

## Bittersweet goodbye

by Abby Burton

It is such a strange feeling knowing that high school is over for me. Not to sound cliché here, but those four years flew by.

I remember being an awkward, shy freshman like it was yesterday. It's true, high school went by fast, but it is crazy to think about how much has happened in these four years.

I went through four different high school sports, made a lot of new friends, joined the newspaper, and even got my first job.

It's weird, though. As I was trying to come up with that list, I struggled to really remember the monumental moments of my high school career. I'm not sure if it's because I am writing this article at 12 AM the night before it's due, or if I am just purely overwhelmed by the amount of amazing experiences I have had here at New Trier. It's been a great four years.

Am I ready to leave? Absolutely. But then again, leaving is bittersweet. I will never again be sitting in these exact same stuffy classrooms or walking down the cramped hallways.

Although these may seem like things that anyone would want to get away from, they are still a part of the memories.

I think the scariest part about leaving is knowing that I won't see most of these people ever again. Who knows, I might run into a Class of 2015 alum in twenty years while walking down the streets of New York City. Highly doubtful though, right?

I love the friends that I have here and the people I've met, but I still did not get to know a majority of the senior class.

Just the other day I was talking to someone who mentioned the name of a fellow senior and, in all honesty, I had never even heard the name before. It's a huge school, but still, how sad is that? I don't like thinking that I may have missed an opportunity to meet some really cool people.

I feel like there are only two mindsets for people leaving for college. One is the "I am so ready to get out of here" while the other is "high school forever."

I might be the one individual who is stuck in the middle. There is so much to look forward to in college, but leaving my friends is going to be difficult. That is what I am struggling with.

It really hasn't hit me yet, but it's strange knowing that I will not see my best friends for months on end when I usually see them every single day.

To all of the freshman, sophomores, juniors, and incoming seniors- enjoy your time here. Take advantage of all opportunities.

So I guess this is goodbye? Writing for this newspaper has really been one of my best experiences at New Trier, so it's going to be hard to leave this behind. Thanks to everyone who actually read my articles. I know there may only be a few of you, but just know that I am very appreciative to you all.

Maybe I'll be writing for the DePauw newspaper next year; you never know. It's been fun, but it's time to pass on this position to next year's opinion editors. Good luck filling these shoes! Kidding (kind of).

It's been real. See you, NT.

## Staff editorial: College is literally a match to be made, not a prize to be won

It's a match to be made, not a prize to be won. As a reminder from concerned parents, a joke from mocking friends, or as advice from a college counselor, we've all heard this mantra about the college process.

The continued repetition of this phrase has transformed it into a New Trier cliché. Students sarcastically mock it because of its seemingly inaccurate portrayal of how New Trier students treat the college process.

For many, selecting a college seems like nothing less than a competition.

Especially junior year and first semester senior year, when students conjure up a list of schools to visit and to apply, everything seems like a competition. Who can apply to the most prestigious schools? Who has the best chance at acceptance?

During this time, many students attempt to hide their list of top choice schools from friends or classmates to avoid increasing the competition.

While all of this secrecy and tense competition is taking place, it's hard to focus on finding the school that may be the best personal match instead of the school most highly ranked by the US News and World Report.

Not only is there an external competitiveness among students, but many are in competition with themselves to get in to the "best school" possible. It feels like more of an accomplishment to get in to

your reach school than it is to get into your safety school, so students are always trying to get in to the most academically challenging institution on their lists.

Students also strive for validation for all the work they did in high school. They want to feel like the difficult class they took or the time they spent studying to get a higher ACT score was worth it.

For many, going to a school lower on the list that may not have required the higher ACT or GPA they earned; it doesn't validate the work they've done.

Annually, US News and World Report releases numerous rankings, which place universities, liberal arts colleges, universities by region, and more. It takes no more than five seconds to enter a school's name in the search bar and discover where it is ranked in all these lists.

For an extra \$29.95, additional lists ranking programs and average accepted GPA and ACT scores are also available. While many people unquestionably believe to these rankings, the qualifications for achieving a high rank are sometimes unknown by students. A university gains a higher ranking for many reasons unrelated to undergraduate education.

In addition to average GPA and ACT, acceptance rate, and course rigor, factors like funding and graduate education also contribute to rankings. These are things that most

prospective students do not need to consider when selecting a school. With this knowledge, it is clear that these rankings should not be the end-all-be-all when comparing colleges. Selecting one college over another simply because of its ranking is not the best method.

As decisions file in and some seniors face rejection from elite universities, they have time to reflect on their true priorities. When deciding between schools, many struggle between choosing the best ranked school to where they are accepted, and a school that may be ranked lower but is more appealing.

To those who face this predicament, our advice is to forget the rankings and go where you really want to go. Attending a school simply because it is "prestigious" will not set you on the best path for success.

Sacrificing four years of your happiness will not outweigh having a personalized college experience.

Once you choose your school, even if it is not the school you originally intended to attend, if it is where you believe you will be happy, there will be unlimited opportunities. Once you're settled in to your school and the competition stops, it is clear that college is a match to be made not a prize to be won. Although we make that into a joke and mock and roll our eyes at our college counselors when they preach this, it is true.

Once you've made that match, you have truly won.

## Dear future freshmen

by Leah Pearlman

Here I am, writing this article at 9 p.m. after the annual journalism banquet. I've sat in Hackneys three years in a row, and yet, I still haven't learned the effects of procrastination.

I could write a book: "Leah's Guide to What Not to Do in High School" because I honestly failed at comprehending this place.

So, incoming freshman, it's a great thing I was given the suggestion to write this article for you guys.

#1: If you want to be the cool kid on campus, befriend Victor Pearlman.

#2: High school is sometimes portrayed in movies, books, or angst-y music as 4 years of torture. This statement is simple and naïve in its creation. I am at the end of my senior year and looking back at high school, as admittedly rough as it was at times, it strengthened me as a person.

In high school you gain more agency over your own life.

What most people fail to recognize are the limitless opportunities stuffed into these four years. Use this time to make experiences that you will take with you to find and learn yourself. They mold you into you. This is the basis of high school.

#3: Don't be an edgy hipster like me and opt out of lunch; it's a dumb idea. Fashion merchandising isn't worth the hunger.

#4: And when it comes to grades, do not stress over them. Start doing your work for you, do the best job you can do. The good grades will follow your intrinsic effort. And isn't that a cute, organic way to motivate yourself?

#5: Your advisory could be *the* worst or your fave part of the day.

Make it the latter.

#6: Never ever let the system knock you down. You didn't get elected into Student Alliance? Who cares. Join the newspaper. New Trier is all competition and you must never let that get you down.

#7: Lastly, be yourself. Ew. Even typing that felt gross, so I'll go wash my hands.

But it's true.

High school personally taught me how to be comfortable in my own skin. It's as if you walk through the doors as a freshman looking for a place to fit in.

Then, through the opportunities, personal growth and discovery, you leave as a strong and comfortable senior ready to take on the world as a unique and awesome individual.

The next four years of your life are filled with opportunities that could sway your life in any direction. Make sure you chose the things that make you happy, and stray away from things that make you sad.

Oh and #8: Stay away from those chicken nuggets in the cafeteria.



Leah Pearlman

## 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.

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