

MAKING PROGRESS

Central works towards moonshot with Science of Reading course, lacks a reading teacher

Fiona Bryant
managing editor

The Omaha Public Schools has embarked on its “moonshot” - an initiative to have every student reading on grade level by 2030 – but Central has not been able to offer supplementary literacy classes this year for students reading below grade level. However, a Science of Reading course is being offered to Central staff by the district to incorporate literacy skills into their teaching.

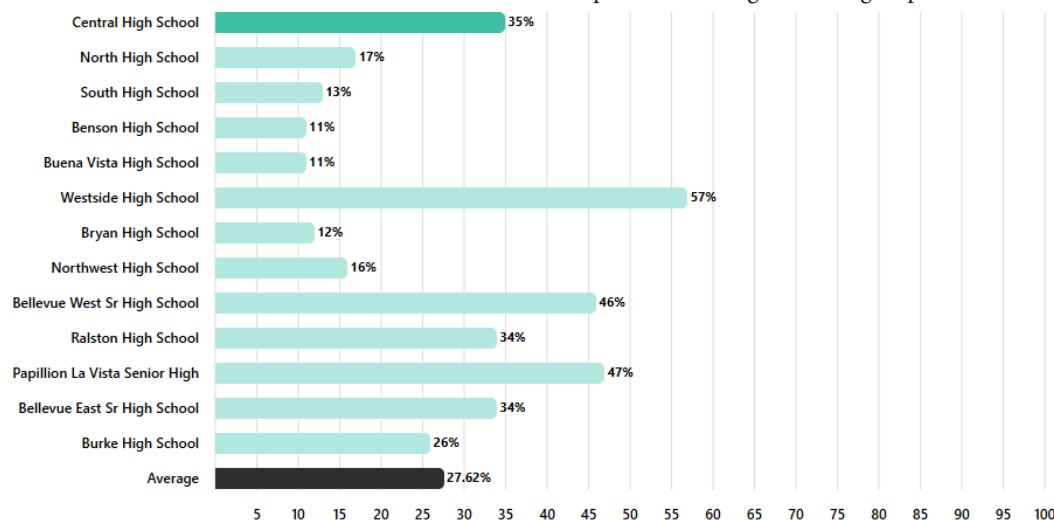
In the 2023-2024 school year, 65 percent of Central juniors were not reading at grade level, as indicated by the ACT.

Central used to offer classes for non-English Learner students who were one or more grades below grade reading level as they entered high school. Tier 2 instruction was offered to students who were one or two grades below grade level in the class Academic Literacy. More intensive Tier 3 instruction, for students three or more grade levels below grade level, was offered in Literacy Skills and Literacy Skills Year 2. English and literacy classes for English Learners are

ACT (11th Grade) - ELA



State 45%
District 20%



At Central, 35% of 11th graders have grade-level English Language Arts proficiency, as determined by the ACT during the 2023-2024 school year. Screenshot of Data from THE NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

These classes are supposed to be taught by a teacher certified in reading, which is different than a certification to teach English. Currently, only two Central teachers are certified in reading, and they are both teaching other classes.

“Our biggest issue is just not having the right people here,” English Department Head Jonathan Flanagan said. “I feel supported by the district in terms of funding and training.”

A position for a

MOONSHOT on page 4

Central trabaja hacia moonshot con el curso de ciencias de la lectura, a falta de un profesor de lectura

Fiona Bryant
managing editor

Brianna Martinez
staff writer

Las escuelas publicas de Omaha se han embarcado en su “moonshot”, una iniciativa para que todos los estudiantes lean a nivel de grado para 2030. Sin embargo, Central no ha podido ofrecer clases complementarias de lacto escritura este año para los estudiantes con lectura por debajo del nivel de grado. Sin embargo, el distrito ofrece al personal de central un curso de Ciencias de la lectura para incorporar habilidades de lacto escritura e su enseñanza.

En el año escolar 2023-2024, el 65% de los estudiantes de tercer año de central no leían a niel de grado, según lo indica el ACT.

Central antes ofrecia clases para estudiantes que no era aprendices de ingles y que estaban uno o mas grados por debajo del nivel de lectura al ingresar a la preparatoria. La instrucción de nivel 2 se ofrecia a los estudiantes que Esteban uno o dos grados por debajo del nivel de su grado en la clase de alfabetización académica. La instrucción de Nivel 3, mas intensiva, para estudiantes tres o mas grados por debajo del nivel de su grado, se ofrecia en habilidades de alfabetización y en habilidades de segundo año. Las clases de ingles y alfabetización para estudiantes que aprenden ingles aun se ofrecen en Central.

Los estudiantes podrían comenzar clases de lectura desde la secundaria, después de que según sus resultados en la prueba MAP, mun maestro o un administrador indique que el estudiante podría beneficiarse del apoyo en lectoescritura. Un estudiante podría tomar la clase de lectura durante varios años hasta que sus resultados mejoren desde el sexto grado hasta el grado 12, las clases son similares y incluyen un programa de lectura en línea como iLit, Code o Read180, tiempo de lectura independiente y instrucción en grupo.

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Crossroads mall redevelopment officially set to start this spring

Katie Besancon
digital editor

Along hoped for hot spot turned blank piece of land is ready for renovations.

The former Crossroads Mall has been set to receive a massive renovation for several years now yet has not had any advancements recently.

As of 10 years ago the property was put into local ownership. However there has been little progress with the property since the initial demolitions. Due to this, the city of Omaha was able to adopt a new redevelopment agreement and ultimately buy the property alongside Woodberry Corporation at the end of 2024.

The new redevelopment agreement has set up a plan to build accountability into the timeline. This will work to ensure that the new renovation and reconstruction plan will take place in a timely fashion and is delayed no longer than it already has been. The plan also includes the upkeep and maintenance of the property to ensure that the plot of land continues to stay in proper condition.

The city of Omaha hired the general contractor and construction company MCL to work on this project with the confidence that they will include local subcontractors on the project as well. MCL has implemented a timeline for the multi-phase project. Phase one is set to begin in June of this year, finishing the phase in 2027.

The first phase of this project will include a plaza or public green space area, multifamily

apartments, ground floor retail, Newmarket entertainment opportunities, and underground parking.

The redevelopment as a whole will be “accomplishing a more pedestrian friendly experiment that is multiuse in nature,” said District 1 City councilmember Pete Festerson. Blueprints suggest the space will be comparable to the feel of the Nebraska Crossing outlets with the outdoor space and activity areas, only denser.

The redevelopment in its entirety will be set to finish in the year 2032, costing around \$862 million. At its completion, the redevelopment will alter the plot of land spanning from 72nd and Cass Streets to 75th and Dodge Streets. The preexisting Target will remain, but all other buildings will undergo demolition and redevelopment, including the standing parking garage on 72nd and Cass.

The work on the redevelopment has already started taking shape and includes the relocation of soil to prep the area for new structures to be layed.

Once the site is complete the renovated area will serve as a place for shopping, entertainment, offices, hotels and housing for the neighborhoods surrounding the 72nd street area.

Specifics regarding retail fronts and entertainment spaces for the development have yet to be announced. They are projected to be announced in the coming months before the official groundbreaking later this spring.

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THRIVE Leadership Club is an afterschool program dedicated to helping disadvantaged youth develop leadership and communication skills.

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The U.S. saw its first fatal midair aviation collision since 2009 on Jan. 29 of this year.

Arts & Culture

Seniors take center stage at Omaha Fashion Week p. 11

Omaha Fashion Week showcased fashion designers and talented models from across the metro area and featured two Central students.

Sports

Predictions for top 10 NFL draft picks p. 19

With the NFL season over and the Philadelphia Eagles crowned NFL champions, the 2025 draft is quickly approaching.

111th Roadshow Gallery



Central's annual tradition consisted of performances from performing arts classes, solo performances, dances, the Step Team and much more. The event was held Feb. 21 and 22 in the auditorium.

BRADLEY SMITH | The Register





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It is the goal of the Central High Register to represent the student body in issues affecting their lives as young people and students. If you feel that we are not covering an issue that is important to you, we welcome contributing writers who bring fresh ideas to the issues.
If you would like to write a story for your student newspaper, please contact Broderick Hilgenkamp at broderick.hilgenkamp@ops.org or come to room 029 to discuss your idea.

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reading teacher is open. Flanagan said not having enough English teachers is part of the problem, because English teachers could teach the reading classes, even without certification. Other OPS high schools also eliminated the program this year. When the program was being offered, not all students estimated to read below grade level could be in a class. Flanagan, who previously taught Tier 3 classes, also said the classes work better with a small group of around 10 students, compared to the years he taught sections of 35. Next school year, the plan is for 101 freshmen to take the reader intervention course over six sections, Flanagan said.

In-class reading instruction and literacy skills, known as Tier 1 instruction, are taught in every English class. These skills follow the science of reading framework for teaching literacy, which is backed by science and focuses on phonics and related skills. Beginning this year, OPS offered staff who teach sixth through 12th grade a stipend or graduate credit for taking a Science of Reading course and attending a collaborative capstone from TNTP, an organization focused on equity in education for low-income students and students of color.

“If [my students] are struggling literacy wise, struggling to read, struggling to interpret, it’s such a difficult thing of, how are you going to be successful in my class, in any class?” social studies teacher Ben Boeckman said. “I want to work on these literacy skills to improve my practice and help support my students more and more.”

The course covers barriers to literacy for different groups of students, the importance of phonics, teaching complex texts, and more. The course does not accredit a teacher in reading.

“I think it’s a valuable asset for everybody,” English teacher Molly Mattison said. “What I’ve experienced so far is this is stuff everybody really needs to know.”

Teaching literacy skills through the science of reading, or structured literacy frameworks, has not always been taught. Some reading instruction, such as the controversial Fountas and Pinnell curriculum, strays away from phonics and promotes cueing, or relying on context clues to read.

“We sort of didn’t teach kids to read for 10 to 15 years,” Flanagan said. “And we’re realizing, oh, wow, all these kids can’t read.”

OPS plans to collaborate with the University of Nebraska Omaha to train all secondary and some elementary teachers in evidence-based instruction by 2027. The district’s next steps are formalizing goals and ideas for the moonshot.

“I think we need to have serious conversations about what happens if students are not reading at grade level,” Mattison said. “What is the plan for students who are not reading at grade level?”

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Estas clases deben ser enseñadas por un profesor certificado en lectura, lo cual es diferente a una certificación para enseñar inglés actualmente, solo dos profesores de central están certificados en lectura y ambos imparten otras clases. “Nuestro mayor problema es simplemente no contar con el personal adecuado”, dijo Jonathan Flanagan, director del departamento de inglés. “Me siento apoyado por el distrito en cuanto a financiación y capacitación”.

Hay una posición disponible para profesor de lectura, pero ningún solicitante se ha presentado. Flanagan explicó que la falta de suficientes profesores de inglés es parte del problema, ya que estos podrían impartir clases de lectura incluso sin certificación. Otras escuelas secundarias de OPS también eliminaron el programa este año. Cuando se ofrecía el programa, no todos los estudiantes con un nivel de lectura inferior al de su grado podían asistir a una clase. Flanagan quien anteriormente impartía clases de Nivel 3, también comentó que las clases funcionan mejor con un grupo pequeño de unos 10 estudiantes, en comparación con los años en que impartía secciones de 35.

La instrucción de lectura y lectoescritura en clase, conocida como instrucción de nivel 1, se imparte en todas las clases de inglés. Estas habilidades siguen el marco de la ciencia de la lectura para la enseñanza de la lectoescritura, el cual está respaldado por ciencias y se centra en la fonética y habilidades relacionadas.

A partir de este año, OPS ofreció a los maestros que enseñan desde sexto grado hasta el grado 12 un estipendio o crédito de posgrado por tomar un curso de ciencias de la lectura y asistir a un proyecto final colaborativo de TNTP, una organización enfocada en la equidad en la educación para estudiantes de bajos ingresos y estudiantes de color.

“Si [mis alumnos] tienen dificultades con la lectoescritura, con la lectura y con la interpretación en muy difícil pensar: ¿Cómo van a tener éxito en mi clase, en cualquier clase?”, dijo el profesor de estudios sociales, Ben Boeckman. “Quiero trabajar en estas habilidades de lectoescritura para mejorar mi práctica y apoyar cada vez más y más alumnos”.

El curso aborda las barreras de la lectoescritura para diferentes grupos de estudiantes, la importancia de la fonética, la enseñanza de textos complejos y más, el curso no acredita a los maestros en lectura.

“Creo que es un recurso valioso para todos”, dijo la profesora de inglés Molly Mattison. “Lo que he experimentado hasta ahora es que es algo que todos realmente necesitan saber”.

La enseñanza de la lectoescritura a través de la ciencia de la lectura, o de Marcos estructurados de lectoescritura, no siempre se ha impartido, algunos métodos de enseñanza de la lectura, como el controvertido currículo de Fountas y Pinnell, se alejan de la fonética y promueven las claves, o el uso de pistas contextuales para leer.

“No enseñamos a los niños a leer durante 10 o 15 años”, dijo Flanagan. “Y nos dimos cuenta de que todos estos niños no sabían leer”.

OPS planea colaborar con la universidad de Nebraska Omaha para capacitar a todos los maestros de secundaria y algunos de primaria en instrucción basada en evidencia para 2027, los próximos pasos del distrito son formalizar los objetivos e ideas para este proyecto de “moonshot”.

“Creo que necesitamos conversar seriamente sobre que sucede si los estudiantes no leen a su nivel de grado”, dijo Mattison. “¿Cuál es el plan para los estudiantes que no leen a su nivel de grado?”

Proposed Green Amendment would ensure environmental protections

Hattie Moeller
news editor

Senator George Dungan of Lincoln introduced on Jan. 21 Legislative Resolution 22CA (LR 22CA), a proposed amendment to the Nebraska state constitution that will recognize environmental rights.

The “Green Amendment” aims to ensure Nebraskans have a legal right to a clean and healthy natural environment. If approved, Nebraskans would have the right to proactively protect the environment and save their communities. The Amendment would ensure all the people of the state, and future generations are protected from harmful outcomes.

The proposed language reads:

“All people have a right to a clean and healthy environment, including pure water, clean air, healthy soils, balanced ecosystems, a safe climate, and diverse and abundant native flora and fauna and to the preservation of the natural, cultural, scenic, recreational, and healthful qualities of the environment.”

The proposal has drawn support from environmentalists, community activists and student advocates from across the state.

The amendment was referred to the Legislature’s Natural Resources Committee on Jan. 23. A formal hearing was scheduled for Feb. 26.

On Feb. 26, proponents and opponents of the “Green Amendment” assembled at the Capitol in Lincoln. Representatives from Students for Sustainability, and Central’s Green Team were in attendance hoping to gain the support of state lawmakers.

Senators and Legislators asked what a green amendment would allow, and what purpose it would serve in the state constitution.

Senior Evalina Sain is president of Green Team, a student body organization focused on sustainability and climate change advocacy. She spoke, remarking that the language of the amendment would grant communities legal pathways to sue state regulators if they felt endan-

gered by the climate conditions.

“Nebraska has a higher-than-average rate of pediatric cancer. It’s important for struggling communities to be able to lie on legal framework,” Sain said.

Greenhouse gas emissions from the burning of fossil fuels, especially in the agricultural and electric power sectors, are huge contributors to pollution in Nebraska.

“One in every five water sources are contaminated with nitrates,” as runoff from rain and irrigation can carry chemicals into streams in both rural and urban areas, causing elevated levels of nitrites in your body. Consequently, exposure to nitrates is linked to increased cancer risk and other health problems.

Sain suggested the state of Nebraska loses the young adult population due to the lack of progress. She believes investments in clean energy and the environment will provide more jobs for Nebraskans.

Opponents of the bill believe the amendment will be an extreme and expensive bill. Omaha attorney David Begley believes an amendment, such as the one proposed, could see an average of three to 10 lawsuits a year.

Begley said, “Liberal lawyers,” will plan to file lawsuits against the state of Nebraska, alleging the state has failed to protect citizens from contaminated groundwater.

However, a green amendment is an important environmental justice ‘tool’. Once enacted, it will enforce an obligation of the state to ensure that decisions impacting natural resources do not in turn infringe on individual’s right to clean air, water, and a healthy environment.

Dungan introduced the amendment after being inspired by youth activists. “I’ve spoken with youth from all around the state about the issues that are important to them, and they consistently put the need for clean air and water at the top of their list,” Dungan said. “We owe it to future generations to act now.”

If enacted, Nebraska would join Montana, New York and Pennsylvania in establishing constitutional “green” amendments, which are actively utilized in state decisions to encourage stronger environmental protections.

Hidden consequence of e-cigarette use takes a toll on teens’ taste buds

Chloe Schwartz
staff writer

Vapers Tongue is a term for a loss of taste perception as caused by vaping. It is caused by chemicals that are found in vape juice such as propylene glycol, ethylene glycol and vegetable glycerin. Vapers Tongue is a momentary condition that affects the sense of taste in people who vape electronic cigarettes. It causes a temporary loss of taste perception and can affect vapers and non-vapers.

This condition can occur if the tongue is overwhelmed, or when it gets exposure to harmful things, resulting in the loss of taste. There are many components that can lead to the growth of this condition.

A couple components of this condition are chemical irritation, dehydration and flavor fatigue. Although vaper’s tongue does not sound like a serious condition, this can lead to other oral issues and further health issues unrelated to the tongue/mouth. The most common effects of Vapers Tongue that people experience is dry mouth, changed taste perception and promotion of more frequent check-ups.

According to Centers for Disease Control, in 2022, around 2.5 million U.S. middle and high school students reported using vapes. In recent polls, it was discovered that almost 85% of the younger generation has used or are currently using vapes. Claimed by the Food and Drug Administration, in 2024 8.1% or 2.25 million (about 3 and a half weeks) of all students that were reported were in current use of tobacco products. As well as in 2024, 5.4% or 640,000 of middle school students admitted to using tobacco products.

One of the biggest ways to get rid of vaper’s tongue is to stop vaping or cut down on vaping frequency. Most of the solutions to getting rid of vaper’s tongue are basic everyday uses,

such as drinking more water and making sure you are extremely hydrated and practicing more oral hygiene like brushing your teeth and your tongue and flossing.

Specifically focusing on Nebraska, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said that in 2024, around half a million less students were using tobacco products. As well as in 2024, when 2.25 million high school and middle school students admitted using a tobacco product within 30 days of being asked. With the large amount of use this is still better than before, there was 2.80 million using tobacco products in 2023. The centers for disease control and prevention and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration have mentioned that society is heading in the right direction.



Central THRIVE provides leadership opportunities

Jasmin Gutierrez Garcia
translation editor

THRIVE Leadership Club is an afterschool program dedicated to helping disadvantaged youth develop leadership skills, communication skills, involvement in multiple communities and fun activities. It began in 2012 and is active in four Omaha Public Schools: Benson High School, Nathan Hale Middle School, Central High School and Northwest High School.

THRIVE holds their meetings every Tuesday after school in room 147. The THRIVE Club has helped many students connect with a community at their school that they might have never known about otherwise. THRIVE has more than seven coaches but the main coaches are Coach Timon Gurung and Coach Juan Cangas.

On a typical meeting, students usually check themselves in then settle down for the first 20 minutes. They may talk with their friends, set things up, or play sports such as volleyball and badminton. After the first 20 minutes pass by, they make officers' announcements or any kind of THRIVE announcements. Then they have a fun activity representing the lesson of the day which consists of either leadership, school, or life advice.

"It is a club that most people are consistent in going to because everyone is so connected to each other, and it is so fun," junior Hellen Jordan Salguero said.

Previously, the activity given to students in THRIVE represented making decisions in the form of a game. The activity can be divided into teams and one of them can win.

"Depending on the choice you make, it would give you a good consequence or a bad consequence," Jordan Salguero said. "That is how you keep advancing in the game or go all the way back."

At each meeting, around 20 members show up. The club's existence is spread out through flyers posted around the school, as well as word of mouth between students. Members feel that it is an environment that is inviting and friendly.

"I would say it's pretty big. It is really easy to make friends," senior Derek Rivera said.

The THRIVE Club has hosted food days, officer elections, career speakers coming in, service days and field trips. THRIVE has field trips every quarter, according to the secretary of THRIVE sophomore Sara Longino Lucio. They recently went on a field trip to The Amazing Pizza Machine and all the schools got together.

"I met new people from other schools, we played some really fun games, hung out, and ate too," Longino Lucio said.

Recently, students in THRIVE participated in a service project. THRIVE has multiple service



Thrive coach Juan Cangas greets Thrive club members.

Isaac Percival-Aizenberg | The Register

opportunities mentioned to the members. The service project involved students working with elementary kids. It was hosted in Benson West Elementary School and was two days.

"We were mentoring little kids from kindergarten through fifth grade, and it was fun," Rivera said.

To stay updated with the club events and meetings, as well as to get any questions answered, contact the club @omahathrive on Instagram.

THRIVE de Central ofrece liderazgo oportunidades

Jasmin Gutierrez Garcia
translation editor

THRIVE Leadership Club es un programa extracurricular dedicado a ayudar a los jóvenes desfavorecidos a desarrollar habilidades de liderazgo, habilidades de comunicación, participación en múltiples comunidades y actividades divertidas. Comenzó en 2012 y está activa en cuatro escuelas públicas de Omaha: Benson High School, Nathan Hale Middle School, Central High School y Northwest High School.

THRIVE lleva a cabo sus reuniones todos los martes después de la escuela en el salón 147. El Club THRIVE ha ayudado a muchos estudiantes a conectarse con una comunidad en su escuela que de otra manera nunca habrían conocido. THRIVE tiene más de siete entrenadores, pero los entrenadores principales son el entrenador Timón Gurung y el entrenador Juan Cangas.

En una reunión típica, los estudiantes generalmente se registran y luego se acomodan durante los primeros 20 minutos. Pueden hablar con sus amigos, preparar cosas o practicar deportes como el voleibol y el bádminton. Después de que pasan los primeros 20 minutos, hacen anuncios de oficiales o cualquier tipo de anuncios de THRIVE. Luego tienen una actividad divertida que representa la lección del día que consiste en liderazgo, escuela o consejos de vida.

"Es un club al que la mayoría de la gente es consistente en ir porque todos están muy conectados entre sí y es muy divertido", dijo la estudiante de tercer año Hellen Jordan Salguero.

Anteriormente, la actividad que se daba a los estudiantes en THRIVE representaba la toma de decisiones en forma de juego. La actividad se puede dividir en equipos y uno de ellos puede ganar.

"Dependiendo de la elección que hagas, te dará una buena o una mala consecuencia", dijo

Jordan Salguero. "Así es como sigues avanzando en el juego o retrocedes todo el camino".

En cada reunión, se presentan alrededor de 20 miembros. La existencia del club se difunde a través de folletos colocados en la escuela, así como de boca entre los estudiantes. Los miembros sienten que es un ambiente acogedor y amigable.

"Yo diría que es bastante grande. Es muy fácil hacer amigos", dijo el estudiante de último año Derek Rivera.

El Club THRIVE ha organizado días de comida, elecciones de oficiales, oradores profesionales, días de servicio y excursiones. THRIVE tiene excursiones cada trimestre, según la secretaria de la estudiante de segundo año de THRIVE, Sara Longino Lucio. Recientemente fueron a una excursión a The Amazing Pizza Machine y todas las escuelas se reunieron.

"Conocí a gente de otras escuelas, jugamos algunos juegos muy divertidos, pasamos el rato y comimos también", dijo Longino Lucio.

Recientemente, los estudiantes de THRIVE participaron en un proyecto de servicio. THRIVE tiene múltiples oportunidades de servicio mencionadas a las miembros. El proyecto de servicio involucró a estudiantes que trabajaban con niños de primaria. Se llevó a cabo en la Escuela Primaria Benson West y duro dos días.

"Fuimos mentores de niños pequeños desde infantes hasta el quinto grado, y fue divertido", dijo Rivera.

Para mantenerse al día con los eventos y reuniones del club, así como para obtener respuestas a cualquier pregunta, comuníquese con el @omahathrive del club en Instagram.

What did students do over the long remote week?

Jazmin Mills
staff writer

The Omaha Public Schools district had three Remote Learning Days from Feb. 18 to Feb. 20. There was also a non-school day that Monday, Feb. 17, due to Presidents' Day, and the total number of remote days this semester was six.

What was supposed to be a four-day school week turned into a single day week for OPS students and staff.

Some teachers assigned school work for students during the Remote Learning Days while others did not. With all this free time at home, minus some online school work, what did students do all week?

Junior Nathaniel Segovia had an eventful break from school. He traveled to Missouri with his family to pick up his brother from The National Guard after being gone for eight

months. "When I saw my brother after a while, I felt a sense of pride that he traveled down a path others are reluctant to go down. The remote week couldn't have come at a better time," Segovia said.

He got to explore the military base where his brother was stationed and took some photos. Throughout his stay in Missouri, he spent a lot of the time going on runs with his brother, enjoying the scenery and spending time with his family.

Segovia was assigned short and quick school assignments that took no longer than 15 minutes each, which he was happy about. "Personally, I liked the long remote week. It's nice to be out and away from school and I believe that longer weekends should be implemented into the system," Segovia said.

Sophomore Keaton Carver had a more relaxed break. Carver mainly stayed at home and caught up on sleep. He also

enjoyed some time hanging out with friends. Together they would play video games, go sledding, and talk. Over the week, Carver was assigned work by some teachers and got most of it completed. "I feel like this break helped me get closer with friends, catch up on sleep, and complete big assignments," Carver said.

Junior Soley Fernandez also enjoyed her time away from school. During the break Fernandez completed all her homework assignments. "I liked doing them, so I wasn't completely bored throughout the day," Fernandez said.

Over the break, Fernandez also enjoyed going sledding in her backyard. Fernandez went so fast she managed to put a hole into her fence, which left a small scar on her neck, but nothing too serious. Other than sledding, Fernandez spent her time crocheting and walking her dog.

NOT TO BLAME

DEI or Die? Plane crashes are not caused by diversity

Steven Dickerson
sports editor

The U.S. saw its first fatal midair aviation collision since 2009 on Jan. 29 of this year. An American Airlines jet flying from Wichita, Kansas, was expected to land at Washington D.C.'s Reagan National Airport. As the plane descended, it collided with a U.S. military Blackhawk helicopter, sending both aircrafts into the Potomac River. All 67 people on board both aircraft were killed.

This crash is one of 130 reported aviation accidents so far in 2025 as of March 24, according to the National Transportation Safety Board. There were zero commercial jet fatalities in the U.S. in 2024, raising alarms that the number has suddenly skyrocketed after just two full months of 2025.

Just a day after the accident in Washington, and just moments after offering his condolences and hosting a moment of silence, President Donald Trump blamed the crashes on diversity, equity and inclusion programs at the Federal Aviation Administration and former Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg, an openly gay man. These sentiments could not be further from the truth.

There has been no evidence presented to show that DEI programs have resulted in aviation crashes or even harmed the workplace at all. A study analyzing FAA data from 2010 to 2023 found no sustained increase in aviation incidents attributable to controller error following the implementation of DEI initiatives. DEI programs have been found to correlate with higher rates of job satisfaction and stronger team performance, according to a 2022 Harvard study.

While diversity initiatives have been baselessly blamed for aviation mishaps, it's essential to scrutinize the broader workforce composition. Historically, the aviation industry has been predominantly staffed by individuals from non-diverse backgrounds. According to a 2023 Florida Tech University study, 92 percent of U.S. aircraft pilots are white and 93 percent are males.

The lack of diversity and the prevalence of non-DEI hiring practices have not prevented, and may have even contributed to, operational oversights leading to incidents. DEI initiatives don't compromise safety and instead reveal the issue that a lack of diverse perspectives hinders comprehensive problem-solving and innovation in any situation or industry, including aviation.

Since DEI initiatives became common for U.S. airlines around 2021, the number of aviation incidents and fatalities due to these incidents has decreased. According to the NTSB, from 2022

to 2024 saw a decrease in total accidents by about 200 compared to 2016 to 2018. While the decrease is not directly correlated to DEI, it's clear that there was not an increase.

As students at Central, arguably the most diverse high school in Nebraska, we see every day how diversity leads to stronger collaboration, innovation and understanding. It's frustrating to watch national leaders scapegoat inclusion efforts when the data and real-world experience show the opposite: representation matters. If young people from various backgrounds and upbringings aren't included in spaces like aviation, the country will miss the chance to bring fresh perspectives that can strengthen safety, problem-solving and accountability.

The real reason these plane incidents are becoming more noticeable under a second Trump administration doesn't trace back to DEI, but rather his own record.

Since taking office in January, the Trump administration has initiated mass layoffs targeting several hundred FAA employees, including those responsible for maintaining critical radar, landing systems, and navigational aids. These cuts were part of a broader directive by the Department of Government Efficiency, or DOGE, to reduce government spending.

Some of these layoffs occurred just weeks after the tragic collision over the Potomac, raising serious concerns about the administration's commitment to aviation safety. Experts have criticized these cuts, emphasizing that support staff play vital roles in ensuring safe air travel and that their removal could jeopardize passenger safety. These cuts have been seen in real time, with a Delta flight arriving in Toronto from Minneapolis on Feb. 27 turning upside-down shortly after landing. Thankfully, no one was killed, but many suffered minor injuries.

Beyond staffing cuts, President Trump has consistently advocated for the privatization of the nation's air traffic control system. In 2017, he proposed transferring ATC operations from the FAA to a nonprofit corporation, arguing that this move would enhance efficiency. Critics contended that such a shift could prioritize cost-cutting over safety and lead to reduced oversight. The bill died on arrival in the House of Representatives in 2018. The push for privatization, even though it wasn't accomplished, coupled with budget cuts and layoffs, has strained the FAA's resources, potentially compromising its ability to effectively oversee and manage the nation's complex airspace.

Trump can sit around and continue believing that DEI is to blame for these incidents. But when the studies come back in the future that continue to show positive effects from diversity and tie Trump's funding cuts and axing of these crucial programs to aviation incidents (deadly ones, especially), he will have blood on his hands.

La diversidad no es la causa de los accidentes aéreos

Steven Dickerson
sports editor

Paula Gutierrez Martinez
arts and culture editor

Los Estados Unidos vieron su primera colisión aérea fatal desde 2009 el 29 de enero de este año. Se esperaba que un avión de American Airlines que volaba desde Wichita, Kansas, aterrizara en el Aeropuerto Nacional Reagan de Washington D.C. Al descender, el avión chocó con un helicóptero Blackhawk del ejército estadounidense, enviando ambas aeronaves al río Potomac. Las 67 personas a bordo de ambas aeronaves murieron.

Este choque es uno de los 130 accidentes de aviación reportados en lo que va de 2025 a partir del 24 de marzo, según la Junta Nacional de Seguridad de Transporte (NSTB). En 2024 no hubo ninguna muerte de aviones comerciales en Estados Unidos, lo que hace saltar las alarmas de que el número se ha disparado repentinamente después de solo dos meses enteros de 2025.

Apenas un día después del accidente en Washington, y momentos después de ofrecer sus condolencias y organizar un momento de silencio, el presidente Donald Trump culpó de los choques a programas de diversidad, equidad, e inclusión (DEI) de la Administración Federal de Aviación (FAA) y el antiguo secretario de Transporte Pete Buttigieg, un hombre abiertamente gay. Estos sentimientos no podrían estar más lejos de la verdad.

No se ha presentado evidencia que los programas de DEI hayan resultado en accidentes de aviación o incluso hayan dañado el lugar de trabajo. Un estudio analizado data de la FAA desde 2010 hasta 2023 no encontró un aumento sostenido en accidentes de aviación atribuibles a error de contróles siguiendo la implementación de iniciativas DEI. Se ha descubierto que los programas de DEI se correlacionan con estadísticas más altas de satisfacción con trabajo y un desempeño del equipo más fuerte, según un estudio de Harvard de 2022.

Aunque las iniciativas de diversidad han sido culpadas injustamente por accidentes de aviación, es esencial escudriñar la composición más amplia de la fuerza laboral. Históricamente, la industria de aviación ha sido predominantemente compuesta por individuales de orígenes no diversos. Según un estudio de 2023 de la Universidad Tecnología de Florida, el 92 por ciento de los pilotos de aviones estadounidenses son blancos y el 93 por ciento son hombres.

La falta de diversidad y la prevalencia de prácticas de contratación no relacionadas con la DEI no han sido prevenidas, e incluso posiblemente hayan contribuido a descuidos operativos que conducen a accidentes. Las iniciativas de DEI no comprometen la seguridad y, en cambio, revelan el problema de que la falta de perspectivas diversas dificulta la resolución de problemas comprensivos y la innovación en cualquier situación o industria, incluida la aviación.

Desde que las iniciativas de DEI se hicieron comunes para las aerolíneas estadounidenses alrededor de 2021, el número de accidentes de aviación y fatalidades debidos a estos accidentes ha disminuido. Según NSTB, el periodo desde 2022 a 2024 vio una disminución en los

accidentes totales por más o menos 200 comparado a 2016 a 2018. Aunque este decrecimiento no sea directamente correlacionado a DEI, queda claro que no ha habido un aumento.

Como estudiantes de Central, posiblemente la escuela secundaria más diverso de Nebraska, vemos todos los días como la diversidad conduce a una colaboración, innovación, y comprensiones más sólidas. Es frustrante ver a los líderes nacionales tratar de chivo expiatorio a esfuerzos de inclusión cuando los datos y la experiencia práctica demuestra lo opuesto: que la representación importa. Si los jóvenes de orígenes y entornos varios no son incluidos en espacios como la aviación, el país perderá la oportunidad de traer perspectivas nuevas que pueden fortalecer a seguridad, la resolución de problemas, y la responsabilidad.

La verdadera razón por la que estos accidentes de aviación se están haciendo más notables bajo la segunda administración de Trump no es por DEI, pero por su propio registro.

Desde que tomo oficina en enero, la administración de Trump ha iniciado despedidos en masa dirigidos hacia cientos de empleados de FAA, incluso esos responsables por mantener radar crítico, sistemas de aterrizar, y ayudas de la navegación. Estos cortes eran parte de un directivo más amplia por el Departamento de Eficiencia Gubernamental, o DOGE, para reducir gastos gubernamentales.

Algunos de estos despidos ocurrieron solo semanas después de la colisión trágico sobre el Potomac, lo que plantea serias preocupaciones sobre el compromiso de la administración a la seguridad aérea. Los expertos han criticado estos cortes, acentuando que el personal de apoyo es vital para asegurar que el viaje aéreo se mantenga segura y que su eliminación puede poner en peligro la seguridad de los pasajeros. Estos cortes se han visto actualmente, con un vuelo de Delta llegando a Toronto de Minneapolis el 27 de febrero volcándose al revés. Agradecidamente, nadie se murió, pero varias personas sufrieron pequeñas heridas.

Mas allá de los cortes de empleados, el presidente Trump ha abogado consecuentemente por la privatización del sistema nacional de control de tráfico aéreo. En 2017, el propuso la transferencia de operaciones de ATC de la FAA a una corporación no lucrativa, sosteniendo que esto ayudaría mejorar la eficiencia. Los críticos manteniéndonoslo que este cambio podría priorizar los cortes de precio por encima de la seguridad y conducir a una supervisión reducida. Esta propuesta se murió al llegar a la Casa de Representativos en 2018. El empujo a la privatización, aunque no se logró, junto a los recortes presupuestarios y despedidos, ha afectado los recursos de la FAA, potencialmente comprometiendo su agilidad para efectivamente supervisar y gestionar el aeroespacial complejo de la nación.

Trump puede quedarse con brazos cruzados y seguir creyendo que estos accidentes son la culpa del DEI, pero cuando los estudios vuelvan en el futuro que continúan de demostrar los efectos positivos de la diversidad y vinculen los recortes presupuestarios de Trump y la eliminación de estos programas cruciales a los accidentes de aviación (especialmente los mortales), tendrá sangre en sus manos.

The Central Register is committed to providing a space for students to share their views with the Central community. If you are interested in writing an opinion story for this section, feel free to reach out to Adviser Brody Hilgenkamp and Opinion Editor Grace Sunseri with your idea. All submissions will undergo an editing and revision process once the submission is received, and final approval of publication will be made by Register staff and the adviser.

I feel seen by The Register p. 8

A Central student reflects on Central's culture and inclusion efforts she has seen in *The Register*.

Make concerts affordable again p. 9

The issue with rising costs in concert tickets is teenagers can't afford them, and it has to stop.

Perusing Paddington in Peru p. 14

Paddington Bear, the heart-warming character, comes back in his most recent movie with a strong family theme.

Central baseball gears up for spring season p. 17

Central's baseball team is back and ready for the season.

Stop watching Ash Trevino

Grace Sunseri
opinion editor

Influencers are a reality of the world we live in now. People can make content, put it out on the internet and make a decent amount of money. I see nothing wrong with this; however, I do have an issue with it when the person who is getting attention is problematic in almost all aspects of her life.

Ashley (Ash) Trevino first started gaining online attention in 2023 for documenting her life as a “prison wife.” Now she is best known for her constant live-streaming and unfiltered personality. While this does not sound horrible at face value, the events that happen in her life and the confessions she makes are inexcusable.

As someone who used to see clips of her live streams and watched both horrified and entertained, it is time we need to stop giving people like her a platform and encouraged them to seek the help they obviously need.

It is clear all Trevino wants is attention, and that is exemplified in her absolutely outrageous behavior on her live streams. She is a 36-year-old mother of two and acts like a teenage party girl.

She routinely engages in highly inappropriate and sexual behavior that certainly goes against TikTok’s guidelines.

While on a live in December, Trevino flashed one of her breasts to thousands of her viewers. More recently, she was being highly sexual and possibly engaging in sexual acts with the camera pointed at her face the entire time.

This behavior was widely condemned by much of her community on TikTok and lead to widespread calls for her to be banned. However, this sexual behavior is not the only prob-

lematic behavior she engages in.

Trevino regularly refers to herself using a derogatory term used for people who only seek a romantic partner who is incarcerated. She has dated numerous prisoners and has even married three of them. Her current last name comes from her latest husband who is serving a 25-year prison sentence for the fatal stabbing of a man outside a nightclub. Another boyfriend is currently serving a 45-year sentence for the fatal shooting of a gas station owner.

There are many instances of Trevino defending the actions of her boyfriends on live, including one who was convicted of double homicide in the killing of two teenage girls. In an August live, she is on the phone with a man and laughing about her viewers saying he is guilty. “Oh my god, they said, ‘Honestly RIP to those who lost their lives,’” Trevino read while laughing.

Trevino has gone as far as introducing her two young daughters, now 13 and 15, to these men and referring to them as the girls’ “daddy.” There are many posts on her Instagram of her daughters meeting these men in prison and of them posing and being held by their mom’s boyfriend.

For Trevino to mock the teenage victims, one of whom was the same age that her daughter is now, is abhorrent behavior and shows Trevino’s true colors.

Her daughters don’t even primarily live with their mom, and for good reason. Trevino admitted, on Live, that her daughters do not have beds at her house and that she could not afford them. This is the same woman who regularly shows off designer purchases such as bags and shoes, yet she claims she cannot afford to buy her teenage daughters bed frames or

mattresses. Trevino’s struggles show how she needs to focus on personal life instead of partying with young 20-year-olds. She obviously needs help but cannot focus on that when she is constantly focused on her online presence.

Many people on TikTok also believe she engages in drug use. There have been times Trevino has ducked out of the camera and came back on sniffing excessively. Several of her former acquaintances have also claimed she uses drugs heavily. One woman she hung out with even showed pictures of what looks like drugs on a table in a house she stayed at with Trevino. While there is no way to prove the drug usage, there is evidence that it happens and that she blatantly uses.

Trevino is not someone who needs to receive as much attention and money as she does. Her behavior is highly problematic and only encourages her and others like her to keep doing what they are doing for money and attention.

Similar to reality television, constantly engaging and interacting with content like Trevino’s can have a negative impact on the viewers’ mental health as well. The dramatized world Trevino exists in can lead viewers to have a distorted view of reality and how social interactions operate. Her behavior can also begin to seem normal and cause viewers to want to act in the same way to gain a similar level of notoriety.

Trevino is just another person on the internet who was blinded by quick fame and a promise to go viral. People in these situations are a sad reflection of the world we exist in today: people will do anything for social media fame and money. Instead of blindly supporting people on social media who very obviously are struggling, encourage them to seek help and consume ethical content that makes you feel good.

AI advancements have gone too far

Aubri Kolterman
staff writer

Take a look around. I’m sure you could name one thing that can be turned into AI, or something AI has created. Try to remember what the world was like before all this mess, if only we could go back. We are in for a ride as AI takes over our lives in the next 30 years.

My concern is that eventually robots are going to take over and start doing everything for us, which will get to the point that we will start to see loss of human influence, which could deteriorate creativity and lead to a lack of expressing emotions, leading to poor communication skills. Basically, we’re going to forget how to be human.

Now you might be thinking, “Woah you’re crazy,” but trust me... I’m not.

AI and recent technology have created so many new programs and advancements that it is going to start affecting all of us very soon, especially with the pace it’s moving. There are

several examples of this including AI-powered job automation, weapons powered by AI, and creation of fake images through AI of absolutely anything you can think of.

Self-driving cars are also a very extreme invention which has gained wide attention. More and more companies today are creating new self-driving cars designed with AI as well.

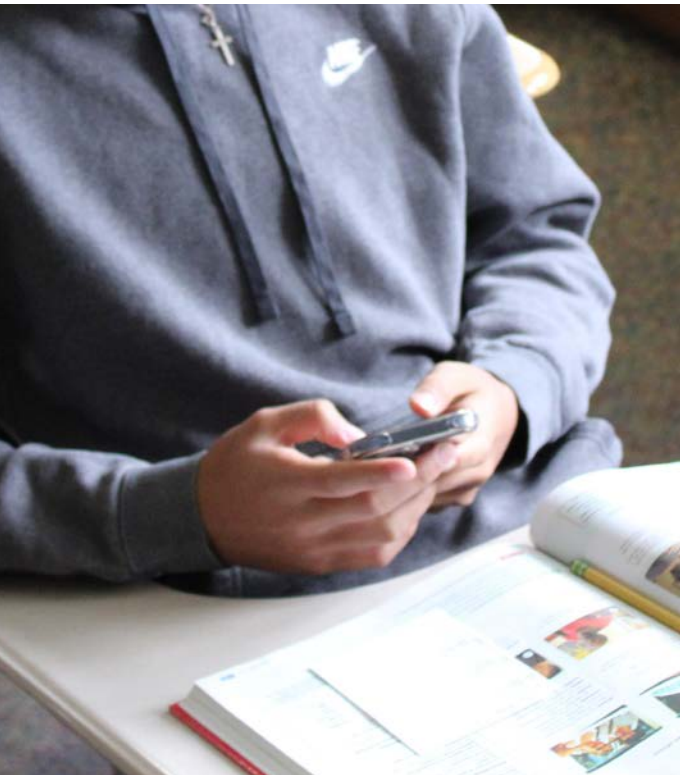
AI powered job automation is very concerning, meaning AI would be quite literally working for you. It’s been adopted in industries such as marketing, manufacturing, and health-care, according to builtin.com. Having AI work for us will cause unemployment, and a whole lot of pure laziness, and people probably won’t have the skills to do the work anyway. According to builtin.com, “AI is estimated to create 9.7 million new jobs by 2025.” This is not good for anyone but companies trying to grow AI.

Another concern with technology and AI is the Amazon Alexa. Alexa is a helpful tool that can be used to answer daily questions such as the forecast or how to cook something, but

it can also influence our behaviors to make purchases, and recommendations. However, it can also listen to you. It seems like Alexa listens to our day-to-day conversations and it’s very obvious.

You could be talking, having a normal conversation and without saying her name, and she may respond with a random sentence like, “Hmm, sounds interesting.” The fact that she can listen and comprehend conversations while not talking to her is a little strange. Relating to this is the Chinese government, which is able to capture data through facial recognition, social media, activities, relationships, and one’s political participation. The way they have the skills to be able to do this and apply it is highly concerning, whether it’s legal or not.

With all of these tools, technology, AI and more we can see a lack of privacy, as before in the old days we would not have had to worry about this. AI has gone TOO far, and sometimes all I want to do is go back.



WHITMAN RUTLEDGE | The Register

Phones can be beneficial in school

Neveah Wilson
contributing writer

Phones nowadays are very useful in many different ways, but teachers find them very distracting and a tool that’s not useful while in class. I feel they aren’t a distraction and can be useful while learning.

Phones can be used as a good alternative for help with work. Phones can be good for taking notes, using learning and educational apps or even just researching facts for a project or an assignment. Phones can also be used to communicate emergencies or even just to take a quick break and communicate with friends or family.

Phones can help students focus better with getting their work done, and music is a key part in that. Not only does music block out distractions, but it can also help reduce stress, improve memory and enhance certain moods, according to Harvard Business Review.

The Pew Research Center provides evidence that 72% of teachers say phones are a distraction. The Basin Republican Rustler reported on a survey that found other evidence. In Big Horn County School District in Wyoming, middle school and high school students were surveyed and 84.3% said phones aren’t a distraction, 68.5% said they were sometimes a distraction for other students, and 12% said they were a distraction for other students.

In the same survey, 86.1% of students also shared that they use their phones to communicate with friends and family, and 32.4% of students answered they were used for school-work. And they also shared almost 27% of students have an emotional attachment to their phones.

But this also can really depend on how you are, because Harvard Business Review also talked about being an introvert or extrovert, which can also play a part with phones being a distraction or not. If someone is an introvert, they’re more likely to not get distracted as easily, so you can listen to music and do your work at the same time and be good, but for an extrovert you could slightly get distracted more.

But overall, phones aren’t a distraction.

8 Don't forget Afghan girls

Fatima Yawari
contributing writer

Afghan girls are pleading for their future, and the world must not forget them. For four years, they have been banned from education and the world takes no notice of it. The Taliban have imposed extreme restrictions for them, banning them from studying, going to work and even accessing health care. It's not only their education that has been taken away, but their basic rights.

Some families were able to flee Afghanistan when the Taliban took over, all of which consider themselves lucky for that. “I am graduating from high school soon, but my heart aches for the other Afghan girls back in my homeland who are denied the right for education,” said Sita Yawari, a senior at Central. Every Afghan girl migrating out of the country shares a similar story and struggle that has a huge impact on their mindset. I also moved to the U.S., escaping from the inhumane and oppressive rules of Taliban, believing I would finally be free. Yet, the thought that I am privileged to be able to study freely overwhelms me.

Seeing the world around me made me realize that education is not a privilege but a basic right and need for every human being, and unfortunately girls in Afghanistan are deprived of that right. Not long ago the Taliban ruled that women cannot be examined by any male doctor while banning girls from pursuing medicine. This means thousands of women in Afghanistan do not have access to medical care.

Despite all this, Afghan girls have been fighting strongly with opening their own online shops, forming secret study groups, and going to underground schools. But this percentage of girls are the ones with more opportunities like accessing the internet and being able to find these facilities. Millions of others are being left behind.

They cannot fight this battle alone. Afghan girls and women need the world to stand with them. It does not have to be something big to support them. Raising awareness, recognizing their unheard voices and not letting them be forgotten is a way. “I want the world to recognize that if Afghan girls had greater opportunities and rights, they could become some of the most successful women in the world,” Yawari said.

If the world normalizes the rules that the Taliban has set, Afghan girls will be forgotten.

“Education is a basic right, and no matter who we are or if we even have direct connection to them, it's still our jobto make sure every girl around the world has access to it,” junior Benazir Ghaznavi said.

For years, Afghan girls have been fighting for equality and their natural rights, trying to make a difference in any way they can in their controlling society, but the Taliban changed the years of hard work in a single day, limiting them from being a part of the society. Luckily, their hope and bravery remain unshaken and keeps getting stronger waiting for the day when the world will recognize their sacrifices and efforts.

“I look towards a future where all Afghan girls can pursue their dreams without limitations,” senior Manizha Rahmani said.

As long as the world speak up for the rights of Afghan girls and women, hope remains that there will be no one denied to education and basic rights in the future.

I feel seen by The Register

Lizbeth Uriostegui-Estrada
contributing writer

I am a Hispanic student at Central. My first language is not English, and neither is my parents. I was born into the first generation, whose parents do not know the language. I am often indifferent to extracurricular activities since most students in the class are English speakers, and with that in mind, most teachers and programs don't attempt to include parents who are not English speakers.

It's very difficult to show my parents what I'm working on. I have never been given papers in Spanish for my parents to understand what is happening in my life, like playbills or informative papers about school trips.

We are told we are a “diverse school,” yet as a school or community have not done enough to consider families who don't speak English. My parents still come to most of my events not because they understand what is happening, but because I am their child. I know that they are proud of me, but it's extremely hard to know what they are proud of me for. I have been in multiple extracurricular activities, but none think about Spanish speakers, except for two.

I am part of the O-Book staff, and it is pleasant to be in a community with them, but this isn't only about the yearbook. It's about the Register and the way they include students who

Me siento vista por El Registro

Lizbeth Uriostegui-Estrada
contributing writer

Soy estudiante hispana en Central. Mi lenguaje materno no es el ingles, ni tampoco lo son mis padres.

Nací en la primera generación mis padres no hablan ingles. Varias instantes incomodan` las actividades extracurriculares, ya que la mayoría de los alumnos de la clase hablan inglés, y con eso en la mente, la mayoría de los profesores y programas no intentan incluir a los padres que no hablan ingles.

Es muy difícil mostrarles a mis padres en que estoy trabajando. Nunca me han dado trabajos en español para que entiendan lo que pasa en mi vida, como programas de teatro o folletos informativos sobre excursiones escolares.

Nos dicen que somos una “escuela diversa”, pero como escuela o comunidad no hemos hecho lo suficiente para considerar a las familias que no hablan inglés. Mis padres siguen asistiendo a la mayoría de mis eventos, no porque entiendan lo que esta pasando, sino porque soy su hija. Sé que están orgullosos de mi, pero es muy difícil saber por qué. He participado en varias actividades extracurriculares, pero ninguna piensa en los que hablan español, excepto dos.

Soy parte del equipo de O-Book y es un placer formar parte de una comunidad con ellos, pero no se trata solo del anuario. Se trata del Registro y la forma en que incluyen a estudiantes que hablan otros idiomas. He conocido a los que hablan español que forman parte del Registro, y ellos, como comunidad, decidieron ser más inclusivos con los estudiantes

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opinion دختران افغان را فراموش نکنید

Fatima Yawari
contributing writer

دختران افغان برای آینده شان التماس میکنند، جهانیان نباید آنها را فراموش کند. برای چهار سال است که آنها از آموزش منع شده اند و جهان به آنها توجه نمی‌کند. طالبان محدودیت های شدید را برای شان ساخته اند که آنها را از تحصیل، رفتن به کار و حتی دسترسی به مراقبت های صحتی منع کرده است. این فقط تعلیم آنها نیست که از آنها گرفته شده است بلکه حقوق انسانی آنهاست . بعضی از خانواده ها زمانیکه طالبان به قدرت رسید توانستند از افغانستان فرار کنند که همه خود را خوش شانس میدانند. سی‌تا یآوری، یک متعلم مکتب لیسه مرکزی می گوید، "من به زودی از لیسه فارغ میشوم، مگر قلب من برای دختران دیگر افغان که در افغانستان هست میسوزد که از حق تحصیل محروم اند هر دختر افغان که به بیرون از کشور مهاجرت میکند، داستان و مبارزه مشابهی را دارند که تاثیر زیادی روی روحیه آنها دارد. من همچنان به ایالات متحده امدم که از قوانین غیرانسانی و ظالمانه طالبان فرار کنم و باور داشتم که بالاخره آزاد خواهم شد. مگر، این فکر که تنها من این چانس تحصیلی را دارم که میتوانم آزادانه درس بخوانم احساس گناه به من داد

بعد از وقتی سپری کردن در اینجا با دیدن دنیای اطرافم متوجه شدم که تحصیل یک چانس نه بلکه یک حق و نیاز اساسی برای هر انسان است و متأسفانه دختران در افغانستان از این حق محروم هستند چندی قبل طالبان حکم کردند که زنان نمیتوانند توسط هیچ داکتر مرد معاینه شوند در کناران دختران را از تحصیل کردن طبابت منع کرده اند. به این معنا که هزاران زن در افغانستان به مراقبت‌های درمانی دسترسی ندارند با وجود این همه، دختران افغان با باز کردن فروشگاه های آنلاین خود، تشکیل گروه های درسی مخفی، و رفتن به مکتب های زیرزمینی و مخفی مبارزه می‌کند. مگر این فیصدی دختران آنهایی هستند که فرصت های بیشتر مانند دسترسی به انترنت و یا توانست یافتن این گروه های درسی را دارند، میلیون های دیگر از این فرصت ها بهره نمی‌برد آنها نمیتوانند به تنهایی بجنگند، دختران و زنان افغان نیاز دارند که جهان در کنار شان باشد. نیازی نیست که برای حمایت از آنها چیزی بزرگ انجام داده شود. آگاه کردن مردم، شنیدن صدای های آنها و فراموش نگذاشتن انها توسط جهان یک راه است. «من از جهان میخواهم که بفهمد اگر دختران افغان فرصت ها و حقوق بیشتری داشته باشند، می توانند به یکی از موفق ترین زنان جهان تبدیل شوند.» سی‌تا یآوری گفت اگر جهان قوانینی را که طالبان وضع کرده قبول کند دختران افغان فراموش خواهند شد متعلم بینظیر غزنوی می گوید، "تعلیم یک حق اساسی است، و مهم نیست که ما کی هستیم یا حتی اگر ما با آنها ارتباط مستقیم داشته باشیم، این هنوز هم وظیفه ما است تا مطمئن شویم که هر دختر در سراسر جهان به آن دسترسی دارد."

سالها است که دختران افغان برای حقوق های جنسیتی و حقوق طبیعی خود مبارزه می کنند. تلاش میکنند تا به هر طریقه که میتوانند در جامعه شان تفاوت ایجاد کنند، مگر طالبان کوشش این سال های سخت را در یک روز تغییر دادند و دختران افغان را از بودن یک بخش جامعه محدود ساختن خوشبختانه، امید و شجاعت آنها باقی مانده است و منتظر روزی که جهان فداکاری ها و تلاش های آنها را بشناسند و قوی تر شوند هستند. منیژه رحمانی متعلم مکتب لیسه مرکزی می گوید، "من به آینده نگاه میکنم که در آن تمام دختران افغان بتوانند بدون محدودیت رویاهای خود را دنبال کنند تا زمانی که جهان برای حقوق دختران و زنان افغانستان حرف بزند، امید باقی می ماند که در آینده هیچ کس از آموزش و حقوق آنها انکار نخواهد شد

speak other languages. I have met Spanish speakers who are part of the Register, and they, as a community, decided to become more inclusive for all students, and their families, who are Spanish speakers by translating their articles.

I have seen this process: it might seem like it takes longer, but with the right amount of inspiration that they have, it takes the same amount of time as another article. The process begins with a person writing an article on a topic of their choice, and then it is edited by an editor on The Register. Then it is assigned to a Spanish speaker to get them to translate it. They do not use Google Translate for this process, which shows how much more work they put in, and with all the hard work it ends up being published and sent around the school.

After 11 years of school, I have been so surprised by The Register's inclusivity in including the success and skills of their Spanish-speaking students. The O-Book will also have some Spanish content this year, including a page about Quinceaneras. I have never really felt so seen. Growing up, it would be difficult to catch up with things going on at school. With The Register being in Spanish, this would not be a problem for current or future students.

My younger self would be so glad that I'm in a community where they include us and our language, I can finally show my parents what my friends are working on, but not mine due to other activities not giving the option for Spanish or other languages.

un problema para los estudiantes actuales ni para los futuros.

Yo de niña mas joven estaría tan contento de estar en una comunidad donde nos incluyen a nosotros, y a nuestro idioma, finalmente puedo mostrarles a mis padres en que están trabajando mis amigos, pero no los míos debido a que otras actividades no dan la opción de español o otros idiomas.



The front page of the previous issue of The Register.

WHITMAN RUTLEDGE | The Register

Letter to a younger me

Becca Rock
chief copy editor

I’m nearing my final days of walking the halls of Central. I have gone through the emotions of being sad, but I’m also excited to enter the next chapter of my life. The past four year I have embraced my Eagle pride and have been downtown proud, and I wouldn’t change any of it. But, if I had to tell my freshman, sophomore, junior, or even early senior self-anything, this is what I would tell her:

- Leave your house.**
You are not going to create lasting high school memories in your room scrolling through your phone. I think I realized way too late that I can go out and about by myself. Even when I couldn’t drive, I should have taken more advantage of public transportation and my love for parks. Any day can be an eventful day by just putting yourself in a different environment.
- Who cares if you stick out?**
I should have shown my personal style through my clothing throughout the last four years. I think a lot of us buy clothes that are cute but end up sitting in our closets because you don’t have an opportunity to wear them. While I love being comfortable at school, why not wear the items of clothing that are rotting in your closet?

- School spirit is not embarrassing.**
My freshman year, I began taking school spirit seriously by dressing up for theme days and going all out. But, in the middle of my sophomore year, while I was still dressing up, that feeling of embarrassment hit me. Central has an issue of most people not participating in school spirit events, which frankly I think is dumb. High school is one of the only times where you dress crazy for a theme and there is no corporate dress code to tell you to dress down. Be the center of attention because it does not matter. Looking back, the most fun memories I have are when I dressed up and participated.
- Introduce yourself to others.**
I can bet that in every single one of your classes there is at least one person that you do not know. There is no harm, literally none, to just getting to know people. Who knows, maybe they would become close friends.
- Take your classes seriously.**
Why not? Paying attention in class is completely free. Would you want to be a part of a society that is so lazy that they can’t even give their teacher the time of day? I understand maybe you didn’t sleep well last night or were working, but Central provides a free education with teachers who want you to succeed.

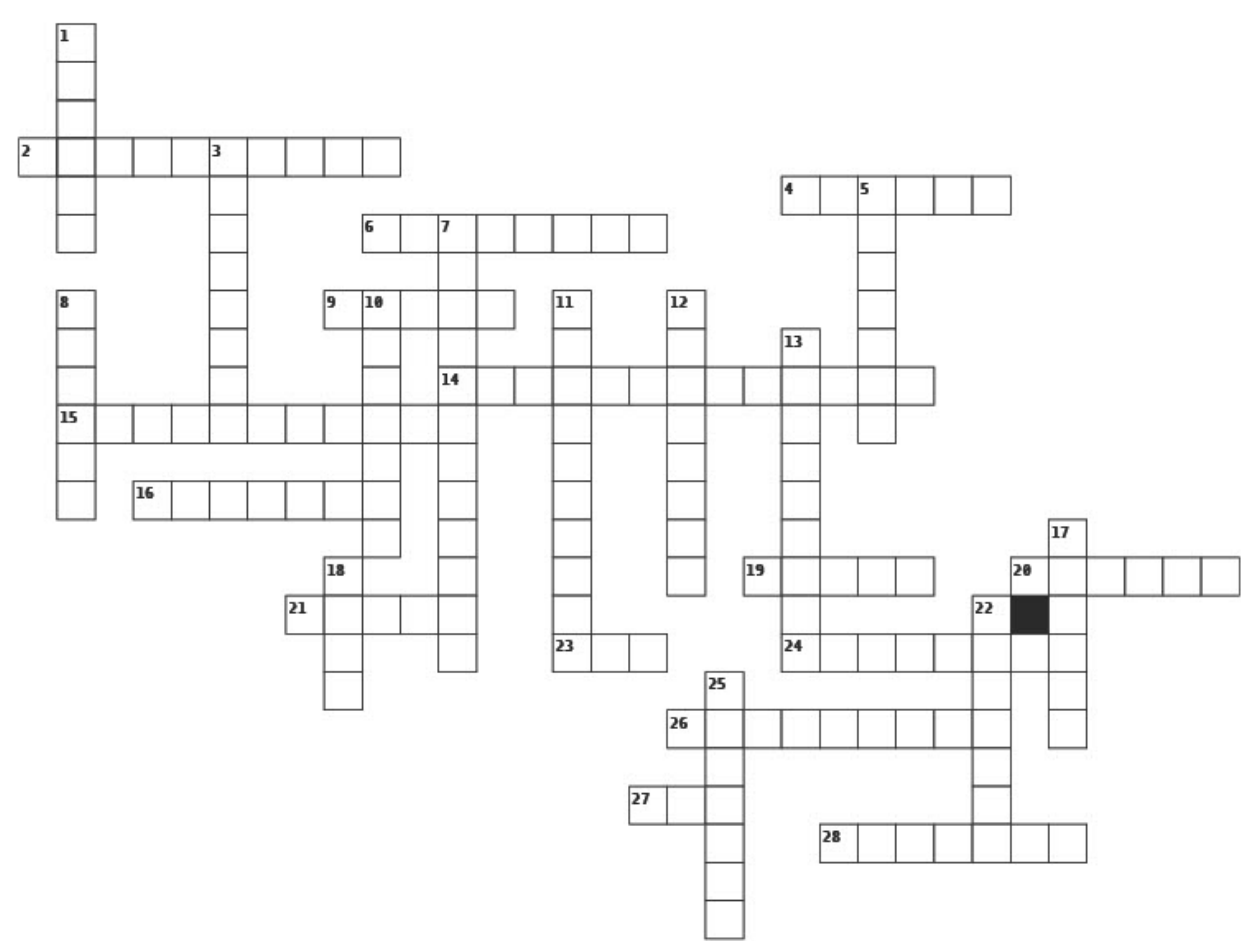
Make concerts affordable again

Katie Besancon
digital editor

- Concerts need to start being affordable again.
- In recent years, it seems that concert ticket prices have skyrocketed and have become less and less affordable. For many students, high school is a time to have fun, and one of the activities many take part in is concerts. Many high school students attend concerts each year, and with the prices as high as they are, that can be extremely costly.
- After a drop in concert sales during Covid due to the lack of touring, prices have been on a steep incline ever since. Now more than ever, artists are back on the road, touring the globe to put on shows for their fans, Digital Music News reports that, on average, a singular ticket cost \$135 in 2024, which is up 34.3% since 2019 when the average price was \$91.86, and is an all-time high.
- From experience, I saw Taylor Swift in 2023. Swift is someone who is arguably at the top of the music industry and my ticket cost around \$200. While we were in the lower bowl, they were still some of the cheaper tickets on the market, outrageous for most but worth it to me. A year and a half later I went to buy tickets to Gracie Abrams, who was one of Taylor Swift’s openers, and the tickets cost around \$150. While it is less than the Taylor swift ticket, I still feel that those tickets are obnoxiously priced. I am trying to go see an artist who opened for someone at the top of the music industry and is still pretty new and the difference is only \$50.
- Since I saw Abrams that first time, she has gained quite a lot of fame, but not anywhere near Taylor Swift and, in my opinion, not enough fame to charge \$150 for a single ticket.
- An additional example is Noah Kahan, an artist I saw when attending his “We’ll All Be Here Forever” tour. My ticket cost \$35, a price that was pretty cheap considering how much fame he has gained due to his social media presence, which grew astronomically, mainly because of the lack of fear he had regarding talking about mental health struggles and incorporating that into his music and social media. I personally believe that the newer to the music industry one is, the cheaper their tickets should be.
- There is absolutely no reason that artists like Alex Warren or Miles Smith, who are new artists to the industry and have only been performing live for about a year, should be

- charging concerts goes more than \$50 to see their show. Currently, to buy a ticket to see Warren in concert in Kansas City, it is around \$180 for general admission.
- It is hard to justify astronomical pricing when most of the time the artist is on stage for maybe an hour to an hour and a half. I would be more willing to pay the steeper price if the artist was on stage for a longer period of time, as concertgoers get more of an experience out of it that way.
- I understand that sometimes the cost of tickets is not entirely up to the artist, and that other outside forces add to the price – venue fees, employee wages, and the cost of the venue. At the same time, they cannot be completely in the dark about their pricing and should have some sort of intervention when prices get to be out of hand.
- There have been attempts to lower the costs of concerts and other events. In 2023 the Federal Trade Commission proposed the Junk Fee Rule that would implement a system that would force “Junk Fees” to be displayed to the customer earlier in the process of buying tickets, along with a breakdown to the customers what the fees are for. The intent was to address these practices, which are used by many companies like Ticketmaster which tack on over 27% in fees for only two tickets per CNN, which would allow customers to know exactly what they are paying for when buying tickets.
- In the United States it is estimated to cost buyers more than \$64 billion each year in fees, most of which the buyer does not know what that money is going towards.
- Since the Biden administration did implement the ban on “Junk Fees,” companies like Seat Geek have made it easier for customers to shop on the basis of all-in pricing, per the White House.
- It does not make it easier when you have resale sites that manage to get a vast majority of tickets in a venue and subsequently sell them for double if not triple the original price. Not only are people not going to want to break the bank and buy those resale tickets, it’s inconvenient and unfair to those who manage to get presale and find that most of the tickets are taken by bots or resell sites.
- Essentially, artists cannot expect a large percentage of their audience to be spending a large amount of money on tickets and resale sites should have restrictions set in place to ensure that they’re not being sold for far beyond the tickets’ face value.

Issue 5 Crossword



- Across**
- 2. Perennial weeds with bright yellow flowers, toothed leaves, and a deep taproot
 - 4. Sport where you kick a ball into a net
 - 6. Sport with a ball and a bat
 - 9. Grass turns from yellow to this color
 - 14. Not a standrard dictionary word that means a big clap of thunder
 - 15. In which country is the Redhead Days festival held?
 - 16. What city turns their river green for St. Patrick’s Day?
 - 19. Spring sport where you run really fast
 - 20. The color of the sun
 - 21. Busiest street in Omaha
 - 23. Less than 2% of the world has this color of hair
 - 24. The song played after every Central football game by Petula Clark
 - 26. A famous spring festival full of parades, beads, and parties
 - 27. April showers bring ____ flowers
 - 28. Spring officially begins March 20th
- Down**
- 1. Raise your ____
 - 3. Sport with a ball and a stick
 - 5. It’s not a hen or rooster
 - 7. Third round of March Madness
 - 8. An outdoor activity where you eat on a blanket
 - 10. An array of colors that occurs after rain
 - 11. Best-rated ice cream in Omaha
 - 12. This day led to the creation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
 - 13. Nebraska flower
 - 17. Sport with yellow ball and racket
 - 18. Early bird get the ____
 - 22. A seasonal heavy rain, common in tropical areas
 - 25. A bug that is supposed to bring you luck

‘Hard work’ doesn’t always pay off the way adults say it will

Caprice McCoy
contributing writer

Adults, specifically teachers and parents, have always pushed students to work hard. Why? Because “hard work always pays off,” meaning if students put all their effort into school now, applying to college will be easier later. And while that may be true when it comes to money-saving tests and scholarships like the ACT, what about later in life?

Say one gets into their preferred college and graduates with the best qualifications for their aspired career. Of course, the next step would be to apply for the jobs they worked so hard for. And they would do it with absolute confidence because they did everything, they needed to do to be successful.

According to Villanova University, in 2019 70-90% of job applications are rejected before reaching a human. Of the applications that make it to a recruiter or hiring manager, only about 3% result in an interview. Even with the required qualifications and education, that students’ chances of being hired are low.

The odds are so low for the simple fact that hard work is

only one of many factors that decide the success that elders have pushed students to accomplish. First, bias is how humans perceive the world and people around them. Bias against things like gender, race and religion will always play a role in the interview process because of the inherent biases that the interviewer might have against an applicant.

Another overlooked factor is market and demand. According to the Corporate Finance Institute, like the markets of goods and services, job markets also follow the supply-demand mechanism. When the quantity of workers demanded is equal to the labor force available (the quantity of supply), the job market reaches its equilibrium point, and wages can be decided.

Simply put, if people need specific skills to produce and sell their product, then the student has greater chances of getting that job. However, if those products are not currently in demand, then tough luck, those chances plummeted. A good example is video rental stores, as streaming services like Netflix and Hulu became more common, killing rental stores.

Another major factor that is particularly hurting Generation Z is that job recruiters want experience – and the only

way to get experience is to either have had a job or internships – which are hard to land. The last reason is simple: luck and timing. If the interviewer is not in a great mood at the time of the interview, then chances are low.

With all these factors going unconsidered, those who followed their teachers’ and parents’ motto —hard work always pays off — are left jobless and struggling to get the jobs they worked so hard to obtain.

There are many people who may disagree, considering they may have faced many odds and still landed a comfortable and high paying job. Often, the only way that could have happened is because of their own hard work, which not everyone has, or social connections.

Instead, elders need to encourage their students to find a way to set themselves apart from others, so they have a better chance at being remembered during the interviewing process. Volunteering, landing a leadership role, any sort of apprenticeship, and opportunities they can afford – those are some for many extracurricular that will increase their value to society. A new motto like “Increasing your value pays off” sounds lame, but it’s accurate.

Why we need to keep investing in higher ed, healthcare workforce development

Arisa Lattison
editor-in-chief

The Trump administration moved in early February to reduce the size of grants for institutions conducting medical research. This would be detrimental to the future of healthcare as opportunities dwindle for prospective students.

This isn’t President Trump’s first time attempting to cut funding for the National Institutes of Health research. In 2017, the Trump Administration proposed to cut funding by approximately \$6 billion, about 20 percent. This proposal was met by opposition from not only Democrats, but Republicans as well. Now the plan is to cut \$9 billion, roughly 30% of the budget issued to research institutions. The Project 2025 blueprint suggested that N.I.H. research funding gave too much support to “leftist” universities.

As someone planning to go into the healthcare field, the financial cuts are a huge problem for me going forward. With a never-ending shortage of healthcare workers, for one, the job opportunities in healthcare occupations are increasing. If funding is cut for research at universities, this affects those

looking to pursue higher education such as graduate school and further in these fields.

According to data from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, in the 2024 fiscal year, the NIH spent around \$32 billion on almost 60,000 grants for medical research. Twenty-three billion dollars of that went to direct research costs such as equipment and salaries. The other \$9 billion went to indirect costs like laboratory upkeep and utility bills, all of which are necessary for research to take place.

This proposal has been put on hold by a federal court, issued by Judge Angel Kelley, appointed by Biden, as a lawsuit was filed by universities and research center that this “flagrantly unlawful action” would “devastate medical research at America’s universities.”

However, on February 7, 2025, NIH released an updated policy that would significantly reduce the amount of funding that research institutions and universities can receive under the terms of their federal grants. More than 80% of NIH’s funding is awarded for research through competitive grants to researchers at universities, medical schools, and other research institutions. The Association of American Medical Colleges

as well as the American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy claimed sudden funding cuts would “wreak havoc” and force universities to lay off staff, close laboratories, and potentially put an end to

According to UMass Chan Medical School, “Due to ongoing uncertainties related to federal funding of biomedical research, UMass Chan, along with many of [their] peer universities, is facing significant challenges in ensuring stable dissertation research opportunities for incoming students.”

As a result, they rescinded all offers of admission for the Fall 2025 term for their Morningside Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. University of Michigan Medical school withdrew all unaccepted offers to their Program in Biomedical Sciences because of “unanticipated federal policies impacting scientific research and education programs.”

As someone planning to go into the healthcare field, the financial cuts are a huge problem for me going forward. If we want to have healthcare professionals, we need to keep knowledge accessible.

‘Emelia Perez:’ controversial, but truly just bad (and offensive, too)

Suri Alvarado
contributing writer

Emilia Perez’ is a controversial film about organized crime and drug trafficking in Mexico. This movie has been criticized as offensive for its script and its depiction of Mexico.

The movie is directed and written by a French man, Jacques Audiard, who openly admits that he didn’t do research about the country he’s talking about. The movie came out Nov. 1, 2024, and it follows the story of Rita, a lawyer who helps a cartel leader retire from his business and transition to a woman. Audiard decided to make a film loosely based on the book “Écoute” by Boris Razon, which explores themes of loneliness, identity and intimacy in a hyperconnected world, but he had the brilliant idea of making it set in Mexico and about drug trafficking.

He thinks that after visiting Mexico a couple of times, he already understood all the complexity of Mexican’s reality. He is taking the great controversies, dangers, and violent themes to which Mexico must face day after day and selling it like a “broken telephone” for the gringos, or foreigners. It’s as if they could have the Mexican experience without having to get involved with Mexico.

Their representation of Mexico is very disrespectful, even though Hollywood fights hard for accurate representation. But here they are rewarding a film that does the opposite. One of the worst parts is that both the director and Netflix made a strategy to release it first in Europe, the United States, and Canada in order to give it recognition and validity before releasing it in Latin American countries. What angered people was that the movie began to receive awards from the so-called film experts. It is insulting how this is the international film

that has the most Oscar nominations in the history of those awards, in total 13.

On top of that, the cast is mostly foreigners to play Mexicans. Audiard said that he considered them better, as if Mexico didn’t have talented actors or actresses, with only one person in the whole cast and crew being Mexican.

One of the things that made the movie get so much attention was the casting of the famous singer Selena Gomez. Maybe for those who don’t understand Spanish her interpretation might’ve been fantastic, since she’s considered of being a “Latina icon” by people in the U.S. The problem is that she plays a native Mexican and Gomez doesn’t even know Spanish, which makes her interpretation taken more as a joke. Since Gomez doesn’t know what the words she’s saying mean, it makes her acting seem plain, with no soul and her character a joke.

The same happened with the casting of Zoe Saldana, whose character is supposed to be Mexican, too. The problem is in that she has a Puerto Rican and Dominican background, and her accent was notable throughout the whole movie. The fact that she didn’t even try to make a Mexican accent either speaks a lot for itself.

The main role was taken by Karla Sofia Gascon, a transgender actress who was criticized since she’s Spaniard, but mostly because she’s known to be very controversial for her ideals and comments that tend to be very offensive to many minorities. The name of the movie’s cartel leader is “Manitas del Monte,” which literally translates to “Mountain handy-men,” a nickname for a criminal that only a foreigner who doesn’t know anything about this culture would think of.

This movie was filmed mostly in France despite being set in Mexico; this didn’t sit well with Mexican people. To top it

off, it’s a musical, as if the serious and painful issues in Mexico could be captured with little songs and dances. Another fact about this was how bad the lyrics of each and every song in this movie are, as if they were made with AI or just put into Google Translate. None of the songs make any sense, are coherent, or rhyme. They also add Mexican mannerisms that the people who write these songs clearly didn’t even know how to use or what they meant.

I have tried to see it objectively, taking away from the fact that I am Mexican, born and raised in Guerrero. My family and friends have been affected by the subject matter that the film deals with. I have tried to see it in an artistic way and from where I have tried to see it, I think it’s terrible and a giant dwelling over my country.

It is ridiculous and comical that the movie is simply a project that should not have come from the imagination of Audiard. He should’ve had at least a little common decency and tried to do research about the topic his movie would talk about, since it involves real problems.

At a press conference after winning the Oscar for best supporting actress, Saldana was asked about what she thought of the anger and how poorly this film was received by the Mexican audience. She said, “I’m sorry that you and many others felt offended, that was never our intention, ... I don’t share your opinion, for me the heart of this movie was not Mexico. We weren’t making a film about a country... We were making a film about four women.”

Her condescending tone when answering the question spoke a lot. Even if she was “right,” some people might say, why did they decide to make it about narco culture? They could’ve based the film in another country.

arts & culture

THE REGISTER

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A peek behind the curtain of ‘Puffs’

Connie Moennig
contributing writer

With the start of spring and summer break drawing near, the CHS theater department has kicked off production of the school year’s final show, “Puffs”, which will have shows on Friday Apr. 25, and Saturday Apr. 26. The play is a parody of the “Harry Potter” franchise, following many of the same themes and plot points as the series but in a more satirical way. The cast and crew are filled with skilled, determined and hardworking students, and there are many obstacles that present themselves during the process of putting a show like this together.

The show’s director and Central’s drama teacher, Scott Mead, said that Puffs has a sizable cast and crew, with a total of 72 cast and crew members working on the show. The most common and trickiest issue is the use of the auditorium. Many different departments utilize the space, so it’s not rare for their schedules to overlap with rehearsals. “We always have to think ahead and plan around those events in order to put together the technical elements of the rehearsals.” Mead said.

Challenges also turn up on a personal level, when it comes to time management for students. Senior, and actor for Oliver Rivers in the play, DeVon Richards II discussed his issues with balance school, family and the play. Like all extracurriculars, it’s difficult to not feel stressed about school and work and home. There is also another problem when it comes to time, or the lack thereof. “We never seem to have enough time, so everything does kind of feel rushed, but it sometimes adds to the fun of it with how fast we are moving.” Richards said. In these situations, it’s important for students to stay dedicated and focused on the tasks at hand while working on the show. “While you’re here make sure you are fully present and doing what you’re supposed to and things like that.” Richards said.



From left, drama director Scott Mead and seniors DeVon Richards and Ray Bartlett rehearse a scene of “Puffs.”

In theater there’s a lot more moving parts beyond what the audience sees onstage. There are students working on every aspect behind the scenes, but communication between the crew and the actors can be challenging. Sophomore Ashton Fischer is the head of scenery crew, designing the set, picking out paint schemes and instructing the rest of the crew. They

find it hard to effectively communicate with the actors and get stuff sorted out. There’s the problem of putting up sets on stage while the actors are rehearsing. “Oftentimes our work towards the end of a show is limited to only Saturdays after the actors have left,” Fischer said.

ISAAC PERCIVAL-AIZENBERG | The Register

A Capella impresses at the state capital

Gaby Antunez
staff writer

A Capella went to Lincoln, Nebraska to sing at the state capital on March 27 and performed four songs. One song that was sung was composed by the Central accompanist Stephen Bouma titled “Always something sayings.”

A Capella teacher Sara Cowan helped prepare students as much as she could before the performance. The morning of the visit they went to a clinic with Tom Trenny, a professor of music at Nebraska Wesleyan University, to work on some songs. “The visit increased expressivity, bring more energy and feeling to the song,” Cowan said.

Senior Jocelyn Grima, sophomore Keaton Carver and junior Lilianna Perez Guzman all attended the event. It was most students’ first time even going to the state capital building.

All of them felt like they were prepared enough but were extremely nervous to be performing in such an important place. “I felt like I wasn’t prepared, but once we got there it felt really comforting and all my doubt went away,” Grima said.

Many different languages were performed, and a common favorite was “Bogoroditse Devo,” which is a Slavonic Russian song composed by Sergei Rachmaninoff. “I thought the students did a fine job presenting that piece because the acoustic of the rotunda was visible,” Cowan said. Guzman agreed and commented that the extra work was needed but worth all the practice. “I really liked that one, it’s a lot of work but is really fun,” Guzman said.

State senator Dunixi Guereca also went to go watch the CHS Singers perform, and it was very memorable for many. “It was really meaningful that he took the time to listen to our performance and congratulate us...felt good to be heard because we were there representing music in our school,” Cowan said.

Many people were shocked that he was there, but very proud that they had such a supportive senator. “I was looking forward to seeing the senator,” Carver said.

All the students joined A Capella for different reasons, but in the end, it connected many music lovers.

“I joined junior choir and Ms. Cowan said, ‘You should join A Capella it will be fun,’ so I joined and it’s really fun,” Carver said.

Seniors take center stage at Omaha Fashion Week

Hattie Moeller
news editor

Omaha Fashion Week showcased fashion designers and talented models from across the metro area and featured two Central students.

From Feb. 26 to March 2, the Omaha Design Center housed hundreds of fashion enthusiasts, designers, models and artists for a week of fashion shows.

OFW highlighted its Spring 2025 showcase, which focused on storytelling and exploring vulnerable experiences. The designers were inspired by the idea of “fashion for good in our community.”

The event showcased 15 emerging designers, 11 featured designers and six headliners. They are from all over the United States, including Nebraska.

On the first night, Feb. 26, the OFW organization featured aspiring high school artists. Deemed “student night,” the showcase allowed senior Maya Brezack to showcase her artistry on Omaha’s biggest fashion runway.

“It was fun to show people what I am capable of as an artist,” Brezack said.

Despite her artistic background, stepping onto the runway was a new experience. “I’m not a

model. I was very nervous. I’m shy, so I tried to not look at the audience,” she said.

However, the energy backstage between stylists, models, and designers made the experience more enjoyable. “It was a fun experience, I enjoyed being backstage with the other models and hyping each other up,” Brezack added.

Senior Shelby Storz modeled for emerging designer Mariana Rodriguez, who crafted a collection of upcycled streetwear. Storz wore a brightly colored outfit, involving a hooded top, woven corset and flared pants.

“I loved it, not only because of the bright colors and the designer’s inspiration...but the ability the piece had to transition,” Storz said.

Halfway down the runway the model loosened ties and released fabric. Rodriguez’s design transformed from an everyday outfit to a fashion statement.

“It was pretty fabulous; the reveal was met with a large cheer. I felt very special to have been chosen to wear that design,” Storz said.

Over the course of the past few years, Omaha Fashion Week has grown to be recognized as the nation’s fourth-largest fashion event.

Outlandia and MAHA join forces p. 12

Omaha’s marquee annual music festival, Maha, will be returning, but will be joining forces with Outlandia and will be held in August.

Lola’s Café is a great place to experience neighborhood charm p. 13

The menu offers a variety of options, from standard breakfast pancakes to frittatas, salads, and charcuterie boards.

NSAA modifies trans-athlete policy due to Trump executive orders p. 17

The NSAA will follow a federal order banning transgender athletes from competing on women’s teams based on their preferred gender identity. The executive order was signed Feb. 5.

Track stars aim to break records and prepare for state p. 20

With records in sight and motivation running high, Central’s boys track athletes Ike Ackerman and Tory Pittman are sharpening their skills and chasing state titles this season.

Becca Rock
chief copy editor

Omaha’s marquee annual music festival, Maha, officially announced their lineup and that they will be returning on Aug. 2 for a one-day festival, but will be joining forces with Outlandia and moving to the Heartland of America Park at the RiverFront.

Outlandia Music Festival has been running since 2022 at Bellevue’s Falconwood Park. The music production company 1% Productions is ending the festival because of a lack of funding, which is why they are joining forces with Maha. Founders of this event had originally worked with Maha to start Outlandia.

The Maha Music Festival was founded in 2009 and began at the Omaha riverfront. The name of the festival stands for marquee annual music festival but also the base culture Omaha was created on. The Omaha tribe (also known as the Maha tribe) is why the city of Omaha is

named “Omaha”, meaning “upstream” or “against the current.” Settling by the Missouri River, the Maha in the early 1700s were also referred to as “the Maha, a wandering nation.” Today the festival has a focus on minimizing waste and positively affecting Omaha. By returning back to the Riverfront, the festival is acknowledging Omaha’s foundation.

The lineup this year consists of headliner The Pixies, a “legendary alt-rock band;” rising folk/ alt-country artist Waxahachie; indie rock band Band of Horses; alternative band Silversun Pickups; and synth/pop Magdalena Bay, also featuring a local band Little Brazil.

This year’s lineup is shorter with fewer local bands because of the switch to a one-day festival.

Many other festivals are also the same weekend, including Lollapalooza in Chicago and Hinterland in St. Charles, Iowa. Both of these festivals are hosting more mainstream artists, which might pull many away from Omaha this summer.

Fun activites to do this spring

Chloe Schwartz
staff writer

Spring is here. Some of us have jobs and some of us don’t, but either way we still need activities to help us enjoy the weather. Here are some of the top spring activities to keep you from sleeping away your spring.

1. Hiking
It’s warm outside, and spending some time in the nice weather exploring and going on adventures is a good source of exercise. If you’re not sure where to go on a hike, I suggest considering Hummel Park. Despite its “creepy” reputation, it is a big hiking area with beautiful landscapes and cool areas to explore. Other than my suggestion, you can always look up hiking trails or parks.
2. Plant a Garden
Planting a garden is good for many things. For example, planting a garden can help boost your health, save money on fruits and vegetables, provide relief from stress, and encourage good physical movement. And it’s great for the environment. Depending on the area you can also build connections with the community.
3. Amusement parks or fairs
Going to an amusement park or a fair is much fun with rides, food, drinks, and games. A fun fair i know about is the Arlington fair! I have been many times! Lots of fun activities, animals to pet, food, and rides! The Arlington fair is located at Thomas Jefferson community center, 3501 second street south! It starts august 13-17th of 2025. Completely free! This can be fun alone or with friends and family. Having fun, eating, and making memories that will last forever is a wonderful way to spend a nice warm day.
4. Picnic or Barbecue
This is not only a cheap choice, but also a nice, calming one to just spend time with friends and family, eating delicious food and enjoying the nice, warm weather. Any public park or area outside including your own backyard is great for this, I visited Spirit of Nebraska Wilderness Park located just downtown!
5. Drive-in Movie
Drive-in movies are so much fun. Most are at night so you can see the screen, so this gives a little breeze in the heat. These are fun to go to with a partner, friends, family, or by yourself as well. They usually cost around \$20-35 depending on the movie and how many people there are. Some locations are Quasar Drive-In and Falconwood Park.

Go out and enjoy the warm weather this spring.



The trails at Hummel Park are a great option for a spring outing. WHIT RUTLEDGE | The Register

‘The Electric State:’ while visually stunning, deserves more room to grow

Caprice McCoy
contributing writer

Going into “The Electric State,” directed by Anthony and Joe Russo and based on the illustrated novel by Simon Stalenhag, I had high hopes. It had been a new concept, the visuals that were spoiled in the trailers were very appealing, and there was clear foreshadowing about the future consequences of artificial intelligence.

The trailer itself doesn’t reveal much about the plot, but the constant showing of robots and well-known actors made me curious. The only red flag is that the movie was based on a book.

It stars Millie bobby Brown alongside voice performances from Chris Pratt, Giancarlo Esposito and Brian Cox. The film brings live action with CGI to bring Stalenhag’s retro-futuristic, post-apocalyptic world to life, exploring themes of loss, memory and the emotional toll of technology.

Thirty minutes into the movie, it felt like they rushed through the plot to get to the part that was advertised – namely, robots and their role in the world. The pacing affected the journey in a negative way. Instead of following a teenager through her risky journey of trying to find the last of her family, we get to see her meet crazy new characters on the way.

They could’ve given viewers more time to grow attached to the protagonist and relate to her in a meaningful way. Typically, movies build this connection naturally during the first hour or so

of the movie. However, in “The Electric State,” it feels as if her emotional depth is overshadowed by the need to push the narrative forward.

I desperately wanted to connect to the protagonist because I personally relate to her struggle, but I was being forced along and not allowed enough time to marinate. Of course, the protagonist has drive, but there’s less focus on her motivations and more on the spectacle of cool vintage robots.

The imbalance makes the film feel more like a highlight reel of its most marketable moments rather than a fully developed emotional experience. While the visual concepts are engaging, the heart of the story, the characters, deserve more room to grow.

Regarding the fact that it is a book adaptation, one common issue is that they rarely reach the full potential due to time constrictions. “The Electric State” was clearly meant to have more depth, but after condensing the story, its message feels underwhelming.

Don’t get me wrong, the movie has its strengths. The story is clear and easy to follow, making it inviting even for those who aren’t familiar with the book. The world is visually stunning, successfully immersing the viewers. And the emotional aspects, while underdeveloped, are present and still hold weight – the film still delivers heartfelt moments. It is an engaging journey with strong visual storytelling.

If you wanted to just sit and watch a movie without contemplating your whole existence, then this movie is great.

‘The Perks of Being a Wallflower’ is more than a coming-of-age story

Jasmin Gutierrez Garcia
translation editor

The Perks of Being a Wallflower” is a young adult novel that was first published in 1999 by Stephen Chbosky. Thirteen years after its release, Chbosky took the initiative to direct and release a coming-of-age romantic drama film adaptation of his own work, bringing the beloved characters and poignant themes to life on the big screen.

The novel is narrated by Charlie, a socially awkward and introverted 15-year-old student in the 1991-1992 school year. “The Perks of Being a Wallflower” is an epistolary novel, which means that it is written in the form of letters. The narration is completely one-sided through-out, since the novel only consists of letters that Charlie writes. His letters are realistic instead of a forced and phony teenager point of view.

He is the titular wallflower who will face his freshman year of high school, clinical depression and traumas all while making close friends. After some time, Charlie meets Sam and Patrick, a duo of step siblings who help him open to the world around him and meet new people.

Charlie starts to write letters to his anonymous “friend” to process his experiences and

trauma, seeking an outlet for his thoughts and feelings without fear of judgement or intervention the night before his freshman year. Eventually, he begins to talk about his challenges in his first year in high school and the traumatizing experiences he has been through. Charlie also makes several references to other literary works, films, and pop culture in general. He begins to have new, typical first teen experiences: malls, football games, school dances, school fights, cruising, parties, hanging out, first crushes, first relationship, first everything. It’s not only easy to understand, but through Charlie’s experiences, a lot can be learned.

Using Charlie’s voice, Chbosky explores the complexities of people and discusses heavy topics like sexuality, mental health and abuse, but also romance and friendship. The book portrays the honest experience of what it feels like to be a teenager. The feeling of being so afraid of the future because everything and nothing makes sense, but also in love with moments of your life that you don’t know how to explain those feelings.

Chbosky made the story so compelling even when it’s all being told to us after-the-fact. The book doesn’t drag or hold back the story. Characters get developed as the book goes on. Charlie tackles trying to learn the why of it all. However, Charlie eventually comes to terms with his past and decides to “participate” in life instead of being an observer.

Early Bird brings the energy, but is a bit pricey

Katie Besancon
digital editor

A brunch spot to suit everyone’s craving: that is what Early Bird Brunch offers. Early Bird has five locations across the Omaha metro, three locations across Iowa, and one location in Lincoln, having the closest one to Central on 38th and Farnam, serving up brunch seven days a week from 6:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. A friend and I went to the Regency Landing location a couple of months ago wanting to find a new locally owned breakfast spot in Omaha. The restaurant itself is really cool, covered in brightly covered paint and decorations; it was definitely a place to wake you up. Upon walking in, the place was buzzing with people. The space looks pretty small, but they have an additional room available to accommodate customers as well as outdoor seating for when it gets nicer out. When it comes to the food, it was really good. They have a very detailed and large menu for

you to choose from. I got the Ham I Am Benny, which consisted of smoked ham, poached eggs and hollandaise on an English muffin. My friend ordered the breakfast tacos, which came with two tacos with eggs, chorizo, cheddar cheese, Pico de Gallo and avocado crema on corn tortillas. The meals came out quickly and the service was good and fast. On top of the meals, we both ordered water, I got an orange juice, and she got a coffee. In total, I believe both of our meals separately were about \$30. Personally, I really enjoyed the environment and the energy of the place and clearly it is popular among the Omaha metro, but it felt a bit pricey. As a high schooler, I am not looking to spending upwards of \$30 on breakfast, especially when I feel the food that we got was not worth \$30. I would rate the atmosphere and environment of the restaurant 9.5 out of 10, the food a 7.5 out of 10, and the pricing a five out of 10. Overall rating the restaurant in its entirety, I’d give it a seven out of 10.

Lola’s Café is a great place to experience neighborhood charm

Elena Hiley
contributing writer

Lola’s Café in Dundee, Omaha, is a great place to go to experience neighborhood charm. Founded in 2019, Lola’s offers both walk up-to-go orders and restaurant style dining. Full-service dining is offered 4 – 9 p.m. on weekdays, and all day on weekends. Their menu offers a variety of options, from standard breakfast pancakes to frittatas, salads, and charcuterie boards all of the best farm to table quality. I went the first time around 4 p.m. on a Saturday, where I got seated but only ordered a drink and a pastry. I ordered a warm chai latte and a pastry, both of which were brought to me within 10 minutes. The chai latte was served with the perfect amount of warmth and was topped with a dusting of cinnamon, all only for \$3.75. This price seemed great compared to the \$6 chai lattes I have gotten in other cafes around Omaha. The café was almost completely empty, with only a few lone people sitting in the window tables enjoying an early dinner. Lola’s is connected to Film Streams, a local movie theater, and the spaces are completely exposed to one another. However, there was very little theater traffic, which added on to the quiet, peaceful atmosphere that evening. Seating in Lola’s includes bar seating, round tables with three chairs, square tables with two chairs, a couple booth-table seats, and small, square window tables. The windows are floor to ceiling covering the whole wall facing Dodge Street, allowing a close-up view of the street and lots of natural light.

Despite the proximity to the busy street, the noise is not disruptive in any way. The evening I went, it was quite chilly and rainy outside. The tables all had a little candle lit on them, which created most of the lighting in the room. The dim lighting of the candles was complimented by the dark greenery of the abundant plants scattered around the café. Large plants were potted on the floor, the counters, in planter baskets, and hanging from the ceiling. The plant life creates a fresh, non-stuffy atmosphere. The coziness of the café in the evening made it very hard to get up and leave. The next morning, I went back, hoping to be seated for breakfast (served 8 a.m.- 3 p.m.). I showed up around 10 a.m., and I was greeted by loud chatter and bustling of servers busy taking people’s orders. It was packed full, so I ended up having to wait about 20 minutes to get seated. I would recommend making a reservation if you plan to attend during brunch hours, as it is obviously very popular. When we were seated, we were almost immediately served with water and had our orders taken. Our server was very friendly and helpful, as were all of the workers that day and the previous evening. I ordered an iced vanilla latte and their brioche French toast, which came with a berry compote and house made maple syrup. My latte had a perfect amount of sweet- to-coffee ratio. The food took over half an hour to be ready, due to the business of the hour. Lola’s has a great neighborhood community, with many regulars who may be your neighbors being within walking distance. I even saw my next-door neighbors, which was a fun interaction to have at such a popular place.

Dave’s Hot Chicken has great vibes, middle-of-the-road food

Lennox Cole
contributing writer

Daves Hot Chicken is a recently popularized chain restaurant that is fast expanding in popularity on social media. Recently a location opened off of Saddle Creek and Wakeley. I went on a Saturday around noon. When entering, the line was almost to the door, but the wait was only about 10 minutes long. The menu was largely posted above the counter with photos and prices that were reasonable compared to other popular chicken restaurants such as Raising Cane’s. It was colorful and the vibe was upbeat. It was loud and mostly packed with full tables and food coming out constantly. The employees were friendly and helpful with making a selection. I decided on a two-finger meal with very large chicken tenders, fries, two slices of white bread, pickles, and a sauce. At Dave’s this was \$12.49 while a three-finger combo at Cane’s is \$9.59 which comes with bread fries and three chicken fingers. First the chicken was juicy, tender, and the coating was crispy. There were over five options for flavors ranging from extremely hot to no spice. I tasted the mild and hot flavors for this

review. The mild was middle of the range and didn’t have a ton of taste overall. The hot flavor however was delicious and full of flavor with their same juicy taste and crispy texture with a nice kick from the spice. Next the fries, they were middle of the road but seasoned similar to most other fast-food fries. They were crisp and okay, just nothing special. Then the bread, it was just simple white sandwich bread but just served as a nice palate cleanser in between bites. After was the best part of the meal: the pickles. They were flavorful and tasted so fresh and crisp. You could tell it was absolutely prepared there with good ingredients. The sauce though was very basic and tasted like any other fast food special sauce. Finally, the mac and cheese, which was an add on to the meal for around \$5. It was creamy, cheesy, and flavorful. The portion was large and came hot. Overall, the vibes were all good and the employees seemed happy to work there. The employees were kind and helped with selections, the vibes were great, but the food was middle of the road.





Photo Courtesy of SONY PICTURES

Perusing a suspenseful, fun ‘Paddington in Peru’

Arisa Lattison
editor-in-chief

If I were to describe Dougal Wilson’s “Paddington in Peru” in three words, I would say it is suspenseful, heart-warming and fun. It makes for a great family night movie.

The movie follows a bear named Paddington summoned to a bear retirement home in—you guessed it—Peru. His Aunt Lucy had sent him a letter asking him to visit. However, when he arrives, it turns out she has gone missing. Determined, he sets out with the Brown family, who had graciously taken Paddington in in the first movie, to find her, but they come across many obstacles along the way.

The film has a 93 percent rating on Rotten Tomatoes, which is why I was surprised when I arrived at the theater to see only a handful of people scattered throughout the seats. Considering how high of a rating the

film has across many platforms; the audience was pretty scarce. I’m not sure if it was due to it being almost a month since the release date or because I went on a weekday, but it was definitely less than I expected. According to TheNumbers.com, during the first week of release “Paddington in Peru” was ranked second in theaters and made almost \$13 million that week. By the weekend I went, the earnings were almost a quarter of what it had been initially, and the rank had dropped down to fifth, explaining the vacancy in the seats.

Going into it, I expected an adventure/mystery movie, but it was so much more than that. I was surprised at how many worthwhile messages were placed throughout the movie. The theme of family was prevalent throughout the film, acting as a reminder to those watching of the importance of prioritizing those close to you over anything else. It reminded me of when my parents would read me books at bedtime and ask me to name

the moral of the story, so this movie sparked nostalgia for me. It is sure to garner smiles and laughs.

“Paddington in Peru” is a sequel to “Paddington” and “Paddington 2.” Since I hadn’t seen the first two, I had someone who had watched the preceding movies accompany me. Throughout the movie, I heard scattered laughter at certain scenes, to which I was informed were references to the first two movies. I did not understand the references, but they did not take away from the experience of the movie. The plot is completely separate, so you can still enjoy it without prior exposure. However, for those who have seen both “Paddington” movies, the references can be appreciated.

One thing I enjoyed was the amount of plot twists in the movie. I was on the edge of my seat the entire time and collective gasps were let out every time something new was revealed. You could never predict what was

going to happen next and it was exciting trying to determine what was to follow. The acting was very exaggerated—how it typically is in a kid’s movie—but it was well done to the point that the comedic relief characters were more than hilarious, and the villains were unnerving.

Something that could have been better for me was the pacing. It was very unrealistic how some characters suddenly had changes of heart. Some parts that were dragged out or shortened were unnecessary. Other than that, I had no complaints.

Overall, “Paddington in Peru” is a great movie to watch with friends and family. People of all ages can enjoy this film, as was seen by the wide variety of ages at the theater, from families with young children, to couples, to even individual adults immersed in the story.

Boundless mediocrity is all the rage in ‘Brave New World’

Charli Tobin
staff writer

Captain America: Brave New World” is the newest entry in the Marvel Cinematic Universe. After its last few duds, this movie had the chance to help refresh the MCU’s credibility and introduce so many new important characters.

Instead, it felt like the exact same movie Marvel has been making since “Avengers: Endgame.” The choice to heavily advertise Red Hulk and then treat the reveal like a twist we should be surprised about but we knew it was coming before we walked into the theater.

The plot revolves around Sam Wilson (Anthony Mackie), now Captain America, attempting to uncover a nefarious global plot to take the world’s supply of the strongest Metal in the world Adamantium after being wrapped into it by President Thaddeus Ross (Harrison Ford), while guiding the new Falcon, Joaquín Torres (Danny Ramirez), on how to be a hero.

The diminishing of the third act twist doesn’t just feel weird but also has plot indications that don’t make sense. The main villain, “the Leader,” is almost completely absent from the third act because he turns himself in for no apparent reason.

The acting is good, with several moments that bring up so much more emotion than usual for a Marvel movie. The moment when Isaiah Bradley (Carl Lumbly), a super soldier made to combat the USSR, finds out he is going back to jail, is so powerful and really makes you feel for him. Mackie’s acting does feel almost flat, like he’s just delivering lines. It doesn’t feel like he cared about the movie.

There isn’t anything else that’s notable or worthy of mention; this movie is boundless mediocrity and that’s somehow worse than just a plain bad movie.

Overall, “Captain America: Brave New World” just disappoints in kicking off a new era of Marvel movies. This movie was underwhelming and just sets the bar lower and lower for Marvel.

‘The Day the Earth Blew Up’ is nostalgic, crisp and smooth

Julius Wakole
contributing writer

The Day the Earth Blew Up: A Looney Tunes Movie” is a 2D animated movie made by Warner Bros Studios and produced by Ketchup Entertainment, directed by Peter Browngardt and released March 14.

Unlike past “Looney Tunes” movies this isn’t a live action cross animation, yet an entirely hand-drawn movie and unlike past movies like “Space Jam”, “Looney Tunes: Back in Action”, and “Space Jam: A New Legacy” with LeBron James.

During the break, my uncle took me to the movies to see the movie upon my request in Atchison, Kansas. I was excited to watch the movie as I love the traditional 2D animation of the “Looney Tunes”. The movie is a science fiction and involves Daffy and Porky needing to save

their roof then the world from a bubble-gum based alien plan from blowing the world up. Daffy Duck and Porky Pig has their original actor from the latest Looney Tunes show, Eric Bauza who voices a ton of other “Looney Tunes” characters.

The animation was crisp and smooth and look fantastic before my eyes, since characters aren’t restricted to what humans usually have and the characters Daffy and Porky are able to bounce around and be looney. It felt like I was watching an original Looney Tunes short. The jokes were funny at times, some more others, but I still laughed or chuckled at most of the jokes. My hopes are that they continue to make movies like this, and I hope that the “Coyote V. ACME” movie when it releases sometime next year.

At the end of it all, I loved the movie and if I could, I would watch the movie 100 times over and then some more and I recommend this film to anyone who wants a good time or just need a break from the other movies.

Tate McRae is ‘so close’ to pop superstardom

Paula Gutiérrez Martínez
arts & culture editor

Canadian singer-songwriter Tate McRae released her third studio album on Feb. 21. The album, called “So Close to What,” is a mix of dance-pop and R&B, and is McRae’s best work to date.

Although McRae has been releasing music since 2017, it was her 2023 song “greedy” that broke new ground for her when it hit top 10 in the United States. She followed up with her sophomore album, “THINK LATER,” that same year.

If “THINK LATER” was McRae’s first step into superstardom, “So Close to What” is when she finally comes into her own. “THINK LATER” felt transitional, stuck somewhere between the intimate bedroom pop associated with most of her career and the hypnotic sound of “greedy.”

“So Close to What” is a nostalgic celebration of 90s and 2000s pop. There are clear influences from powerhouses like the Pussycat Dolls, Christina Aguilera and Britney Spears, the latter of which McRae has been frequently compared to because of their dancing abilities.

McRae’s embrace of these comparisons ultimately pays off, as this album is probably her best one yet. She dials up the sleekness and glamour, trading bedroom pop ballads for dance-worthy hits.

Although there’s still a certain commercial sheen to the songs, they’re still catchy. McRae’s music is easily digestible, but her unique, breathy vocals give her music that recognizable

“Tate McRae” quality.

“Miss possessive” is a fierce competition anthem that sets the tone for “So Close to What.” It transitions well into “Revolving door,” which is slower—and more mellow—but still undoubtedly a great song. According to a video interview with Billboard, it’s inspired by McRae’s life feeling “like a never-ending revolving door.”

American rapper Flo Milli steals the show with her feature on “bloodonmyhands,” but McRae still manages to hold her own. “Dear god” is McRae’s desperate plea to God to get someone out of her head, and “Purple lace bra,” perhaps McRae’s most adult track yet, is a criticism of the media and people’s public perception of who she is.

In “Sports car,” one of the best songs on the album, McRae dials up the sensuality. It has that nostalgic 2000s pop sound McRae tried to capture in “So Close to What,” and in “Sports car” she executes it flawlessly. The beat is catchy, and her scratchy vocals blend with it perfectly.

“Signs” is upbeat but held back by some toxic messaging about unhealthy communication habits in a relationship. Nevertheless, it’s still a fun song to nod along to.

“I Know Love” is a standout because of McRae’s collaboration with her boyfriend, fellow Australian rapper and singer-songwriter The Kid Laroi. It’s a cute, energetic song, and its lyrics are sweeter than some of the other songs on the album. It’s not the highlight of the album, but the hate it gets isn’t warranted.

The quality of the songs quickly deteriorates in the second

half of the album. It’s held up by two of the album’s breakout hits: “2 hands” and “It’s ok I’m ok.” Like “Sports car,” “2 hands” is hands-down one of the best songs on the album. It’s fast and catchy, the kind of song you play on repeat. While I did not like “It’s ok I’m ok,” as much as other people did, its booming drums give it character, something “Like I do,” “No I’m not in love,” and “Means I care” all lack. These songs are quickly forgotten as soon as they’re over, and they all sort of blend together.

There’s a Spears-esque monologue towards the end of “Like I Do,” reminiscent of that from “Oops!...I Did It Again,” but McRae doesn’t pull it off quite as well as Spears did.

“Greenlight” and “Nostalgia” are interesting because of their deviation from the standard instrumentals present in most of the songs. They’re both slow and mellow, even more so than “Revolving door.” “Nostalgia” stands out because of how stripped back it is. The acoustic guitar gives it a unique feel, and the lyrics are reflective, focused on family. It’s simple but still manages to find a place on the album.

McRae is still a pop girl, albeit one that is more focused on dancing than singing. She still has a long way to go before breaking into the mainstream, but she’s heading in the right direction. “So Close to What” may just be basic pop music, but it’s still catchy and fun.

McRae is set to make a stop in the CHI Health Center Omaha on Oct. 9 as part of her Miss Possessive tour.

Jennie’s ‘Ruby’ is a gem of an album

Fatima Yawari
contributing writer

Ruby” is K-pop star Jennie Kim’s first solo debut album released on March 7. It has reached a monthly listener of 49,039,388 on Spotify and is now ranked #51 in the world.

The album has five singles: “Mantra,” “Love Hangover,” “ExtraL,” “Like Jennie,” and “Handlebars.” Two of her songs “Mantra” and “Like Jennie,” have reached the top five of the Billboard Global 200 and topped charts in several countries.

I love how Kim’s new album is a self-reflecting album which really represents who Kim really is.

In seven years of her career as a member of South Korean girl group Blackpink, it was mostly that the girls worked together as a group never really able to express their individual selves in group works. “Ruby” for Kim is about self-discovery, and personal growth.

Kim told Billboard, “The more I get to know myself, the more I try to love myself. I’ve had a time in my life where I didn’t—I had no clue how to do that. I didn’t know who I was.”

“ExtraL,” which features American rapper and singer Doechii comes with strong messages of women empowerment and a reminder that women are strong. Doechii and Kim chant

“Do my ladies run this? Do my ladies run this?” really supporting women ideas.

“Ruby” also includes love songs like “Love Hangover,” “Seoul City” which is about Kim’s personal relationships. “We say it’s over/But I keep fucking with you/And every time I go, I wake up with this love hangover” verses from the song “Love Hangover” showing her struggle with someone she hates to love.

My personal favorite song is “Like Jennie” which is a really catchy song representing her uniqueness and her success. It is bold and the lyrics seems like self- empowerment anthem of hers, “I think I really like JENNIE/Haters they don’t really like JENNIE/Cause they can never ever be like Jennie.” The lyrics of the song are really confident and bold, and it has become a trend all over the internet with everyone dancing to the choreography.

Kim’s album compared to the other members of Blackpink is closest similar to the Album “Alter-ego” by Thai rapper Lisa which is also about self- empowerment and self-discovery. On the other hand, other members of Blackpink singers Rosie and Jisoo’s albums are about personal emotions and explore love stories.

“Ruby” is a new side of Kim that is bold and confident showing her beyond just her group Blackpink.



Photo Courtesy of **Esperanza Castro Pastrana**

Central students enjoy Ampers&One

Gaby Antunez
staff writer

South Korean boy band Ampers&One performed at the Benson Theatre on March 11 for their “My First_” tour, which consists of 19 shows spanning in 18 different U.S. states, each show lasting for around three hours.

Many students were able to see them despite concert tickets selling out in under two hours of going live. A lot of different merchandise was available for purchase, including clothes, light sticks and even pens.

Junior Esperanza Castro Pastrana and sophomore Hannah Drake have such good memories of the concert. “It’s probably one of the best concerts I’ve been to,” Castro said. It wasn’t her first time going to a concert, but compared to the other concerts she has been to it was one of the most enjoyable ones.

Unlike Castro, it was Drake’s first time going to a concert and it lived up to the expectations

she had. “I really enjoyed how loud and hyped everyone was at the concert,” Drake said.

Many songs were performed, ranging from songs the group made to covers of other popular songs. “My favorite songs they performed were ‘Broken Heart’ and ‘Sweet & Sour,’” Drake said. She went to the concert because of how affordable the tickets were and because she wanted to make good memories of her first concert with her friends.

“My favorite song they performed was probably the cover for ‘Blood, Sweat, and Tears’ by BTS,” Castro said. She went to the concert because barely any K-pop groups perform in Omaha, and the performance by Ampers&One, one of her favorite groups, is now a core memory to her.

Castro and Drake were even able to get VVIP tickets which cost a little more but had more benefits. She was even able to get close to the artists and now has a photo forever remembering the once in a lifetime experience.

“The most memorable part was taking pictures with the idols. I got the selfie bundle, and it was the best idea I ever had,” Castro said.



Photo Courtesy of **Esperanza Castro Pastrana**

STUDENT-ATHLETE LIFE

Is being a student-athlete getting harder?

Steven Dickerson
sports editor

High school student-athletes are under more pressure than ever, juggling packed practice schedules, demanding class loads and increasing mental health concerns. As college admissions grow more competitive and sports become more year-round, many students are finding the balance harder to maintain, including right here at Central.

A 2022 survey by the National Federation of State High School Associations found that the average high school athlete spends at least 20 hours per week on their sport during the season. For students participating in club or travel teams, that number can rise to 30–35 hours, comparable to a part-time job.

“Varsity tennis is a bit challenging with so many matches, often far out,” Central Spanish teacher and girls’ tennis coach Melissa Kuskie said. She has been doing sports since she was 3 and coaching for decades. She said practice times for her girls have not changed over the years and does not believe the challenges for student athletes have become harder. “I feel that students are better students when they have sports in their lives,” she said.

At the same time, academic expectations are rising. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the average high school student spends 6.8 hours per week on homework, a figure that increases for AP and honors students, many of whom also participate in sports.

“100% I believe that student-athletes carry a bigger bur



Left: senior Marcus Kane focuses in class. Right: Kane swings during a game.

den than when I played,” baseball coach and physics teacher Joshua Bullock said. “I honestly don’t know when students are supposed to study.”

“I train outside of school, so time management with workouts, practices, and especially schoolwork is crucial,” said senior Alijah Wayne, a multi-sport athlete. He finds it challenging to be so busy with sports and school but also rewarding to take care of his health.

Senior Marcus Kane, a baseball player and scholar, agreed. “It’s hard to get enough schoolwork done to keep up solid grades, let alone get any extra workouts or practices in,” he said.

“The increasing amount of schoolwork is really the



ISAAC AIZENBURG & MAURO GUTIERREZ | The Register struggle,” junior hockey player Noah Smith said.

“Participating in a varsity sport has undeniably created additional pressure, especially when managing time and discerning how to effectively balance school with sports,” said Evalina Sain, the top student in the senior class and a varsity volleyball player. Despite this, she believes that the challenge of balancing the student-athlete role is a part of the learning experience and ultimately helps with developing important skills.

Mental health and lack of social wellbeing is also a growing concern for student-athletes. The CDC’s Youth Risk Behavior Survey in 2023 reported that 42% of high school students felt persistently sad or hopeless during the past year.

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Central baseball gears up for spring season

Hattie Moeller
news editor

After a 2024 season that ended in a 14 –15 record, the Eagles baseball team is looking to refine its game and make a run during postseason play. The baseball program is led by 11 seniors, all having experience competing at the varsity level, and managed by head coach Gerald Kreber and assistant coach Joshua Bullock.

In his 24th season coaching, Kreber sees potential in this year’s roster, which is 7-6 as of April 10.

“We have the same toughness as last year’s team, but we are adding more pitching depth,” Kreber said.

Returning pitchers include seniors Blake Demman and Joe Dougherty and junior Boe Di Lorenzo. On the mound, Demman has recorded 11 strikeouts in four appearances and has a 2.62 earned run average. Dougherty has delivered solid performances on the mound, with a 2.90 ERA and 13 strikeouts.

With a team leading 20 strikeouts and 3.82 ERA, Di Lorenzo is a competitive pitcher for the Eagles. Sophomore Grant Hamill is new to the varsity team, but has already produced 12 strikeouts and has a 1.08 ERA.

Offensively, Dougherty is the most successful player when in the batter’s box. Dougherty has a batting average of .425 and has recorded 17 hits in just 13 games. He also holds a team high of nine RBIs. Senior Ethan Ferguson is another consistent threat at the plate with a batting average of .351. He is a strong offensive player with eight runs scored and five RBIs. Another key contributor, senior Mark Ripp, maintains a .350 batting average, and has recorded five runs, and earned six RBIs in 13 game appearances.

The Central baseball team opened the spring season on March 25 with a 15 – 3 victory over Omaha Bryan. Players contributed from all areas of the diamond, both on offense and defense. Against the Bears, Di Lorenzo pitched two innings while giving up no earned runs or hits. As a batter Ripp went 3-for-3 and scored a run to propel the Eagles forward.

Prior to season, throughout the months of Jan. and Feb., coaches and players improved their throwing and hitting mechanics. The team also held weight-room sessions to improve their strength and endurance. Since tryouts began on March 3, the Eagles’ main focus in practices has been game preparedness.

“We work on plays that could make or break the game,” Bullock said.

Increasing intensity and simulating games prepares the team for important matchups. Players practice offense and defensive situations: pickoffs, rundowns, and cuts and relays.



Senior Blake Demman hits at a game. MAURO GUTIERREZ | The Register

“It’s important, it helps our players feel comfortable when the situation arises,” Bullock said.

The team will play a total of twelve home games this season. Their upcoming games include several key matchups against top 25 teams. They will face Millard North on April 15, and Skutt Catholic on April 25, both top-10 teams.

“The point of sports is to have fun and enjoy the moment. We will play anyone that is on our schedule,” Bullock said.

Central plays home games at Boyd Field.

NSAA modifies trans athlete policy due to Trump executive orders p. 17

The NSAA will follow a federal order banning transgender athletes from competing on women’s teams based on their preferred gender identity. The executive order was signed Feb. 5.

Boys soccer eyes state tournament as momentum builds p. 18

With strong team chemistry, a focus on mental toughness, and a 5-2 start, Central’s varsity soccer team is determined to finish strong and make a deep run toward state.

The last of a dying breed: Aaron Rodgers released p. 19

Aaron Rodgers’ release from the Jets marks a potential end to his legendary, lengthy career and closes the chapter on a golden era of NFL quarterbacks.

Track stars aim to break records and prepare for state p. 20

With records in sight and motivation running high, Central’s boys track athletes Ike Ackerman and Tory Pittman are sharpening their skills and chasing state titles this season.

NSAA complies with Trump order banning trans athletes from women's sports

Paula Gutierrez-Martinez
arts & culture editor

On Feb. 24, the Nebraska School Activities Association announced that they would comply with President Donald Trump's executive order banning transgender athletes from competing in women's sports team inconsistent with their sex assigned at birth.

The NSAA, Nebraska's only interscholastic activities association, made the decision at its monthly Board of Directors meeting on Feb. 19. The eight-member board unanimously voted to comply with state and federal law "until more clarity emerges."

Previously, NSAA policy required that transgender athletes undergo an approval process involving their schools, the NSAA Gender Identity Eligibility Committee, and various documents, including the student's school registration information, a statement by the student, and verification from an appropriate healthcare provider. This policy has been in place for nine years.

According to NSAA Assistant Director Jeff Strauss, The NSAA Gender Participation Committee has received eight applications since 2018. To protect the privacy and legal rights of the students and their families, the NSAA does not release any information regarding the details of an application.

Moving forward, the NSAA will handle all new applications for transgender participation in a way consistent with the Executive Order and state and federal law. Nebraska's long-standing law allowing females to participate on male teams when there is no female sport, comparable sport or team offered in that sport by the member school will remain unchanged.

The Executive Order, titled "Keeping Men Out of Women's Sports," was signed Feb. 5 by

Trump and prohibits the participation of transgender females in women's sports.

The order calls for enforcement actions to be taken against state activity associations and member schools, which could lose federal funding if they refuse to comply. It also calls for the development of regulations and resolution of ongoing litigation consistent with the order.

This builds on Executive Order 14168, signed on Jan. 20 and titled "Defending Women from Gender Ideology Extremism and Restoring Biological Truth to the Federal Government." This order mandates that federal agencies recognize gender as an unchanging male-female binary determined by sex at birth. In addition, it cut all federal funding for gender-affirming care and barred transgender individuals from using federally funded single-sex facilities that align with their gender identity.

Eight days later, Trump also signed Executive Order "Protecting Children from Chemical and Surgical Mutilation," which proclaimed that the U.S. government would neither fund, promote, nor support gender-affirming care for minors, such as puberty blockers, hormone therapy and surgery.

Nebraska's Unicameral is also considering further action with LB 89, introduced by Senator Kathleen Kauth of Omaha at the request of Governor Jim Pillen. The "Stand with Women Act" would prohibit all transgender participation and limit activity participation to male and female sports based on biological reproductive function rather than gender identity. It was advanced to the floor of Nebraska Legislature in General File by the Government, Military and Veterans Affairs Committee Mar. 20 in a 5-3 vote. Senators Rita Sanders, Bob Andersen, Dan Lonowski, Dan McKeon and Dave Wordekemper voted in favor, and Senators Machaela Cavanaugh, Dunixi Guereca and Megan Hunt voted against.

Swimmers and divers stun at state, show room for growth

Steven Dickerson
sports editor

The 2025 Nebraska State Swimming and Diving Championships took place from Feb. 27 to March 1, bringing together the state's top aquatic athletes for a thrilling weekend of competition. Central made a strong showing, sending multiple swimmers and a diver to the meet, with standout performances across various events.

The top performers include junior Owen Johnson, the only diver for Central, who placed third in the state with a score of 403.60. On the swimming side, junior Carter Hiley broke the OPS district record and placed second in the boys 100-yard freestyle with time of 45.82 seconds. Hiley also placed second in the 200-yard individual medley with a time of 1 minute and 51.29 seconds. Senior Laura Lindsay placed fifth in the girls 100-yard breaststroke with a time of 1 minute and 6.98 seconds.

The girls 200-yard medley relay, including Lindsay, freshman Eliza Stockmann, junior Cecilia Taylor and senior Holland Robison, placed eleventh with a time of 1:55. The boys 400-

yard freestyle relay team, including Hiley, freshmen Aydin Gholami and Max Goebel, and senior Rocco Cerasoli, placed 15th with a time of 3:25. Several other relay teams, both girls and boys, did not advance to the finals following prelims.

The state meet did not come without adversity for the team. Just a week before state, Johnson broke his wrist doing the exact dive that would eventually place him at state. Despite the lack of practice, injury recovery and pre-meet anxiety, he became the first diver from Central to place in years.

"I didn't get to practice at all between breaking my wrist and state, so when I was cleared to dive, I was scared it wouldn't go well," Johnson said.

Lindsay was also challenged, struggling to find her footing during prelims. She would go on to be the best girl's swimmer for Central at state. "I had to reset mentally that night," she said of the prelims.

Taylor was worried after the suit she was supposed to wear at state didn't work out. "I ended up having to wear a suit from freshman year that I already had bad races in, so I worried it wasn't going to go well," she said.



Left: A swim relay including seniors Becca Rock, Holland Robison, Renny Maxwell and Laura Lindsay compete at a meet. Right: junior Carter Hiley at a meet.

Photos Courtesy of MICAH RINGLEIN

College basketball season ends, with Florida winning it all

Boe Di Lorenzo
staff writer

The college basketball season has now come to an end and the Florida Gators are the national champions after an exciting tournament and Final Four. Senior guard Walter Clayton Jr., a transfer from Iona, won the tournament MVP.

The Naismith National Awards for standout players were announced, also including All-America teams and all-conference teams. There was a close race for the National Player of the Year award, called the Wooden Award, the winner was Duke forward Cooper Flagg, who averaged 19.4 points, 7.6 rebounds, 4.2 assists and shot 49.2%, with 38.2% from 3-point range per game. His defense was also outstanding, averaging 1.5 steals and 1.3 blocks per game. Flagg was the key piece of his team's success and brought his team to the Final Four, and they were just one shot away from a National Championship Game appearance. Nonetheless, his team had a very successful season, winning the ACC regular season and tournament title.

The Naismith Defensive Player of the year was Creighton

center Ryan Kalkbrenner. After winning his fourth Big East Defensive Player of the Year, Kalkbrenner in his final collegiate year got the nation's top defensive award. This season, he averaged 2.7 blocks and 8.7 rebounds a game, he was a force altering shots at the rim and opponents would fear to drive into the paint. He is now headed to the 2025 NBA Draft.

At the beginning of the tournament, in the Round of 64, all fans anticipated crazy upsets and bracket busters, but there was not much of that. McNeese State did pull off an upset vs fifth-seeded Clemson in the round of 64, as they were a 12 seed. It was the first tournament win in the school's program history; they would later get beat in the Round of 32 by fourth-seeded Purdue. Arkansas, a 10 seed, made the Sweet 16 after upsetting No. 7 Kansas and No. 2 St. John's. Except for those games, there were no major upsets, but with no upsets, it made for exciting matchups with teams who did well in the regular season.

For the first time since 2008, all No. 1 seeds from each region made it to the Final Four. Houston, Florida, Duke, and

Auburn breezed through the competition in their regions, which set up for an anticipated Final Four. All three games were close and came down to the final minutes. In the first game, Florida beat Auburn 79-73 after a second half surge by the Gators after trailing at halftime. Clayton had a historic performance, scoring 34 points. Following that, Duke versus Houston was a classic, as the Cougars won just by two points on a late comeback after trailing by 11 with five minutes left in the game. The game had everything: controversial calls, big time shots, and both coaches freaking out. Flagg for Duke had the ball with 10 seconds left, trailing by one, but could not make the step-back jumper near the free throw line.

For the national championship game, Houston was up by double digits in the second half, but Florida came back once again, being led by Clayton in both games. He played exceptional defense and made shots when he needed to in the big moments. The end score was 65-63 and this is the team's first championship since going back-to-back in 2006 and 2007.

Central boys soccer team has big goals ahead of them

Aubri Kolterman
staff writer

As soccer season kicks off the boys’ varsity team has many goals this season individually, and as a whole including ways to prepare while they reach for success for the remaining season ahead of them.

A big goal for the players is to make it to state, and Head coach Nicholas Webster said finishing games is extremely important and something they need to work on as a team.

In the past they have gotten very close to finishing games but end up losing by just a pinch. “We want to really finish those games because as a program we can compete with anybody, we can really beat anybody,” Webster said.

The team is currently ranked ____ and a possible state contender early in the season, however “it’s just a number,” Webster said.

Mental success is a big part of sports as well, same being the way the coaches carry themselves. Webster said that the boys are going to be a reflection of him, and that is something he has worked on in the offseason.

Trying to keep the energy up too is huge for him. All of these things can determine how players react or perform on and off the field. “Trying to control my frustration, my emotions, and my actions on the sideline that way everyone can stay calm and controlled,” he said. Something the team has always had for the past few years has been chemistry, described by Webster as a real emphasis on the family environment and a brotherly type of love that epitomizes them.

The players first began bonding at the OHA soccer club, in which the boys competed and traveled with their teammates. Most of the soccer team participated leading up to this season. It helped them develop skills all around, getting them ready to transition the skills into the school soccer games.

Senior Juan Balbuena-Rodriguez said it was good for the guys as they gained chemistry playing at OHA. “The club really helped me a lot as a player, mentally and physically,” he said.

Rodriguez plans to make it to state, be at least top five in the state, and continue doing what he has been doing as a player.

Last year the team finished their regular season 13-5. Junior forward Siidi Adan was their top goal scorer with 12 total goals. Adan plans to improve and make it to state this year. He has hopes to be the top leading goal scorer again. He reflects on last year and wants to be better this year.

“People expect a lot from me, and I’m not really giving them what they want but we still have a long season ahead of us, so I still have time,” Adan said. He was also named “Player of the match” of their most recent game vs Papillion La-vista

The team currently sits at 5-2 with many more games to go. Last year the Omaha central soccer team finished their regular season 13-5.



Top left: Head coach Nick Webster watches as players warm up. Top right: Siidi Adan, second from left, battles for the ball on the field. Bottom: Senior Juan Rodriguez runs toward the action in the Central versus North Platte game.

AUBRI KOLTERMAN | The Register

Nebraska boys volleyball league aims for NSAA sanctioning

Elena Hiley
contributing writer

The Nebraska Boys High School Volleyball League is continuously striving to bring attention to themselves with an end goal of creating more opportunities for boys involved in volleyball.

Boys’ volleyball is not a sanctioned sport in the NSAA, so USA Volleyball’s Great Plains Region created its own league to compensate for the lack of opportunities. The league consists of six teams within Omaha and Lincoln.

This is the inaugural season, with a central goal of visibility. The goal of bringing attention to the league is to eventually get it as a sanctioned sport by the NSAA, where it would most likely become a spring sport.

Junior Steven Dickerson is a part of the league, and he

enjoys being part of the community. He has been playing volleyball since third grade, and four of those years have been club.

“We all have each other’s backs,” Dickerson said.

League Director Lindsey Smith said volleyball allows one to be a part of a community bigger than themselves. “The people I’ve met through volleyball are some of the most important people in my life, and the experiences I’ve had in volleyball are the best experiences of my life,” Smith said.

The future hopes of this league include expansion within the metro areas of Omaha and Lincoln and extending into central Nebraska. “I believe everyone should have the opportunity to experience that, which is why growing the game on the boys’ side is so important to me,” Smith said.

According to Team Snap, girls’ participation in volleyball

to boys’ participation ratio was 8-1in 2019, with 450,000 girls and 63,000 boys. But that increased to more than 77,000 in 2023, according to the National Federation of State High School Association.

“Girl’s volleyball is characterized by longer rallies, more defensive plays and more ball placement shots. Boys’ volleyball is very power and speed-driven, more athletic and often has shorter rallies because the serves and hits are just harder to defend,” Smith said.

“It’s very fast paced,” Dickerson said.

There are even boys’ volleyball opportunities opening up at Central. Coach Ariel Gass and coach Jackson Jordan are running open gyms after school from 3:15 to 5 p.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Storm takes head coach job at Bryan

Boe Di Lorenzo
staff writer

Matthew Storm, a physical education teacher at Omaha Central, will be leaving for the upcoming school year to go be the head coach at Omaha Bryan High School and teach there as well.

He has been teaching and coaching at Central for many years. Central is also coach Storm’s alma mater. He graduated in 2004, so leaving to Bryan will be a change.

“I’m going to miss Central and the tradition here it was a bitter-sweet decision, also a bitter-sweet feeling of moving on. But sometimes change isn’t necessarily bad,” Storm said.

This past season, the Omaha Bryan football team finished with a record of 2-7 and missed the state playoffs. The program’s history has been quite disappointing, and the hiring of Coach Storm could bring an uprising to the program and give them a fresh start.

“I’m most looking forward getting back on the football field. I have always wanted to be a head football coach ever since I was in high school. So I wanted to take the opportunity,” Storm said.

Storm also was an assistant coach for the boys wrestling team, and he will be doing the same at Bryan.

Now, going into the 2025 high school football season Bryan will take on Lincoln High in Lincoln, and try to start off their season with a win and Storm’s first ever win as a head coach.



Storm smiles for a photo on April 14.

MAURO GUTIERREZ | The Register

Predicting the top ten picks in the 2025 NFL draft

Charli Tobin
staff writer

With the NFL season over and the Philadelphia Eagles crowned NFL champions, the 2025 draft is quickly approaching. Here’s how each team may draft in the top 10 this year.

1. Tennessee Titans- The Titans desperately need a quarterback, and the best quarterback in this year’s draft class is Cameron “Cam” Ward from the Miami Hurricanes. Thirty-nine touchdowns to only seven interceptions, he is incredible, also throwing 4,313 yards in only 13 games. He is absolutely the No. 1 pick in the draft this year.
2. Cleveland Browns -This is the first time since 2021 the Browns have had a first-round pick, and they have an amazing opportunity to draft Big Ten Defensive Player of the year and All-American Penn State defensive end Abdul Carter. They recently traded for quarterback Kenny Pickett. This is their chance to build a fierce defense with linebacker Jeremiah Owusu-Koramoah and defensive end Miles Garrett. Carter will be a great fit for the defense.
3. New York Giants- The Giants have struggled in the quarterback position ever since Eli Manning left and they started Daniel “Dimes” Jones. This is their chance to mend that situation and draft an NFL legend’s son. Shedeur Sanders of Colorado, son of Deion Sanders, is the agreed second-best quarterback in the draft, throwing 4,134 yards and 37 touchdowns in his time at Colorado, and with an NFL cornerback for a father, that could give him a leg up against other quarterbacks in the draft.
4. New England Patriots- The Patriots’ choice will likely be one to protect young quarterback Drake Maye. To do this, the Patriots should draft Will Campbell for their offensive line. This beast of a human only allowed five sacks in three years at LSU, and three of them were as a freshman. He is a proven protector for quarterbacks.
5. Jacksonville Jaguars- The Jags needed to address their O-line and D-line; they attempted to address their O-line in free agency, so in the 2025 draft they could draft two-time all-American DT Mason Graham. He stacked up nine sacks, 56 QB pressures and 122 total tackles over his three years with the Michigan Wolverines. This would be a huge addition to help

with the interior D-line.

6. Las Vegas Raiders- The Raiders have needed a QB since Derrek Carr left for the Saints, but at this point in the draft there is likely not a QB, so they will likely aim to grab a young wide receiver for their QB to throw to. Tetairoa McMillan was an Arizona Wildcat receiver and racked up 1,319 yards and eight touchdowns on 84 receptions in his last college season, and had multiple 100+ yard games. The addition of his skills would be a great weapon to throw to.
7. New York Jets- The Jets should draft Heisman-winning cornerback Travis Hunter. This pick would be very effective for the Jets as they’ve needed depth at the corner position. Hunter racked up four interceptions last season with Colorado and 35 total tackles. If teamed up with Sauce Gardner, the duo could rack up double digit interceptions together.
8. Carolina Panthers- The Panthers need someone to help address the issue of pass defense getting assaulted through the air last season. Adding Michigan CB Will Johnson would be an amazing addition to pair with CB Jaycee Horn and help solve this issue. It wouldn’t solve all their problems on defense but it’s a good step in the right direction.
9. The New Orleans Saints- The Saints need help with their pass rush and the best rusher in the draft right now is James Pearce, Jr of the Tennessee Volunteers. He racked up 19 sacks in his three-year career in Tennessee and 70 total tackles along with three forced fumbles. This would really help the pass rush and pair great with 36-year-old veteran linebacker Demario Davis. As a field general who doesn’t rush the quarterback that well, it would be helpful having a young rookie outside linebacker like Pearce.
10. Chicago Bears- The Chicago Bears have a great offensive line after free agency, a young developing quarterback in Caleb Williams, and good wide receivers. What’s missing is a reliable running back, and generational talent is available this year in Ashton Jeanty. The Heisman finalist racked up 2,601 rushing yards this season with Boise State. He was 27 yards away from the NCAA single season rushing yard record set by Barry Sanders in 1988. Along with 29 rushing touchdowns and one receiving touchdown, Jeanty would be an amazing pick for the Bears and take their offense from alright to elite.

The last of a dying breed: Aaron Rodgers released

Grace Sunseri
opinion editor

Super Bowl XLV MVP, four-time National Football League MVP, and future Hall of Fame quarterback Aaron Rodgers was officially released from the New York Jets Feb. 20, signaling a likely end to a monumental career and the end to a specific era of NFL quarterbacks.

From 2000-2005, some of the undoubtably best quarterbacks in NFL history were drafted, setting a high standard for the era.

Some notable mentions are Ben Roethlisberger of the Pittsburgh Steelers, Peyton Manning of the Indianapolis Colts and Denver Broncos, and Tom Brady of the New England Patriots and Tampa Bay Buccaneers.

Rodgers was drafted by the Green Bay Packers as the 24 overall pick in the 2005 NFL Draft. He is the last of the “greats” from that half decade still playing, as Brady retired in 2023. As many new standouts, possibly franchise quarterbacks, are starting to come out of college, a new generation is emerging and Rodgers, 41, stands out as the oldest quarterback still playing as of now in the NFL.

He spent the first two years of his time with the Packers as the backup for Brett Favre, another Hall of Fame quarterback. He then went on to start for the first time in the 2008 season, after Favre retired, jumpstarting his dazzling 18 years with the Packers.

In 2010, just two years after being named starter, Rodgers led his team to a Super Bowl win. In that season, he had 3,922 passing yards, 28 touchdowns and 11 interceptions. He led the NFL in touchdown percentage, yards per attempt, and passer rating.

Since that February day in 2010, Rodgers has never been able to “climb the mountain” again, not returning to a Super Bowl. He remains 7-9 in the postseason, playing 16 straight

postseasons without reaching the Super Bowl, the longest streak by any quarterback in NFL history.

In April 2023, the Packers traded him to the Jets for six players, a 2023 first-round pick, a 2023 second-round pick, a 2023 sixth-round pick and a 2024 second-round pick.

In his first game as a Jet, his fourth play in the white, black and Gotham green, Rodgers tore his right Achilles tendon, ending his season immediately. “I was really thinking, this is it. You don’t come back from this injury,” Rodgers said in a 2024 interview for the I Can Fly Podcast.

Seventy-seven days after Rodgers had surgery on his knee, he returned to practice. He did not return to the field until over a year later ahead for the 2024 season.

The Jets finished the 2024 season with a record of 5-12, missing the playoffs. This season was one of the best, statistically, for the franchise, but their record did not reflect that.

Rodgers started all 17 games, finishing with the third-most passing yards and touchdowns in Jets history.

After the Jets released Rodgers, many believed he would not return, but it is evident that he still wants to play.

A string of many Quarterback trades and open positions has left an opening position at the New York Giants and a possible position with the Minnesota Vikings, although subsequent reports suggest they have moved on to other options.

So, Rodgers could retire and mark the end of an awe-striking career and era of rare quarterbacks, or he could continue playing, and keep working for that mountain top of success, one he has been working on achieving again since 2010.

Demands of sports affect sleep, studies

STUDENT-ATHLETES from page 16

Among student-athletes, a 2022 Aspen Institute study showed that one in three reported feeling burned out or overwhelmed due to the demands of school and sports.

“It can take a toll on your social and mental wellbeing for sure,” Kane said.

The pressures don’t end after the final whistle. Student-athletes often face higher expectations from parents, coaches and peers. The Journal of Adolescent Health found that nearly 60% of high school athletes reported feeling pressure to perform well academically to maintain eligibility or meet scholarship goals.

Sleep schedules also take a hit. The Sleep Foundation recommends eight to 10 hours of sleep for teens, but a 2022 Stanford Medicine study found that high school athletes averaged just 6.5 hours per night, increasing the risk of injury and impairing academic performance. Sleep was the only aspect of being a student-athlete that everyone the Register spoke to brought up.

“Too many late nights I’ve spent studying and doing homework, and it usually means I wake up later and have less motivation,” junior multi-sport athlete McKenzie Martin said.

“We aren’t getting enough sleep, so our bodies aren’t recovering well enough,” Kane said.

“It really takes a toll on your body only getting a few hours of sleep a night,” Wayne said.

Some have proposed changes to student-athlete dynamics to solve the multitude of concerns. One approach gaining traction is limiting practice time to preserve academic and personal balance. The National Federation of State High School Associations recommends that schools cap organized practice at 18 hours per week, though enforcement varies. Encouraging “off days” and scheduling practices to avoid late evenings can help students maintain healthier sleep patterns and reduce burnout.

Wayne wishes student-athletes would have more time to sleep, especially since it is “the most underrated way of recovering.” “In order to perform my best, I have to get some good sleep,” he said.

Kane wants there to be a greater emphasis on recovery for student-athletes, potentially by incorporating more late starts or days off into the schedule for maximum possible recovery time.

Schools can also invest in academic support systems for athletes or limit the amount of homework being assigned. Study halls, tutoring, and flexible deadlines around competition schedules have proven effective. A 2023 EdWeek Research Center survey found that students who received structured academic support during their sports seasons were 22% more likely to maintain a GPA of 3.5 or higher.

Martin hopes student-athletes will get more class time to get homework done, that way they can relax in their free time. Smith agreed, hoping that schools reevaluate how much homework is being assigned.

Mental health resources are equally critical. Expanding access to school counselors and hiring sports psychologists or mental health professionals who understand the athlete’s experience can provide vital support. The American Psychological Association reports that athletes who received regular check-ins from mental health professionals saw a 30% drop in stress-related absences.

Lastly, a culture shift may be necessary. Coaches and families can emphasize effort and well-being over results, and schools can develop ways to more elaborately celebrate student-athletes not only for wins, but also for academic achievement, leadership, and community involvement. The Aspen Institute’s Project Play initiative encourages schools to create environments where multi-sport participation, rest, and mental health are valued as much as competitiveness.



FINN COSTELLO | The O-Book

Students shouldn’t be ashamed of esports

Ethan Hughes
Staff writer

When Central High added an eSports club, many people shunned it and many thought it was a dumb idea. But to business teacher Jonathan Franta, the eSports head coach, it means a way to have kids have fun with their hobbies, even if they don’t line up with physical sports.

According to Franta, there are around 50 members in eSports, making up 12 to 13 teams, including teams for “Mario Kart,” “League of Legends,” “Valorant” and “Rocket League.” When asked to name a standout team or player, Franta said

that all the teams and players count.

“I do this for the players, not for me. I don’t want the focus to be on me. Every student need something to do during and after high school, and if you love games, why not?” Franta said.

Sofia Luethge and Finn Paintin, students who participate in eSports, support the sentiment that every player is equally important. Luethge, who is part of the first Mario Kart team, said, “Every time we play, I’m impressed by how good they are.”

Paintin, who plays “League of Legends,” agreed, saying

that eSports is a great place to meet other people, and according to him, a better place than most.

Luethge said that it’s important to remember that eSports is more than a club – it’s a team, and one that can provide scholarships. All three University of Nebraska campuses and Midland University offer varsity scholarships for eSports players.

Franta said that there’s no point fearing eSports. “Everyone’s a nerd in some way. It’s time to start just embracing what you love, [be it] DECA, football, games, whatever,” he said.

Pittman, Ackerman, eye track championships

Neveah Wilson
contributing writer

The boys track season has begun, and athletes such as sophomore Tory Pittman and senior Ike Ackerman are planning to sharpen their tools this season and win. Last year, Ackerman won shot put and placed second in discus throw, and Pittman placed fifth in long jump.

Ackerman plans to break the Class A state record in shot put, as well as the all-class record in shot put. Class A record is 64 feet and 9.5 inches, and the all-class record is 66 feet and 11.5 inches. Ackerman threw 63 feet and 4 inches at state last year, just a few feet away from the Class A record.

The team is very confident and ready coming into this season.

“I don’t think there’s a lot different we can do, I think it’s just about sharpening the tools you already have, I just plan to go a lot harder this year,” Ackerman said.

Last year, Ackerman was a junior competing in discus and faced doubts about his size. He competed against bigger and heavier-set guys. However, that gave him motivation to strive and accomplish his goals.

“People saying that I’m too small to do it motivated me,” Ackerman said.

Motivation can help with positive outcomes and achieving goals. Pittman was motivated by being a freshman on varsity and wanting to win state. He went to state hoping to achieve a four-peat last year, but did not achieve it, ultimately placing fifth in long jump at 22 feet and 6.25 inches. He’s planning to now achieve winning state for a three-peat and jumping 24 feet in long jump.

Other leaders last year, such as Maurice Sherrod, were great collaborators and competitors. He placed fifteenth in the state, jumping 20 feet and 10 inches. His focus for this year is showing dedication and effort.

“I want to focus on jumping and the 100-meter dash,” Pittman said.

They’re ready to work hard with competing and advancing their skills to be even greater than last year; focused and more ready than ever for the season.

So far this year Ackerman has thrown 64 feet and 8 inches, just an inch and a half away from the Class A record and thrown discus at 160 feet and 7 inches.



Tory Pittman jumps during a meet at Benson High School.
MAURO GUTIERREZ | The Register

Girl’s Soccer in Action - Photos by Mauro Guttierrez



Senior Hudson Palu battles for ball against a Papillion-La Vista player.



Junior Audriana Reese defends the goal against a shot against Papillion-La Vista.



Senior Jasmyrn Hollenbeck, center, runs after ball.



Senior Hattie Moeller senior races towards ball during a game.