

# THE PANTHER TIMES

the teen mental health crisis and

the questions

to ask

we had

pgs. 8-9



# letter from the editor



Many of The PantherTimes newsmagazine readers may be wondering why there is a new face being introduced as Editor-in-Chief of the paper. Although this change was not exactly desirable, we, RayPecNow, feel that the change will encourage a new style and bring great changes to the department. We thank you for your patience, and promise that we are working our hardest to represent the student body as accurately and as well as we possibly can.

That being said, it is with great pride I present the January 2020 edition of The Panther Times. The staff of RayPecNOW has worked very hard on this paper, and we are excited to finally reveal it to the student body. We hope that the changes are noticed, and even greater than that: appreciated.

email: maddyson.berg638@raypec.org

## EDITORS

**content manager-**  
Kylee Kingman  
**copy-**  
Maddyson Berg  
**newsmagazine-**  
Maddyson Berg  
**online-**  
Jenn Aguilar  
**photo/art-**  
Kaylee Ohlson  
**yearbook-**  
Kenzi Jones  
Hannah Schulze

## CONTRIBUTORS

Gatz, Sierra  
Luna, Mercedes  
Minor, Grace  
Ohlson, Kaylee  
Ricketts, Cade  
Rimel, Zoe  
Rogers, Grace  
Young, Madie  
**ALL STAFFERS**  
Beltz, James  
Blackstone, Em  
Catlett, Taylor  
Como, Samantha  
Dick, Marissa  
Gatz, Sierra  
Heriford, Sydney  
Kingman, Kylee  
Kobilnyk, Cameron

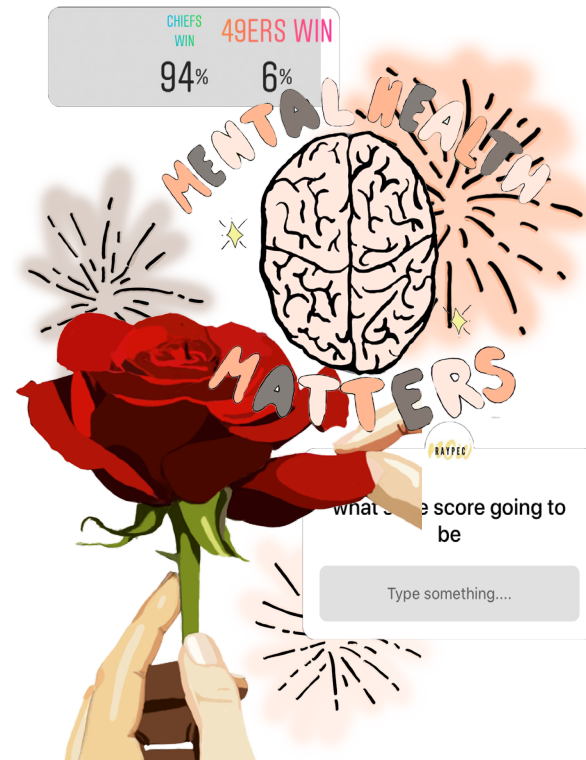
Kurtz, Lauren  
Luna, Mercedes  
Minor, Grace  
Ohlson, Kaylee  
Posey, Bobbi  
Ricketts, Cade  
Rimel, Zoe  
Rogers, Grace  
Schulze, Hannah  
Smith, Savannah  
Torres, Bela  
Williams, Marlon  
Young, Madie  
Zaner, Braden

# table of contents

4-5  
from A-Z:  
The Bachelor,  
New Year's  
Resolutions

6-7  
Coach Eve  
feature,  
boy vs girl  
editorial

8-9  
reporting  
at length:  
questions we  
had to ask



16  
student poll

10-11  
sports: girls'  
swim,  
sports: boys'  
basketball

12-13  
college/career  
readiness,  
coming back  
for semester  
two

14-15  
overheard @  
RP,  
courtwarding  
nominees

## RayPecNOW Mission Statement

As student journalists, we believe in the freedoms of press and expression guaranteed in the First Amendment of the Constitution. It is our responsibility to uphold these freedoms in a fair and decent way, for these freedoms come with a higher responsibility to strive for the highest standards possible for our work.

As writers, photographers, editors, artists, and designers, we as journalists have an obligation to respect our readers and their right to be informed. Always, thorough accuracy, fairness, and good judgment are our main responsibilities.

## FIND CHEWY

A mini Chewy The Panther (like seen below) will be hidden somewhere in the newsmagazine. Once you find it, come to Room 811. **The first to find it will get a prize.**



Actual Size

### Community Financial Services Group

Helping you navigate the path to financial freedom. We want to understand your unique needs so we can help you with:

- Wealth Management
- Insurance
- Personal Banking
- Group Benefits
- Business Planning
- College Planning
- Wills/Trusts
- 401(k) Rollovers

Let us simplify your life.

Schedule an appointment today!  
Brent R. Ewert, AAMS  
816-322-2760  
Brent@cfsfgk.com

Community Financial Services Group  
801 W. Foxwood Dr.  
Raymore, MO 64083  
CommunityFinancialServicesGroup.com

Securities offered through The C.F. Group, Inc. (Member FINRA/SIPC, Dan Financial Way, Cincinnati, OH 45242-1130). 754-2754 Investment Advisory Services Offered through C.F. Investment Management Company, C.F. The Advisory Group, 12045 Blue Bell, Suite 100, St. Louis, MO 63141, (314) 619-8000. Products offered through Community Financial Services Group are not federally insured, may lose value and are not underwritten or guaranteed by the financial institutions.

### Advanced Eyecare

For a Lifetime of Healthy Vision

with three locations in the K.C. Metro  
healthyvisionkc.com

Visit us at 905 W. Foxwood Drive 816.322.1872 www.healthyvisionkc.com

Richard C. Wilson, O.D., F.A.A.O.

Dana J. Krause, O.D.

Jeffrey A. Harter, O.D.

Lawrence D. Reed, O.D.

Meiissa M. Enevoldsen, O.D.

Lauren M. Pachy, O.D.

Julie R. Lafreniere, O.D., F.A.A.O.

# from A-Z on The Bachelor

by zoe rimel

*The Bachelor* is a popular show among high school students. People believe that *The Bachelor* is popular in teen culture because of the entertaining nature of the show.

*The Bachelor* is mainly known for having drama and lots of character. Senior Kate Lagis recommends the show because of the thrilling events which occur.

"It is the most fun you're going to have on a Monday night and it's funny to watch girls compete over one guy," said Lagis.

There are reasons as to why people watch *The Bachelor*, such as the love and passion, but senior Conley Baurenfiend watches it for the action.

"Some people watch it for the romance, but I watch it for the fights and drama," said Baurenfiend.

*The Bachelor* is on every Monday night, and people make time specifically to watch *The Bachelor*. Senior Ellie Retter is among those who do so.

"I watch *The Bachelor* every Monday night," said Retter.

Since the main audience of *The Bachelor* is high school students, it gives teens a chance to come together and share a love for the show. Lagis believes that *The Bachelor* is an opportunity to make friends and meet new people.

"I think that teens like it because it gives us something to do and talk about with each other, it's fun because we all share a common interest," said Lagis.

The show is believed to be fascinating for a variety of different reasons. The main reason being that everyone that participates in *The Bachelor* stays in the same house.

"It's entertaining to see how many different personalities mesh together in the same house, and I like to hope that they find love," said Lagis.

*The Bachelor* has a large fan base, and is very popular on social media. People believe that teenagers enjoy the show because of its drama, and how much it resembles a reality show. Whether people watch it for the romance or the drama, the show has a variety of stimulating moments.

**katelagis**  
Bachelor Mansion



Liked by jenn.aguilarr and others

katelagis School today was hard, but at least @pilot\_pete is back on TV #tonight



**ellie**  
@ellieretter

The Bachelor for girls is the equivalent to Monday night football for boys

10:21 PM · 1/6/20 · Twitter for iPhone

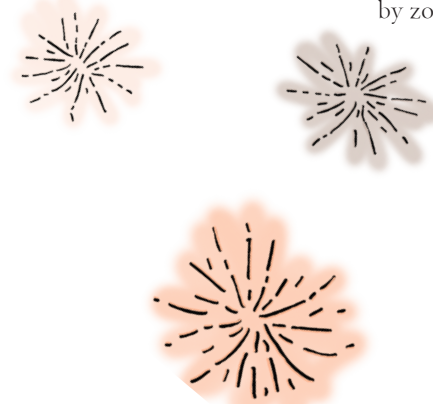
**caroline**  
@carolnepaschal

me when kelsey got the first rose on #TheBachelor



# on (New Year's) Resolutions

by zoe rimel



Although people have varying views, a popular tradition to participate in each year is creating a New Year's resolution. For years, people have made lists of goals to achieve during the upcoming year. Whether it is to improve themselves, break habits, or develop habits, people believe resolutions are either beneficial or pointless for their future.

Senior Logan Bennett has confidence in having a New Year's resolution, and believes that having a goal for the following year can improve a person's future.

"Resolutions are important because it's a social trend that encourages people to better themselves as a whole. It helps compel people to get started on things they've consciously thought about before," said Bennett.

Senior Breanne Fox also participates in creating New Year's resolutions, but has a bit of a different take on the idea. She believes that having a resolution is an influential way to begin the new year. Starting off the year on a positive note with set goals can encourage people to better their lives.

"I chose my resolutions because I wanted to better myself this year," said Fox.

Fox explains how she plans to make her year influential.

"I wanted to stop procrastinating and be more productive in life instead of wasting my time," said Fox.

Senior Avery Stevenson, who opposes the idea of New Year's resolutions, believes that it is a waste of time, and that there are more efficient ways to better oneself.

"I think that it's good that people come up with resolutions, but most don't follow through with them. That's why people should make goals everyday," said Stevenson.

However, in order to prevent what Stevenson described, Bennett plans to follow through with his resolution.

"I am going to take the first step, [which is] to get started, because that is the hardest part. From that point on, I am going to be consistent in order to create a habit," said Bennett.

Another factor which plays into the downfall of resolutions is the timing. Many people, including Stevenson, believe that having a specific day out of the year to accomplish goals can bring hope, but it is not realistic.

"I feel like people should better themselves everyday, rather than waiting for a day of the year to accomplish goals," said Stevenson.

Resolutions are important to people in this generation, as they rely on resolutions to do things they would not have done before. Resolutions present the opportunity to advance themselves. Although some people disagree with the idea, resolutions provide people with hope for a better future, and a better life.

## HEALTHY FOODS

"My new years resolution was to eat better. I did accomplish it but it was hard because it was right at the time of winter break. I do also believe there is no better time to start making changes than today, so you do not need to wait until a new year comes around when you could just start today"  
- Ryan Cook

## EAT HEALTHIER

"One of my goals last year was to eat healthier. I did eat healthier for a while but then I slowly started to stop eating healthy"  
- Avery Smith

## FINISH THINGS

"Last year my new years resolution was to finish more things that I have started. I have finished a lot more but it is challenging because I am kind of lazy"  
- Kamy Waters

## STAY UP

"My new year's resolution last year was to try and stay up all night to watch the ball drop. I accomplished that by not going to bed early"  
- Shawn Courtney

by lauren kurtz

# 19 Questions: with Coach Eve

From Dudek to Eve

by grace rogers and sierra gatz

Q: What is your name?

A: "It's Dudek... Eve! I'm sorry. It changed now."

Q: Favorite and least favorite thing about teaching and why?

A: "My favorite thing is forming relationships with kids. I would say my least favorite thing is hearing about what kids go through. There's some kids that have horrible horrible things they go through."

Q: How would describe yourself in three words?

A: "Down to Earth."

Q: Where did you and your husband first meet?

A: "The first time we met was at a cross country meet."

Q: What is it like coaching Carson and Lainey?

A: "It's fun. I've known Carson longer than his dad, since he was a freshman. They're great kids, I love being around them."

Q: What do you hope your new marriage brings for you and your family and why?

A: "I hope it brings a positive male role model into my kids' lives, which it is. Then with my son, because he has three sisters, it adds some more males in the family because it's just been the five of us for so long - I just think that is going to be really really good for him to have some males around."

Q: Is it a concern for you that the Eve kids will perceive your coaching differently since the marriage?

A: "No, that's never been an issue. Never."

Q: How do you think this change will impact students?

A: "I don't think they'll ever call me 'Eve,' I think it will always be 'Dudek.'"

Q: How would you describe the transition so far from Dudek to Eve?

A: "Very difficult. I say [my last name] wrong all the time. That part hasn't sunk in yet."

Q: How do you feel your transition of last name will impact your family?

A: "The only thing I don't like is having a different last name than my kids."

Q: Where did you attend college and what did you do there?

A: "I attended Northwest Missouri State. That's where I got my teaching certificate."

Q: You recently got married. How has this affected your life?

A: "We have relocated, so we're living somewhere new - that's different. The new house is really the only thing that has changed."

Q: Where do you see yourself in 10 years?

A: "Retired, I hope"

Q: Why did you decide to change your last name when you got married?

A: "I guess I'm more old schooled, I think that's just what to do."

Q: Why did you decide to become a teacher?

A: "I have always to be one. That's what I've always geared towards."

Q: How did the kids react?

A: "They were happy, they were good with it."

Q: How did you and your husband tell you kids about the relationship at first?

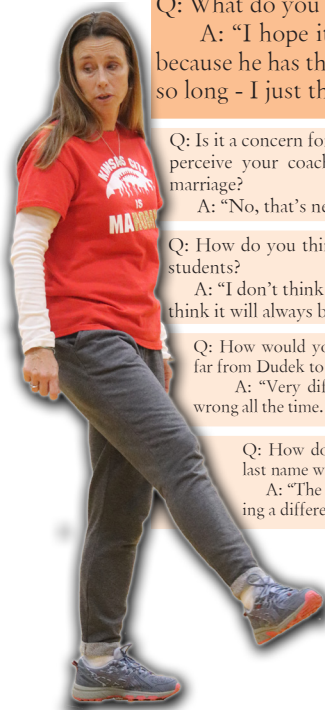
A: "I told mine and he told his. We didn't do it together, we sat down separately."

Q: Would you ever correct your students if they call you your previous last name?

A: "No, I wouldn't correct them. Shawn Courtney would though!"

Q: Will you miss being called "Coach Dudek"?

A: "Yes, I will. I've just known it for so long."



## Boys vs Girls: Social Pressures

The differences in social pressures between young men and women by cade ricketts and kaylee ohlson

The societal pressures on women have been suppressed until quite recently as our youth began to show signs of negatively altered mental states because of it.

We, as women, determine the latest fashion trends and make-up looks, we determine what is considered chic and model-worthy. On the other hand, men tend to determine what traits are "attractive" in a woman. However, collectively the pressures put in place by society affect the nation's young girls the most.

Adolescent females are taught at a young age that their worth is based on their appearances. As children, girls are bombarded with an array of different standards put in place by advertisements, books, movies, TV shows, and in music. It doesn't help when even their toys and dolls depict what the "ideal" female should look like. Such as Barbie Dolls and their trim waists and nonproportionate bodies, or Bratz dolls with their over accentuated facial features and the skimpy clothes they're meant to wear. This "hot-sexy-thin" ideal is imposed upon girls before they are even old enough to understand what it means, and it worsens as they grow up. Eventually leading to mental disorders and eating disorders, such as: anxiety, depression, anorexia, bulimia, etc.

Pop-Culture is not only creating an image for young girls to follow, but a character they're supposed to transform into; a movie role. Today's popular culture is teaching adolescent girls that their worth is also based on the amount of attention they're gaining, and that it doesn't matter how it's obtained as long as they've got the spotlight. "Influencers" of today are selling this figure that their self-worth is weighing in how many likes, followers, subscribers, and comments they have. This creates an enormous pressure on teen girls to upkeep with the "changing ways" of social media. The pressure can eventually lead to behavioral problems, anxiety, and even depression as some girls may feel that they can not "fit" into that role displayed.

Not only are women and young girls pressured to maintain their worth through the justifications of their actions and their appearances, but also through their achievements. Now that certain stigmas and barriers have been broken, women are able to accomplish and achieve much more in the workplace, in sports, and in society in general. However, with this newfound freedom, the pressure to achieve very highly emerges for some women and girls. Many girls, and boys as well, feel pressured to compete and achieve in academics, athletics, and other extracurricular activities. They feel that if they just work a little harder, they will maintain that level of perfection that is placed into their heads.

Overall, the accumulation of these pressures placed on teenage girls and adolescent girls can be too much. Some girls push themselves relentlessly to achieve these ideals and end up fading away, while other girls may just give up all together. This presents the issue of different mental disorders, mentioned earlier, as well as substance abuse and self-inflicted injury as self-punishments for not reaching that goal.

In today's society, you hear about pressure, whether that be peer pressure or social pressure. We often hear that women feel these pressures more than men. However, that's not entirely true. Most men don't go around talking about it, but there is definitely peer and social pressure put on them by society.

Since the beginning of time, men have been expected to be the provider for their families. All the way back to the cave-dweller era the man was the one who was expected to go out and find the food, fire, and shelter, necessities for human survival. At that time, that decision was based on stature, the survival of the fittest.

Our society has come a long way with women now contributing or being financially responsible for the household. However, that social norm can still stand in the mind of a lot of men. Men still feel the need to have a job that makes the most money in the household. By the time men are in high school they are expected to know what they want to do with their lives. Working in the medical field or being involved in law and politics is desirable for men.

After a man chooses his career path the pressure to succeed in that job can be immense. There is pressure to not only keep the job and be successful at it, but continue to rise in that field to make more money. The pressure to be all these things can lead to stress and anger when one feels like they are not succeeding. Men can try to cope with these stressors in unhealthy ways. All this can lead to struggles in the household.

One of the biggest societal pressures put on men is to be athletic and manly.

In most men, there is a competitive drive to be successful in sports. From an early age, most boys are given a bat and ball and can be expected by their parents to want to play with them. From there the pressure to be good at sports transfers into hours in the gym. Men feel pressure to become physically fit. Just as doctors and lawyers are admired, so are sports figures.

All these things are based off of common traits that are expected in men, such as financial success, ambition, strength, hard work, and physical attractiveness. While some men will succeed at all of these things, others will feel the pressure of not being enough.

# Mental Health: Questions we Had to Ask

Addressing the mental health of teens

by kaylee ohlson

Mental health in teenagers has carried a stigma with it for many years. Decades before now, it was seen as “taboo” to share the deep thoughts and feelings that teenagers had all bottled up inside, and when they were voiced, the adolescents were told that it was all made up and in their head. This stigma is still carried into today’s society, however it now carries a different weight. A questionnaire was sent out and answered by 117 high school students asking for their truth about mental health in adolescents. These are the true and real thoughts provided by peers and faculty alike.

an almost surefire way to get rid of the stigma completely, and allow for teenagers to feel comfortable with who they are.

## “It’s all in your head”

The stigma surrounding mental health in teens mainly stems from earlier generations such as parents and grandparents, and the comparison between their generation and the current generation. They seem to believe that our mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, and eating disorders are just “teenage angst” and that it is all just a phase. The negative attitudes directed towards mental disorders in high school age students prolong the stigma that many advocates of mental health have tried to erase. According to the survey given to students, 60.7% of participants believe that there is still a stigma very similar to that of the past. An anonymous participant believes that because of the continuing stigma, students find it hard to get help.

“There always has been a stigma with mental health. There’s less of a stigma now with more people opening up about and teachers starting to recognize those symptoms. However, someone who is truly struggling isn’t gonna ask for help because they believe no one will understand, or there will be people out there telling them to just get over it” said Anonymous (junior).

The stigma surrounding teen mental disorders is also affected by social media and video media such as TV shows and movies. It can be argued whether or not the impact is positive or negative, but for counselor Nicole Ingram, it can be seen as a positive as it creates conversation.

“I think that there is still a lot of stigma surrounding mental health issues. I think there are a lot of people that struggle with depression and suicidal ideation and anxiety that don’t get the resources they need. I actually like whenever it (mental health challenges) is presented in that media because I think that it helps take away the stigma, and it also normalizes it” said Ingram.

Breaking the negative attitude towards mental health issues in teens and eliminating the stigma that comes with it is essential for creating dialogue about the topic, and hence creating a more welcoming atmosphere for those suffering to get help. Sources of Strength Lead Teacher Coordinator Ashleigh Easton, believes that conversation regarding such sensitive topics is critical to teens suffering from mental health disorders.

“As a society, we’ve decided that mental health is not really something we want to talk about, and so having the ability to have conversations about mental health, anxiety, eating disorders, suicide, anything that is one of those taboo topics, is vital because it’s real” said Easton.

Creating conversation and making mental disorders in teens known, assists in diminishing the stigma surrounding the topic. Present day society shuns the topic of mental health and pushes the affair to the back burner because of the uncomfortability of it. Continuing to share stories and experiences regarding the mental health of teens is

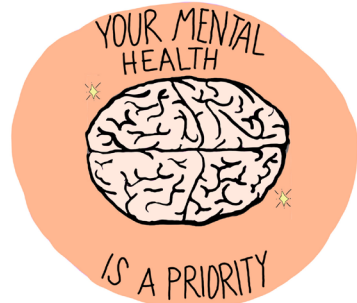
## “We have a lot to be anxious about”

As teenagers, we are constantly stressed by the pressure to perform and the constant pressure to be the best. Over time, this has increased the amount of anxiety in teenagers in modern times. In fact, a statistic from the American Psychological Association (APA) states, “...studies find that anxiety has increased so much that typical schoolchildren during the 1980s reported more anxiety than child psychiatric patients did during the 1950s.” According to a student here, they get to school at 6:45 to work in the coffee shop before going to school all day. They then have theater rehearsal until around 9:00 at night before possibly heading home. If they are not headed home, they are headed to the gym to put in the recommended amount of exercise needed daily for teens, putting their estimated time of arrival at home to 10:00. This becomes more of an issue considering that they could possibly have homework in 5 of the 7 daily classes, creating the stress of finishing it on time to get at least 6 hours of sleep. An anonymous student agrees with the statistic and feels that the stress stems from fitting into the students’ parents and other people’s standards.

“Yes, we are constantly being filled with stress from trying to not only fit the standards of school and social media but our peers and even parents as well. They set a high standard in order to insure that we are successful instead of prioritizing our happiness. If we ‘fail’ to the adults despite the hard work we become down on ourselves and see ourselves as a disappointment and a failure. So, because we are constantly trying to fit this never ending standard of perfection, we are always worried and anxious to see if we will make it” said Anonymous (sophomore).

Students aren’t the only ones who believe this statistic accurately describes the massive shift in anxiety levels. Easton believes that the statement is true as well, and feels that it is because of the idea of the “perfect teenager”.

“I believe it’s true. And I believe it’s true for many different reasons. The world has drastically changed, and if we look at what was happening then and compare it to what’s happening now, it’s a total 180. We have this idea of perfection and we’re accessing this idea of perfection constantly. You’re (teens are) being shown what high schoolers look like via TV shows like Riverdale and even High School Musical, and you’re looking at this teenager on TV and thinking, ‘Oh my gosh, I’m 15, why don’t I look like that?’. Well, that’s a 26 year-old adult that sometimes just happens to look like a child some days, and you’re not able to see what’s real” said Easton.



Many adolescents have the constant thought and idea that they have to be the best at everything, and are crushed under the pressure of their parents and teachers’ expectations. They are not told as much that ‘it is okay to struggle and fall as long as you keep going’, but rather they need to ‘pick it up’ and ‘do better.’

## “The Stress of Trying To Be The Best”

What is the stress of trying to be the best? When asked what affected their mental health the most, the top three responses from the questionnaire sent out to students were: school, comparison, and parents. An anonymous participant in the questionnaire believes that the many commitments students have in their daily lives are slowly mentally incapacitating them.

“The stress that comes with being a high school student. Many students are trying their best to maintain good grades and good relationships with others. They have to work many hours on top of spending most of the day at school. Then to go home and do hours of homework. As well as, some kids having extra curricular activities. With being a student, and trying to find time to relax and breathe, it’s nearly impossible. We aren’t given mental days or needed time off. It isn’t in our human nature to pile things one after the other without a mental day off. I don’t think people truly understand that. I believe that the stress and the amount of work kids put into everything they do, is mentally killing them” said Anonymous (junior).

At school, counselors and faculty try their best to make all students feel safe and welcomed in the school district. Ingram believes that almost everything in students’ lives affects their mental health, and wishes she could do more to help students at home.

“I think everything. It’s so hard because as counselors, we try the best that we can to make the students comfortable here at school so they can be successful, but we also want to help as much as we can outside of school. But, so many things are out of our control and that’s the hardest part, is that we want to make it the best that we can for them, but we can’t control their home life, and just so many things” said Ingram.

## “It’s Not That Accessible”

Treatment for mental health disorders and mental illnesses come in many different forms. The two main forms of treatment are therapy/counseling and medication. While therapy is the most ideal form of treatment or teens and adolescents with mental health challenges, according to the results of the questionnaire 72.7% of participants believe that students are hesitant to share their feelings about their mental health to adults. An anonymous participant feels that trusted adults may not be that trusted at times.

“I think people are still scared to tell people and the school must tell certain people and kids don’t think they can trust adults because they don’t think their secrets or feelings are safe with who they are confiding in” said Anonymous (junior).

While students can seek help from outside of school resources and healthcare networks, there are also resources that are available to students inside of school as well. Although these networks may be known to students, an anonymous student feels that they don’t know how to use them.

“When I’m having a bad day and I can’t handle being in the classroom I’m too scared to ask if I can isolate myself because I’m not sure that’s something the school allows” said Anonymous (senior).

On the other hand, another anonymous student feels that there aren’t any resources available to kids,

“What resources? The counselors that most people don’t have real relationships with? The peer mediation groups that are great in theory, and that I myself am a part of, but never seem to actually work? Our peers and teachers that we don’t want to burden by asking for help?” said Anonymous (junior).



The other side of treatment, medication, is a seemingly controversial method of relief. Freshman counselor Bethany Sylvester, believes that medication could work better if doctors had the time to pay more attention to body composition.

“I’ve seen it work, and I’ve seen it not work. What I would say is yes, I do think we’re failing a lot of people when psychiatrists don’t spend a lot of time with their patients because it’s a lot of in-and-out, and sometimes it can be around a 4 month wait for help. Psychiatrists sometimes don’t take the time to study body chemistry which makes it hard to prescribe them the medicine that will work best for them” said Sylvester.

Another participant in the questionnaire feels similarly about the topic of medication for mental health disorders.

“I would like to say that mental health has been such a stunted subject. Nowadays doctors will just prescribe medicine to teens instead of sending them to a therapist. We don’t know the long term these medicines have on people, especially with teens whose minds are still developing and we’re messing with their hormones. These medicines actually can typically lead to making problems worse but that can’t be observed because they don’t have a trained professional to pay attention to their behavior. People want quick easy fixes, but mental health can’t always be fixed like that” said Anonymous (senior).

Despite the pros and cons of both treatment plans, more time and effort should be put into the study of patients by doctors and psychiatrists to ensure the proper treatment and best results that will benefit the patient. This is especially important in teenagers and adolescents as this is a crucial growth period for them.

## “Thank You For Letting Me Share”

The data and responses gathered by the questionnaire were raw and uncut versions of students’ thoughts and beliefs on the stigma and conversations surrounding mental health in teens. These are the true voices of teen mental health challenges. But what are ways the school can help diminish the stigma and improve the mental health state of its’ students? An anonymous student believes that mental health days should be considered unexcused absences to ensure a full recovery.

“I think mental days should be added as an excused absence. Some schools have implemented this. Since we have already lost too many students to suicide, I think it’s important to allow students to have a mental day every now and then, or if a student is apart of the A Plus program, and they need counseling. They should not be docked hours, if their needed appointment is part of their school day,” said Anonymous (junior).

Whatever the idea of support and help may be, teens and adults alike should remain united to defeat the stigma, and power through the pain and obstacles brought on by mental health challenges.

“These stressors are never going to go away, we just have to learn how best to deal with these stressors and find a good support system within each other. Comparison is the thief of joy!” said Anonymous (senior).

# Swim: Swimming through Records

The girls' swim team breaks multiple records throughout the season

by grace minor

Recently the girls' swim team traveled to Columbia for a big meet. In this meet the girls broke five school records and qualified for state.

There are a lot of different events which go on during a meet. Junior Marlina (Marli) Brusick broke two of the records, which allowed her to qualify for state.

"I broke the 100 back record that my sister Maddi had, and my relay broke the 200 medley record," said Brusick.

Junior Kayla Cea broke a record at the meet as well as Brusick. Cea had been working towards this goal for a while.

"I broke the 200 freestyle and 200 medley relay," said Cea.

Coach Michaela Parisi has noticed tremendous growth in the girls; not only when it comes to the sport but their teamwork as well.

"So the two things I've seen them improve on is their team spirit and willingness to try new things. Secondly we've seen times drop. We are currently ranked 15-35 in individual girls

and 18 in teams," said Parisi.

Brusick and her relay had big goals set for their races and have been working hard to meet these goals in order to qualify for state.



Team! Getting together before a race, junior Marlina Brusick, freshman Michaela Duran, and freshman Madison McKinley prepare for their 200 medley relay race. The girls got first, swimming a 1:56.26.

"It was my relay team that qualified for state we were trying to beat it, and we did, a little before halfway through the season," said Brusick.

The girls have developed a relationship with each other at practice and with their motivation. Parisi has noticed the girls' teamwork improve as the season has progressed.

"So within their lanes they push each other and help each other with their technique, encourage each other, and joke around. As a whole team they strategize and work hard together to work on times. The senior girls are also good with helping the first time swimmers" said Parisi.

Throughout the season the girls have worked together a lot

possible and they have been meeting their expectations ahead of what they thought throughout all of the practice they've put in.

# Basketball: the Boys' Glow up

The success of the boys' basketball team has come at a cost

by cade ricketts



Drive. Rolling off of his fingers and into the basket senior Jordan Jermain divides the defenders to score an early basket. Jordan is the son of the head coach Scott Jermain.

Go up. Fighting through the defender's senior Kian Scroggins attempts to get a shot off. Scroggins will attend Sam Houston State next season for college.

Shot up. Shooting the ball from inside the arc senior Jordan Jermain puts up a jump shot. Jermain is the starting point guard for this year's team and has played a key role in the team's success.

As the season winds down, the boys' basketball team knows they have improved and continued to grow as a team with the record of 11-1. The basketball team hopes to keep this momentum going into the playoffs. This season has not come easy to the players as they have put in a lot of hard work and hope it pays off.

Head basketball coach Scott Jermain has been coaching basketball at the high school for 14 years. He believes the team's dynamic has played a large role in their success this season.

"I would say one of the big things that have played a role in this year's team success so far is the culture. You know since we have been here our team of coaches have been instrumental in implementing just a positive attitude, a team before individual mindset," said Jermain.

Jermain is very pleased with the effort the time has put in. He knows their hard work has made the team better.

"We also just have a really nice group of young men [who] have dedicated themselves to being better basketball players, and so it helps our team be successful," said Jermain.

Senior Matthew Harrison has been playing basketball since third grade. He believes winning is a direct result of the team bond.

"We have been so successful this year because of unity. We spend a lot of time together thanks to the coaching staff, and for us players wanting to go out and spend time with each other off the court and just building a good bond," said Harrison.

Jermain believes life and basketball have a lot in common. He

coaches to the team that the work they put in will determine the success they will get out.

"I think basketball is about as close to life as you can get, you know as far work hard and good things will happen. The integrity of working out on your own or to keep working out when a coach isn't looking," said Jermain.

Senior Payton Ball has been playing basketball since first grade. He appreciates what Jermain has done for the program.

"Coach Jermain has been the foundation for this team. He has made us work hard all offseason and played a lot of games over the summer and just became a great team thanks to his coaching," said Ball.

Jermain realizes how good this team is, but he also knows there is always room for improvement. He feels people may not realize how hard improving can be.

"I would say one of the biggest challenges for the players is dealing with humility and continue to get better. They are already one of the best teams, [so] trying to climb and continue to get better is not easy. Some people say it is easy to get better but that is just not the truth, and it takes a lot of time," said Jermain.

Thanks to the strategy of coaching, the team bond, and the team's overall dynamic, the boys have been able to make this season successful. Make sure to go out and support the basketball team as they get closer to the playoffs.

**PRO Concrete INC.**

**Jim Jones**  
Owner/Estimator

13501 E. 198th Street  
Peculiar, Missouri 64078  
(816) 331-3473  
Fax: (816) 331-1968  
Cell: (816) 985-5979

Serving Kansas and Missouri

www.AJgroupKC.com

**Abbey Bertolone** 949.351.3969 **Joe Yearn** 816.651.0069

**Mike Chick** 816.896.0430 **Giovana Gallagher** 816.738.0468

Let us bring you HOME.

platinum realty Platinum Realty 51 Corporate Woods 9393 West 110th St, Suite 170 Overland Park, KS 66210 888.220.0988 **A&J GROUP REALTY**

# Help or Hurt: College and Career Readiness

A number of career exploration programs are offered by the school. A student's schedule could be filled with college prep classes, career specific programs, or traditional learning courses.

Southland CAPS (Centers for Advanced Professional Studies), Summit Tech Academy (STA), and Cass Career Center, and Work-Release Internship are off-site programs offered to career-driven students. The Associates of Arts (AA) program is a Dual-Enrollment program for students interested in getting a high school diploma and associate's degree at the same time. LAUNCH is an online-learning program offered to full or part-time students. The school also offers Dual-Enrollment, AP, and IB level courses on-site. Inside the building, students can also participate in in-depth career programs like the Den, RayPecNow, the Daily Grind, or computer programming classes (JAVA or CAD).

"It's nice because given where we live, we are able to offer several different options. We are really lucky at our school because we are so close to Harrisonville and to the city and Lee's Summit and we can offer a plethora of things for students to choose from so they can really have more options available to them," said 10-12 Counselor, Nicole Ingram.

Senior Amara Smith takes advantage of the off-site nursing program offered at Cass Career Center. Smith also receives dual credit for all the classes she takes here through the University of Central Missouri.

"I go to Cass for the first three blocks and I come back to school during 4th block. I will get my CNA (Certified Nursing Assistant) with this program and it will help me with nursing school" said Smith.

Senior Alex Strickland comes to school for traditional classes in the morning, then leaves after fourth hour to head to work. This school year, Strickland enrolled in the Internship program, where seniors take a block of marketing and work on an early-release schedule, allowing them to get more hours at their job.

"I chose to enroll in this program because I was caught up on my credits and because I worked a lot as it was with full days of school and I wanted to be able to have even more time to work," said Strickland.

Ingram sees how out-of-school programs, like the ones Smith and Strickland are enrolled in, benefit students. The programs the school offers prepares students for their future without kids having to worry about spending their money or college credit hours on exploration courses.

"I think it gives them a better opportunity to see what career paths they could be interested in before they even graduate high school and before they actually have to start spending their own money towards credits. We offer a lot to students and I think it's

Investigating off-campus learning by grace rogers

really good because it gives them the option to explore and see what they could be interested in," said Ingram.

Smith feels Cass has given her a foundation for her first few years of post high school life. She recommends this program to those who are also interested in the nursing field, but suggests proper investigation of the program before enrollment.

"It gives me an idea of what to expect, when I go to college after nursing school. I would definitely recommend it if they research it first, and know what they're getting into," said Smith.

Strickland enjoys the same things about work-release as Smith does about Cass - it gets her ready to graduate high school and be a responsible young adult.

"I feel like it has prepared me a lot. I feel more like a student in college than a student in high school. I have a lot less hours of school and I'm able to have a full time job. This has allowed me to make more money and save up for college, a new car, and eventually an apartment of my own," said Strickland.

Unlike those enrolled in Cass, CAPS, or STA, those who do Internship miss the last three to four blocks of the day. This results in work-release students missing out on afternoon announcements, pep assemblies, etc.

"I feel like I miss out on a lot. Pep assemblies, announcements, being around friends, and even sports events because most of the time I'm working when those are going on," said Strickland.

A lot of community building activities that happen around the school occur during the second half of the day. The administration plans for pep assemblies and other activities to occur later in the school day because most students with alternate schedules are gone in the morning.

"So many of the things that we do happen at the end of the day for that reason, because we plan them that way- we don't want them to feel isolated or left out. I think we do the best we can to still enable them to still have a sense of community in our school as well," said Ingram.

Enrolling in off and on-site career and college prep programs that result in alternate schedules come with both pros and cons, but Ingram recognizes that choosing to enroll in one requires time and consideration from the student.

"I think it's definitely more to navigate because you have some things you have to figure out. You have to make sure that you've planned appropriately so if you go into one of the programs you're gone have the day so you want to make sure you can make sure you can meet all the requirements to graduate on time," said Ingram.

The school offers various options for student enrollment and career/college planning. Off-site programs, in-depth classes, and traditional scheduling all offer different styles of learning for students of each manner.



courtesy photo kaci kinder

# Back to School: Initial Thoughts

Students express their expectation vs reality for the first weeks of second semester

"Yes, I was **happy** to be entering my final year in high school but I also was not in the best **head space**. Going into this final semester I have promised myself that I will allow more '**me-time**' into my schedule."

-Senior Kiki Williams

"It was **pretty** good, it was good to get back in the **swing** of things. I like the idea of being a **senior** for my last second semester."

"I'm looking forward to **graduating** and the show 'Guys and Dolls'. I am also going on a **senior** trip to **Belize** and New York

"I think we are all getting the **hang** of high school but by senior year you kind of already **know** what you are doing. You just kind of go in and **crank** it all out."

-Senior Seth Kelley

"I am really excited for the **soccer** season because that is coming up, **tryouts** are in March; and **Prom**, I am very excited for that because I didn't **go** last

"It was really **good** to get back into things but now I'm in the **groove** especially when it comes to waking up so **early** for soccer **conditioning**."

-Junior Elena Eastwood

"It was **hard** getting back into the sleep schedule but I was **excited** to go into second semester of junior year seeing that I only have **1 year** left after this."

"I was really tired. I have **art** foundations now which is boring. I also have **tutoring** at Eagle Glenn. We didn't really do much in the first couple weeks, it was mostly **review**."

-Junior Kaleb Thomas

"I have a few **new** classes, and some of those classes I don't know anyone in. First semester was probably my **favorite** because I got to eat lunch with my **friends**. We were always be laughing, and people would stare at us and even make **weird faces** at us."

"It went **better** than I thought but I am always **tired** so that's not the

-Sophomore Piper Findley

"I **expected** the first weeks to go **easier** and come in more **prepared**."

"I came in and some classes were **harder** but, I **felt** prepared for most."

-Sophomore Chance Embry

"I want to get no D's this **semester**, I am actually going to do my **work** this semester"

"I have three **Fs**, but that is because I was gone on **vacation** for the first week of

-Freshman Riley Ramirez

"The new **classes** and being able to have a **fresh** start"

"It is **better** than first semester, I already know **every-one**. And getting new classes is pretty **fun**,"

-Freshman Jackson Green

by madie young and mercedes luna



**Aubrey Rogers**  
Independent Sales Director

**Mary Kay**  
<http://www.marykay.com/manager62333>  
<https://m.facebook.com/Aubreyconsultant/>  
 aubrey.rogers75@yahoo.com  
 816-777-6878



**KISSICK CONSTRUCTION**  
25th Anniversary

kissickco.com Trusted Team, Reliable Partner.

## CHINA WOK



248 State Hwy C  
Peculiar, MO 64078  
Hours  
Mon: Closed  
Tues-Sun: 10:30am-9:30pm

eatchinawok.com  
(816) 758-6666

## OVERHEAR @ RP

- ☞ “My fish drowned.”
- ☞ “I would step on a Lego for you.”
- ☞ “Once I showered with my clothes on because I didn’t want to do laundry.”
- ☞ “Just wipe your face with your socks.”
- ☞ “You’re an immature little squirrel.”
- ☞ “The older the jolly rancher the better it tastes.”

## The amenities you want with nary an ounce of pretention

Call (816) 301-7649 today to schedule your personal visit.



A Life Care\* Community  
Independent Living | Assisted Living  
Alzheimer’s & Dementia Care  
Rehabilitation & Skilled Nursing  
brookdalelifecare.com

\*Life Care plan/guarantee is subject to the terms of the Residency Contract.  
©2019 Brookdale Senior Living Inc. All rights reserved.  
BROOKDALE SENIOR LIVING and BRINGING NEW LIFE TO SENIOR LIVING are the registered trademarks of Brookdale Senior Living Inc.

# Courtwarming: Nominees

Candidates nominated by the student body for the winter formal



Alexis Ausler and Micah Baird



Peyton Balfour and Carson Eve



Peydnn Cohen & Conley Baurenfeind



Elizabeth Retter and Jacob Collins



Ayana Richard and Dalton Apel



Chloe Adams and Mason Hensley



Payton Ballinger and Garrett Whitten



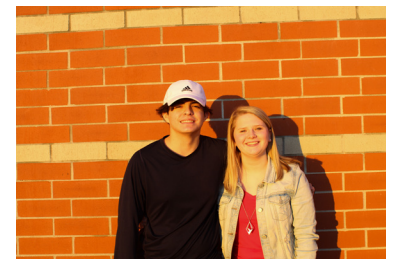
Haylee Thurman and Spencer Barr



Payton Rayos and Khuram Choudry



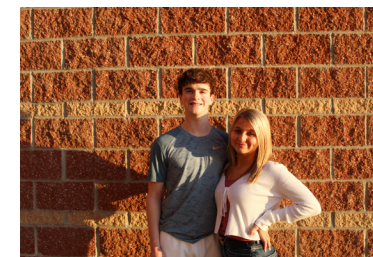
Skylor Shepard and Aidan Martel



Paige Showen and Ruben Angel



Mia Abnos and Andrew Brokaw



Caterina Rudolph and Rylan Teale



Emma Zeysing and Trey Hipple

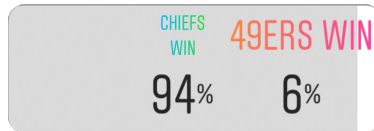


# Student Vote: Will the Chiefs win the Superbowl?

by maddyson berg



Will the Kansas City Chiefs or the San Francisco 49ers win the 54 annual Superbowl?



voters: 130-9



what's the score going to be

average score voted:

32-24

Type something....

5am-12 Everyday  
Who's your Daddy!

**Big Daddy's DONUTS**  
816-728-6395

Raymore Location 1280 W. Foxwood Dr 816-728-6395	Belton location 801 E. North Ave 816-772-3888
--	---

**Thank you Ray-Pec High School!**

**Pearce PHOTOGRAPHICS** 816.331.8586

## Go Panthers!

### Heritage Chiropractic & Wellness Center

Do you experience headaches from the long hours of studying from exams?

Does sitting in class or carrying your backpack cause you to have neck, upper back, or low back pain?

If the answer is yes, we can help! Schedule your appointment today so we can get you feeling better before the next exam!

**(816) 322-1990**  
[www.lowback.net](http://www.lowback.net)