

College talks, keep them to yourselves

by Abby Burton

I hate being the one to bring up college. Unfortunately, however, the subject cannot be avoided forever. Don't worry; I'm not going to talk about the upcoming deadlines or the extensive essays. Rather, I want to address a common issue that I have noticed within our senior student body.

Of course, it is understandable that seniors are talking about the applications and process that each college requires, but too commonly I have heard students say negative things about certain colleges.

Everyone has different standards for the type of college they wish to attend, therefore I understand students having different attitudes toward certain colleges. I think these students, though, need to keep these thoughts to themselves because they can be offensive.

Just the other day I was sitting with a large group of seniors and someone nonchalantly said, "Wait, what is the school that accepts basically everyone?" In my head, I thought of the many colleges that students from New Trier are applying to and couldn't think of the college that this person was referring to.

From across the room, another person shouted, "I think it's

University of Iowa. I heard that it is so easy to get into."

At this point, my jaw dropped. Although I am sure that these specific students didn't mean to come off rude or critical of this school, their comments could have easily offended someone.

Sure, I know many students who have gotten into this university, but that doesn't mean it is "easy" to get into. It solely means that the students accepted are academically qualified for the school. Just because a school has a higher acceptance rate than others, doesn't mean that it is easier academically.

From what I have heard, students from New Trier go to schools with a wide range of acceptance rates. By the end of their freshman year, they realize that most of these universities obtain similar academic standards and contain a difficult curriculum. Therefore, in the end, acceptance rates mean very little.

Many students also give some schools the negative title of being a party school. To many parent's disappointment, any school can become a party school if one really tries. Just because a student goes to a school that has this negative connotation, does not mean that they are a partier.

Students choose a university

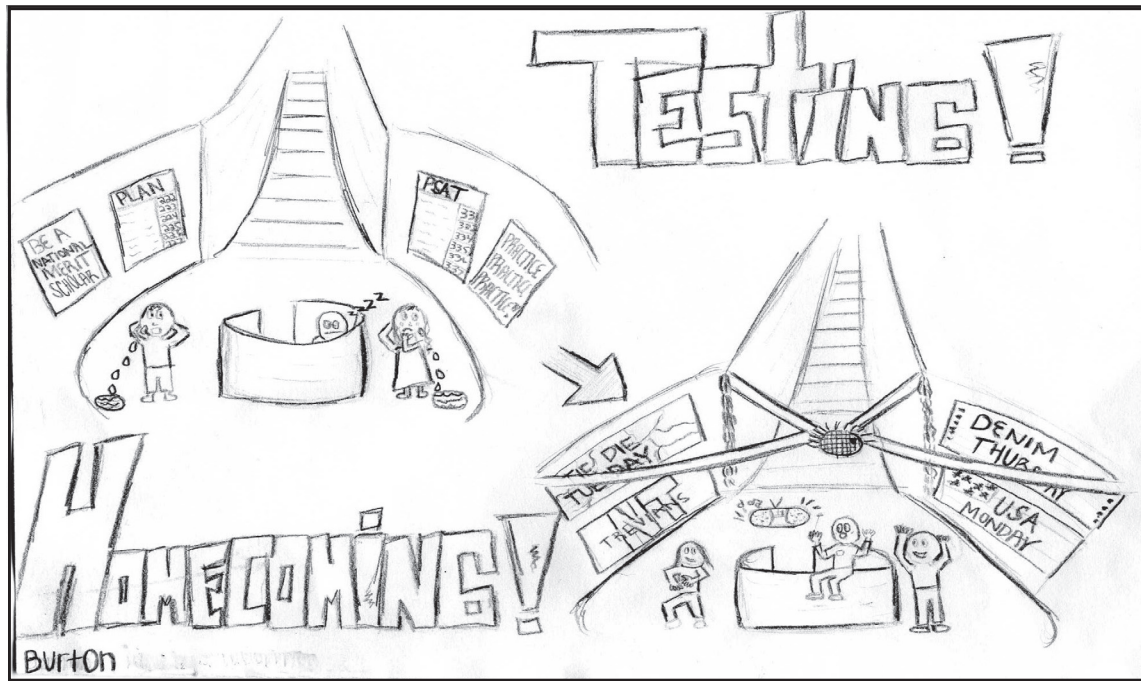
for the education, not because they want to party every single day. A responsible student can get just as much out of a party school as they can at a "regular school."

Another thing that frustrates me is when students use the term "safety school" when talking to other students. I know that most students are applying to some safety schools, some target schools, and even some reach schools, but these labels should be kept to oneself.

For all someone knows, the school that they are referring to as a safety may be considered someone else's reach. If someone said that Syracuse is their safety in front of another student who doesn't meet the academic standards of that school, they could become less confident with their individual college journey.

Even though college does not seem like a sensitive subject because seniors talk about it, it is. The process is difficult and, honestly, I don't think a student's personal experience with it should be publicized to others. Getting into a university is stressful on its own and extra pressure doesn't need to be added by others' standards or negative attitudes.

Just make sure that next time you're talking about colleges with someone else, be careful of what you say and keep an open mind.



We're rational people, let's act like it

by Lydia Wuorinen

Fear of the Ebola outbreak has taken hold of America.

Symptoms of the ravaging illness include fever, muscle pain, vomiting, unexplained hemorrhages, and severe headaches.

The arrival of the states' first patient suffering from Ebola, Thomas Eric Duncan, and his later death has caused widespread panic.

Although the first 48 people who came into contact with Duncan have been cleared, the stigma sparked by the first Ebola outbreak in the U.S. is still apparent.

Some New Trier students have shared fears of contracting the disease through their parents, some of whom work as health professionals in one of the world's biggest cities.

The Chicago Department of Aviation (CDA) reports that a total of 46,700,454 passengers have flown in and out of O'Hare International Airport between January 2014 and August 2014.

The fears of Ebola making its way to Chicago have some grounding when one thinks about how much traffic the city gets, however, they are being exaggerated more than they

need to be.

The reproductive rate of Ebola is calculated to rest nearly at 2.0, meaning that one person infected with Ebola will infect two more. The numbers add up fast, and many base their fears on the possibility of Ebola becoming airborne.

Ebola as a disease is scary—that's something that I believe almost everyone could agree upon. With that said, the fear that we show for Ebola is based on illogical arguments.

The CDC states that 4,546 people around the world have died from the most recent Ebola outbreak, a relatively small number in comparison to 50,000, which is the number of deaths seasonal influenza can cause per year in the U.S. alone.

I find it interesting that while everyone is frightened about catching Ebola, no one fears something as common as seasonal influenza, which is contracted by approximately 5-20% of Americans each year.

The average number of people killed by the flu, over the past ten seasons, comes to 32,743 deaths. It is estimated by the CDC that over 200,000 people are hospitalized with flu related symptoms each year.

The symptoms may not seem as

severe; a cough, having a sore throat, stuffy nose, chills, fatigue, vomiting, and feeling aches. However, the flu has proven more deadly over the course of human history than Ebola has.

Certainly these are shocking statistics, but even more shocking is the percentage of American adults who choose to not be vaccinated—only 46 percent of Americans received vaccinations against the flu during the 2013-2014 flu season, reports the CDC and the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID).

The best protection against illness is prevention. Although there are no vaccines on the market to prevent Ebola, or drugs to battle Ebola-ridden people, there are a few being tested.

So instead of freaking out about Ebola, look at the numbers. When gathering information about Ebola, and any illness for that matter, refer to research conducted by credible sources.

Panic brings only more panic, we need to come to the realization that Ebola is like every other disease, and should be approached in the same respect.

Staff editorial Give freshmen the green light for Homecoming dance

New Trier is not a typical high school. This is well-known. Gym class cannot be called P.E., but rather Kinetic Wellness. Class rank? Forget about it.

The list goes on and on, and although quirky, almost all of these idiosyncrasies are justifiable, if not correct. One quirk, however, is wrong, and that's the dividing line when it comes to the Homecoming dance. Freshmen should be allowed to attend.

New Trier's Northfield campus undoubtedly makes a smoother transition for the 1,000 or so nervous freshman each year. Thought of by some as a "bigger junior high school," it allows an opportunity to get acquainted with the demands of a high school workload while not having to worry about dodging the potentially-intimidating seniors that roam the Winnetka campus.

When the Northfield campus fails to do, however, is unite the freshmen with their upperclassmen. This unification is so important because the upperclassmen will leave a foundation that the freshmen will build upon over three years.

When New Trier West and New Trier East merged in 1981, considerable efforts were made to stifle any possible conflict between the former rival schools. These efforts might have succeeded too well, to the point that school spirit plateaued (although spirit has seen a surge of late, as detailed in last week's editorial).

Allowing freshmen to attend the Homecoming dance would go a long way in patching up the inherent discord left between campuses.

Upperclassmen would establish the inclusive nature we all remember from the Bar/Bat Mitzvah years; just two months into their high school career, freshmen would have the opportunity to get a peek at future classmates. They'd have an opportunity to see the building they'd be spending their next three school

years in. They'd actually feel like they were in high school, and New Trier High School, at that.

The separate freshman mixer alleviates much of the stress experienced by freshmen. There's no questioning that. Its "no-date" structure means that freshmen can feel more comfortable by going with their friends. The laid-back nature of the whole night does wonders in making freshmen truly feel welcomed.

All of these measures are very effective, but the stress surrounding the foreign social pressures of freshmen year still exists. This is evince that some freshmen started securing Turnabout dates two weeks into the school year. The Turnabout dance is on March 7, 2015. That's over five months away. This widespread overanxiety is going to occur no matter the date of the freshman class's first school dance. Freshmen will inevitably ask dates early, so why not use this to the school's advantage?

Having a school-wide Homecoming dance would literally take away the freshman class's ability to ask so early. It would prevent this (extremely) premature Turnabout date-asking by providing an earlier event to which they could secure dates. Freshmen will inevitably feel pressure to ask a date to a dance; why not get this pressure out of the way sooner by allowing them to come to Homecoming?

As freshmen, there was something weird about going to the Homecoming football game but not being able to go to the actual dance the next night. It felt like we were part of a satellite Trevian population, like we'd have to wait one more year to get the true high school experience. It's time for this exclusion to end. In this case, we should emulate Evanston, Loyola, and just about every other high school in the area.

On the eve of Homecoming 2014, we'd like to say that it's okay to conform, New Trier. The freshmen

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