

# UNDERSTANDING NEWS



*News is what affects the greatest number of people with the greatest intensity. Telling my community the news lets me tell people what's likely to affect them and how much it will affect them. If people don't know something is happening and don't know how it will affect them, they can't do anything to change or stop what affects them. If people know something is likely to happen to them, then they have a choice of what do about it. The news and journalists give people choice about how to shape their lives, their neighborhood, their community, their world. The news allows people to change the bad and promote the good.*

*Charlotte Grimes, Knight Chair in Political Reporting, S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, Syracuse University*



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this chapter you will be able to:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| ● determine the core values that create interest in news  | ● understand how using a beat system will help you cover your school in an organized way     |
| ● understand the role of audience in making news decisions                                      | ● understand how to find the sources that will provide the best information for your stories |
| ● make informed decisions about covering and publishing news, in both print and online editions | ● provide coverage of your school's diverse populations.                                     |

### Test your knowledge

Can you think of a topic of conversation you've had with friends recently or heard classmates discussing that could result in a story on your website or in the newspaper?

### Quick Exercise

From a recent copy of a local newspaper, find an example of a hyperlocal story focusing on a specific community. Would this story be covered in any other newspaper? Why is the news important to this publication's readers?

**Y**OU'RE WALKING DOWN THE HALL in your high school and you overhear a conversation among several members of the student debate team. It turns out that the principal has canceled an upcoming debate trip because of district budget cuts. The students are dismayed and disappointed. They have spent months practicing and strategizing for this yearly trip to the state debate tournament. They don't understand how this last-minute cancelation could have happened and they didn't see it coming.

As this example makes clear, news is all around you. Sometimes you hear it in idle classroom conversations, sometimes in the cafeteria or the hallways. Or you might read about a pressing issue being discussed on a social networking site such as Facebook or Twitter. Sometimes you may not realize that a casual conversation could be the beginning of a story with far-reaching implications. If your friends are talking about it, it may be news.

For instance, if your friends are complaining about not having access to parking in the school lot despite paying a parking fee, or about having to pay a new fee to participate in clubs and sports or about not having enough time to eat after lunch periods are cut by five minutes – in each case, you're hearing potential news. All of these topics appeared as news stories in high school newspapers. As a reporter, you're empowered to report and write these stories. You'll provide the context and perspective for these news items, providing the answers to basic questions that your friends can't access. You can interview the people who made the decisions and provide factual information to sort out the gossip and rumor that surround any controversial issue.

The school newspaper and its website can give you a chance to impart important information to the school community, and to help find constructive solutions to difficult problems. High school journalists are trained to gather information, interview the relevant sources and to provide credible, timely stories about the news that matters most to their school communities.

Though high school newspapers usually publish less frequently than municipal or national papers, most still have an opportunity to publish timely news. This means that the newspaper staff must be alert to time-sensitive information and be ready to provide context or other supplemental features if an event occurs a week or two before the paper goes to press. Depending on when an event occurs, time-sensitive news may be covered on the newspaper's website and updated in the print edition. Such stories may have long-lasting implications that can generate months of coverage and analysis in both print and online editions.

Many professional newspapers focus on **hyperlocal news**, events and information that are most important to their immediate and local audience, rather than trying to keep up with the pace of the 24-hour news cycle. Most school newspapers publish even less frequently than daily papers, often weekly, every other week or once a month. Ensuring that the print edition of your high school paper is relevant and timely can be a difficult task. But a well-maintained website can provide you with opportunities to keep the news fresh, with updated coverage continuing between print editions.

## “ WORDS of WISDOM

*Never, ever be afraid to ask questions. In time, you'll figure out the best way to go about it.*

*Should you grill that official accused of corruption under the glaring lights of a press conference?*

*Would it be best to pull aside an aide behind the scenes to get a response no-one else*

*may get? Or do both? Intimidating situations can turn into exhilarating learning situations when you get that answer or funny look you may not have expected to get.*

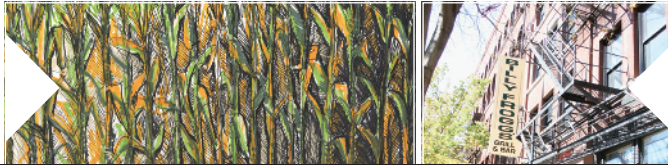
Genaro C. Armas, Correspondent, *The Associated Press*





## PULL OUT in-depth

Is Westside really  
"Hollywood High?"



## PAGE 10 a&e

The entertainment staff  
reviews local hotspots

# Lance

8701 Pacific St. Omaha, NE 68114 Volume 56 Issue 3 November 4, 2011



## MIDDLE SCHOOL change in grading system implemented

By Aaron Calderon  
NEWS EDITOR

"A one? How could you get a one?"

Instead of being reprimanded for F's, that's what some students may be hearing now.

In place of the traditional A, B, C grading system, Westside Middle School (WMS) has switched to a 1, 2, 3 system.

Standards-Based Reporting (SBR) was implemented in the elementary schools last year and in the middle school this year.

There is a simple explanation for this change, according to WMS Principal Steve

Schrad.

"The elementary schools changed last year because all students are required to meet state and district standards," Schrad said. "Research says if we use standards, which every school does, then we should grade by standards."

That's exactly what SBR does. Students are given ones for "not yet progressing to the standard," twos for "progressing to the standard" and threes for "meets the standard."

Teachers set concepts, or indicators, for their students to master. These indicators are how teachers gauge the learning of their

students.

Just as with the previous A, B, C system, there are "cut scores" which determine what grade a student receives.

"In ways it's not a lot different [from the A, B, C system]," Schrad said. "We're doing the same curriculum, actually using more rigor."

But teachers have a problem with the cut scores: they undermine the system of Standards-Based Reporting. SBR, in its purest form, does not use percentage scores.

"We're doing both the old and new systems, not one or the other," middle school instructor Dexter Johnson said. "It doesn't

work."

Even with a new grading system, the curriculum is the same, and the same concepts are taught.

"Nothing has changed in terms of teaching," Schrad said.

Nothing except time. Teachers had to revise their standards to make them more attainable at the middle school level.

"[The standards] forced teachers to go in and rewrite the indicators because they weren't specific enough," Schrad said.

In addition to creating new indicators, teachers must grade for each of these new

see WMS page 3

## what do the numbers mean?

### 1 not yet progressing toward the standard

The student shows little understanding of grade level skills and concepts and needs frequent assistance and/or support.

### 2 progressing toward the standard

The student is developing an understanding of grade level skills and concepts and may need assistance and/or support.

### 3 meets the standard

The student demonstrates mastery of grade level skills and concepts.

## High school officials visit to observe modular scheduling

By Maddie Goodman  
MANAGING EDITOR

The same classes every day, the same seven-period structure. Every moment scheduled.

Westside students are different. With modular scheduling, students are allowed more time to do what they please.

"I have to choose whether to do homework or go to the café to hangout with friends," freshman Hannah Bohacek said.

According to the district website, Westside switched to a modular schedule in the fall of 1967.

Administrators implemented modular scheduling after realizing the traditional six-period day did not give students opportunities to make their own decisions about how to spend their time at school.

"That's always been the number one overriding thing for graduates, that they've always felt, as freshmen in college, that they were much more able to handle their freedom," scheduler Mark Stegman said.

Other schools are curious about modular scheduling.

"There's at least a few schools every year that visit us for modular scheduling," Assistant Principal Tony Weers said.

Representatives from these schools come from all over the country. This year, Westside has hosted schools from South Carolina, South Dakota and Nebraska.

"There were 300 plus kids in an auditorium there at Westside and seeing one teacher deliver a lecture to them, it simulated to me a college experience," said Luke Clamp, principal of River Bluff High in South Carolina. "How enlightening that was to see a school provide that experience for students with the purpose for them to have college experiences on a high school campus."

River Bluff chose to explore modular scheduling with the hope of making its future student body more independent. Clamps seeks to spread modular scheduling to the other high schools in the district.

"This school has the opportunity to redesign a path and a culture of not just one high school, but also duplicate this in the other four high schools in our district as a potential

instrument," Clamp said.

Even schools around the Omaha metro area are interested in Westside's unique system.

"We're looking into different options," Marian math instructor Rochelle Rohlfis said. "It's not that we feel there is anything wrong with our scheduling now as it is, but we also don't want to rule out anything because of not going out and looking at what others are doing."

Westside provides variety for students by offering different types of classes.

"Kids can take a wider variety of classes," Weers said.

"Kids have the opportunity to take more classes over a high school career."

Having more class options means the demand for classes could be uneven from semester to semester. Westside tries to fill the needs of the students.

"The way we schedule it goes entirely off student request," Stegman said. "Not every teacher's schedule looks the same from semester to semester, even if they're teaching the same

see MODS page 2

**FIGURE 1.1** *Lance*, Westside High School, Omaha, Neb., Vol. 56, Issue 3, April 4, 2011. Reproduced by permission of Rod How.

The *Lance* front-page focuses on a change in the grading system at the local middle school to conform to new state grading standards. The story includes a sidebar detailing an explanation of the number-based standard from the previous letter-based standard. The second story focuses on visitors to the school observing a modular scheduling system already in place. Both stories are local, hyperfocused stories of interest to the students in this school and their educational experiences.

## WWW

**WEBLINK** Check out  
[www.journalism.org](http://www.journalism.org)

A website produced by the Pew Research Center for Excellence in Journalism, this site contains a wealth of good resources for journalists especially under the Journalism Resources link.

## WHERE DOES NEWS COME FROM?

It has been said that the word “news” stands for north, east, west and south – the full compass of directions and topics that a newspaper must cover on a daily basis. According to linguists, though, the word “news” is a plural variant of a French word, “nouvelles,” and a German word, “neues,” both meaning that which is novel, or new. **Breaking news** has come to mean coverage of an important event as it is actually happening. With today’s access to 24-hour media sources, breaking news has become a continuous stream of information from multiple sources and locations around the world.

High school papers usually have to report breaking news some time after it occurs. A gas smell causing a school-wide evacuation was reported in *The Lowell*, the student newspaper of San Francisco’s Lowell High School, four days after the event took place. The paper’s website, however, was able to post the news online just two days after it occurred, and included a gallery of photos from the event. Fortunately, most high school news is not quite so time-sensitive, and can interest readers for longer periods of time. Such news is appropriate for both the print and online editions of your paper.

## NEWS VALUE

It is important that the newspaper staff determine the news value of each potential story. This means evaluating such factors as a story’s timeliness, proximity to your school community, prominence of the people involved and size of the potential audience – as well as such elements as conflict and drama, surprise or oddity and emotional and visual appeal. Such factors are essential to how readers interact with the information and how long they stay with a story before losing interest.

As editors determine the news value of potential stories, they help determine what information reaches the public. In this way, the newspaper staff become **gatekeepers of information**, a very important responsibility in journalism. By choosing to cover some stories rather than others, they give life and credibility to particular topics and perspectives.

Where to place each story is another important news value decision. The greater the news value of a story, the more space and more prominent position it should receive in the print edition. The front-page is the first thing a reader sees, and should therefore be reserved for topics most important to your audience. In many professional newspapers, local news appears on the front-page while less timely world and national news is often relegated to inside pages because it’s less timely. News is also prioritized on websites, where the timeliest news often takes the top position in a feed or blog. On a website, important and updated news might also be featured in a special banner or distinct multimedia package.

News value goes hand in hand with the elements of a **news lead**, which includes the *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why* and *how* of a story (see Chapter 3 for more on news leads). In determining the news value of a story, the reporter may determine that the *why* and *how* may need to be emphasized over other facts that may not be as relevant or important.

The more news value a story has, the more important and interesting it will be to a broad audience. More readers will relate and care about what they are reading. The news value of a high school story often determines whether it will interest the local community, in addition to the paper’s primary audience of students, teachers and parents. Below you’ll find a more detailed discussion of the key factors to keep in mind when assessing the news value of a story.

### Timeliness

It goes almost without saying that news travels fast. Information that is current is of greater interest than older news. When something important happens at your school, students and staff will talk about it and will pass on the information they have heard, even if it isn’t accurate. A newspaper staff trained to identify the relevant facts can quickly clarify these events through the newspaper’s website, as well as through social media such as Twitter.

Reporting old news in the print edition of your newspaper is unlikely to interest readers in an age of continuous Internet and cable news. Your newspaper’s website can be used to bridge the gap between print editions, especially through the use of **news briefs** – short articles that report the basic facts of timely news stories. Rather than printing information that has already been

### PHOTOS OF THE WEEK



Stefano Byer

The saxophone section of the Blue Knights Jazz Band performs a solo at the annual Jazz Night held on May 4.



Marian Walton

SENIOR DROSTE MILLEDGE cuts across in front of the Olathe goalie as he scores one of his team's four goals in the game on May 2.



Christian Wilcox

JUNIOR CALEB MASON works on his swing during Team Games class on May 2.



Maddie Schoenmann

JUNIOR DREW BROECKELMAN comforts SENIOR ABBY MOORE at the year's last choir concert on May 3.

## THE NEWS IN BRIEF

SCHOOL

written by Emily Donovan | art by Tom Lynch



### Parents plan after graduation party

A casino, an inflatable climbing wall, Noodles & Co., Sheridan's, karaoke, a DJ, prizes (including iPods) and more will be available to the Class of 2012. The After Graduation Party will take place Thursday, May 17 in the East gymnasium and cafeteria, from 9 p.m. to 1 a.m. Everything is free for seniors with their student ID.

A committee of 10 Lancer parents solicited donations from families, local businesses and the Parent-Teacher Association throughout the year to raise a \$12,000 budget for the event. These parents hope to provide a safe, fun party environment where the senior class can be together one last time.



### Teachers and students look forward to art awards

Artwork made throughout the semester will be awarded Wednesday, May 16 from 3-4:30 p.m. in the East cafeteria. The visual art department teachers will present awards to their students, finishing the two-week-long art show outside the counseling office, the art wing, the gym hallway and throughout the building.

Artwork was judged by Kansas City artists, art teachers and art curators from local museums and businesses. Awards will be given for judges' awards, teachers' awards, the first, second and third place winners, and honorable mentions in each visual arts category.

With coordination help from the booster club, Friends of the Art awards ceremony will include snacks.



### Students prepare for Lobster Landing

The foreign exchange program at East is partially funded by lobsters. Saturday, May 12, foreign exchange students will distribute lobsters outside the counselling hallway at the Lobster Landing from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Over 800 lobsters have been pre-ordered for the event.

The Lobster Landing is a bi-annual tradition coordinated by former Lancer parents for the past 35 years. Profits from the sale go towards study abroad scholarships for East students who plan to study abroad and benefit foreign exchange students through purchasing yearbooks, activity ticket, and holiday gifts from the school.

### COMMUNITY



### Corinth shops undergo construction

Local Prairie Village shopping centers are getting a facelift. LANE4 Property Group, Inc. has already begun renovation of the main center structure at Corinth Square, planning to replace the current wood-shingled roof with clay tiles and recycle design elements and materials of Urban Table. Additionally, four "pocket parks," or small sitting recreation areas, are scheduled to be constructed at each of the shopping center's four corners. LANE4 will be doing similar renovation for Johnny's Tavern exterior patio area and both of Hen House's Corinth Square and Prairie Village Shopping Center facades.



### City prepares for annual PV Art Fair

Kiosks housing local and national artists will take over the Village Shopping Center June 1, 2 and 3 for Prairie Village Art Fair. The Art Fair gives patrons the opportunity to walk up and down the village, entering booths to purchase artwork or speak directly with the artist, a special opportunity which connects the purchaser with the artist. Mediums include jewelry, ceramics, painting, woodwork and more.

The fair, however, includes more than original artwork. Friday and Saturday nights will offer live music from 7:10 p.m. performed by Kansas City musicians. In addition to food vendors throughout the event, Chris Cakes will offer a Pancake Breakfast Saturday morning from 8:30-10:30 a.m.



### Anti-abortion bill passes Kansas Legislature

According to a 23-16 vote in the Kansas Senate, health care professionals should not be sued or have their jobs put in jeopardy for refusing to perform an abortion by following their consciences. The bill passed in both the Kansas House and Senate, despite concerns that giving additional legal protection to doctors would allow some professions to deny life-saving procedures and limit access to birth control. Critics worry that a patient will not know the doctor's stance on abortion until he refuses to administer treatment and that the doctor will not have to refer the patient elsewhere.

The "conscience" bill, which is expected to be signed by Governor Sam Brownback, will go into effect July 1.

### STATE

**FIGURE 1.2** *The Harbinger*, Shawnee Mission East High School, Prairie Village, Kan. Reproduced by permission of C. Dow Tate.

News briefs on this page expand beyond school to include community and state items of interest to student readers. In addition to the briefs, relevant art heads each story adding visual interest. A vertical panel of photos of the week also adds visual interest and includes captions for each image. In addition to news briefs, many newspapers include sports and entertainment briefs.

made public, a striking photograph can also be used, with a long caption summarizing the story. High school papers often publish several pages of pictures from major school events, and offer slideshows or video footage on their websites.

## Proximity

News that happens in or near your school will be of interest to students, parents, staff and administrators. Such stories should be a primary focus for a school newspaper, which may be the only official record of the information.

As students, high school newspaper reporters have access to sources and information that may not be available to outsiders. For example, at Virginia's Chantilly High School, the *Purple Tide* newspaper reported on the removal of the senior class president and treasurer from their positions after they were caught drinking before a football game. The story quoted the treasurer admitting to the offense, while school officials would not comment on the reason the two were disqualified. Clearly, the student reporter had access to the students accused in the incident.



**FIGURE 1.3** *Spark*, Lakota East High School, Liberty Township, Ohio. Reproduced by permission of Dean Hume.

After district voters struck down a tax levy for the third consecutive time, staff of *Spark* newspaper analyzed in a series of articles what the impact of the district's spending deficit would be. Staff coverage included a series of stories, detailed in an explanatory box on the right page. A visual infographic at the bottom of the left page graphically shows the impact of the past votes dating from 2004.

news | levy

## Levy Failure Brings Lakota More Challenges

For the third time in a row, the Lakota levy was struck down by voters, this time 54-46 percent. Potentially facing a \$17.6 million spending deficit by 2016, Lakota will be forced to re-evaluate and make "painful cuts."

story rachel podnar | photo ellen fleetwood | infographic irfan ibrahim

**P**olitical climate. Taxes. Board indecision. Budgetary concerns. Poor economy. Misinformation. Transparency.

Whatever the factors were that contributed to the community's decision, the Nov. 8 election left the Lakota Local School District at a loss for funding. The third since 2005, the failure of the operating levy means the continuation of Lakota's long struggle for funding and the beginning of a new series of tough decisions and cuts to be made by the Lakota Board of Education.

Based on the Oct. 2011 Five-Year Forecast, a "snapshot" of the district's projected finances, at current spending levels, Lakota will have a spending deficit of \$17.6 million in 2016, up from the current spending deficit of \$9 million.

If the levy would have passed, it would have kept Lakota out of deficit spending until at least 2014.

According to Lakota Treasurer Jenni

Logan, the 4.75 mill levy would have garnered approximately \$12 million per year and would have filled a hole created by loss of state funding.

The decrease in Lakota's state funding will amount to about \$12 million per year by 2014. \$3 million of that amount is due to the end of the stimulus funds that Lakota has received and the state deciding not to replace those dollars. The other \$9 million comes from the loss of funds from a commercial activity tax.

Logan said the state discontinued a source of funding for local governments—the tangible personal property tax—in order to attract businesses to Ohio. To compensate for the loss of revenue, the state replaced the tax with the commercial activity tax, which is to be phased out by 2018. The tax, however, is being phased out early and will be completely phased out by 2014, resulting in a \$9 million loss for Lakota.

With the levy failure, it is time to reassess the budget and compensate for the \$12

million revenue loss, according to Logan.

"A need still exists. Without the needed revenue we are forced to make more drastic reductions," Logan said. "That is never fun. It is not something that we look forward to and it is a job that we have to do. We are beginning on it immediately."

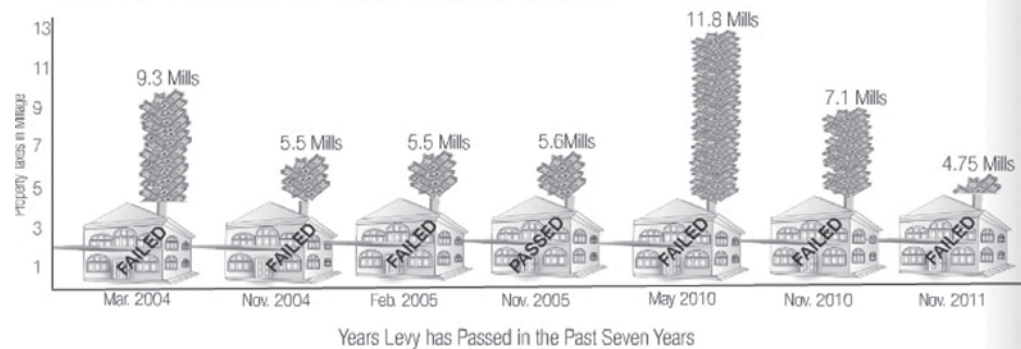
The timeframe for decision-making is short—if the Board chooses to place a levy on the ballot in Mar. they will need to take action by Dec. 7 in order to secure the necessary resolutions and certification, according to Logan. In the coming weeks, the Board must decide whether it will request another levy and if it will be on the ballot in Mar., Jun. or Nov.

This decision will work in tandem with what cuts are made and where, and under what time frame they will be made.

"One of the first steps is [to decide whether or not to] go back to the ballot," Logan said. "If [we choose to put another levy on the ballot] do we want to keep it at 4.75 mills? With this defeat we have now lost

### Millage Matters

The Lakota District has had 16 levies concerning either current expenses, reduction of current expenses, or emergency, six of which have passed. The most recent levy asked for \$12.6 million. One mill is equal to a tenth of a percent in property tax. So, if the millage is 4 mills, the percent taxed to a \$100,000 is .04 percent, or \$400 in tax dollars per year. Due to property values fluctuating over the past seven years, the millage has done likewise.



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Covering events that happen far from the school, such as the tsunami that hit Japan in 2011, will need to be localized for a high school newspaper. In this case, schools with large Asian populations could have interviewed students who might have friends and relatives living in Japan and covered the story from their perspectives. No news story should take reporting from an already published account in a professional publication, even if the source is attributed.

### Prominence

People of prominence will add interest to any news story. A school visit by First Lady Michelle Obama, accompanied by the first lady of the Republic of Korea, made front-page news in *The A*

FIGURE 1.3 (continued)

revenue because we won't be able to collect in 2012, we have lost a year of collection."

Lakota Superintendent Karen Mantia said that the decision of whether or not to go back on the ballot is part of many decisions on the horizon.

"The Board will have to ask where will we go from here," she said. "If we do go back, how much do we go back for? Will it be with the same services or will services have to change here in Lakota? We're evaluating all of that."

Unlike in the Nov. 2010 levy, the Board did not release a list of objectives to be cut in the event of the levy's failure. As of press time, details regarding specific cuts have not been released. According to Logan, there is no set number for how much cuts must amount to, because future levies could affect the how much needs to be cut.

Board vice president Ben Dibble spoke to the fact that where the inevitable cuts will come from is largely up in the air at this point.

"We haven't said exactly what [those cuts] will be," Dibble said. "We can't at this point. The obvious things are already cut. Things like busing—already cut. It will be more of cutting into what we are actually offering. You keep hearing analogies of cutting into the muscle and into the bone because there is no fat. We cut into the muscle so I guess it's back into the bone where we're cutting into the structure of the thing."

According to Dibble, one of the reasons the Board did not release a list of specific

This issue is the first piece in *Spark's* series of post-levy budget coverage

cuts to be made was because of the arrival of Mantia as the new superintendent. Mantia was new to the district and she was deciding where her priorities for the district were and thus she could not outline specific cuts to be made.

To approach the task ahead of making cuts in the schools, Mantia is relying on a data-based decision making model, one that analyzes costs and benefits to all programs. Dibble said that she has gone through a process already to determine where Lakota's costs are and she will use that when making her decisions.

Mantia said, "We'll match the cost to the service as provided. We want to ask the question of the value that it brings to students and what students need."

While the areas from which cuts will be made have not yet been announced, it is the clear message of the NoLakota group that the district should start with a conversation with the teachers.

Rich Hoffman, spokesman for NoLakota, said that Lakota should come up with 5



Lakota levy supporters gathered at Champs on Nov. 8 to watch the election returns.

percent savings out of the teacher's contract.

"I'd like to see the superintendent sit down with the LEA [Lakota Educator's Association] and ask them if they would be willing to work within the budget and come up with five percent savings," Hoffman said. "That way nobody has to lose a job, no electives need to be cut. They need to figure out how to work in the budget that the community set the constraints for [on Nov. 8]."

After the last levy failure, cuts were felt in all grade levels, across all areas: transportation, class offerings and sizes and athletics. While the Board does not know what exactly the next round of cuts will look like, they will most likely come from personnel expenditures, where approximately 77 percent of the general fund is spent on wages and benefits.

"There isn't much else to cut other than personnel," Logan said. "Not in a budget of \$1.55 million when 77 percent of the expenditures are in personnel. But that doesn't mean we won't look at everything. We renegotiate negotiate contracts. We try to save dollars with anything and everything we can look at but that is not going to fix our problems. The spending deficit is \$9 million and there's not enough of those expenditures to solve \$9 million."

Community outreach coordinator for the Lakota Levy Committee Kelly Casper reiterates that while it is painful, cuts will likely come in the form of personnel reductions.

"Unfortunately, the biggest place that we can cut is personnel and I hate to see that happen," Casper said. "I hate to see teachers losing their jobs but I have tremendous, tremendous faith in Dr. Mantia. She is trying to get Lakota back on track."

With the failure of the levy and the certainty of cuts, Mantia said that district will use the failure as an opportunity to re-evaluate the district's situation. Her plan

was to make cuts regardless of a levy passage or failure and she said this failure is a chance to take a deeper look at Lakota.

"[After talking to the community], the second step is to step back and reprioritize," Mantia said. "We'll have to answer a lot of questions. Will we go back on the ballot, what will we do with the shortage of money? I don't have answers for [those questions]. But there are a lot of questions circling around. We're regrouping."

With all of the factors that go into how voters make decisions, there are any number of causes that lead to the mandate for Lakota to regroup. Dibble expressed his concern that the other issues on the ballot might have taken away from the levy.

He said that levies do not commonly go on the ballot at the same time as board elections and that may have contributed to the failure, while Casper thinks it is a sign of a lack of concern for good schools in the community.

Hoffman disagrees with both of these points and argues that this levy was voted down because people feel that they are taxed too much.

"[The levy failed] because the taxes are too high and [the community] is frustrated and there isn't any plan to bring the budget together, even though it might not sound that way in the school system," Hoffman said.

Mantia said that the issue is not about why the levy failed but rather that a new dialogue must begin in Lakota between the school district and the community in order to move forward.

Mantia said, "We need to find out what the community wants from us. This is their failure and we need to ask the questions and develop an understanding of where our community is. I don't think it's about liking kids or not liking kids, it's about the climate. We need to understand the community better." ■

*Blast*, the student newspaper of Annandale High School, in Annandale, Virginia. The story included additional links to a slideshow and video footage from this event.

Prominence differs with context. Student leaders, teachers, coaches and administrators are prominent in all schools, and much news will center around these figures. Organizations such as the school's student government or principal's council can also be important in shaping news.

## Audience impact

A story that influences or affects a large number of readers will have greater news value. In high schools, news may impact on a single set of students, students in certain classes and age levels



or the entire school. A story's importance may also extend beyond the school to the broader community. When the voters rejected a tax levy for the Lakota, Ohio Schools for the third time, *Spark* newspaper staff took two pages to examine how their high school would be forced to cut back its programs, an issue of relevance to the entire community. The issue had such impact that *Spark* staff extended it into a series of stories, analyzing how the budget situation would affect everything from academics to sports.

### Surprise or oddity

A story that reports on something surprising, unusual or mysterious can spark interest and draw in new readers. While such stories may have less news value than others, they are often topics of discussion and may generate publicity for the paper when people talk about them. *The Harbinger* newspaper of Shawnee Mission East High School in Kansas, reported on a student's project to construct a dress from folded Starburst wrappers as a costuming project for her school's fashion show on Earth Day.

### Human interest

Stories about people, their struggles, triumphs, passions and accomplishments will often be of interest to readers. Human interest stories are often those that people relate and respond to on a personal level. In many newspapers, human interest stories generate such reaction that readers may want to offer help, join in a cause, donate money or provide some appropriate help. In *The Campanile* newspaper of Palo Alto Senior High School, a front-page story paid tribute to a loved head custodian retiring after 29 years at the school. The story told of a campaign by the school to raise money for a trip to Hawaii for the employee and his family, the generosity of a teacher in offering her family home to him for the visit, and a letter-writing campaign thanking him for his hard work and dedication to the school.

### Conflict and drama

When a story reports on a conflict, the news value is high. People choose sides, squaring off against each other, often with one side possibly unhappy with the outcome. Emotions can flare, adding drama. Conflict in schools often crops up among groups of students, between students and administrators or between teachers and administrators. Students who joined the Occupy San Diego movement in 2011 to protest about inequalities in wealth were interviewed and photographed by *The Falconer* of Torrey Pines High in California. This story had the additional benefits of timeliness and proximity, which helped justify its front-page placement.

## WWW

**WEBLINK** Check out  
[www.spj.org](http://www.spj.org)

The website of the Society of Professional Journalists has a link to Generation J's Reading Room which contains advice on a variety of topics related to becoming a better journalist, and a Journalist's Toolbox under the Resources link.

### Visual impact

The news value of a story can also be enhanced if it has a striking visual component. People will often be the primary focus of accompanying photos or videos, but occasional scene-setting pictorials can also be effective. Schools abound with opportunities for strong visual presentations. Good editors will ensure these images have strong camera angles, a range of people, as well as good pacing and variety. Homecoming, dances, traditional school events, the prom and graduation are obvious choices for visual stories. Good visual journalists look for ordinary, unnoticed and behind-the-scenes images to broaden this list. They should also consider providing multimedia presentations and slideshows of still images for the newspaper website.

Striking images are also useful for capturing the drama, conflict and emotion of a story. The surprise on the homecoming queen's face, the excitement of the band members winning a marching competition or an athlete's tearful reaction to a loss or victory are all visuals that are both memorable and informative.



**FIGURE 1.4** *Harbinger Online*, Shawnee Mission East High School, Prairie Village, Kan. Reproduced by permission of C. Dow Tate.

High school life is full of emotion running the gamut from pure excitement to great disappointment. These pictures are among the most dramatic ones for readers or online readers. Photographer Jake Crandall wisely followed the football team into the locker room after it defeated a crosstown rival to get this emotion-filled moment of excitement of a player hoisting a wooden trophy.

## THE IMPORTANCE OF AUDIENCE

Just as a local or regional newspaper must be responsive to its entire community, so must the school newspaper. The audience includes students, teachers, staff, administrators, the school board, parents, alumni, taxpayers and other community members, including local businesses, especially those that interact with the school. All of these audiences should be covered and drawn on as sources of information. Establishing relationships with each segment of your audience is important in making this happen.

The **primary audience** for a school newspaper is the students, staff and teachers within the school and, of these, students are the most important. The school newspaper is the voice of the students and most likely the only media outlet devoted to their perspectives. While many students communicate through social media, the messages aren't publicly distributed. Serving the student population is a huge responsibility with far-reaching implications. The newspaper staff must be responsive to the full range of student voices in its coverage. Staff members must avoid catering to certain factions, cliques or segments, but must strive to represent the entire student body. For each issue, the school's various groups and populations should be considered when story assignments are made.

The **secondary audience** for the newspaper and website are people in the local community, particularly parents, taxpayers, alumni and local businesses. Your paper and website could also be accessed by a wide network of interested readers from surrounding communities, school alumni, other student journalists and friends and relatives of people in your school community.

Serving the newspaper's different audiences isn't easy. Newspaper reporters and editors are constantly called upon to make judgments about possible stories presented in editorial meetings and on their beats. Without a structure in place, students left to brainstorm story ideas may look only to those activities and events with which they are familiar. Editors must be vigilant about making sure that the newspaper serves the entire school community. Recruiting underrepresented student populations to the staff is one good strategy. Or, the staff can seek to include a broader range of voices through submissions, in the form of guest columns and editorials, entertainment reviews, collections of student quotes and through reader-submitted photos and videos.

### Quick Exercise

Using a print or online newspaper, find examples of five news leads and identify the news value of each. Why is that news value of interest to the reader?

### Test your knowledge

How does visual impact play a role in news reporting? When can it replace traditional prose as a form of storytelling?

## BEAT REPORTING

News coverage will frequently be developed by staff members assigned to **beats** – specific people, groups, activities, academic departments, administrators and other areas of interest. Beat reporters will have regular sources on their beat whom they will visit frequently or periodically for updates and potential stories.

Two kinds of stories will often emerge from these beat conversations. One kind of story that may emerge will have immediate news value – upcoming events and student or club awards, for instance. The beat reporter can help the staff determine if this information becomes a news brief (see above) or expanded into a print or online story. Another kind of story might provide the reporter with information to be developed, discussed and possibly used later. This information is referred to as a **future story**. While it's possible to use such information immediately as an **advance story** – a story about something coming up in the future – the information could be kept in a database of ideas that might be covered later, when more information or context might be available. Database entries should be chronological and include the possible story idea, the date it is tentatively scheduled, contact sources, possible visual ideas, website connections and any other information that will help in planning coverage. Maintaining a beat database prevents the stories from getting lost, and gives staff a starting point for coverage in each issue.

Say, for instance, that during the fall semester a student reporter interviews the school's drama teacher, who mentions that he plans to bring a professional Shakespeare company to perform for the entire school the following spring. At this point he doesn't know which play will be performed, when the assembly will take place or how it will be organized. As the school year progresses, though, his plans become more detailed and firm. After the initial interview, there isn't enough information to write a solid story. The reporter makes a note in her beat database to follow up with the teacher and emphasizes that this is a story she'd really like to write. When the performance plans are established, she can write an advance story. Collaborating with the web team would help them plan for multimedia coverage.

## “ WORDS of WISDOM

*Beats are the backbone of a good publication. Like a cop covering a beat, journalists need to keep on top of things – because newsmakers, especially high school newsmakers, forget how important it is to publicize information. If we are keeping the student body informed, we are talking to the newsmakers every week.*

*For my staff, I have the Beginning Journalism students cover beats and report back each week to the newspaper staff. It's important for them to learn the basics. Plus, it's a huge predictor of their future involvement in the paper. Students who work hard and get their beat done every week are driven. Eventually, these driven students almost always write the best stories and make the best editors on the newspaper staff.*

*Jeff Nardone, Adviser, The Tower, Grosse Pointe South High School, Grosse Pointe Farms, Mich.*





I think the other things are perks and additions that come with it. There's that pride." Van Sickle also understands that varsity jackets are a tradition for a lot of students. "I hope people are investing in something that is meaningful to them and that they can wear," Van Sickle said. "It's part of that high school experience and in time, when you decide to pack it away with all of your yearbooks, and special photos, and memories, and prom ticket, whatever your friends put on your locker that you save as souvenirs, it's part of those things, but it's really something you can wear for a lifetime." Van Sickle wants students to show their school spirit while at a school events or somewhere outside of school. She earned her varsity letter, but never got a jacket. "My mom was a stay at home mom and my dad was retired, as well as disabled. He was a veteran and blind, so [buying a varsity jacket] was not something that I wanted to ask my parents for. I still have my varsity letter. I was in Track." The students who have met with Van Sickle understand why the district has made this rule. "She came to a Student Council meeting and she told us about it and it sounded pretty reasonable," Armstrong said. "I just think that it's important to prevent anything bad from happening. I think that the school is kind of complacent because nothing bad has happened yet."

Armstrong thinks that if there was a problem at school, the students would change their minds about the rule. Root, who feels she has the right to wear her jacket is upset about the rule, but doesn't plan on causing any problems in order to get her point across. "I'll obey the rules," Root said, "but I'm not happy about them." Regardless of students' and teachers' opinions on the matter, Armstrong is still convinced of one thing. "It's just a jacket," Armstrong said.

say fairness is  
arsity jacket, like,  
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wouldn't you let  
? **Root said**

**news 3**

# Lesley Van Sickle SPEAKS OUT

ABOUT THE RUMORS AT WKHS

Principal Lesley Van Sickle held a press conference with the *Murmur* staff to address rumors and other topics of discussion

By Allie Shaner

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <h2>Rumor</h2> <p>Powderpuff is canceled next year because of unsportsmanship, incidents at the game and upset parents</p> <h2>Reality</h2> <p>"I haven't heard that rumor at all about parents being upset about it nor have we talked about canceling it at all."</p> | <h2>Rumor</h2> <p>Wristbands are to be worn during Prom and other dances</p> <h2>Reality</h2> <p>"I don't have any clarification on the wristbands outside of what we originally talked about, my assumption is that the dance code will be in effect for prom, middle school dances, high school dances, and yes that should be what it currently is."</p>  |
| <h2>Rumor</h2> <p>Boots and Moccasins are Banned</p> <h2>Reality</h2> <p>"Not sure where the rumor of moccasins and Ugg boots came from, you just aren't allowed to wear slippers, you have to have a hard sole on the bottom of your shoes for safety purposes."</p>   | <h2>Rumor</h2> <p>The dress code is going to change at the dances</p> <h2>Reality</h2> <p>"The only dress code restriction that I recall from it is that your dress or dresses need to be fingertip above your knees and [you need to be] in shoes. Outside of that regard to rumors about the strapless and open backs and those sort of things, it's a district wide policy, and it was first implemented at Mott's Homecoming."</p> |

**FIGURE 1.5** *The Murmur*, Waterford-Kettering High School, Waterford Township, Mich. Reproduced by permission of Brian Wilson.

A high school newspaper staff can regularly meet with its principal and other administrators to help answer students' questions and clarify issues in the paper. In this column, Principal Lesley Van Sickle met with *Murmur* staff to clarify the rumor vs. reality of several issues among students in the school.

After the show, the production could be reviewed by a writer for an entertainment **review**, and might include a slideshow or video on the paper's website. If the paper's print edition is being finalized soon after the production, a story with student reaction quotes could be included. Or, photographs could be used with captions and might refer students to coverage on the website or elsewhere in the paper. A video interview with the school's drama club, interviews capturing

## WWW

**WEBLINK** Check out  
[www.myhighschooljournalism.org](http://www.myhighschooljournalism.org)

Hosted by the American Society of News Editors, this site features a national edition of stories from across the country as well as links to high school newspapers they host. A good source for story ideas.

student reaction to the event or an interview with the visiting professionals would all add different dimensions to the coverage.

In order to serve their student audience, beat reporters should schedule regular meetings with the school principal to keep abreast of what is going on with the school, and to get comments on specific areas of student concern. Having a regularly scheduled meeting with the principal is crucial to identifying important information for coverage. The principal could be invited to write an occasional guest column, or simply respond to student concerns brought out in a meeting with reporters. Many school newspapers also regularly assign students to cover school board meetings as a beat. School boards make policy decisions which can have significant impact on students at all the schools within their jurisdictions.

Other important sources for beat reporting could include the school PTA and booster groups, the state board of education, local governments (particularly if they share a tax base with the school), and state athletic organizations (especially if they define school athletic districts). While

### HELPFUL TIPS

## Covering a beat

Being a good beat reporter is more than running into a source in the hall and asking, "Hi, got any news for me?" While you know what news is and what might work for upcoming coverage, your beat contact may be busy or may not understand the potential of information. Here are some tips for good beat coverage:

- Try to work with editors to get a beat assignment that matches your interests and prior knowledge. Students involved in specific activities will have a base of knowledge about them, and will already know the organizers and participants. This paves the way for good coverage.
- Go and visit your beat sources early in the school semester, introduce yourself and explain what you'll be doing. Provide the sources with your contact information and establish a good time to touch base on a regular basis. How often you meet with each source should be appropriate for both your schedules and the newspaper's publishing schedule. Once you've established yourself as the relevant reporter, other sources on your beat may contact you when they have news to pass on.
- Ask questions. Use information you've heard or found on websites to start the conversation. For example, "I hear the math department is starting an after-school tutoring program. Can you tell me when that program will be set up?" Take notes during the meeting and save those notes so you can go back and review them. Be sure to clarify anything that might be just rumor circulating in the school.
- If your newspaper has a database of future events, add what you've learned so it doesn't get lost. Revise the database when details are firmed up. Add potential resource needs: audio, video, photography or informational graphics, so editors can plan accordingly for these assignments.
- Ask your source for suggestions for all kinds of possible stories: achievements, interesting classroom activities, guest speakers, presentations. Think visually as well as verbally. While a class might be celebrating Black History Month by wearing period clothing and having readings, these events may not be a good match for your publishing cycle. In that case, they might be better covered on the newspaper's website, both through a story and a slideshow or video.
- Establish good relationships with your sources by practicing smart public relations. Thank each source by email after meeting, and keep reminding the source how interested you are in gathering relevant information. Make sure to let sources know when their stories and visuals are published or posted, so they'll be sure to see them, whether in print or on the website. Drop off copies of the newspaper or send them links to the coverage online. After a story is published, write a quick email thanking sources for helping you with the information.
- Don't drop the ball on your beats or you'll miss out on potentially good stories. Your beat sources may not have something for you at every meeting, but providing information to you periodically should be enough to ensure that this beat gets thoroughly covered. In most cases you'll be dealing with people who seek publicity for their program and events. They'll appreciate your work.



the people who run these organizations are harder to contact and might take more time to interview, their impact on the educational process is far-reaching. Establishing relationships before crucial information is needed should be a goal of all beat reporters.

Beat reporters should frequently consult local news and other websites to keep tabs on potential stories and to learn as much about the issues before contacting sources. With local, state and national government organizations, much relevant information can be easily accessed online. With private organizations, sources may be harder to reach and potentially take more time to contact. Starting early is often a key to reaching a source.

## FEATURIZING NEWS

Most news published in the print editions of high school papers is **featurized news**: stories with some basic news value, but lacking a strong aspect of timeliness. A story without a strong time connection is sometimes referred to as **evergreen news**: it could be printed today, a week from now, next month or even later without losing importance or relevance. Since most high school newspapers don't publish frequently enough to include breaking news, reporters must emphasize a different **angle** of the story's news value and might need to relate it to a broader topic. Explaining the *how* and *why* of the news is a key service that a high school paper can provide with such features. For instance, a story might have several potential news value elements such as timeliness, conflict and prominence. The writer might choose to emphasize one value over another, avoiding an older timeliness factor in favor of conflict or prominence. This would allow the writer to construct the story around that angle.

In a front-page story, *The Charger*, the Oxford (Mississippi) High School newspaper, used both words and images to report on an increase in student piercings and a new school policy curtailing them, to be implemented at the beginning of the following term. The story involved some time-sensitive news, but was also important in a broader sense because the policy was controversial. In the past, the school had allowed students to cover piercings with bandages, but that policy was being abused and therefore changed, according to the article.

Note the way the story, "Enforced policy limits jewelry in piercings," begins:

When senior Eliot Miller stabbed his ears, he was not bent on self-mutilation – he was merely piercing them.

"If you do it my way, ice and needles," Miller said. "You hold the ice on your ear for 30 seconds, then you take the earring and – without hesitation – poke it through."

Miller says he got the earrings because, "they're different." When he debuted his new studs, he got good reactions.

"I was just doing something at first," Miller said. "A couple of girls said they liked it, so I kept it in."

School nurse Tracy Shawn says before getting a piercing a person should first consider why he/she wants one.

"These decisions will not go away, and if visible, can cause others to form opinions about the way you look," Shawn said.

The story doesn't start with a traditional news lead, doesn't necessarily have a timeliness angle and uses a writing style more typical of a feature story. But lower in the story, comes the news angle:

Beginning in January, trouble may come when the school rule dealing with jewelry in piercings will be enforced.

According to Superintendent Kim Stasny, piercings in places other than in ears tend to be disruptive to the learning environment.

"Eliminating or decreasing distractions is important to teachers, administrators and parents," Stasny said.

A story such as the one above can offer journalistic work with depth and breadth, which anchors the material around it. On the same front-page of *The Charger*, the paper published two pieces of timely and more traditional news, and a horizontal bar of photos from the school's medieval faire.

### Quick Exercise

Compile a list of beats that you think should be covered throughout your school. Include academic areas, clubs, sports and other relevant areas. Compare your list with other students' lists. How could you organize the coverage of these beats?

### Test your knowledge

What are some ways in which beat coverage helps improve the diversity of news coverage in print and online?

**FIGURE 1.6** *The Charger*, Oxford High School, Oxford, Miss., front-page, Vol. 30, Issue 3, Nov./Dec. 2010.

Reproduced by permission of Cynthia Ferguson, adviser.

Many high school newspapers print feature stories and news on their front-pages often giving more space to features. In this feature on a new school piercing policy, the story appears in a prime position at the top of the page and features a non-standard typeface which helps separate it from the news stories also running on the page. The story also has four visuals showing various forms of student piercings.

proves challenging  
see page 9  
SOCCER SEASON KICKS OFF  
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Prairie Village, MO 64070

OXFORD HIGH SCHOOL

# the CHARGER

Volume 30, Issue 3  
November/December 2010  
222 Bramlett Blvd., Oxford, Miss.

## Medieval Faire

students explore the past  
Photos by Kate Krause and Courtney Wilcox

## Students get 'invitations' to Saturday school

ROSALIE DOERKSEN  
Staff Writer

After a week of suffering from strep throat, junior Wade Lindley returned to school only to realize that he had a day of Saturday school looming before him.

The latest session of Saturday school met on November 13.

"(The supervisors) were really mean, and they made me do work," he said.

Not just makeup work for his classes, but, according to Lindley, "useless busywork." If a student didn't have any work to make up for a class, he says the supervisor gave them other "random" work to complete.

Any Beckham, the Saturday school coordinator says, however, that all the work for each student is prepared by their teacher. If they finish making up the work they missed, the teacher provides additional work that the student completes for an extra grade.

English III teacher Kim Austin was one of five teachers who applied to supervise Saturday school.

She says her jobs included taking regular attendance and issuing students' work that teachers left for them to do, including worksheets, study guides, and novel reading.

Several of Austin's students were in attendance that Saturday.

"I left plenty of work for them and graded every single page of it," she said. "If they completed the work correctly they were given the grade for it, which helped several of them raise their grade."

According to Austin, Saturday school is not mandatory. She says the administration "invites" students to attend, for their own benefit.

"We call it an invitation so that (the students) can see it as an opportunity to help themselves," she said.

The school attendance policy says students may only miss six days of school for semester classes and twelve for year long courses in order to receive credit.

Saturday school and, Beckham says, a few days of summer school, are an opportunity for students to essentially make up days of school.

When a student reaches five, nine, or twelve absences, Beckham issues an intent-to-attend form to them, which the students sign. She then distributes the seven hours of that school day to replace missed class hours, beginning with the semester courses.

Beckham says she gave out a total of 123 invitations to Saturday school this semester.

Junior Tal Toole was absent from school for seven days during the first semester, five of them due to a bout of pneumonia.

He says the administration informed him and the other attendees that they were "invited" to Saturday school. But, he says the invitation is simply a "cover up" to make it look like the administration was working with the students.

"If I declined the 'invitation,'" he said, "the school would fail me in (Trigonometry) for missing seven days of school even with my make up work all made up and a passing average."

Toole says the extra educational time is most beneficial for those who skip school for unnecessary reasons and for those in need of raising their grades, but should not be required of those who missed school due to sickness.

## enforced policy limits jewelry in PIERCINGS

### Piercing trend among students

DORA CHEN  
Staff Writer

When senior Eliot Miller stabbed his ears, he was not bent on self-mutilation—he was merely piercing them.

"If you do it my way, ice and needles," Miller said. "You hold the ice on your ear for 30 seconds, then you take the earring and—without hesitation—poke it through."

Miller says he got the earrings because "they're different." When he debuted his new studs, he got good reactions.

"I was just doing something at first," Miller said. "A couple of girls said they liked it, so I kept it in."

School nurse Tracy Shawn says before getting a piercing a person should first consider why he/she wants one.

"These decisions will not go away, and if viable, can cause others to form opinions about the way you look," Shawn said.

Sophomore Donya Alqasbi decided to get her nose pierced last year while she was in Egypt. The piercing became infected because the piercers used a needle gun, typically not used for noses.

"You're not supposed to do that," Alqasbi said about the needle gun. "It was really bad."

Although she does not condone certain body piercings, Shawn says going to certified piercing salons will reduce risks of these infections and other harmful effects of piercings, such as keloid build up, reactions, and allergies.

"Make sure you are using a licensed place and not some unsterile backdoor person because they can tell you anything they want to and not actually properly sterilize their equipment," Shawn said.

Sophomore Mary Catherine Hall currently has her nose and ears pierced. In past years, however, she has had her tongue, septum, lip, and nose pierced—all done at home.

"Doing it yourself isn't really smart because you have a bigger risk of getting an infection, but that doesn't stop me," Hall said.

To pierce her tongue, Hall purchased a sterilized piercing kit from eBay. Aside from proper equipment, though, Shawn emphasized that a piercer must have knowledge of the nerve lines and veins in the area he/she is piercing.

"If these areas are pierced though, you will have great trouble with swelling, decreased circulation, pain, infection, and at times irreversible damage for life," Shawn said.

Beginning in January, trouble may come when the school rule dealing with jewelry in piercings will be enforced.

According to Superintendent Kim Stansy, piercings in places other than in ears tend to be disruptive to the learning environment.

"Eliminating or decreasing distractions is important to teachers, administrators and parents," Stansy said.

To Miller, the claim that jewelry in non-ear

See **Piercing** page 3

Upper Left: Senior **Sammy Rippon** wears his nose ring. Rippon has had his nose pierced for one and a half years. Left: Junior **Dondra Gastin** shows off his lip ring. Gastin took his sister's car after work to get his lip pierced. Bottom Left: Senior **Meemee McGuire** took off her bandaid to show off her eyebrow ring. Right: Senior **Dallas Nutt** wears a small silver stud in her nose. This silver stud is usually replaced by a clear one for the school day.

Photos by Jake Williamson & Katie Krause

## Teacher gets custody of Coleman brothers

ROSALIE DOERKSEN  
Staff Writer

On October 28, Denise Collier, the school's behavior specialist, got an urgent phone call from her student, sophomore Jesse Coleman. He had just discovered the dead body of his mother, and wanted her to come get him and his brother.

Considering the circumstance, Collier says Jesse was extremely leave.

he says he did suffer from depression during that time, "for about a day and a half."

"It was awful," he said. "I felt pretty sad, and surprisingly, not a single drop of tears came out of my eyes, but I still love her."

The Mississippi Department of Human Services gave Collier temporary custody of both Jesse and Drake. Collier says she has worked with both boys extensively since she first met

into the new one pretty easily, but Jesse has had a little more trouble.

"Foodwise, (the transition was) extremely difficult, but otherwise, not that hard," Jesse said.

Learning to eat vegetables, especially broccoli, is difficult for Jesse, according to Collier, but every week she gives the boys a reward for their effort known as "Tree Farm Friday." On that day, Jesse and Drake are allowed to eat whatever they want: chips, french fries

ments," she said.

However, Collier says both Jesse and Drake have blossomed in the "really stimulating atmosphere" of her home. She says she can learn from them as well.

"They force me to expand my perspective," she said.

Jesse and Drake are both talented with computers and are extremely intelligent according to Collier. Jesse regularly works with a computer pro-



## NEWS IN OTHER CONTEXTS

When you hear the word “news,” you might think of information that will appear only on the front-page or in the traditional news sections of a paper or website. But other sections include stories that should be considered news, owing to the various factors that give them news value. For instance, sports news includes timely information about games, conflict and drama. Occasionally, a sports team might be playing for a regional or state title, which might demand a front-page treatment in the print or online editions. Sports briefs columns are good ways to keep readers updated on various sports without devoting space to stories that are old news (see Chapter 6 for more on this topic).

Entertainment pages often include information about upcoming concerts, movies and events, all of which are timely and newsworthy. Entertainment stories might also have stronger news ties if other news value elements are present. Many entertainment stories feature people who are well known and popular with the school audience, adding prominent figures to the mix.

In *The Prospector* – high school newspaper of Mount Prospect, Illinois – a 2011 front-page photo featured Haley Reinhart, who had made it to the final three of that season’s *American Idol* and had appeared locally for a hometown visit. Reinhart attended high school in the district, so her success had generated a lot of local interest. A small story that ran with the photo referred readers to the newspaper’s website for more coverage.

The paper also noted that Lee DeWyze, another local high school student, had won the *Idol* competition the previous year. The newspaper also extensively covered DeWyze when he returned to his hometown as one of the show’s top three contestants.

High school newspaper staff need to be frequently reminded about the importance of covering their own community. When important national or state news takes place, it will only be newsworthy for the school paper if a local connection can be established. This is known as **localizing news** – making it relevant to the immediate audience. Trying to cover national or state news without localizing might result in using information gleaned from **third-party sources**, people interviewed by other publications and attributed to those publications in your story. (This should be avoided whenever possible.) It’s always better to localize the story through your own reporting.

## SOURCING NEWS

**News stories** should generally feature quotes and information from one of two types of sources. Sources provide authoritative, informed facts which may also include opinion. Opinion should appear only in quotes, and not in the reporter’s writing. Sources provide both **direct quotes**, which appear in stories in quotation marks with **attribution**, the name and source identification information in stories and **indirect quotes** in which comments might be summarized or shortened by rewording so the quote is no longer in the speaker’s actual words, but with the information still attributed to the source.

### Primary sources

**Primary sources** are generally those people who are actually interviewed for a story. Preferably, an interview should be live and face-to-face although Skype, telephone or online interviews may be necessary when time is limited or the source isn’t available for a meeting. Primary sources should be those individuals most informed about or most closely related to the topic of the story, who can clarify the issues or provide opinions. In most cases, primary sources should be selected from your school or local community. Quotes can also come from professionals or people not associated with your school, when appropriate, and when they are the ultimate source for that information.

### Quick Exercise

Identify five topics currently in the news. Identify ways in which these topics could be localized for coverage in your school newspaper and online site. Who would you interview to localize the information and make it relevant to your readers?

### Test your knowledge

Why is using information from third-party sources a weak reporting technique?

**FIGURE 1.7** *The Prospector*, Prospect High School, Mount Prospect, Ill., back page, May 27, 2011. Reproduced by permission of Jason Block.

A back-page sports news story on a new pay-to-play policy garners an entire page of coverage including two sidebars and an illustration photo. The story takes a look at the impact the new policy will have on students, compares the new policy to those at other nearby schools and questions whether non-sports groups will eventually be covered by the policy.

Friday, May 27, 2011

SPORTS

**Bringing back the title**  
 The baseball team reclaimed the MSL Championship title for the first time since the last championship win in 2003 — the fifth in Prospect history — on May 21. For the story on the team's finish, go online.  
**On Prospectornow.com...**



The price to play

Graphic by Ian Magnuson and Heather Dove

District 214 charges all co-curricular activity participants \$25 fee to continue playing

**By Alyssa Zediker and Jack Mathews**  
*Executive Sports Editors*

Junior Maura Benson will not only be spending time at gyms and camps over the summer, but she will also be spending money to be there. Benson plays volleyball, basketball and badminton, and she has to pay \$96 for a two-week volleyball camp and \$176 for a three-week basketball camp.

Benson also participates in a summer basketball league, which adds expenses for uniforms and a sign-up fee. On top of the camp and league fees, Benson and her sister, freshman Trisha Benson, are also doing a team camp at the University of Notre Dame, which costs around \$200. Benson said it is expensive to play sports, and even though her family can afford it, she still wants to help cover some of the costs.

Everything seems to have some monetary value and, as a result, nothing is truly free — even public schools. Parents pay for registration fees, bus fees and cafeteria lunches, and now students in all District 214 schools will be required to pay \$25 for every activity they join.

Activities affected by this change are the same as those affected by the academic code policy. These include all sports, music programs and clubs. The district is implementing the fee for only

DISTRICT COST COMPARISON

**Barrington** - Registration fees are \$138 higher than District 214, plus an additional \$50 charge for band or orchestra

**Downers Grove** - \$105 per activity; \$22 for band or orchestra

**Elmwood Park** - \$50 per activity; \$100 for band or orchestra

**Glenbard** - \$130 per activity

**Glenbrook** - Registration fees are \$100 higher than District 214

**Maine 207** - Registration fees are \$129 higher than District 214

**New Trier** - Registration fees are \$137 higher than District 214, plus \$15 per activity

**Highland Park** - Registration fees are \$190 higher than District 214, plus \$100 per activity

**Lake Forest** - \$195 per season with a family maximum of \$780

**Oak Park-River Forest** - \$50 per activity

**Stevenson** - \$65 per activity

**Woodstock** - \$92 per activity

**Prospect Heights District 23** - \$125 per activity with a family maximum of \$375

those who participate in activities in order to prevent students from paying for services they don't use.

While the fees could put an economic strain on some families, the district has set a limit so no family will have to pay more than \$100.

If a family cannot afford the activity fee, they can apply for a fee waiver along with the registration fee. The fee waiver is based on parent's income level. There are also opportunities to set up payment plans that divide the total cost into smaller payments that can be made over a period of time.

The money from the fees will go directly to the district office, where Associate Superintendent for Finance and Operations Deb Parenti will handle the distribution.

In the past, parents were actually surprised by the lack of fees because they were used to paying for various activities at the elementary and middle school levels.

The District 214 Board of Education decided a year ago to add a fee in order to offset the cost of running each school's activities.

For the past 17 years, the Board of Education has been able to balance its budget with increasing taxes, but with recent economic problems, the state owes District 214 \$4 million. Since the state is \$15 billion in debt, it cannot pay its bills to the public schools.

"We haven't really hurt the class-

room for the students [with the fee change], and that's our basic focus," board member Bill Dussling said. "Let's control the budget with minimal effect on the classroom."

Associate Principal Greg Minter feels the only benefit students will see from the fees is the coverage of any competition transportation, hotels and meals when teams compete at state.

"I want to be able to maintain [our activities] as we have them," Minter said. "I don't believe the district would raise fees if they didn't need to."

Board member James Perkins feels there will initially be some disappointment and frustration because families have tight budgets and now have to pay even more.

"I think for the most part, families are accepting of the fact that it is expensive to play sports, and so they will be accepting of the fact that there is a fee associated with having those programs," Perkins said.

Athletes in multiple sports will be required to pay the fee more than once. Juniors Nick and Chris Meersman are involved in track and football, and they will be two more students affected by the new extra-curricular fee. For football players, fees are nothing new be-

cause they have been fundraising to cover the cost of the program for years.

Chris feels some students should be exempt from fees because they already have high fees to pay.

The Meersman family will be required to pay for each activity, and since each boy participates in two sports, this will just reach the \$100 limit.

Catherine Mataloni, mother of sophomore Alec Mataloni, said her family will not be too affected by the fee change because she had experience with similar fees from when Alec was in middle school. She said other families, however, might feel strain from the fee.

Alec is on the robotics team and speech team, as well as being involved in school plays. While these activities aren't sports, they are included in the extra-curricular fee. Catherine feels the extra expenses will not affect Alec's participation, but at the same time, she suspects some families will have to be more selective.

Dussling said the board hopes that the new fee won't hurt student participation, but either way, the district has to cover the costs they have.

"I hope [students] understand costs are going up across the board, and we just have to cover that," Dussling said. "Somewhere, you have to fund the activities — you want to have."

Minter said he didn't think most families would be too affected by the change, but he agreed that some families in less affluent areas might feel more of a burden.

Ultimately, the board is trying to give the students the best experiences possible, both through the classroom and extra-curricular activities.

"It is the first time we are charging anything, and we get that [the fees] are different," Superintendent Dr. David Schuler said. "[But] what is really important, from my perspective, is looking for ways to raise revenue in a manner that does not prevent students from participating in activities."

"Let's control the budget with minimal effect on the classroom."

- District board member Bill Dussling

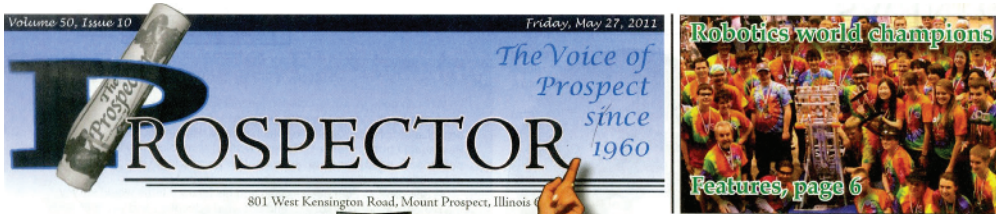
#### OUTSIDE ATHLETICS

The music hallway is no stranger to fees, and students involved in music programs will also see the \$25 increase in their fees because of the new district policy. The district is applying the fee increase to all co-curriculars that fall under the no pass, no play policy.

Band director Chris Barnum feels it won't affect participation, but at the same time, he does not like to dwell on fees with his students and prefers to focus on the music.

In times of economic hardships, students have been forced to quit music activities, but there are scholarship opportunities to help cover fees for students who would not have been able to participate.





Former Prospect student Lee DeWyze came back to Mount Prospect last year to perform at Arlington Park Racetrack in celebration of making the top three contestants on "American Idol" Season 9.

DeWyze went on to win the competition, and this season,

District 214 has another alumnus on the FOX show. '09 Wheeling High School graduate Haley Reinhart made it to the top three, and despite the rain, she performed in front of a crowd of over 30,000 at Arlington Park on Saturday, May 14.

Reinhart, who started the season

as a frequent visitor of the bottom three, has since impressed "Idol" judges Randy Jackson, Jennifer Lopez and Stephen Tyler.

The other contestants in the top three were Scotty McCreery of North Carolina and Lauren Alaina of Georgia. Reinhart came in third place after the votes were tallied.

For more on Reinhart and her homecoming celebration, check out...

[Prospectornow.com](http://Prospectornow.com)



Graphic by Emmy Lindfors

## Students lack summer jobs, turn to internships

By Meghan Doyle, Nabl Dressler and Jenny Johnson

News Editors

Junior Alex Kaszubowski, a former lifeguard at Pioneer Pool in Arlington Heights, will be spending her summer a little differently this year.

Instead of returning to her post at the pool, Kaszubowski will be interning at Lutheran General Hospital in the child-life sector, along with working at Mariano's.

With the recent downfall of the economy, summer jobs are in higher demand than ever. Unfortunately, not all seekers are finders.

According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, 19.1 percent of 16- to 24-year-olds were unemployed in July 2010, the highest unemployment rate during July since 1948. Not only are young adults having difficulties finding summer jobs in the first place, but it's even harder when they're trying to work around

busy summer schedules.

A common solution to the summer job quandary is an internship, both paid and not paid. Many high school students turn to internships because they can't find a traditional paying job for the summer.

According to The New York Times, the National Association of Colleges and Employers discovered that 83 percent of graduating students in 2008 had interned, a 74 percent increase since 1992. Prospect even has a program to help students in their search for internship opportunities.

See INTERNSHIPS, page 2

## Low interest prompts class cuts next year

By Emmy Lindfors  
Managing Editor

Junior Lauren DeCant plans on majoring in Fashion Merchandising at one of the two top Fashion Design schools in the country: Fashion Institute of Design and Merchandising in California or the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York.

DeCant has always loved fashion and has been involved in the Fashion Construction classes at Prospect. But next year, DeCant will not have that option because Fashion Construction 1, 2, 3 and 4 will not be offered next year.

According to Assistant Principal for Student Services Lee Stanley, class cancellations are unfortunate and rare. For the 2011-2012 school year, only three classes have been canceled: Fashion Construction, Vocational Autos and AP Art History (see Going, going, gone).

The Fashion Construction classes were canceled because of low enrollment.

To determine if a class should not be offered for the following year, Student Services goes through the class recommendation lists students completed during first semester. Then they create a list to see how many students are interested in all the classes offered. From there, Student Services can determine how many class periods and teachers that are needed, as well as if there is a class that needs to be canceled for the following year.

Usually when determining if a class needs to be canceled, Student Services will see if there is a class with very low enrollment. For example, a class that should have 30 students, but only has eight might lead to a cancellation.

From there, Student Services will determine if they think the class should be left open for a few weeks to see if anyone else enrolls or if they should cancel it for the following year right away.

Another reason elective classes can get canceled is because required classes, such as English and math, need more periods to accommodate all the students, according to Associate Principal for Instruction Michelle Dowling.

When elective classes are canceled, it frees up a period or a teacher so students can fit into those required classes.

For instance, sometimes when Student Services looks at the lists, they might notice classes like Algebra 70 having 30 kids in each class. Student Services tries to find ways for the classes to be cut down to 27 or 28 students. This way, the teacher and the students benefit by being able to receive or give more attention. Student Services especially tries to do this with a class that has a lot of writing, according to Dowling.

Student Services tries its best to avoid canceling a class. They will reorganize classes trying to save a teacher for another class and open a class period within the division.

See CLASS CUTS, page 3

### Animation evolution

Over time, cartoon shows have shifted away from the traditional "Rugrats." For an opinion on cartoons then and now, check out...

Opinion, page 5



### Religious reasons

Classes like World Religions allow students to explore and learn about different faiths. For stories on religions at Prospect and students who practice them, see...

In-Depth, pages 8-9



### Racing to the finish

The boys' track and field team captured first place at the MSI conference meet on Friday, May 13. To read about the team dynamic, turn to...

Sports, page 12



**FIGURE 1.8a** *The Prospect*, Prospect High School, Mount Prospect, Ill. Reproduced by permission of Jason Block.

The *Prospect* front-page includes a promotional website link to a story about Haley Reinhart, a finalist in *American Idol*, shortly after she came third in the competition. The online story **1.8b** provided details of her hometown visit. Though she attended another school in this district, she was well-known and drew a lot of interest, boosting this mention on the front-page.



FIGURE 1.8b

Home » [Featured Post](#), [Featured Video](#), [News](#)


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## Haley comes home

Submitted by [Prospector](#) on May 27, 2011 – 7:19 am No Comment

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By Miranda Holloway



*Executive Online Editor*

On May 14 Mount Prospect residents had a flashback. They remembered the warm May day where former resident and American Idol season nine winner Lee Dewyze came home for his hometown visit. He paraded down Central road and held a free concert at Arlington Park Race Track. When they woke up from this flashback however, it was not them who had a new sweetheart. It was neighboring Wheeling who could now boast about having a resident become an 'Idol' finalist. '09 Wheeling High School graduate Haley Reinhart made it to the top three on 'Idol's' season ten which brought her home to Wheeling.

Reinhart did not have the time to enjoy all of the comforts of home however, she had a packed schedule doing promotional events and filming material to be shown on 'Idol'.

Her day started her day in front of 200 fans at a Deer Park AT&T store. According to the Daily Herald, she teared up at the store seeing all of her supporters, which was just a preview of the emotional day that faced her. After making a few sentimental stops at old work places and favorite restaurants she then made a stop at her alma mater to promote Ford's "Drive One 4UR School" fundraiser. The program allowed people to test drive a Ford for a \$20 dollar donation to the school's music program. The fundraiser ultimately raised \$10,000 for the music department. During her appearance Reinhart made speech to her hometown supporters and to current Wheeling students.

"For me, it started here. I hope this inspires you to do whatever you want to do in life," Reinhart said to the crowd according to the Daily Herald.

### Secondary sources

**Secondary sources** are typically those that provide your story with factual information second-hand, such as a reference book, government records resource, credible Internet website or documentary film.

In a story on eating disorders, a student reporter might obtain state or national statistics on the current percentage of high school students with eating disorders from the National Eating Disorders Association, a credible secondary source. Citing these statistics and attributing them to the organization would give contextual breadth and factual depth to the story. Calling local or regional clinics for eating disorders and interviewing directors or doctors would provide primary source information for the story. Interviewing students in the school who are recovering or suffering from eating disorders would be the primary-source key to making this story work. What a student reporter should avoid is quoting a magazine article or professional newspaper story as a source for the story. That isn't original reporting (see Chapter 2 for more on interviewing and reporting).

# Shelling of South Korean island hits close to home

By Parul Guliani  
*Editor-in-Chief*

**A**lthough North Korea's shelling of a South Korean island just before Thanksgiving surprised members of the school with ties to Korea, most don't think the two countries will go to war.

Senior Jiwon Oh was visiting family in Seoul at the time of the artillery fire.

"It was on the news all day, for a week straight," she said. "I thought it wasn't that serious at first. But when I realized two (marines) and two civilians were killed, I realized it was."

The bombardment of Yeonpyeong island was the first attack with civilian casualties since the Korean War.

Oh said the rest of her family wasn't that concerned.

"My cousin has to be drafted if war comes, so we're worried about him," she said. But Oh doesn't think war is likely.

Senior KJ Park doesn't believe the nations will go to war, either.

"Things like that have happened," she said. "I don't think it's going to be that big of a deal."

Park's mother, who lives in Seoul, agrees with her, she said.

After hearing about the attack, Minji Kim, '09, now a sophomore at University of Pennsylvania, called her parents.

"They said, 'Don't worry. Nothing's going to happen,'" Kim said.

"People in Korea weren't as worried as people (in the United States). The American media is making it seem like a bigger deal."

Chris Springer, '85—who has

See **Shelling**, page 3

**FIGURE 1.9** *The Octagon*, Sacramento Country Day School, Sacramento, Calif. "Shelling of South Korean Island hits close to home," by Paul Guliana. Reproduced by permission of Patricia Fels.

In a news item of international interest involving a shelling by North Korea of a South Korean island, *Octagon* staff localized their coverage by interviewing students, one of whom was actually visiting family at the time of the event. Other students with Korean ties including alumni were also interviewed giving the story local focus. One alum, an author with two books on Korea, was also quoted extensively.

Similarly, many school publications try to cover events such as professional and college sporting events, often by using already published information or quotes from professional sources. This undermines the integrity of their work, in part because professional news sources have access to primary sources that most student publications can't get. The better way to cover such events is through localizing, getting student and staff reactions and opinions on events such as the Super Bowl, the World Series or the Final Four.

Many school publications cover the Oscars, the Grammys and other important entertainment events by interviewing students involved in drama or music, who have specialized knowledge



FIGURE 1.9 (continued)

## Shelling: Escalation to full-scale war unlikely, Korean sources say

(Continued from page 1)

written two books about North Korea and has visited the country three times—agrees with Kim.

“When we read about incidents like this in the news, we get the impression that we’re on the brink of another Korean War,” he said.

“I think that’s very alarmist.”

He pointed out that since the end of the Korean War there have been hundreds of border incidents.

Korea, annexed by Japan in 1910, was divided at the 38th parallel after World War II by the United States and the Soviet Union. The latter occupied the area north of the border while American forces took responsibility for the area south of it.

“Each country set up a regime, and the 38th parallel became a Cold War border,” Springer said. “Each one felt that it should administer the entire area.”

North Korea felt so much so that it invaded the South on June 25, 1950.

“A repeat of the Korean War strikes me as extremely unlikely,” Springer said.

Andy Furillo, ’09, a sophomore at UC Berkeley, is a political science major with a focus on North East Asian politics, has taken Korean history and language classes and is a member

of the Korean political discussion club.

Furillo said his Korean language class talked about the attack the day after it happened.

“All of my Korean friends were shocked that (North Korea) fired on civilians,” he said. “They were really worried about their relatives.”

However, Furillo’s friends agreed life was going on as usual in the South Korean mainland.

But Furillo believes South Korea should retaliate more strongly.

“They can’t let the North keep attacking them,” he said. “At some point you have to go in and let them know they can’t get away with it anymore.”

Senior Daniel Edgren’s grandfather Sam Lim—a Korean War veteran and émigré—thinks Furillo is right.

“If you’re afraid of all-out war, you’ll have all-out war. If you’re not afraid of it and you defend really strongly, there won’t be an all-out war,” he said.

But he isn’t against going to war—even nuclear war.

“If (there is) an atomic war, let them nuke once or twice. A million soldiers might die from it, but eventually, we will win,” he said.

“But if you go piecemeal, little by little, a couple million will die.”

in those areas. The coverage will be more appropriate and more interesting for the high school audience when local angles are covered and local sources are consulted. Student perspectives will often only be available in your school’s publications.

### Test your knowledge

Find examples of direct and indirect quotes in two news stories. Identify the sources of those quotes as primary or secondary sources.

## OTHER FACTORS AFFECTING COVERAGE

What’s important in news coverage can also be affected by a variety of factors unique to different schools and their locations. If the school is private and affiliated with a religious organization, news related to that affiliation will always be important. Issues such as tuition, uniforms, required chapel or other services might all be ripe for coverage. Magnet schools are usually established with a special focus: the visual arts, music, engineering and science, to name a few examples. News in those specialized disciplines will always be important for those magnet school communities. The pressure to succeed, to gain acceptance into prestigious universities, or into specialty programs are other common issues for students at such schools. Student expertise can also serve as a resource when reviewing entertainment, local services or technology products.

## “ WORDS of WISDOM

*Cultivating sources is one of the most important tasks a journalist must master because without sources, there is no story. Journalists need to be able to pick up the phone and call a source within minutes when news breaks. Sources are needed to make a story balanced and accurate and are also crucial if you want to do any investigative reporting. When sources trust journalists, they are more apt to alert them to an upcoming story, talk off the record or provide other background knowledge and leads.*

*To build a database of sources, prove to be an accurate and fair journalist. Keep off the record conversations out of print and follow up with sources even when there is no story in the works. Be personable; share something about yourself and also learn a little something about them that you can ask about whenever you talk. Prove you can be trusted and you will be surprised how much people start opening up to you.*

*Jennifer Buske-Sigal, Former Reporter, The Washington Post*



Other schools might be part of consolidated districts made up of students from two or more nearby towns. Consolidated schools might have unique news coverage needs, based on the different communities they serve. School transportation might be a bigger issue and require a beat reporter. If the school is located in a rural setting, finding and traveling to games with competitors might be issues for sports coverage. Shared resources such as specialized teachers could require students to change campuses during the day. Students' interests outside of school might be distinctive if the community depends on an agricultural economic base. All of these factors could generate special beats and coverage.

Schools in urban settings have their own unique coverage opportunities. In the heart of a large city, students mix with professional workers, might commute to school on public transportation and might be vulnerable to factors such as crime. Urban schools often bring together students from a wide geographical area, who come from radically different communities. Such schools may have fewer after-school activities or meetings to cover, although demonstrations and political rallies might be more accessible for coverage, especially if students are taking part in them.

The demographics of the school population and community are always important in school news coverage. As community populations age and gentrify, school populations can increase or decrease, affecting the school populations, class sizes and sometimes whether or not schools in the district are closed. Schools made up of ethnic majorities are often most interested in issues affecting their particular cultures, such as traditional holidays and celebrations, ethnic foods and styles, as well as local political struggles and conflicts. Religious majorities will have similar interests, which will also affect how the students feel about national and world issues.

In private school settings, where schools might have greater legal ability to censor student journalists, some controversial topics may not be allowed in coverage, particularly if the topics go against the tenets of the private affiliation. In a Catholic school, an article exploring the topic of abortion might be disallowed or censored owing to the beliefs of the church (see Chapter 17 for more information on censorship).

If an important news event occurs in, or dramatically impacts, the school community, students might choose to publish a **special edition** out of their publishing cycle. Written by and for students,

### Quick Exercise

In groups, discuss factors that make your school unique. How can these factors affect coverage in your newspaper and online content? Find an example of how one of these factors is represented in coverage from previous editions or online stories.



**FIGURE 1.10** *ReMarker*, St. Mark's School of Texas, Dallas, Texas. Reproduced by permission of Ray Westbrook.

In a private school, relevant news might be unique to the school. In this featurized, local story, newspaper staff took a look at a required weekly chapel under a new chaplain who had changes in store for the service. The story takes up the major space on the front-page but is framed by inside page summaries and a more timely news story on a commencement speaker. To add visual interest, staff include a panel of visual references to stories inside the paper across the top.

thursday MAY 17, 2012  
ST. MARK'S SCHOOL OF TEXAS  
DALLAS, TX 75230  
VOLUME 58, ISSUE 7

# remarker

Junior Danny Koudelka p. 17 Cum Laude ceremony p. 4 Athens band p. 10 Waleed Rashed p. 3 Sophomore Sam Khooshbin p. 19

## up & coming

Author Gus Lee scheduled to speak at Commencement

by RACHIT MOHAN  
special projects director

**NINETY SENIORS, DRESSED IN** bright white tuxedo jackets, will walk across the stage May 25, shake the headmaster's hand and receive their diplomas.

As each boy-turned-man steps off the stage, diploma in hand, he puts an end to his time at St. Mark's. But at the same moment, he commences a new journey, one that takes him well beyond the boundaries of 10600 Preston Road.

"I think most of us are ready to move on," Senior Class President Ross Crawford said. "I'm excited, but I'm more sad to leave than excited because this is a pretty awesome place, and I've pretty much known this my whole life so it's tough to actually be leaving."

Commencement speaker will be accomplished author Gus Lee, who writes on topics relating to ethics and leadership. He has also been a resource to development of the school's Leadership and Ethics Program.

He was chosen to address the Senior Class because he has a deep understanding of the community and its goals, so his speech can offer a more direct connection for the graduates.

"Gus Lee is speaking, and he's been around and knows the kids," sponsor J.T. Sutcliffe said. "Which is nice because it's always nice when you have somebody who doesn't come in and gives a bland, generic speech but hopefully tailor it a little bit."

**commencement headlines**

- Guest speaker is noted leadership expert and author Gus Lee
- Student speakers include Senior Class President Ross Crawford and class valedictorian (to be named)
- Awards to be presented include Headmaster's Cup, the School Flag and Citizenship Cup
- Begins at 8 p.m.
- Reception follows in the Great Hall

Along with Lee, Crawford will address his class at commencement, as will the class valedictorian, who has not been named as of press time.

But while the seniors may be leaving campus, they have certainly left a trail of accomplishments and successes on the field, classroom and stage.

"The SPC victories, the academic leadership, the wonderful musical performances, they all attest to the achievement that this class has reached," Sutcliffe said. "So in many ways, that's what stays here."

Beyond accolades and awards, the senior class has set the tone for spirit and community support.

CONTINUED, PAGE 6

THE CHANGING CHAPEL

AS SOPHOMORE JACK PIGOTT WALKED INTO THE DIMMED CHAPEL AMID THE HORDES OF UPPER School students for his March 14 edition of weekly mandated half-hour of respite, his grumbles of apathy and indifference were replaced by a hush of anticipation.

There was a new face atop the altar — a new face that already had large expectations.

When new chaplain Rev. Michael Dangelo first began to speak, a rare aura of personality and charisma was emitted from his every pore, one that captivated Pigott as soon as the minister abandoned the pulpit to homilize from the nave itself. There was something different about him.

CONTINUED, PAGE 15

► by Paul Gudmundsson, managing editor

**inside**

**news**

► By the time he turned 18, senior Roland Salatiello had accomplished what only a few Boy Scouts had ever done before: he had earned his 17th palm award. Page 5.

**scene**

► Whether it's through his piano concerts at Carnegie Hall or his contagious smile at school, senior Roderick Demming has touched the lives of countless people. Read his story. Page 8.

**centerspread**

► Did you know that in Texas it is illegal to milk another person's cow? We take a look at some of our own little-known rules. Pages 12-13.

**sports**

► After the 60th anniversary of SPC this year, we take a look back at some of the best moments in Lions sports. Page 16.

**commentary**

► When the deadline for Blue and Gold Day event signups passed, many students did not know where or by when they were supposed to sign up. See the Editorial Board's suggestions to improve communication. Page 21.

**ahead**

**today**

- Last day of classes for grades 9-12
- AP exams
- Athletic Banquet in Great Hall, 6:30 p.m.

**tomorrow**

- Reading day for grades 9-11
- AP exams

**saturday**

- Exams for grades 8-11
- Marksmen Ball, 6:30 p.m.

**index**

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|--------------|----------|
| News         | 2-7      |
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| Centerspread | 12-13    |
| Up & coming  | 15       |
| Sports       | 16-20    |
| Commentary   | 21-23    |
| Fun Day      | 24       |

**Soul Man**  
Starting with more lively chapel speeches, Rev. Michael Dangelo plans on making several changes to the weekly services, including new hymnals, engaging messages and stimulating music, to the chapel program.



## “ WORDS of WISDOM

*As a religion writer, I think about finding the faith angle in current events or localizing a larger trend in religion news. For enterprise story ideas, never turn off your curiosity. Try to discover the reasons behind facts and ask experts to predict the implications. For instance, why is your cafeteria switching food services? Was there a problem with the old company or its products? Will the new one help students maintain a healthy lifestyle? What will this mean for the overall functioning of your community? Will it save your school money? What can be done with a few extra pennies?*

*The answers could lead to more questions and unearth information vital to students, parents, faculty, staff and visitors. Always try to consider and give a voice to all players involved in a topic, and your sources may shape your story. Don't try to pigeonhole a story into the blueprint you initially imagine.*

*Angela Cave, Reporter and Web Coordinator, The Evangelist, Albany, N.Y.*



the special edition might frame the news event from the perspective of the student audience, providing context and school-oriented viewpoints. Many school publications chose to present special editions after the events of Sept. 11, 2001. Other schools have published special editions after natural disasters and serious weather events in their communities or when tragic crimes such as school shootings occur.

Alternatively, a **special section** of coverage might be included in the next print edition, particularly if the coverage is still timely and ongoing in its effects on the school and community. This kind of coverage isn't limited to news events, but could take a look at larger issues such as those of race, gender, sexual orientation, economics, politics, health or labor. In all cases, coverage should center on the people in the school and community, and should examine broader issues from a local perspective. Many schools publish special sections before political elections, particularly presidential ones, with coverage focused on student polls and perspectives, and on local candidates. Interviewing students active in political campaigns or with strong political affiliations can provide a local angle while drawing on their knowledge and analysis (see Chapter 8 for more information on in-depth reporting).

In all reporting, student journalists should strive to ensure their coverage is fair, broad-based and sensitive to their readers. Student journalists should frequently evaluate their coverage to make sure they are being inclusive to all school populations.

## CONCLUSION

Though news is still at the heart of a newspaper's mission, technology has altered the way in which traditional news is presented. The core elements of news value remain important in choosing and presenting information to readers and viewers. Without a timeliness angle, journalists rely on another value, often emphasizing a feature angle. Information presented to readers should be chosen and organized based on audience interest.

### Test your knowledge

Can you think of an upcoming event, anniversary or special occasion that would make a good topic for a special section of coverage?

## SUMMARY

- Reporters should be inquisitive and sensitive to discussions with friends and throughout the school in identifying topics that would make good stories.
- Hyperlocal news and reporting about your specialized school audience will be of primary interest to readers.
- Journalists must take seriously their role as gatekeepers of information.
- News value helps reporters order news in placement in print and online.
- Organized beats help newspapers broaden coverage across the school.
- Featurizing news helps keep it current.
- News sources should primarily be local, school and community based.
- News appears throughout the print edition and website in sections such as news, sports and entertainment.

## KEY TERMS

advance story  
angle  
attribution  
audience  
beats  
breaking news  
conflict  
coverage  
direct quote  
drama  
emotion  
evergreen news

featurized news  
future story  
gatekeepers of information  
human interest  
hyperlocal news  
indirect quote  
localizing news  
news brief  
news lead  
news story  
news value

primary audience  
primary sources  
prominence  
proximity  
review  
secondary audience  
secondary sources  
special edition  
special section  
surprise or oddity  
third-party source  
timeliness

## EXERCISES

- 1 Do a demographic survey of your community and your school population. Using the latest U.S. Census figures from [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov), analyze the make-up of your neighborhood, city, county and state in terms of population, ethnicity, age/sex and housing status. Visit the website for your school district and see if you can compare similar data for your school or district. Or, see if your school keeps data on these demographics.
- 2 Using the data you collected in Exercise 1, go through a copy of your newspaper and the website and note how many stories relate to this data. What other story ideas can you think of that might draw on, or relate to this demographic information.
- 3 Find five examples in stories of news value from print or online editions and explain how the value affected the story's placement and space.
- 4 Analyze five leads from online or print editions. Mark each to identify the *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why* and *how* elements. Which news element was featured in each lead?
- 5 In a group, find two examples of featurized news from print or online editions. Share and discuss your examples. What is the timeliness factor? Why was the news featurized?
- 6 Identify three examples in past editions of your print paper or online edition in which strong visual impact is present in a photo, online slideshow or video. How does the visual impact increase interest in the story?