

Livingston High School Rated "A"

By Oriana Tang '15

Livingston High School was recently given an "A" rating by Star Ledger-run magazine *Inside Jersey*.

The magazine ranked all New Jersey schools using data about each school's math and language arts achievement from the New Jersey Department of Education as well as their average SAT scores from the past four years.

Schools with above-average scores received an "A" if they showed little improvement or a "B" if they showed significant improvement, while schools with below-average scores received a "C" if they showed significant improvement or a "D" if they showed little improvement. With a mean SAT score of 1735, Livingston ranked second in Essex County behind Millburn, which had a score of 1857 (see table below).

"We're always proud to see ourselves on top of any list," said LHS principal Mark Stern.

Others feel less certain. "[The ranking system] is a way to judge a town's socioeconomic status but not a town's quality," said senior Rachel Geffner. "Towns that have more resources have better chances of testing well."

Another student agreed. "SAT scores are much more indicative of how capable a student is of taking an exam than of how much they have learned or how well they have been taught."

School	SAT	'08 Score	'12 Score	Grade	Median Home Value
Millburn H.S.	1857	381.1	393.3	A	\$921,900
Livingston H.S.	1735	355.9	372.5	A	\$575,300
Montclair H.S.	1618	325.5	349.8	B	\$600,500
Nutley H.S.	1484	301.4	321.4	B	\$398,900
W. Orange H.S.	1449	290.1	310.9	C	\$395,100
Bloomfield H.S.	1359	273.8	293.3	C	\$356,400

The full table can be found at NJ.com.

Alleged Syrian Chemical Attacks Spark Global Debate

By Crystal Song '14

President Obama addressed the nation on September 10, promoting strategic airstrikes against the regime of Syrian president Bashar al-Assad following the alleged use of chemical weapons against Syrian citizens.

"We know the Assad regime was responsible," Obama said, referring to the attacks of August 21 that killed more than 1,400 Damascus citizens. The president, who is prepared to strike alone but will not act without a mandate from Congress, asked for a vote in that body to be postponed until the U.N. comes to a resolution over Russia's new proposal for Syria to turn its chemical weaponry over to international control. Meanwhile, the U.S. military is primed to "respond if diplomacy fails."

Before the Russian initiative, President Obama had been campaigning to gain support for strikes, resulting in criticism from the opposition. "President Obama, the multilateralist, is the one who is indeed acting unilaterally," said a former press secretary for President Bush, calling attention to 2008 candidate Obama's commitment to international diplomacy.

Others are concerned with the possible consequences of diplomacy as well as those

of military action. Republican senator John McCain told the *Wall Street Journal* the day after Obama's address, "I believe that there is a possibility that this fails and we reveal the Russia initiative for what I think it is: it's just a stalling tactic."

In an editorial for the *New York Times*, Russian president Vladimir Putin stated that international leaders "must stop using the language of force and return to the path of civilized diplomatic and political settlement."

Support for military action, unilateral or otherwise, is far from universal at home and abroad. According to a new NBC news poll, nearly 60% of Americans oppose intervention; so far, only France has voiced support for a U.S.-led strike. As the U.S. venture for retaliatory strikes flounders on the international stage and diplomacy emerges as a tentative option, President Assad rallies supporters in the Syrian capital, who are already wary of American intervention.

"They spoke about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq; instead they destroyed Iraq and nothing was proved," said a citizen of Damascus interviewed by the *Wall Street Journal*. "I believe nothing the Americans say."

Syria to Affect Congressional Vote on Fiscal Issues

By Oriana Tang '15

The U.S. House of Representatives reconvened on September 9 to address, among other affairs, the debt ceiling, which the U.S. is due to hit in mid-October.

The debt ceiling—the maximum amount of money the government is legally allowed to borrow—is currently set at \$16.7 trillion. If this value isn't increased by the September 30 vote, the government will shut down on October 1 and default on its loans by the middle of the month.

Generally, votes to increase the borrow-

ing limit are routine procedure. However, now Congress also has to make decisions on military action in Syria. This, coupled with the fact that the House has only organized nine legislative days in September, makes it very likely that alternative measures will be taken.

"I think you have to say that the chance of a short-term extension has increased," said political analyst Chris Krueger.

House Republicans have stated that they plan to use the debt ceiling vote as leverage for federal spending cuts, especially in Obamacare.

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From the Desk of the Editors-in-Chief

An admissions officer sits at her desk, faced with two applications. On the left, a Caucasian boy with a 3.9 GPA boasts about his plethora of AP classes and extracurricular activities. On the right side is a Latino American with a 3.6 GPA and similarly rigorous classes and activities. Without a second thought, she places the application on the right side of her desk into the “accepted” pile for only one reason: race.

Affirmative action—policies of discrimination based on race, religion, and gender that attempt to benefit underrepresented minorities—creates reverse discrimination against majority groups. While some argue that it compensates for past injustices, such as slavery, in reality there is little tangible correlation. Affirmative action is not directed towards a specific person or group of people but rather entire races and genders that span the globe.

It’s a controversy over fairness, equality, and merit that has continually resurfaced in the Supreme Court. But if affirmative action raises so many questions, shouldn’t it not exist at all?

Rachel Geffner

With the school year in full swing, every senior has an endgame in sight, and affirmative action is never quite out of mind, taking on a personal tone as we sit down with our applications. As a system, affirmative action is not perfect. It treats ethnic and racial diversity as an asset, which—unlike grades or extracurriculars—no student can control.

But the essence of affirmative action itself is essential to our identity as a nation. Yes, we favor individualism, but no individual can prosper on their own in an increasingly interconnected and globalized world. And no individual should be left without resources, as were generations before them. Denying the need for affirmative action denies a long and brutal history of racism, and the thriving remnants of that racism today.

We all deserve an equal chance, but that equality depends upon raising some players up to an even playing field. In the end, merit in most important, and accomplishments—not just color—will determine which students get into their dream schools.

Crystal Song

Livingston’s New Claim to Fame: Best Tasting Water in New Jersey

By Jordan Spector ‘14

Livingston recently earned an award for the “Best Tasting Water in New Jersey” after competing in a blind taste test at the American Water Works Association New Jersey Section’s annual conference in Atlantic City.

Approximately 800 people were in attendance, and 150 of them tasted samples of tap water from various townships state-wide and then voted on which ones had the best flavor.

The contest was conducted according to strict guidelines. “The water had to be room temperature and be served in similar containers,”

said Kathleen Udasco of the New Jersey Chapter of the American Water Works Association, which holds similar conferences each year throughout the country in order to promote high standards for water treatment and safety.

“It’s a group that focuses on the technical, managerial and the operational aspects of delivering drinking water,” Dennis Ciemniecki, the NJ Section Chair, said.

Now that Livingston has defeated its local neighbors, it will compete at the next AWWA national water convention in pursuit of earning the prize for best water in America.

features

Monteith Dead, Hudson Gone

By Rachel Roth ‘14

Cory Monteith, who played the role of Finn for the past four seasons of “Glee,” was found dead in a Vancouver hotel room on July 13 of this past. The deputy police chief stated that Monteith was discovered around noon local time Saturday, after he missed his check-out time at the Fairmont Pacific Rim Hotel.

The 31-year-old Canadian actor died as a result of “a lethal combination of heroin and alcohol,” reported The Huffington Post.

Although his death shocked “Glee” fans (known as “Gleeks”) throughout the world, Monteith’s passing was not so unexpected. He had openly shared his past struggles with substance abuse; he began using drugs at 13 and went into rehab at 19. Despite time spent in a drug addiction treatment facility in March this year, Monteith seemed to be doing much better.

Describing his conversation with Monteith the morning of his death, Adam Shankman,

a director of “Glee,” said, “I had several interactions with him yesterday where he said he was doing amazing. He even said [he was] feeling fantastic.” Shankman explained that he felt “really devastated and confused by what happened.”

Monteith’s character on “Glee,” Finn, was considered by most to be the main male role in the show. He was not only the star quarterback at McKinley High School but also one of the most talented singers in the Glee Club. Shankman labeled Monteith as the glue of “Glee.”

Monteith’s ties with the Fox show extended beyond what was broadcasted on camera. The actor was dating co-star Lea Michelle off-screen, who also played his high school love in the show.

“Glee”’s season 5 will premiere on October 10, 2013, and a special tribute to Monteith is to take place by the third episode. Gleeks everywhere are hoping that they can love the popular show in its 5th season just as much without Finn Hudson.

draw? paint?
take pictures?

*the Lance is trying to incorporate
student artwork into its issues
this year*

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Editor’s Mix

OneRepublic
I Lived

Avicii
Wake Me Up

King Charles
Love Lust

Lana Del Rey
Summertime Sadness

Calvin Harris feat. Ellie
Goulding
I Need Your Love

Panic! at the Disco
That Green
Gentleman

opinion

Head-to-Head: Summer Homework

PRO

By Joan Shira '14

Call me Summer—wait, no, call me required, sure-to-be-done-last-minute summer homework. But why? Is summer homework necessary? Are teachers just mean, soulless human beings who enjoy their students' suffering?

One of the most common complaints about institutionalized school is that students are forced to master a subject at certain pace. The purpose of summer homework? To emphasize learning outside of the classroom.

This summer, besides the required assignments, the percentage of the LHS population who freely decided to learn a new subject, just because, is (taking an educated guess here) less than 10%, and that's a generous number. Students regard learning as a classroom activity. After a test, the learned, or rather memorized, information is forgotten.

Summer homework gives you the freedom to choose when to learn what, and how. Perhaps you'd rather read a chapter a night, or finish the entire book in a day. The restrictions of teacher and classroom are gone. That means having the advantage of taking your time and absorbing the knowledge instead of cramming three outlines into the last weekend of vacation.

Maybe teachers aren't really that heartless. Maybe they just want us to "shoot for the moon because even if we miss, we'll land among the stars," or not get accepted into college and fail miserably in life. Either way, summer homework isn't all that bad.

Working in High School: A Necessity or A Distraction?

By Brett Weiser-Schlesinger '14

To most high school students, summer vacation is a time most often (and probably best) spent on a beach, on vacation, and at home, relaxing. For many students, however, it's also the perfect time to earn money and experience at a summer job.

While youth employment may be nowhere near the levels of 20 or 30 years ago, being a member of the workforce remains a significant part of the average American teenager's summer plans. A key, controversial question surrounds the topic of youth jobs: is the effort of searching for and working in a job ultimately worth its sacrifices?

Some parents and students argue that high school students already have a job: performing in school. The pressure to achieve high grades is larger in today's education system than ever before. College is a necessity for many students to have any hope of holding a decent job after attaining a high school diploma. Many parents and students alike believe that commitment to a job outside of

CON

By Morgan Levy '15

I live my life in a constant state of stress.

During my middle school days summer was an oasis, a time free from the intense effort I applied to my academics. I cherished the freedom every year, the opportunity to escape my perfectionistic ways and high stress levels for an extended period of time. High school has robbed me of that. Summer is no longer a true "break" from the stress of school.

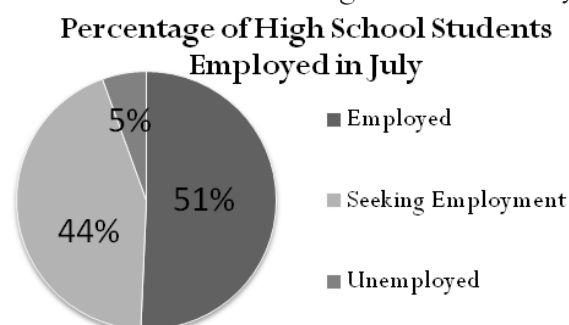
In particular, students taking Honors and AP classes are loaded with mountains of summer work. I have diligently been working on my pile of work since the early days in July, and I am still nowhere near done as the start of school approaches.

The main problem with summer work is the extensive amount of time the assignments take. It is good for students to do some work in order to prepare for the year ahead, but the amount of work should not be so excessive. Additionally, it is not as if most students sit around wasting their summers. Many LHS students are traveling, taking teen tours, working at camps, or interning in a field of interest.

Students should be able to use summer as a break from academics, an opportunity to relax and recharge, allowing them to come back to school energized and ready to take on the new year. High school is stressful; it is unfair that summer work makes academic stress eternally present.

By eliminating summer work, or even lowering the amount, students would be alleviated of the stress that comes with these assignments.

school hours could take time away that would otherwise have been designated for studying.



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics.

On the other side of the debate, some contend that earning money on one's own before being thrust into the world of college (and beyond) is an important preparatory step in becoming an independent adult. Instead of being reliant on parents or family members for constant income, students holding jobs are able to pay for food, clothing, and expenses that are usually funded by relatives.

"Having my own money to spend on

Fine—Blurred?—Lines

By Crystal Song '14

"What a pleasure it is to degrade a woman," Robin Thicke joked to *GQ*. What a pleasure, indeed, to punch the man responsible for the song of the summer in his big D.

"I think it's catchy and I like it. So sue me," one blogger said of the singer's new hit, "Blurred Lines."

Unfortunately, music is about more than a foot-tapping tune, and the popularity of "Blurred Lines" is highly suggestive. The three men in Thicke's video are allowed to express their sexuality without making themselves vulnerable. The three women exist purely for their benefit.

There's a fine—blurred?—line between flattery and outright harassment, and every girl knows what it's like when a boy toes that line. We're taught from kindergarten that boys will be boys, and when they punch you on the playground or pressure you into giving it up, it just means they *like* you. Thicke's models show no discomfort. They're all too happy to get serenaded with lines like *I know you want it* and *you the hottest bitch in this joint*—pure poetry.

For guys like Robin Thicke, the blurred lines where it's hard to tell if a woman wants you because society pushes her to accept even unwanted male attention really are a pain. For girls who live in a world where songs like Thicke's are celebrated, the real line is drawn between being treated as an actual human being and being treated as something less.

pretty much whatever I want is great," says one high school student with his own paid job. "I really feel like I'm a lot more prepared for living on my own in college because of it."

Getting the feel for working with other people, having responsibilities outside of the house, and being rewarded for one's labor are just a few ways that high school students can learn from working a part-time job.

In the end, parents and students have the responsibility of deciding whether or not having a job is necessary for the sake of sacrificing a small portion of one's time.

Whether working a part-time job or keeping one's time sacrificed lowered with the intent of achieving academic goals, what happens to a student in high school will likely affect the rest of their career. Students will have plenty of choices to make for the rest of their lives, and employment will be one of those choices. Why not get a head start?

sports & health

Football Captain Jake Rosenbaum: “Livingston Should be Excited”

By Randy Posner '14

Jake Rosenbaum has been a beast on the gridiron for eleven years. Now, as one of the senior captains, Rosenbaum is ready to lead the team to victory. I was able to talk to the fullback and outside linebacker about the upcoming season.

Randy Posner: Who are the 2013 captains?

Jake Rosenbaum: All seniors are viewed as the captains (Jake Rosenbaum, Ryan Distler, Will Gonzalez, Will Cardona, Llew Rochas, Jake Kurland, Brandon Cohen, Devon Nwosu, Franz Rivero, James Mattia, Adam Zedeck).

RP: How did it feel to be named captain, and what is your role?

JR: It is truly an honor. After years of following the past seniors, it's exciting to finally lead the 2013 Lancer football team. My role as a captain is to motivate and lead the younger kids. I teach the younger kids the terminology, technique, and the pace of varsity football.

RP: How does the team look compared to LHS teams in the past?

JR: This team is special. Most of the upperclassmen have been playing together since we were in 2nd and 3rd grade and the others who joined late understood the game quickly and were able to contribute right away. Our offseason work was stellar and that showed up in our weight room numbers (which broke a lot of team records).

Our new, improved, and experienced coaching staff are second to none and all of whom were once or will be head coaches in the future. Overall this is a team will cause some teams major problems.



LHS football captain Jake Rosenbaum.

RP: What are some key games to watch for this season?

JR: All of them. We play in one of the toughest football conferences in all of New Jersey, and all games are going to be fun to watch.

RP: What are some of your goals for the season?

JR: Our goal every year is to bring home another state championship. Yes, last year was an unsuccessful season. Many of the major NJ high school news websites will not speak hilt about us, but I truly believe that we have the talent and personnel to win a state title.

RP: Who are some up and coming players?

JR: Juniors Matt Gibbon, Johnny Schreiber, Ryan Cheeseman, Greg Glassman, Alex Bauer, Ian Bambrick, Zach Marini, Chase Everett, and Chris Mattia have all gained attention by filling in for injured seniors or just flat out earning a starting job for the beginning of camp. Livingston should be excited for the next two to three years of Lancer football.

RP: Talk about the team's strengths and weaknesses.

JR: So far in camp I have seen that we are strong, efficient, and disciplined. We are not interrupted by any little distraction and we are mentally strong enough to fight through the heat. One thing we can improve on is communication. Some of the seniors, including myself, have to be more vocal within the drills to help the younger kids become better football players.

RP: Message to the fans?

JR: You may think otherwise but expect something special this season.

Seven Ways for Seven Days: How to Get Healthy This School Year

By Chloe Seltzer '14

As school kicks back into motion, it is hard to say that any student is excited to see his or her late nights cut short and early morning waking up resume. Being healthy while also remaining happy is easier than once previously believed. Using seven easy steps throughout seven days of the week can lead to once-locked doors suddenly opening.

Waking up is never easy, and most people just wish everyday could be a Saturday. The key to making waking up easier is to preserve 8-9 hours each night for sleeping. While this may seem like a clichéd fact, a good night's rest can lead to a more alert and focused student. Once the day has begun, a large and healthy breakfast is the next step to living happier. Each breakfast meal should include a good amount of protein, fiber, and carbs. Breakfast can help retain memory by maintaining focus and help to avoid overeating later in the day.

Once the school day has started, the wait immediately begins for lunchtime. When it comes to eating a healthy and filling lunch, the key is to choose foods that contain protein, such as turkey or nuts, and picking foods that do not forfeit nutrition. Students who pack their own lunches, or goes on the lunch line with a plan in mind, can avoid desirable junk food without having to rely on willpower.

Lunch, however, is not only about eating; students are often rushing through their days without taking a moment to relax. Each lunch period leaves enough time to eat while also reserving 10-15 minutes to unwind. Taking a break should not be confused with being lazy: it simply means a student is regrouping for the remainder of the day.

When the school day is finally over, an afternoon snack should not be discouraged. Rather than picking up a bag of chips or downing a Slurpee, a student should find healthier

alternatives such as protein shakes or vegetables with dip.

With homework and studying, all too often students become overwhelmed with stress. Rather than keeping emotions pent up inside, exercise is a healthy way to blow off steam and avoid depression or anxiety. Thirty minutes to an hour of exercise each day is essential to staying fit and at ease.

Finally, it is important to find easy ways to “trick” the brain, such as brushing one's teeth with a non-dominant hand or singing the alphabet backwards. Keeping one's mind active is a great way to evade memory loss in the future.

When a person is healthy, he or she tends to be happier. Maintaining a healthy lifestyle can be as easy losing one hour of television to gain one hour of sleep. As the new school year begins, every student should do his or her best to adopt healthy habits and make sure that this year counts.