



# Dancing with the **Tigers**



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Cover photo by Maddy Parkhurst from the Winter Formal dance held Saturday, Feb. 24, in the Main Gym.

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#### Contact

The Orange & Black, Grand Junction High School, 1400 N. Fifth St., Grand Junction, CO 81501.

Phone: 970-254-6900.

Adviser e-mail:

steve.fox@d51schools.org

## Letter from the editor

# What about us?

This time of year is typically exciting and has been for my past 13 years of schooling, but it's not as fun this time around.

It's not easy to say everything will be OK as a senior this year. As our last year in the high school is also the final year of the building, it feels like we're being forgotten about already. And the new building isn't even done yet.

The shiny new \$144 million building foreshadows the 2024 Senior Class, much like how COVID foreshadowed our eighth grade graduation as well. The feelings of being forgotten have arisen yet again and no one seems to acknowledge it.

I have a younger sister who will not be able to go to any

of the same schools I have except for elementary school, which might not exist in a few years either. Along with that, my entire K-12 schooling will become rubble and forgotten shortly, which makes it really emotional for me.

Emotions aside, I'm tired of hearing about the new building that I'll never see or experience.

It's great for all of you who are excited but don't forget about us in our final months, weeks, days, and hours of this journey that we've been on our entire lives.

Signed,  
miah **hines**, O&B Editor in Chief



Miah Hines  
Editor in Chief



Maddy Parkurst  
Managing Editor



Marie Calkins  
Copy Editor



Lila Mottram  
Online Editor



Serenity Schmidt  
Photo Editor



Landon Ward  
Reporter



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# District 51 school board passes zoning changes

## Insight on new boundaries that affect who will attend GJHS

story by eli schultz

In order to even out student numbers between the four high schools in the valley, Mesa Valley School District 51 Board of Education has voted to change the boundaries.

“The school board approved a school zone change,” said Josh Warinner, the assistant principal at GJHS.

Warinner stated that following the closing of Fruita 8/9 and Fruita Monument High School changing back to a four-year high school, the district needed to change the boundaries of the school zones in order to even out the number of students attending each high school. District 51 is changing the school boundaries following the fall of the 2024-25 school year.

GJHS will welcome all Redlands Middle School as a new feeder school. A feeder school is a school whose students attend another school. An example of this is West Middle School students going to GJHS.

“I think we are going to see a big change in diversity as well as a big change in how people view GJHS,” said

Brogan Morris, a sophomore and graduate from RMS.

The original middle schools that were in GJHS’ zone were West Middle School, what was East Middle School, roughly half of Redlands, and Orchard Mesa Middle School.

Now all of Redlands will be moved into GJHS’ school boundary following the fall 2024-25 school year. They were previously fed into FMHS.

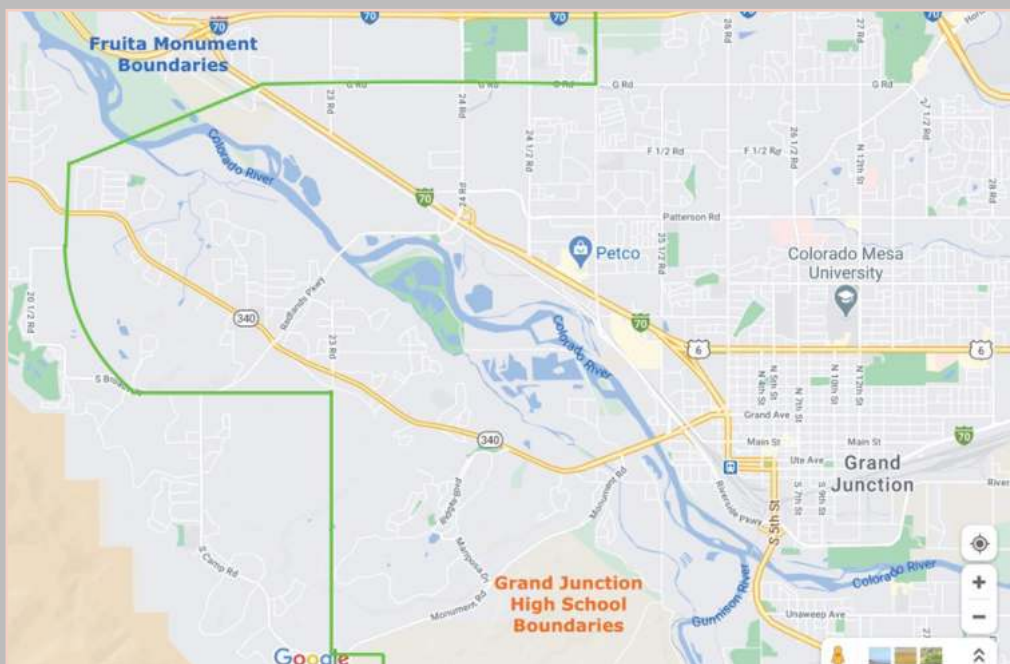
Warinner said, “We are projected to have more students and we will possibly increase staff, but we don’t know that number yet.”

Bus routes will also be changing due to the zone change but no changes have been released yet.

The routes are currently being planned by the bus company and will be ready for the coming school year.

The zone change will take place when the brand new GJHS school building opens. According to Mesa County Valley School District 51, the new school will cost 144.5 million dollars, and will open in the fall of the 2024-25 school year.

According to School District 51 the school will be three stories tall, at 250,000-square-foot, and will be able to enroll 1,600 comfortably with 1,900 students at its max capacity.



**Pictured to the left is a map of Mesa County school district 51. The green line shown displays the old school zone boundaries. New boundaries are to be decided soon. Photo from Mesa County school district website.**



# No tolerance for tardiness

## GJHS begins a new policy for being late

story by lila mottram

photo by serenity schmidt

If you ask any student, more likely than not, they have been late at least once.

For years, GJHS followed the district's lenient tardiness policy which stated that students could be up to twenty minutes late to their class before they would be marked absent, with up to twelve steps before interference from staff.

But, as of winter 2024, that policy will no longer be in effect at GJHS. Now, the school will follow a new policy for students.

"We noticed early on in the year that the twenty minutes allowed to be tardy was cutting into almost half of the class time," said GJHS attendance secretary Michelle Umberger.

The staff took this concern of class time and pulled tardiness data after the first semester to find that, overall, the school had about 1,100 recorded tardies in just one semester.

"And then when we looked further at the data, we found out that about 28 kids or so were causing up to 40% of those 1,100 tardies," GJHS assistant principal Heather O'Brien said. "So a small number of kids were repeatedly being late and causing a large proportion of the tardies."

In an attempt to save the wasted class time and hopefully help these consistently tardy students, O'Brien headed the movement to create a new policy for GJHS, and even wrote the policy herself.

"[The old policy] went through so many steps, like on each of twelve different tardies, this or that will



happen, and an adult in their right mind can keep track of that many tardies for one kid," O'Brien stated. "Teachers have more important things to do than keep track of twelve tardies from one kid. And then by time it got to an office referral, it was just too many tardies and too many kids to track."

The new policy states that after a student's first and second tardies, the teacher will speak with them. After the third tardy their parents will be contacted by the teacher. Finally, after the fourth tardy, the student will complete a minor office referral to address the concern.

"If tardiness becomes a habitual problem to a student, it is our job as adults to figure out why. It's our job to try to support that student," said O'Brien. "If it's a matter of their mom not being able to drop them off on time, we don't want to punish the kid for something out of their control."

But while this new policy may help the school's tardiness records, some students have expressed disdain with the new policy.

"I feel like they say that they'll enforce [the tardy policy] but I really haven't seen any teachers actually using it," stated GJHS junior Mercedes Candland.

Other students are concerned about the small amount of tardies they are permitted.

"It's a rule, so I'm sure kids are not going to like it," O'Brien said. "But it's not like we're just creating rules for the sake of being rules. It's really a life skill. If you show up to your job late three times in a row, your boss is not going to be happy with you. Of all the rules we have, this one clearly has relevance to real life."

So far, the plan is to transfer this policy to the new building as well.

"Nothing in the new building is going to require any of this language to change," O'Brien said. "In fact, I think tardies will even go down just because now everything is in one building."

After years of plenty of tardies at GJHS, the school's attendance record will hopefully change for the better.

**With minimal permitted tardy markings, students are expected to hustle to be on time.**

# Grind My Gears

## We took that from the Simpsons

story by connor **kinser**  
photo by maddy **parkhurst**

Here at the Orange and Black we are a student led newspaper who is always yapping about our opinions. But what about your opinions? Here is what some Grand Junction High School Students had to say about their problems with the school.

Zayden Ross (senior):

“The education system, you have to take all of these pretty useless credits.. that are not going to really benefit you a whole lot. Then the same thing in college. You gotta be paying a whole lot of money for general education, not even for the stuff you want to go into. Like why do I need an English class when I want to become an electrician.”

Milo Haberkorn (junior):

“My biggest thing is parking. I can never find a parking spot and it leads to students having to park in illegal spots.”

Hayden Joredenheim (junior):

“One of my least favorite things is they removed all the seating and the only seating in the school is in the library so I hope they fix that in the new school because I hate sitting in the cafeteria. Another thing is this school is just boring. The most fun I’ve had has been going to lunch with my friends or at my college classes. I have more fun doing college homework than I do having high school homework. Also the wifi sucks here I hate the wifi fix your wifi.”

Junior Hayden Jordheim, senior Zayden Ross and juniors Bryan Caro Caspar visibly frustrated with the condition and rules of the school.



Tali Colombe (sophomore):

“Some of the teachers here are kinda sexist like in the way in weights class they would give a lot of attention to the men on how well they were doing and they would push them and then for us female groups who were in weights class and putting in effort. I guess they don’t put as much spirit as they could in this school. I feel like they could work a little harder on making people feel included in the school then they should be.”

Noah Lay (sophomore):

“Some things the school could do better is the curriculum...instead of doing multiple subjects at once for a long time we could say for one quarter we could focus on one subject and just work on understanding that subject more in depth then what we do. We could also go a little bit long, say you get out of high school when you’re 20 so we can go into detail about each subject more than we do.”

# Opinion: P-TECH what the heck

story by maddy parkhurst

## Why is there nothing going on?

When I was in middle school signing up for my high school classes, I was first introduced to the P-TECH program that Grand Junction High School is offering. I then began the process of applying for this program.

P-TECH stands for Pathways in Technology Early College. It was first brought to GJHS in 2021. This program is for highschool students and it helps them earn their associates degree at no cost during high school. Some of the pathways within this program are Architecture and Construction, Engineering, Computer Science, Environment and Natural Resources, Education and Human Services, Health and Exercise Science. Within these different categories you have different careers. For example in the Environment and Natural Resources that is where the vet-tech program is a part of.

I have looked on both the school website and in the Academies handbook for information on the P-TECH program, but there is very little information. It gives you a QR code to apply and a list of the different areas it covers, along with a few basic facts about the program. It doesn't give you a list of classes to take for it, it doesn't give you any names of who to talk to about the program. Overall, I just feel like it's very unhelpful for anyone looking for more information.

On the first day of school, I was looking at my schedule and found there was nothing to do with P-TECH on my schedule. I later found out the only class for P-TECH was my advisory.

Within this advisory, we really didn't do much related to P-TECH. We would just try to plan on going to vet clinics or plan on doing something vet tech related, but none of these things actually ever happened.

I did think we would start actually doing something P-TECH related when all the P-TECH advisories met in the cafeteria for a P-TECH meeting. I soon found out there wasn't much about P-TECH other than just hearing about the other advisories. No one really paid attention to what was said at these meetings, we all just seemed excited to get doughnuts and orange juice.

Now I am placed in my academy, which really

hasn't done much for me and my P-TECH journey. I was placed in a tech-ed classroom for my advisory which has nothing to do with my career choice, which is really upsetting to me.

I have been asking around trying to get more information on P-TECH but no one seems to know anything. Honestly, if they brought back the advisory meetings for P-TECH that would at least help get some information out and for students to ask questions. The only place I found information on what classes to take is further in the hand book under the different academy sections for specific careers. On these pages it gives a better outline of what classes to take for your specific career.

If they gave P-TECH its own advisory or a class period to help us get information or make it easier for us to get information it would make the program run more smoothly.

In the new school hopefully there will be an easier way of helping kids getting information or finding out what classes to take for their specific pathway.





# New building, better bathrooms

## Restrooms in the new GJHS are expected to be much better than current situation

story and photo by serenity **schmidt**

**T**he new Grand Junction High School building is expected to have cleaner, nicer, new restrooms.

The restrooms in the current GJHS are not the best, regarding cleanliness and bathroom traffic. However, in the new building, students can expect a noticeable difference.

“There are three levels in the classroom wing. There’s a west wing and an east wing and there’s bathrooms on each side, so a male and female bathroom on each side. So six sets of restrooms,” said Josh Warinner, GJHS assistant principal, describing the bathroom situation.

Since there are three levels in the academic section of the new building, restroom traffic can be expected to be less chaotic. There will be multiple bathrooms spread out across the building.

“We’ll have restrooms that will be in the commons area like the ones we have now, and there will be restrooms in the locker rooms/gym area. And there will be some restrooms in the lobby of the auditorium area, too,” said Warinner.

As for restroom policies, not much is expected to change, except for additional school agreements.

“We will continue doing the same bathroom policies that we have now. And actually what we’re going to be doing is agreements, like our school agreements now,” said Warinner.

As for the students who will get to be in the new GJHS, some think that the new restrooms will be much better than the current ones.

“I expect [the restrooms] to be clean, and have more privacy, like

stalls that actually lock and don’t have big gaps where you can see through,” said GJHS sophomore Brianna Nation.

The new \$144.5 million GJHS building is scheduled to be finished in time for students in the Fall of 2024. Hopes are high that students won’t use these new restrooms for the wrong reasons, such as vaping and graffiti.



**Students and community see the new Grand Junction High School building progressing more every day. Students are excited and can expect better restrooms.**



# Tigers compete in FBLA

## Business club has been at GJHS for more than 30 years

story by paiten brown

There is a club at GJHS that helps students get real experience while in school.

FBLA is a club that can help with many things. It stands for Future Business Leaders of America. Club members competed in districts on Jan. 30 in the Colorado Mesa University ballroom. Students can compete in individual, team, or chapter events and possibly qualify for state.

Students who qualify for state will complete April 1st - 3rd in Denver. If they qualify for Nationals, they can go to Orlando, Florida, this summer.

The GJHS chapter of FBLA has around 18 active students and two advisors. FBLA has been at GJHS for more than 30 years. It is a club that brings business and education together.

“Number one, it’s a great way to meet new people and kind of network. Not only in the school itself but in the valley because we meet up and compete with people around the valley at the other high schools,” said GJHS teacher and co-advisor of FBLA Weston Brady.

Many club members say that they think it is a great club to be in. Students can meet new people while traveling or other club members.



**FBLA members getting ready to compete in districts at CMU to hopefully make it to nationals. Submitted photo.**

“The thing I like about FBLA is that you’re able to compete and there is an event for everyone,” said GJHS junior Alex Kirch, who is in FBLA and is also the Promotion Manager of the Orange & Black student newspaper.

Students can compete individually in events such as Accounting, Business Law, Public Speaking, and Entrepreneurship.

“It’s a great club if you are interested in business, computer

science, journalism...with our new academy model if it’s in with getting the extra credentials on your diploma,” said GJHS teacher and co-advisor of FBLA Suzanne Dunlap.

FBLA holds meetings every Thursday during lunch. If any student wants to join FBLA go see Dunlap in Room 102.

# Students get better wifi by turning off the Internet

# OPINION: GJHS can't connect!

story and photo by alexia bailey

GJHS students are finding it increasingly difficult to communicate using the school's wifi.

In the age of technology, phones have become a constant, and at times, addictive part of my daily life. I, like many of my other classmates, use my phone to listen to music, check my grades, and most importantly, communicate with my friends and family while in school.

It's hard to carry out these tasks though, when the school wifi doesn't work. In fact, the school wifi prohibits certain websites, videos and pictures from working and oftentimes the wifi doesn't allow text messages to go through. This can be detrimental when students try to contact parents and friends. But this isn't important if the students can't even get on the wifi in the first place.

"It was obnoxious because I would need to send a message to my parents and nothing would go through," said GJHS senior Ava Rinaldi who now uses data or a VPN, a virtual private

network, while on school grounds.

One may argue that school is a place for learning and not a place to be on phones. There have become many laws and rules surrounding the use of phones in school. They have become a distraction for learning, something I can't deny. I have seen classmates fail assignments and tests because they were on their phones during the entirety of class.

By using phones, I have seen students find their friends who are having a mental health crisis. I have seen phones being used to help with research projects and to do classwork. I have also seen phones being used as a tool for a movement, like the protests against a GJHS teacher in 2023.

Phones, no matter how many arguments are made that they do not belong in school, have become an immense tool for students. It is my hope that phones will find a better place within school. If the district put more funding into the improvement of the wifi and phone use within schools, making it less taboo to use one's phone at schools, students could potentially consistently use their phones as a learning resource.



**A GJHS student displays various social media apps that don't work while connected to the school wifi.**





# GJHS prepares to present the musical Matilda

story and photos  
by ramona ripple

The Grand Junction High School theater department is putting on the musical Matilda as both the final production this school year and the final production on this campus.

Having the largest auditorium on the Western Slope, with a max capacity of 1,500 occupants, GJHS is widely known in the area for its theatrical productions. The GJHS theater department puts on one production per semester: Airness was performed in the fall.

“I’m really enjoying getting to work with this year’s group of kids,” said GJHS theater teacher and Matilda director Bryan Carlson.

“They’re all extremely talented in their own ways and really pouring themselves into this show. From rehearsing after school, to staying way late into the night to get stuff done, to putting their all into really embracing their roles in the show, they’re all doing amazing and I couldn’t be prouder.”

Students involved in this semester’s production include senior Meghan Hartz in the role of Matilda, sophomore Alexis Walpole in the role of Ms. Honey, sophomore Carmen Barrientinos in the role of



**Matilda cast members practicing and rehearsing on stage after school. The musical will be performed March 1st, 2nd, 8th, and 9th.**

Ms. Trunchbull, sophomore Russell White in the role of Mr. Wormwood, and freshman Julia Markakis in the role of Mrs. Wormwood.

“I feel like theater brings a good community to be able to look forward to going to, kind of like an escape, to just be able to open up and do what you’re passionate about,” said Hartz.

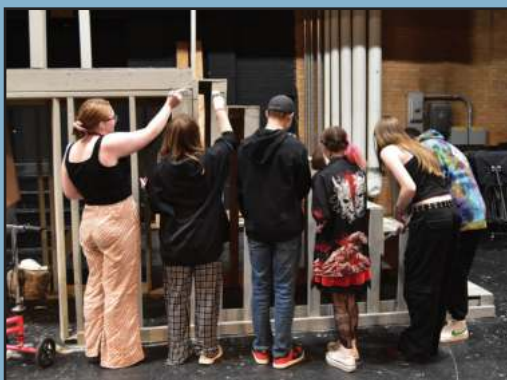
As of now, the production is still in the process of being put together, with stage equipment, props, lighting, sound, and costumes still in the works. The student leaders in charge of tech crew, who are responsible for such things, include Alyssa Harvey, Del Halter, Alexia Bailey, and Osker Chamberlain.

“I think it’s really cool to see how productions evolve from nothing but a script and a stage into an actual performance, especially with this specific group of people,

and this specific show,” said sophomore Marek Fought, cast in the role of Escapologist, and who’s been involved in theater since his freshman year.

Matilda will be open to the public March 1st at 7:00 P.M., March 2nd at 1:00 & 7:00 P.M., March 8th at 7:00 P.M., and March 9th at 1:00 & 7:00 P.M. Tickets are \$15 per adult ticket, \$10 per student ticket, and free for children age 5 and under. Tickets can be purchased online with the scan of a QR code available on posters around the school.

This school year marks Carlson’s first year teaching, with him in charge of both the theater classes and after school program. With the new \$144.5 million GJHS building expected to be finished this coming fall, the Tigers will have an all-new theater for future performances.



The Winter Formal dance was hosted by Student Council. The cost was \$20 in advance or \$25 at the door. StuCo reported around 500 people attended, including some students from surrounding schools.



GJHS Winter Formal was held February 24, 2024. This was the last dance that will be held in the current GJHS gym before we move into the new school. The DJ for the "Night in the Arctic" was DJ Triston Rascon who had students dancing the night away.





# NIGHT IN THE ARCADE



photos by maddy parkhurst

# REC Program

After-school program is helping students do their homework,  
one assignment at a time

story by alexia bailey

**G**JHS Students are getting more help with their homework thanks to the REC program. The Riverside Education Center (REC) is an after-school program in which students can get free help with their homework with the use of tutors.

“REC is a non-profit organization that’s here in the Grand Valley and we support after-school tutoring and enrichment activities in the sixteen different schools that we partner with,” said the GJHS After-School Program Manager Jessica Prussa.

“In January 2006, Mary Spirio, a former third-grade teacher, opened the doors of the Riverside Educational Center (REC). REC started as a nonprofit organization assisting 22 students with their homework,” as according to the REC Website.

The REC program has been at Grand Junction High School for multiple years. REC feeds students healthy snacks and later uses the help of CMU students, retired teachers, and long-time REC volunteers to help students with their coursework, which improves grades around the school.

“We meet in the (GJHS) cafeteria Monday through



**REC students participate in many activities, one of which being paddleboarding. (Photos submitted by the REC program.)**

Thursday, from when the bell rings to 5:30 pm,” said Prussa.

But within the two hour time frame, REC isn’t just homework help, the roughly 65 active students are able to do activities such as structured art lessons or make over 500 Valentines cards to give to a local nursing home. And at the end of the day, students without a ride home can get a ride home from the program with the free REC bus.

Although it is not advertised as much as the other programs at GJHS, the important implementation of the REC program upon the GJHS community has become a source of extra learning and growth for the students involved. It gives students a better chance of getting help with homework, connecting with peers, and learning how to have a positive impact on the community around them.

To donate money or to enroll a student in REC, parents should go to [www.rec4kids.com](http://www.rec4kids.com).



**REC students take advantage of outside opportunities, including a hike up to Rifle Falls.**



# Speech and Debate team returns to GJHS

## Learning how to be a master debater

story by eli schultz

Grand Junction High School finished its first season back after not having a Speech and Debate team.

Kara Riddle, the speech and debate adviser and a teacher at GJHS, did Speech and Debate when she attended Central High School. She said it made her more confident and helped her come out of her shell in high school.

“It was one of the best things I did in high school and that’s why I started it up,” Riddle said.

The majority of students think that speech and debate is only meant for debate, but that is far from the truth.

Performing comedy, acting, and even performing your own Ted Talk in front of an audience are all available through Speech and Debate.

The debate side of Speech and Debate include different debate forms like the Lincoln-Douglas debate where two people argue for or against a resolution; Factual Public Forum which is a two-on-two debate argue for or against a resolution; Mock Congress where students draft and propose bills to debate and vote for in a congressional fashion, and many more.

Jerrik Wingerter, a GJHS sophomore and a member of the speech and debate team, said he did Public Forum, Impromptu, and Extemporaneous Speaking. All of which are speech and debate



**Sophomores Jessica Ford and Jerrik Wingerter show off their sixth and fifth place prizes at a Speech and Debate Tournament. Submitted Photo.**

categories.

Speech and Debate is also different from classes you can take at GJHS such as Forensics and International Forum because you are not competing in those classes.

“When you’re in those classes you learn the skills but aren’t actually competing,” said Riddle.

The Speech and Debate team is also looking for more members to join in the future.

“We tried posters and I was trying to talk to people in International Forum, but we just need more announcements on it,” Wingerter

said.

Riddle said she will no longer be working at GJHS due to her and her significant other moving to Delta.

“Myself and Mr. Woytek are trying to find someone interested [in running Speech and Debate],” said Riddle. Steve Woytek is the activities director at GJHS.

The new academy model coming to GJHS may also help with new members joining the team as students need to choose pathways that could involve speech and debate.

# Art Club Comics

## Editor's note:

In collaboration with the GJHS Art Club, the O&B is proud to print student created cartoons. If you are interested in contributing your artwork in a future edition, contact us.

comics by abigail young





# SAT/ PSAT has changed

## Tests will be online instead of using pencils and scantrons

story and photo by spencer **penkaty**

The PSAT/SAT will be taken online instead of what everyone has gotten used to on the scantrons.

The goal for this is to possibly cut down the time actually needed to take the tests as we will no longer have to fill out the bubble sheets with our name and grade.

GJHS assistant principal Jared Burek said, “The digital SAT is substantially shorter than the pencil paper one. the reading passages are shorter with one passage per a question.”

Even though it is shorter, Burek and GJHS Principal Jory Sorensen wanted to emphasize how important it is to bring a charged Chromebook to school on test day.

“Students need to bring their school Chromebook. They are not allowed to use a personal device,” said Burek. “You need to be prepared for the test by having your Chromebook charged for the day.”

“I kinda wish I got to take it online because my eyes don’t line up right so I bubbled in all the wrong answers,” said GJHS Senior Cloe Milton.

GJHS senior Tycen LeFebre agrees with Cloe that it’s a good choice to change to online. “I think as we go into a more modernized world, technology is just going to grow, and grow so it does make sense that they made that

transition. I think I’m mostly just curious about how they monitor it. How you can’t just open a second tab on your computer? as long as it’s heavily monitored. I think it’s fine.”

Junior J.P. Loggins likes the thought of having the test online. “I think it’s so much better that it will be online because I did the national merit scholarship thing and it was online. It’s easier, it’s faster, you’re able to stay awake and the passages are smaller. I think it’s going to be way better,” said Loggins.

For some of the other students there’s not much of a difference for them. Grand Junction High School junior Tycen Thomas said “Personally I like doing paper more because I get the right stuff down idk I just think it’s easier to do it on paper online seems more confusing. If it [ the online version] does make the test shorter I’d be willing to do that. My main concern would be sitting in front of the screen for that long.”

This year the SAT/PSAT will take place April 16 for freshmen taking the PSAT and juniors taking the SAT, then April 17 for the sophomores taking the PSAT. Students will have the day off that they are not testing. Seniors have both days off.



# Academic Team

Question: Nearly 90% of the cosmic rays entering Earth's atmosphere consist of what subatomic particles?

**The Answer:** Protons.

If you didn't know the answer to that, you're not alone but that's the kind of question GJHS' Academic Team has to be prepared to know the answer to.

GJHS' Academic Team history is almost completely victorious. According to varsity head coach and GJHS teacher Coady Shawcroft, it's all a matter of strategy.

"Really, it's figuring out: How do you learn? How do you learn to remember things long term? And then practicing that. Everybody does it a little bit differently. Overall, anybody can do this. It's space repetition," said Shawcroft.

Shawcroft's job as Head Coach is slightly complex. He has to be an expert in what will be asked; he has to be able to play and compete with them.

"I have to be good enough to be able to push them," said Shawcroft.

In addition to this, he has to monitor extraneous things to their success from making sure the team is well funded all the way to making sure the players have good sleeping habits/arrangements pre-tournament.

"It's a lot of different hats to wear," he added.

There's plenty that goes into the team's success, but a lot of it is personalized.

"Usually each team member will have a specific area that they're more specialized in so that when the team kind of comes together we have bits and pieces. Alex (Chang) is a math and science type of guy and I'm more literature, geography, and stuff," said varsity team captain senior Sam Guddat.

The members also each have their own means of practicing and preparing.

"For me studying involves reading as much Wikipedia as possible and using flashcards," said Guddat.

And some don't at all.

"Back when I was young I watched way too many educational videos. I should prepare, but I don't," said varsity team member senior Alexander Chang.

As for their practice as a team, it is very closely modeled to tournaments. The most important aspect of winning the game is being able to play it. It is very highly attributed to strategy after the players have picked up information from their daily classes.

"You can't really study until you know how to play the game, because the raw knowledge isn't as useful as the fundamentals," said JV and assistant coach and GJHS teacher Noah Schmidt.

Just like any other sport, you practice how you play. Luckily for Academic Team, they're always practicing against the best of the best. They practice against each other - the best team in the state - and often GJHS Academic Team alumni, who happen to be national champions.

"No other program can boast that. It's why a place like Junction [High School] can compete against schools that get private funding or schools that have to get in the 99th percentile of IQ scores," said Shawcroft.

The tournaments themselves begin with a written exam, which separates the teams into "rooms" based on knowledge level.

"People with the higher scores will be in the top room, then so on...The oral rounds will start, that's where they're asking you questions and you have to buzz in and answer. The rounds are 50 questions each. After each oral round, scores will be redistributed. Someone who got a poor written score in the second room might be able to jump up to the first room," said Guddat.

The team usually participates in 4-5 state level tournaments each year. The main tournament the

**ARTICLE continues on Page 19**



# kicks ass

story by **marie calkins**  
submitted photos

team looks forward to is the State Knowledge bowl, which has between 80-100 teams competing. GJHS is expected to win this, among other tournaments.

“Our Varsity is pretty much expected to win first place in state. If you’re not putting in the work, then you don’t really have a place,” said Schmidt.

In tournaments, the teams’ goals are to answer as many questions as possible, even if they’re guessing.

“The best players in the game will guess. You want to be guessing a majority of the time. For Knowledge Bowl in particular, half of your guesses for the best players should be right,” said Shawcroft.

“It is okay to be wrong, and it is expected. If you don’t buzz in or answer at all, you’d never get anything,” said Schmidt.

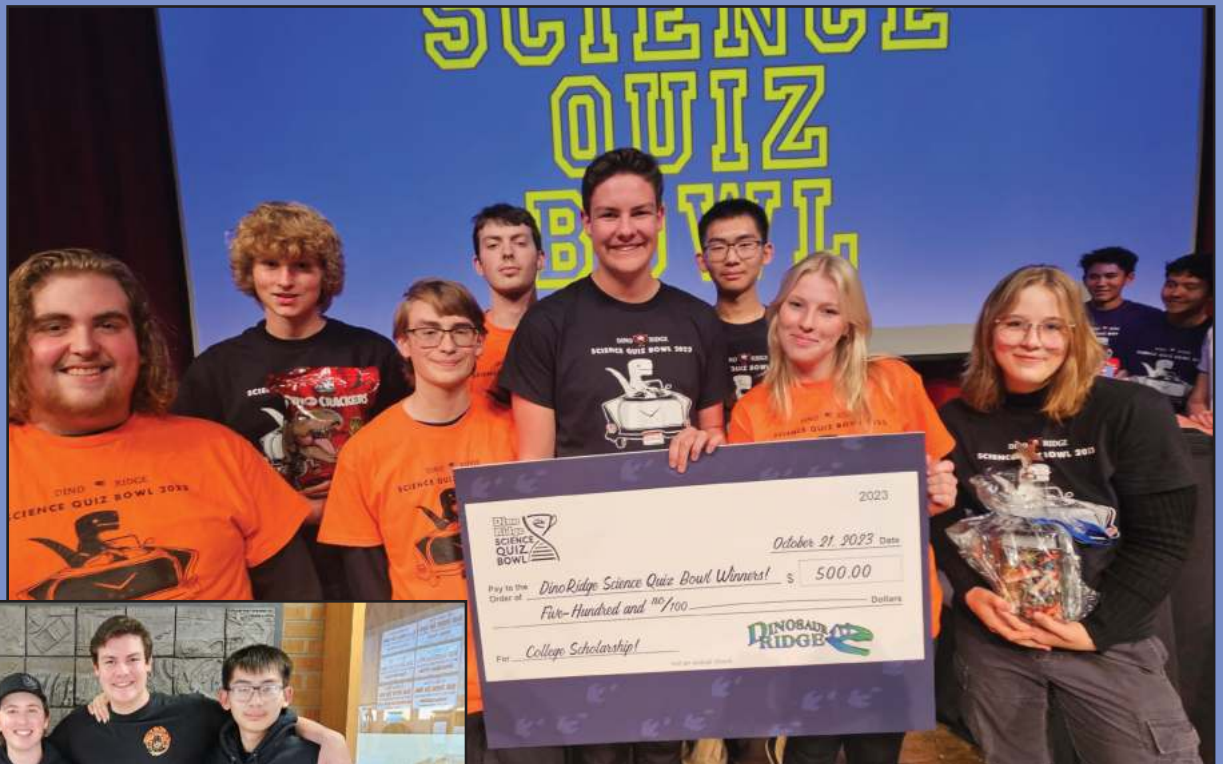
Both teams, JV and Varsity, are winners.

“Any tournament that has had a JV division, which I think there’s only been one, they have never lost versus other JVs, period. I am confident saying they are the best performing JV team in the state, beyond a shadow of a doubt in my mind,” said Schmidt, “most other tournaments, the JV places third or second next to our Varsity teams.”

GJHS’ Academic Team, as a unit, have the knowledge and most importantly, the strategies that lead them to their constant winning streak.

“You can’t be focused on the result, if you are, you’re going to fail every single time. You have to be focused on the process of playing well and being a good team member. If you do that, then well, you win state championships,” said Shawcroft.

Below, from left to right, Madeleine Kawasaki, Jamison Whiteford, Sam Guddat, Alex Chang



Above, from left to right, Max Wilson, Carter Reynolds, Neil Scott, Andrew Agredano, Sam Guddat, Alex Chang, Macy McComb, and Anna Stone Ewing receiving a check after winning the Dino-Ridge Science quiz bowl that was featured on PBS.



# Leadership At GJHS

## Leadership around Grand Junction High School

story by connor kinser

Leadership is something students at Grand Junction High School can witness everyday.

Whether it's your teachers showing it in the classroom or Principal Jory Sorensen on the announcements every day: Great leaders can be found anywhere.

"There are loads of incredible leaders that I've met through my life both in school and in Student Council. I've met people in school... But if I had to say the greatest leader ever I would have to say our parents are good parents that have led us into the people we are," said GJHS junior Brayan Caro Gaspar, who is a member of Student Council.

There are many definitions of leadership but the common ground in leadership is that a leader thinks of others.

"My definition of leadership would be somebody that puts the goal of the team or the group above themselves. Leadership puts everyone else ahead of them. They make sure others around them are successful and have the opportunity to be successful," said GJHS teacher Landon McKee. He teaches the school's new Champion Development class and is GJHS varsity football coach.

"For me, leadership is just the decision to take a responsibility to help and to guide others through any ways you can," Caro Gaspar said.

"Somebody that can handle multiple things at once and treat everyone the same," said GJHS junior and ALT (Advanced Leadership Team) member Kayla



**Senior Murphy Harris and juniors Joseph Salazar, Mason Anderson and Triston Rogers of the Advanced Leadership Team hype up fellow students at a school assembly. Photos by GJHS class of 2021 graduate Lilly Caldwell.**

Jakopic.

Leadership can also be a stressful position as there can be a lot going behind the scenes that people may not notice. According to global leadership data website, 65% of leaders experience burnout from being in a leadership position.

"If you're not ready for it and you don't prepare yourself for it mentally and to work through all the strife that can come about. Failure can come from not being able to do what you want to do. It can be really stressful, but I think if you chose to be a leader you probably do it for a reason and at the end of the day you can be happy that you help others," Caro Casper said.

Leadership also comes with a unique set of goals you can have.

"Depending on the scenario and the situation, an overarching goal as a leader would be to create the best possible culture and be the standard of that culture and always doing the right thing and being in the right

place," said McKee

Students looking to get into leadership programs may want to look into ALT, Student Council, Equity Club, Gay Straight Alliance, national honors society, Future Business Leaders of America, Academic team, Stuco, Art club, any sport and any other club at GJHS.

**ALT members senior Jordan Queen and junior Mason Anderson high fiving at freshman orientation.**





## PAID CONTENT

# STUDENT COUNCIL: Your Dance Money at Work

With three dances that students pay for throughout the school year, students may wonder where their money goes.

The Grand Junction Student Council, who organize the dances, use the money earned on many things that benefit the students of GJHS.

“Most of the money made from dances goes straight to other events throughout the school and eventually any money that’s left over is used for the graduating classes,” said StuCo Junior class representative Brayon Caro.

One major thing StuCo uses the money for is Homecoming activities, which includes permits for the downtown Main Street parade, food trucks, and this year hiring the Lost Junction Band to perform.

“They help make future events fun, and bring in fun things such as food trucks,” said

Freshman Lincoln Bavor, who is a representative in StuCo.

They also use the money for Mental Health Awareness Week, bringing in nationally recognized guest speakers.

StuCo also makes many donations to GJHS clubs and activities using the money to support groups like the Marching Band and Theater.

Many students around the school also feel that the money does benefit them and the school. This year StuCo decided to sponsor the two GJHS student publications, Tiger Yearbook and the Orange & Black newspaper.

Graduating classes get the remainder of the money, with the purchase of diploma covers, free movie nights, and springfest game rentals.

“I feel that the money does benefit Grand Junction High School students,” said junior Isaiah Pingleton.

### Money Spent:

Homecoming Afterparty with The Lost Junction band  
Free food trucks for students at Homecoming Afterparty  
Permits and Traffic Control for Homecoming Parade  
Dr. Laymon Hicks, nationally-recognized guest speaker for Mental Health Awareness Week  
Dr. Julia Garcia, nationally-recognized guest speaker for Mental Health Awareness Week  
Gift Cards Donation to “Happier Holidays” Project for GJHS students  
Financial donation to GJHS Theater Department for Stage Equipment  
Financial donation to Academic Team  
Financial donation to Marching Band  
Financial donation to Choir  
Financial donation to Mock Trial Team  
Financial donation to Theater  
Purchase of 2023 Graduation Diploma Covers  
Free Movie Nights with Concessions for Student Staff Holiday and Year-End Coffee and Donuts  
Springfest Game rentals

### Sponsorships:

Orange and Black  
Tiger Yearbook

**Students wave their hands in the air while celebrating at the homecoming dance.**



- Written and designed by Alex Kirch & Landon Ward

# Female spotlight: Wrestling and swim/dive

## Two often overlooked sports of GJHS

story and photo by **miah hines**

**T**iger girls swim and dive as well as D51 Phoenix girls wrestling are two under-recognized female sports at Grand Junction High School.

“I don’t think girls wrestling is very recognized around GJHS and I think it’s kind of mocked. I don’t think that they realized that the girls work just as hard if not harder than the boys ... I just wish we were out there more,” said GJHS sophomore wrestler Rya Burke.

The Phoenix wrestling coach is Chad Dare. The combined School District 51 team is scheduled through Central High School and has 36 total girls wrestling. Six are from GJHS: Sophomores Burke, Aubriel Gullen and Mercedes Miller; junior Emily Trichel, and freshmen Azzariyah Truitt and Luna Williams.

The girls wrestling regional tournament was held the weekend of Feb. 9. Sending GJHS’ very own Miller to the state competition.

The girls swim and dive team also sent a number of athletes to the state meet last season.

**GJHS junior Kylee Mull, in Lane 4, dives into the pool at the regional competition held on Feb. 3 at Colorado Mesa University.**

The swim and dive team of three different schools, grand junction, palisade, and caprock academy, has the joint mascot of the tigers.

GJHS has seven girls from Junction including juniors Gracie Folkers, Abbi Wilson and Kylee Mull, sophomores Natalie Colombe and Stephanie Shambiln, and freshmen Charlee Bray and Madalyn Dietrich.

Four tiger swimmers qualified for the state meet in the Southwestern League meet at the El Pomar Natatorium at CMU on Saturday Feb. 3 including Mull, Emily Hardin, Abby Price, and Elli Dorr.

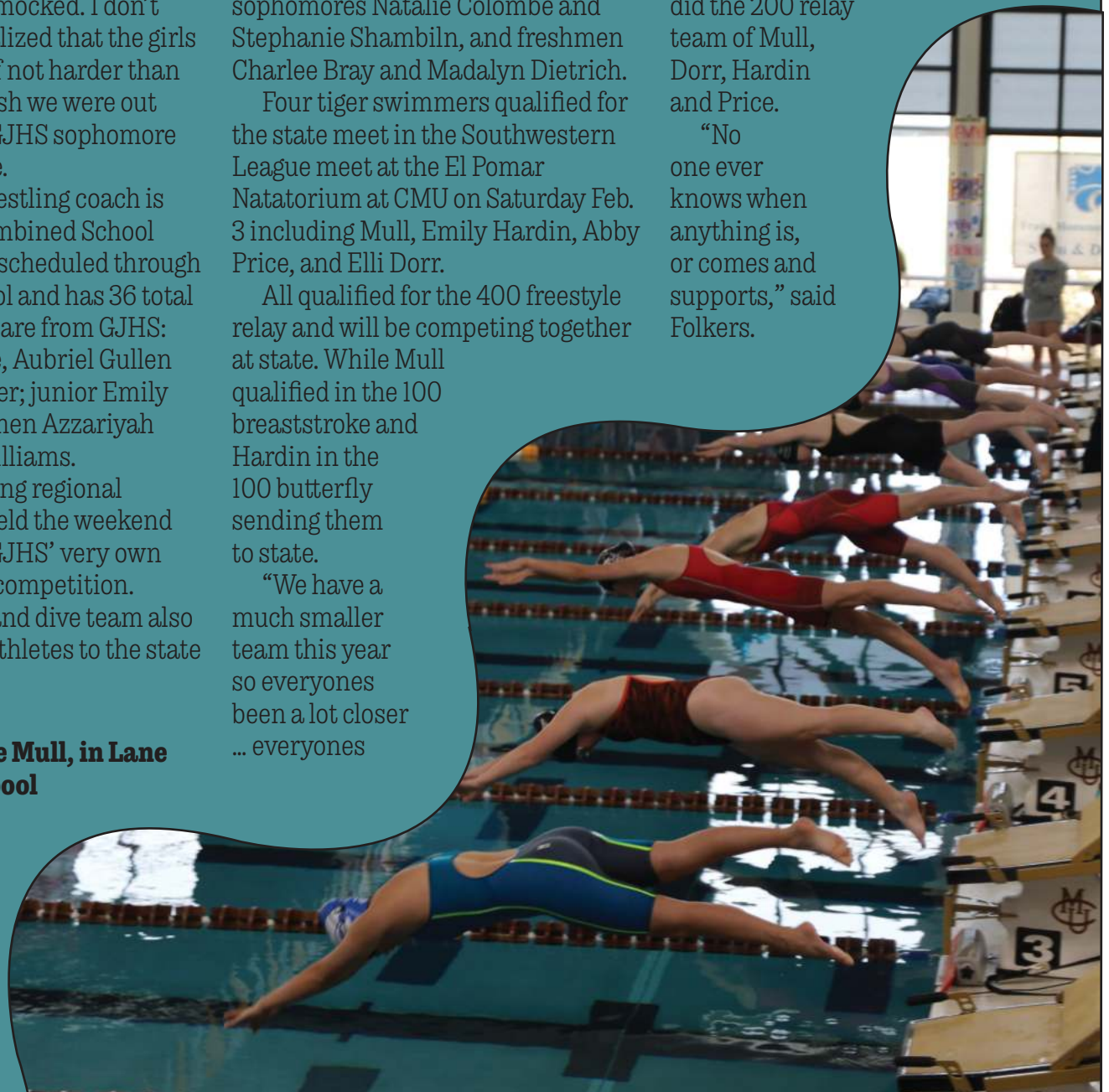
All qualified for the 400 freestyle relay and will be competing together at state. While Mull qualified in the 100 breaststroke and Hardin in the 100 butterfly sending them to state.

“We have a much smaller team this year so everyone’s been a lot closer ... everyone’s

pretty dedicated,” said GJHS junior Gracie Folkers.

During the second day of the CHSAA girls 4A/5A state championship, Mull placed 19th in the 100-yard breaststroke to advance to finals, as did the 200 relay team of Mull, Dorr, Hardin and Price.

“No one ever knows when anything is, or comes and supports,” said Folkers.





# Club brings together Christian

## Athletes

Meeting every Thursday during lunch, FCA brings a message of faith to every meeting

story and photo by lance herald

Fellowship of Christian Athletes club offers a safe and fun community for students to bond, share their faith and have fun.

Grand Junction High School has many clubs that students participate in, one of these clubs is the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA). This club is advertised as a group for students who want to bring the word of Christ into both their sports and day to day lives. The high schools FCA club meets in room 209 during lunch every Thursday where students enjoy snacks, games and group prayers. Senior members Jordan Queen and Lincoln Forkner share the main goals for the high school's FCA club.

"The idea is that we take the athletes on campus and we show them a way to where they can take their sports, their careers or whatever it is and bring Jesus to the center of it—our goal is just to bring Jesus on to campus and tell as many people as we can about him," said Forkner.

Despite Queen and Forkners estimate that FCA at the school was typically around ten people each meet, outside of the highschool FCA is quite big.

FCA was founded by Don McClanen in 1954, and currently has clubs in 115 different countries. According to FCA's official website "Statement of Faith," some of their group rules include, "We believe there is only one God who eternally exists in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (Matthew 28:19)" and "We believe that acceptance of Jesus Christ and the corresponding renewal of the Holy Spirit is the only path to salvation for lost/sinful men and women (John 3:16; John 5:24; Titus 3:3-7)."

In the second to last section of the statement it states, "We believe that in rejecting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, we receive eternal suffering in hell. (Matthew 25:31-46; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)." This quote to some may seem extreme but Grand Junction High School math teacher Russell Gregory sheds light on what the verse could truly mean.

"Hell is described as the separation from God, so it's not that Hell is like you're being sent somewhere, Hell is you are being removed from God's presence," said Gregory.

According to Gregory, christian students on campus face challenges such as peer pressure to use profanity, have sex, or use drugs. FCA allows for a safe place to talk about these struggles. FCA flags scattered around the school with the blue and gold logo, members hope for a bright future for the club.

"As their on campus they talk about some of the difficulties of what being a Christian might be like and what are some challenges they face with peer pressure and some of those things of just trying to live life differently, and so they are trying to build and expanded the group of reaching people but they are also trying to build eachother up," said Gregory.

FCA considers themselves a safe space for many, they encourage anyone who is interested to join their weekly meets, have fun, and help build a community for students of Christian faith here at GJHS.



**Students listen to instructions for a fun game. One of the students sports a shirt with a message to all, Grand Junction High School, Room 209.**

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