

# Spark

EMILY CHAO

---

JOURNALISM PORTFOLIO

# EMILY CHAO

Spark newsmagazine, Lakota East High School  
Opinion Editor 2011-12  
Webmaster, Assistant Opinion Managing Editor 2012-13

## COLUMNS STORIES



### 5 BUDGET CUTS

This column was written as part of Head to Head against another editor's in response to the U.S.'s involvement in Libya.



### 10 LIBYA CONFLICT

This column was written after the Board of Education decided to slash over \$10 million from the school budget.



### 3 WESTBORO

Written in response to the protest held at Miami Univ.

### 4 FACEBOOK

Written regarding Facebook's 4.74 degrees of separation.

### 6 MARRIAGE

Written in response to North Carolina's gay marriage ban.

### 7 PIANO GUYS

Online Review of the Piano Guys' self-titled second album.

### 11 GUN CONTROL

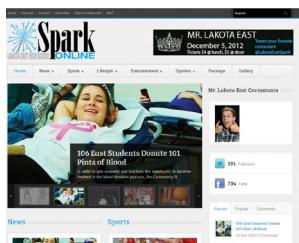
Written as part of Head to Head regarding U.S. gun sales.

# HIGHLIGHTS



## 8 PRINCIPAL DIPLOMACY

Our principal Dr. Kline visited several schools in China, reciprocating the visit of a Chinese principal. Writing this follow-up story led to me being featured in the *Cincinnati Enquirer*. The Spark staff later sent 100 copies of the magazine to the high school Kline visited to be used in the classroom to teach English.



## 12 SPARK'S WEBSITE

As Webmaster this year, the first thing I did was completely redesign the website from its previous, cluttered look. This process took me the summer.



## 20 SPORTS CULTURE

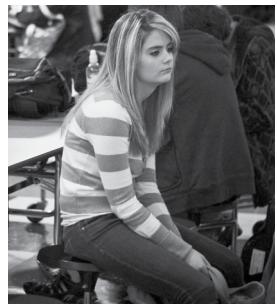
This 2-page infographic examined multiple facets of the current sports culture in America, including injuries, costs, and going professional.

## INFOGRAPHICS DESIGN



### 18 THE ELECTION

For Spark's election issue, I did three infographics for three different stories. All political icons were made from scratch.



### 26 TEACHER DESIGN

One of our school's biggest frustrations was the current teacher planning. The layout I designed conveyed that feeling.

### 13 LEVY RESULTS

Infographic detailing who voted against and for the levy

### 14 TIMELINE/JUMP

Timeline of Iraq, Afghanistan Infographic: how to long jump

### 16 ATHLETIC FOOD

Infographic comparing how much elite swimmers eat

### 17 SOLAR IKEA

Infographic showing how IKEA's new solar panels work

### 18 SEA TO SEE

Infographic detailing an East student's journey to Israel

### 22 OPINION LAYOUT

New East Speaks Out layout, inspiration from *TIME*

### 24 TURNITIN DESIGN

Vertical layout based on the photos and short story



# Emily Chao

OPINION EDITOR

## FREE TIME AT WESTBORO

contact emily at [elchao96@yahoo.com](mailto:elchao96@yahoo.com)

**S**pare time is hard to come. Most would rather watch the latest episode of Glee or read or update Facebook. But for the Westboro Baptist Church (WBC), spare time means bringing along smiling advocates of homophobia, changing popular song lyrics to reflect their beliefs and picketing anywhere deemed appropriate (or not so appropriate).

Westboro is controversial. Critical. Even crazy. The extreme case of American disillusion with society. And its influence is slowly swelling for all Americans to see.

Located in Topeka, KS, the WBC did not spring into major action until a few years ago, when they picketed a dead soldier's funeral to promote their anti-homosexual theology. Stirring up controversy, the tiny church, with its bright signs and vigilant attendees overstepped ethical and moral boundaries and protested outside the funeral service of fallen soldier Lance Cpl. Matthew A. Snyder, holding signs such as "You're Going To Hell" and "God Hates the USA" as reported by The New York Times.

Sheer willpower has kept them going, leading them to protest at schools such as Oak Hills High School and The Ohio State University. They even threatened to picket funerals of Steve Jobs and Ryan Dunn. An elaborate picket list on their website details which places they will go to next.

So on Oct. 25, Westboro picked Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, the quintessential college for those Ohioans who wish to escape the traffic going to University of Cincinnati and for those parents who worry about their young adult partying too much at Ohio University. Better yet, here's what they had to say about their picket on their website:

"Miami University, the home of the First Amendment hating cowards who have no courage of [sic] their convictions regarding academic freedom and worse and more, you hate God and you turned that University, lock, stock and stiletto over to the fags!"

The message doesn't end there. Readers on their website are called "craven friends," then "foolish friends," afterwards addressed as "rebel friends" before being called "filthy friends." "Fags" are the reasons, they say, that soldiers come home dead, that our nation's jobs "literally fly, fly away," and that Maria Lauterbach and her eight-month-old fetus were cruelly murdered by a Marine.

They plead with the populace, they yearn for Jesus to save our nation, and they want the nation's children to stop believing that God loves everybody. Westboro seeks a quick solution to our nation's current political, moral and socioeconomic woes: Judgment Day.

In a way, Westboro has a point. Our nation is on the verge of a downward spiral in terms of our economy and our quality of education.

The unemployment rate as of August 2011 is 9.1 percent according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Three years after the 2008 housing bubble burst, the United States is still clinging to Uncle Sam's coattails for any possible assistance.

But in numerous other ways, Westboro is radical, extreme and bigoted. Only one-sixth of the world's population of seven billion people call themselves Christian. Despite being a sizable influence, Christian beliefs are not absolute for the rest of the people. Those who are Buddhist, Hindu or Jewish can lead a peaceful life with good morals just like Westboro Baptists.

Of all the different demographic groups throughout history, religious groups tend to be the most intolerant. The Puritans were so uptight after suffering English persecution that they exiled anyone who didn't believe in God's supreme will. The Crusades' outright purpose was to reclaim Jerusalem, the Holy Land, but they also inadvertently served as a reminder to the 12th century world that Christianity was supreme. The Church burned many people at the stake for supposed heresy. Poor Galileo could not advance the world's scientific knowledge because the Church forced him to recant.

Westboro lives up to its predecessors. To stir up controversy for the sake of stirring up controversy, Westboro's prejudice is seeping through small cracks of America's patriotism.

Soldiers are willing to die for our freedom, yet their funerals yield more emotional distress as Westboro proudly states that they are going to Hell.

In fact, soldiers died to preserve our First Amendment rights, yet Westboro abuses the privileges that come with these rights. Conformity was a failure in the 1950's, and it is still a failure.

We, as a nation, despite being the forerunner of a free democracy, are witnessing the oozing influence of xenophobic, hateful people.

Tolerance exists for a reason. Our nation has been faithfully dubbed "the melting pot" and it's true. People of all cultures and backgrounds, by their own will, can get along and respect each other. In due time, the minorities will see themselves come to be the majority.

Just like people do not just drink Pepsi or Coke, not all people are just Christian or Muslim. We can still be ethically and morally okay to live in society even without holding a brightly colored sign and screaming at a soldier's funeral. But apparently some people don't get that.

Instead, they're spending their spare time changing the recipe to the melting pot. ■



Want more Westboro Baptist Church? Go online to see an editorial cartoon and read stories at [lakotaeastspark.com](http://lakotaeastspark.com)



Emily Chao  
OPINION EDITOR

## SEPARATING THE FACE

contact emily at [elchao96@yahoo.com](mailto:elchao96@yahoo.com)

**W**alt Disney was truly a man before his time. And I'm not just talking from the point of a view of a quasi-sociopath who spends the Saturday after Black Friday writing this column and happens to be listening to The Hunchback of Notre Dame songs. No, Walt Disney was a man before his time.

Everyone probably knows the song "It's a Small World After All." Well, in the days of true hand-drawn animation and black and white chick flicks, the song was kind of a strange themed melody. Back then, people didn't have the technology to be able to communicate with others on a constant basis. At best they had a telephone and maybe an outing with some friends at the theaters, but once inside the home, it's all privacy with a little wooden porch.

But nowadays, the telephone is more than a hefty contraption with a bunch of numbers to dial. The computer came along and now we have things like tablets and touch-screens. Everybody we need to contact can be reached by the touch of a button or the tap of a screen. So much for letters.

Surrounded by all of this technology, we can stay in touch with everyone we meet along the way. Facebook, the brain child of Mark Zuckerberg, who set up a mushroom cloud of data much like Einstein's atomic bomb, has helped make that connection possible.

Granted, Facebook is a wonderful medium that has its merits. I can keep in touch with people I haven't seen since seventh grade science camp as well prod numerous friends online for homework clarifications.

But to really put it in perspective, according to a CNN study, I am connected to everyone in the world with a Facebook by just 4.74 degrees of separation. In other words, if I had to send a message to someone on Facebook that I don't know using only my contacts, I can most likely accomplish that through about five clicks.

Fascinating. And a little scary.

Out of Facebook's ever-growing 800 million active users, the degree of separation for those in the United States is a mere 4.37 degrees. To have a friend of a friend of a friend of a friend be able to reach me in a few seconds of clicking is like reducing Earth's size by a factor of 10.

We have potential contact with so many people that the concept of privacy is really now quite simple: there is none. The effects of this lack of privacy are virtually astounding and can be quite dangerous.

Having this indirect connection with so many people leaves ripe room for cyber bullies to target people. Over the past year, according to Consumer Reports, over one million children were harassed or subjected to cyber bullying. Yet according to Pew Research Center, 69 percent of teens who use social media believe that peers are kind to each other.

I'm not one for clichés, but they always say to keep your friends close but your enemies closer. Facebook has aroused fights and 35.3 percent

of 284 East students surveyed have said that they were involved in a cyberbullying or other negative incident on Facebook. This can be either a face-to-face confrontation or a string of angry chat messages.

So many people put all their information out there for all to see and due to the lack of privacy, this harmful string of friendships can destroy the concept of "private information." The more connected we are, the more liable we are to virtual dangers. Most people would call me paranoid for setting my Facebook privacy settings to the point where my information is virtually in a lock and chained box and can only be accessed by friends. It may be extreme, but 15 percent of Americans have never bothered to check the privacy settings on the social media site they use, according to a study done by McAfee and the National Cyber Security Alliance. I just don't want a friend of a friend of a friend of a friend to be able to stalk me and gather information about me. That's all.

In fact, Facebook's privacy settings have been under scrutiny from authorities lately. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) recently accused Facebook of engaging in "unfair and deceptive" business practices, as reported by The New York Times. These included allowing advertisers to be able to see some of users' information even though those users checked the box saying they did not want that to happen.

Videos and pictures of some people were also still accessible even though their account had been deleted.

The fact is most people don't realize the permanence of the data that is released by them on these websites. I, like many other people I'm sure, have said things that I didn't mean to say on Facebook. In an attempt to delete it, many people will still have seen it. Even if I deleted it, that comment, that little snippet of HTML or PHP is stored somewhere in the vast networks of Internet providers.

The activity isn't going to stop anytime soon. People will still put out whatever little fact about their lives onto that social media site. Privacy is dying as the Internet swallows it up and we're the victims of its regurgitation.

It's nice to be able to see grandparents' faces on the computer screen. Social networking sites are wonderful for that reason. Cautions, however, need to be taken on how much information a person puts onto the web.

Walt Disney, besides being a magical animator whose characters we all love, was right after all. It's a small world after all and it's getting smaller every day. But the smaller we let it get, the more privacy we'll lose. ■



Go online to see editorial cartoons and read stories about the Lakota Local Schools' levy defeat at [lakotaeastspark.com](http://lakotaeastspark.com)

About | Awards | Contact | Advertise | Spark Commercial | Staff

**Spark**  
LAKOTA EAST HIGH SCHOOL  
**ONLINE**

MR. LAKOTA EAST  
December 5, 2012  
Tickets \$4 @ lunch, \$5 @ door  
Tweet your favorite  
contestant  
@LakotaEastSpark

Home News » Sports » Lifestyle » Entertainment » Opinion » Package Gallery

Bawling Because of Budget Cuts  
By Emily Chao

Never Forget (Seriously)  
American Muslim  
Student Feature: Mallory Weinh



Scan with a smartphone to check out the column published on the Lakota East Spark's website.

## Bawling Because of Budget Cuts

<http://www.lakotaeastspark.com/2012/03/23/bawling-because-of-budget-cuts/>

I'm usually an emotionless person, but after the March 13 Board of Education meeting, I might have to shed a tear or two. I mean, Julie Shaffer stated that she was going to have a "John Boehner moment." And it actually happened.

You see, the Board of Education made the final decisions regarding most of the proposals. Preschool services will now be purchased from the Butler County Educational Service Center at an estimated savings of \$1.2 million, leaving hundreds of young and developing children in the hands of a school run by the government. And we know how that usually turns out.

Students in Kindergarten through grade six will now only be able to exercise their creative sides through "specials" like art and music only once per week for a mere 45 minutes. Money is saved, but it's not enough time. Not enough to satisfy hungry minds and hands-on learners.

All junior high and high school proposed cuts were passed despite a defiant "no" from a couple Board members and a silent "no" myself.

And to top off the bitter frosting on an already woeful cake, athletics will suffer cuts as well, having \$73,000 from the general fund cut from the programs. The specifics have yet to be disclosed.

Six pages of detailed cuts total to \$10,573,000, and the future is not looking bright for any aspect of the district.

In fact, the future has not been looking pretty for quite some time. The escalation of financial woes has led the district to the point where we are now.

This is my fifth year in the district. I transferred from a private school into Lakota at the start of seventh grade. Since then, I've been fortunate to have many opportunities that led to my decision to pursue engineering and computer science. If not for Lakota, I would not have been able to submit a resume to InterAlliance in hopes of getting a summer Information Technology internship. If not for Lakota, I would not have been able to travel with a group of high-achieving students to Ohio Northern University to compete in the Junior Engineering Technical Society (JETS) competition and have a lot of fun in the process. And if not for Lakota, I would not be writing this column as an editor for Spark.

All of these opportunities and many more have stemmed from just one decision made at the end of elementary school, and I have not looked back.

But my relationship with Lakota is more profound than all of these academic and interest-building benefits. Lakota transformed me into the person I am today.

At the end of elementary school, I was on the verge of becoming a

severe introvert. As a student whose only friends were her teachers and the school nurse, I did not really fit in with the rest of them. I had no challenge and no direction.

Then my parents decided to transfer me back to Lakota, and I instantly changed. I found a niche of friends. I found a rigorous curriculum taught by wonderful teachers. At Lakota, I found a place where I could be accepted and not excluded.

Most importantly, I found a voice.

But with the looming cloud of education consolidation and the forecast of more financial woes, so many students like me who found a voice through Lakota or are trying to find a voice might not be able to have it heard.

And that reveals the fatal flaw of our community's attitude toward our school district.

The community has voted "no" six times when the Board of Education has proposed a levy. What people don't realize is that those six times have resulted in more than \$13 million in cuts from the previous year and \$10 million from just this past meeting. More than 18,000 students will be affected by these cuts.

In these past two years, the district has seen more changes than the last 10 years combined. Busing has been eliminated for all high school students as well as students living within a two-mile radius of their school. Athletic fees have almost quadrupled from \$140 per player with a family cap to \$550 with no family cap. Teachers have even agreed to teach an extra period—30 more students with no increased pay.

And all around us, as these changes are taking place, students have been struggling to find ways to express themselves through their own interests and to find their place in society. Teachers, already stretched thinner than before, have been trying to the best of their abilities to help these students succeed and accomplish their goals.

Yet the community continues to reject the levies that will only help our district continue to maintain its "Excellence with Distinction" rating and churn out bright minds that will be the future workers of America.

We, as a community, however, cannot take education lightly, even if the future of the district depends on the touch of a voting booth screen. Education is vital to the success of our economy, the success of our country and ultimately, the success of ourselves.

The school district I came into five years ago was a school district with resources to be able to do just that—to educate the minds of the future. Now, the community has spoken, yet the students remain voiceless.

And I might just have a "John Boehner moment" tonight.



**Emily Chao**  
OPINION EDITOR

## MARRIAGE EQUALITY

contact emily at [elchao96@yahoo.com](mailto:elchao96@yahoo.com)

**A**fter more than 200 years of mistakes and reprieves, America has still not learned.

Our nation has not learned the difference between acceptance and belief. Our nation has not learned to distinguish the fundamental differences between people. Our nation has not learned to keep the subject of gender outside the subject of marriage.

North Carolina has banned same-sex marriage. With a majority vote of 61 percent, more than 1.5 million voters voted to place a constitutional amendment that defines marriage as a union between a man and a woman. The amendment supporters served wedding cake to celebrate the fact that they voted to deny these homosexual couples marriage as reported by CNN. That makes 30 states that have banned same-sex marriage.

30 states that shouldn't have.

North Carolina has just solidified our nation's continuing prejudice toward people that love others of their own gender. And serving wedding cake to these couples who, as of now, will never be able to have it is the cruellest way to do it.

Same-sex marriage catches people in a hype. People rage debates about it, shout about it in town halls, and rave about it on their Facebooks and Tumblrs. In a recent 2012 Gallup survey, 50 percent of Americans believe that same-sex couples should be able to wed. The other half of the nation either has no comment or is strongly "pro-marriage" but "anti-gay." This 50 percent believes that marriage is not sanctified unless a man and woman place an expensive diamond ring on each others' fingers, feed each other their first bite of cake and dance the night away. But being "pro-marriage" is hypocritical when more than 80,000 same-sex couples are struggling to even tie the knot, according to US News.

Same-sex marriage is no different than heterosexual marriage. There is nothing different except for the gender of the groom. And that shouldn't matter.

The only thing that should matter is if they love each other. The United States, according to Census Bureau, is ranked number one in divorce rates, with an average of 5.2 divorces per 1,000 people as of 2008. But statistics also show that in states that allow same-sex marriage, divorce rates are 10 percent lower than in states that don't. These men and women choose to be together, and when it takes a struggle to have that first wedding dance, their love only solidifies.

It's not only the love, but also the children. In a study conducted by sociologist Stacy and Timothy Blibarz of the University of Southern California, same-sex parents are just as effective if not more effective in parenting their kids. Same-sex parents are more likely to be more hands-

on and more active in their children's lives.

Several studies are also showing that there is increasing biological evidence that homosexual people were born that way. In 2008, The Telegraph reported that studies conducted by Sven Bocklandt of University of California-Los Angeles showed that gay males tended to share similar biological characteristics, such as being left-handed and having counterclockwise hair whorls. 60 Minutes ran a segment in 2008 showing the biological evidence. According to the study, while in the womb, if the fetus' hypothalamus has not been exposed to sufficient testosterone, the baby will most likely be homosexual.

So for some, it might just be genetics. Being homosexual is part of their nature and people shouldn't be banned from being themselves. Thus, people should be allowed to marry whomever they want to marry. They should have the right to choose.

But if the fundamental step to a loving relationship cannot be granted to these couples, America has overlooked its national mission set in stone by Thomas Jefferson. "All men are created equal," and even though the papyrus that has enshrined those words is now withering and aging, that principle shouldn't waver.

If we are a country that prides itself in being able to provide freedoms to every citizen, then we should know that this is a freedom we cannot take away. Individuals tend to take the concept of marriage for granted, knowing that they have the right to be able to say "I do" to the lover of their choice. For homosexual couples, however, it's an ongoing battle that seems to become more one-sided each day.

Traditionally, the Evangelical Christian view is that marriage is between a woman and a man. From the Christian perspective, marriage is not sanctified unless it is heterosexual.

But we're not magnets. Even though opposites attract, some of us are attracted to a gender that a part of society wants us to repel.

As President Obama declares his support for homosexual marriage just in time for his re-election campaign, then supporters of the North Carolina amendment should reconsider their stance. By not supporting gay and lesbian rights, they are essentially turning away from a country's values that their viewpoints have tried to esteem so highly.

If these homosexual couples love one another, then they should be allowed to finally declare their love by getting married. Just like we pick and choose our potential significant others (or dump them for new ones), homosexual couples undergo the same deal, and it shouldn't be any different.

Gay couples are just like any other couple. They're humans just like us. And they should be allowed to walk down the aisle just like any straight man or woman.

Because after all, the aisle itself is ramrod straight. ■

About | Awards | Contact | Advertise | Spark Commercial | Staff

**Spark  
ONLINE**

MR. LAKOTA EAST  
December 5, 2012  
Tickets \$4 @ lunch, \$5 @ door

Review: The Piano Guys

0

16 Oct 2012 album, chao, classical, emily, entertainment, guys, music, piano, review by Emily Chao

Release Date: Oct. 2, 2012 Artist: The Piano Guys Label: Sony Masterworks Spark Rating: 4/5

THEPIANO GUYS

Let's be honest: Classical music is dead for Generation Y. It met its grave when the last great composer of Ludwig van Beethoven, died. And he died insane.

We just don't listen to classical music anymore. The Romantics messed it up, and Impressionist musical geniuses like Claude Debussy gave it such a different twist that it wasn't considered true, melodic, 8-beat classical. No, classical music is dead.

But then came the Piano Guys. They're among a rising group of YouTube artists like Aston Music and Jurgen Johannes who are trying to reinvent classical music and bring it back to Generation Y. And they're doing that in the way they know best: by making covers of top 40 hits with their violins, cellos and pianos.

I chanced on a video from the Piano Guys when I listened to a cover of OneRepublic's "Secrets" by Tiffany Alvord. She just happened to mix in her simple, vibrato-less vocals to this amazing instrumental done by, well, five dads in their 40s (two of whom are the ones that actually play the music). After the first listen, I gave up on trying to like Alvord's voice (which gets weaker and weaker each subsequent video) and decided to take a closer listen to the Piano Guys.

It turns out that the Piano Guys, in the two short years that they've been in the YouTube scene, have a reputation for arranging beautiful classical renditions of top 40 pop songs, producing gorgeous cinematography as well as sticking their pianist Jon Schmidt, cellist Steven Sharpe Nelson and their instruments in crazy places (their most recent video "Titanium/Pavane" just happened to have both of them perched precariously on top a canyon in Utah). But that's not the point.

The point is that because of this reputation, they've released their self-titled second album and have scored a gig on PBS as well as an appearance with Katie Couric. Granted, almost all of the songs on The Piano Guys except for brand new tracks "Arwen's Vigil" and "Titanium/Pavane" have been released as a single beforehand and have a video along with it on YouTube, but the music is still pretty captivating.

Every one of the Piano Guys' covers is structured almost like a classical sonata, except without the 20-minute-long expositions and Mozart's lack of good rhythm. Because each song is no longer than five minutes long, subtleties in classical style are hardly noticed. Which is what The Piano Guys is all about.

The Piano Guys starts out with the best track on the album "Titanium/Pavane," which is by far the most elaborate rendition of the song that David Guetta's going to get. Introducing the melody of "Pavane" before leading into the chorus normally belted out by Sia's drone-like voice, cellist Nelson along with added electric cello and synth back tracks set up the rhythm for Schmidt's harmonious piano variations, which get quite dramatic. Subtle background vocalization is also added, but only to increase the dramatic effect of the piece. It's a track that allows the listener to still keep their heartbeats normal but be sucked into the intense emotions instigated by Schmidt's rigorously fast piano



Scan with a smartphone to see my review in its web layout and see other features.

## Review: The Piano Guys

<http://www.lakotaeastspark.com/2012/10/16/review-the-piano-guys/>

Let's be honest: Classical music is dead for Generation Y.

It met its grave when the last great composer of the Classical era, Ludwig van Beethoven, died. And he died insane.

We just don't listen to classical music anymore. The Romantics messed it up, and Impressionist musical geniuses like Claude Debussy gave it such a different twist that it wasn't considered true, melodic, 8-beat classical. No, classical music is dead.

But then came the Piano Guys. They're among a rising group of YouTube artists like Aston Music and Jurgen Johannes who are trying to reinvent classical music and bring it back to Generation Y. And they're doing that in the way they know best: by making covers of top 40 hits with their violins, cellos and pianos.

I chanced on a video from the Piano Guys when I listened to a cover of OneRepublic's "Secrets" by Tiffany Alvord. She just happened to mix in her simple, vibrato-less vocals to this amazing instrumental done by, well, five dads in their 40s (two of whom are the ones that actually play the music). After the first listen, I gave up on trying to like Alvord's voice (which gets weaker and weaker each subsequent video) and decided to take a closer listen to the Piano Guys.

It turns out that the Piano Guys, in the two short years that they've been in the YouTube scene, have a reputation for arranging beautiful classical renditions of top 40 pop songs, producing gorgeous cinematography as well as sticking their pianist Jon Schmidt, cellist Steven Sharpe Nelson and their instruments in crazy places (their most recent video "Titanium/Pavane" just happened to have both of them perched precariously on top a canyon in Utah). But that's not the point.

The point is that because of this reputation, they've released their self-titled second album and have scored a gig on PBS as well as an appearance with Katie Couric. Granted, almost all of the songs on The Piano Guys except for brand new tracks "Arwen's Vigil" and "Titanium/Pavane" have been released as a single beforehand and have a video along with it on YouTube, but the music is still pretty captivating.

Every one of the Piano Guys' covers is structured almost like a classical sonata, except without the 20-minute-long expositions and Mozart's lack of good rhythm. Because each song is no longer than five minutes long, subtleties in classical style are hardly noticed. Which is what The Piano Guys is all about.

The Piano Guys starts out with the best track on the album "Titanium/Pavane," which is by far the most elaborate rendition of the song that David Guetta's going to get. Introducing the melody of "Pavane" before leading into the chorus normally belted out by Sia's drone-like voice, cellist Nelson along with added electric cello and synth back tracks set up the rhythm for Schmidt's harmonious piano variations, which get quite dramatic. Subtle background vocalization is also added, but only to increase the dramatic effect of the piece. It's a track that allows the listener to still keep their heartbeats normal but be sucked into the intense emotions instigated by Schmidt's rigorously fast piano

melodies.

Regardless of their Top 40 cover streak, "Moonlight" and "Beethoven's 5 Secrets" have to be lauded. The Piano Guys completely changed classical Beethoven pieces that normally put even the most alert person to sleep to something quite different. They even mixed in OneRepublic's "Secrets" for one of them (it's easy to guess which). Both songs take a little getting used to because of the repetitiveness of the beginning segments, but the buildup is quite fantastic. And they go along with The Piano Guys' mission of bringing classical back.

"Peponi (Paradise)" and "What Makes You Beautiful" are the only two tracks in the album that utilize foreground vocals. "Peponi (Paradise)" is Schmidt and Nelson's African rendition of the Coldplay hit. With Alex Boye, a talented soulful singer whose Swahili phrases combined with a dramatic accompaniment produce something to be imagined, the Piano Guys turn an already-great song about its head. But they tried to repeat vocalization (granted, not an African rendition) for "What Makes You Beautiful," and it isn't the same. One Direction is no Coldplay. But that's really no secret anymore.

The great thing about the Piano Guys is that their style isn't really defined. True, they have the same slow buildup and ending in a thrilling fashion, but every track on the album offers something new to the listener. From action-movie-esque tones of "Code Name Vivaldi" and "Michael Meets Mozart" to peaceful and gorgeous melodies like "A Thousand Years" and "Arwen's Vigil" to playful and light-hearted tracks like "Over the Rainbow/Simple Gifts," Schmidt and Nelson have unique ways of covering each song. Unlike other YouTube cover artists like Megan Nicole and Tyler Ward, the Piano Guys adapt their style to what's best for the song, not the other way around. It's what makes for a fresh experience. Especially if you're listening to these songs with surround sound headphones.

The only downfall of their album is "Cello Wars." A half-serious rendition of the Star Wars soundtrack, "Cello Wars" begins like all the other tracks but is suddenly interjected with random accordion. In the music video on YouTube, it actually makes sense. Darth Vader interrupts the intense battle with his accordion before being defeated, and the music resumes once more to its seriousness. But when it's just the track alone, "Cello Wars" sounds undone, not unified and just plain silly.

What the Piano Guys have done with their album is provide a doorway to resurrect classical music, but also reintroduce to our ears organic sounds from classical instruments, weaning us away from fun.'s autotune and Nicki Minaj's overly aggressive synth. Just like the Vitamin String Quartet or the 2 Cellos who are trying to reincorporate strings back into mainstream music, the Piano Guys are trying to spread the message that even classical music can sound cool.

It's nice to know that classical music may not be dead after all. It's just visiting its grave and making its way back.

# PRINCIPAL DIPLOMACY

**W**hen East principal Dr. Keith Kline stepped into Jingmen No. 1 High School in Hubei Province, China, he was hoisted to celebrity status. Not only did TV stations and reporters stop by to capture the moment, but the students also “spent days” planning a welcome party to greet the foreign star.

“[The other educators in the program and I] were welcomed graciously wherever we went,” Kline said. “Their generosity is so moving.”

As one of the 33 American educators selected in the country, Kline spent two weeks at various schools in China, through the Chinese Exchange Initiative (CEI), whose goal is to facilitate friendships between educators in the two contacts to reduce conflict. He, along with CEI Deputy Director Ryan Martinson and other administrators, also spoke with Chinese national officials regarding the education system in China.

Reciprocating Jingmen No. 1 High School principal Yuan Ye’s visit in November, Kline interacted with students at Jingmen No. 1 High School. For his two days at Jingmen No. 1 High School, Kline taught a ninth grade English class, had lunch with students and observed classrooms.

“[The class was] so good.” Jingmen No. 1 student Selina Green said. “We all think he is a kind man.”

Kline felt that he was able to engage the students and have them experience a class that did not follow the Chinese system’s traditional structure of lecturing and memorizing. He made a slideshow with pictures depicting East students going about their daily lives and shared some simple English phrases with the students. Afterwards, he posed some questions like “What are you planning to do tonight?” for the students to answer.

“The comment I got from the assistant principal was that [the class] was very active and interactive,” Kline said. “The big term that they learned from me [was] ‘I will hang out with my friends’ and they didn’t know what ‘hang out’ meant. [Then], all the adults on my trip kept saying, ‘Well, let’s just go hang out.’”

Kline spent some time “hanging out” with the students. He had lunch with six students from Jingmen’s high school and middle school who all had very different personalities. According to Kline, one student was so outgoing that she decorated the photo she and

After Chinese Principal Yuan Ye Jingmen of No. 1 High School visited East in Fall 2011, Dr. Kline trekked across the Pacific to experience Chinese education at its fullest potential.

story emily chao | photo used with permission from Keith Kline

Kline took together.

“We had a picture taken and she put bunny ears behind my head,” he said. “[She had a] great sense of humor.”

Kline realized that all students had something in common, despite being from different countries.

“Kids are kids regardless of where you are in the world,” he said. “Originally, the misconception was that American students didn’t do anything and they didn’t work at all. We corrected that. [The students] were really curious about the life of an American teenager.”

After talking with the students, however, Kline realized that there was still a drastic difference between Jingmen’s students and students back home at East.

“Most of the [students at Jingmen] expressed to me [that they] would like some more latitude in making decisions for themselves,” he said. “Their focus is very different from what we focus on here [and] they really wanted more opportunities to have more free time to go hang out with their friends and relax.”

As he observed the classrooms, Kline found out quickly that relaxing was a hard

thing to do for students. They were in class from 6:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. with a two-hour break in between for lunch and a nap. Although a midday nap “would be awesome” in Kline’s mind, he noticed that the students have to nap to have more fuel to persevere through their day. Most kids, Kline observed, had classes on the weekend, making Sunday evening their only free time.

Another difficult stress that Chinese students have is passing a comprehensive test to get into Jingmen No. 1 High School. Some students had to relocate far from home in order to get a good education because their future depends on their performance on the high school entrance test.

Half of Jingmen No. 1 High School’s students live on school grounds and only visit home on the weekends. For some students, moving back and forth between home and school frequently is not feasible, and they may only go home once a year.

“[Going to school is] their life,” he said, “[Going home] depends on their family situation and whether their family can afford to get them home.”

Kline observed that the students in other schools were in different environments while





Kline meets a group of young Chinese school children on his trip to China.

learning. According to Kline, Beijing National Day School was one of the premier schools in Beijing and was “very well appointed,” while the rural schools were “very poor.”

“[Rural schools] maybe have two computers in the entire school compared to Beijing National Day School, [which] had a lot of technology and a lot of equipment for kids to use in the learning process,” he said. “[There are many] discrepancies between the haves and the have-nots in all areas of China’s [educational system].”

Even in the schools that allow students to move out of the “caste system,” Kline saw that the learning environment at most of the schools he visited did not allow much mobility within the classroom. All students are placed in classes that range from 50 to 60 students. They sit in rows and the teacher’s lessons are mainly rote-based.

The students then “study for an inordinate amount of time” to memorize scientific facts and math formulas instead of writing papers. As a result, creativity is limited.

## **“The big term that they learned from me [was] ‘I will hang out with my friends’ and they didn’t know what ‘hang out’ meant.”**

“I didn’t see a creative writing class,” he said. “They do a lot of reading of Chinese literature, but they don’t do a lot of writing of Chinese literature and that’s the creativity part that’s built in schools in this country.”

Because of the students’ driven mentality as well as the restrictions placed by the instructional techniques, Chinese officials are noticing drastic changes in student motivation after students take the university entrance exam, otherwise known as the “Gao Kao.”

“I think they’re starting to experience that their teenage students are so driven to do well academically, that they don’t really have a very balanced life,” Kline said. “So when they go to the university, it goes from one extreme to the other.”

Kline also addressed the issue of teaching creativity and problem solving while adhering to the required curriculum with Chinese national officials. He stressed the concerns

of how to train teachers to “pull the best out of their kids” and “blend the two [systems] so that the kids have a better life in the long run.”

Nonetheless, he found the experience very “eye-opening,” realizing that the Chinese system and the American education system differed extremely.

For Martinson, this was exactly the purpose of the trip.

“As a program organizer, I am rewarded each time I see a participant—American or Chinese—learn something new or correct a mistaken view or understanding,” he said. “The friendships that are born as a result of our work also give me a jolt of happiness.”

Kline, however, found that there were some aspects of the Chinese system that he would like to bring back home.

“I would love to package their work ethic and bring it back to America,” he said. “We can take their work ethic, combined with our structural strategies and how we teach. There’d be no stopping the United States in the future.” ■

# Libyan Conflict

emily chao



art lisa cai

If the U.S. had not taken the initiative to demand Gadhafi to step down, the rebels would not have been able to accomplish their goal for a free Libya.

Libya's Dark Lord is gone.

Gone are the oppressive soldiers of Libya, gone are the atrocious acts that stain Libya's history, gone is the man who has held the country in his grip for 42 years.

Moammar Gadhafi has been defeated by the rebels fighting for democracy in Libya and has vanished almost as quickly as Voldemort apparated out of the Ministry of Magic. His flapping tunic has made it more dramatic.

Yet, this victory for Libya's citizens would not have been possible if the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) had not become involved—and this was no mistake.

The whole revolution sprung from a speech President Obama gave at 10 o'clock at night. One Tomahawk missile was all that was needed to set the events in motion.

After the U.S. initially started this mission, NATO soon took over the command operation to enforce the United Nations' no-fly zone over Libya. Over 900 strikes later, the United States and NATO made an impact significant enough to allow the rebels to take over Tripoli on Aug. 21. They came armed with Blackberry's, AK-47's and a fighting spirit only comparable to the troops siding with the Boy Who Lived. According to British newspaper *The Telegraph*, Gadhafi himself fled his country in one of the convoys that left Tripoli daily.

If the U.S. had not taken the initiative to demand Gadhafi to step down, the rebels would not have been able to accomplish their goal for a free Libya. They would not have continued to have greater dominance in Libya's revolution. They would not have continued to nurture the flower that has come into full bloom during the Arab Spring.

Battles between Gadhafi's faithful soldiers and the die-hard rebels could have been prolonged for many more months, even years. Other revolutions have taken years—the American Revolution took eight years and the French Revolution took a decade. Libya was freed from Gadhafi in a mere six months. Their Ministry was infiltrated with people wanting good for their country, not with followers of an evil, snake-faced, half-human terror.

Despite the casualties and the sometimes inaccurate bombings, NATO has provided a gateway for Libyans to live a potentially better life. According to the news organization Reuters, after the air strikes ceased, markets were reopened in Tripoli and basic utilities such

as electricity and water were restored. "Out in the desert, some oil flows," it said. A quick return to normalcy, accomplished better than Warren G. Harding's futile promise.

Consider this: Gadhafi promised his country economic reform, but instead, he turned against his people, calling them "backwards." Corruption covered up the wounds of Libyan children's malnutrition and workers' high unemployment. Libyans lay in the middle of Africa awash in a sea of oil with barely any freedoms.

*TIME* sent reporters to the deserted Gadhafi compound, where only a few months before, the leader had lived with his wives, sons, and daughters. Photos revealed a palace of gold, expensive furniture, lavish architecture. Digging deeper beneath the magnificent Bab al-Aziziya, photographers and Libyan officials revealed deep crypts, reeking of rotten flesh and littered with skeletons.

These wretched images are the full proof that Gadhafi had to go.

When a country's people is pleading for assistance, almost screaming for help in the fight for democracy, the U.S. and other developed nations have a duty to help. This is not Iraq or Afghanistan, where the U.S. barged in based on our own interests. No preemptive strikes took place. No misjudged invasions of a country that did not pose a legitimate threat occurred. No retaliation of the Taliban has surfaced. This was a conflict that should have been fought because the Libyans came begging for assistance. The United States and its European allies were the perfect people to help. They, with plentiful resources and manpower, were the forefront of the whole democratic movement.

Even though Gadhafi never stole money from his citizens, his government was full of corruption. Many of his officials lived in lavish surroundings, himself living in a gilded palace. He took mysterious vacations to unknown locations, as seen from a photo album that was released to the media.

He did not keep any promises and neither did the government. The Libyan people did what they had to do. They fulfilled their civic duty when faced with an intolerable system: overthrow the government and set up a new one. Freedom only comes this way when people decide how the nation should be governed.

Popular sovereignty. Only this time, the United States bore the lightning shaped scar. ■

# CONTROL?

should states be considering stricter gun control laws?

**T**hree years ago, I went to Chicago with my father to go get my passport renewed. Afterwards, we decided to take a horse-drawn carriage ride around the city at night.

I found myself sitting in a white carriage with an overenthusiastic coachwoman eager to mask all of Chicago's woes and a horse that nonchalantly released its mess onto the stained concrete road. It was glory bathed in a smell of excrement and a sharp hint of chill.

We continued our ride for a while, admiring Chicago's slightly dimmed skyline and staring back at a couple of pedestrians envying us for sitting in such a silly thing. But, suddenly, there was a sharp "boom." A gunshot. The horse stopped and shook for a bit and the coachwoman tried to soothe it.

Moments later, an ambulance siren pierced the air and whizzed past. Upon hearing it, I realized that someone had been shot and that the ambulance was rushing to his or her aid. And the experience stuck with me just like a curious fly sticks to horse dung.

But if gun control laws were stricter, I wouldn't have been scarred by this experience.

Of all the aspects of Obama's presidency from 2009-2012, the one thing he failed to address or remotely take action on was gun control.

During Obama's first term, 11 shootings involving three or more deaths happened in the United States, from the 2011 Tucson, AZ shooting to the more recent shootings in Aurora, Colorado.

While occurrences of other major issues in the United States such as teen pregnancy and drinking and driving have shrunk, gun-related homicides have stayed at the same rate, due in part to the steady rate of gun ownership. Some Americans continue to exercise and often exploit their right to bear arms by buying these lethal weapons. In fact, gun sales are expected to rise due to Obama's reelection according to the New York Daily News.

The United States has the highest gun ownership rate in the world: on average 88 guns for every 100 people, according to The Guardian. Runner-up is Yemen, at 54.8. As of July 2012, the United States has the highest average total of all civilian firearms, 270 million, well ahead of India's 46 million.

Not only is the United States a nation that takes full advantage of our claimed "right to self-defense," but also one that tends to put guns into the wrong hands.

Clinically diagnosed schizophrenic and college dropout Jared Lee Loughner, for instance, should never have had a chance to touch a gun. He shouldn't have been able to

walk into a local store and purchase a 9 mm pistol as he did, as reported by CNN. Nor should he have been able to buy ammunition in Walmart. He had a history of mental instability. But because Arizona's gun control laws were very lax and his background check did not perceive odd behavior, Loughner got his Glock 19 gun and started shooting at the local Safeway in Tucson, AZ where Representative Gabrielle Giffords was speaking.

By killing six innocent bystanders and wounding 13 more people, including Giffords, Loughner unleashed a madness that history does not want repeated. And, over a year and half later, he is finally getting the sentence from our nation's sloth-like judicial system: seven sentences of life and 140 years in prison according to USA TODAY.

No one should be the victim of such a harrowing ordeal. But the U.S. is a country that gives people freedoms that are continually abused, and American citizens know it. We as a nation have to understand that the best way to go about fixing this problem is to have more stringent laws regarding firearm purchase and use.

Gun laws are not standard across states. Citizens are guaranteed the right to bear arms in the Second Amendment, but other than that, the nation's 50 states each pass their own legislation regarding firearm handling and purchase. While people don't need permits or licenses to openly carry their firearms in Arizona (one of the most relaxed states when it comes to gun laws, and had an 18 percent increase in gun crime in 2010), no one can openly carry such a weapon in California (a state having an eight percent decrease in gun violence in the same year). When it comes to public purchase, as mandated by the Brady Handgun Violence Prevention Act, a passed background check is necessary, but only from a criminal and a broad psychological point of view. Many private purchases forego this simple, yet necessary practice, leading to guns to be placed in the wrong hands.

Many Americans expound on the fact that they need guns for self-defense, yet our country is suffering more crime due to the availability of guns. America has to standardize gun laws and ban all sale of assault weapons. Gun buyers should produce

medical records with at least 5 years of review, including any psychiatric review as well as a criminal background check. For the sake of the defenseless, the United States has to take these measures.

Or experiences like mine in Chicago will be embedded into many people's minds. **SM**

AND THE  
EXPERIENCE  
STUCK WITH  
ME JUST LIKE A  
CURIOS FLY  
STICKS TO  
HORSE DUNG.



<http://www.lakotaeastspark.com/>

Scan this QR code with a smartphone to check out the Spark website. It is updated daily with news stories, sports recaps, opinions, and many more.



About | Awards | Contact | Advertise | Spark Commercial | Staff

Search...

# Spark

LAKOTA EAST HIGH SCHOOL **ONLINE**

MR. LAKOTA EAST

December 5, 2012

Tickets \$4 @ lunch, \$5 @ door

Tweet your favorite contestant @LakotaEastSpark

Home News » Sports » Lifestyle » Entertainment » Opinion » Package Gallery

Mr. Lakota East Contestants

106 East Students Donate 101 Pints of Blood

In order to give students and teachers the opportunity to become involved in the blood donation process, the Community B

Recent Popular Comments

191 Followers

734 Fans

Cello Wars - The Piano Guys

Peppermint (Paradise) - The Piano Guys

Code Name Vivid - The Piano Guys

Beethoven's 5 Scales - The Piano Guys

Over the Rainbow - Simple Gifts - The Piano Guys

Anne's Vigil - The Piano Guys

Moonlight - The Piano Guys

A Thousand Years - The Piano Guys

Michael Meets Mozart - The Piano Guys

The Cello Song - The Piano Guys

Rolling in the Deep - The Piano Guys

Titanium / Pavane - The Piano Guys

Bourne Vivid - The Piano Guys

Harry Potter theme - The Piano Guys

What Makes You Beautiful - The Piano Guys

caron - The Piano Guys

GROOVESHARK.com

Social Share

Facebook Twitter Google+ StumbleUpon Digg LinkedIn

Politics: The Cost

Head to Head: Obama vs. Romney

Welcome to the Party

Painting the Face Behind Political Calls: Nick Riddle

About | Awards | Contact | Advertise | Spark Commercial | Staff

Search...

# Spark

LAKOTA EAST HIGH SCHOOL **ONLINE**

Home News » Sports » Lifestyle » Entertainment » Opinion » Package Gallery

Bowl Guide 2012

Buffalo Wild Wings Bowl: Texas Christian vs. Michigan State

Meineke Car Care Bowl: Texas Tech vs. Minnesota

GoDaddy.com Bowl: Kent State vs. Arkansas State

Hyundai Sun Bowl: Georgia Tech vs. University of Southern California

BBVA Compass Bowl: Mississippi vs. Pittsburgh

200 Followers

737 Fans

Recent Popular Comments

Five Innovative (and Affordable) Holiday Gifts for Her and Him

Born with a Gun

Art Club Makes Homemade Wrapping Paper

Book Review: Franny and Zooey

21 Dec 2012, 0 Comment

20 Dec 2012, 0 Comment

20 Dec 2012, 0 Comment

19 Dec 2012, 0 Comment

Latest Photos

Copyright © 2012 by Spark. Powered by WordPress and Bangkok Press.

Home About Contact SibSci

News Sports Lifestyle Entertainment Opinion Package Gad

Notre Dame

No preference

Vote View Result

Slideshow

News

Art Club Makes Homemade Wrapping Paper

East art club made homemade wrapping paper, ate cookies and watched Arthur Christmas during its holiday party on Monday, Dec. 17. According to advisor Jessie Duncan, the holiday party [ ]

20 Dec 2012, 0 Comment

Buffalo Wild Wings Bowl: Texas Christian vs. Michigan State

On Dec. 29, the 27th annual Buffalo Wild Wings Bowl will feature the Texas Christian University (TCU) Horned Frogs and the Michigan State University (MSU) Spartans at the Sun Devil [ ]

19 Dec 2012, 0 Comment

Board of Education Proposes Business Class Model for Students

SACA Plans to Hold Secret Santa with Special Needs Students

Malibu Car Care Bowl: Texas Christian vs. Minnesota

East Boy's Basketball Wins Tight Game Against Crosstown Rival

Lifestyle

Entertainment

2012 album baseball bowing center sheet column community alien district east educator election emoji entertainment football girl grumpy john joshua latkula lifestyle education news multiples music news rock or opinion parenting review school sha sports the thunderbirds variety weird who

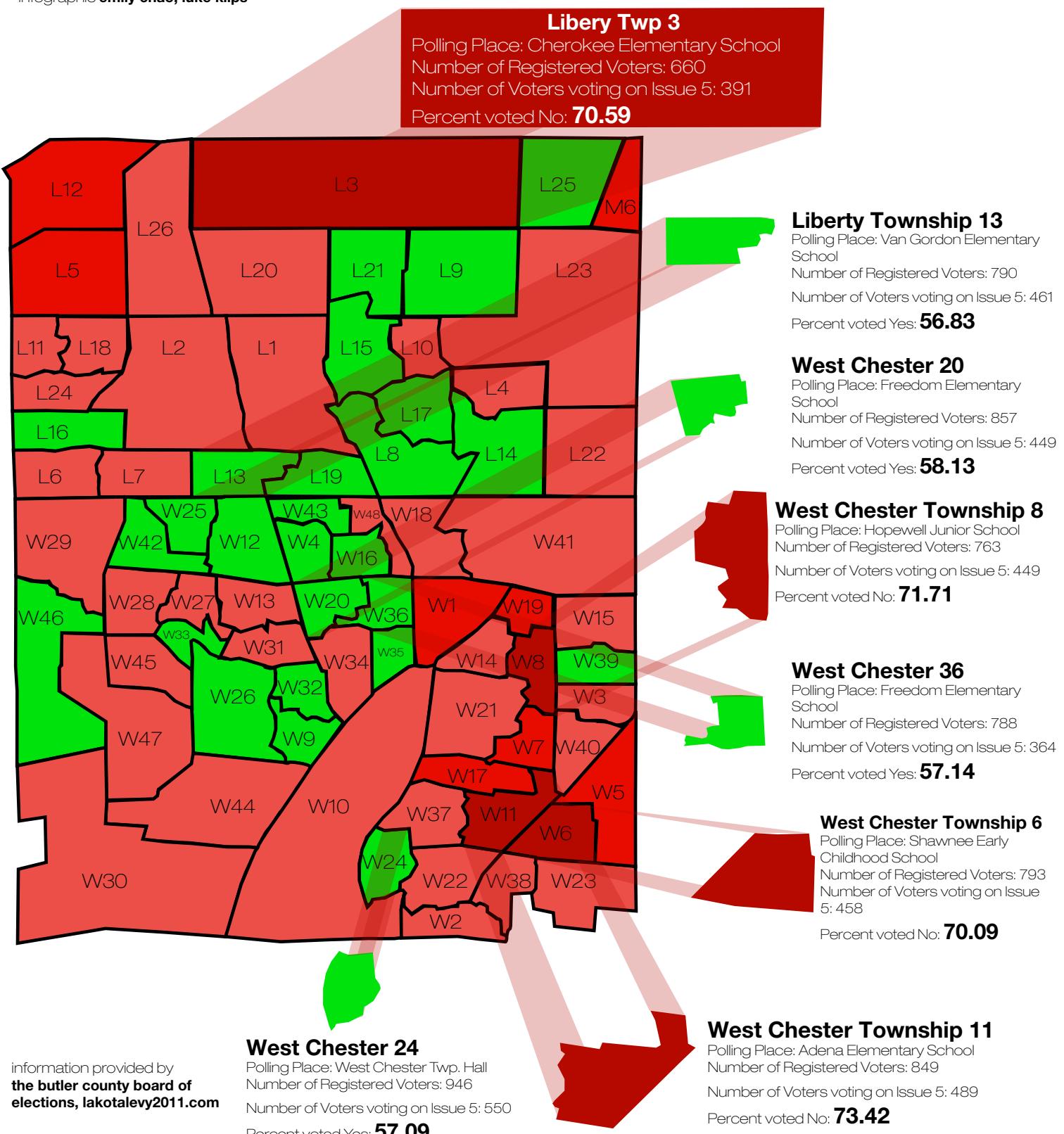
# Levy Results Dissected

On Nov. 8, voters all over Butler County voted on Issue 5, the Lakota Local Schools operating levy, which asked for 4.75 mills. 35,510 votes later, the levy failed by an overall 53.54 - 46.46 percent margin. This map shows the precincts of Butler County, which are divided by street along with the general percentage of who voted yes and who voted no.

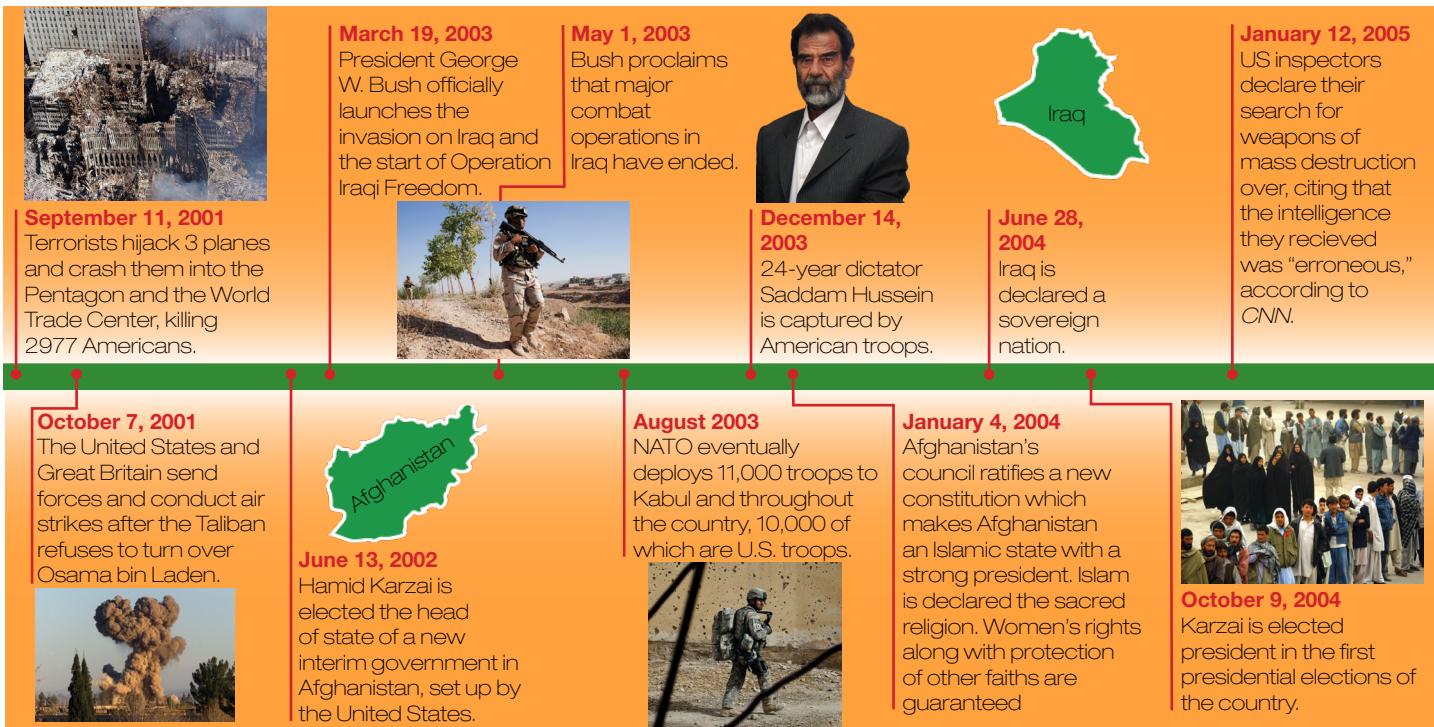
infographic emily chao, luke kilps



W - West Chester Township  
L - Liberty Township  
M - Monroe Township



information provided by  
the butler county board of  
elections, [lakotalevy2011.com](http://lakotalevy2011.com)



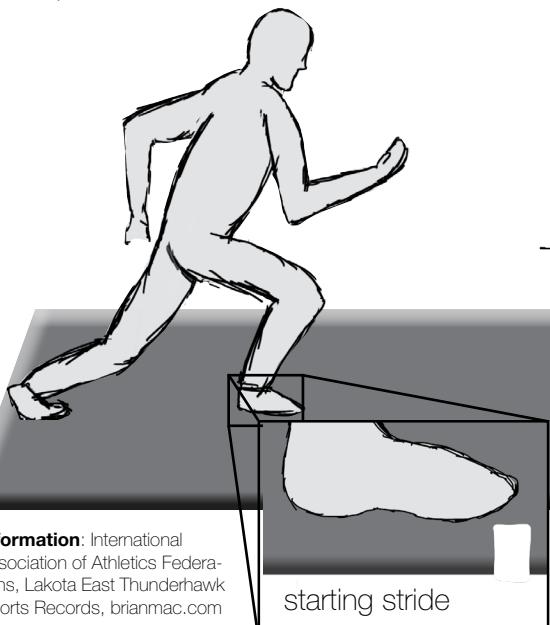
2011-2012, Issue 4

# The Science of Flight

Long jump combines both sprinting and explosive leaps in order to achieve the power of flight.  
graphic | emily chao

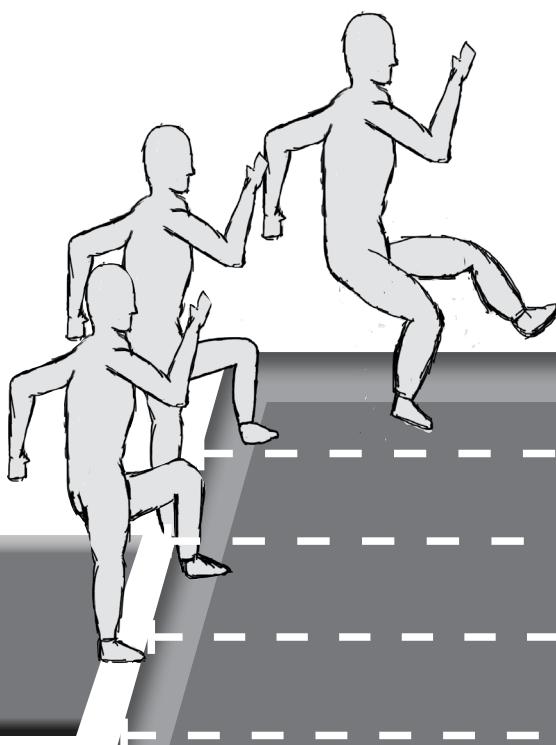
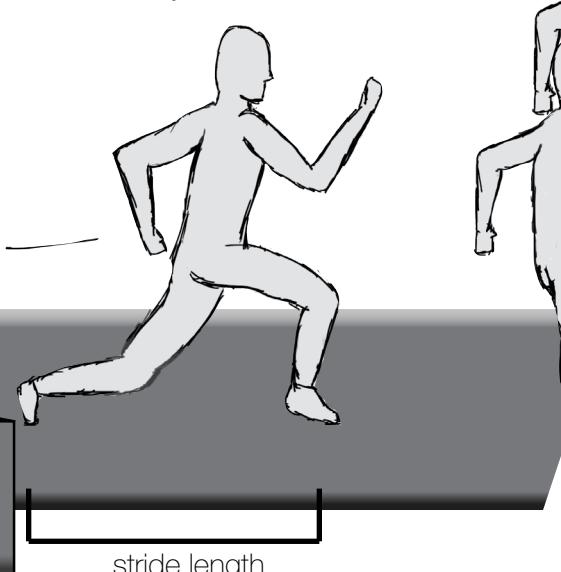
1

The jumper starts at his/her designated starting position which is dependent on his/her stride length and the placement of the board.



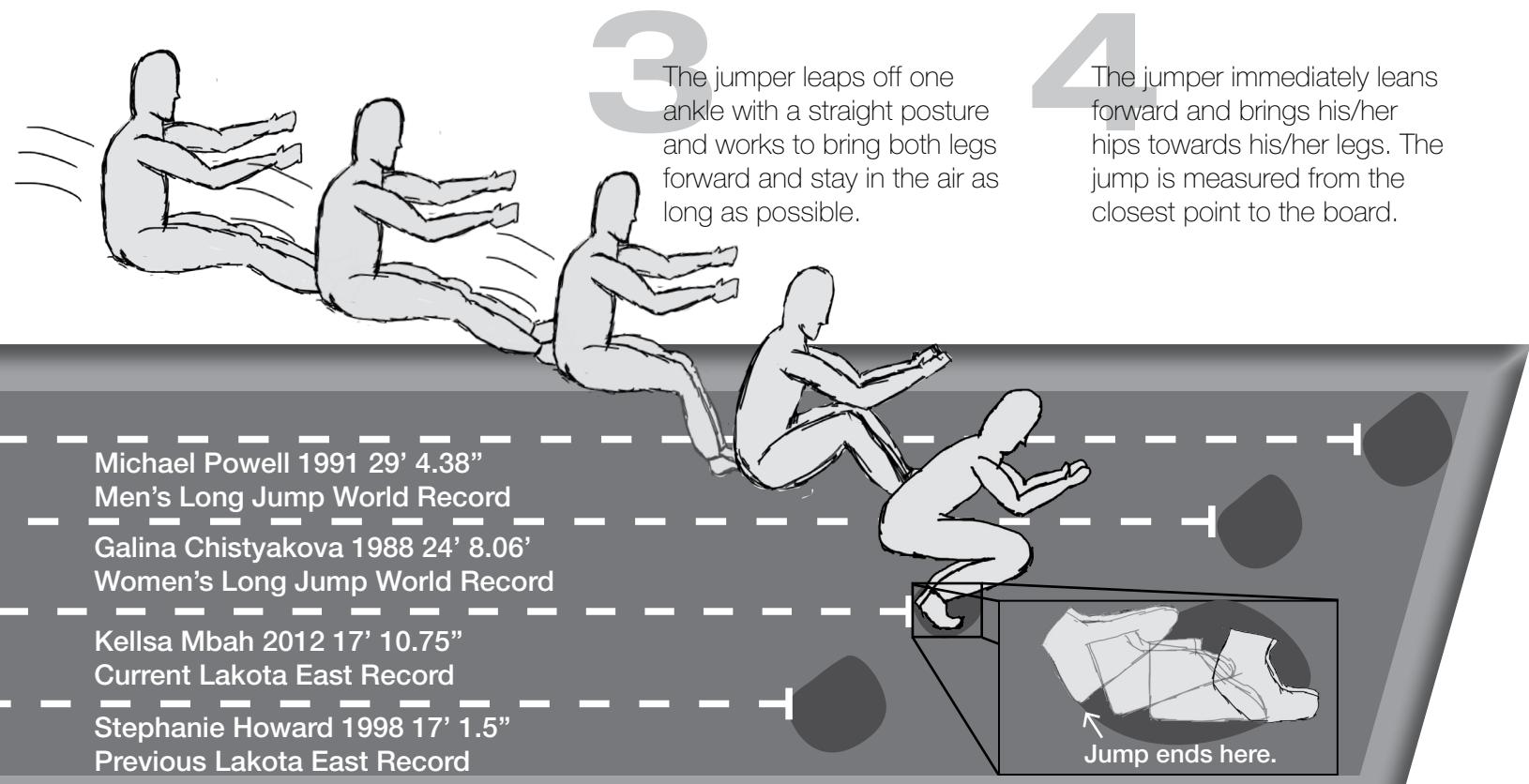
2

The jumper sprints at full speed toward the board in order to be ready to jump. The number of strides is usually between 10 and 12.





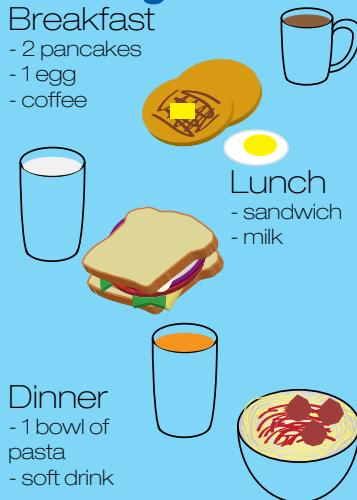
photos used with paid permission from mictcampus or labeled for commercial reuse information provided by cbs news, the washington post, thinkprogress.org, the new york times, understandingwar.org, the telegraph



# Fueling the Elite Swimmer

With intensive, long workouts, especially during school breaks, elite swimmers often burn so many calories that they eat as much as 6 times the average person's usually daily caloric intake.

## Average Person



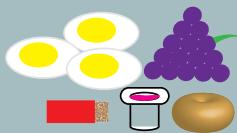
**2000 Calories**

## Rob Van Kirk



### Breakfast

- 3 eggs
- bagel
- yogurt
- grapes
- granola bar



### Lunch

- 3 extra large pancakes
- 1 four-egg omelette
- fruit



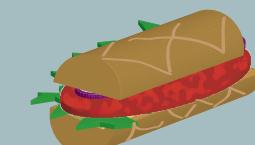
### Snack

- Gatorade
- protein powder shake



### Snack

- 112-inch Subway sandwich



### Dinner

- Gatorade
- protein powder shake
- 1 extra large Chipotle burrito



### Snack

- yogurt and granola bar

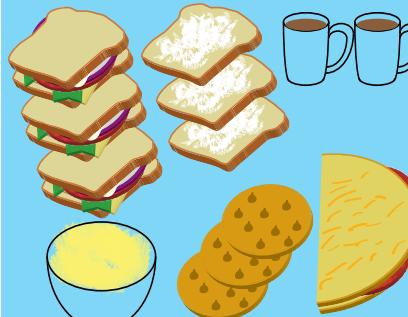
**9000 Calories**

## Michael Phelps



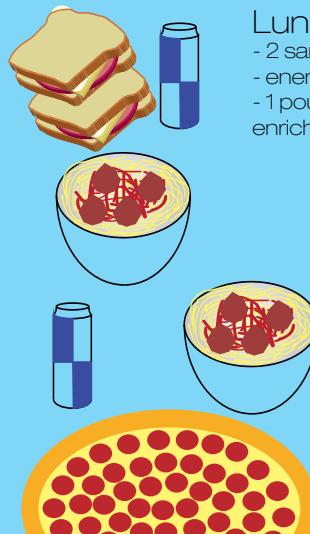
### Breakfast

- 3 sandwiches
- 3 slices of French toast with powdered sugar
- 2 cups of coffee
- 1 bowl of grits
- 3 chocolate chip pancakes
- 1 five-egg omelette



### Lunch

- 2 sandwiches
- energy drinks
- 1 pound of enriched pasta



- energy drinks
- 1 whole pizza
- 1 pound of enriched pasta

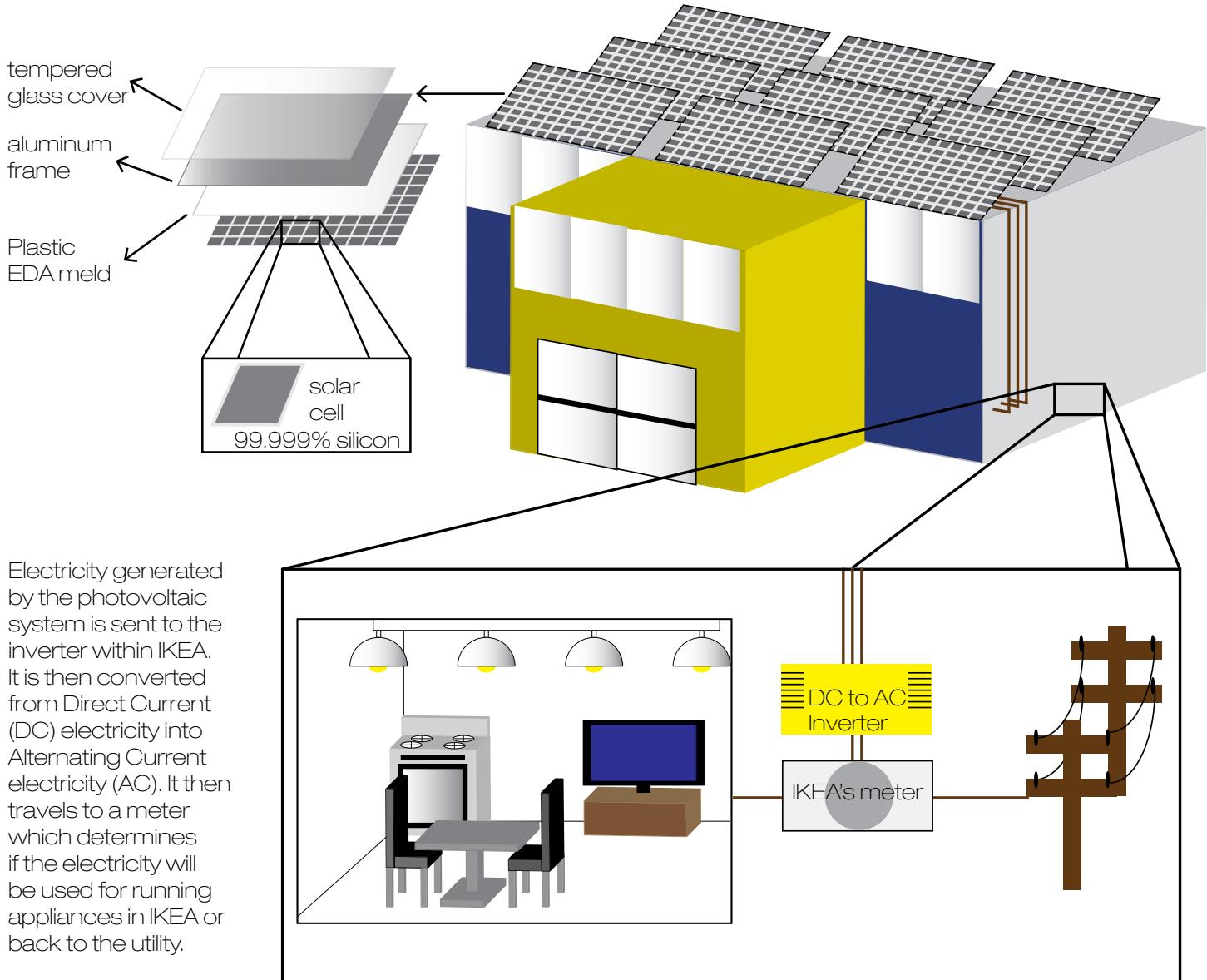
**12000 Calories**

Information -The Wall Street Journal, Rob Van Kirk photos used with paid permission from mctcampus.com

2011-2012, Issue 5

# IKEA Going Green

IKEA West Chester recently installed a 128,000 photovoltaic array consisting of 4,186 solar panels atop its roof. This is the 14th store to undergo such an installation, with 23 more locations underway. 1/3 of IKEA's electricity usage will be completely clean, solar energy.



# SEE THE SEA: ISRAEL

In a six-week trip this summer, junior Alyssa Weisman was able to see many sites in Europe that correlated with her Jewish roots as well as experience the culture and religious aura of Israel.

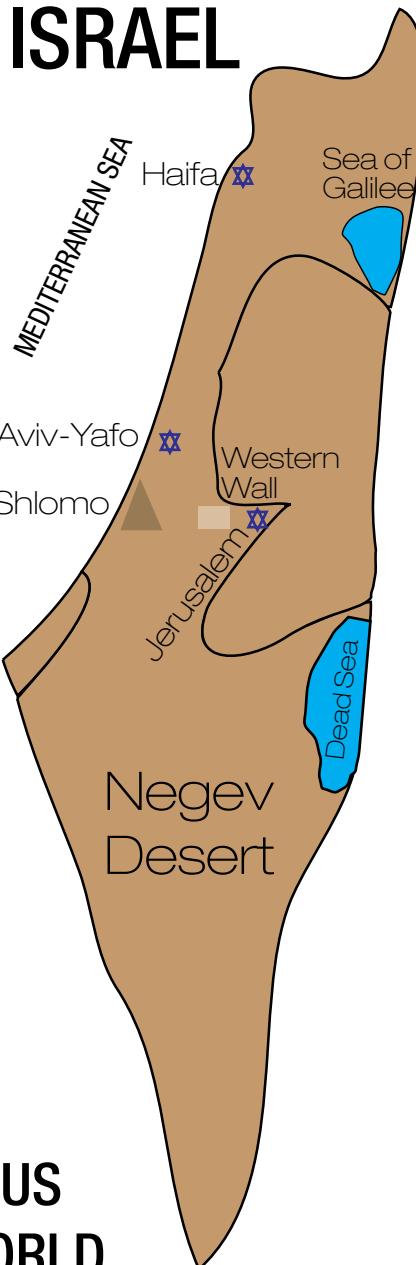
## POLAND



## CZECH REPUBLIC



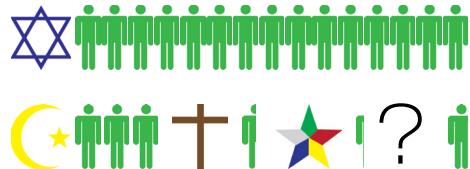
## ISRAEL



## FAST FACTS: ISRAEL



Population:  
**7,590,758**



5% of population

The only country that has the majority of people that are Jewish.

## CUISINE IN ISRAEL:



**Falafel:**  
chick peas and cilantro fried into a ball, Arab origins



**Schnitzel:**  
breaded meat cutlet that is fried, European origins



**Hummus:**  
Arab origins, dip made from spices and chickpeas



**Shawarma:**  
meat roasted on a vertical spit, like a gyro, Arab origins

## ASPECTS OF JUDAISM:

**Bar Mitzvah:** Coming of age ritual for Jewish boys at age 13

**Bat Mitzvah:** Coming of age ritual for Jewish girls at age 12

**Tishba B'Av:** A Jewish holiday that occurs on the ninth day of Av (usually in July or Aug.) that commemorates the destruction of the First and Second Temples

**Torah:** The Jewish holy book

## COMPARISON: RELIGIOUS SITES AROUND THE WORLD

### ISLAM



#### Kaaba

"The House of God"  
Approximately **2 million**  
Muslims complete the pilgrimage annually

### BUDDHISM



#### Potala Palace

Dalai Lama's Palace  
Approximately **1 million**  
Buddhists and tourists visit the site annually

### CHRISTIANITY



#### Vatican City

Home to St. Peter's Basilica and the Pope  
Approximately **18 million** visitors yearly

### HINDUISM



#### Varanasi:

Home to the Kashi Vishwanath Temple  
Approximately **21.9 million** visitors yearly

### JUDAISM



#### Western Wall:

Wailing Wall or Ha-Kotel Ha-Ma'aravi  
Approximately **5 million** visitors annually

information israel bureau of statistics, cia factbook, jewfaq.com, religionfacts.com, unesco world heritage foundation, sacred-destinations.com, travelandleisure.com, google maps, photos used with paid permission from mtcampus.com or labeled for commercial reuse.

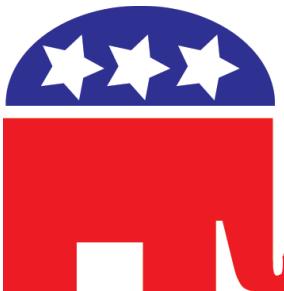
## WHAT AMERICAN VOTERS VOTE



CONSTITUTIONAL  
367,000



LIBERTARIAN  
278,446



REPUBLICAN  
30,700,138



DEMOCRAT:  
43,140,758



GREEN  
246,145

## OHIO'S DEMOGRAPHIC



**AVERAGE INCOME:** \$46,752 according to the Kaiser Family Foundation

**AVERAGE UNEMPLOYMENT:** 7.4% in June 2012

**RACE:** 83.6% White, 12.4% Black, 3.2% Hispanic, .8% Other

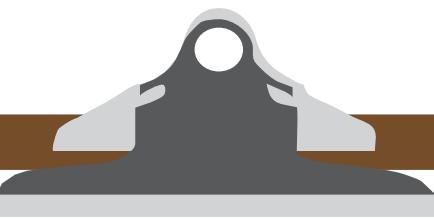
**URBANIZATION:** 78% of Ohioans live in urban areas

**RELIGION:** 26% Evangelical Protestant, 22% Other Protestant, 21% Catholic, 17% Non-religious, 14% Other

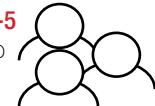
**BLUE COLLAR:** 64% of Ohio workers are classified as "blue collar"

**7,722,180**  
REGISTERED VOTERS IN OHIO

## HOW TO GET A REFERENDUM ON THE BALLOT



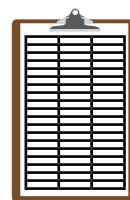
1 Create a petitioners committee of 3-5 people to represent the entire group in all matters related to the petition.



2 File an initial petition signed by 1000 Ohio registered voters and the full text and summary of the section of law referred to the Secretary of State. After the Secretary of State certifies it, the information is filed to the Attorney General within one business day.



3 If the Attorney General approves, start part-petitions. They will be combined at the end of the process as one.



4 Follow the following signature requirements:

- Total Number: at least 6% of the total vote cast for governor
- Be obtained from at least 44 of the 88 counties of Ohio
- Number from each county: at least 3% of total vote cast for governor in that county
- Each Petitioner Signer: qualified elector of Ohio
- Each Part-Petition: signatures from one county

5 File the part-petitions and \$25 within 90 days after the law or section of law to be referred has been filed.



6 The signatures' sufficiency will be determined by the Secretary of State no later than 105 days and if they are not sufficient, 10 days are allowed for additional ones.

7 The petition committee may file an explanation in favor of the proposed referendum no later than 80 days before the election. It may not be more than 300 words. If that fails, the Secretary of State will notify the Ohio Ballot Board to complete the task.

information ohio secretary of state

information cnn, pew forum, washington post, ohio secretary of state jon husted's ohio presidential election data, digital topography maps, east survey

# THE CULTURE OF SPORTS

The United States has evolved into a nation where sports competition is fierce starting in high school.

## CLUB VS. SCHOOL: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE

### CLUB SPORTS

Tend to be year-round, with practices 1-3 times each week and tournaments every few weekends.

Club sports tend to cost more due to tournament fees and year-round coaching fees, as well as club fees.

Recruiters target more athletes from club sports due to the availability of athletes during high school pre and post season.



### SCHOOL SPORTS

Season tends to be a few months long, practices every weekday, tournaments during the week.

High school sporting fees tend to be lower than club sports, but are rising due to lack of athletic funds in schools.

Recruiters have difficulty recruiting high school athletes due to regulated times and pre and post season.

## SPORTS REGULATIONS: OHSAA VS. AAU

Ohio High School Athletic Association



OHSAA prohibits student athletes from competing in non-interscholastic competitions during a high school season for the same sport.

Amateur Athletic Association



An athlete competing in club sports can be members of multiple clubs and can transfer to another club in the same sport under certain competition conditions.

## INJURY CORNER: WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

*"Risk of injury increases with the volume of activity."*

Dr. Marc Galloway, Head Physician for the Cincinnati Bengals

### MULTI-SPORT ATHLETES

are "better-protected" because they tend to exercise different muscle groups and have different movement patterns during different seasons.



### BASEBALL AND SOCCER

athletes, according to Dr. Galloway, tend to have long year-round seasons, increasing risk for injury.



### SINGLE-SPORT ATHLETES

who play their sport all year long, tend to have overuse injuries like joint tendonitis and shin splints due to repetitive movements and micro-trauma.

**FOOTBALL** athletes, although playing a more dangerous sport, tend to play multiple sports due to a shorter fall-based season.

## EAST SURVEYED

**34** percent of 325 East students surveyed who play club sports

2012-13 East athletes who signed National Letters of Intent as of Dec. 1

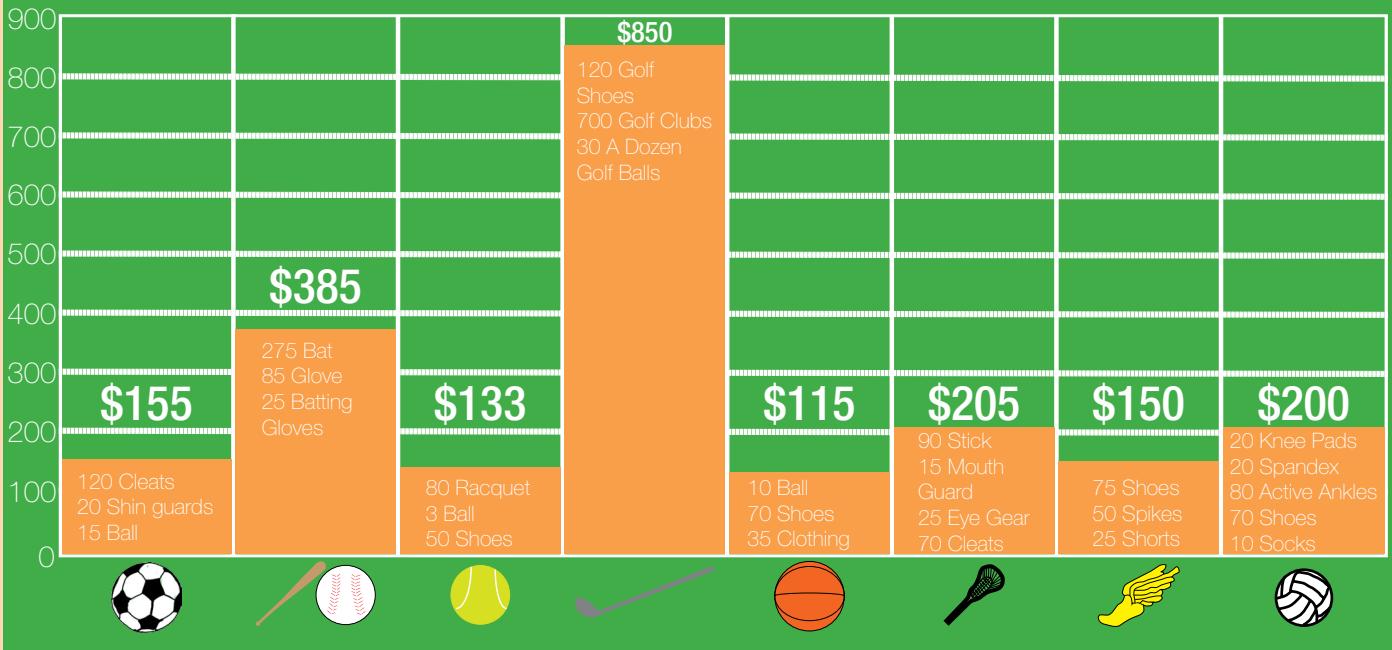


Ali Lake  
Ohio Univ.

Derek Baker  
Ashland Univ.

Ashley Evans  
Purdue Univ.

# AVERAGE COST OF EQUIPMENT FOR VARIOUS SPORTS



## HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS: HIGHER PRICES FOR LAKOTA ATHLETES

Mason HS athletes, paying \$150 per sport, can play two sports, pay for equipment and have money left over for the \$550 that East athletes pay to play only one sport.

$$\$550 = \$150 + \$150 + \$150 + \$100$$

Cost to play one sport in Lakota

Cost to run cross country at Mason HS

Average cost of cross country equipment

Cost to participate in track and field at Mason HS

Money left over

Compared to 2009, Lakota pay-to-play sports fees has almost **QUADRUPLED** for high school athletes.

**\$140**

\$280 family cap levy failed 62-38

**2009-2010**

**\$300**

no family cap levy failed 53-47

**2010-2011**

**\$550**

no family cap levy failed 54-46

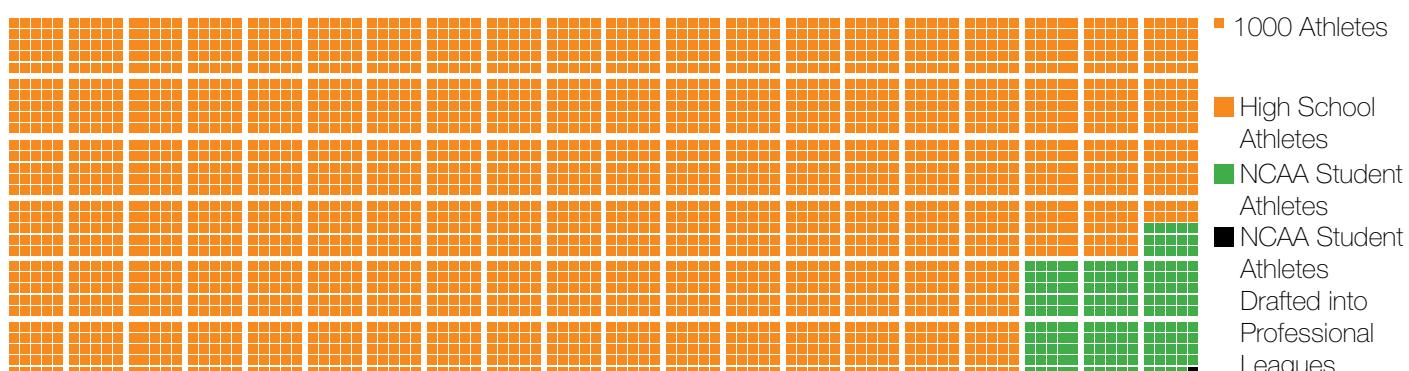
**2011-2012**

**\$550**

no levy on ballot

**2012-2013**

## BY THE NUMBERS: WHERE ATHLETES GO FROM HIGH SCHOOL



data combined from men's basketball, women's basketball, football, baseball, men's ice hockey, and men's soccer



contact tommy at [tom.behan730@gmail.com](mailto:tom.behan730@gmail.com)

I am a packer.

Not the quarterback who refused to accept retirement. Not the obsessive fan who wears an oversized jersey with a painted face and a cheesehead hat. Not the zealot who waits anywhere from 30 to 955 years for a season ticket, but then dies, passing his ticket-voucher to his baby, who finally gets to the game as an old man and then dies.

No. I do the impossible. I do what only the bravest will do. I pack my lunch in my old blue and gray double decker. The crumpled lower level contains my ice pack and Capri-Sun. The stained upper level holds my sandwiches and on a good day, my thermos. And it's obvious know I'm a hardcore packer when I ignore the trendy brown bags.

The only thing I love more than my lunch box is the lunch it holds. There is something satisfying about taking a break and eating the fruits of my hard labor. To enrich that experience from time to time, I indulge myself by buying cookies for dessert. One cookie is not enough. Two cookies cannot satisfy my feral hunger. I only stop at three cookies: three cookies for one dollar. On the first day of school, however, I sensed something was amiss.

They looked promising, stacked neatly in their respective drawers. I suspected nothing when I saw the familiar wax-like bottom that always indicates a good cookie. But something was different. The shade was just a hint browner. As I gave the lunch lady a dollar, she explained how they were now more expensive. Three cookies cost \$1.10. When I went back to the table, thinking my \$1.10 well spent, one bite was all it took to tip the scales.

I had never felt so betrayed.

The change in the cookies was as traumatic for me as when my family started eating whole wheat bread instead of white bread. The cookies tasted dry, and left me not wanting to take that sweet second bite. I forced myself to finish all three, for the sake of my feral hunger. My taste buds and I were not on speaking terms for nearly a week. Consequently, those were the last three cafeteria cookies I would eat during my sacred lunch period.

Shocked, horrified and puzzled at the same time, I made inquiries about the changes in the cookies. After putting on my Sherlock Holmes hat and doing some extensive investigative work (talking to a lunch lady), I deduced that the cookies were made of whole grain.

Cookies are not the only food going on a diet. Chips, milk and most a la carte items are now regulated, or going to be regulated, by several sources, primarily Ohio Senate Bill 210.

Under the bill's restrictions, the baseline for a la carte items must be less than 100 calories, less than 35 percent fat and less than 35 percent

# Tommy Behan WEBMASTER COOKIE CUTTER

sugar by weight. On paper, these guidelines add up to healthier foods in the cafeteria and thus healthier meals. When the district looks in the vault for the money it uses on food, however, it will only find a dark, empty room, the taxpayers' money long gone. This is because the state continues to mandate changes within school districts without providing additional funding to cover the new and increasing costs.

Take cookies, for instance. Lakota's cookies are made by Otis Spunkmeyer. Due to Senate Bill 210, Otis Spunkmeyer had to reformulate the cookies to make them fit conform to the new cafeteria food regulations. This change cost Lakota six cents—per cookie. This cost, multiplied by the thousands of students who buy cookies on a regular basis means Lakota is spending thousands of dollars on cookies alone, not counting other a la carte items.

The state of Ohio has good intentions. They want to prevent obesity. I could say the same thing about Brett Favre. He had good intentions coming back to the National Football League after he announced he would be retiring. The result, on the other hand, was more destructive than it was beneficial.

Representatives seek to prevent obesity by forcing schools to improve their cafeterias, even though the outcome is bleaker than a fourth down with oh-so-many yards to go.

This method is clearly more destructive than beneficial.

While eating healthy is a good lesson to teach modern teenagers, it is also a lesson that should not be taught by the state, but rather, taught in the home by parents who hold responsibility for their child's nutrition.

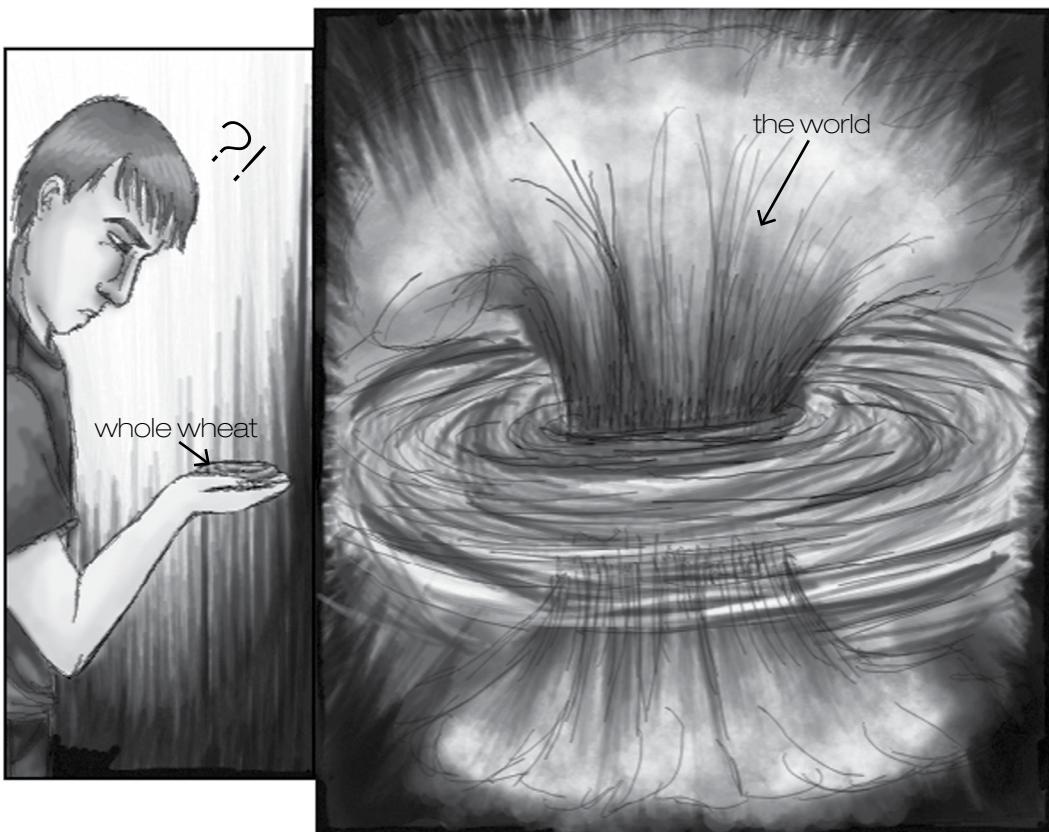
There is nothing wrong with having a good balance of healthy meals and not so healthy meals, like cookies, from time to time. When students buy a cookie (or three), they are obviously not trying to make a healthy choice. They are trying to make a judgment based purely on the craving for melted chocolate and soft cookie dough. It is not a decision where the calories and fats are put into consideration, but a decision where the sometimes-too-influential taste buds and the roaring stomach are contemplated.

Packers' fans will always boo the referee's decision to flag a receiver on an excessive celebration call. The referee may make what they see as the right call, but the fans will always disagree. The Ohio Congress may think it is looking out for kids eating cafeteria food, but the students will always disagree. Especially when it comes to the cookies. ■

---

**"THE COOKIES TASTED  
DRY...AND I FORCED  
MYSELF TO FINISH ALL  
THREE, FOR THE SAKE OF  
MY FERAL HUNGER."**

---



...Healthy cookies? Isn't that like dividing by zero?

**Nick Hansen, junior**

To an extent, not necessarily as much as they have. I think it should be up to the school a bit too.

**Kendra Thomas, junior**

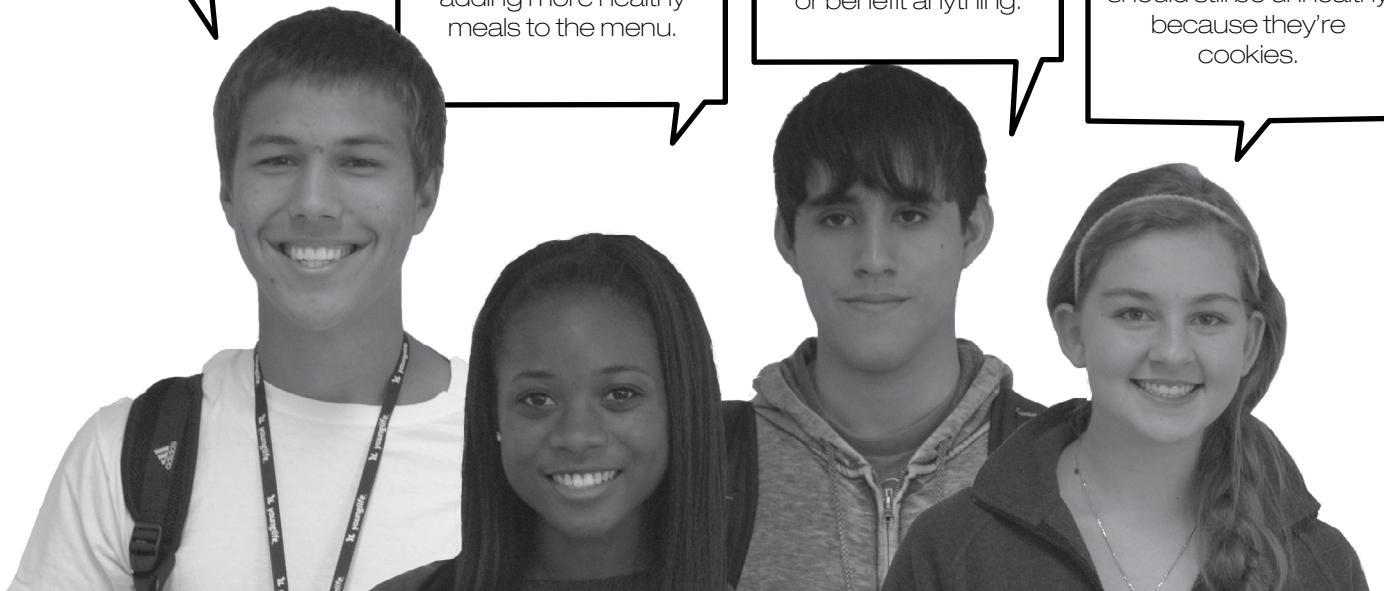
Cookies are dessert and so you don't want to have a nasty dessert but maybe instead of making the dessert more healthy, maybe adding more healthy meals to the menu.

**Manuel Aleman, junior**

I don't think it will change the general population's weight problem but eating a cookie that's not very nutritious won't change or benefit anything.

**Claire Casper, junior**

If they wanted to go with the healthier thing, they [can] change the food, but I personally feel like since cookies are dessert that they should still be unhealthy because they're cookies.



## East Speaks Out

Do you think the government should regulate cafeteria food?



Students are taking advantage of being able to turn in their papers the night they are due at Turnitin.com

In order to combat plagiarism, teachers are utilizing new technology to gauge students and encourage them to

# TURNITIN

story **shervani patel**

photo **ellen fleetwood**

graphic **maggie schaller, irfan ibrahim**

**E**ast has implemented the use of turnitin.com, a plagiarism prevention website, in order to assist English teachers by reducing the time it takes to grade one paper. The website also gives teachers an originality report informing them of whether a student has plagiarized or not.

Turnitin.com was created by four University of California Berkley graduate students and is designed to detect plagiarism in students' written work. The parent company of turnitin, iParadigms, is also included in the website. Turnitin also provides WriteCheck, which allows students to individually check their papers for plagiarism and citation problems before submitting them.

"[The four students] noticed a lot of plagiarism in papers at their college and people trying to pass other peoples' words off as their own," Turnitin vice president of Marketing Chris Harrick said. "[The students] created the website 12 years ago and originally meant for the website to only be for peer review, but over time they added more features to the website."

East's English department is the first to use turnitin.com in the school, because of problems with plagiarism in past years.

"We have heard that there has been a rise in the number of students plagiarizing," East counselor Jill Kelechi said. "Teachers have been complaining much more than usual. [Hopefully the use of Turnitin] will help decrease those numbers."

Students plagiarize for many reasons, including not having time to complete assignments or not understanding them.

"Sometimes the students don't know how to cite sources properly," turnitin.com's Vice President of Marketing Chris Harrick said. "That's the main reason plagiarism happens. Or, students don't care, and they won't pay attention to their citations."

Despite having to pay two dollars per

student each year, many of the teachers have become very fond of the website for various reasons. Instead of collecting the students' papers during class time, teachers are able to have students submit their papers directly to the website.

"Right now, [Turnitin] has only been rolled out to the English department, so all of the English department should be using it," Schneider said. "[Turnitin] gives teachers a chance to grade online and have electronic comments. There is also a voice feature section where teachers can leave voice comments to students."

Turnitin utilizes three different records in order to check students' citations.

"Turnitin uses information from three main databases when checking for originality," Harrick said. "We use web pages from the internet, academic content and school textbooks and older papers from past students. Web pages are very helpful because, unfortunately, plagiarism is on the rise because of the internet."

Many students have been using turnitin.com and are liking what they see.

"I like Turnitin because I don't have to worry about printer problems," East junior Carlin Marsh said. "Also, I can submit [my paper] after school instead of remembering to bring it to school [the day it is due]."

However, not all of the students are completely fond of using it.

"I prefer physically turning [a paper] in because technology fails sometimes," East junior Regan Donnell said. "You also never know if it fails to save on Turnitin.com, and your teacher would just think that you didn't [write the paper.]"

Turnitin2 was also released recently. It has more updated features such as originality checking, online grading and peer review. However, not all of the students are using the features the website offers.

"I just use the spelling and grammar check on Microsoft Word," Donnell said.

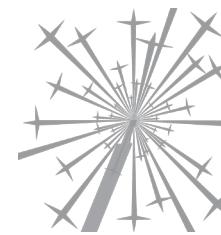
Turnitin will also help teachers grade papers at a faster rate than when they grade by hand. Currently, Schneider has not seen an improvement in her grading time, but believes that the website will soon shorten the time.

"Right now it takes about the same amount

of time [to grade papers as when I did it by hand]," Schneider said, "but I think [the time] will reduce once we get the hang of [using the website]. I have talked to others teachers whose grade time has been reduced because of Turnitin."

Several of the teachers at East are finding Turnitin easy to use.

"[Turnitin] is a new way to learn," East English teacher Lisa Schmaltz said. "The website is also a new way to approach grading. Once we get more practice at it, we'll become more proficient." SM



Read Alyssa Roehm's story on East's National Merit Semifinalists at **[lakotaeastspark.com](http://lakotaeastspark.com)**

# TOOLS BEHIND TURNITIN

## 10 TYPES OF PLAGIARISM

**THE CLONE:** Submitting another person's work, word for word, and passing it off as one's own.

**THE CTRL-C:** Containing noteworthy portions of text from one source without any alterations.

**THE FIND-REPLACE:** Changing key words but maintaining the essential content of the source in the paper.

**THE REMIX:** Paraphrasing words from other sources and making the context fit together.

**THE RECYCLE:** Borrowing from one's own previous work without citations.

**THE HYBRID:** Perfectly combining cited sources and copied passages without citing sources.

**THE MASHUP:** Representing a mix of copied material without citations.

**THE 404 ERROR:** Including citation to non-existent or inaccurate information.

**THE AGGREGATOR:** Including proper citation, but not including original work.

**THE RE-TWEET:** including proper citation, but relying too much on the text's original wording.

information turnitin.com



## HOW TURNITIN CHECKS FOR PLAGIARISM

1) The paper is turned into its original format.

2) Turnitin finds the total percentage of borrowed material in the paper.

3) The website then finds the percentage of the paper from the schools the previous paper was turned into.

4) Sentences are highlighted if they are used in other papers, the database of papers is 220+ million.

## QUICK FACTS:

**20+million**



number of papers graded through Turnitin.com

**150,000**

number of papers turnitin grows by each day

**bookface.com**

**33**

percent of papers that steal material from a Social or Contact-Sharing Site

**20 billion  
220 million**

Number of web pages and student papers that turnitin.com checks every paper against, respectively.



**LEFT:** Students must stay in the gym or cafeteria until they are allowed to go to their lockers at 7:50 a.m.;

**CENTER:** Students congregate on Main Street as 7:50 a.m. draws near;

**RIGHT:** East art teacher Linda Augutis tries to utilize her plan period in her vacant room.

# CURRENT PLAN PERIOD: EAST'S BIGGEST FRUSTRATION

East teachers' current planning period from 7:15 to 7:50 a.m. has caused troubles for administrators, teachers and students alike. Because of the budget situation, however, change to the schedule is unlikely.

story **angela ferguson** | photos **ellen fleetwood** | infographic **alice li**

**E**ast English teacher Rich Schmaltz is used to being alone at school for hours every weekend. Sundays are when he gets as much grading done as he possibly can, from the time when he arrives at a single-digit hour of the morning to about 4 p.m. when he leaves. When he has to, he uses Saturdays as prep days: making handouts, running off copies and planning for the next week.

The additional amount of planning time that Schmaltz spends outside of the work week used to be much less, but now he works 8 to 10 hours on weekends. He used to be of the few teachers who would come in outside of the regular school week but this year, he has noticed that more teachers have made working at school part of their weekend routines.

This trend, a result of the Lakota Local School District's \$10.9 million budget cuts last year, is related to the implementation of this year's new teacher planning period. This consists of a school-wide planning time

beginning at 7:15 a.m. every day before students arrive. Ohio state law requires the planning period to be 10 percent, or 42 minutes, of the teacher workday at East and Lakota West high school, but East's teacher planning time is 5 percent less than the average teacher planning time provided at nearby public school districts Fairfield (45), Hamilton (50), Princeton (45), and Oak Hills (49).

According to Schmaltz, although teachers last year managed seven class periods a day, they had roughly 60 to 70 minutes of daily student-free time. On the other hand, this year's schedule with the morning planning bell means that teachers are instructing six periods each day and supervising a 25-minute extra help with a 30-minute break for lunch.

After the Lakota Board of Education asked district administrators to make cuts, the Board settled on superintendent Karen Mantia's proposal to adjust the planning period because of two major advantages, the foremost of

which being financial.

"If you gave one-sixth of the teachers one period off, you'd have to hire one-sixth more teachers to make sure that kids have teachers at all times," Board president Ben Dibble said. "The clear advantage [of the new planning period] is that it makes our school system more efficient."

The shared planning period was also intended to allow teachers direct time to communicate with colleagues.

"To have one period off a day to collaborate and plan makes no sense if the people you need to collaborate and plan with are not planning that period too," Dibble said. "We have phenomenal teachers, but if they all share their strengths, we will end up with even better teachers."

Based on teacher feedback, however, Schmaltz said that teacher-to-teacher communication is actually occurring less now. During their planning time, teachers are so

focused on what they have to do for their own classes that they do not have time to collaborate with other teachers. Furthermore, 92 percent of 25 East teachers surveyed rated their productivity during the new plan bell as less than it was last year.

Budget cuts mean change for students, too. Last year, East senior Lea Buckenmyer came to school every day at 6:45 a.m. to check her Honors Physics homework. She said it helped her on tests, but now as an Advanced Placement (AP) Physics student, she does not have the opportunity to receive extra help in the morning because she is forced to wait in either the gymnasium or cafeteria until 7:50 a.m., when students can report to class.

"I do not feel as confident about physics," said Buckenmyer, who is also tutoring two Honors Physics students because they, too, are not able to get help from East science teacher Sandee Coats-Haan in the morning. "Coats-Haan still posts [homework] answers online, but it is easier to talk about the key with her if I do not understand something."

Coats-Haan is concerned about her students as well.

"[My AP students] are used to demanding attention from me," Coats-Haan said, "but the honors kids say, 'Oh, I don't get it. I guess I just will not.' Where I would have been able to reach out to them in the past and pull them in, I am not [able to] do that [with this schedule]."

She is not the only one: 88 percent of 26 East teachers surveyed think students' learning is being "negatively impacted" by the new plan period. In addition to the implications the planning period has for this year, though, Coats-Haan is also concerned about the further effects it will have on next year's students.

"I am worried for what we are setting for the future, for AP," Coats-Haan said. "These [AP students] have the best work ethic and I have done everything I can to support that, but I am not doing anything to build and support work ethic in the class of 2014."

East science teacher John Severns has heard that there has been a drop in student performance "over and over again" from teachers.

"The only time I have to work with [students] is during class, so it feels like sometimes I am just running from one student to the next," said Severns, who is vice president of the Lakota Education Association. "As

## 150 OUT OF 328 SURVEYED EAST STUDENTS HAVE TRIED AND FAILED TO GET HELP FROM A TEACHER BEFORE SCHOOL BECAUSE OF THE NEW PLAN BELL.

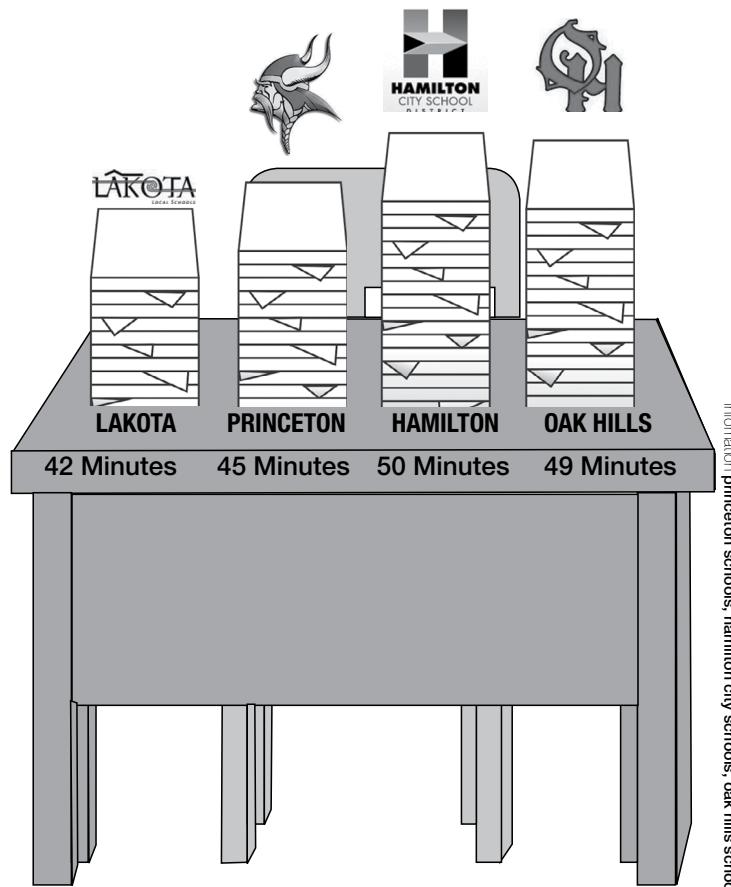
opposed to trying to bring the whole class along, I am running around putting band-aids on things."

Like other East teachers, Schmaltz said he can teach six periods a day with half an hour of planning time. All he needs to do is hand out worksheets all day.

"It is killing [teachers] emotionally because they are having to say, 'I have to do less than what I feel is good teaching,'" Schmaltz said.

Severns also feels that his teaching is not as

## Comparing High School Teacher Planning Period Lengths



good as he would like it to be. He has always changed his lesson plan every year, but this year, he cannot because of the lack of time.

"I am pretty much doing what I did last year because I do not feel there is time in the schedule for me to innovate any [new lesson plans]," Severns said. "I feel like I have not grown as a teacher from last year."

Although some teachers do not see the current planning period as the best arrangement, Dibble said it serves its purpose.

"[Teachers] live their job," said Dibble, who believes that the 42-minute planning period is an additional opportunity for teachers to plan at school. "Is [the current planning period] the best? We honestly did not have time to figure out 'best.' Given the circumstances and our finances, it is pretty darn close."

East Principal Suzanna Davis has held two teacher listening sessions in order to allow teachers to voice their opinions about the changes this year's budget reductions have brought to the school. Davis said that these sessions helped the administration understand how the budget cut-induced changes in the school are playing out.

"I certainly want to hear about things that are going well and areas that we may need to continue to look at," said Davis, who was

out on maternity leave for much of the new planning period's actual implementation. "[But by] having these listening sessions, [we will] not necessarily be able to turn around and solve all of the problems."

One thing that the administration cannot change is the current plan period. Davis said the current schedule will remain that way for the rest of the school year, unless something were to change at the central office level.

"[Administrators] are doing what they can," Schmaltz said. "As rough as this is, it is sort of weird that this is the most [connected teachers] have been with the administration."

For now, Severns said he would like to see more creativity in teacher-administration discussions so that schedule changes for the 2013-14 school year can be made this February and March. Meanwhile, Schmaltz is looking for something a bit different.

"What are [teachers] hoping for?" said Schmaltz. "Salvation. It is good to know that people who work here are professionals and do whatever they have to do and whatever they can do, [but it does not] always line up, so it ends up being whatever we can do." SM