

The GROVE GAZETTE

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Union Grove ISD News

Oct. 2023

THE Magic OF HOMECOMING



On the Cover

Drum Major Sarah Clowers leads the band's halftime drill during the homecoming game Sept. 22. The band started by playing "Mighty Mite" and "Vienna Philharmonic Fanfare". PHOTO: Daytona Vaughn

This page: Ag sub Melesia Stevens pulls the Ag/FFA float behind her tractor. "It was really fun because we got to see everyone smiling and happy when we were throwing the candy," new eighth-grader Lisa Hill said. "We never had parades at my old school. We would go to the gym and the principal would walk in with a microphone and announce everything, and that was all." PHOTO: Kinleigh Birlew

 GROVE GAZETTE



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Connor Stanford (8) runs the Quitman cross-country meet Sept. 16. "At this point of the race my knees and throat were hurting, but I knew I had to finish for my mom that was sick," Stanford said. PHOTO: Briana Bowling

LETTERS FROM THE PRINCIPALS

There are too many good things to name happening here at Union Grove Elementary! We are in full swing, and our teachers and students are working hard every day!

These are some things we have been doing:

- MAP testing to find out where our students are academically
- Homecoming parade
- Snowcones! Charley's Snowcones comes on the last Friday of every month

The fall promises to be a busy time.

Here are some things we have coming up:

- We will celebrate our grandparents for PK-2nd graders on Oct. 10 and our 3rd-6th grandparents Oct. 11.
- Our Scholastic Book Fair is Oct. 9-13.
- Painting with the Kids is after school on Oct. 3 and 10.
- Red Ribbon Week will be Oct. 23-27
- Our first awards assemblies will be on Oct. 27
- The Harvest Carnival is also Friday, Oct. 27

As always, I am here to help you if you need anything!

Sherrill Ballard
Elementary Principal
903-845-3481 / ballards@ugisd.org

2023-24 is going to be the best year yet at Union Grove Elementary!

What a great year we are having here at UG JH/HS! We have been very busy with several activities and a lot of learning. Our students who are involved in various activities are doing well and working hard each day to prepare for the next competition.

We love our community and the support they show to UG students and staff. We appreciate each of you!

If you want to know what is happening, please follow us on the following social media outlets:

Facebook: Union Grove Junior High/High School

Instagram: uglionpride

If I can be of any assistance or provide more information, please feel free to contact me.

Rachel Evers
JH/HS Principal
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Scholastic Book Fair Back in Business

By Lucky Woodard

The Scholastic book fair will be open Oct. 9 -13 in the elementary library hallway. This year, students can purchase books and school supplies using eWallet, which Scholastic calls a "convenient, cash-free digital payment system".

According to librarian Mandy Cox, one great thing about the book fair is kids can choose any book—not just those on their AR levels.

"The book fair is important for the students to have the opportunity to explore all types of books no matter what level they are on," Cox said. "I hope they gain a greater love for reading."

Families can get started online at www.scholastic.com/bf/uniongroveelementaryschool2. Online orders over \$25 ship free to the students' homes.

"The book fair gives all students an opportunity to shop for new books when they may not be able to get to the public library or bookstores," kindergarten teacher Kelli Stanford said, "As a teacher, I love to see the kids get so excited about new books."

This is the second book fair since the 2020 pandemic which shut down the event that year and the following year.



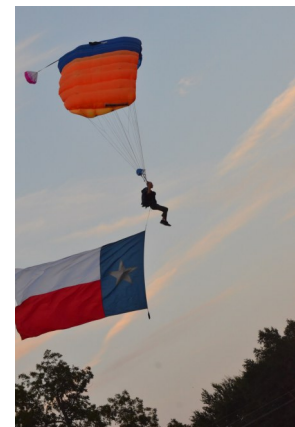
Distinguished Alumni As part of the pre-game ceremony, school board members presented three guests with distinguished alumni awards for their service and dedication to our community: Melinda "Memaw" Smith, Glyn Johnston and Jared Maddox. PHOTOS: Jamie Russell

2023 Gladewater Rodeo Sweetheart Scarlett Edward rides in the homecoming parade. PHOTO: Kinleigh Birlew



Varsity cheerleaders perform at the Thursday night bonfire. "Cheering at the bonfire creates a special moment," freshman Miley Nono said. "You kinda get to see everyone that's there and how close our bond with everyone is." PHOTO: Daytona Vaughn

Adalynn Orms (7) and Kelsey Kent (7) throw candy to junior high and high school students during the Friday afternoon parade. "It was very hot," Orms said. "And the candy was hard to throw because it was so light, but it was really fun because it makes people happy." PHOTO: Kinleigh Birlew / A skydiver from Skydive East Texas drops in to deliver the game ball. PHOTO: Lucky Woodard



The Magic of Homecoming

By Lucky Woodard

A full 24 hours of festivities — the blaze of school spirit emitting from the annual bonfire, parade floats showering students with candy, the biggest pep rally of the year — all building to the crowning of the homecoming queen, the skydiver-delivery of the game ball, and the rivalry game against Ore City.

Before the crowning ceremony, the senior duchesses — Sarah Clowers, Katy King, Paulina Navarro-Gonzalez, Jenna Scott and Faith Woodall — wish each other the best.

One in particular is surprised by a familiar face and filled with emotion. Clowers is less surprised to be named queen than to see her dear friend, 2023 homecoming queen Sumeet Mattu, who previously told Clowers she would not be able to make it in time to crown her successor

but attended with 2023 alum Angelina Leyva anyway.

"I was stuck in a moment of disbelief," Clowers said. "I didn't think she was going to be here, so when I saw her I started to cry a little from how excited I was, but more than anything, I missed them. I was so excited to be crowned by the former homecoming queen and good friend."

Immediately following the presentation of the court, the game commenced with skydiver delivery of the ball, the playing of the national anthem and an exchange of student council gifts.

The Lions fought hard against their foes from Ore City and looked good for the win for most of the game. The boys in blue started strong with a safety in the first quarter. Quarterback Jace Roberts (12) rushed for three touchdowns and threw a 19-yard pass to Will Wilson (12) for a fourth. Kicker Luis Fernandez (10),

who boasts a near-perfect record, scored three extra points. Carter Cooper (10) made ten solo tackles for the Lions' defense. Wilson tallied five, and Kayden Day (11) added four. Jesse Fulmer (11) sacked the Rebels' quarterback, and Wrigley Roberts (10) grabbed an interception. However, Ore City pushed past the Lions in the fourth quarter, scoring twice and finishing the game 40-29.

Although it was a crushing loss, the players and students' spirits were not defeated. Students and community members gathered on the field to watch the fireworks and reflect on memories made so far this year.

"In the end, it was perfect," senior Kameron Townsend said. "The fireworks brought a spectacular end to the long homecoming night, but I'm glad that we could all share the peaceful moment, even through the loss."

Student Council Members Parker Haley (10) and Hunter Rogers (10) create hallway signs advertising this year's homecoming dress-up days. Students wore Disney on Monday and camo on Tuesday. Wednesday was Country v. Country Club, and Thursday was 'Merica Day. On Friday, everyone wore their blue-out gear for the big game. PHOTO: Faith Woodall



2022 Queen Sumeet Mattu surprises Sarah Clowers (12) at the crowning ceremony after telling her friend she would not be there. "I was in shock because I didn't think she and Angie were going to be here," Clowers said. "I cried a little when I saw her because I was so excited and I missed them. I'm glad I was able to be crowned by the former queen and a part of a UG tradition.." PHOTO: Lucky Woodard



Homecoming Court Rachel Potter (9), Kaki Pharr (10), Faith Woodall (12), Katy King (12), Queen Sarah Clowers (12), Paulina Navarro-Gonzalez (12), Jenna Scott (12) and Hannah Coulter (11) pose with Prince Greyson Webb and Princess Kimarie Parsons. PHOTO: Daytona Vaughn

Alumni and former staff catch up during the half-time reception. PHOTO: Lucky Woodard



KYKX's Harlen the Sports Guy and Pigskin Bob honor eighth-grade math teacher and coach Jill Winn during the pep rally. Several students were nominated for Student of the Week scholarships, and Grace Woodall (12) received a \$500 scholarship to Tyler Junior College. PHOTO: Lucky Woodard



M'Kenzie Smith (10) and Kameron Townsend (12) cozy up for the post-game fireworks show. "It's definitely a memory I will never forget," Smith said. "It's really a sight to see with the people you love." PHOTO: Jamie Russell

PHOTO: Lucky Woodard

Lions Win Big in Pre-Season

By Faith Woodall

Prior to the homecoming game, the varsity Lions boasted a four-game pre-season winning streak.

Linden-Kildare (45-8)

In the Sept. 14 away game, quarterback Jace Roberts (11) threw touchdown passes to Judson George (11) and Jacob Griffin (11) and scored twice rushing the ball himself. George and Kohl Sirmans (10) also rushed for touchdowns, and Luis Fernandez (10) scored four extra points and a 32-yard field goal.

Carter Cooper (10) and Will Wilson (12) completed seven tackles each. Kayden Day (11) made five, and Cason Cowan (11) added four. Cooper and Day each earned a sack, and Wrigley Roberts (10) caught an interception.

Cushing (21-20)

On Sept. 7, J. Roberts rushed 97 yards for two touchdowns, and George scored on an 82-yard run. Fernandez scored the extra point after all three touchdowns.

Cowan made six tackles, Roberts and George each added four, and Cooper, W. Roberts and Day each made three.

Cumby (45-14)

On Aug. 31, the Lions traveled to Cumby, where J. Roberts led the Lions to victory with two touchdown passes to George and Wilson and three more rushing the ball himself, his longest a 47-yard run. Jesse Fulmer (11) completed an 80-yard touchdown run, and Fernandez went six-for-six on extra points and scored an 18-yard field goal for a total of nine points.

Cooper made six tackles, Day added five, and George, Wilson and Griffin made four apiece.

T.K. Gorman (37-14)

The Lions kicked off their season Aug. 24 against Bishop T.K. Gorman's Crusaders.

J. Roberts rushed 163 yards for three touchdowns, including a 65-yard touchdown run, and passed 41 yards to George for another six points. Day also scored a touchdown for the Lions on a 4-yard run, and Fernandez added a field goal and four PATs.

The Lions' defense held Gorman to two touchdowns. Cooper made five tackles and caused a fumble, George and Day each made three tackles, and J. Roberts, Wilson, and Morgan Mayhan (11) added two apiece.



JH FOOTBALL Easton Head (8) aids Daniel Fernandez (8) in evading an LK defender. The combined junior high team won 26-6, and on Sept. 21, the boys beat Ore City 22-8. PHOTO: Hannah Caperton / Konner Long (8) drags a Linden-Kildare player downfield. Long scored three touchdowns in the Sept. 12 home game. PHOTO: Anissa Barton / Quarterback Brycen Porter rushes past Linden-Kildare's linebackers to gain a first down. PHOTO: Bella Foster

JV FOOTBALL Andy Peck (9) pushes past an Overton linebacker for a first down during the boys' 18-14 win against Overton Sept. 12. PHOTO: Kinleigh Birlew / Kody Nutt (9) holds Overton's defense back so quarterback Hudson Wightman (9) can run the ball. PHOTO: Briana Bowling

Meet Results

The cross country teams most recently competed at the Quitman invitational Sept. 16

Varsity Girls

Sophie Pyle (12) — 12th
Danica Vestal (9) — 16th
Ava Wightman (12) — 21st
Rachel Potter (9) — 22nd
Keira Taylor (11) — 32nd
Jenna Scott (12) — 40th
Averi Cook (9) — 44th

Varsity Boys

David Shaver (9) — 46th
Isaiah O'Neal (12) — 49th
Lane Turner (12) — 74th
TJ Fowler (11) — 95th
Mateo Lara (9) — 99th
Josiah Sturkie (10) — 104th

IV Girls

Arianna Gibboney (9) — 11th
Jill Taylor (9) — 13th
Miley Nono (9) — 16th
Kadence Frey (9) — 18th
Hailey Griffin (9) — 21st

JH Girls

Landry Harris (8) — 1st
Emma Wadle (8) — 14th
Bree Cox (8) — 35th
Natalie Delaney (7) — 50th
Jillian Russell (7) — 60th

JH Boys

Ryder Martindale (8) — 34th
Brady Pritchett (7) — 35th
Kynan Birlew (7) — 60th
Liam Mayhan (8) — 68th
Connor Stanford (8) — 76th
Waylon Clift (8) — 84th
Connor Mead (8) — 94th
Konnor Long (8) — 102nd
Isaac O'Neal (8) — 113th



Isaiah O'Neal (12) started the Quitman race in first place but rolled his ankle and had to pace his run to prevent further injury. PHOTOS: Briana Bowling



XC Prepares for District

By Faith Woodall

Varsity, junior varsity and junior high cross country teams will compete in their district meets Oct. 11 at Hawkins.

Most teams will defend the championships won last year. The varsity girls' cross country team will race for their eighth consecutive district championship, while the varsity boys have won four of the last eight district championships.

Junior high and JV runners will finish their seasons at Hawkins, but the top three varsity teams will advance to the regional competition Oct. 23 at Huntsville, where the girls have placed in the top ten five times and advanced to state for the last three years. Then those who advance from regionals will continue what team captain Sophie Pyle calls their "legacy of winning" in Round Rock on Nov. 4-5

"This team is extremely dedicated and determined to put in the hard work to be great," Pyle said.

The Lady Lions have focused on staying together and getting faster this season in order to return to Round Rock after earning fourth at state last year.

"This year our main goal has been to make it out of regionals and go to state for the fourth year in a row, and I think as of right now that's looking very achievable because of the work we have put in together," junior Keira Taylor said.

The teams have had to overcome injuries and illnesses to make it this far. Isaiah O'Neal (12) rolled his ankle at the Quitman meet, and Konnor Long (8) suffered a

asthma attack after starting in the top five.

"I was pumped and ready to show out, but after a week of the wind blowing and my allergies stirring, my asthma hit me hard," Long said. "My lungs started feeling like they were closing and my body went into a kind of panic knowing I still had a mile and a half to go."

Long was "pale as a ghost" when he got to the first mile marker, and his mom suggested he quit the race, but Long refused.

"I knew I couldn't with everyone cheering me on," Long said. "I kept kicking, knowing how good I can do."

Long trusted his self-awareness, the inhaler he carried throughout the race, and the training that had gotten him that far.

"The practices at 6:00 in the morning are so hard right after waking up," Connor Mead (8) said. "Though it's hard and grueling, it's very good for me and gets me in shape. The best part is getting first as a team in the meets. I think competing with all of these bigger and better schools at our meets will make district a lot easier for us to get first place."

Seniors reflecting on their cross country careers have some advice for the athletes who are just getting started in the sport:

"Run your race at your own pace that you're comfortable with," Wightman said. "No matter how hard it is or how bad you want to stop, just keep going."

Did you know?

According to the NCAA, 8 million students currently participate in high school athletics in the U.S. How many go on to play college sports?

3.9% of volleyball players (1.2% go D1)

6.8% of female golfers (2.8% go D1)

5.9% of male golfers (2% go D1)

7.3% of football players (2.9% go D1)

7.5% of baseball players (2.2% go D1)

5.6% of softball players (1.8% go D1)

4.8% of male track and field athletes (1.9% go D1)

6.2% of female track and field athletes (2.8% go D1)

4.1% of female basketball players (1.3% go D1)

3.5% of male basketball players (1% go D1)

7.1% of female cross country runners (2.7% go D1)

5.3% of male cross country runners (1.8% go D1)

Taylor Campbell (11) hits over Hawkins's block Sept. 22. Campbell scored four kills, an ace, and seven digs against the Lady Hawks. Teammate Sarah Prince (11) tallied five kills, and ace, and a block, and setter Brady Colby (12) added two kills, four assists, four digs and two blocks. The girls fought hard but lost all three games. PHOTO: Bre Reynolds

Chloe Brooks (10), Brady Colby (12), Sarah Prince (11) and Daytona Vaughn (12) celebrate a kill against Leverett's Chapel Sept. 19. The girls won 25-23, 25-8, and 25-22. PHOTO: Bre Reynolds



TINY BUT FIERCE JV player Bre Reynolds (9) teaches Little Bumpers players to set properly during their Sept. 13 practice. PHOTO: Emma Holder



SET TO WIN Hannah Caperton (8) sets Aubrie Coulter (8) during the girls' game against West Rusk Aug. 28. All three teams won that night. PHOTO: Anissa Barton



Varsity Girls Renew Love for Sport

Jamie Russell

The Lady Lions play with renewed vigor this season. More confidence. More spirit. More smiles.

They celebrate the little things: each kill, each block, each point.

Maybe its because they're winning more games. Or maybe they're winning because of the tangible shift in team spirit.

"All Coach Musick wants for us is to get better every day and do it as a team," Daytona Vaughn said. "We're all trying new ways to improve ourselves in anything we do."

At the Sept. 22 home game against Hawkins, the Hawkins fans got loud. Several wore "Kitty Patrol" shirts and carried signs and baby lions. The visitors' heckling filled the gym, but the Lady Lions never backed down. Instead of bowing their heads after a mistake, they dug deep for the grit to go on. They rallied for every point. They hustled to the end.

The girls didn't win, but they were a lot of fun to watch.



Sarah Prince (11) blows out her "Happy Birthday" candles after scoring a kill on a Winona player's overpass. The girls beat Winona 3-0 on Aug. 29. PHOTO: Anissa Barton

Left: Natalie Woodard (10) tips the ball back to Hawkins during the Sept. 22 rival match. "It's easy to get in your head and feel down about your mistakes, but Coach Musick has helped me understand that getting upset doesn't fix anything," Woodard said. "It's what you do to change it. My experience this year has already made such a change in my life and how I view certain things. I'm very thankful to have someone as encouraging as Coach Musick by my side." PHOTO: Bre Reynolds

FFA Student Fulfills Life-Long Dream of Yamboree Royalty

By Jamie Russell and Bailee Hosak

Sparkling dresses and gorgeous makeup. Pretty smiles and friendly waves. Perfectly styled hair topped by crowns.

The beautiful Yamboree court.

The dreams of a young girl.

Senior Katherine Potter always wanted to be one of those girls — a member of the queen's court.

Potter has been involved in the Yamboree as long as she can remember. She's used to showing rabbits, goats and heifers, but this year, she'll fulfill her childhood dream. This year, she'll be the duchess waving.

"I am so blessed because there is only one representative," Potter said. "I wanted this so bad."

Potter was chosen after writing an essay on why she should represent Union Grove. As school duchess, she will ride in the parade, attend the queen's tea and walk the stage, in addition to competing in her usual FFA contests.

"This won't stop me from showing," Potter said. "I am excited to be in the show ring and the pageant. I am getting to do both things I love."

And she'll get to share it with a person she loves — her sister, Rachel.

"I'm looking forward to getting ready with her and just getting to experience it with her," Rachel said.

The Yamboree spans Oct. 14-21, and Potter and her escort, senior Jeremiah McGee, will be busy with FFA and queen's court activities Wednesday through Saturday.

"I am so ready for it all," Potter said. "I get to go from my boots and jeans to getting into my big fancy dress and heels. When I walk across that stage with the lights hitting me, it will be a dream come true."



PHOTO: Michael Potter



Colton Jamison (11) uses a cutting torch to saddle pipe for the duck blind he and Andrew Jacobus (11) are building for the Yamboree Ag Mech show. PHOTO: Bre Reynolds

Yamboree Schedule

Saturday, Oct. 14

- 7:30 a.m. — Tater Trot

Wednesday, Oct. 18

- 7 a.m. — Broiler Show
- 11 a.m. — Rabbit Show
- 6 p.m. — Carnival Begins (Half-Price Night)
- 7:30 p.m. — Queen's Coronation

Thursday, Oct. 19

- 8:30 a.m. — Market Swine Show
- 10 a.m. — Bandstand, Inside Exhibits Open
- Noon — Carnival and Outside Exhibits Open
- 7:30 p.m. — Queen's Coronation
- 8:30 p.m. — Street Dance

Friday, Oct. 20

- 9 a.m. — Bandstand, Outside Exhibits Open
- 10 a.m. — Inside Exhibits Open
- 11 a.m. — School/Youth Parade
- Noon — Carnival Opens, Area Bands Perform
- 1:30 p.m. — Steer Show
- 3 p.m. — Dairy Show
- 4 p.m. — Gospel Stage Begins
- 8:30 p.m. — Street Dance

Saturday, Oct. 21

- 8 a.m. — Antique Car Show Opens
- 9 a.m. — Outside Exhibits, Bandstand Open
- 10 a.m. — Inside Exhibits Open
- 11 a.m. — Queen's Parade
- 11 a.m. — Barbecue, Gospel Stage Begin, Carnival Opens
- 1 p.m. — Fiddler's Contest Begins
- 2 p.m. — Livestock Sale
- 7:30 p.m. — Barn Dance

At-Home Entertainment

Spooky Movies to Spark Your Halloween Spirit

By Emma Holder



Talk to Me

Everyone's talking about the horror movie of 2023: "Talk to Me".

The Australian movie, rated R primarily for violence, follows a brother and sister who turn to partying with the dead to cope with the loss of their mother and the terror that ensues.

The siblings are compelling characters going through one of the worst heart-breaks humans have to face, and it's a wonderfully written story about human connection and the insatiable need to fit in. It's also a warning for the dangers a teen might face when dipping a little too far into partying.

As of publication, this movie is still in its theatrical run and available for purchase on Amazon Prime; however, the film will likely be streaming just in time for those haunting movie nights.



Corpse Bride

Too scary?

For a spooky but much more family-friendly movie night, "Corpse Bride" is a classic.

Follow the thorny lead, Victor Van Dort, voiced by Johnny Depp, as he tries to wed the heiress Victoria Everglot but instead marries an undead bride named Emily by pure accident.

It's a work of art, with musical scores by Danny Elfman (think "Nightmare Before Christmas") and mesmerizing visuals in the incredibly unique style of the famous Tim Burton in conjunction with Disney.

The movie is available to rent on a host of platforms, including YouTube, Google Play, Apple TV, Vudu, and Amazon Prime Video for around \$3.99.



Home of the
UNION GROVE

Honor Society Inducts New Members

Juniors Rylee Aiken, Thomas Branscom, Taylor Campbell, Hannah Coulter, Elise Daugherty, William Driggers, Isabelle Gregg, Torryn Humber, Colton Mead, Jamie Russell and Briana Westmoreland and seniors Anna Flanagan, Paulina Navarro-Gonzalez and Weldon Willson officially joined National Honor Society during the candle ceremony Sept. 25.

Officers Katy King, Sarah Clowers, Sydney Pritchett, Addison Smith and Faith Woodall led the ceremony.

Seniors Brayden Carter, Jaxson Daniels, Esmeralda Escobedo, Owen Matthew, Elijah Parham, Paige Parman, Sophie Pyle, Keeley Rust, Jenna Scott, Colton Taylor, Kameron Townsend, Lane Turner, Ava Wightman, Rowdy Williams and Grace Woodall are also members.

Above: Juniors Will Driggers and Rylee Aiken light the candle formally committing to the principles of NHS. PHOTOS: Briana Bowling

Education Threatened by AI Use

By Jamie Russell and Lucky Woodard

When students were copy-and-pasting their essays from a Google search, teachers could copy-and-paste the students' "work" back into Google and find the source. They could use websites like TurnItIn.com or the Google Classroom plagiarism checker to see how much source material students used.

But AI like ChatGPT has changed the game.

Since large-language models synthesize huge amounts of data to create responses, a simple Google search won't prove a student used AI to write their English IV essay.

How will education change as students and teachers adapt to its use?

STUDENT USE OF AI

The survey emailed to all high school students yielded faulty but interesting results.

When asked, "Have you ever used ChatGPT or other AI to assist with your schoolwork?", only 28.3% of responding students admitted using AI.

However, when asked, "If you used AI to assist with your schoolwork last year, to what extent did you use it?", only 2.6% maintained they had not used AI on any classwork.

71.7% of students indicated they dis-

agree that using AI is cheating, and many, including junior Briana Westmoreland, consider it a useful educational tool.

"[AI] can be good because it can help you understand the work that you are having trouble on," Westmoreland said.

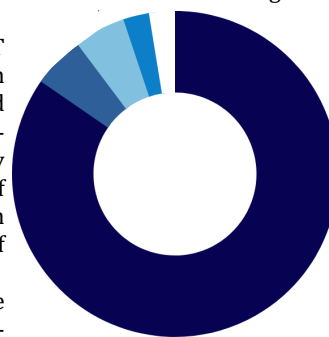
TEACHER RESPONSE

Even ChatGPT acknowledges that "when you use AI-generated content without modification, you are essentially presenting the work of the AI as your own, which can be seen as a form of plagiarism."

While the district Code of Conduct doesn't currently refer to the specific use of AI, it does state that "Students shall not... engage in academic dishonesty, which includes cheating or copying the work of another student, plagiarism, and unauthorized communication between students during an examination", and for English teachers like Katie Duvall, this is just "something else teachers have to worry about".

"I have been struggling with students using AI to cheat and skip out on writing something from their own minds," Duvall,

who teaches English II and IV, said. "Honestly, I do not think I will ever let my students use AI for an assignment. I think AI is not helpful to students because it does all the work for them and they learn nothing on their own."



- ⇒ 84.6% used AI for brainstorming
- ⇒ 5.1% used AI to edit their own work
- ⇒ 5.1% used AI to write a paper they edited
- ⇒ 2.6% used AI to write a paper they did not edit at all
- ⇒ 2.6% never used AI

In response to widespread use of AI on assignments, students worldwide will likely notice teachers adjusting their instruction and grading.

"I try to prevent the use of AI by having students write their papers in my class," eighth-grade English teacher Mattie Duvall said. "They are not allowed to take it home and work on it. The students working on their essays in class allows me to monitor their computer screens."

The Duvalls, as well as seventh-grade English teacher Kimber Smith, also en-

Don't Wait to Prepare



Make School Count

Speak with Mrs. Applegate and adults who can mentor you to make the most of your high school experience by:

- Considering your skills and potential career paths
- Choosing classes and activities that will support your post-graduation goals and future career
- Getting involved in student organizations and extra-curricular activities

Maintaining a resume highlighting your accomplishments

- Looking for volunteer and leadership opportunities
- Taking practice tests like the PSAT

Do Your Research

- Look for colleges that offer your intended program of study
- Attend college fairs for more information
- Schedule tours and ask questions about the colleges' academic programs and what life is like on each campus
- Look up application deadlines and requirements, including testing

7-10

courage students to write exclusively in class. Sometimes, the teachers even make students write the old-fashioned way — with no computers at all.

“It’s not just AI we have to worry about, but any outside ‘help,’” Smith said. “I’ve had multiple students tell me after the fact that they have older siblings complete their work. That’s cheating, too. I also grade the writing process, not just the product, so, when kids turn in a Google Doc, I check the work history to make sure the paper evolved over time and wasn’t just copy-and-pasted.”

EFFECTS OF AI USE V. MISUSE

In addition to possible classroom consequences, according to ChatGPT, using AI on assignments can have negative effects on students’ ability to execute tasks:

“If students rely too heavily on AI tools during their academic years, they may struggle to develop critical thinking, creativity, and independent problem-solving skills, which are essential in many professional roles. Students might not fully understand the ethical implications of AI use, potentially leading to unethical practices at work, such as plagiarism or misuse of AI-generated content. Overemphasis on AI-assisted tasks may result in underdeveloped soft skills, such as communication, teamwork, and emotional intelligence, which are vital in collaborative work environments.”

More importantly, some of the top AI pioneers like Geoffrey Hinton and Yoshua Bengio, as well as tech leaders Elon Musk and Steve Wozniak are warning others

about the dangers of AI.

Hinton told BBC that “it’s essential that the world invests heavily and urgently in AI safety and control” and Bengio recently blogged about signing an open letter asking to slow down AI development because of risks regarding disinformation and potentially harmful programming.

But AI *can* be a valuable tool for idea generation and -for some classes- an information source. However, it should be handled like any other source: incorporated with students’ original thoughts and cited appropriately.

“I don’t think it’s cheating when used properly, or properly monitored,” senior Chase Crutsinger said. “I typically use AI to help me study, but it also assists with grammar building and expanding ideas. And I don’t use it much because a lot of the time it’s just wrong.”

Right now, for teachers, the potential harm of AI outweighs the benefits.

“I honestly believe AI has positive benefits for students, but I think students will use it to do the work for them, which only hinders their learning,” Mattie Duvall said. “They are not learning the writing process. They aren’t learning how to use words in well thought out sentences, or even using their brains to think or plan out their essays and sentence structure.”

Maybe one day all the teachers will be replaced by AI.



CULINARY ARTS SENIORS Emily Valdes, Itzayana Sanchez and Colton Taylor prep a taco bar for the junior high and high school teachers Sept. 21 “The teachers deserve some Mexican in their lives,” Taylor said. “but my favorite part about the preparation was being able to sample the green sauce to get it tasting its best.” PHOTOS: Faith Woodall

are for College

Apply

Some schools have their own application, but over 900 colleges accept the Common Application, which students complete once and send to multiple schools. Some colleges also require a supplement to the Common Application, which may include more writing.

- Write your essay. Most applications include one or more essays that encourage self-reflection.
- Complete your FAFSA and fill out all the scholarship applications that apply to you
- Complete a transcript request and ask for letters of recommendation.

Once Accepted

- Apply for housing
- Attend orientation and meet with an advisor to register for classes
- Develop a system for keeping track of assignment deadlines
- Request an official transcript after graduation

11-12

“Striking Ignorance” by Lucky Woodard



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Upcoming Events

Oct. 2
School Custodian Appreciation Day
JH Volleyball v. Overton 4:30 p.m.

Oct. 3
K-2 Painting with Kids 4 p.m.
HS Volleyball v. Big Sandy 4:30 p.m.

Oct. 4
FFA @State Fair of Texas
UT Tyler Top 25% Celebration
3-6 Painting with Kids 4 p.m.

Oct. 5
HS Cross Country @Lindale
JH/JV Football @Harleton

Oct. 6-13
Scholastic Book Fair @Elementary

Oct. 6
Pink Out
V Volleyball @Beckville 4:30 p.m.
Junior Class Tailgate
Mini-Twirler Performance 7 p.m.
V Football v. Harleton 7:30 p.m.

Oct. 7
Little Bumpers @JH Gym 9:30 a.m.

Oct. 10
PK-2 Grandparents Lunch
HS Band UIL Marching Contest
@Mt. Pleasant

The band will march in their typical military style and perform "Vienna Philharmonic Fanfare", "Chicago's World Fair Centennial Celebration 1933", and "Mighty Mite" at 1:00 p.m.

"I am very nervous about the whole competition," freshman Emma Klein said. "But I think once we work on what we need to, we'll have a chance at winning."

Should the band receive full marks, they will progress to the state marching competition at McLane Stadium in Waco.

"We've been going for about thirty-four years now, and earned a first division," Director Andy Thompson said, "so my expectations for them are pretty high."

HS Volleyball @Hawkins 4:30 p.m.

Oct. 11
3-6 Grandparents Lunch
FFA @State Fair
Cross Country District Meet
@Hawkins
FCA Field of Faith @Pine Tree 7 p.m.

Oct. 12
3rd Grade Field Trip
Senior Parent Meeting 6 p.m.

Oct. 13
V Volleyball v. Carlisle 4:30 p.m.

Oct. 14
Little Bumpers @JH Gym 9:30 a.m.

Oct. 16
JH Volleyball v. Big Sandy 4:30 p.m.

Oct. 17-21
Yamboree Festivities

Oct. 17
JH/JV Football v. Big Sandy
Kilgore College Senior Day
HS Volleyball @Overton 4:30 p.m.

Oct. 19
V Volleyball @Big Sandy 4:30 p.m.
V Football @Big Sandy 7 p.m.

Oct. 23-27
Red Ribbon Week
Harvest Festival Livestock Show

Oct. 23
JH Volleyball @Beckville 4:30 p.m.

Oct. 24
Regional Cross Country @Huntsville
HS Volleyball v. Beckville 4:30 p.m.

Oct. 25
Band UIL State Marching Contest
4-6 GT @Region 7 iFair

Oct. 26
JH/JV Football @Hawkins
1st Grade Halloween Music Program

Oct. 27
Harvest Carnival
Elementary Award Assemblies
V Football v. Hawkins (Senior Night)
7:30 p.m.

Oct. 30
FFA @Winona LDE Invitational
National FFA Convention

Oct. 31
Fall Band Concerts
PSAT 8 a.m.



"Purr-anormal Activity" by Emma Holder

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