

Staff Editorial

When students will feel safe

As we enter into a new school year, the reality that it's in the wake of a harrowing succession of school shootings is still a pressing matter. At a time of year that's supposed to signify a fresh start, this baggage undeniably still weighs over student's school lives. And after a loaded gun was found in the possession of a Wilmette Junior High School student last week, the possibility of a school shooting seems more proximate than ever.

While new security measures have been implemented, the fact of the matter is that this tarnished sense of security is only partially mended as changes are made and students are made aware of them.

On one hand, we recognize that this undertaking is a work in progress and appreciate the efforts of the administration and faculty who have acted to address safety concerns. It's true that the events of the past few months have brought to light the numerous flaws in the previous security system. But for a school that's notorious for being resistant to change, these security efforts have been timely. And it's also true that there's a lot more to unpack about the security's effectiveness, but we are lucky that our school has the resources and the desire to make things safer.

There's also no denying that as a school, these new scrutiny measures are new territory, meaning that the process of handling this new territory necessitates continued efforts to address and revise.

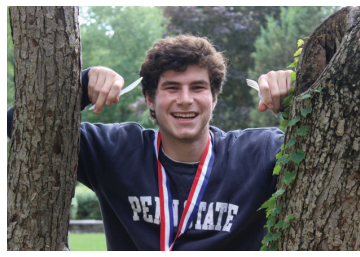
And as a staff, we feel that thoughtful reporting on the revisions is necessary to ensure that the school's population is as informed as possible about the true nature of their safety. Because of this, we feel it is critical for us to voice valid questions and criticisms being raised that could possibly bring light to how we could further improve the system.

In that sense, we wanted to emphasize the point that the new restrictions on entering and exiting the building might not be adequate preventative measures, considering most shooters are students at the school and as a result could enter the building easily. In fact, this was the case in the WJHS incident.

Despite this, ultimately, fear will not make us safer. As students, it is both our responsibility as part of a community and in our own interest to be conscious of these new changes and communicative as to how they address the cracks in our security that could be exploited by a school shooter. Our skepticism and complaints are necessary voices in making the system better as long as these are constructively communicated. To echo the PowerPoint shown in advisories, "if you see something say something." And this applies to observations about how security functions in our daily lives.

On the other side of the coin, we think the administration should make further efforts to engage with student thoughts and feelings about security by holding a forum or focus group. As we waded through the consequences of last year and anticipate the likelihood that it's not yet over, continually listening to and addressing concerns is necessary in ensuring that the security implementation process is first of all, ongoing, and second of all, in proximity of actually making our school safer.

To all the girls I've loved before



by Ezra Wallach

First things first, guys can like "chick flicks." If you don't know why that's the first thing that I am saying, then it's probably because you haven't seen or heard of the new Netflix movie, "To All The Boys I've Loved Before."

For me, this wasn't just another rom-com. Now that I'm actually in high school, at the same point in my life as the movie's main characters, I can relate to them, like a lot. When I saw "Sixteen Candles" for the first time, I was like 12 years old and at that point in my life, the only girl problem I had was who I would choose for the snowball dance at my bar mitzvah (which was actually a really big deal for me).

So here I was, sitting in my room after an evening Rosh Hashanah service, depressed because the Packers beat the Bears on Sunday Night Football, watching a movie that girls told me I wouldn't like because it isn't for guys. Who would've thought a "chick flick" like this would have inspired me to come to deep revelations about myself?

The next morning I watched the

second half of it again and started to think about my own life. I grew up watching high school TV shows like "Friday Night Lights," or even "iCarly," and now that I was in high school, it seemed like my life wasn't as exciting as these characters. This is mostly true.

No high school is actually like the ones portrayed in TV shows or movies, and the fairy tale storylines in these movies seem to never happen in real life—but parts of them do.

Studies have shown that in the age of smartphones and social media, high school relationships are down, and the way people meet each other is more often through the internet than in person. Thus, the picture perfect moments we dreamed about as twelve or thirteen year olds are becoming increasingly rare.

One of the most consequential scenes in the movie consists of the two main characters, Peter and Lara Jean, eating dinner after a party talking about their unbelievably complicated relationship, one that I won't get into because you should watch the movie. Peter asks Lara Jean why she has never had a girlfriend before and she responds, "Okay. Um...So love and dating? I love to read about it, and it's fun to write about and to think about in my head, but when it's real...it's scary. The more people that you let into your life, the more that can just walk right out."

This hit me hard. For the

entirety of high school, I've sat around, dreaming of things that could be, while not pursuing them because in my head just the idea of it all seemed better, if not just safer than the real thing—and this goes for all kinds of relationships, not just romantic ones.

I could just be wasting my time thinking way too deeply about a movie that was intended for girls, but I don't think I am. As I'm now a senior, and high school will be over in a matter of months, I'm realizing that the decisions we choose to make now won't haunt us for the rest of our lives. Rejection, while scary, is a part of life and telling people how you feel isn't actually that weird.

I'm not trying to say that my life sucks, because it doesn't. I don't question whether I live a good life, rather, I question whether I am living my best life. It sounds stupid, but when I think about how much privilege I was born with, I constantly wonder if I'm making the most out of it.

In a year, I will be in college, and the little things I did and said in high school will have little importance, but even so, you only are in high school once. I think it's worth letting more people into your life even if the goodbyes became that much harder later on.

After all, the decisions we choose not to make today are the ones we will probably regret in the future. That, more than anything else, is what scares me the most.

Junior year isn't the worst year



by Danielle Kurensky

Throughout my high school experience, junior year has always been demonized as the worst. There seems to be a consensus that it will be the hardest year. While it is definitely challenging, it is not as bad as people make it out to seem.

I know this comes as a shock to many of you and some seniors have probably stopped reading as they are experiencing flashbacks to the horrors of junior year, but just hear me out.

I'm not saying junior year is easy, I just think it is not as awful as it's portrayed to be.

Let's take Junior Theme for example. This paper is so hyped up that when my teachers passed out a piece of paper for the start of Junior Theme, it was like the air was sucked out of the room. Just a piece of paper that mentioned Junior Theme caused the level of stress in the room to increase.

It didn't increase because of the immediate assignment. All we had to do was brainstorm some topics that we would want to write about, something we were all more than

capable of, yet because of all of the build up about junior year and Junior Theme in particular, I along with many others in the class felt a wave of panic.

Looking back now, I wish I knew that it wouldn't be that bad. Yes it is a lot of work, trust me I spent two periods every single day of third quarter in the library working on it. But just because it is a lot of work doesn't mean you are not capable of it.

Most of the work you have to do for Junior Theme you have actually done before, just not on this scale. As much as I hate to say it, all of those analytical essays might have had a purpose.

Many of you probably want to dismiss me as an anomaly, but I'm not alone on this. On the last day of junior year, in American Studies we were discussing what we enjoyed about the class, what we wish we could have changed and what we would tell a new student taking the class. Multiple people in the class mentioned that Junior Theme was not as bad as they envisioned it to be, especially if you pick a topic you are genuinely interested in and stay on track with your work.

While Junior Theme isn't the only thing people claim makes junior year difficult, it is almost always part of the equation. Another substantial part is the ACT or SAT.

As someone who got very stressed about the ACT, I'm not

going to pretend it is no big deal. Looking back though, I knew multiple things I could be doing to make myself more prepared. The most difficult part was finding the time and the effort to do more academic work when all you want is to lay in bed and watch Netflix.

While they tend to get overshadowed, positives do exist in junior year as well. As you enter the second half of high school, you are no longer the youngest at school, more leadership opportunities become available, and you can take classes that you are actually interested in.

Junior year was my favorite year of high school so far and I think so many others have the opportunity to enjoy it as well, but first we need to stop painting it as the worst year of high school.

Sure, there will be times when you are stressed and sleep deprived, but to almost all of us that's nothing new. So before you write off junior year as the the hardest and most stressful year, try to have an open mind, because if you go into the year with that mentality then it's hard to recover.

I know so much of this is easier said than done, but conserve your energy junior year, because if senior year keeps going at the rate it is has been so far, you're definitely going to need it.



Alessia Liebovich

The New Trier News

Published Fridays during the school year by the students of New Trier Township High School, 385 Winnetka Avenue, Illinois 60093.

Correspondence may be directed to the New Trier News Office, Room 011, or by calling (847) 784-2278.

All letters to the editors are welcome, though we will not print anonymous letters. Direct these and other inquiries to our email at ntnews@nths.net

The Staff Editorial is written by the editors-in-chief, not adult faculty.

Editors-in-Chief.....Eleanor Kaplan, Claudia Levens
Chief Online Editor.....Stephanie Kim
News Editors.....Molly George, Layla Saqibuddin
Opinion Editors.....Danielle Kurensky, Ezra Wallach
Features Editors.....Darcie Kim, Alyssa Pak
Sports Editors.....Jack Soble, Millie Winter
Photo Editor.....Victor Pearlman
Graphic Design Artist.....Alessia Liebovich
Editorial Adviser.....Carlo Trovato
Assistant Editorial Adviser.....Sarah Gompers