

The results are in: students and staff reflect on NeSA results

Megan Yanders
Reporter

For the class of 2013, the Nebraska State Assessment (NeSA) was yet another part of the usual junior year, full of tests and constant worrying about results and colleges.

For their teachers, these tests reflect on the effectiveness of their teaching. This assessment from the 2011-2012 junior year has varying levels of success, but no matter how excellent or poor the results, still shows the overall knowledge retained during their high school years.

Some are wondering why students take these tests in the first place. They aren't an actual part of students' grades and don't count toward graduation.

In the writing section of the testing, 77 percent of Bellevue West students either passed or exceeded the standards for the NeSA tests. 23 percent did not pass, falling below the testing standards.

"When you just look at the overall numbers, it actually seems to be a twenty point drop from last year. However, when you look at the whole picture with the more advanced testing standards for this year, the results are pretty good," junior English teacher Nikki Salinas said.

In the mathematics section of the testing, 66 percent of last year's juniors met or exceeded the standards.

April Buschelman, an Algebra 2 teacher, said, "I was pleased [with the results], because it showed improvement from last year."

The lower scores in the math department made sense to senior Melissa Jones.

"Math was the hardest because you go into all different types. It covers Algebra, Geometry, Algebra 2, and even some things from Discrete Mathematics," Jones said.

This was the first year that the juniors in the district took part in the science section of the NeSA testing, which sets the standards for improvement in the future. The results for Bellevue West science scores show 75 percent of juniors who took the NeSA science test exceeded or met the minimum standards of the test.

"Of course I was pleased with the results, but there's also always room for improvement. Next year I'd like maybe 83 percent to pass the test," science teacher Nicole Menard said.

Before the tests, the teachers make sure to prepare their students so they know what to expect.

"All the juniors go into the computer lab to take a practice test. We also give them flashcards of science terms to review, since vocab is a big part of what they need to know. They do a tutorial on the NeSA tools that they can use on the test," Menard said.

In the English department they have a slightly different way of prepping for the NeSA tests.

"We practice adult forms of reading and writing and sophisticated comprehension skills. Really, though, it's not just the junior teachers. They've been prepared by every teacher in BPS ever since first grade," Salinas said.

All the preparations seem to pay off, with the teachers being generally pleased about the results, but there are a few things that they wish could be changed about the tests.

"The test is heavy on recall and memorization, so I wish it had less of that and more reasoning," Menard said.

Buschelman had a slightly different opinion on improvements that could be made to the tests, more about the overall testing procedures than the specifics of the math curriculum.

"I think that the tests should have more merit," Buschelman said. "They should mean something to the students. They should have some reward or consequence so they take it more seriously."

"We need more of a head start on subjects. Maybe study sessions for students that need more help, and a small break between the tests," Jones said.

Some are wondering why we even take these tests in the first place since they aren't part of students' grades.

"All schools in Nebraska take these tests. The state decides what we test on," assistant principal Dr. Fran Pokorski said.

All in all, the NeSA test scores, good or bad, reflect on the current state of each student's learning, teacher's instructing, and Bellevue Public School District's educational programs, as well as the state of Nebraska in general.

"Math was the hardest because you go into all different types," senior Melissa Jones said.

West considers a tech update

Stephanie Henry
Reporter

Technology is an ever-growing part of not only 21st century daily life, but also in the way 21st century schools are run.

Because of society's growing dependency on technology, the way classes are taught, as well as what is taught, has changed and is changing. Textbooks can be accessed online, papers are rarely handwritten, even novels are accessed through technology.

Senior Blake James said that PowerPoint presentations, document cameras, and YouTube videos are used in his classes to enhance the learning experience.

In August, the Springfield-Platteview school district began the school year with a new name, logo, slogan and about 1,000 new iPads for students grades 7-12 and teachers. Popular rumor states that Bellevue Public Schools will also become a one-to-one system like Springfield-Platteview district. According to Greg Boettger, the district's Director of Technology, this isn't the case.

"No, we're not doing it right now, but it's something we are looking at and something we'd like to talk about and discuss," Boettger said.

According to Boettger, a committee was formed to develop a timeline and technology plan. They came up with recommendations to present to Superintendent Frank Harwood and eventually the Board of Education.

"This extends from a one-to-one system, to bring our own device, to replacing the current computers," Boettger said.

There is currently no plan of implementation.

"If students were issued a device they would be able to type their work, making it more legible to teachers; it's also easier for the teachers to edit. The paper consumption would go down drastically," James said. "[Students] would also be able to use ebooks if they were [issued] iPads. Communication for the teacher and students would be improved due to the iMessage function of all Apple products."

Both iPads and MacBooks have the potential to help enhance student learning but according to Julie Sorensen, iPads can't do enough.

"[It's] a consumption device, an easy delivery tool," Sorensen said. "MacBooks are more of a creation device which is better for students."

Boettger believes that equality is one benefit to issuing every student the same device at the start of the school year but at the same time it allows creativity. It would also save teachers time if they didn't have to "waste time" taking their students to computer labs.

Sorensen said that issuing students a device at the start of the year would potentially change the way traditional classrooms are set up.

"We could get rid of desks and it could be more like Starbucks [in set up]," Sorensen said.

Although our district isn't a one-to-one school with iPads like the Springfield-Platteview school district, still many technological opportunities are available for West students.

A student wifi network, although fickle, is provided for student use.

West is fortunate to have nine computer labs available to students.

Rover carts are available for teacher use along with the document projectors.

And of course, every single teacher in the entire district now has a MacBook Pro to replace their PC laptops.

"Teachers were up for a refresh for new computers and because of the changes with Apple and their new products, we got these at a very significant cost cut," Boettger said.

According to Boettger a survey was sent out to teachers last school year and it came back saying that they would rather look at the Macintosh platform.

"Technology plays a big part today since it's not technology to students. They've grown up with it. It's an expectation for schools to have technology for students," Boettger said.

DECA students produce Bellevue Days

Linzey Heim
Reporter

On September 23, Bellevue West DECA sponsored the first annual Bellevue Day. Bellevue Day was a fundraiser for West's DECA chapter, unlike other community events such as Papillon Days and LaVista Days. Activities included a car show, two different bands, food, carnival games, 3 on 3 basketball tournament and more.

The first Bellevue Day was in the hands of seniors Emilie Pechacek and Haelee Kowalski. The idea was based on former DECA members, Maggie Dailey and Valerie Targy's senior project.

"We liked the idea and wanted to take it and make it bigger and better," Pechacek said.

Dave Shillinglaw, the advisor of the DECA chapter, had high expectations that Bellevue Day would do well this year and even better the next time around.

"I think it will do very well this year, but of

course I think it will do better next year with a year under our belts. Hailee and Julie have done a pretty good job of organizing it," Shillinglaw said.

Although the car show is returning, the other activities were new, making the expectations of a crowd unknown.

"We have sent flyers out to the public, but with it being the first one we aren't sure how many to expect," Kowalski said.

Based on last year, the car show was expected to bring in a fairly decent number of spectators. Cars came from all around the metro area and even Iowa. To enter the car show a \$15 fee was charged.

"We have around 200 cars coming," Kowalski said.

Camaros, Mustangs, Corvettes and many classics were some of the featured cars at the car show.

Maggie Dailey was in charge of the car show

this year based on her performance at organizing last year's car show.

"She is organizing it as part of an internship," Shillinglaw said.

The hope for Bellevue Day was to raise money for the DECA chapter. According to Shillinglaw a share of the profits will go towards getting a few new Macs into the Marketing department. In addition it is hoped to provide a hands on learning experience for Kowalski and Pechacek.

"With it being the first, I am a little nervous but in the end we always have the DECA chapter to help out," Pechacek said.

"Hopefully we develop some karma between my juniors and seniors and also start to create teamwork and team atmosphere that I think we are known for," Shillinglaw said.



Photo by Annaliese Schneider

DECA students senior Emilie Pechacek and Haelee Kowalski host the first Bellevue Day. To advertise Bellevue Day they placed posters through the school.



Lettering goes Beyond athletics

Chloe Brim
Reporter

On the first day of school each year, every student attends a class meeting in which they learn about the rules, requirements to graduate, and the new schedule for that year. During that meeting, certain students are called up to the stage and honored for their academic performance by receiving a letter or a gold bar.

"I'm not too surprised that students don't know what those are, probably because most kids don't realize the importance of academics on their scholarships. They think they have a lot of time and they procrastinate," scholarship coordinator Kathie Britten said.

An academic letter is a way to recognize outstanding academics. Its purpose is to give students something to work for and to better prepare for college. The academic letter is based on an average of a student's first semester and second semester's GPA.

"An academic letter means I succeeded my goals for last year's classes and I got outstanding grades," senior Caleb Bateman said.

The pride these qualifiers take in

their work is the reason why this award was developed in the first place.

"It makes me feel pretty good about my hard work towards school and gives me a bright outlook to my future," junior Courtney Bybee said.

The first time a student meets qualifications they receive a letter "B" with a lamp in the middle of it. The lamp signifies academics and intelligence, which is what the letter represents. Any other time a student meets qualifications they receive a gold bar that is bare. Bellevue West likes to further recognize those students who continue to keep up their excellent grades and performance with a bigger reward.

"Each year, an average of 130 to 180 students receive the academic letter recognition, 45 of those students being first time qualifiers," Britten said.

Lettering in academics can be similar to lettering in sports, but very different at the same time. In both cases, a student has to perform at an above average level. The level of difficulty for lettering in either academics or sports depends on the student because every person is different. In order to letter in a sport, the student must be on varsity and must

have had some playing time.

In order to letter in academics, however, the student must participate in advanced or AP courses and be in the top percentile of their class.

"Getting a grade point average high enough to receive an academic letter is not something you can just do by sleeping in class, skipping, and not doing homework. It goes to show that all I have put into school is paying off," Bybee said.

Another type of reward or recognition a student can receive is an academic scholarship. Students can receive these from the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, The University of Nebraska at Omaha, Bellevue University, and almost every other college or organization. Academic scholarships are based off of a student's cumulative grade point average, which is an average of all the grades they earn while in high school.

A scholarship is based solely off of academics, performance, skill, and need, and it all depends on the student's GPA and class rank. Some scholarships can be worth a lot of money, but that does vary on the college or organization the student receives it from. Usually a

student has to be in the top twenty five percent of their class to qualify for a scholarship.

"Scholarships are a way to recognize a student's outstanding academics, and to give students something to work for and better prepare them for college," Britten said.

There is a big difference between an academic letter and an academic scholarship. While they both portray a student's academic excellence and recognize them for their hard work, scholarships are a bigger reward for students. An academic letter is provided from Bellevue West, and has no money involved. It is merely a reward from the school to the students to recognize them for their hard work. An academic scholarship, however, has monetary value and comes from many colleges and organizations.

"It makes me very proud to be able to work with these students, and it makes me proud to know we have a lot of hard working people here at West," Britten said.

An academic letter and an academic scholarship are both very important to pushing students to succeed, and are big honors to receive. They represent a

student being above average and their success for that year.

"I feel accomplished, because not everyone can earn an academic letter, you have to work hard at it," Bateman said.

Many students have set goals to work for during that school year, in order to qualify for an academic letter or scholarship. Qualifying for these awards have shown them that their work pays off.

"This letter or bar means I met my goals or even higher for that school year and it makes me feel proud of myself," Bybee said.

The students who earn these awards recognize the significance of them, and are very proud to be in the positions they are in. Teachers and staff are also proud of the hard work that goes on at Bellevue West.

"I believe that we have a lot of hard working students here at West so to those who do earn one, congrats, and to those who don't earn one as long as you did your best that's all that matters. Not everyone can be at the top, but everyone is important and every student matters at Bellevue West," Britten said.

West's enrollment decreases

Nayeli Hernandez
Reporter

Painted walls and new teachers aren't the only changes at West this year. West also has fewer students.

This year the number of students at West dropped from 1740 to 1601. According to principal Kevin Rohlfis, this is due to closed enrollment; the limit for West this year is 1680.

Under the Learning Community this year, West is closed to open enrollment students. Open enrollment is when students from a different district other than Bellevue can apply to transfer here.

According to Rohlfis, East is not closed to open enrollment students because last year its total number of students was lower than West's, so they were allowed to stay open this year.

Students are still allowed to transfer within the same district, which is why someone from East can get accepted to transfer to West.

A couple of students from East who have transferred are Will Secrist and Hunter Gage, who are both sophomores.

They both went through slightly different processes. Gage got in a little easier because West is already his home school.

"We called, sent in transfer papers, and got in," Gage said.

So far Gage is glad he transferred for his sophomore year.

"I enjoy school here more than at East," Gage said.

Sometimes when a student applies he or she is denied and then they apply a second time and they get approved. If they give it some time, it can be worked out for them to transfer.

Secrist went through this longer process. He had to apply twice after being denied the first time.

"We filled out an application. It got denied because West was 'at its max occupancy.' Then my dad wrote a letter to the superintendent and they reconsidered their prior decision," Secrist said.

Secrist feels that the long process he went through was worth it. He's glad he got accepted.

"The staff and students are more welcoming here," Secrist said.

Rohlfis explained that last year many transfers from East to West were denied due to the enrollment being high, and that it depends on the year and the timing.

Also if the student wanting to transfer doesn't have a good enough reason, it is often denied. The decision is mostly based on numbers and reason. Sometimes timing has to do with it too.

"If it's because you want to go to school with your girlfriend that's not a good reason because six months later she won't be your girlfriend anymore and you're stuck at the same school," Rohlfis said.

Students who move to Bellevue, mostly military students, can come here because they live in the district to go here. But students who don't live in the district have to fill out an application which has to state a good reason for them wanting to go here, that application then gets sent downtown where the district office makes the decision.

"Next year open enrollment most likely will be open again," Rohlfis said.

New teachers bring varied experience

Candi Bolden
Editor-in-Chief

Each year Bellevue West brings in a handful of new faces including teachers. This year West added 14 teachers to their staff.

"We've got thirteen and a half new staff members to this building; we've got one shared with East. That's where the half comes in," Principal Kevin Rohlfis said.

Other schools in the district have some new additions as well. Bellevue Public Schools hired 63 new teachers and five administrators.

"It's [the] average [amount of teachers here] this year," Director of Personnel Dr. Sharron Smith said.

The hiring is average at West as well.

"I've had double digit hiring I think almost every year I've been principal so it's been as low as ten, as high as 26," Rohlfis said.

This year the hiring was focused in the English department which hired four new teachers: Jessica Frank, Adam Heuertz, Megan Rynders, and Kristen Schweer. Heuertz taught at Benson for

11 years before coming to West.

"I was really excited to start something different to have some new experiences. Once I get in the classroom it doesn't seem a whole lot different to me," Heuertz said.

Heuertz said he was offered a job last year at West but turned it down because at the time he didn't want to leave his job as head football coach at Benson High School.

To hire a teacher, the district first lists the position needed to be filled on TalentEd, a website used by Bellevue Public Schools to announce open jobs. After it's been posted, applications are looked over and then they have interview fairs where applicants are interviewed by administrators from both high schools and Smith.

This year, administrators attended eleven hiring fairs where they met with 233 applicants. Bellevue hosts its own interview fair, but administrators also attend other fairs, such as the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's, to seek more teacher candidates.

"We start as early as January and February for the hardest jobs. The high

school positions are usually filled by the time school gets out," Smith said.

After the interview there is a follow-up interview for some applicants, which includes a tour of the school. According to Smith this helps to see if the teacher would fit in to the community of the school. For some, the community of the school attracts them towards West.

"The whole staff is pretty friendly and welcoming. The summer when I was working in the room it just seemed like a family atmosphere here, and then when the kids came everybody's pretty talented and excited about being in the art program. It's just been good. Everybody is super friendly here," art teacher Paula Yochim said.

Yochim has worked for Bellevue Public Schools for ten years. Before coming to West she worked at Mission, then at Lewis and Clark when it opened. She switched to West because she wanted to teach high school students.

Along with hiring teachers who have already taught in the district, Bellevue Public Schools hires West and East graduates, this year hiring ten total graduates. They also keep track of

teachers hired from local colleges such as University of Nebraska in Lincoln, University of Nebraska in Omaha, and University of Nebraska in Kearney. Math teacher Scott Bobier attended UNI before becoming a teacher but didn't immediately go to West.

Bobier was drawn to West to be closer to his family and because of the community atmosphere surrounding West.

"The community and the school work hand in hand and that's pretty neat. How the outside community, Offutt, and different places work with the school is something I've never seen before," Bobier said.

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Photo by Chloe Brim
Senior English teacher Adam Heuertz grades papers during a guided study hall. He taught at Benson High School for 11 years and was also head football coach. In addition to teaching English he has joined the football coaching staff at West.

Fashion trends erupt

Chloe Brim
Reporter

Every year students look down the hallways of Bellevue West and judge the new styles and different trends that have erupted. This year long socks with Bro Tanks, rucksacks, bobs, Nike shorts, highwaisted shorts, yoga pants, and even mohawks have set the new and different tones for trends and "fashion." Many students have strong opinions on these popular trends, and how people choose to dress at West.

"There are a lot of different trends. Some cute, some not so cute. People try so hard to be original," junior Caitie Kieser said.

Many students would describe West student's trends as "out there." A handful of students also believe that many students lack originality.

"Some people dress really weird. It seems like guys care more about their appearance than girls do," junior Manhaten Williamson said. "It's also kind of embarrassing. People copy each other and don't look unique."

Unlike the students that don't

necessarily like the way others dress, trendsetters like Caitie Kieser love the new styles and trends that arise.

"I love Sperrys, high waisted shorts, and more vintage looks," Kieser said.

Other popular trends are Miss Me jeans, V-Necks, and Uggs. The boys have created their own styles as well, including Bro Tanks, snapbacks, khakis and high tops.

"I have ten pairs of shoes, and over thirteen snapbacks that match with every outfit I own," senior Jordan Armistead said.

Snapbacks and shoes aren't the only things that have been trending for guys. Hairstyles are important as well, the main style that has been trending is mohawks.

"It's just a way for us to show our creativity and it describes how outgoing of a person I am. I got it the first week of summer," sophomore Malik Hluchowecy said.

Another thing that has been very popular this year for girls are leggings and yoga pants.

"Yoga pants are my favorite. They are so comfortable and you can bum it while looking cute,"

Williamson said.

Many people would rather dress comfortably for school instead of actually trying.

"I would rather bum it. It's too much work to dress up and I'd rather be comfortable at school while I'm doing my work," sophomore Elena Petranick said.

On the other hand, dressing nicely and following fashion trends makes people feel successful and important.

"I try to dress nice and professional for school every day because I like to look cute and I feel better about myself when I present myself professionally," Kieser said.

Junior Dar Alkan agrees with the students that like trying to dress nicely for school.

"I like to dress nicely because that's who I am, and I like to impress people," Alkan said.

Many of the students at West like trends, but also try to strive on originality. Students hold

many different opinions and views when it comes to fashion. Anyone walking down the halls of Bellevue West will see these trends, whether it's a vintage look or a snapback.

Two brothers, twenty countries

Jason Wisenhaker
Entertainment Editor

At just 17 and 16 years of age respectively, senior Joe and junior Tim Messina have lived in three different countries and visited 20 others.

The countries they've been to include the United States of America, Italy, Spain, Norway, Sweden, the Netherlands, Japan, China, Thailand, Germany, Dubai, Oman, Egypt, Cyprus, Morocco, Austria, Canada, and Vatican City.

The Messinas move around a lot and vacation in different places primarily because their father is in the military. They've lived in different states in the United States including Nebraska, North Dakota, Colorado, and they've also lived overseas in Norway and Japan.

"My favorite place I've lived in is Colorado Springs," Tim said. "I liked the weather there and the scenery and I had a lot of good friends there."

Joe's favorite place to vacation was Dubai, because he got to go indoor snowboarding.

However, Joe and Tim haven't liked every place they've been to. Both brothers agree that North Dakota was their least favorite place to live.

"It was cold and we didn't live there very long so you didn't get to know people very well there," Tim said.

Joe said the snow and the bugs made it a miserable place to live.

The brothers both like moving around, even though they miss certain elements of their home. Living in different countries exposed them to different cultures and they went to places not a lot of people get to go to.

"It's nice meeting new people and going to different places and experiencing. There are certain things from America that you miss when you're overseas, but it's definitely worth living there to experience the different cultures," Tim said.

Both brothers enjoyed living overseas in Norway the most.

"We had a good time there," Joe said. "I want to go back to Norway for sure, to visit all my friends."

They've lived in Bellevue for three years now and have had time to see how it stacks up to other places they've lived in.

"It's got its ups and downs. It's definitely not on the top, but it's above some of the places I've been to," Joe said.

No future travel plans are in store, but Tim and Joe both say there's still some locations they would like to visit or return to.

"There's a couple places I want to go that I haven't been to yet," Tim said. "I want to go to France. And I want to go back to Rome."

Joe has different locations in mind.

"I want to go back to Greece, that was fun. England was fun. I want to go to Australia for sure," Joe said.



Photos by Annaliesa Schneider

Students dress to impress their peers with the latest fashion trends. Sperrys came in several different styles, including sparkly and plain. Rucksacks varied in prints, from floral to cheetah. Students expressed their individuality through their choices in fashion.

Few alumni return for homecoming

Bri Thomas
News editor

It's football season again, and with that comes the big homecoming game and dance. Students started prepping weeks in advance for what is now a formal occasion. Dresses, slacks, ties, heels, you name it. Homecoming today has completely evolved from its traditional meaning.

Originally, and in some smaller schools today, the dance is held directly after the football game and is a casual event. Due to the amount of people that attend homecoming, Bellevue West is unable to do that.

Senior Jeremy Morton guessed homecoming had something to do with the military.

"Maybe it was when young soldiers were welcomed home," Morton said.

Homecoming actually has nothing to do with soldiers. It was traditionally an event held for high school graduates.

"Homecoming is a fall activity associated with the varsity football game and then a dance following that," Activities Director Kevin Broderick said. "Originally though, it welcomed alumni back home."

To many students at Bellevue West, homecoming is anything but that. The whole idea of graduates returning to their nest has

diminished almost completely.

"Homecoming is when you go out with friends to a nice dinner, come back and dance, and overall have a good time," said senior Garrett Schaffer.

Homecoming is one of the bigger events of the year, but seems to be more exciting and appealing to underclassmen.

"Freshman and sophomores make it a bigger deal out of any other class. To upperclassmen it's just another dance," junior Tiara Brooks said.

One nostalgic aspect that remains a part of homecoming is the idea of bringing back the previous graduating class' homecoming king and queen—if possible.

"It really just depends on if they're available and they're schedules with school, jobs, et cetera," Broderick said. Business teacher Jeanette Carlson remembers how homecoming in her hometown was celebrated beyond the school.

"On Friday we had a parade from the school to our post office downtown and held a community pep rally. The homecoming candidates rode down in convertibles, the band marched, and the student body walked down. It was also great to see former graduates return for the homecoming game," Carlson said. "It really brought the com-

munity together."

Teachers have recognized the evolution, some even being interested in trying to get it back to the old way. There was an attempt to get convertible cars this year for candidates to ride in, but the idea never followed through.

On September 15th, the north gym was transformed into a dance party with neon lights covering the walls, a DJ playing all the latest hits, and students getting their groove on. The dance was far from classic, but students seemed to enjoy themselves.

"This year's homecoming was way better than last year's. I'm glad that it was my senior homecoming because I think it was the best one out of all the years I've gone," senior Jamie Waddington said.



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New club competes in cyber security

James Teutschmann
Editor-in-Chief

Along with the new school year, a new club called cyber patriot has emerged. According to usecyberpatriot.org, it is a club that allows students to compete in computer hacking and military computer defense, "created to inspire high school students toward careers in cybersecurity, or other sciences...critical to our nations future."

Cyber Patriot has been around Bellevue West High School for three years now. The difference now, and the push for students to join, is now you do not have to be in ROTC to be part of it. Cyber Patriot is offered to all students at BWHS as

an extra-curricular activity.

"About 15-20 people have been showing up on a weekly basis," said senior Connor Goduto.

Bellevue East and West A/JROTC teacher, Vicki Swingle was originally the teacher that wanted to start an open division here at school. That is when Business teacher Dan Parkinson started one last year.

"Since there was an ROTC team already, they [Cyber Patriot] didn't charge us to make another team," Parkinson said.

The students can win prizes for placing in competitions.

"I last year scholarships were given to students," said Parkinson.

Cyber Patriot club meets every Wednesday from 3:30-4:45.

However the students are expected to do some of the practice and learning at home.

"There are training modules online that the students look over. Then next week they come in and we talk about it," said Parkinson.

Students can take classes here at West that are an extension of what is learned in Cyber Patriot. The two classes that are the most helpful are Ciso and PC hardware. These classes give students a "head start" for participating and competing in the club, but are not mandatory to compete.

"Every student trains from the beginning. It doesn't matter if you take the classes or not," said senior Thomas Rincon

One problem that the club is running into, even though it's in its early stages is those wanting to compete can't, because of previous commitments. Some students participating in football are interested but because practices are after school they cannot make it to meetings.

Cyber Patriot will run throughout the whole school year. Actual competitions will run through January.

Up to 10 students are allowed per team, so not all of the students that are in the club will be allowed to participate during competitions. However, students are still welcome to join practices and try to compete. Over 400 teams are competing this year

throughout the nation. Bellevue East ROTC also has a team that will be competing this year, along with the two teams from West.

"This lays down a lot of the ground work if you ever want to get into technology as a career," Rincon said.

Thomas got interested in participating and competing because of the knowledge and foundation that it provides for future use.

Goduto is also looking into studying aeronautical engineering or computer sciences as a major in college, and eventually a career.

"You learn a lot about cyber security, safety on the net, and a lot about computers," Goduto

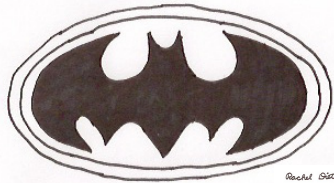
said.

Goduto, like most of the club, has never competed in competition and looks forward to the opportunity, but has no real expectations of how they will do.

"I just want to do as good for myself as I can," Goduto said.

While living in South Korea two years ago Rincon had his first competition. He is continually learning new things and getting better.

"It's like trying out for a sports team, you are never going to know everything from the start," said Rincon.

Sidney Marks
Reporter

Marvel has a long track record with big time blockbusters. X-Men, Spider-Man, Fantastic Four, Ghost Rider and the Avengers and every hero outside the teams are all owned by Marvel. Marvel editor Stan Lee makes a cameo in almost all the movies based on the comic books. Marvel had a transcendent turn out for this summer's "The Amazing Spider-Man" starring Andrew Garfield. Fans and critics were raving about the made-over franchise receiving a 73% "fresh" on www.rottentomatoes.com.

"I like how Marvel characters are real people," business teacher Chad Huseth said. "I like Spider-Man because Peter Parker is Spider-Man, not the other way around."

Huseth said that he likes the reality of Marvel and that it's about Peter Parker having problems with school, girls and work.

"You can take any kid from Bellevue West and he can be Peter Parker," Huseth said.

VS.



Rachel Gidd

In the past few years Marvel has built up character stories for "The Avengers." First premiered "Iron Man" starring Robert Downey, Jr. in May 2008. Then "The Incredible Hulk" debuted with Eric Bana in June 2008. As summer of 2011 came, people were getting excited when "Thor," played by Chris Hemsworth, had Nick Fury make a cameo after the credits. Lastly, the leader: Chris Evans as "Captain America: The First Avenger" with a twist ending making it clear that "The Avengers" was in production.

"The Avengers" currently holds the box office record for highest grossing movie in an opening weekend in addition to being the first Marvel film to make one billion dollars.

However, in the past Marvel has had some flops according to critics and some audiences for movies such as "X-Men Origins: Wolverine," "Ghost Rider," "Daredevil" and "Elektra."

Marvel has its fair share of animated shows. And now Disney is a main partner with Marvel. Already there's "The Avengers: Earth's Mightiest Heroes" and "Ultimate Spider-Man" on the sub chan-

nel Disney XD.

"I've always gravitated towards DC because I liked the characters better," history teacher Jim Torrez said.

As for DC comics, partnered with Warner Bros. Pictures, live action superhero movies have come in small dosages. First the Batman trilogy with Anne Hathaway as Catwoman, second "Green Lantern" and next summer "Man of Steel." "As a kid I liked DC, because they had all the super people and the humans," Huseth said.

Jack Kirby is widely considered a "king" of comic books, having written Spider-Man, The Avengers and X-Men.

"Everyone thinks Stan Lee was great, but once Jack Kirby retired, he couldn't think of anything or come up with his own stories," Torrez said.

However, instead of live action movies DC comics have come out with several small screen showings promoting their fictional personas. In the early 2000's "Justice League" was on Cartoon Network from 2001-2006. In "Young Justice" the concept is focusing on sidekicks of the Justice League such as Robin and

Kid Flash.

Regarding movies, "The Dark Knight Rises" hit theatres July 20 and kept its number one spot for three weeks. Christopher Nolan directed and wrote the infamous "Batman" trilogy.

Nolan also wrote/produced the much anticipated "Man of Steel" starring Henry Cavill based on Superman's origins, set to premiere next summer.

It has been announced that there will be a Justice League movie with Superman, Batman, Green Lantern, Wonder Woman, Aquaman, the Flash and other superheroes according to www.ign.com. Will Beall is currently working the script.

Torrez stated growing up he was biased towards DC. "DC, in my opinion, is the original," Torrez said, "Marvel tended to copy storylines."

It is rumored that since the Batman trilogy ended, their will be a reboot of Batman character. Plus at the end of "Dark Knight Rises," Joseph Gordon-Levitt plays John Blake whose real name is revealed to be "Robin" John Blake which could possibly mean a spin off for the character.

Along with a new Batman, Rya Reynolds is in talks with Marvel to do a character movie for "Deadpool." "Deadpool" a.k.a Wade Wilson was a main antagonist in "X-Men Origins: Wolverine." Popular Marvel comics writer, Stan Lee, has mentioned he would like to see a Deadpool movie soon since the comic was so popular.

Torrez also mentioned that he likes Marvel's "X-Men," "The Avengers," "Spider-Man," "Hulk," and especially "Thor." Huseth suggested that he liked both comic books and movies equally. Torrez said he liked the comic books better than the movies.

When it comes to the silver screen Marvel has DC beat. They have the highest grossing comic book movie of all time, they have more movies out then with more characters to build off of and a bigger fan base.

DC, however, is more popular or the small screen. Hit shows like "Justice League" and "Young Justice" playing on the popular channel Cartoon Network are evident within the superhero animated shows.

Photo Poll: Favorite superhero? DC or Marvel?

Senior Justin Bibbs, left
Green Lantern, Marvel
Senior Kendrick Dula, right
Hulk, MarvelSenior Paige Weil
Captain America, MarvelSophomore Zach Miller
Batman, DCFreshmen Hannah Dubas, left, and
Courtney Morehead, right
Spider-Man, MarvelSophomore Nick Lawrence
Iron Man, Marvel

Students showcase their memorable talents

Holly Clauson
Reporter

Singing, dancing, acting, Michael Jackson, and chickens can only mean one thing: The Best of West Talent Showcase 2012.

The Best of West Talent Showcase took place on September 12 and 13 in the auditorium.

The show was a fundraiser for West After School Theater (WAST) and Thespians to go to state and nationals this year, and also allowed students to show their talents.

"The Theater and Music departments put on a musical every year and just started the Best of West showcase two years ago, and switch the two off every year. Except this year we are doing both," choir teacher A.J. Reimer said.

The reason they did the showcase instead of the musical is because the musical takes three months whereas the talent showcase only takes three weeks.

The show was an interesting mix of comedy, acting, singing, dancing, chickens, and much more.

At times, I was literally out of my seat laughing so hard. One thing that really stuck out to me was everyone's hard work and dedication.

Clearly a lot of hard work went into making the show seeing as how everybody knew exactly what they were doing at all times and I never saw any mistakes.

One of the acts was a disappointment though.

While advertising to get people to come to the show, the WAST members mentioned that there would be real live

chickens dancing as an act, but at the show the chickens lost their boogie.

The chickens didn't live up to my expectations. So instead they had everyone in the crowd stand up and dance which was a good alternative, but not exactly what I had in mind. How dependable are chickens anyways? Apparently not very.

Overall, everyone that performed at the show performed well, but perhaps most memorable was senior James Teutschmann, and juniors Darrison Tellez and Jauchan Laravie. Their performance had me laughing so hard I was crying.

Also to the actors, dancers and anyone else who performed, bravo. I was entertained the entire time and I would go see it again if I could.

If you didn't see the Best of West talent showcase, you missed out.



Photo by Teesa Perez

Juniors Jauchan Laravie, Darrison Tellez, and senior James Teutschmann perform an interpretive dance to Adele's "Someone Like You" during the Best of West.

The reality of Kevin Jonas

Ashley Quintela
Features Editor

The Jonas Brothers began rocking the stage in 2006 during their "Look Me in the Eye" tour. When they performed, teenage girls around the globe instantly became obsessed over the musical geniuses.

Throughout their ongoing fame, the Jonas Brothers swore their band would never be left behind, but when Kevin Jonas asked Danielle Deleasa's hand in marriage, faithful fans questioned the Jonas Brothers' promise.

In the same year of the proposal, Jonas and Deleasa tied the knot. Now rather than starring in their hit TV shows "Jonas," that aired on Disney channel, Kevin Jonas now is the star of his very own reality show, "Married to a Jonas."

The reality show brings Kevin, as well as his brothers, back into the limelight. The show is about the life of Kevin and wife Danielle. The show first aired Sunday August 19th.

During the episode, Kevin expresses his feelings about his lack of privacy due to Danielle's family just walking in their home without a ring of a doorbell or a knock on the door.

Also in the episode, Kevin and his brothers Joe Jonas and Nick Jonas discussed their next tour. Danielle views this as a problem since she and Kevin plan on

having a family in the near future.

In the past, the brothers brought attention to their views on abstinence by wearing purity rings. Because the Jonas Brothers were the known boy band that forbade sexual activity before marriage, it was difficult to hear Kevin making jokes on the show that hold sexual content. In Kevin's eyes, the jokes are funny, but Danielle is a much harsher critic. It seems like everything Kevin says to his wife is either not listened to or immediately judged.

Hearing Kevin say things such as "Oh I have an idea," followed by a seductive wink, is a sight that was hard to process. Because the Jonas Brothers were abstinent, being brought into life with his wife is kind of weird to hear about.

When it comes to the fame scale of the Jonas Brothers, Kevin was never high on the chart. Most fans fell in love with Joe's humor, and Nick's sensibility, but with all the attention on the lead singers, the talented guitar player was left in the dust.

I like how the show gives insight to his life. Even when the Jonas band got big, not all eyes were focused on Kevin and his mad skills on the guitar. In all my years of being a fan of the brothers, I was really never able to form an opinion on Kevin.

Now that the show is on television, people are now able to get a little more information concerning Kevin.

The tabloids never exploited Danielle to the world, she was just always known as the girls married to a Jonas. Now that she is out in the media, people were able to form an opinion on the Jersey Girl.

In the show, Danielle seems very much like a spoiled brat with no respect for anyone else's needs or wants. She seems way too emotional and high-strung. Seeing the way she treats Kevin is very annoying.

Whenever Kevin talks about his family or his upcoming tour, Danielle, or as I like to call her "The Dream Killer," gets all hyped up and rude over everything.

In the show, Danielle is concerned that her mother-in-law, Denise Jonas, does not like her. Well to be honest I wouldn't either. When the Jonas family came over for dinner, Danielle was very standoffish. It seemed as though she was not interested in their conversations enough to participate in any of them.

It is weird to think of Kevin as a family man rather than the guitar/backup vocalist in the Jonas Band. Ever since 2006, the famous brothers have toured, released countless toe tapping CDs and made their way onto the big screen.

Eventually the Jonas fever began to sizzle out, but is now returning with the new hit show "Married to a Jonas."



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Reporter Nayeli Hernandez reviews the re-release of "Finding Nemo" in 3D, currently playing in theaters.



Picture imperfect



Hailey Stolze
Web Editor/Commentary Editor

It's practically tradition: at the beginning of each school year, there's always that stressful day of pictures.

Though highly anticipated, this practice is known as the most dreadful day of the year. This could very well be prevented if faculty would bestow the time and effort it would take to perfect the art of school pictures.

In retrospect, the preparation is slightly insane. Girls are always way too cranky—probably because they've been up since 4:00 AM stripping their bodies of its natural essence. Almost all girls

look like they're dressed up to meet the president or Leonardo DiCaprio. Faces are caked in makeup, students are dressed nice from head to toe (even though the pictures are taken from the neck up), and hairs are perfectly combed. A blindfold would be the only thing standing in one's way of realizing it's picture day.

Yet this preparation is unnoticed. Regardless of the strenuous efforts to look attractive, the pictures always turn out horrendous. I'm not sure if it's the lighting, the lack of skills from every school-picture photographer ever, or maybe there's a contagious stench in the air that turns us all into picture-day monsters.

Even with the countless hours spent trying to finally look halfway decent in a school picture, the photos always come back with crooked smiles, messy hair and diseased-looking skin.

Looking silly in a photo is one thing, but it's another when you're paying money. School photos can be expensive. My parents purchase several copies to give to family members.

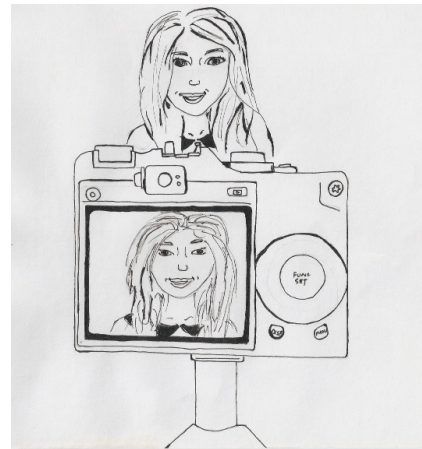
Though my grandma may think I look pleasant in my photo, I don't want to see my framed hair-raising photo lin-

gering on his house's walls for months to come.

If my family pays for a photo of me that we could have easily taken ourselves, students should be able to approve the photo being used directly after it is taken. Seeing it months later defeats the purpose.

Whoever said picture day had to be limited to just a day? If I'm paying for this photo, I don't want to be rushed. Pictures should be taken over the course of at least two days, that way everyone has a photo they're comfortable with. Spreading pictures out over two days would also reduce the time students take out of their classes to be photographed: fewer people, shorter lines. Administrators, if you expect my family to pay this much for a photo, I expect you to make sure all of the photos are done to their highest potential.

60 years from now, when my past classmates vaguely recall high school with wrinkled hands and glasses with a magnification power of electron microscope, I don't want them to remember me by the awkwardness of my school photo.



"They say the camera steals your soul."

Angela Saenz
Guest Cartoonist

Dress code encrypted 2012-2013 West Wind Staff



Ashley Weed
Guest Editorial

The regulations for student attire have always sparked controversy, especially these past few years, putting administrators and students at odds with each other.

Despite every "Do it because I said so" and "I am right because I'm the staff member and you're the student" the faculty may throw at us, they fail to see the paramour error of their ways.

The execution of the dress code at Bellevue West is devastatingly flawed, as there is zero incentive to follow the regulations.

First of all, the actual wording of the regulations is incredibly ambiguous. How can you expect students to follow the dress code if they don't even know what the rules are?

Under the Regulation section of Student Grooming and Attire located in our Parent-Student handbook, clause eight bans the wearing of any sort of "headwear including, but not limited to, baseball hats, stocking caps, knit caps, skull caps and bandanas."

What makes a rolled up American flag bandana to hold your hair back more offensive than a headband? Are the choir department's famous "WINNING" sweatbands considered against school policy?

The fact that there are only a few clear guidelines and an elastic clause that allows for random enforcement is unfair to unsuspecting students who want to promote patriotism with their spirited "headwear" or who want support Mr. Reimer in Teacher Survivor with the sweatbands that they bought.

The vagueness of the dress code isn't limited to the definition of headwear. The list of guidelines is rife with subjective adjectives such as "extremely short," "vulgar," and "inappropriate."

There is no checklist that an outfit must complete in order to be considered "inappropriate," no unified definition of "vulgar," no measurements that qualify as "extremely short" ("fingertip length" is nowhere to be found in the handbook though it is announced in freshman and sophomore assemblies).

Each and every human being has a different idea of the criteria something needs to meet in order to deserve any of these arbitrary labels. In a school, one of the most socialist environments in which "no child is left behind," these words are left to be individually interpreted by staff members that have different understandings of the dress code, and the subsequent interpretations are then forced upon unsuspecting students,

violating the homogeneous nature of America's public school system. Simply put, the central problem with the execution of the dress code is inconsistency.

However, ambiguity is only half of what makes the enforcement of the dress code so inconsistent. There are too many exceptions to the rule, and too many people overlooked for punishment.

Our cheerleaders are not asked to change into pants on game day. Athletic shorts hiked up past the navel to show more thigh constantly go unnoticed.

It's like playing a game of Minesweeper every time you walk past an administrator or teacher while wearing something they might deem inappropriate.

Sometimes you get "talked to," sometimes you are sent to the dean's office and given demerits, though most times you can get away without any recognition or mark on your permanent record.

For example, in August of my sophomore year, a staff member approached my lunch table. She pulled aside one of the girls at my table and informed her that her shorts were not "fingertip length" and was instructed to change her shorts immediately. Ironically, the girl sitting right next to the "offender" had shorts on that were just as short.

Honestly, I didn't have to provide any anecdotes to prove my point. You could have supported my thesis with your own horror stories of the absolute arbitrariness of the way the dress code is imposed upon us at Bellevue West.

However, this inconsistency has other implications other than injustice. Psychology tells us our behavior is reinforced when we are rewarded on a variable interval.

Essentially, if we are rewarded by the school's disciplinarians ignoring our dress code violations ninety-nine out of a hundred times we pass them in the hallways, we are more likely to repeat the behavior.

This means that the execution (or lack thereof) of the dress code is actually conditioning students to break the rules.

The existence of dress regulations does not bother me. I'd rather not see the unmentionables of my peers, or be at risk of getting gored by someone's spiked dog collar, or trip over someone's wallet chains. However, unless the administrators recognize the flaws within their methods of execution, we will forever be stuck in this vicious cycle, perpetuating this conflict between staff and students.

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Fact check: Disadvantaged demographics

In response to the Bellevue Leader's editorial, "Schools should drop the excuses."



Candi Bolden
Editor-in-Chief

The NeSA tests were given to juniors beginning of February of 2012, the same time frame SAT and ACT season starts and just before the first AP test. Once a week students were loaded on a bus in the middle of the school day, shuffled off to take a test that didn't affect them.

But there's more than just students who don't try because the test doesn't affect them. There are students who are not academically prepared for testing.

In the Sept. 5 editorial by the Bellevue Leader, "Schools should drop the excuses," the Leader's editorial staff missed important factors with the testing and they ignored facts. The Bellevue Leader should know better than to expect overall proficiency on the science test but let's get to their main argument: Poverty doesn't factor into the equation when it comes to testing scores.

First let's analyze the Leader's idea that in the past people in poverty understood the importance of education and put it above other matters. This doesn't come down to the understanding that education is important but test scores on statewide tests. The nostalgic time described was a time way before No Child Left Behind and we don't know if in the past overall proficiency was achievable.

According to a study done by University of California-Berkeley professors W. Thomas Boyce and Robert Knight and published in the Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience, 9 and 10 year-olds from lower socioeconomic levels have similar brain functions to someone who has undergone a stroke.

The lack of basic necessities is not just an excuse but empirically proven reason for students that have problems focusing on their studies.

A presidential address given by Helen F. Ladd, an Edgar T. Thompson Professor of Public Policy at the Sanford School of Public Policy and Professor of Economics at Duke University stated that "test-based evaluation of teachers and the promotion of competition, are misguided because they either deny or set to the side a basic body of evidence documenting that students from disadvantaged households on average

perform less well in school than those from more advantaged families." In the address she mentions that one of the markers used to measure poverty is use of free or reduced lunch.

Bryan schools let alone the US in general isn't the only place whose had correlation between low test scores and students not able to buy lunch. Ladd cites that 12 other countries have followed the trend of areas with poverty getting low test scores.

The problem with poverty and education according to Ladd is that some students because of their home environment "started out well below the achievement standards" and won't be able to catch fully up unless the standards are set at ground level.

Truthfully I find it hard to believe the column "Schools should stop the excuses" got published not only because its tendency to stray from common knowledge but its factual inaccuracy. According to the

Nebraska Department of Education Nebraska State Accountability (NeSA) District Report of School Performance Spring of 2012, Bryan was not placed last amongst the Omaha schools. Benson High School was behind in the Math and the Science and across the boards Omaha South was just a few points ahead.

Also when in particular did Bryan's student population become an equivalent to Omaha's population in general? I'm pretty sure that there is more to Omaha than Bryan. Yet they still say "that 81 percent of it's [Bryan Junior High School's] students receive a free or reduced lunch" which leads to "81 percent of Omaha families are incapable of providing their kids with a decent lunch."

Bryan is at the average Omaha rate for non-English speakers. But that can't be immediately discarded. Students who don't speak English are given test accommodations. But how effective are these accommodations.

According to the NeSA Analysis of Accommodations for Limited English Proficient Students, accommodations were available for students who had two years or fewer speaking English. Despite the fact English is not their first language they still take that test.

Overall the editorial "Schools should drop the excuses" along with the NeSA testing itself is subpar. As a legitimate news source the Leader's editorial staff should have checked the facts before attacking a school's teachers and administration.

Yes it is bad that Bryan Junior High and Bryan High School "scored significantly lower in science, math and reading exams" on the test but there are more factors that need to be weighed in on before blaming it all on schools and their "relaxed" attitudes toward poverty.

hitting the runway

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THETHUNDERBEAT.ORG





Family, School, Football

Bri Thomas
News Editor

On June 17 the Bellevue community suffered the loss of longtime head football coach John Faiman, but the grief extended beyond Bellevue. Aside from being head football coach, he was also a dean of students at Bellevue West.

Faiman played quarterback for the University of Nebraska at Lincoln from 1960 to 1962. Before this, he was named All-American quarterback while playing for Omaha South High School. Faiman began coaching high school football directly after college, making connections all around the state. His first coaching job was in David City, Nebraska. Along with this he was assistant coach during the 1968 Shrine Bowl.

Faiman dipped his toes in the college football world but decided to return to high school football. He was head coach at Bellevue West for 26 years, starting in 1986.

Craig Moraski said that the loss of Faiman was felt by many.

"It's bigger than just our players. It's high school football. He coached all over, developing great relationships with coaches and brought a lot of great things back to Bellevue West," Moraski said.

Moraski was named interim head coach of the varsity

football team. For the most part his new responsibilities are minimal.

"He [Faiman] let us do a lot. The biggest thing is that I'm the one delegating responsibility between coaches now. And there's the TV interviews, newspaper, et cetera. I don't like that part, but it is what it is," Moraski said.

Senior team captain Cale Svehla's relationship with Faiman extended outside of school. They were also close family friends.

"My grandpa was his doctor. He went to church with us every now and then. He'd come to my basketball games just to support me and he'd always call my mom just to check up on us," Svehla said.

The football team has a newfound motivation this year stemming from this loss.

"It gave us more passion and an even greater reason to play than any other year," Svehla said.

The process of finding a new head coach is on the back burner for now. After advertising the position, applicants will be researched and go through the hiring process, but that's the last thing on Moraski's mind.

"That's not until November. I'm just trying to keep things enjoyable for the kids. [I'm] not thinking about it," Moraski said.



Photo by Annaliese Schneider

Junior Nolan Bald wears the East-West t-shirt designed by FBLA. The shirts represented John Faiman's impact on the Bellevue West Community.



Photo by Kyle Malone

Senior Aaron Seals (Left) throws a pass during the East vs. West rivalry game. Junior Mike Gilbert (Right) protects the pocket during the play. As of press time their record is 3-1.



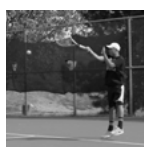
Photo by Kyle Malone

Bellevue West's offensive line faces off against Bellevue East's defensive line. The East-West game came down to a run by Senior Forrest Wayne in overtime. West won 29-26.

Athletes in action



(Left) Sophomore Marissa Beaulieu walks to the next hole during a practice at Willow Lakes. The girls golf team will compete at districts Oct. 2nd. (Right) Alex Garcia-Hudson returns a serve during a Varsity tennis practice. Tennis Metro tournament is on Oct. 3-4 at Tranquility Park.



(Left) Senior Linzy Heim throws the ball to Junior Kaitlyn Flynn during a home game at the Leid Activity Center. Softball districts will take place Oct. 4-6. As of press time their record is 12-8. (Right) Bellevue West Cross Country team runs during the Bellevue West invite. Districts are Oct. 11th.



2012 T-birds total Titans

Sidney Marks
Reporter

Bellevue West beat Papillion-La Vista South 34-13 at West's 2012 Homecoming game. At press time, West improved their record to 3-1.

Senior Forrest Waymire led the team in rushing, totaling 92 yards. Waymire averaged 4.8 yards per carry and scored the only touchdown by Bellevue West in the first quarter.

In the T-Birds first four outings, Waymire leads rushing with 280 yards, and has scored four touchdowns.

After a slow first quarter, West scored twice in the last five minutes of the half. Senior Nick Guida rushed four yards for a touchdown. The last touchdown of the quarter was a 28 yard pass to junior Brad Brazzel with 10 seconds left.

Brazzel leads receptions with 333 yards. Defensively, Brazzel also leads the T-Birds in interceptions. He added one to his record, a 21-yard interception against Papio South.

Senior quarterback Aaron Seals passed for 300 yards, hitting five different receivers. Sophomore CJ Johnson racked up 112 yards, including Seals' longest pass, 39 yards, of the night.

Senior Mason Savine connected on four of five PATs.

Bellevue West will play Omaha South on Sept. 28 at Collin Field. Admission is four dollars.

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Attention Division I Hopefuls

Attention Division I Hopefuls

The NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) has increased the standards for Division I student athletes.

These new regulations are on a sliding scale correlating with the students SAT test scores, requiring:

a minimum of a 2.3 GPA to compete in athletic events.

Students must complete 10 of the 16 total core class credits before they are a senior.

Seven of those classes must be from English, math and science.

These regulations will be affecting this year's freshman.

A tale of two quarterbacks

Nick Wilkinson
Sports Editor

In the three games as a starter, Bellevue West quarterback Aaron Seals racked up 155 yards against cross-town rival Bellevue East (29-26 W), 248 passing yards against Millard South (50-17 L), and 145 passing yards in West's 56-7 victory over Omaha Benson.

Seals has accepted the challenge to continue the legacy of being a Bellevue West starting quarterback; he is also compared to his two-time All-state, record breaking brother Tyler Seals, who started at Bellevue West in 2007 and 2008.

"I'm proud that my brother may be the best quarterback in Bellevue West history, maybe even Nebraska history, and it doesn't bother me that he was better than me as a T-bird," Aaron said.

Tyler Seals threw for a total of 60 touchdowns as a Bellevue West quarterback in his two years as a starter and more than 5,000 yards. He broke the Class-A mark for passing yards and touchdowns. So how does the young Seals of the new generation maintain composure as the starter with the pressure of T-bird fans that compare him to his older brother, Tyler?

"It's cool having Tyler as my brother. People know who I am but I have always

fallen short in school and in sports. That gets old," Aaron said.

Aaron's focus is on the team, more than his own personal competition with his brother's stats.

"I don't care about my personal stats. If the team doesn't play sloppy we could have a two or three loss season," Aaron said.

Throughout his life, Aaron has been around sports. Being brought up around sports made his interest in playing football much more intense.

"My dad and Tyler helped me with football growing up. They gave me tips and advice and I always trusted them because they've been there," Aaron said.

Tyler has his brother's best interests in mind, including him in his own recruiting process when he was signing with Northwest Missouri St. University showing him what he is like and what he is now prepared for as a senior.

"Next year I want to go to a big school. I'm a student first, but I want to try and walk on somewhere," Aaron said.

Even though playing quarterback is a serious situation, the Seals brothers have fun with it all their lives, from playing catch in the yard to comparing what each of them would do if they could play against each other.

"If we played against each other I would win. I'm much bigger than he [Ty-

ler] was as a senior," Aaron said.

Tyler, on the other hand, can't agree with his little brother on that one.

"It's going to be tough for anyone to match what Greg Hardin and I did with our time at West, but Aaron definitely has some great players on his side. I can't pick a winner but it would be a high scoring game," Tyler said.

Either way, the Seals brothers respect each other as family members and as football players. "Without a doubt Aaron has earned the starting spot, and I'm proud of him for that," Tyler said.