

Vol. 99  
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# The Guidon

February  
2025

Hays High School | 2300 E. 13th St. | Hays, Kan. 67601

## **Eat This, Not That**

**Avoiding ultraprocessed foods  
can positively impact health**

Pages 6-7

Contents

February 2025 | Volume 99 | Issue 4

- IN EVERY ISSUE**
- 2 | Teacher Spotlight
- 8 | Staff Editorial
- 11 | Athlete Spotlight

**NEWS**

- 3 | Students to begin pre-enrollment process for next academic year
- 5 | Changing policies, varying use of E-Hall Pass frustrates students

**FEATURES**

- 6-7 | Experts recommend avoiding ultraprocessed foods in healthy diets

**OPINIONS**

- 9 | Staff member recaps whirlwind of changes with new presidency

**SPORTS**

- 10 | Students participate in intramural basketball for competition and fun
- 11 | Winter sports teams review season progress, preview postseason

**ENTERTAINMENT**

- 12 | With the new year, publications, students make predictions for 2025

**ON THE COVER**



ORGANIZATIONS

# Quill and Scroll Journalism Honor Society plans fundraisers, events for second semester

By Katelyn Willemsen  
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Quill and Scroll Journalism Honor Society is an international organization that recognizes achievements in scholastic journalism, along with offering opportunities in journalism to high school students.

The organization started in 1926 at the University of Iowa, and Hays High School applied for a charter in 1932. While the chapter's activity waned throughout the years, in 2020, journalism adviser Jessica Augustine revived the school organization.

"To be in Quill and Scroll at Hays High, students must meet certain qualifications, complete an application and be selected by a committee to be inducted," Augustine said. "Qualifications include that they are sophomores, juniors or seniors; that they have at least a 3.0 GPA; that they have been in the newspaper or yearbook courses for at least one full year or two semesters; and that they have done outstanding journalism work."

Once inducted, one of the opportunities available to Hays High chapter members is attending the Journalism Education Association/National Scholastic Press Association national high school journalism conventions, which are held twice a year.

Last April, Augustine and nine students attended the spring convention in Kansas City. This year, the spring convention will be in Seattle, Wash., from April 24-26, which XX students have signed up to attend.

"The best part about the conventions is we learn from professionals in the field," Augustine said. "There are journalists from major media organizations, professors from universities across the nation and students from every state. So, we get the chance to get different ideas, opinions and practices that we can bring back to make our publications even better."

To fund the Seattle convention trip, members have been completing different fundraising activities. They hosted Applebee's donation nights on Jan. 7 and on Feb. 3, and they are looking at other fundraisers to do this spring.

Outside of fundraising, members are also planning other events. With Feb. 24-28 being Scholastic Journalism Week, the group will sponsor a children's book drive from Feb. 17-28.

"We will be asking for donations of gently used or brand-new children's books, which we will give to the elementary schools and to Early Childhood Connections," Augustine said. "We want to promote literacy in our own community."

The group also plans on hosting the middle school yearbook class before the eighth grade students pre-enroll, so that eighth graders are aware of journalism classes they can take. And, the organization will host its spring ceremony on Wednesday, April 30, at which it will induct its new members and recognize its seniors.

"Last year, at the national convention, it was really cool to hear the different speakers," senior club president Maycie Holdeman said. "We went to a session about story structure that we brought to staff this year. That way, there is some variety throughout the yearbook."

**"The best part about the conventions is we learn from professionals in the field... to make our publications even better." sponsor Jessica Augustine**

TEACHER SPOTLIGHT

Student Council helps plan events to get students more involved at school, with the most popular being the school dances, such as Indian Call, which is Feb. 8. Teacher Luke Lundmark, along with teacher Alan Neal, sponsors the club and devotes a lot of extra hours to the club. Along with that, he helps students who are officers to get the experience of leadership.



sponsor  
Luke Lundmark

**How long have you been StuCo sponsor, and why did you start?**

"I have been one of the sponsors for four years. I could not do this without my amazing co-advisor, Mr. Neal. We make a good team! I chose to be an advisor for Student Council because I could see the impact that StuCo had on creating a positive school culture, and it seemed like it aligned with my values as a teacher."

**What have been your favorite parts of overseeing StuCo?**

"Can I say 'everything?' I love the fun programs, the service projects, the way we serve the school, the amazing officers and the students who are involved!"

**What is your favorite school activity to host, and why?**

"My favorite activity is Indian Call; it's right in the middle of winter, and it's such a fun event because it can bring joy during a dreary season!"

**What can StuCo could improve?**

"I think we can improve StuCo every year by evaluating what we do, making sure we are following our goals, listening to the students and not being afraid to try new things."

Reporting by Kennedy Fischer

## ACADEMICS

# With pre-enrollment process beginning soon, students must know graduation requirements

By Kennedy Fischer  
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At a meeting on May 15, 2024, the Kansas State Board of Education changed high school graduation requirements, starting with the Class of 2028, this year's freshman class, which will affect students' upcoming enrollment this spring.

In Kansas, the minimum number of credits needed to graduate will still be 21, although USD 489 requires 25 credits, but some credit requirements have changed.

To start, instead of needing four credits in English Language Arts, students will need three and a half credits in ELA. The other half credit will need to be in a Communications course, which, at Hays High School, could include 21st Century Journalism (Journalism and Media Communications), Competitive Speech, Debate or Fundamentals of Oral Communication.

"Communication is important to our society, and while writing is vital for us to carry our messages across a vast amount of audience members, speaking is part of our daily routine," ELA teacher Kathy Wagoner said. "KSBE has recognized this necessary skill, so we need to promote it within our school curriculum."

Another change is the addition of a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) credit to go along with the three science credits and three math credits required.

A third change to the requirements is that the one physical education credit will be split into a half credit of a PE class and a half credit of a health class, which Hays High already does.

Finally, students will need a half credit in financial literacy, then at least four and a half other elective credits that are included in their Individual Plans of Study (IPS), which the

Kansas State Department of Education defines as, "a product and a process that students may use with support from school counselors, teachers and families to help them define their career goals and postsecondary plans and make informed decisions about their courses and activities throughout high school."

A financial literacy class is in the process of being created at Hays High and will be available for students in the Class of 2028 to take during either their junior or senior year.

"I believe that Personal Finance is one of the most important, if not the most important, course that a high school student can take while in school," business teacher Shaina Prough said. "Regardless of a student's career choice, income level, education level or path in life, everyone will be responsible for handling one's own finances at some point in life."

Along with the changes to credits, students will now have to complete at least two post-secondary assets, which can include tasks, such as earning an ACT composite score of 21 or higher, having at least a 95 percent attendance rate or participating in two or more high school activities or athletics. The state has released a list of 22 assets from which graduating students can choose to complete their two or more assets.

With these changes in mind, Hays High's pre-enrollment process will start towards the end of this month or in early

March for all the current freshmen, sophomores and juniors.

"Right now, students should start thinking about what classes they are wanting to take for next school year," counselor Alyssa Chappell said. "Things to consider are what will meet graduation requirements, if they plan to take any concurrent credit classes towards college and what courses will help them prepare for their future careers."

**NEW GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**  
*for Class of 2028 and beyond in Kansas*

- 3.5 credits of English Language Arts
- 0.5 credit of Communications
- 3.0 credits of Social Science
- 3.0 credits of Mathematics
- 3.0 credits of Science
- 1.0 credit of STEM
- 0.5 credit of Financial Literacy
- 0.5 credit of Physical Education
- 0.5 credit of Health
- 1.0 credit of Fine Arts
- 4.5 credits of Electives

■ Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

■ 2+ Post-Secondary Assets from the following:

ACT Composite Score of 21+, SAT Score of 1060+, WorkKeys Silver or Higher,  
9+ College Credits, State Assessment Scores of 3+ in ELA, Math & Science, ASVAB,  
International Baccalaureate Score of 4+, Advanced Placement Score of 3+,  
Board of Regents Curriculum, CTE Scholar, Seal of Biliteracy, 95% Attendance Rate,  
2+ Athletics/Activities, JROTC, Eagle Scout or Gold Scout, Senior Exit Project,  
State Career & Technical Student Organization Officer, Industry Certifications,  
Workplace Learning, Client-Centered Projects,  
Youth Apprenticeships, 30+ Community Service Hours

Information from Kansas State Department of Education

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## EDUCATION

## Pass system causes frustration for staff members, students

By Alijah Arias  
27aarias@usd489.com

Last year, Hays High School implemented the use of Securly Pass, commonly known as E-Hall Pass. While most people have grown accustomed to using it, students have been questioning the policy changes and the inconsistent use of the system by staff and students.

For the most part, the policies regarding passing have stayed the same, although when students are allowed to pass to places has changed this year.

Towards the end of first semester, the administration decided to limit passing, so that students are not allowed to pass within the first 10 minutes and the last 10 minutes of each class. Along with this, the administration has limited the number of students who are allowed to pass at a time on different days during different blocks.

"If we're getting ready to have passing period, we don't need extra people in the hallway," principal Shawn Henderson said. "We're just making sure that we have less movement before we have those passing periods. It's really just to keep people in their classes, finish up their hours strong and then go to the next passing period."

However, both of these changes have led to some staff members sending students to their desired locations without passes, as students cannot make passes at the start or at the end of their classes, or the system will not allow them to pass if the number of other students in the system has reached its limit. This often happens in classes where teachers have allotted the first five to 10 minutes as bell work or as time for students to use the restrooms, drinking fountains or vending machines.

"Occasionally, teachers will send students to places without passes, and while in necessary situations, I think it is all right, I think the lack of consistency may confuse or frustrate students," sophomore Riley Flax said. "If one teacher allows them to go to the bathroom without a pass, but the next teacher does not, there could be problems."

Auto passing also allows staff members to have the option to set which places students can auto pass, allowing students to start and to stop their own passes, such as to the restrooms. With this, most teachers who use auto passing have set up rules for students to check with them before leaving, but not every student always follows that. In some cases, students will leave without

a pass, which then becomes a safety issue, in that the students are not accounted for in the event of an incident.

In the 2024-2025 Student Handbook, it says that students may visit the office, restrooms, drinking fountains and vending machines in the five minutes allowed for passing from location to location. For some staff members, if students take longer than five minutes, then they may send a Raptor alert to find the student. This is not an official policy, but many faculty members follow it.

"This year, I have only sent a Raptor once because a student was gone an abnormal amount for the restroom," math teacher Chelsea Haskett said. "I usually will send one if they are gone for more than seven minutes."

While E-Hall Pass has increased the accountability of students out in the building, with the school having digital logs of where students are, the system is being used inconsistently at times.

"We want to make sure that everyone is following it with fidelity," Henderson said. "A system is only as strong as everyone making sure that they're doing their part. So, we're always encouraging everybody to do it the right way for sure."

## Seniors pursuing post-secondary education need to complete FAFSA

By Cason Grezeszak  
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For seniors going to college or technical school next year, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA, priority deadline is approaching this spring, so seniors should be completing their forms for the 2025-2026 academic year now.

In Kansas, the priority consideration deadline is on April 1 at midnight Central time, while the regular deadline is on June 30, although some colleges or schools have separate deadlines for the FAFSA form, so students need to check the schools' deadlines also.

With the federal government and the U.S. Department of Education trying to simplify the FAFSA, they opened the form for completion on Nov. 18, which was later than the usual Oct. 1 opening.

"With FAFSA seeing a decline in applicants last year, new deadlines were put in place to make the application process easier than ever," counselor Amy Miller said.

With the FAFSA open to users, many seniors have created their accounts on the FAFSA website ([studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa](http://studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid/fafsa)), have completed their applications and have even received their award letters.

By completing the FAFSA, students and their parents can determine whether they are eligible for grants or scholarships that do not have to be paid back, loans that must be repaid or work-study jobs on college campuses. While all seniors can complete the FAFSA, regardless of income, some federal aid depends on their parents' income.

To apply, students must create a FAFSA account on the website. Students will need to have their Social Security number, and parents will need to supply information from their W-2 tax forms, along with other information regarding income, child support or other assets to help determine possible financial assistance for their child.

"Completing the FAFSA was much easier than I thought it would be," senior Peter Hyatt said. "I got my results back in a few days, and the extra money is going to help in my college journey, so I won't have to worry so much about my financial needs."

In the United States, the average cost for a four-year college degree is \$153,080, according to the National Center for Education Statistics. Without the help of financial aid, some students may not be able to earn their degree, or they would have to take out private loans to fund their education.

While completing the FAFSA can be time consuming, according to the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, approximately \$3.6 billion of federal aid is left unclaimed due to students not completing the FAFSA.

In order to help students, Fort Hays State University will be hosting FAFSA workshop sessions for seniors and their parents on Feb. 11 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at FHSU's Cunningham Hall and on Feb. 17 from 2 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at FHSU's Memorial Union Cody Commons.

"All students planning on continuing their education should apply," Miller said. "Every student is eligible for applying and receiving possible funding."

**"Completing the FAFSA was much easier than I thought it would be."**  
senior  
Peter Hyatt

# Nutrition Facts

In the United States, many foods and beverages are **ultraprocessed** with additives and preservatives, meaning consumers who are health conscious should choose less processed options

**UNPROCESSED FOODS:** foods that are how they appear in nature or are minimally processed to clean the foods or discard unwanted parts (such as corn on the cob)

**PROCESSED CULINARY INGREDIENTS:** foods that are obtained from unprocessed foods to create culinary dishes (such as butter)

**PROCESSED FOODS:** foods that have had at least one level of processing that has changed their original form (such as canned corn)

**ULTRAPROCESSED FOODS:** foods that have had multiple levels of processing that involves adding extra colors, flavors or preservatives (such as corn chips)

By Delia Dixon  
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Nearly all food items we consume have been processed in some way. Processed foods pose little threat to our overall health. But, an issue arises with *ultraprocessed* foods.

“Not all processed foods are bad,” Certified Personal Trainer and Certified Wellness Coach Amy Summers said. “Processed food is food that’s changed in any way from its natural state. That includes washing, canning, freezing, baking, cooking or preparing. However, pizza, cookies and sugary drinks are ultraprocessed and loaded with added ingredients that aren’t good for you.”

Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines ultraprocessed foods, or UPFs, as “containing or made primarily with highly processed ingredients including artificial additives (such as coloring, flavoring and preservatives) and typically having high levels of fat, sugar or salt.”

However, not all UPFs are “bad.” For example, most Greek yogurts are considered ultraprocessed, despite their benefits. To discern beneficial UPFs from harmful ones, one must consider the level of processing and the ingredients.

Common ingredients in UPFs that can negatively impact health include trans fats (often listed as hydrogenated fat or partially hydrogenated vegetable oil), refined carbohydrates, high fructose corn syrup and high levels of salt and sugar.

“Sugar is commonly added during processing,” Summers said. “Almost 90 percent of added sugar in American diets comes from highly processed food.”

While it is wise to avoid most UPFs, this proves to be extremely challenging. According to a 2021 article in *Nutrients* journal, 73 percent of foods in American stores are ultraprocessed, and the United States has the highest consumption of UPFs in the world. Furthermore, in 2019, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations stated that more than 50 percent of Americans’ daily calories are from ultraprocessed drinks and food.

In stores and restaurants, Americans are regularly exposed to promotions of UPFs through incessant advertising and appealing packaging. Food prices also play a role in whether people buy unhealthy options over healthy options.

“I believe people want to make better choices,” Summers said. “But, many times, the better choice is double to triple the price. That hurts people. Not only is it impacting their bank account, but it is also impacting their health.”

In addition to often being high in additives but low in nutrients, consuming UPFs releases dopamine in the brain. As a result, the more UPFs people eat, the more they want, making it easy to overeat on “empty calories” while also consuming unwanted substances. In the long run, UPFs can increase health problems, such as obesity, Type II diabetes, cardiovascular disease and cancers.

“It’s important to understand that, when you are consuming UPFs, you are consuming food that has been stripped of essential nutrients, like fiber, vitamins and minerals the body needs to survive and thrive,” Summers said.

Consuming UPFs have also been linked to mental health issues.

According to a 2023 issue of *Nutritional Neuroscience*, for every 10 percent increase in ultraprocessed calories, the risk for depression increases by 11 percent. Additionally, poor gut health can lead to poor mental health. In a 2023 issue of the *Journal of Clinical Medicine*, it states that the gastrointestinal tract and the microorganisms within it produce 95 percent of the serotonin in the body, which helps regulate mood. High levels of UPFs can impair the gut’s critical functions. According to the National Institute of Health, higher UPF consumption correlates with increased boredom, fear, insomnia, loneliness, sadness and worry.

Moreover, there is controversy surrounding ingredients found in UPFs. Some of these ingredients are banned in other countries, but the U.S. Food and Drug Administration permits their use in American foods. These include azodicarbonamide (ADA), potassium bromate, propylparaben and titanium dioxide, among others, as many of these have been linked to cancer in rodents.

Dyes on nutrition labels also can be a sign of ultraprocessing. Red 40, Yellow 5 and Yellow 6 are legal in the United States but banned in Europe. Until recently, Red 3, which was linked to cancer in rodents and behavioral disorders in people, was allowed in foods within the United States.

While it is unrealistic to eliminate all UPFs, awareness about ingredients and processing for the foods and drinks we put into our bodies is the first step toward better eating habits.

“When it comes down to it, healthy living is about strategy, education and balance,” Summers said.

 <p><b>GATORADE (COOL BLUE)</b> Gatorade can replenish electrolytes during intense exercise. But, a 20-ounce bottle has 34 grams of sugar, so if not consumed in moderation, Gatorade can contribute to weight gain and health conditions like diabetes. Gatorade also contains ester gum, an emulsifier; emulsifiers have been connected to gut damage and inflammation.</p>	 <p><b>CLIF BAR (OATMEAL RAISIN WALNUT)</b> This protein bar is not designed to be consumed as a regular, leisurely snack. Its purpose is to fuel prolonged, intense exercise. With 240 calories, 21 grams of sugar and nine grams of protein per bar, it can provide energy when proper food sources are not readily available. If consumed excessively, the concerns outweigh the benefits.</p>	 <p><b>CHOBANI GREEK YOGURT (STRAWBERRY ZERO SUGAR)</b> This yogurt is considered ultra processed, as it uses allulose, guar gum and stevia leaf extract to sweeten it, but it does not contain ingredients that would be wise to avoid. While there are healthier yogurt alternatives, this is still an acceptable yogurt that can provide protein without excessive sugar.</p>	 <p><b>SMUCKER'S UNCRUSTABLE (PEANUT BUTTER &amp; STRAWBERRY JAM)</b> One Smucker's Uncrustable PB&amp;J sandwich contains 39 ingredients! Among these are hydrogenated soybean and vegetable oils, which are trans fats, and high fructose corn syrup. While it has six grams of protein, it has eight grams of added sugars and 220 mg of sodium.</p>
 <p><b>SPINDRIFT SPARKLING WATER (RASPBERRY LIME)</b> This naturally flavored sparkling water has virtually no health risks. It has just three ingredients, which are carbonated water, raspberry puree and lime juice. There are also no added sugars.</p>	 <p><b>LARABAR (PEANUT BUTTER CHOCOLATE CHIP)</b> While similar to the Clif Bar in its calories, protein and sugar, this bar involves much less processing. It contains four ingredients: dates, peanuts, semi-sweet chocolate chips and sea salt. If consumed in moderation, this bar can be considered healthy.</p>	 <p><b>SIGGI'S SKYR (RIPE CHERRY)</b> This yogurt is less processed than the Chobani, but it does contain actual sugar. Each serving contains six grams of sugar, but the ingredient count sums up to five. While this option contains more sugar, it went through less processing than the Zero Sugar Chobani offering.</p>	 <p><b>HOMEMADE PB&amp;J SANDWICH</b> Depending on if you use packaged bread versus fresh baked, ultraprocessed peanut butter versus natural peanut butter and ultraprocessed jams or jellies versus less processed fruit preserves, a PB&amp;J can be lower in additives and sugars. Whole wheat sourdough, Smucker's natural peanut butter and Bonne Maman preserves are suggested.</p>
 <p><b>PLAIN WATER WITH FRESH FRUIT</b> By adding any sliced fresh fruit, such as berries, citrus or melons, to a glass of regular water, consumers can make their own naturally flavored water beverage without any processing or additives, such as dyes or sugars.</p>	 <p><b>HOMEMADE GRANOLA</b> To avoid the high sugar levels of most granola bars, homemade granola may provide a solution. By selecting minimally processed ingredients that supply you with nutrition, such as oats, nuts and honey, you can design a healthy snack that keeps you energized and satiated.</p>	 <p><b>FAGE GREEK YOGURT (PLAIN)</b> This yogurt is very minimally processed, containing only two ingredients: pasteurized skimmed milk and live active yogurt cultures. It has the most calcium and the most protein out of the three yogurt options, and it contains no added sugars and no fat. For flavor and sweetness, just add fresh berries.</p>	 <p><b>MIXED BERRIES &amp; NUTS</b> Fresh berries are whole foods, requiring little to no processing. They contain no added sugars, they are good fiber sources and they provide essential vitamins and minerals. Unsalted assorted nuts are also classified as whole foods. They are a good source of healthy fats, fiber, protein, minerals and vitamins.</p>

## Praises

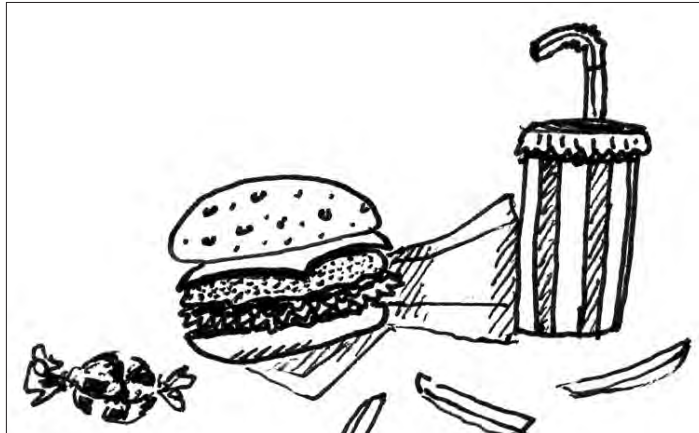
- T.G.I.F.
- Girls basketball team record
- Flexed out parking lot
- Kool-Aid Jammers
- Sourdough bread
- Mr. David Buller
- Digital cameras
- Coloring books
- Fruit Roll-Ups
- Harry Potter

## Protests

- Elon Musk's children's names
- Scholarship applications
- Standardized tests
- Icy windshields
- Gulf of America
- Fake glasses
- Bob haircuts
- Red 40
- Hot dogs
- Elon Musk

## Staff Playlist

- Alijah Arias**  
"Obsessed"  
by Olivia Rodrigo
- Reagan Bates**  
"She's a Mystery to Me"  
by Roy Orbison
- Eleanor Bittel**  
"Colors of the Wind"  
by Judy Kuhn
- Hank Corsair**  
"I Had Some Help"  
by Post Malone, Morgan Wallen
- Delia Dixon**  
"Scott Street"  
by Phoebe Bridgers
- Kennedi Fischer**  
"Funny"  
by Searows
- Cason Grezeszak**  
"Death & Taxes"  
by Daniel Caesar
- Kale Schwein**  
"Those Eyes"  
by New West
- Brayden Staley-Herman**  
"Larger Than Life"  
by Backstreet Boys
- Clare Tholstrup**  
"I'd Do Anything for Love (But I Won't Do That)"  
by Meat Loaf
- Katelyn Willemsen**  
"Glue Myself Shut"  
by Noah Kahan
- Tavia Wynn-Coffman**  
"Breakfast At Tiffany's"  
by Deep Blue Something
- Jessica Augustine**  
"Believe"  
by Brooks & Dunn with Jelly Roll



Cartoon by Eleanor Bittel

# People need to be cautious about products they consume

Americans have faced the issue of unwanted ingredients in foods for decades. However, some potentially harmful substances have become even more prevalent, despite calls for removal. Because of that, consumers must be aware of these ingredients and of the ways they can protect themselves against them.

One such controversial substance is dye, such as Red 40, a synthetic dye found in many common products. Various candies, chips, sports drinks and even children's medications, such as Benadryl, Motrin or Nyquil liquid medications or Flintstones vitamin gummies, contain the dye.

According to sources, Red 40 dye, also called Allura Red AC or E129, can make people hyperactive or irritable, with some sources claiming Red 40 causes Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder. The recommended limit of Red 40 is no more than 3.75 milligrams daily; however, if a person ate just one bag of Skittles, that person would consume 33.3 milligrams of the dye.

Because of the potential risks of Red 40, some nations have banned this additive. While the United States has not done so, the Food and Drug Administration recommends avoiding Red 40 and choosing foods with natural colorings, like from fruits and vegetables, and medications that are free of dyes.

Another issue in our food supply is the presence of organisms that can cause health issues. For example, in July of 2024, Boar's Head Provisions Co. Inc. experienced a recall of deli meat products that had a potential *Listeria monocytogene* bacterial contamination. In 13 different states, 34 people became sick, with 33 out of the 34 being hospitalized and two dying.

Also, in November of 2024, Grimmway Farms issued a voluntary recall of their bagged carrots, due to *E. coli*, affecting products distributed in 19 states and causing at least 48 illnesses, 20 hospitalizations and one death.

With these safety issues, it is important for our government to take more action. President Donald Trump has nominated Robert F. Kennedy Jr. to lead the Department of Health and Human Services, and Kennedy has proposed ideas for eliminating ultraprocessed foods and getting rid of food dyes that may be linked to mental and physical health problems.

In the meantime, to keep safe from harmful ingredients, consumers need to take action on their own – being aware of potentially harmful additives, reading labels on drinks and foods before purchasing and, like always, cleaning, cooking and storing food properly.

## Opinion of the Guidon Staff

Agree: 13  
Disagree: 0

## The Guidon Staff

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## Information/Policies

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The *Guidon* is a student-produced newsmagazine published to inform and entertain the Hays High community, to record the history of the school and to serve as an educational tool for journalism students. Under the supervision of a faculty adviser, journalism students have the opportunities to inform, investigate, entertain, interpret and evaluate in an open forum – all accepted functions of the traditional free press – and have the responsibilities to provide accurate, fair, objective and truthful coverage. Should unintentional errors in content be made, they will be retracted in the next issue of the school year.

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The staff welcomes letters to the editor, as long as they are not libelous, an invasion of privacy, obscene or copyright protected. Letters must be signed and must include the writer's name, address and phone number.

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Other policies are available upon request by contacting adviser Jessica Augustine at [jaugustine@usd489.com](mailto:jaugustine@usd489.com).

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# RANDOM THOUGHTS WITH REAGAN

## Columnist returns with more views, including opinion on 2000s rom com

**Jan. 10 8:03 p.m.** I just had the best little IHOP dinner date with senior Katelyn Willemsen, and I absolutely devoured my food. I love Eggs Benedict.

**Jan. 16 7:36 p.m.** I just received the coloring book and the very large pack of markers that I ordered, and I am so ready to be on my coloring grind.

**Jan. 17 10:04 a.m.** It upsets me when someone sits in my seat that I have always sat in. When I have to sit elsewhere, I feel like I am disturbing the peace.

**Jan. 21 8:05 p.m.** I made Katelyn watch the movie “500 Days of Summer,” a romantic comedy film from 2009. Can you believe she has never seen it? I also made her tell me who she thought the villain was, which is a very big deal among fans of the movie, as people have many different theories. After watching the movie yet again for probably around the 100th time, I think I finally have come to my conclusion on the villain, and I want to share it with you.



By Reagan Bates  
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For context, the story is told in a nonlinear fashion and depicts the relationship of Tom (Joseph Gordon-Levitt), who works for a greeting card company, and Summer (Zoey Deschanel), who starts working at the same company as an assistant. Tom falls for Summer, but she does not show interest at first. After Tom drops hints to Summer about his growing interest in her, they share a kiss, thus beginning their “relationship.” However, Summer tells Tom that she does not want anything serious, and Tom says he understands.

Throughout the movie, Summer shares how she does not believe in “true love,” but Tom does, and this leads to tension between the two. Summer eventually breaks up with Tom, and he spirals, quitting his job at the greeting card company and pursuing his dream of being an architect.

Later, the two meet again at the wedding of a co-worker, and they dance together. In Tom’s eyes, their situation

is starting to look promising again, especially when Summer invites him to a party she is hosting. Tom attends the party, with his hopes high as ever, but his dreams are absolutely crushed when he learns Summer is engaged. He leaves the party in anger and sadness, and the story plays out. One of the last scenes is of the two running into each other at a park that Tom took Summer to while they were dating. We get some closure, as Summer admits that Tom was right about love, but that he was just not right about her (crushing, I know).

I have seen a lot of differing ideas about the villain of the story. The conclusion I have come to, is that it is mostly Summer (evil woman), but also Tom was never fully in the right. Summer had expressed from the start that she did not want anything serious, but Tom repeatedly got his hopes up. However, Summer frequently sent Tom mixed signals, causing him pain and turmoil (poor guy).

**Jan. 25 10:48 p.m.** I just watched the “Challengers” movie, and it was quite possibly the weirdest thing I have seen. I do not know how to feel right now...

## People must pay attention to recent political decisions by Trump

While there have always been conflicting views about U.S. presidents, since the Jan. 20 inauguration of President Donald Trump, almost every day has contained discussion about his policies – a few of which I will address here.

### 1) Pardoning J6 Rioters

On Jan. 6, 2021, the U.S. Capitol was stormed by Trump supporters, as they tried to prevent Congress from certifying the 2020 election. Some supporters were arrested for various criminal actions, ranging from assault, manslaughter, theft, vandalism, etc. However, Trump pardoned them following his inauguration. This was an extremely bad decision, considering some of the people have extensive criminal backgrounds.

### 2) Nominating RFK

Trump nominated Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. (RFK) as the Secretary of Health and Human Services. RFK has expressed anti-vaccine views for years, but now in Cabinet confirmation hearings, he is dismissing his past claims. In my opinion, RFK should not be in charge of HHS, due to his history of misinformation.

### 3) Dismantling DEI Programs

DEI programs have helped minimalized groups that have been subject to discrimination, ranging from racial minorities, religious minorities, women, veterans and more. Trump vowed to end DEI programs, and with an executive order, he did that, too. This is another bad executive decision. This means that people who are apt to face discrimination will not be given the same opportunities as the majority anymore.

### 4) Removing Immigrants

Trump has ordered federal agents to remove illegal immigrants from the country, and he has deployed troops to ensure they are rounded up and moved out of the country. At the U.S./ Mexican border, he has stationed troops, making sure nobody can enter the United States. While immigration reform is needed, deporting every single immigrant is a bad idea. Many news sources have said that removing illegal immigrants,

who do pay taxes and help the economy, could have significant negative effects on agricultural economies and food prices. Instead of eliminating all the immigrants, perhaps the government could start by

removing illegal immigrants with criminal backgrounds and by quickening the process of becoming a citizen for those who want to become American citizens.

There are many other issues that are arising daily in Trump’s second term. Whether people agree with or disagree with these actions, it is very important that people, including students, get educated and be active in politics.

As Social Science teacher Abby Gillan said, “My message to all students and future voters is to stay engaged and never stop participating in our government. That is the only way to ensure the things you love and value are reflected. The system fails us when we fail to challenge and engage in it.”



By Brayden Staley  
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INTRAMURALS

# Intramural basketball provides opportunity for competition outside of school athletics

By Kale Schwien  
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Starting up once again with the second semester is the intramural basketball season.

Intramural basketball, which is played through the Hays Recreation Commission, allows students who either could not or did not want to play for the school teams, to play basketball competitively.

“Intramurals helps those who don’t play school sports to get involved,” senior Jalen Smith said. “And, it takes the stress out of the game.”

Prior to the season starting in January, students

formed their teams, registered with Hays Rec and paid a fee, which helps to cover league expenses, such as buying T-shirts for the team members and getting referees for games.

In the boys’ division, there are seven teams that are competing, including And 1, B Team Elite, Backshooters, Big Baller Brand, BOU, Buzz Beaters Academy and Grimace Prep. For the girls’ division, three teams are participating,

including Big Ballers, Holy Shooters and Tall Bicklers.

Last year, And 1 captured the championship against WAP Prep, whose players have graduated. Returning to And 1 are seniors Brock Homeier, Trace Jacobs, Wyatt Kirkpatrick, Cooper Lindenmeyer, Dalton Meyers, Braeden Moeckel, Mason Rodriguez, Slade Salmans, Logan Schoenberger and Smith, plus sophomore Gus Corsair.

“We have made a few changes, losing a great player in Cooper L. Johnson but gaining a sniper in Truman Johnson,” Rodriguez said. “We also lost our star power

forward Carter Graham due to injury before this season, but we love having him as an honorary coach.”

The season was scheduled to start on Jan. 6 but was rescheduled for Jan. 13, due to a snow day. Teams compete every Monday at 6:15 p.m. on school nights at the 13th Street gym, and on days without school, they play at 11 a.m. at Hays Rec. The season lasts until Feb. 17.

So far, the top boys’ teams are And 1 and Buzz Beaters, who have both a 3-0 record, and the top girls’ team is Big Ballers, who has a 2-0 record.

“I’m feeling great about the season so far, starting out hot at 3-0,” Rodriguez said. “The teams this year are a lot better than last year’s squads, which is going to make it a bit more tough to go back-to-back, especially in a great league like the PIL [Professional Intramural League], anything can happen, especially when the tournament comes.”

Even though they are intramural games, there are still similarities between intramural sports and school sports, such as the basic game rules, the sense of competitiveness and the need for teamwork. However, there are some differences, such as the length of games. While high school games are made up of four quarters of eight minutes each for a total of 32 minutes, intramural games usually are four quarters of four minutes each for a total of 16 minutes. Intramural games also tend to be more relaxed, but still are competitive.

“Intramurals are more fun and more relaxed compared to school sports,” senior Cooper L. Johnson said.

**“Intramurals helps those who don't play school sports to get involved, and it takes the stress out of the game.”**  
senior Jalen Smith

## ATHLETE SPOTLIGHT

Boys Wrestling



senior Dalton Meyers

Senior Dalton Meyers has been a key figure on the wrestling team over the last four years. After reaching 100 career wins and being ranked as one of the top wrestlers at 175 lbs. in 5A, he has shown that this season could be another impactful one.

**What did it feel like to reach 100 career wrestling wins?**

“When I got my 100th win, it felt quite amazing because not everyone gets that feeling in wrestling, knowing they have won 100 matches on varsity.”

**What has helped you the most with your success in wrestling?**

“Something that has helped me the most in wrestling has got to be my experience.”

**What has been your biggest achievement in your wrestling career, and what else do you hope to achieve?**

“My biggest achievement in wrestling has got to be my 100th win. Something I also hope to achieve is to make it into that state finals match.”

Reporting by Hank Corsair



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## ATHLETICS

## SEASON SUMMARIES

## Winter teams continue competition with postseason in sight

**BOYS BASKETBALL**  
with coach Sean Dreiling

**How do you feel like the season has gone so far?**  
“The season has been challenging. We have played multiple ranked opponents, including three Top 10 6A schools. Those experiences have made us better as we continue to strive to reach our full potential.”

**How do you think playing that level of competition has helped your team?**

“The only way you really get better is to play teams that are tough, and in some cases, better than you. As long as we keep believing in who we are and what we are capable of together, we will be better off for it.”

**What are you hoping to see from the team in the home stretch of the regular season and into the postseason?**

“I’m hoping to see us play our best basketball this month. We have put in a lot of time and hard work, dating back to June of 2024. This is why we do it – so we can play our best basketball in February and March.”

**GIRLS BASKETBALL**  
with coach Len Melvin

**Other than the girls’ current undefeated record, what has pleased you most with your team this year?**

“I love that our girls play hard for each other and care about each other’s successes. It is a very unselfish bunch that wants to win together.”

**How much does it mean to win both the Hays City Shootout and the Colby Orange & Black Tournament?**

“One of our goals was to play for and win championships. We are hoping we get to two more and win two more in the sub-state championship, and God willing, the state championship.”

**What is going to be the biggest key to securing a conference championship and getting to the state championship?**

“We have to stay focused. We will be playing teams for a second time, and after winning the first time around, it’s easy to become complacent. We need to stay focused and continue to work hard at improving.”

**BOYS SWIMMING**  
with coach Tyler Stein

**How has the team looked throughout the regular season?**

“My team has looked amazing throughout the season. We are nearly half the size, if not smaller than, all the other teams we’ve competed against, but despite this, we have qualified multiple events for state and won meets.”

**Can you tell us what the competition you have faced has been like, and how it made your team better?**

“We’ve faced a lot of very difficult competition, including many 6A teams and 5A state champs from previous years. I feel that this has really pushed the guys to work harder and has made the team much better.”

**What do you think has been the highlight of the season so far?**

“The highlight of the season so far was our most recent meet at Topeka. We have been chasing a state time in the 400 relay all season, and the guys rallied together and had a huge time improvement to get the time needed.”

**WRESTLING**  
with coach Heath Meder

**What are your thoughts on the performance of your teams this season?**

“The girls are representing well. Since they split up 5A and 6A at the state tournament, that’ll help us in the postseason. As far as the guys go, some wrestlers didn’t get on the mat right away with the football season going late. But, the guys are hitting on all cylinders and peaking at the right time.”

**What pleased you the most with your teams at both the Prairie Classic and the Bob Kuhn Invitational?**

“We didn’t have the greatest round at the Bob Kuhn Invitational, and then our guys came back and finished stronger. As far as the girls go, the team wrestled strong and finished well again after combating injuries.”

**With many seniors, what can they bring to the table at state?**

“Hopefully, those seniors set an example and keep the wrestlers calm, so they can follow that lead of treating it like another tournament.”

**BOWLING**  
with junior Tyler Huynh

**How do you think the bowling season has gone this year, as both the boys’ and the girls’ teams are now halfway done?**

“I think the season is going the same as our previous seasons.”

**What has the experience of being on the bowling team been like this season?**

“The experience of being on the bowling team is amazing. Everyone on the team is connected, and it is like a happy friend group.”


**As regional bowling approaches on Feb. 24 and possibly state on March 6, what are some of the goals for you and your teammates for the remainder of the season?**

“Some of the goals for my teammates and I for the rest of the season are to start averaging 200 pins per game.”

Reporting by Hank Corsair




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PREDICTIONS

# Dive Into 2025

## Professional media outlets, Guidon staff members provide predictions about what is upcoming this year

By Clare Tholstrup  
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Making predictions for a new year is not just a recent interest. In the past years, many ancient civilizations turned to figures in their societies, such as shamans, oracles and the like, to predict the future.

Over time, the concept of trying to predict what is to come has become more casual. For decades now, people have made guesses as to what the world will be like in future years. Various publications and websites, along with media personalities and average people, have hopped onto the popular trend of guessing what will come in the next year.

For 2025, fashion magazines, such as Glamour and Teen Vogue, have made their predictions about the upcoming fashion trends. Among many possibilities, both magazines predicted an increase in animal prints, boho styles and maximalism in fashion for this year.


From fashion to food, the New York Times reported its predictions about the culinary world trends for 2025. Some notable predictions included the idea that there will be more "designer" fruits, such as the cotton candy grape, and that restaurants will create more aesthetic takeout packaging.

The newspaper also predicted that ingredient labels will continue to become more simplified.


But, not all predictions were about just pop culture. Forbes magazine made many predictions related to artificial intelligence


in 2025. Among many other ideas, Forbes predicted that new president Donald Trump and technology giant Elon Musk will have a falling out, and that will lead to a more hands-off approach when it comes to AI safety. Forbes also predicted that AI will pass a test, in which humans cannot tell if it is a real person speaking or an AI voice speaking, which could have serious consequences regarding deep fakes in media.


### Guidon Staff Member Predictions for 2025

"Charli XCX will release another version of 'Brat.'"  **sophomore Alijah Arias**


"Joe Biden will die."  **senior Reagan Bates**

"Melania Trump's hat will grow."  **senior Eleanor Bittel**


"TikTok will get banned again."  **senior Hank Corsair**


"There will be another pandemic with the bird flu."  **junior Delia Dixon**


"Taylor Swift will have a major controversy."  **junior Kennedy Fischer**


"Donald Trump will have an affair with Elon Musk."  **senior Cason Grezeszak**

"MrBeast will buy TikTok."  **senior Kale Schwien**

"The U.S. economy will become rougher."  **sophomore Brayden Staley**

"Timothee Chalamet and Kylie Jenner will break up."  **senior Clare Tholstrup**

"Tom Holland and Zendaya will have the wedding of the century."  **senior Katelyn Willemssen**

"Travis Kelce will retire from football and follow Taylor Swift around."  **senior Tavia Wynn-Coffman**

Unlike magazines and websites that focused on a specific area to make predictions about, The Atlantic reported a variety of its predictions, although mainly science related, for 2025. They predicted that there will be testing of quantum teleportation, that dementia will decline with more research and that lightweight aircraft will be powered by electricity via lithium-ion batteries.

Likewise, the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) magazine reported various predictions for 2025, from public health to the economy. Regarding public health, the article expressed concern over the spread of the bird flu. With the U.S. economy, the article noted that tariffs proposed by president Trump will majorly affect trade and will cause prices on all goods to increase for American consumers. The article also mentioned that current mass deportations will likely negatively affect agriculture and housing costs, but those effects will not be felt for a couple of years.

With the variety of different predictions, 2025 will definitely make its mark. Whether for better or worse and whether they come true or remain only an idea, these predictions set up 2025 as a year for the books.



## Anticipated Albums

- Alessia Cara - "Love & Hyperbole"
- Bartees Strange - "Horror"
- Lisa - "Alter Ego"
- Neil Young - "Oceanside Countryside"
- Panda Bear - "Sinister Gift"
- Sharon Van Etten - "Sharon Van Etten & The Attachment Theory"



## Future Films

- Feb. 7**
  - "Heart Eyes"
  - "Love Hurts"
  - "We Live in a Time"
- Feb. 14**
  - "Captain America: Brave New World"
  - "Paddington in Peru"
- Feb. 21**
  - "Cleaner"
  - "The Monkey"
  - "The Unbreakable Boy"
- Feb. 28**
  - "Last Breath"
  - "The Day the Earth Blew Up: A Looney Tunes Movie"
  - "The Legend of Ochi"



## Monthly Mentions

- American Heart Month
- Bake for Family Fun Month
- Celebration of Chocolate Month
- Dog Training Education Month
- Great American Pie Month
- International Boost Self-Esteem Month
- National Bird Feeding Month
- National Black History Month
- National Library Lovers Month
- National Potato Lovers Month
- National Self-Check Month
- National Snack Food Month