never even breaks a sweat. This is not the reality for many women, which can lead them to have self image issues.

Internalized misogyny can even come

from something as harmless as a movie. Many iconic Disney properties, like *Heracles* and *Beauty and the Beast*, cause this. The female characters in these films, Meg and Belle respectively, are labeled as feminists or women that are different than the usual Disney woman.

Meg is labeled as a feminist and a unique woman, yet is introduced as the love interest for the main male character. Throughout the movie, she is given the illusion of a choice, but ultimately ends up falling for the man that she said she would never love.

At the start of *Beauty and the Beast*, Belle mentions that she doesn't want to

end up as a trophy wife, yet marries her captor at the end of her film. Both of these movies perpetuate the harmful standard that women need to find a husband to be successful. Neither of these women were allowed even the thought that they could be successful on their own.

This is something that is pushed onto women from a very young age, and it can have negative effects on their self-image and impact them for life. If young girls are introduced to female characters that seem to be independent, or even deny the opportunity for love, they could see that there is more than one way to end the story.

Though the word is commonplace, feminism is still an absolute necessity. Women need to see more of themselves represented in the media in all types of roles: in relationships and not in relationships, and in positions where they are unafraid to assert themselves. Feminism stands for women to be given the same rights and opportunities as their male counterparts. It is imperative that men positively contribute to the feminist movement as well.

Society has a hard time changing unless more than one group is willing to put in positive effort. But until the day that women gain the rights such as equal education, equal pay, and body representation, the feminist movement will evolve and persevere. 🌱

## NL fair in April will showcase jobs, college, military

Northern Lehigh High School will be holding a Career, College, and Military Readiness Fair on Friday, April 22, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. for students in grades 7-12. The event will be held in the gymnasium.

Students will have four 50-minute sessions that are scheduled throughout the day so that they can rotate in and out of the gym to visit vendor tables. Students will be able to meet with, and gather information from, various post-secondary vendors and community organizations. These vendors include

branches of the military, corporations, small local businesses, colleges, universities, technical schools, workforce programs, first responders, and community membership organizations.

The goal of the event is to provide education/information to students about career pathways. Additionally, we have some community membership organizations that have reserved tables so they can share information with our students about opportunities to help support their community.

As an additional bonus, some of our

vendors have volunteered to bring hard assets such as vehicles and equipment. The vehicles will be on display on Snyder Avenue, the street between the high school and the middle school, and near the entrance of the high school. Some equipment will also be on display in the gymnasium near vendor tables.

As a grand finale, a flyover by the United States Air Force is being planned. If approved, the flyover will take place at 2 p.m. High school and middle school students will be dismissed from

their respective buildings to view the flyover.

As the Northern Lehigh School District continues to strive toward its goal of building strong relationships with community stakeholders, it is hoped to hold this event annually.

Administration believes that this event is a great opportunity for organizations to provide valuable future-ready skills and career pathway opportunities for its students. 🌱

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# NEVER-AGING SIMPSONS IN AN EVER-CHANGING WORLD

BY HAVEN MOORE  
STAFF WRITER

Picture it: December 17th, 1989. A new show is being aired on your television screen. A comically-drawn family in the community of a lively and vibrant town known as Springfield plays out their day-to-day scenarios. Sarcastic jokes and hilarious jabs in the modern world are made continuously throughout the episode, and you grow to love the wholesome family that brings such amusement.

Fast forward 33 years and some 700 episodes, and the Simpson family is still alive and relevant to this very day. The family unit consists of characters with dramatically different personalities (which only makes the show better).

The most well-known character is the not-so-intelligent, lazy, and alcoholic father named Homer, who is infamous for his dumb-witted actions and philosophies about life (he also yells “DOH!” quite a bit). His wife, who is miraculously tolerant and loving of her husband, is the wise and strong Marge.

Their children consist of a trouble-making delinquent 10-year-old son named Bart, a highly intelligent and compassionate 8-year-old daughter named Lisa, and a stubborn, acquisitive baby named Maggie. Together, they all manage to accomplish their ever-lasting task of amusing and touching the hearts of viewers around the world for decades.

**After 700-plus episodes with no visible aging, we wondered what Homer and Maggie would look like ‘older.’**



Sure, a few things have changed in the family and the character’s aspects, but they have remained for the most part untouched since the golden ages of the earlier seasons. They never age a day! The family revolves around a continuing present time and as our world evolves, so does theirs, though everyone in the show is the same age as they were from the release of episode one. Their environment and surroundings are constantly changing and adapting to whatever cur-

rent events and reality the world is facing at that very moment. It is quite powerful to recognize how *The Simpson’s* society changes and fluctuates throughout its history as yours does. Technology, newer animation, social events, and even celebrities have made their way into the show to convey a more recent feel. So this poses the big question; how is this show, after so many years, still relevant today?

The most common response is that the originality and nostalgic sense of the

family unit from back in the day serves as a great comparison to the ever-changing world they live in.

It is also a show that after so many years, still retains its humor. Though our favorite family may have its ups and downs (controversies even), audiences always walk away from each episode with some sense of amusement sparked by their favorite family.

This show seems to have been almost universally welcomed by so many for so long that it has become a timeless show that we’ll perhaps never forget.

On that note, it has fortunately been reported that *The Simpsons* have been renewed for another season. And until that sad day when the very last episode airs, there’s no doubt that the Simpsons will continue to run strong as our favorite off-beat, on-screen, TV family. For at least a little while longer, the people of Springfield will continue to flicker on our screens and face the changes of the world along with us. 🐾

## Could an elimination of homework lessen stress?

### HOMEWORK, from page 1

learning. Because of this, they are able to use class time more efficiently by focusing on the topics that students are struggling with and limiting the time spent on the topics that are well understood.

In addition to this, it can be argued that homework teaches students essential skills such as responsibility, time management, and accountability. Students are responsible for completing their homework assignments, and in order to ensure that their work is completed on time, they must learn to properly manage their time. If they forget about an assignment or run out of time to complete it, they will hopefully learn accountability.

Meanwhile, it can be argued that the negative effects homework can have on students outweigh the benefits. According to *How Does Homework Affect Students?* by Kenny Gill, large amounts of homework can be overwhelming for students and can result in stress, exhaustion, and reduced motivation. Students can become stressed when they are trying to balance homework and their activities and responsibilities outside of school. They may worry about trying to find time to complete their assignments or worry about being able to finish their homework within the available time.

Limited time can result in students rushing through homework or staying up late to complete it. If students are rushing through their assignments, they are less likely to benefit from them.

Likewise, if students are staying up late to complete homework, they will most likely become exhausted and less motivated to complete the assignment. Loss of motivation can occur for students who are not pressed for time as well. After spending eight hours in school, students may be exhausted from learning all day and may not have the motivation to come home and start schoolwork all over again.

*Education Inequity: Homework and its Negative Impact on Students* by Joseph Lathan emphasizes another disadvantage of homework: it emphasizes inequalities. Not all students have access to parental support or the materials that are needed to complete assignments. A student who is struggling with the curriculum may be confused by their assignments and

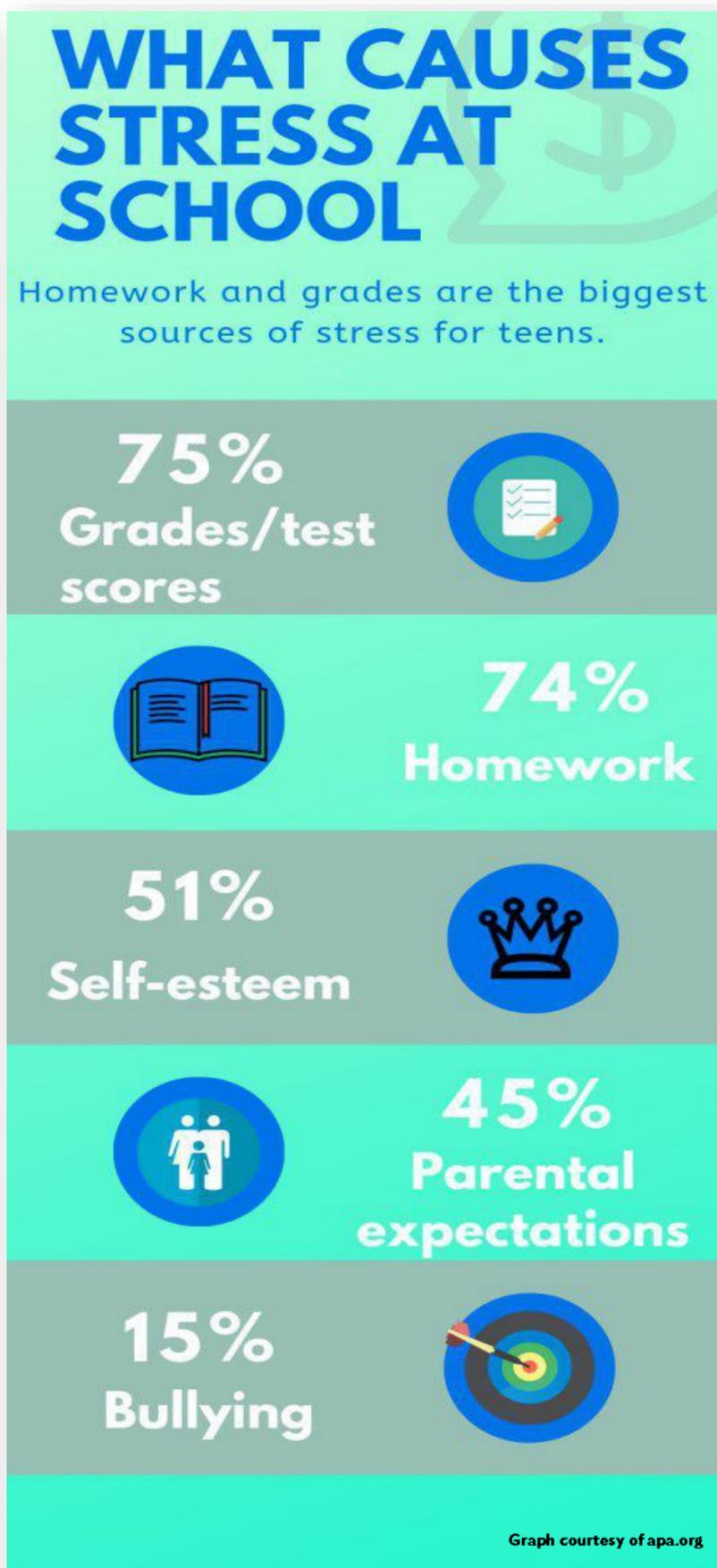
could become frustrated and unmotivated to do them. If they do not have anyone at home who is able to help them, they may give up on the assignment. Similarly, not all students have the resources that they need to complete their homework assignments at home. For example, a student may not have access to online materials if they do not have internet access at home.

So do the benefits of homework outweigh the negative effects it can have on students? There are a variety of opinions on this matter at Northern Lehigh High School. “I feel as though homework could be helpful in some ways,” sophomore Daisy Richards said. “Math homework is good for repetition, but science is sometimes confusing. When given homework, I think it shouldn’t be graded. It should be more of a review of what we did, not necessarily something that would confuse students.”

On the contrary, an anonymous student declared: “I think it’s harmful because it just feels like we are then doing school when we come home. I work on homework every single day for at least two hours. It’s unnecessary because we do all this stuff in school then we come home and can’t relax.”

On another side, not all teachers advocate for extra work once the school day ends. “I always think back to when I was a student—none of us wanted to get home and go right back to school again. Without speaking for them directly, I cannot imagine most teachers want to do the same, even though we are sometimes forced to,” English teacher Mr. Christopher Barnes said. “But with 90-minute classes, that should allow plenty of time to practice skills independently with the teacher still present for any needed help. Also, so many kids have jobs these days, and on top of those hours, having to do more schoolwork can be too much. It could only add to the disgust that so many of today’s teens have with school in general.”

Due to the variety of pro-homework and anti-homework opinions, whether homework is helpful or harmful to students will continue to be debated in the years to come. In the meantime, students and teachers should discuss the assignments they feel are beneficial and what they believe could be done to find a middle ground between the homework opinion extremes. 🐾



# To write or not to write

Forget the 5-paragraph essay — NaNoWriMo is for the serious story creators

BY DIEGO FENSTERMAKER  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

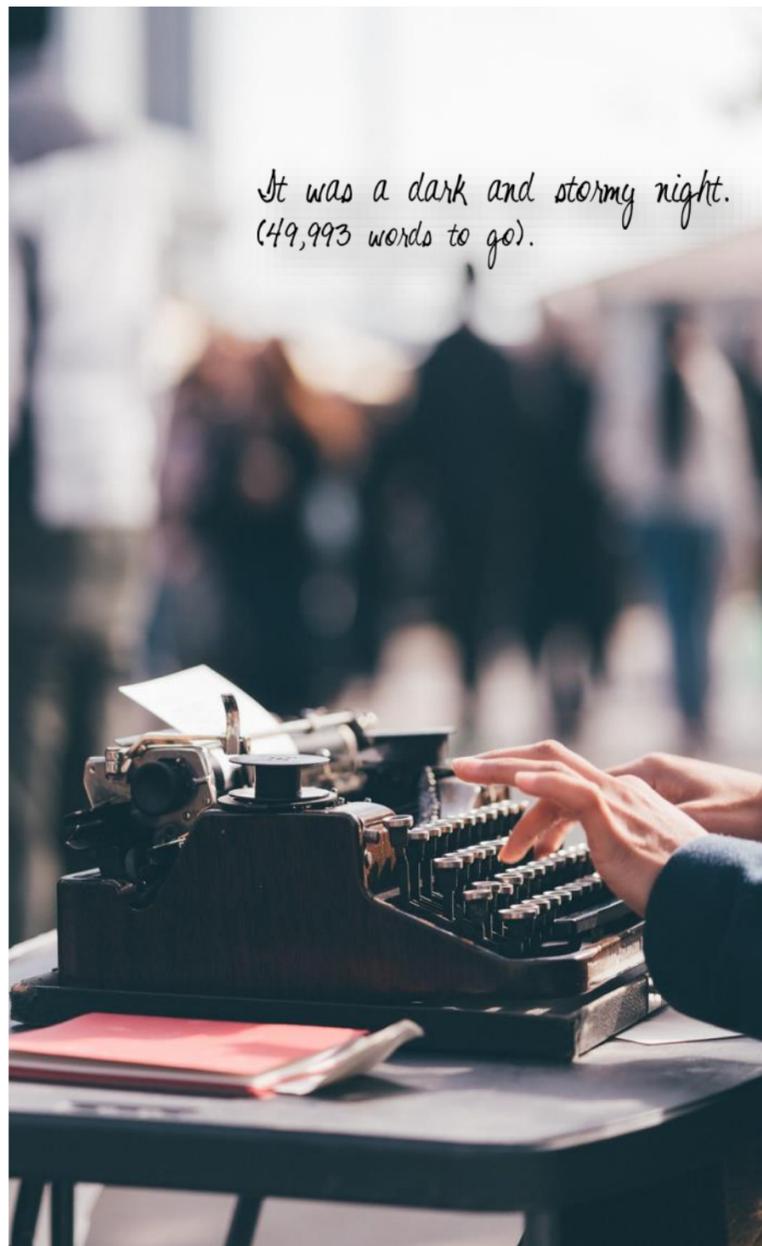
It was a cool, windy night as the few brown leaves in a tree rustled in the breeze. A single light was highlighted amongst the darkness, pouring from a window where a person stood typing at a keyboard. These two sentences could be the start of a story, or this article, which matches the whole point of National Novel Writing Month – to inspire students and provide a way for them to start the stories in their head

What exactly is National Novel Writing Month, sometimes referred to as NaNoWriMo? According to its website, “NaNoWriMo is a nonprofit that believes in the transformational power of creativity.” Beginning in 1999, the challenge was to write 50,000 words of a novel during November. This equates to about 1,500 words a day, requiring that writers work constantly in order to achieve this goal.

However, as Mrs. Krystle-Dawn Willing-Tiedeman, librarian at Northern Lehigh High School, says, “The goal of it is to think about and work on writing.”

Participants can choose their own word goals, personalizing the experience for them. Writers can also choose to use the website to pen their words. The interface includes a word counter and tracker that compares the words written and the words needed to meet a writer’s goal. In addition to this, a word sprint timer and creative challenges are provided to help any writer’s blocks that may occur.

This is not required though as writers can keep a personal update of their word count and use other media to write as they fancy. The challenge is not specifically regulated to only novel writing or focusing on large, long paragraphs and passages daily either. If the goal is to



write a few words a day, that is acceptable. If a participant wishes to write a poem a day instead of a novel that could also be a personal challenge.

No matter the method, the premise was the same: devote a portion of time daily to an activity requiring either pen

and paper or keyboard and document. Throughout the month students hashed out their stories trying to meet their personal goals. Some for fun, while others had the added encouragement of a short story assignment for a class.

Mrs. Tiedeman brought the challenge with her to the school district. “I’d included National Novel Writing in my teaching at my previous district. When I came to Northern Lehigh I had a few small writing groups, nothing big and formal.”

Since then, the number of participants has varied year to year. Last year though, Mrs. Tiedeman decided to pro-

mote it among everything happening with the virus. “I thought with everything that is going on, it would be nice to encourage some writing, reflection, and creativity to come out of this. After all, renaissance follows the darkest times.”

Following some success with participation, including a student writing an entire novel, it continues again this school year. “Eleven people signed up officially, plus Ms. Scheckler had an entire class,” Mrs. Tiedeman said. In the past a writing workshop was even offered throughout the year, bringing together writers in the library on a bi-weekly basis every Tuesday. Discussing ideas and processes on writing. The workshop was not only limited to students, “Parents and adults would come for this writing workshop.”

While writing is primarily person and very private, the activity could also be done in a group setting. Many writers go on retreats; Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* was a result of such a retreat.

The premise of creative writing is also vital to the program. After all, in its own statement, the organization states that creativity has the power to transform. Against a backdrop of essays, book reports, and other pieces of writing, the definition of creative writing may become murky.

Mrs. Tiedeman notes that it is much more than just simply writing fiction, “There are nonfiction books that are written with incredibly creative perspectives, giving people a more engaging insight into things that might otherwise seem boring in what we think of as traditional academic writing. Many times, true life stories are stories as well being able to contend with fictional stories of imaginary events. Instead, she said, the more vital aspect is a person writing. Being in a library daily, Mrs. Tiedeman is surrounded by books, those that contain the ideas, feelings, and stories of thousands of people.

“It really makes me feel that it is important for every person to tell their story. Whether it is their personal story of ‘This is who I am, and this is how I feel’ or their fantasy story. ‘This is a story I have inside of me that I can share with other people.’”

The magic of writing and books seems to lay not in the imagination or creativity it holds, but the part of the writer that is left there. Myths entertain cultures since it contains their descendants. A school newspaper contains the opinions, reasoning, and ideas of students. 🐾

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## It's their pleasure to ban

*School curricula are trying to be customized by modern-day Thought Police parents. And it's working.*

Ray Bradbury saw it all. "It was a pleasure to burn," ominously starts his 1953 dystopian novel, *Fahrenheit 451*, in which books were banned in an attempt to keep society happy, or so they were told. In their supposedly-fictional world, if people did not have to form opinions for themselves, there would be less conflict, and all would be happier.

What was originally penned as a novel has increasingly evolved as more realistic than ever imagined as 2022's scary trend of classroom control and public power over what goes into our curriculum invades many U.S. schools.

On today's inflamed horizon, it is their pleasure to ban.

The censoring of books in our nation's schools is not new, as many books from *Harry Potter* (sorcery) to *Charlotte's Web* (blasphemy of talking animals), and from *The Lorax* (complaints from the logging industry) to *James and the Giant Peach* (mentions of tobacco, whiskey, and a spider licking its lips deemed overtly sexual by a Wisconsin School Board in 1999) are removed from library shelves and teacher recommendations.

But what once was laughable (yet threatening at the same time) as the American Library Association still releases an annual list of outlawed texts, has now become all-too-prevalent in U.S. lessons as communities, and even a few parents, strive to customize what they deem appropriate for the entire student body.

George Orwell's *1984* (although written in 1949) eerily foreshadowed not only omniscient cameras and the removal of privacy everywhere, but also the Thought Police who set out to punish per-

sonal and political thoughts unapproved by Big Brother's regime.

The most recent victim is *Maus* – the Pulitzer Prize-winning graphic novel duology by Art Spiegelman, whose parents were concentration camp survivors (his mother having committed suicide years later).

Marilisa Garcia reports in the Atlantic, "U.S. classrooms and education policy have, for decades, incorporated the teaching of Holocaust literature and survivor testimonies, the goal being to 'never forget...'. In October 2021, a Texas school district administrator invoked a law that requires teachers to present opposing viewpoints to 'widely debated and currently controversial issues,' instructing teachers to present opposing views about the Holocaust in their classrooms.

There are definitely circumstances where the presentation of multiple sides of an argument or event are necessary, but are we really meant to brainstorm ways of defending Nazism, to look for very fine people on both sides?

"In the Tennessee debate over *Maus*, one school board member was quoted as saying, 'It shows people hanging, it shows them killing kids, why does the educational system promote this kind of stuff? It is not wise or healthy.' This is a familiar argument from those who seek to keep young people from reading about history's horrors... [but] the sanitization of history in the name of shielding children assumes, incorrectly, that today's students are untouched by oppression, imprisonment, death, or racial and ethnic profiling. (For example, Tennessee has been a site of controversy in recent years for incarcerating children as young as 7 and disrupting the lives of undocumented youth.)

NLHS English teacher Mrs. Tayler Urban has a copy of *Maus I* in her classroom, as other ELA teachers do in the school.

"I read it for a college course during my undergrad degree. I'm typically not a fan of graphic novels in general just because I prefer to imagine things in my brain rather than see them visually on the

page," Mrs. Urban said. "However, I found *Maus* to be compelling. I remember thinking that I would have liked to read this paired with *Anne Frank* or other things we read in school about the Holocaust."

Is some literature content too mature for young (meaning elementary school-age) audiences? Sure, according to Mrs. Urban and many English teachers who don't advocate first graders accidentally stumbling upon Stephen King novels when they're searching for Dr. Seuss.

"That's not what is being done when books like this get banned," she said. "I teach *Fahrenheit 451* which I think does a great job in demonstrating what happens when books get banned and what a community is actually trying to accomplish when they ban books and it is never a good thing. Survivors' stories like *Night*, *Maus*, and *Anne Frank* need to be on school shelves so we/future generations don't repeat the mistakes of our past.

"Suppressing those ideas and watering them down with PG fiction stories that leave out the graphic, uncomfortable truths does not honor the lives that were lost," Mrs. Urban said. "They make it easier for people to forget or, even worse, deny what happened, how easily neighbors were convinced to turn on their neighbors, and how so many others just acted like nothing was happening to avoid it happening to them."

Parents, community members, and all people of earth, we assure you: our classrooms are not promoting or celebrating the Holocaust, slavery, 9/11. We are discussing history and sharing stories of the past. Conversations should not be censored to customize your beliefs. Educators are not sitting around your dinner table dictating what opinions you should allow.

We are not giving up, Ray Bradbury. Your fiction predicted way too much. Too many people are trying to ignite the wrong spark in schools. The history and knowledge of this world is far too important to simply ban and burn. 🌱

Our View



Art by Keona Dyer

**THE SLATE**  
ALL YOUR BULLDOG NEWS..

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## Queer kids deserve safety, support in schools

*Florida further proves that U.S. schools and governments are entering a new age of heightened discrimination*

BY OWEN LEVAN-UHLER  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

I'm getting *really* tired of queer people's rights and safety *still* being stripped away, if you couldn't tell by now. *All* Americans should be. It's 2022, why is being queer such a big deal? Why should anyone be discriminated against because of who they love or how they identify? Queerness isn't unnatural, nor a new concept.

In another installment of an angry queer teenage writer, Florida came up with a lovely little piece of legislation dubbed the "Don't Say Gay Bill." (Its real name is the Parental Rights in Education bill, but that's misleading).

The bill's purpose is to "reinforce the fundamental right of parents to make decisions regarding the upbringing and control of their children," though Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, a key proponent of the bill, elaborates on its real reason. The legislation is aimed to ban all discussions of gender identity/expression and sexuality in classrooms across the entire state of Florida.

DeSantis stated that he doesn't approve of "injecting these concepts about choosing your gender" in school, saying schools should stick to "the basics" like "teaching kids to read, to write... to teach them science, history."

So, being taught a surface level understanding of queerness, whether it be transgenderism or other forms of gender-nonconformity, is not *science*? Learning about *queer history* is not *history*? Besides, those educators trying to teach kids about gender aren't telling kids to 'choose their

gender,' they're just helping them understand the complex gender spectrum. I digress slightly, but I'm not wrong.

Anyway, supporters, such as State Senator Dennis Baxley, who proposed the bill, claim that teaching about these sorts of things, especially in elementary settings, is grooming, and that the teaching of these "ideologies" should be left to the discretion of parents. You could im-

trans and requests to be referred to as 'Emily' and use she/her pronouns, Emily's transphobic parents would legally be able to prevent a school from using her preferred name and pronouns.

And this whole thing doesn't just stop classrooms from teaching kids about "queer ideologies." States across the country are, and have been for decades, banning queer literature in schools. Parents and legislators are discriminating against and censoring schools, children, authors, just for

about LGBTQ people and issues in school.

Of course, anyone can agree that sexually explicit material should be monitored in a school setting. But elementary teachers gently teaching their students about queer issues and about being queer shouldn't be a discouragable or illegal activity, because it's definitely not a sexually explicit one.

In fact, this sort of teaching should be strongly encouraged by schools, or even put into official curriculums if parents and legislators are so worried about kids being exposed to sexual content. Governments could ensure that the safe education and search of identity are facilitated in schools, but they choose to be bigoted and queerphobic instead.

The whole point is: parents aren't worried about their kids being exposed to sexual content, because there isn't any. Their fear of "sexual content" is just a guise, for what they are truly afraid of is *queerness*. The only ones truly pushing a "gender ideology" are people who are obsessed with upholding "traditional" heterosexuality and a gender binary—two things that discount the psychology and biology of humans, and that are put above the unconditional love and support all kids should receive, whether they are queer or not.

If you have to negatively question anything I wrote in this article, you are in the wrong. If you agree with the banning of queer literature and the banning of queer education and history, then you are part of the problem. You create a dangerous and dark world, for reasons none other than failing to rewrite the indoctrination rooted in your brains.

You are directly responsible for perpetuating the hatefulness that causes queer people, *queer kids*, to be undereducated. To be hate-crimes. To kill themselves.

If you agree or align with this deadly, anti-queer rhetoric, shame on you. Get help, and get educated. And let your kids be educated, too. 🐾



agine why something like this could make me, or pretty much any other queer person or ally, absolutely livid.

This sets a really dangerous stereotype against queer people: it portrays us as predators attempting to indoctrinate or take advantage of children. This also sets a *very dangerous* legal precedent in the United States, even if it isn't passed. Bills like these make it easier for more anti-queer legislation to be introduced and passed.

In Wisconsin, a proposed bill states that parents will literally have legal control over what name and pronouns their child is allowed to use and be referred to in schools. If a kid legally named John is

supporting queerness, or *being queer*.

Under the Florida bill, if a kid comes out of the closet to someone employed by a school, even a therapist or counselor, that employee is legally required to inform their parents or guardians of their coming out.

Legislation like this makes it even less safe for queer people, especially for queer youth, to live. The Trevor Project, the world's largest suicide prevention and crisis intervention organization for LGBTQ youth, published findings in a recent survey, showing that 42% of LGBTQ youth seriously considered suicide within the past year. It also found that the chance of suicide in LGBTQ youth *dropped* by 23% when they learned

## Blood is blood

*How queer men have been banned from donating blood for decades*

BY LAURENCE NICHOLS  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

During a national blood shortage and a global pandemic, blood donations would be beneficial to a multitude of people, though, many are still technically not allowed to donate blood due to their queerness. Despite the constant need for blood donors, gay and bisexual men have been banned from donating blood for decades.

Due to the drop in blood drives, the need for blood is ever-higher. In fact, somebody in the U.S. is in need of blood approximately every 2 seconds. With this ban on queer people remaining in place, the amount of possible blood donors is undoubtedly lower than if people of any sexuality were allowed to donate their blood at will.

The reasoning for keeping this ban in place is widely flawed. The ban was put into place during the AIDS crisis, out of fear that if a queer man donated his blood, he would inevitably be giving diseased, or infected blood. This, in large part, led to the stigmatization of HIV/AIDS as a "gay disease." This has since been disproven time and time again, as people of all genders and sexualities can contract these illnesses. Besides, all donated blood is vigorously and thoroughly tested for any disease(s) that it may or may not contain. Only blood that has been tested and declared safe is used to help those in need.

Around 23% of people diagnosed with HIV are heterosexual people. Despite this, there are no restrictions on *them* donating blood. A straight person with countless partners could donate their blood and face no problems. A queer man with only one partner would be turned away. If the reasoning for keeping this ban is for protecting against diseases that can affect anyone, then it is more likely that the ban is in place because of hatred and homophobia, something that many people, especially medical professionals, have come to realize.

Keeping this ban in place out of fear of queer men is pointless and hurtful to those who might need blood. If people are so concerned about helping and protecting others, encouraging as many people as possible to donate blood would've been more helpful than banning possible blood donors.

Recently the ban has been lightened to queer men abstaining from promiscuous activities for 3 months before they are able to donate. Though this is a step in the right direction, the ban still needs to be lifted fully, as it only perpetuates the homophobia that so many queer men experience in this country. 🐾

## Honey, we have a problem



According to GreenMatters.com, the biggest causes of bee population decline include everything from habitat loss to climate change. Humans destroy natural habitats, forests, wildflower meadows, and many other areas that once held flower species necessary for bee survival. Seasonal changes disrupt the delicate nesting behavior of bees and can prevent or confuse normal pollination and breeding patterns. Diseases, parasites, invasive species, and pesticides make up the rest of the culprits.

## Dear transphobes: Let's talk



Columnist

Dev Vega

I am so tired of seeing an individual's gender identity as a topic of debate. Guess what? It's none of your freaking business what anyone identifies as. Unless you're asking how to refer to them, you do not need to ponder the intricacies of whether or not someone's pronouns are "valid." Especially not to their face.

You don't sit there and wonder if the person you're talking to agrees with your opinion of *Terminator 2* because it doesn't matter unless you're talking about *Terminator 2*. It's the same with gender, sexuality, and just about anything else where disagreement can occur.

News flash, shutting up is and always will be a valid option when someone doesn't adhere to your boring standards that not even ancient philosophers agreed

with. There are 8 billion people on earth, and not one of us is exactly the same as another. Everyone, and I mean *everyone*, will believe in something that you don't. And that's okay: people are allowed to flourish in their own unique way from everyone else as long as they're not hurting others. But your shallow opinions on who and what can be and do specific things *are* hurting others. Around 41% of transgender youth commit suicide. Transphobes say, "You're clearly not healthy if you kill yourselves. Myeh myeh myeh! I'm such a good person!"

An unbelievably huge majority of those 41% who die, die because of people like you. You're throwing your own kill count around and it's causing even more deaths. How can anyone possibly be so blind to not notice the obvious connection there?

So many children and adults are brought to the absolute lowest parts of their lives so early because they simply don't like something they didn't get to choose. Think about how unfair that is. People change their names all the time or prefer to go by nicknames. Do you drive them to the brink too because they're "too selfish to accept what life gave them?" No. No, you don't. Because that



would be stupid. Just as stupid as what's going on now.

Eight billion people, and you'd rather call someone a slur for wanting to wear a dress. Wake up, your actions are what's making new generations "so soft," as you like to throw around. People are soft because *you* never give them the chance to

build up their shell without breaking it down over and over again.

To transphobes, homophobes, TERFs (Feminists who exclude trans women), and anyone else who needs to hear it — you're the problem, not us.

Sincerely, someone just trying to be themselves. 🌟

## How far can the First Amendment stretch?



Columnist

Abby Peartree

The First Amendment to the Constitution states that all United States citizens have the right to free speech. The question is, how free is that speech, and how does this amendment affect students?

Due to recent political protests and elections, the words 'freedom of speech' have been tossed around a lot, but what do these words truly mean in the context of the Constitution? Of course, there are obvious exceptions, such as no words that could potentially harm or threaten others, but what about words that could be taken as treason?

After the 2020 election, certain mer-

chandise was created that was intended to go against President Joe Biden. Flags with phrases such as "Don't blame me, I voted for Trump," and "F\*\*\* Biden" were, and still are, being sold. Is this considered free speech? Is this what the founding fathers wanted for America?

The U.S. Supreme Court has gone through several cases that can provide insight into whether these types of political merchandise are actually constitutional.

On one occasion, in *Abrams v. The United States* (1919), it was found that the First Amendment did not protect certain speech that incites violent protests or revolution. This case came about due to someone handing out pamphlets that spoke out against the Vietnam War.

These pamphlets invoked violence and strike within the U.S. As the Supreme Court would call it, they 'disturbed the peace'. This term refers to a disruption of everyday life caused by speech, usually politically affiliated, that is considered to be unconstitutional. This disruption could be something along the lines of a fight, verbal or physical, that requires interference from the police.

This does not affect the aforementioned examples, however, it does provide clarity on speech inciting violence and/or strike. It tells citizens that merchandise inciting violence is not protected under the First Amendment.

Another case, *Cohen v. California* (1971), stated that if signage was not known to disrupt the immediate peace, it could be displayed. The sign, in this particular case, is similar to the ones that are currently being sold as it stated "F\*\*\* the draft" and also protested the government at the time using vulgarities.

Many other cases such as *Tinker v. Des Moines* (1969) have decided that speech that protests symbolically is allowed as long as it does not 'disturb the peace'. *Tinker v. Des Moines* specifically was a case that occurred in a school building in which students wore black armbands with peace signs on them in order to protest the Vietnam War.

This is not the same as the flags and signs being sold today as the armbands are considered 'symbolic speech,' meaning that they are meant to symbolize the opinion rather than using vulgarities.

However, another case regarding

schools, *Morse v. Frederick* (2007), stated that students could not disturb the peace with explicit content while on school property or while engaging in a school-sanctioned event. The explicit content in question was a sign that said "Bong Hits 4 Jesus".

The sign was displayed at the student's home, however, it was still seen as the school's right to discipline him as he deliberately set it up during a school event. Despite the fact that it is not inherently political, the case is still important as it found they are unable to have the entirely same free speech they have outside of school when on the school district's property or on a school trip.

Overall, it appears that freedom of speech does fully cover the signs that protest President Biden. Although they could disturb the peace, until that happens, the Supreme Court would rule that they are constitutional, and thus, can still be sold.

However, if a school rules them to be inappropriate, students have to keep them at home. 🌟

## Sports integrity and fairness must remain



Columnist

Ayden Scanlon

Humanity has undergone many changes throughout the many years of its existence. As the years go by, the perspective in which many people see the world shifts.

In modern times, a lot of attention falls on issues relating to the universal idea of equality and acceptance. This is especially true when talking about the transgender community. Many people and organizations have adjusted their policies to increase inclusivity and to be more welcoming to not only members of the transgender community, but also the entire LGBTQ+ spectrum.

However, one topic has been undeniably controversial as of late: transgender women competing in women's sports.

So where exactly do the problems arise when covering this issue? To put it simply, many people believe that trans

women gain an unfair advantage when compared to women who identify as their biological sex. This stems from the fact that on average, biological men are stronger than biological women.

This is because, typically, the male body has greater muscle mass, denser bones, and stronger tendons. This is not to say that a woman cannot be stronger than a man. Surely, a man who is a couch potato is almost certain to be outclassed by a female athlete. But ultimately, men simply have more muscular ability than women.

One cannot even begin to tackle an issue like this without talking about the two main sex hormones, testosterone and estrogen.

Testosterone being the hormone that men start producing at 7 weeks from conception. Aside from controlling sexual factors such as libido and gamete production, it also makes the formation of new muscle tissue easier. The concentration of the hormone peaks at the height of puberty, in which a slew of extreme changes will also go into effect. Estrogen, the female sex hormone, is equally as important for women as testosterone is for men.

Because of these biological advantages, many people are lead to believe

that transgender women should not be competing against biological women. A common counter argument for this claim is that many transgender athletes undergo hormone replacement therapy. While this does impact the development of muscle mass, it does not show a noticeable difference on muscle development until a little more than a year into the treatment.

That is also ignoring the other biological factors such as bone structure. A more radical approach to the situation would be the use of hormone inhibitors such as puberty blockers to prevent unwanted biological changes. However that is another highly controversial topic in and of itself.

A large talking point surrounding transgender athletes is how it affects the biological women competing. This is especially true when taking school sports into consideration. Women in Connecticut filed discrimination suits when they faced fierce competition from a transgender counterpart. The women in question had previously shown extraordinary athletic abilities. They protested that women's sports should have a level playing field.

Another example involves the now-famous athlete Lia Thomas. In 2019, she was an avid swimmer who was previously

competing in the men's league at the University of Pennsylvania. Lei has shattered multiple records in the women's league since she was initiated. While this is not a bad thing at face value, it certainly warrants some semblance of skepticism.

The topic at hand is extremely difficult to put into words. It seems as if there is no way to satisfy both sides of the argument. At its core, it all comes down to inclusivity over fairness. Caitlyn Jenner, a transgender woman and 1970s Olympic gold medalist, opposes the inclusion of transgender women in their sports.

At the end of the day, sports are separated by male and female for a reason. The main reason being the ability to compete on a fair playing field. This can especially be said today, when sex and gender have been broadened into a wider range of meaning than ever before. While being inclusive and welcoming to everyone is a wonderful thing, it should not always be treated as the determining factor in many situations.

This is especially true when it comes to athletics, which can become incredibly competitive. It is imperative that we protect the integrity of sporting events through careful and scientific judgment. 🌟

## Lady Dawgs' Baller Scores Two Milestones



# A season of Records

BY ALEXIS TRAUGHER  
SPORTS EDITOR

From the age of 12 to 18, athletes change in many ways. From playing a different sport, changing positions, and creating new goals, life goes by fast yet there is never a dull moment. After years of hard work and dedication, Emma Niebell was able to mark her spot in Northern Lehigh history.

Niebell, senior basketball player, claimed the record for most points scored in a game (41) and achieved her 1,000th point. After multiple seasons scoring 20-plus points per game, a dream became reality.

Niebell's basketball career started in the sixth grade. Throughout these seven years, she grew alongside her fellow athletes and began to shine. With other women like Chennedy Carter, American professional basketball player, showing her what is possible, her goals developed.

"When I am on the court, my role model is definitely Chennedy Carter. Before games, I watch all of her highlights. The way she scores and celebrates makes me want to go out and do the same thing. She is entertaining to watch and is exactly who I want to be," said Niebell.

In addition to role models, inspiration is another

aspect of the mindset that gets an athlete even closer to their must-earn goals. "My biggest inspiration would be my goals. I have such high expectations of myself that I have and will reach. I want to be successful enough to give back to the people who have supported me growing up," said Niebell.

Female athletes show commitment and persistence in everything they do. Any young girl to a full-grown female athlete, has a work ethic like no other. Competing on and off the court, striving to be the best they can, and helping to grow others with them demonstrates this. Emma Niebell is definitely nothing shy of this.

"I think I've always had motivation to be better. I've never been handed anything and I work for everything I have. The thing that keeps me going is the feeling of success. The feeling of when you have achieved what you've been working so hard for," she said.

Bryan Geist, NL athletic director, has also witnessed these things in Niebell. "Emma is a hard-working multi-sport athlete. She is a great competitor," said Geist.

In January 2022, Niebell raised the record for most points scored in a game from 40 to 41 points. The record-breaking game showed how close the team is, supporting Niebell the whole way. "[The game] was lit. I

apologized at halftime because I didn't want my team to think I was being selfish, but they all understood. The whole bench was counting my points for me and were supporting me all the way. The coaches got us pizza on the way back. I don't think it could have gone any better," said Niebell.

A couple games later, Niebell reached her 1,000th point against rival Northwestern Lehigh. After people doubting her and defenders always trying to stop her, she shook the whole NL athletic world. "We announced it at our boys game vs Northwestern Lehigh and the entire crowd erupted in applause," said Geist.

And for Niebell this was a moment to remember. "I was ecstatic. Seven years of hard work for that moment was worth it. All of my family and friends there to cheer me on felt amazing. I wasn't emotional until I hugged my mom. She said she was proud of me. No matter how I play, she is still my number one supporter," she said.

Overall, Niebell's motivation won out in the end, officially proving people wrong. "A couple weeks ago, I was reading an article in the newspaper. It was talking about 1,000-point scorers and said how a girl from another school was most likely going to be the last person to receive her thousandth for the 2021-2022 season. I just had to prove them wrong." 🐾

## Basketballers bounce through season



(Above, clockwise) Bryce Lopinto, Alex Erdo, Brayden Tocci, Connor Simms, coaches Sam Yadush and Matt Egan, Nick Frame, and head coach Patrick Wana maker. Photo by Lifetouch for The Reflections Yearbook



Photos by Lifetouch for The Reflections Yearbook (l to r) A.J. Wittong, Devon Sosa, Ayden Parvel, and Izaiah Ramos.

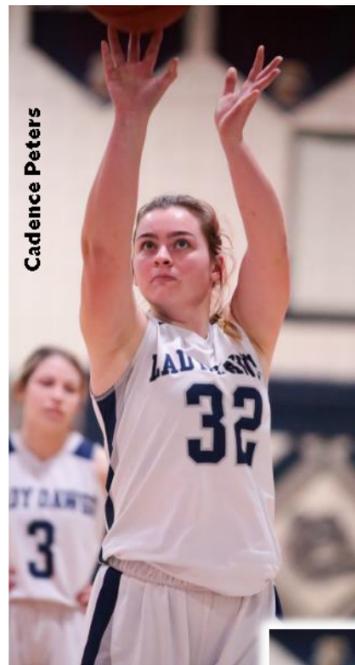
## Game Faces



Stef Steckel



Danielle Dougherty



Cadence Peters



Aiyana Bosch



Sophia Lear



Emma Niebell



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Photos by Caitlin Kirk for The Slate  
 Deep underground in the basement of NLHS's news bunker, the Dog Dish hits the air live each day around 7:20 a.m. Now in its 10th season, Mr. Andy Kern and Mr. Chris Bennett steer the ship for its revolving stools of anchors and behind-the-scenes production personnel. (Left) Toby Frantz and Jackson Hunsicker work screens, cameras, and sound. (Above) Mr. Bennett counts down to showtime. Other members like Krista Lynch fill in other positions as needed. Each Dog Dish episode is available for livestreaming in homeroom and on the NL Studios YouTube channel, along with past episodes and special segments.

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# MONUMENTAL MOMENTS IN HISTORY

## The Battle for Iwo Jima A Flag Raised for Freedom

BY CALLUM BRYCE ZIMMERMAN  
SLATE HISTORIAN

During the bloody Battle for Iwo Jima, U.S. Marines from the 3rd Platoon, E Company, 2nd Battalion, 28th Regiment of the 5th Division take the crest of Mount Suribachi, the island's highest peak and most strategic position, and raise the U.S. flag — that iconic moment.

Marine photographer Louis Lowery was with them and recorded the event. Americans fighting for control of Suribachi's slopes cheered the raising of the flag and, several hours later, more Marines headed up to the top with a larger flag. Joe Rosenthal, a photographer with the Associated Press, met them along the way and recorded the raising of the second flag alongside a Marine still photographer and a motion-picture cameraman.

Rosenthal took three photographs atop Suribachi. The first, which showed five Marines and one Navy corpsman struggling to hoist the heavy flag pole, became the most reproduced photograph in history and won him a Pulitzer Prize.

The accompanying motion-picture footage attests to the fact that the picture was not posed. Of the other two photos, the second was similar to the first but less impactful. The third was a group picture of 18 Marines smiling and waving for the camera. Many of these men, including three of the Marines seen raising the flag in the famous Rosenthal photo, were killed before the conclusion of the Battle for Iwo Jima in late March.

The Battle of Iwo Jima was an epic military campaign between the U.S. Marines and the Imperial Army of Japan in



early 1945. Located 750 miles off the coast of Japan, the island of Iwo Jima had three airfields that could serve as a staging facility for a potential invasion of mainland Japan.

American forces invaded the island on February 19, 1945, and the following Battle of Iwo Jima lasted for five weeks. In some of the bloodiest fighting of World War II, it's believed that all but 200 or so of the 21,000 Japanese forces on the island were killed, as were almost

7,000 Marines.

On February 19, 1945, U.S. Marines made an amphibious landing on Iwo Jima and were met immediately with unanticipated challenges. First and foremost, the beaches of the island were made up of steep dunes of soft, gray volcanic ash, which made getting sturdy footing and passage for vehicles difficult.

As the Marines struggled forward, the Japanese laid in wait. The Americans assumed the pre-attack bombardment

had been effective, and had crippled the enemy's defenses on the island.

However, the lack of immediate response was simply part of Kuribayashi's plan. With the Americans struggling to get a foothold on the beaches of Iwo Jima—literally and figuratively—Kuribayashi's artillery positions in the mountains above opened fire, stalling the advancing Marines and inflicting signifi-

See IWO JIMA, page 15



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# Iwo Jima remembered

Iwo Jima, from page 14

Despite a banzai charge by dozens of Japanese soldiers as dusk fell, however, the Marines were eventually able to move past the beach and seize part of one Iwo Jima's airfields—the stated mission of the invasion.

Within days, some 70,000 U.S. Marines landed on Iwo Jima. Although they significantly outnumbered their Japanese enemies on the island, by a more than three-to-one margin, many Americans were wounded or killed over the five weeks of fighting, with some estimates suggesting more than 25,000 casualties, including nearly 7,000 deaths.

The Japanese, meanwhile, were also suffering major losses, and were running low on supplies - in particular weapons and food. Under Kuribayashi's leadership, they mounted most of their defenses via attacks under the cover of darkness. While effective, the

success of the Japanese forces seemed to merely forestall the inevitable.

Battles raged on in the northern part of Iwo Jima for four weeks, with Kuribayashi essentially setting up a garrison in the mountains in that part of the island. On March 25, 1945, 300 of Kuribayashi's men mounted a final banzai attack.

Although the American military declared that Iwo Jima had been captured the next day, American forces spent weeks on end trudging through the island's jungles, finding and killing or capturing Japanese "holdouts" who refused to surrender and opted to continue fighting.

But just four days into the fighting, U.S. Marines captured Mount Suribachi, on Iwo Jima's south side, famously raising an American flag at the summit. That image was captured by Associated Press photographer Joe Rosenthal, who won a Pulitzer Prize for the iconic photograph. 🐾



Courtesy of history.org



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