

# The Blazer



Masked middle schoolers  
dance the night away

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### Mission Statement

As preservers of democracy, World Journalism Preparatory School (WJPS) shall protect, encourage and enhance free speech and the exchange of ideas as a means of protecting our American way of life.

The Blazer is the official student-produced medium of news and information published/produced by The Blazer and ENEWS students. The Blazer has been established as a designated public forum for student editors to inform and educate their readers as well as for the discussion of issues of concern to their audience. It will not be reviewed or restrained by school officials prior to publication or distribution. Advisers will coach and discuss content during the writing process.

### Writing Process

Because school officials do not engage in prior review, and the content of the The Blazer is determined by and reflects only the views of the student staff and not school officials or the school itself, its student editorial board and responsible student staff members assume complete legal and financial liability for the content of the publication.

### Editorial Board

The editorial board, which consists of the staff's student editors, OR HOWEVER THE DECISION IS MADE will determine the content, including all unsigned editorials. The views stated in editorials represent that of a majority of the editorial board. Signed columns or reviews represent only the opinion of the author.

### Letters

The Blazer may accept letters to the editor, guest columns and news releases from students, faculty, administrators, community residents and the general public. We ask that letters to the editor, guest columns or other submissions be 300 words or less and contain the author's name, address and signature. All submissions will be verified.

The Blazer editorial board reserves the right to withhold a letter or column or other submission and/OR return it for revision if it contains unprotected speech or grammatical errors that could hamper its meaning. Deadlines for letters and columns will be determined by each year's student staff, allowing sufficient time for verification of authorship prior to publication.

### Errors

Staff members will strive to correct errors prior to publication; however, if the editorial board determines a significant error is printed, the editorial board will determine the manner and timeliness of a correction.

### Advertising

The Blazer's editorial board reserves the right to accept or reject any ad in accordance with its advertising policy.

### Professional Affiliations

The Blazer is a member of the Columbia Scholastic Press Association (CSPA), National Scholastic Press Association (NSPA), and the Empire State Scholastic Press Association (ESSPA).

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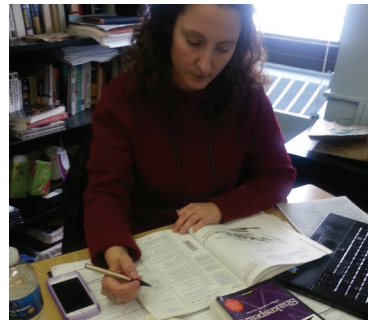
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# Programs suffer due to budget cuts

by Ardhys De Leon, staff reporter

Imagine a school that was making improvement every year, publication classes growing, school programs that keep students busy after school and grade trips that takes learning out of the classroom and into the real world. But that isn't the case here anymore because of budget cuts.

Last year, the Blazer was available to students as a print version like in any other high school with a newspaper. But this year, the Blazer suffered a major blow because of budget cuts. The school was not able to provide newspaper program with the money needed to print a monthly issue.

"With the budget cut it has become more difficult to produce a newspaper every month. We tried to sell advertisements but it wasn't so successful. Now all we have is an online paper that is really hard to keep a consistent deadline date," senior Alexandra Krupa said.

This left the Blazer with one option, moving online. Now, the newspaper runs an online version and releases a PDF issue monthly. The amount of readers has reduced because

of this since most of them don't go on the school's website (wjps.org), which sponsors the Blazer. Therefore, a lot of students are unaware of the newspaper publication.

**"There's no money to buy video cameras."**

"I do read the Blazer less now that it's online because I used to read it in class but now it's harder to access it in school," sophomore Tamia Avery said.

Yearbook is currently facing a similar problem. Last year, yearbook was able to get their pages printed and binding without having to worry much about the cost since the school would provide for this. But entering this school, the yearbook staff was told that they would have to fundraise in order to be able to produce copies in the spring.

"[Because of the budget cuts] not everyone can take pictures at the same time because we only have limited cameras. Also the laptops we get are really slow with the software we're using so it delays us," junior Lisbeth Zea said.

In years before, the broadcast publication ran a successful show, live4five was on every day after Channel 1 and The Highlight was on every Friday.

Now broadcast doesn't go on live since the classroom for this publication was changed to the basement where the wires do not reach the other floors.

Instead the students in broadcast struggle because they have to film their stories ahead of time for the Highlight on Fridays. This means that if there is news that occurs on Friday, it goes unmentioned.

"There's no money to buy more video cameras for the broadcast classes, so both the junior and senior class need to share, which makes producing stories difficult. This is because there's only around 1-8 cameras for about 20+ teams to use," junior Rita Cinquemani said.

As seen, budget cuts have affected the school in every department, especially the publication classes. This has led to the publications teachers working together in order to find ways to fix the problems they are each facing in their classes. Some of the solutions the teachers have resulted to are the publications carnival and selling ads.

The publications carnival will be raising funds for the publications through raffles,

food, game and P.O.P. bracelets. The money raised will be used to better the programs and fill in the spots for some of the stuff the budget cuts took away.

"All of the proceeds from the carnival will go directly to publications classes. The money will be used for new equipment and publication conferences which will benefit the students [in these classes]," Yearbook adviser Ms. Destefano said.

Selling ads will also help by making the publications self-supported by having local businesses pay for ads, which will be sponsored by each publication. For the newspaper, this means being able to have a print newspaper again.

With these efforts newspaper, yearbook and broadcast is hoping to get back to its original standing before the budget cuts.

"We have to become self supporting, so I am hoping that if we can create a climate where students are accustomed to selling ads like how they have to in the journalism world, then we can grow the program without the need of school budget," Publications coordinator Ms. Sackstein said.

## Teens for Jeans

by Naomi Smith-George, feature editor

The DO something club is notorious for their community service projects to WJPS. Recently, the DO something club ran their annual community service project, Teens for Jeans issued by DOSomething.org.

DO something.org is a non-profit organization that services community service projects, and encourages schools to work along. Projects that are issued are ones such as park clean-ups, various other projects including widespread clean up, and Teens for Jeans.

In running the Teens for Jeans campaign, the DO something club collected 63 pairs of jeans in total the

turnout more successful than the last one that took place last school year.

"I think that this year, the drive turned out a lot more successful than last year. We had a lot of helping hands and donations," DO Something club President Katherine Eglezos said.

Aeropostale collaborated with DOSomething.org for the campaign Teens for Jeans, something they do every year starting in 2008. Everyone who donated received a 25% discount on their next purchase from Aeropostale. The drive is held from January 11th to February 10th, and all of the donated jeans are then donated

to homeless teens Across the country. There are over 1.6 million homeless teens living in shelters and on the streets in America at this moment.

"The most common item asked by homeless teens from organizations like DOSomething.org and shelters are pairs of jeans," Eglezos said.

WJPS students were very eager to donate, and received a jeans day pass for donating. Seventh grader Shayan Karim felt it was important to donate to the Teens for Jeans campaign. "I had a lot of jeans that really didn't fit me anymore so I just decided to donate them to kids that didn't have any. I felt that it was important to



**Katherine Eglezos**  
**Members collected donated jeans.**

donate because I have gotten things from other people and I was very grateful, so I figured why not do the same thing for someone else," Karim said.

The WJPS DO Something club meets every week on tuesdays during 6th period lunch.

## Masked middle schoolers dance the night away

by Katherine Capulong, staff reporter

Middle schoolers celebrated Valentine's Day in a masquerade dance on February 13th. The girls put on pretty dresses and the boys wore collars around their necks. They were offered masquerade masks on entrance to the dance and one boy even broke out a pirate hat.

The masquerade theme was inspired by Mardi Gras, and was evident in all of the decorations and masks. The PTA fundraiser brought out the fashionistas in many of the students. Bodycon dresses, button down shirts, empire waists, tiered skirts, and sequins all made an appearance that night.

"Some of my friends coordinated outfits," seventh grader Katie Mihalios said.

The gym was decorated with paper portrayals of the masks that adorned the students' face. The music was loud, and a seating area was provided in one corner of the gym. The PTA sold snacks, pizza and ice cream as well as setting up for it for a noble cause.

"We did this to raise money

for the school, bring the kids together. It's an opportunity for everybody to hang out and have fun," PTA member Linda Post said.

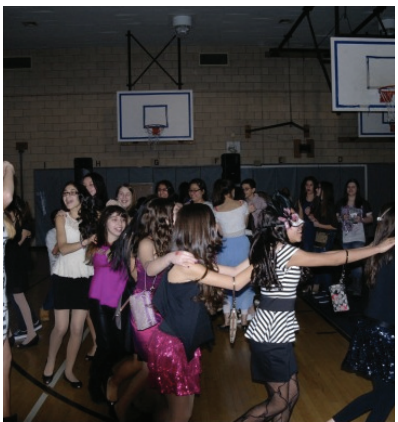
The PTA, teachers, and ad-

ministration chaperoned the dance, even joining it for a song or two. The music was loud, current and appropriate for the event. Party songs like "The Cupid Shuffle," "Gangnam Style," and "Cha Cha Slide" were played, as well as chart toppers like One Direction's "What Makes You Beautiful" and Justin Bieber's "Beauty and a Beat." A few older songs made appearances as well like "Birthday" by the Beatles.

"This [music] is Z100, KTU, what kids are listening to right now," said the DJ for the school

dance, Chicago Joe. The school gym was pumping with energy and bass. Many students conveyed their appreciation and appreciation of the dance.

"It's pretty cool. It seemed like a nice opportunity to be with the whole grade," seventh grader Ashley Gadoy said.



Peggy Wu

**"The music was great, there was a lot of dancing and snacks and it was really nice." -Julia Bacarella, seventh grade**



Peggy Wu

**"I danced with my friends and had some snacks and listened to music the whole night" -Christian Chamberlain, seventh grade**

## Publications' annual carnival raises money for programs

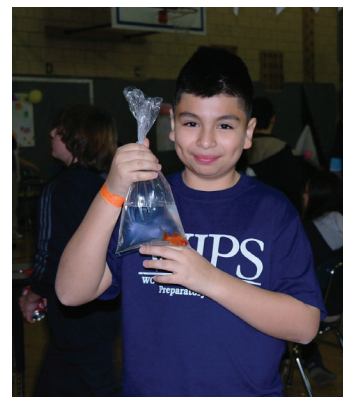
Giorgina Orofino, news editor

Students stayed up for lunch, focusing on ways to get donations before the carnival took place. They separated into groups in charge of different stations. One group worried about getting a donation of goldfish for the Fish Pong game, while another contemplated on what mouth watering snacks would attract the most buyers. As time speeds up, its the morning of the carnival and the dedicated students sit back and watch their hard work unfold into another successful carnival.

"It was a true transformation to see a school gym turn into a Winter Wonderland. It was a great to see the enthusiastic participation by the student body," Guidance counselor Mr. Lumetta said.

The money from the school's second carnival still proceeds to the three publications. The Blazer, The Byline and The Highlight have been experiencing difficulty this school year due to budget cuts and the carnival helped the classes raise a total of approximately \$3,500.

"This year's carnival was better because I helped organize it. It was very nerve wracking but I was pleased with the outcome," senior Selena Romero said.



Peggy Wu

**Students at the carnival were able to win fish as a prize for one of the games.**

The carnival had a variety of games such as Fish Pond, Three in a Row and Pie throwing. In addition, there was a wide spread of snacks from warm pizza to Belgian waffles with either chocolate syrup, cherries, whipped cream or powder.

"This year's carnival was better than last years because I enjoyed competing with my friends in the sack toss and winning candy," seventh grader Christian Chamberlain said.

The anticipated fall festival that was originally planned for October 30th was postponed to Thursday, February 21st due to the unexpected tragedy of Hurricane Sandy. The Halloween spectacular transformed into a German Winter Wonderland.



Peggy Wu

**Students dancing, eating, and enjoying themselves at the carnival.**



# Senior Trip 2013

*"It was really fun and a good bonding experience for everyone. I really liked the snow tubing."* -Natallia Paschoalim



*"[Julian Oddo] got the party going but the rest of the dancing was highly inappropriate."* -Brittany Morley

*"The night in the hallway blasting music was the most memorable thing."* - Daniela Sosa



*"Snow tubing was a unique part of the trip that I won't forget. It was definitely a once in a lifetime experience."* - Bianca Rosembert



*"It brought everyone together. We all managed to leave the hate at school and we just had one non hateful weekend."* - Allen Shamra



*"I never thought that I would talk to some of the people that were on the trip until we actually bonded together and had fun."* - Kiana Doubly



# Teenagers lose sleep due to work overload

by **Mohammed Raja**, contributing reporter

Stress has become a major part of every student's life. According to the Center of Disease Control and Prevention, 7.8% of men and 12.3% of women ages 18-24 report frequent mental distress. Student life has become hard, due to the demands of study combined with their busy lives, making stress a part of their live.

## Definition of Stress

Stress is simply the body's specific response to any demand made on it. Stress provides the means to express exhaustion and illness. The results of continuing stress may cause disruption in your health physically, emotionally, and socially. Some indicators that recognize stress are elevated heart rate, increased blood pressures, insomnia, headaches etc.

## Stress Relating to Student Life

Many students in today's societies can relate their life to stress. One of those students is senior student Andleeb Khushnood who discussed her stress life and feels that she barely gets any sleep, due to

the work she needs to do and prepare for college.

"I think that college is going to be much harder and more stressful than high school because in college, you're on your own. No one will help you," Khushnood said.

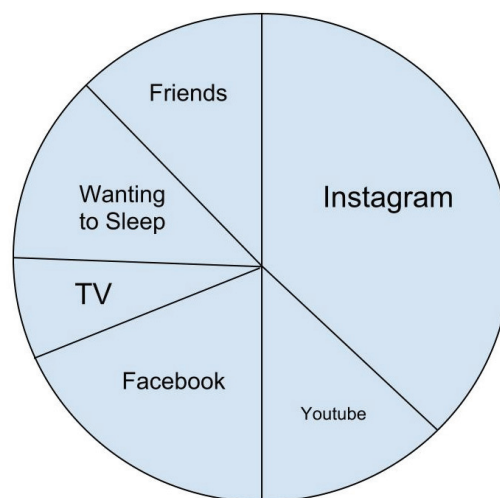
She's right on one thing; college does get harder than high school and adds to one's stress meter. In fact, in a recent national college health survey, 10% of college students had been diagnosed with depression.

"When I am stressed, I feel like I am really tired and that I don't feel like doing any school work or homework anymore. But, knowing that my grade is going to go down makes me do it, even though I am really tired. Also, I get headaches sometimes and feel like my head is spinning," Amir Shallit said.

## Stress Management Strategies

- Eat well balanced meals, more whole grain, nuts, fruits, and vegetables. Substitute fruits for desserts
- Maintain communication with friends
- Take part in enjoyable activities like sports or exercising

## Studying distractions



- Get at least seven hours of sleep
- Make sure to have physical contact like hugging someone. Physical contact is a great way to relieve stress
- Keep the mind relaxed and organized, not panicked and stressed

Believe it or not, middle school students can also have the same stress levels as the students in high school. In fact, a host of statistics showed that only 36% of 7th graders agreed

with the statement, "I am happy with my life."

"When I am stressed, I do what I like the best- which is play basketball. It helps me relieve my stress because I have fun while I am playing it," junior high school 185 student Haseeb Raja said.

Students need to realize that schoolwork is going to be hard with many challenges, but they need to learn how to control it by making time for it and not to let stress into their brains.

# NYU performs Hamlet: a Shakespeare tragedy

by **Colleen Fox**, Entertainment editor

Swordplay and musical instruments graced the auditorium stage on February 1st, when students from a NYU Shakespearean company performed Hamlet.

As students got settled, the director of the play got everyone's attention by asking the audience opening questions if anyone has seen Hamlet and comparing the storyline to that of *The Lion King*.

"Hamlet was hard to understand at first, but because of the acting, I was able to understand it better," sophomore Ysabel Hernandez said.

The rendition of Hamlet had a small cast of nine people all dressed in modern clothes, and included drum beats between

scenes as well as a climactic sword fighting scene with the tragic death of most of the characters.

"It was interesting. I've never seen a Shakespeare play before and I've never read Hamlet so it was insightful," senior Ashley Urena said.

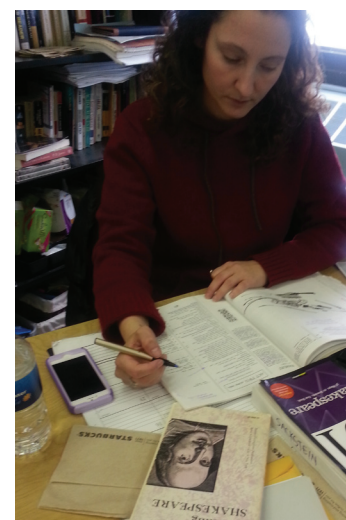
After the 45 minute play, the cast, director, and producer came down onto the stage to give the students the opportunity to ask questions about the play, company, or about studying drama in college.

This particular Shakespearean Company was the first Shakespeare play some of the cast have ever played in and the company has been together since auditions in

September. Most of the cast do not actually want to be actors on the big stage, but rather teach drama in schools. They all started theatre in their own unique way, whether it's a sixth grade play, or a hole in their college schedule that they had no choice but to fill with theatre.

"Throughout the play, I admired the actors a lot, especially that they seemed to be very close to my age and I really enjoyed getting to know them at the end," senior Maria Apostolidis said.

Students took away an experience that they never had before, and although may have been challenging to follow, Hamlet was something to learn from.



**Naomi Smith-George**  
*Ms. Sackstein's AP Literature began to read Hamlet after the performance.*



# Liam Neeson's newest movie is good but not great

By Nadine Cavanough, staff reporter

Yet again, Liam Neeson delivers in *Taken 2*, playing both the rescuer and the hostage. Neeson displays heroic valor when the families of his victims in the previous movie try to extract their revenge when Neeson and his own family go on vacation. Fast-paced and packed with action, fans of the first *Taken* will not be disappointed with this aspect. "...It was full of action, with it's shooting and fighting, which I always like," junior Brais Sampedro said.

The only downfall with the latest *Taken* was that the plot may have been thought out better. Similar to the redundant plots of *The Hangover* series, the story was slightly less original, sticking to the same concept that the first movie did. It would have been nice to see there be a different plot twist in

the movie, but considering the nature of the film, there aren't very many places the story can go, without abstaining too much from the first one. Although, Neeson's combination of charisma and intimidation keep him as one of America's favorite heroes, playing the role of an ex-CIA agent, his acting wasn't enough to fill out some of the holes in *Taken 2*.

"I thought it [the movie] was really good, but the first one was better... It had more action, and this movie followed the same

plotline, it was predictable," junior Rita Cinquemani said.

Regardless, the *Taken* franchise isn't bad, and is sure to see more sequels. *Taken 2* leaves off with Neeson saving

his family from the people who kidnapped them (and killing every one of them in the process) but, it seems that there is enough room to build on the franchise and still redeem its name.

According to the Salon website, Neeson says, jokingly, "How many times can she be taken?... I mean, it's bad parenthood, really, after that."

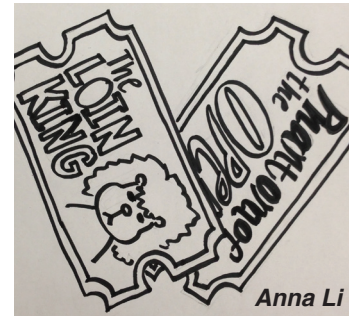
He does illustrate a good point here. Where else can the producers take the story, after having taken all the family Neeson has?

Regardless, considering the success of the first two movies, viewers can most likely expect a third one to come out shortly, building onto, and perhaps concluding, the *Taken* franchise.

**"How many times can she be taken?... I mean, it's bad parenthood, really, after that."**

# Broadway goes two for one

by Jamel Rogers, staff reporter



Broadway Week is back with ticket deals this winter, which offers show tickets for half off tickets. The usual price for a Broadway ticket varies from \$100-\$250 each, which is expensive for most people, so Broadway created this deal to give people the opportunity to afford to go.

"By Broadway doing this it's going to get more families and musical lovers a chance to enjoy themselves," senior slash Broadway fanatic Samantha Matos said.

Most Broadway shows are included in this promotion, including favorites like *Wicked*, *The Lion King*, and *Phantom of the Opera*. Participating in the promotion also allows one to be entered to win a trip aboard a Norwegian Cruise Ship.

"Broadway shows are always spectacular and loved among people like me who take interest in musicals," senior Maria Apostolidis said. "The fact that they're having a 2 for 1 deal is so beneficial and cool."

Tickets for the shows went on sale January 7th, and are continued to be sold until all tickets are sold out. Broadway week takes place between January 22 and February 7.

For more information and where to buy tickets, head over to <http://www.nycgo.com/broadwayweek>

# Disney recreates magic in theaters

by Colleen Fox, entertainment editor

Disney has been back to taking the movie theaters by storm, with re-releasing films in "eye-catching" 3D.

After *The Lion King* was re-released into theaters for a limited time in order to promote the Blu-Ray re-release, Disney took notice to the amount of money made

at the box office, according to Huffington Post, a mighty \$61.7 million in the US alone. It wasn't at all expected, so Disney, like any great business would do, realized they could keep re-releasing their timeless films.

Earlier this year, both *Beauty and the Beast* and *Finding Nemo* entered the theater for their second time, *Beauty and the Beast* making \$47.6 million and *Finding Nemo* making

\$40.8 million in domestic gross, according to BoxOfficeMojo.com. Now with *Monsters Inc.* out in theaters, it's almost losing the surprise and the spark that the others have had.

Rather than be something that people seemed to look forward to with *The Lion King*, it's getting a bit old.

"I saw *Finding Nemo* in September and it was nice because I was too little to see it when it first came out. It gave me the chance to see it with my parents in theaters!" sixth grader Brielle Donnelly said.

Other movies have followed Disney's trend, like James Cameron's *Titanic*, and have come back to theaters in "3D," (which some could argue isn't really "3D" where things pop out at you, but rather a crystal

clear picture). And to some, it more so just seems like a stunt to get more money, with 3D ticket prices skyrocketing to \$16.50 per adult ticket at some theaters.

"I don't think 3D is necessary. Especially that it tends to hurt people's eyes," seventh grader Kevin Ramirez said.

From the business outlook on things, Disney has found a goldmine in re-releasing their films in 3D; however, as a moviegoer, it can't help but be wondered, how many more movies will Disney get away with re-releasing before people get tired of paying \$16.50 to see a movie that has been on DVD for 10+ years.

Whether 3D is loved or not, Disney lovers should be on the lookout for *Monsters Inc.*, which was released December 19, (and it's new prequel, *Monsters University* being released June 21, 2013) and *The Little Mermaid* in September 2013.



# Hurricanes Irene and Sandy: A sign of things to come

by Oliver Lataste, staff reporter



Leanne Romano

***Traffic all around the local area has gathered up during Sandy. This picture shows the harsh tides that came with the hurricane. Little Neck Bay was catatrophic at the time of the Hurricane.***

Hurricanes Irene and Sandy rocked the east coast, leaving it devastated. It seems that strong hurricanes are going to be more common; Floridians are already used to them. New Yorkers will have to become used to hurricanes now, too.

According to fema.gov, this is a pattern that should be noticed before it's too late. Governor Andrew Cuomo should take note of what happened in the two hurricanes to help preparations from future hurricanes. "[Governor Andrew Cuomo] should definitely prepare more for natural disasters and sea surges," English teacher Mr. Cross said.

New York City might be in trouble, should what Professor Charles H. Greene at Cornell University says is true: "Not necessarily increasing the

total number of hurricanes, but increasing the number of strong ones. It is also making our mega cities near sea level much more vulnerable."

Not only do these hurricanes affect the East Coast, they can affect cities worldwide. "We can expect more stronger hurricanes worldwide and higher storm surges, especially as sea level rises."

With the glaciers melting, our climate is going through a rapid change and we should adapt to the world while trying to find a way to decrease emissions. If any city could do it, it's New York.

Greenhouse gases may be increasing the frequency of strong hurricanes. So New Yorkers should reduce emissions and prepare for the safety of New York City.



Leanne Romano

***Destruction takes place in every area of Queens. Disasterous damage took place such as tree falling.***



Leanne Romano

***The Little Neck Bay Fort Totten Area had flooded tremendously during hurricane Sandy.***



# Concocting a plan, in order to expand

by Esther Animalu, contributing reporter

Space. Having an abundant amount of space would be crucial for one's well being. There's more room to roam around, to breathe, to play, to explore. Whereas no space at all, is like being crammed in a closet with mounds and mounds of people. This metaphor best describes the need to expand our area of space.

World Journalism Preparatory School currently shares a building with two other schools, I.S. 25 and P.S. 233. As a result, students are limited to the places they can go, as well as when and where to socialize.

We are unable to use the immense schoolyard every single time that we request it, we're unable to cross our boundaries into a different school territory unless told otherwise. We are unable to have the locker rooms, the lunch room, and the gym all to ourselves without the disturbance of another school.

Each and everyday, more and more students seem to complain about these stern conditions one way or the other. If World Journalism were to have its own school building, there'll be various activities that most students can enjoy, more clubs, more events that cater to teachers and students interest, as well as more supplies and expansion for broadcasting, and publication.

"With more space, they'll be more school spirit since we'd have more people like Bayside and Francis Lewis," senior Anna Li said.

As a result, this will enhance the technology, enjoyment and athletic quality of the school, thereby making more and more students amused to get involved in the school's society. According to <http://www.healthyschoolcommunities.org/hsrc/pages/navigationcontent/Resource.spx?display=ResourcesLink10>, studies show that students who are involved physically in school are likely to gain more self-confidence, better teamwork skills and school pride from being actively involved in their education and extracurricular classes.

"I would participate in school activities like sports, because we can compete against other schools and we have more room to operate. More activities means more fun! Also being physical will keep students in shape and it's fun," sophomore

Mohammad Raja said.

Teachers may also notice a positive change in their relationships with students when it comes to hands on projects, as well as group projects.

Furthermore, more space will allow more students who pursue a journalism passion or may simply be interested in World Journalism to get accepted, rather than accepting a limited amount of students routinely each year. Likewise, we'll have an extra boost of school spirit. Therefore getting a school building assigned to only World Journalism Preparatory School, would be a beneficial advantage.

However, with having our own school building comes with many disadvantages that can impact the school's society a great deal. Having our own building would mean, World Journalism wouldn't be considered a "small school" anymore. Some students and teachers

may be fond of small schools, rather than an immense school because recognizing familiar faces brings a sense of comfort,

there's less teachers, getting to each class on time isn't a hassle, each classroom wouldn't be packed to punch with students because of the limited space, and remembering most teachers regardless of one's grade, is a much easier task.

"I enjoy small schools because everyone knows everyone and the teachers recognize everyone. I would like our own school building but it should be small or medium," 7th grader Julia Bacarella said.

Whereas, having a vast school would mean, not expecting to find the same sense of a smaller community, recognizing students would be complex, interacting with teachers would be somewhat difficult because there'll be more students in each classroom, it would be less accessible to resolve issues or get help with subjects, some students may not feel comfortable with the large class sizes, if learning best for a student happens while being able to interact during class through discussion or hands-on activities would be challenging

with the number of students. "I like small schools, it's nice to see and know almost everyone and their personalities. If we had a giant school, students would seem like ordinary people we pass by on the streets," senior Anna Li said.

Also, students won't get

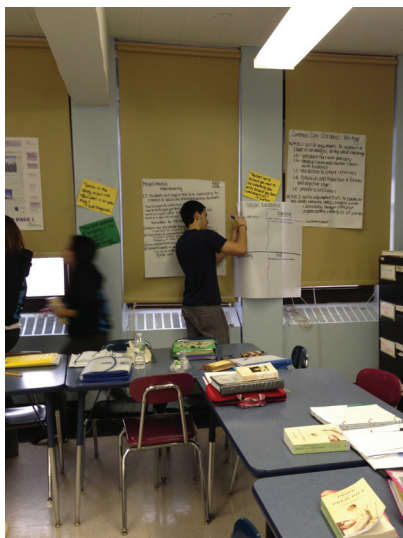
as much individual attention at a big school, teachers may struggle with remembering students' names due to the sheer number of pupils that they teach on a daily basis. Conflict between students would also increase because they're likely to get

away with more academic and personal offenses due to the quantity of students. Handling every single one of them would be twice as hard as it is now.

"I like big schools because it allows the department of education to create a better place and help kids get knowledge and have a more bigger and advanced society," 7th grader Brianna Mendoza said.

All in all, if World Journalism Preparatory School were to have its own school building, nothing would be the same. The circumstances can change either for the greater good, or for the wrongfully worse.

Despite all odds, not only would the school become more dominant, bountiful, prosperous, and inspiring than it already is, doors can finally be unlocked to unleash more positive opportunities for students to change the future. If only the school were to expand its area of space.



**Ms. Sackstein**  
*Senior Allen Sharma participates in class "party."*



**Ms. Sackstein**  
*Empty classrooms are spacious.*

# Prohibition: A law to ban the use of guns needs to be put into place

by Joseph Wolkin, staff reporter

27. That is the horrific number of victims from the brutal attacks that could have been prevented if it weren't for the Second Amendment that America's forefathers thought was necessary to include within the Bill of Rights.

After the events that occurred on Dec. 14, a change within the United States constitution must be put into place and it must be put into place soon.

"They [shooters] have mental issues and have something lingering inside them," paraprofessional Donna Beaman said. "You can't really stop it, they need to make the gun laws stricter."

For some reason, the law has stuck around for over two centuries, but according to an ABC statistic, roughly three people get killed per minute and 83 a day due to the use of guns. This is truly ridiculous and the problem is getting larger. Over the years, people with mental disabilities have been capable of accessing firearms in the easiest of ways. All it takes is passing a few tests in order to buy a gun, if not more.

**The number is by far too large. All it takes is one person to purchase a gun, and a few missiles to ruin a life.**

In the case of the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting which took place in Newtown, CT (just an hour and a half away from Whitestone and Flushing), the man that shot all of the innocent children owned three assault rifles which had several magazines that could have killed well more

than the amount of people that are sadly deceased. The problem is increasing as people in the United States are 20 times as likely to be killed by guns than citizens in other developed countries, according to an article in the Washington Post.

20 children being killed is just unbelievable. The President of the United States, the Commander in Chief, who has dealt with all types of horrific situations was tearing up on national television for pete's sake. That just shows the severity of the problem. The solution is simple: place a ban on firearms.

"I think it's a step in the right direction, but outright banning them would be too difficult," English teacher Mr. Cross said.

The ban has the possibility

of causing a situation similar to what happened with the prohibition laws in the early 1900's with alcohol, but with modern-day security, that will be less likely to happen. Though thousands of jobs will probably be lost due to events such as this one, it would be worth it. If not, then Americans will continue to witness such events which devastate even those not affected by it on a personal standpoint.

But, instead of banning these weapons altogether and avoiding the loss of thousands of jobs, giving people a psychiatric test before they maintain a weapon of such sort should be mandated immediately. According to the Journalist Resource, homicides are the cause of at least 15,000 lost lives a year. "The National Instant Criminal Background Check System, or NICS, is all about saving lives and protecting people from harm—by not letting guns and explosives fall into the wrong hands. It also ensures the timely transfer of firearms to eligible gun buyers," according to the FBI website as the statement can be considered to be hypocritical with the events that have occurred over the past

few decades.

The way guns are controlled throughout the country is truly unbearable. Groups across the nation, as well as politicians, are attempting to change the ways which guns are purchased. It is simply too easy for citizens to buy armed weapons throughout the nation as there are over 80 million gun owners across the country, according to the NRA. The number is by far too large. All it takes is one person to purchase a gun, and a few missiles to ruin a life. Gaining access of these weapons is rather easy especially at gun shows where private owners don't even request for a tax or paperwork once they buy the weapons. It's just truly amazing how congress allows this to occur.

Young people getting killed by guns is just unbelievable. With the events that occurred in Newtown, CT, parents are worried just to enable their children to go to school. This isn't how Americans should live and it needs to come to an end. If the world ends, maybe it would be a good thing. Getting killed by nature is better than being shot by a psychopath.

## A Flipped Idea

by Chelsea Mesa, opinion editor

There are a number of unique ways of teaching such as the act of verbal lecturing and/or online lecturing. The main question educators have been turning over is the concept of internet teaching and the backwards switch of teaching in a classroom.

According to an article on <http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers>, "One premise of the flipped classroom model is that students spend most of their time in class interacting with content rather than listening to teachers present content".

Another premise of the flipped classroom model is that in order for students to interact with content in class, they must watch a videotaped lecture on that content before class. So,

students watch the lecture at home, then work in class the following day on what would have been their homework. Hence the term "flipped instruction".

The usual classroom schedule is simple, like this students come in sit down and wait for the lesson to be pronounced. After the topic has been taught students then begin to practice and learn by working with the topic. In a flipped classroom the opposite of this happens. This idea may seem quite confusing. Switching the schedule of a classroom could be chaotic at times or could be extremely educational.

The use of the idea of a flipped classroom helps students have more of an option with learn-

ing. Students can choose to not watch a video lesson if they already know the material. Instead of sitting in a classroom and listen to their teacher start another lesson whether or not they are paying any attention. At times when a student is struggling with something they would have to wait to go and talk to their teacher. In a flipped classroom there would be a video that will specifically only help the student in the area that they are struggling with. In a normal running classroom teachers only present one approach to these problems.

Senior Andleeb Khushnood said, "I feel that a flipped classroom is an overall good option for classes such as Math

or even Science but for a class like English I don't think the idea would work right". That is one of the issues students face with the flipped classroom concept will it be beneficial. In Mr. Sacher's physics class online videos are used quite often students find them to be quite educational. Junior Sage O'brien said, "The physics videos we watch in class before we start a lesson really helps me understand the topic before we get started on it and start practicing it. I enjoy the flipped classroom idea, I feel that this can give students a better understanding on the key concepts we sometimes miss in a normal running classroom".



# Why always Mario?

by George Angelidis, staff reporter



Ms. Sackstein

**Young children playing sports don't look at the color of skin, just the color of their uniforms working together and having fun.**

Throughout the history of soccer, what many people call a beautiful game, there has been a lot of racism and discrimination towards players, coaches and even referees that greatly affect this prestigious sport.

This abuse most commonly happens in Europe. Playing professional soccer in Europe is like playing in the NBA or the MLB in the United States; it's that big of a deal. There is a lot of competition which leads to a lot of tension between rival teams and, sometimes even between own teammates.

"Over the years racism in sports has died down in my opinion but is nowhere close to where it should be at the moment. In every single sport there is still a form or another of racism which is unacceptable," junior Nikitas Troumouhis said.

Mario Balotelli, a 22 year old promising young talent, who currently plays for Manchester City, is victim to these unnecessary attacks. He was born in Palermo Italy, however he is from Ghanaian descent. His parents Rose and Thomas Barwuah were forced to send young Mario to a foster home at only the age of three, after he became ill with a very uncommon virus. They simply didn't have the money to care for Mario.

When Mario was four years old, he was adopted by the

Balloteli's, a caring family that saved his life. He was also thankfully treated for the virus that he had, and finally became fully healthy. Mario always had a soccer ball at his foot, it was simply meant to be.

In his youth career, he had great promising talent and when he was only 16 years old he got his first pro contract with Inter, a powerhouse team in Italy at that time. Mario impressed many people with his unique playing style. He became the youngest player to score a Champions League goal when he was just 18 years old, a record that still stands today.

He plays forward and is a goal scoring machine. Many people call him a hybrid player because he is very quick and nimble but, can out muscle the defender and be a dominant physical player at the same time.

He is best known for his unique celebrations that thrill or agitate the crowd such as taking off his shirt, flexing and staring right at the opposing supporters or, most notably, after scoring a key goal against his team's rival; lifting his uniform over his head which displayed an under-t-shirt that read "Why Always Me," which just pissed off the supporters even more.

The only bad thing about Balloteli is that he has a bit of a

temper issue and when things don't go his way, he lets it get into his head, which at times affects his play.

For example, after missing a key chance to score in a preseason game, his coach Roberto Manchini a fellow Italian, subbed him out in the 27th minute. Mario was furious at his coach. A verbal confrontation between

the two soon followed and Balloteli walked straight into the tunnel and refused to sit with his teammates on the bench.

"When Balloteli is in form he is one of the best players in the world. He lets with temper get the better of him and allows frustration to kick in and isn't as productive as he wishes to be when this happens," freshman Tommy Mastoras said.

When he was only 15 years old and playing for an academy team in Italy, he was furiously booed by the supporters from the other team and there were several monkey chants throughout the stadium mocking young Mario who was the only black player at the field at that time.

When Mario was 17 years, old he was playing in an away game in Palermo with Inter; the same brutal thing would occur. Ironically, Balloteli was born in Palermo and grew up there and was supposed to be a town favorite.

While taking a corner kick a banana was thrown at him and struck him in the back. Surprisingly, he simply picked it up and tossed it to the side and would go on to score a great goal, just minutes later and glared at opposing fans. Balloteli had enough of all the abuse that he is dealing with.

When playing with his current team, Manchester City in an FA cup 4th round game in 2011 against Leeds United, numerous supporters taunted Mario yet again and were constantly using the N word towards him. Right after scoring a goal to make the score 2-0, right after the second half started, he picked up the ball, protested, and told the ref Howard Webb "I refuse to play."

Mario and his teammates walked off the field, into the lockers rooms, and stood by their striker's side. The league took action and suspended Leeds United fans for their next three home games due to their actions, and gave Manchester City a 3-0 win via forfeit since the game was never finished.

Even though Mario is a prime target for all this pointless racist abuse, he tries to put it all behind him, play his game, and not let his emotions get the better of him. Every time he scores a goal in an away game, he glares straight at the opposing fans, and shows them who's laughing now.

**"Over the years racism in sports has died down..."**  
-Nikitas Troumouhis