

FUTURE COMES INTO FOCUS

Curriculum specialists to replace department heads; staff unsure change is needed

Paula Gutierrez Martinez
news editor

Central High School will transition from department heads to curriculum specialists for the 2026-27 school year.

Omaha Public Schools staff in curriculum instruction and support, school improvement and talent services worked with Central Principal Dionne Kirksey to reach the decision, with the goal of improving attendance, graduation and on-track rates, among other metrics.

In the middle of the 2025-26 school year, 34.9% of students were off-track for graduation. Of the 2,382 students enrolled in the first semester, 21.70% were at moderate risk for chronic absenteeism, and 35.10% were severely absent, meaning they were absent for at least 20% of class time.

Regarding the decision, Kirksey said, "I have to look at where we are, but most importantly, I need to look at where we need to go and how we need to close stuff."

Although the decision is meant to improve Central's learning environment, teacher concerns about potential drawbacks run high, as do doubts about the necessity of the change.

Department heads differ from curriculum specialists in that they teach a partial schedule. The other portion of their workload is devoted to coaching visits, teacher observations and evaluations, managing the departmental budget and annual teaching schedule. Beyond the work they do within their own departments, department heads attend department head, administrative and district-level meetings. They also work with experts in curriculum instruction.

Central has 14 department heads and will have six curriculum specialists next year. Of the six, three are current department heads: English department head Jon Flanagan, social studies department head Jimmie Foster, and International Baccalaureate Programme

Director Paul Nielson. Dr. Christy Flaherty-Colling, who will oversee science next year, is the current pathways and special projects coordinator.

The other future curriculum specialists are music teacher Jeff Mount and Jillian Roger, who is currently a social studies teacher at Marian High School. Special Education and the English Learner departments will keep their department heads.

A common teacher concern is that the condensing of departments could lead to less subject-specific support if the curriculum specialist doesn't have a background in a subject under their purview.

"When I became a high school teacher, I had to take a methods and practices class in English and in history. So, I had to learn the best practices to instruct young people in those subject areas, and they were not the same. They were two separate classes," social studies teacher Casey Denton said.

Foster, who will be stepping into a curriculum specialist role overseeing social studies, world languages and physical education, touched on these concerns while addressing the unique challenges he predicted from the transition.

"I've been social studies through and through since I've been in this building, and so it would probably be hard to not think social studies first," he said. "That'll probably be something that I'll have to keep reminding myself about."

OPS Chief Talent Officer Dr. Collette Nero acknowledged that a curriculum specialist may not have a depth of knowledge across all subjects but maintains that the instruction they provide is more geared towards best educational practices, regardless of subject.

"Teachers are experts in their content. And we have, at the district level, teaching and learning consultants that have the content knowledge. The curriculum specialist is really looking at how do we make the curriculum come alive and how do they support teachers



Math teacher Brent Larson teaches a class of sophomores. IZABELLA KAMMERER | The Register

in doing that," Nero said.

Nero stressed that teacher support always involves a collaborative learning process. In cases where a curriculum specialist must provide subject-specific instruction, similar resources are available, such as teaching and learning consultants or university partnerships. Principals without expertise in certain content areas also utilize these resources for training.

OPS does not typically encourage or recommend one educational model over another, Nero said. Instead, district officials discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each model and felt that Central would benefit from the switch because the department heads' split duties limit the support available at Central. Central is the only OPS high school with department heads.

"When you look across the district at the different models that are in place, you want to make sure each school has adequate resources and we're providing a consistent experience across our schools," Nero said. "We wanted to

make sure that Central has the benefit of that additional support on their leadership team."

Science teacher Matt Hamill does not believe the change to curriculum specialists is related to scores.

"If you were making the decision related to scores academically, Central High has been and continues to be the top academic school in OPS," he said.

According to the data from the state of Nebraska, Central has consistently outperformed the district's average in graduation rates and ACT proficiency. In the 2024-2025 school year, Central's graduation rate surpassed the district-wide average by 3.5%. The percentage of Central students who met the ACT benchmarks on English Language Arts, mathematics and science was more than 75% higher than the district average for each of the tests. For example, 20.78% of Central students met the ACT benchmark for ELA, which is 86% higher than the 11.16% of students across the district.

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OPS, teachers union finalize formal agreement

Connie Moenning
staff writer

Omaha Public Schools and the Omaha Education Association finalized a one-year agreement in March that updated staff salary, leave and benefits. New policies and changes to existing policies will be in effect throughout the 2026-2027 school year. Some of these effects may also bleed into following school years.

The primary motives behind the agreement were to keep OPS and the OEA up to date on certain policies pertaining to salary and benefits. Their focus was towards providing additional compensation. A notable change being that special education teachers will receive an additional 10% of the base teacher pay, and deans will receive 15%.

OPS Chief Talent Officer Dr. Collette

Nero said that these policy updates would be centered around staff.

"Our goal is just that we continue to invest in teachers, make sure we stay competitive and provide a proposal that we can come to an agreement on," Nero said. What would've normally been a longer agreement, lasting two or three years, was ultimately shortened to only one year to account for current financial concerns after the state of Nebraska announced it would reduce state aid to the district due to overpaying for the 2025-26 school year.

"One of the biggest things that we will spend time doing next year is collaborating on the following year," Nero said.

Central social studies teacher and OEA member, Jordan Boyer spoke about the length of the agreement and how that related to the recent issues with funding. Because of the

error the district wasn't able to provide the salary changes that were desired, causing the OEA to be less likely to accept a longer agreement.

"Then the OEA would be agreeing to that short pay bump for three years instead of just one year," Boyer said.

Another Central teacher and OEA member Deron Larson said he isn't expecting many significant changes in the 2026-27 school year.

"The changes, as I understand them, that will make the greatest impact will be a greater responsibility for employees to pay for their healthcare," Larson said.

The agreement also included a clause that will shorten the student school day by 20 minutes during the 2027-28 school year but not the teacher work day.



Deron Larson teaches an English class in room 240.

JULIUS WAKOLE | The Register

News

Central track champ returns to teach p. 3 / pagina 3

Wayne Reynolds, a three-time state track champion, has returned to Central as an English teacher.

Opinion

Winter weather is concerning p. 5 / pagina 5

The weather Nebraska has experienced in the last two months could signal something more serious happening on this Earth.

Arts & Culture

"Project Hail Mary," two perspectives p. 8 / pagina 8

Two Register writers offer two different perspectives on newly released sci-fi movie. One has read the book, the other has not.

Sports

Central holds first Unified basketball game p. 11 / pagina 11

In the first game of its kind at Central, Unified athletes were able to participate in front of students.

Two Central staff members to retire at end of school year with Kirksey

Steven Dickerson
editor-in-chief

After decades of combined service, Dean of Students William Canney and English teacher Marcella Mahoney will retire from Central High School at the conclusion of the 2025-26 school year. The two educators are the only staff members retiring this year beyond Principal Dionne Kirksey, having shaped the lives of countless students and leaving behind strong legacies.

Canney has served as dean of students for all of his 18 years at Central. Before arriving, he taught at North High School for three years, spent four years at York University and six years teaching in Texas. When a dean position opened at Central, he said the decision was straightforward.

“I wanted to move up into administration,” Canney said.

Mahoney’s connection to Central runs even deeper. She has taught English at Central for 29 years. She has spent 33 years with OPS, which includes her time at Norris Middle School prior to joining CHS. Her path to Central began during her freshman year at Creighton University, when an introductory education course required her to complete classroom observation hours in Terrie Saunders’ Honors English class at Central.

“I was instantly impressed by the students and the effort they put into their work as well as their preparation for class,” Mahoney said. A later course with legendary English department chair Dan Daly cemented her goal. “I knew that my end-goal in teaching was to return to Central.”

Despite their different roles, both said the most rewarding part of their careers has been watching students develop over time. For Canney, that meant seeing freshmen grow and get their diploma four years later.

“I’m proud watching freshmen mature into seniors and then watching them graduate,” he said.

For Mahoney, the rewards have come in a different form: handwritten notes and emails from former students, sometimes arriving years after graduation. She said she has received close to a hundred such messages crediting her writing instruction as pivotal to their college and career experiences.



Left: English teacher Marcella Mahoney teaches a class. Right: Dean of Students William Canney interacts with a student in the hallway.

NEVEAH WILSON | The Register

“I treasure the friendships I’ve made with colleagues and the ‘years-later’ thank you notes from students the most,” Mahoney said. “Our staff is made up of incredible humans.”

“She is an icon; she is Central English,” said Anna Wiksell, a fellow English teacher.

Both have also witnessed Central change considerably during their tenures. Canney pointed to shifts in student needs since the COVID-19 pandemic, noting that a larger share of students now require additional support than in years past.

“Overall, since COVID, they’ve become more needy. Not everybody, but there’s a much larger group than what we used to see,” Canney said. He also noted that certain behavioral patterns have grown more consistent as well, such as skipping. Mahoney agreed.

“Passing periods between classes used to be so loud and crowded with students catching up with each other, stopping at their lockers to get their books,” Mahoney said. “During class, there was virtually no one but the security guards and office student-aides in the halls. That is sure different now.”

When asked what they will miss most, both pointed to the people around them. Canney cited the relationships built over nearly two decades at Central.

“I’ll miss the students, I’ll miss the parents and of course the teachers and colleagues that I have grown close to,” Canney said.

Mahoney, who has taught exclusively freshmen for the past five years, said she will

miss watching those students grow across their time at Central, and plans to visit when her schedule allows.

“I have especially enjoyed several of my ninth graders this year on Team Crandell,” Mahoney said.

For the next dean, Canney emphasized patience and the importance of personal connection with students.

“Commit to this with an open mind and be very patient but work on creating relationships with kids so that the behaviors don’t exist,” Canney said.

Mahoney’s advice was pointed. She urged staff to trust their own expertise and push back when policies don’t serve students.

“You are a degreed professional who knows your subject and your students better than anyone else in the building and in the district offices,” Mahoney said. “Never hesitate to challenge or question policies, programs, or procedures when they are not in the best interest of preparing students to grow academically and demonstrate personal responsibility.”

In retirement, Canney said his priority was rest. He and his son, both originally from Texas, are considering moving back at some point, though he said it is not in the immediate future.

Mahoney, by contrast, is not stepping away from teaching at all. She will teach eighth grade English Language Arts at St. Patrick Catholic School in Elkhorn next year,

returning to her eighth-grade teaching roots.

“While I am retiring from Omaha Public Schools, I am not retiring from teaching,” Mahoney said. “In a way, I will be returning to where I started my career, which was teaching eighth grade at Norris Middle School. I’m excited for the challenges that will be part of this new chapter.”

Both said that despite the demands of their careers, they have no regrets. When asked whether becoming a dean was worth it, Canney did not hesitate.

“Definitely worth it, for sure,” Canney said. He recalled seeing former students in public years after graduation. He noted their success is a reminder of why he pursued the role in the first place.

“I see kids out in public after they graduate, and they will come up to me,” Canney said. “I’m hoping that they are successful.”

Mahoney echoed that sentiment, pointing to the enduring strength of the department she helped build. She said it saddens her that department head positions have been eliminated across Central, but she expressed confidence in the English department’s future under future curriculum specialist and current department head Jon Flanagan.

“The CHS English Department is the cornerstone of our school, and I will always consider it an honor to have been part of it,” Mahoney said. “We are definitely in good hands with him at the helm.”

LEADERSHIP from page 1

However, Central’s chronic absenteeism rate has increased annually by around 2% from 50.95% in 2020-21 to 58.88% in 2024-25. In contrast, the district-wide rate has remained stagnant at just under 40%.

“I think Central is outstanding. And I think Central has had a lot of historic traditions and systems and institutions that have allowed it to maintain a certain standard of excellence around its time. And I think the department head model is one of those things,” Denton said.

Nero is unsure that the department head model is a direct contributing factor to Central’s academic outperformance of other OPS high schools.

“Imagine if Central does have additional individuals that are focused full-time on that, they’re able to dig into that data because everyone has room to grow. So even if [Central is] performing better than other schools, there’s still a lot of room for growth,” Nero said.

Eric Behrens, who will be Central’s principal next year, worked with curriculum specialists as an assistant principal for three years at Westview High School.

“If things are aligned properly and use the position the way that is meant to be used, it can be a tremendous asset to students and to your classroom,” he told the Register in a March 25 article.

From an administrative perspective, math department head Brent Larson understands why a curriculum specialist model may be more beneficial.

“If I had a teacher that I needed to go in and observe or a teacher to go in and help, right now, my only blocks that are open are first and fourth block. If there was a teacher that needed help during second or third block, I’m tied up and I can’t help,” Larson said.

Larson did not apply for a curriculum specialist position because of how much he enjoys being in the classroom. Science department head Tracy Rumbaugh opted out for similar reasons.

“As a person in the [department head position], it gets harder every year to do my job and split my time equally between the two positions and to split the way I’m thinking equally about the two positions. So, in that sense, I support it. But on the no side, I truly believe in the department head philosophy,” Rumbaugh said.

Teachers like Hamill and Denton acknowledge that curriculum specialists would recognize good teaching practices regardless of their background, but they maintain the superiority of the department head model because department heads actively teach in classrooms.

“Our department heads, part of what makes them so great is because they’re in

the classroom. And because they are in the classroom every single day, that gives them a greater empathy and understanding,” Hamill said.

In a survey of Central staff, respondents indicated the methods they thought would be most effective at bringing about the changes the district hopes to achieve with the switch to curriculum specialists. The most popular was modifying the student schedule into a nine-period or modified block schedule, which Central will have next year. Other solutions included increased accountability of students and parents over attendance and more teacher support without unnecessary restrictions.

Foster was strongly in favor of keeping the current model in place. However, once it became clear that Central would transition to curriculum specialists, he applied for the position because he wanted to ensure that Central would head in a direction that continued to help Central and its students.

Foster thinks his curriculum specialist job will have some added responsibilities, but he is

unsure about the nature of those responsibilities. He empathized with teacher concerns about less subject-specific support.

“I think that’s something that can’t be answered. You just probably have to wait and see how it goes and keep adapting as you hit each situation,” he said.



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It is the goal of the Central High Register to represent the student body in issues affecting their lives as young people and students. If you feel that we are not covering an issue that is important to you, we welcome contributing writers who bring fresh ideas to the issues. If you would like to write a story for your student newspaper, please contact Broderick Hilgenkamp at broderick.hilgenkamp@ops.org or come to room 029 to discuss your idea.

The battle of senior year returns for class of 2026

Bri Martinez
staff writer

Senior assassin brings the senior class together in a fun way. It is a senior year tradition that's all over social media and played in many schools.

At Central, students are playing the game through an app called Splashin. Information is given on Instagram explaining the rules, videos of those who were eliminated and redemption challenges.

There is a cash prize for the last one standing. As of April 24, the current pot is \$507 and there are 6 people remaining. The cash prize comes from the \$5 entry fee and paid redemptions.

In the game, contestants are assigned a target each round without the target know-

ing who they are, and they must shoot them with a water gun while catching it on camera. Redemption challenges are tasks or games an eliminated player does in order to get back into the game.

"I think it's really cool, it brings the senior class together. There's people you wouldn't normally see together teaming up and playing," said senior Tessa Fershee, who manages the game.

The main issue students could have before joining is privacy.

"At school you can't get someone out or anywhere school related... on the clock at work is safe, there's safety items like goggles and pool floaties," Fershee said.

If anyone is worried about their opponent wearing their safety items all the time, there

are purge days, which are basically a free-for-all day.

"On purge days the goggles and floaties don't count, so people don't get stuck not being able to get their opponent," Fershee said.

Fershee helped manage the game last year as a junior and is continuing to help this year while participating. The only thing she can't do is see everyone else's targets.

Anna Moeller is a junior and the admin on the app. She knows everyone's target and helps run the Instagram as well.

"My sister was a senior last year, so I knew about it and Tessa reached out to me this year to help run it," Moeller said.

Moeller hopes to participate next year as a senior.

"I think it's a cool experience for the se-

niors in their last couple months at school, it's just something fun that's partly in school and out," Moeller said.

Madeline Miller is a senior and joined the game as soon as it started.

"I joined because it's such a big thing on social media. I thought it would be really fun, and my friend had joined it, so I might as well," Miller said.

Miller had the game strategized by keeping a floaty on one arm, which acted as a shield the first few rounds. But then she got out, and her "tragedy" was posted on April 12 on the Instagram account.

"It was almost twelve in the morning, I was just getting home, and he ran up on me at my porch. I did not know it was my senior assassin. I was so scared," Miller said.

Former hurdles champ returns to The Nest as English teacher

Haydee Olvera
contributing writer

Wayne Reynolds is a 1999 Central graduate and track champion now teaching and coaching at his alma mater.

He is a three-time state champion and holds Central's 300-meter hurdles record. He won first place in his senior year in the 300-meter intermediate hurdles with the time of 38.56 seconds, also winning first place in the 110-meter-high hurdles, timing in at 14.28 seconds. In his junior year, he won first place in the 110-meter-high hurdles at 14.54 seconds.

Reynolds also won the 110-meter USA track and field master's outdoor championships in the 40s age category in 2022.

Born in Atlanta, Georgia, he moved to Omaha in the 80s and went to Central High School and later studied at the University of South Dakota. He studied business, but over time switched to teaching since he was more interested in teaching because he loves to inspire others.

He was also coaching during 2019 but had to pause because of the pandemic. After the pandemic, he was named the head boy's track coach during the 2023-24 school year.

In addition to being the track coach, in

January he returned to Central as an English teacher for freshmen and seniors.

He said that teaching is more fulfilling to him than anything he has done in the corporate world, as he gets to shape better connections around the school with students and other teachers. He is appreciated by students and others and takes pride in being a Central Eagle.

"I mean, I've had people offer me food just because I wore a Central hat," Reynolds said.

Jodie Martinez was his English teacher when he was in high school. She said he was an outgoing student and known for a lot for good reasons, and she's glad to have him back.

"To have a former Central student who graduated from Central come back here, you know they've got their heart in the right place," Martinez said.

Reynolds was known for being involved in things making the community around him improve, Martinez said.

"He would like to get involved with things, and make things better, and just be an active part of the whole school scene. And he was very popular, like almost all the kids knew who he is and for a good reason," Martinez said.



Wayne Reynolds teaches an English class.

HAYDEE OLVERA | The Register

Gallery: A purple tradition

Purple Feather Day took place at Seemann Stadium on Tuesday, April 14. All photos by Julius Wakole.



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class of 2026

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TIMES HAVE CHANGED

Success is not the same anymore!

| Caprice McCoy
opinion editor

For a long time, success after high school followed a simple formula: graduate, get a job or go to college, and eventually build a stable life. That expectation still exists, but it feels harder to reach than ever.

Rising costs, limited wages, and a more competitive job market have made financial stability feel less like a next step and more like an aspiration. Even when students do everything “right,” the outcome does not always match what they were promised.

A big part of this comes down to how the economy actually works right now. Everything is more expensive — rent, food, tuition — but wages have not kept up in a way that makes any of it feel manageable. Because of that,

saving money has become increasingly difficult, especially for younger generations. What makes this more frustrating is that it is not due to a lack of effort.

According to the Bank of America Institute, a majority of Gen Z considers saving money a top financial priority, yet many still struggle to build meaningful savings. It is not that young people are not trying — it is that the cost of living simply makes it difficult to get ahead in the first place.

At the same time, basic expenses continue to take up a significant portion of income. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, housing is one of the largest expenses for Americans, often consuming a substantial share of monthly income. When most of what you earn goes toward necessities, saving stops being a realistic goal and becomes more of a

luxury.

The job market does not make it any easier. “Entry level” positions often require experience that students have not had the chance to gain yet. According to the National Association of Colleges and Employers, many employers expect prior experience even for entry-level roles, making it harder for new graduates to break into the workforce.

Internships and side jobs are supposed to help, but not everyone can afford to work for little or no pay just to build experience. It stops being about effort and rather about who has the opportunity to get ahead early.

There is also a clear disconnect between what younger people are experiencing and what older generations expect, also known as generation discrepancy. Advice like “just work harder” or “start from the bottom” does not

fully match the reality of today’s economy. The structure has changed, even if the expectations have not.

That gap can make it seem like the problem is individual effort, when in reality, the system itself has shifted.

This does not mean success is impossible. People will still find opportunities, build careers, and create stability for themselves. But the path is no longer as straightforward or accessible as it once was. It takes more time, more money, and more effort just to reach the same level of security that used to be expected.

For many students, graduation is no longer the start of something stable. It is the beginning of figuring out how to navigate a system that feels harder to enter, and even harder to succeed in.

What is up with this weather?

| Eduardo Torreblanca
staff writer

This past winter has been more erratic when it comes to the weather, for example on March 15 it snowed and four days later, all the snow was gone, and it was 79 degrees. Around three out of those four days a blizzard happened between the High Plains and Great Lakes where Wisconsin experienced more than 2 feet of snow, and a state of emergency was declared. Other states also saw similar conditions. Rain, snow, sleet, freezing rain and hail even fell in southern Wisconsin.

Throughout the years, I’ve heard people say that the Midwest and Nebraska weather can be “bipolar” at times, where one day it could be snowing and 80 degrees the next. I think that now we can actually see the “bipo-

lar” weather happen in real time.

Don’t believe me? Let me list another example. On March 11, the day before conferences, I woke up to snow on the ground. When I got to class, I heard Kelsey Porter, my teacher for AP English Language & Composition, say, “I didn’t know it was going to snow today,” if my memory serves correctly.

The three days before, March 8, 9, and 10, were 75, 78, and 73 respectively. As a cherry on top, on March 12 it was 67 and all the snow from the previous day was gone. Isn’t that weird? In the past, it was consistently cold with an occasional warm day which usually meant that severe weather would follow suit the same day.

This isn’t an isolated event; there are many similar instances of this happening in the rest of March and February, one in

January and even recently in April. Usually, the average high temperature in March is 52, February 38.6 and January is 33.6. But this year, March’s average high was 63, February’s was 50, and January’s was 34.8. January is close to average, but March and February look like rides on the rollercoaster.

On March 21, believe it or not, it was 96 and it beat “the day’s previous record [March 20 was 87] by a significant nine degrees and beating the month’s all time warmest temp by an amazing five degrees” according to the National Weather Service’s Omaha/Valley office.

On a similar note, to the weather, did you know that in 2025, mosquitoes were spotted for the first time in Iceland? Usually, Iceland is one of the very few safe havens from mosquitoes due to its climate and high latitude. But not anymore.

Back in the U.S., the snowpack of the mountains of Colorado has been “the lowest snowpack in more than 40 years – and possibly ever” due to warmer winter days, according to Russ Schumacher of Colorado State University. As another cherry on top, the snowpack from the mountains melts into the waterways, for example the Colorado River, which other states, including Colorado itself, use as a source of water.

Combine those two with other factors, like drought, and you have a water crisis and the battle for water access.

Slightly off topic, when I was in Colorado for three days during spring break, it was warm enough that I didn’t need to wear my jacket around.

My only guess for this? Climate change and global warming.

029’s watchdog has bittersweet view of end of the year

| Charli Tobin
sports editor

Inside room 029, while The Register staff has been hard at work, there has been one unseen hidden worker who keeps us all on track: Dr. Eric. Swartzlander, Central student journalism’s very own watchdog.

I had the lucky opportunity to interview the esteemed doctor. Though he is a dog of very few words, he gave some wise quotes to share with all the readers.

“Woof woof bark,” Swartzlander said.

Although the Register regularly translates articles into Spanish, we cannot translate Swartzlander’s wise words. We do have it on good authority that he is a good boy, and he is saying good and wise things about what he sees in the room.

Swartzlander did have something to say about the ongoing war between the Register and the Flies. The battle between the Flies and the Register has been ongoing and constant. With the Flies somehow always finding a way into room 029 no matter what the staff does to keep them at bay.

“Bark Woof Bark, Bark, Woof Bark,” Swartzlander said.

What an insightful take on the constant battle.

This is the first time he will be seeing the seniors leave who he saw throughout all four years in the room. He is very emotional, but is excited for the future of The Register will always carry on despite most staff being on

Swartzlander will miss the seniors deeply, and he knows the seniors will also miss the Register, but we all know the Register is in good hands.

Charli Tobin
Sports Editor

for only two or three years. But seeing the intro and first year staffers work and contribute to the Register, he knows the seniors will be leaving the future of the oldest student newspaper west of the Mississippi River in good hands.

Finally, we had the Esteemed Doctor point out his favorite staffer and he selected... drumroll please...Yours truly, Charli Tobin!

Though it was a very tough decision. Swartzlander will miss the seniors deeply, and he knows the seniors will also miss the Register, but we all know the Register is in good hands.



Dr. Eric Swartzlander is named after journalism adviser Brody Hilgenkamp’s college journalism professors. BRADLEY SMITH | The Register

Why have the recent generations lost their fondness for writing?

Caprice McCoy
opinion editor

Somewhere between five-paragraph essays, discussion boards, and strict word counts, writing stopped feeling personal. For a lot of students, it is no longer something they turn to because they want to. It is something they put off until the last minute because it feels like just another assignment. What used to be a way to express thoughts, tell stories, or make sense of emotions has slowly become something tied to grades, deadlines, and pressure.

A big part of that shift comes from the way writing is taught in schools. From an early age, students are introduced to formulas: topic sentences, thesis statements, transitions, conclusions. While structure is important, it can also make writing feel less like expression and more like following instructions. Over time, students learn how to write for approval rather than for themselves. Instead of asking what they want to say, they start asking what sounds right, what will earn the best grade, or what their teacher wants to hear. The result is that writing becomes less about what they learned and more about performance.

At the same time, the way people consume information has changed. Social media has made everything faster. Thoughts are shortened into captions, opinions are turned into short videos, and attention spans are constantly being pulled in different directions. Writing requires patience. It requires sitting with an idea long enough to understand it, shape it, and put it into words. In a world built around speed and instant reactions, that kind of reflection can start to feel

unfamiliar.

There is also something vulnerable about writing that people do not talk about enough. To write honestly means to reveal something about the way you think, what you notice, or what matters to you. That can feel uncomfortable, especially now, when so much of life feels performative.

It is easier to stay detached, ironic, or vague than to risk sounding too emotional or too sincere. In that way, losing our love for writing may also reflect broader discomfort with slowing down and being fully present with ourselves.

That does not mean the desire to express oneself is gone. People still journal, write notes in their phones, create stories online, and pour themselves into captions, comments, and messages. The need to communicate is still there. What has changed is the environment around writing. Somewhere along the way, something meaningful started to feel mechanical.

Writing is not dead, and neither is the love people once had for it. It is just buried under pressure, distraction, and the feeling that everything needs to be useful. Maybe the problem is not that people have less to say. Maybe it is that they have forgotten what it feels like to write without worrying about who is going to read it.

If the goal is to rebuild students' relationship with writing, the way it is taught must shift. Structure and technical skill are important, but they should not come at the cost of voice and creativity.

Classrooms could benefit from making more space for low-pressure writing — journaling, personal responses, or creative pieces that are



Cheyenne Rowell works on her English work in study hall room 117. IZABELLA KAMMERER | The Register

not graded as strictly as formal essays.

When students are given the opportunity to write without constantly worrying about meeting a rubric, they are more likely to reconnect with writing as a form of expression rather than just an assignment.

At the same time, allowing more choice

in topics can make writing feel more relevant, giving students the ability to explore ideas they actually care about.

Writing should not only teach students how to communicate effectively but also give them the space to discover what they want to say in the first place.



Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat, YouTube, Facebook, Twitch and Reddit applications displayed on a mobile phone ahead of new law banning social media for users under 16 in Australia, in this picture illustration taken on Dec. 9, 2025. HOLLIE ADAMS | Reuters

Artificial intelligence is taking over social media

Whitman Rutledge
staff writer

In today's social media, most people watch short form videos on TikTok, Instagram and YouTube Shorts. An increasing share of those videos were human-made videos. Until the start of 2020, it started showing signs of more AI content, and now the percentage of AI in the media people consume is over 70%, according to The Daily Nexus of The

University of California Santa Barbara.

Social media platforms should use their algorithms to promote human-made content to viewers instead of AI-generated videos that are detrimental to the environment.

One of the main examples was a popular series on TikTok that was a rip-off of "Love Island." The creator redid "Love Island," but used AI to create characters that look like fruit. It gained fame, each video getting millions of views, and it might be taking views

from real human beings creating and working on their own project.

Most of these AI models they use on social media need water to cool down their machines. The water they use is freshwater, and they stated they used 12.7 billion liters of water in 2021 of AI alone, according to the University of California Riverside. It shows how much AI impacts the environment for our entertainment.

The explosion of the platform Sora, made

by ChatGPT, increased views on AI videos. It's a text to video software and makes 30 to 60 second videos based off a user-inputted prompt.

This software created a mainstream spread of more software that does the same thing but is better than the original. This explosion of AI videos made the percentages of AI in the social media skyrocket.

IT'S MOVIE SEASON

‘Undertone’ is refreshing, but not without flaws

Connie Moennig
staff writer

It'll be the first to admit that it doesn't take much to scare me. I love horror movies because I can get an adrenaline rush in a safe environment. Even so, "Undertone" managed to push all my buttons and scared me in a way I forgot that I could be scared.

"Undertone" premiered last summer at the Fantasia International Film Festival in Montreal. Its official theatrical release was on March 13. It was the directorial debut of Ian Tuason and starred Nina Kiri as the protagonist.

The plot follows a young woman named Evy, who hosts a podcast discussing the paranormal with her friend Justin, who is played by Adam DiMarco. Behind the scenes, Evy is caring for her dying mother. True horror begins when Evy and Justin receive 10 haunted audio files which they listen to and commentate

on for their podcast, and it all turns out to be more real than either of them bargained for.

The way this film approaches its concept is very refreshing. Subtlety and patience are things that can make or break a horror film. "Undertone" does both of these things beautifully.

The entirety of the movie is spent in Evy's childhood home as she watches over her comatose mother. They are the only two people the audience sees throughout the film's duration. The isolation is what makes the movie feel so suffocating. Anyone other than Evy or her mother is either a recording or a disembodied voice over the phone.

So, despite Justin being a major character, he never actually appears on screen. It's great for building tension and disorienting the viewers.

There are a lot of good things to say about the atmosphere. It seems to capture perfectly the essence of a place that used to be full of

warmth, but that is drained of everything that would've made it feel safe or welcoming. The ambience whenever Evy is not on the phone with Justin is incredibly unnerving.

The filmmakers also seemed to have a good grasp on setup and payoff, which is an aspect of horror that can increase the fear-factor tenfold if done correctly. Multiple times during the movie Evy disregards supernatural instances and abnormalities that are later revealed to have much more significance.

Even though it was generally a great movie, there are a few weak points that made it a little underwhelming at times.

First, and foremost, the acting: It wasn't the moments of fear or stress that stood out to me as bad, but more so the banter between Evy and Justin, as well as their laidback conversations near the start.

I wasn't completely sold on their friendship, and there were some lines that really pushed my suspension of disbelief. It was a weak

point, but one I could look past.

Another thing that felt lackluster was the abandonment of plot points introduced in the beginning. For instance, Evy is mentioned to have a neglectful boyfriend, who never comes up again even when she is revealed to be pregnant.

Evy is also implied to have abused alcohol in the past and seems to relapse in an early scene. This, coupled with her pregnancy, felt like a setup, but it was never mentioned again, nor did it have any major plot consequences. Maybe it was just added to show Evy's mental state, but it could've lent itself to the plot in a very interesting way.

These things were disappointing, but not enough to have turned me off of the movie completely. It is well-crafted and terrifying. I would definitely recommend it to those who enjoy supernatural horror movies.

Back to Westeros with ‘A Knight of the Seven Kingdoms’

Suri Alvarado
staff writer

If you haven't seen "A Knight of the Seven Kingdoms," you're missing out on one of the best shows on TV this year.

And if you were one of those people who stepped away from the Game of Thrones universe after the original series ended, this might be the perfect reason to come back.

Based on the book by George R. R. Martin, published in 2015, the show is a prequel set about 75 years after "The House of Dragon" and 90 years before the original "Game of Thrones." The great news is that newcomers to the "Game of Thrones" universe will still understand the "A Knight of the Seven Kingdoms" story.

Instead of focusing on large battles and political drama surrounding the lord houses or power struggles, it tells a more personal and grounded story. It's a story about personal honor, friendship and the lives of common people.

The series follows Ser Duncan the Tall and his young companion, Egg, who is secretly

Aegon Targaryen, a future king. Their journey is much simpler than what fans are used to, but that is what makes it stand out. The focus on their friendship and personal growth gives the story a unique and refreshing tone.

Many fans of the "Game of Thrones" universe feel more satisfied with this series after the mixed reception of "House of the Dragon": While that show had its strengths, some viewers felt it didn't fully meet expectations. Because of that, "A Knight of the Seven Kingdoms" feels like a breath of fresh air. It has received strong reviews, including an 8.7/10 average rating on IMDb and around a 95% score on Rotten Tomatoes.

The HBO series was released on Jan. 18, with episodes dropping weekly every Sunday, with its premiere drawing 6.7 million viewers. It averaged around 14 million U.S. viewers across the platform and reached about 26 million viewers worldwide, making it the third-biggest premiere in HBO Max history. It now joins 'House of the Dragon' and 'The Last of Us' as one of the platform's largest premieres. This was surprising, especially since the series is much smaller in scale compared to these

other shows, but that is exactly what makes it so enjoyable.

This first season is almost a perfect season of television. The final episode, especially its third act, reminded me of the feeling I had the first time I watched "The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring." The soundtrack by Dan Romer adds to that emotional impact by focusing on the quieter, more personal side of the story. Songs like "Quieter Accommodations" bring a kind of peaceful, beautiful fantasy feeling that I never expected from this universe.

It's easily the best thing in the Game of Thrones universe since the earlier seasons of the original series. A huge amount of credit goes to Peter Claffey (Ser Duncan the Tall) and Dexter Sol Ansell (Egg). Both actors deliver strong performances and bring new energy to the story, becoming especially important at a time when Hollywood needs new faces, and this series helps introduce them.

Claffey and Ansell have completely won over fans. Ansell stands out in the cast, delivering an emotional and memorable performance, especially for such a young actor.

Claffey's portrayal of Ser Duncan is just as strong, at times powerful, and at others genuinely adorable. He represents the definition of a true knight, even without the official title.

What makes his character so interesting is that he is the most honorable knight but isn't officially recognized, while many who carry the title lack real honor. It highlights how social status can be misleading, that some people hide behind titles, while those who truly deserve them are often overlooked. This defines the show's theme.

"A Knight of the Seven Kingdoms" is now streaming on HBO Max. The second season is already in development and is expected to release next year. HBO reportedly has long-term plans for the series, which could allow the story to grow over multiple seasons.

After watching this, I'm completely on board. HBO doesn't always need massive battles and huge budgets to succeed. Sometimes, a smaller and more personal story is exactly what audiences want.

It feels good to be back in Westeros with this level of quality.

‘The Drama’ lives up to name

Violet Lightner
contributing writer

The title of the movie "The Drama" perfectly captures the emotional roller-coaster this film takes you on. The movie stars Zendaya and Robert Pattinson playing Emma and Charlie, a couple preparing for their picture-perfect wedding in a week.

The chaos begins when Emma and Charlie are having dinner with their other couple friends Rachel (Alana Haim) and Mike (Mamoudou Athie), when Rachel asks, "What's the worst thing you have ever done?" Saying it was something she and Mike had done before they got married. Everyone goes around the table hesitantly sharing stories and laughing until it gets to Emma's turn.

Immediately, the unserious tone of the conversation changes to confusion and shock as the group processes what she said. Charlie is blindsided by her confession, anxiously asking Emma questions, while Rachel yells at her in self righteous anger before storming out. Charlie is left wondering if his fiancé is who he thought she was.

The movie is shot through Charlie's perspective, so the next morning and in the

following days, ordinary situations feel tense because of Charlie's increasing mistrust.

This movie does a great job of keeping the audience guessing what's real versus what is just Charlie overthinking. As his mind spins the audience is right there with him and can feel his discomfort second hand thanks to Pattison's acting. Zendaya also succeeds in making Emma feel like a real person and plays off Pattison very well.

The marketing for "The Drama" added to the unexpectedness of the plot. Very little of the plot was revealed: in fact at first glance it looks like a romantic comedy. The audience is finding out what Emma's "worst thing was" as the same time as the characters. The reveal was extremely shocking and keeping it a secret in all trailers and promotions was effective in drawing in an audience.

This could be seen as misleading or triggering to some considering the movie takes a darker more serious turn for the rest of the movie but the mystery made this movie stand out. It's undeniable that it made going into "The Drama" without much prior knowledge more exciting.

The Drama handles relationships between characters extremely well and invites conver-

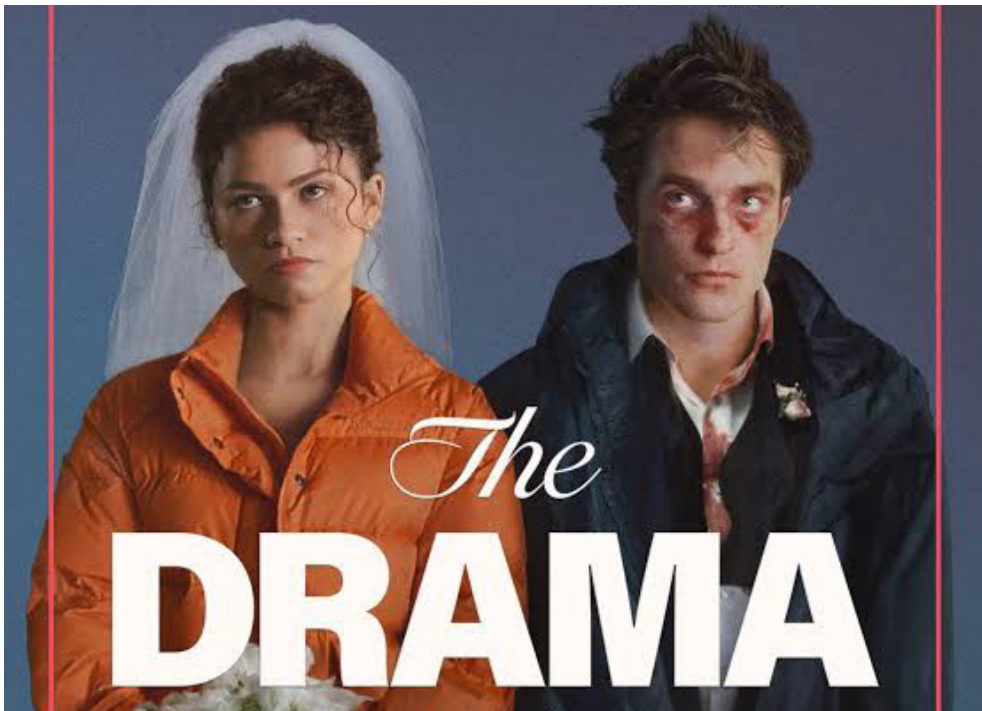


Photo Courtesy of A24

sation about it. While Charlie is struggling to block out his own negative thoughts about Emma he also has to balance defending her to Mike and Rachel.

As characters debate about what Emma did and if it's possible to forgive and trust her

it forces the audience to ask themselves the same questions. It finds a way to add humor and of course drama into a movie about morals and limits of forgiveness seamlessly. "The Drama" will have you on the edge of your seat and leave you thinking long after it ends.

'Project Hail Mary' proves sci-fi is accessible

Grace Sunseri
chief copy editor

Project Hail Mary, an adaptation of the 2021 novel, tells the story of Dr. Ryland Grace (Ryan Gosling), a scientist turned middle-school teacher, who is tasked with saving the world from a sun-eating organism, Astrophage, that could lead to a catastrophic ice age.

This catapults him light years into space with this mission. It is here that he makes an unlikely companion who is trying to solve the same problem.

As someone who does not typically read

science fiction novels or watch science fiction movies, I found "Project Hail Mary" easy to digest and the complex science made easy to understand.

Like most sci-fi, they had to navigate many logical questions and give those answers in a way the masses could understand. How does a middle school teacher end up in space? How do we explain Astrophage? How do we create a unique alien? All of these possible questions were beautifully answered throughout the movie.

The story is told through flashbacks, showing Grace on the ship and him on Earth. These frequent flashbacks are not only an

innovative way to display the story but serve a practical use, as Grace lost much of his memory on the journey because he was put in a coma. The flashbacks are him remembering who he is and what his purpose is. The emotions displayed are vital to the story and to Grace's character development.

The story is also told through the incredible visuals of the ship, of space and of extraterrestrial plants. These dazzling shots were made entirely with human-built sets and visual effects, which fuse live action shots and digital imagery.

"What's fun about the movie is that there is no green screen in the movie whatsoever.

Not a single green or blue screen was used," Director Christopher Miller told ComicBook on the film's press tour.

Rocky, Grace's alien companion, was a puppet, operated by six puppeteers and was not made exclusively through computer generation. While this movie is incredibly entertaining throughout, with a run time of over two and a half hours, there are bound to be moments and scenes that could've been cut.

The overall message could have been given and received in the same way in two hours or less.



"Project Hail Mary" movie poster at theatre.

NEVEAH WILSON | The Register

'Project Hail Mary' changes theme of book, but is still incredible

Harper Gniffke-Leek
contributing writer

The movie version of the popular sci-fi book "Project Hail Mary" came out on March 20 and earned \$140.9 million in just the opening weekend.

It is a tremendous success so far, and it is enjoyable even though the movie version's focus strays from that of the book. As someone who read the book, I was curious how the writers would portray the science aspects of the movie, as most of the scientific realizations are in the main character's thoughts in the book.

Instead, the film changed the main theme of the story from science to the friendship between Ryland Grace (Ryan Gosling) and Rocky (James Ortiz), making it an even bigger plot point than in the book, which focused on Grace's scientific endeavors to find a predator to stop Astrophage, his recovery of memories and his friendship with Rocky.

The movie misses or deemphasizes a couple of plot points, in particular the issue of Taumoeba getting loose on the ship and

eating most of his Astrophage, which is the energy source powering his ship back to earth. This does have to deal with the lack of time they have available, as it is a 500-page book, and the movie's run time was two hours and 36 minutes.

This change does not ruin the movie, as it is still loyal to the book with its blend of the wonders of science and the emotions of friendship.

Gosling was an excellent choice for this role and perfectly portrayed a person unwilling to die and struggling to lose someone. The lack of scientific information was made up for by the incredible acting by all the cast, along with the writing, which pulled in the audience and made it feel like they were experiencing the situation themselves, such as Grace's complaining video about Rocky and when the two first met.

The book was funny at times, and the movie showed this as well, adding a few extra quips to make it feel a little happier. The shift away from science also makes it lighter, which is understandable as the movie now

can appeal to a larger audience than just sci-fi fans.

One obvious addition was the karaoke scene that Stratt sang. This scene was not in the book, and was not in the script until Gosling, the star and producer, suggested it, thinking it wouldn't move the plot forward but would enrich the story. Stratt, played by Sandra Hüller, oversees Project Hail Mary and recruits Grace to help save the world. During this scene, the members of Project Hail Mary were singing and relaxing before the mission, and Stratt decided to join in for one song, singing "Sign of the Times" by Harry Styles.

At first, I was doubtful about this scene, but after reflection I am happy that they added it. It adds a sense of humanity to Stratt's character, who is portrayed as kinder person in the movie.

The movie in general is more hopeful or kid-friendly than the book and singing "Sign of the Times" is very impactful to the story, as the lyrics include, "They told me that the end is near, we gotta get away from here."

The movie may be less realistic than the

book, but I still enjoyed it and was able to relax into the changes easily, and Andy Weir, the writer of the book and made choices that made the story and emotions come to life from the moment it started, such as Grace teaching his students at the beginning and the music when he retrieved the sample from the planet Adrien.

The only complaint I have is the amount of music montages while Grace worked on the projects. Sometimes I wished we had genuine reactions to the problems rather than him talking about it after the fact.

There were also a few science mistakes or issues that were cleared up in the books that they did not address, but it never took me out of the story. But in general, the movie was fantastic and very enjoyable to watch.

I appreciate that they kept the ending exactly the same, and those who did not read the book would be able to understand it. Although science was less of a priority, the movie nailed humanity and emotion, and it would be a deserving title to call it one of the best sci-fi movies of all time.

K-Pop club welcomes all who love global phenomenon

Alex Tamang
contributing writer

Over the past decade K-pop has grown worldwide, become a global mainstream cultural phenomenon in the Western world, and so it happens to be there is a K-Pop club at Central.

Members say it is a very welcoming community where students can gather, have fun, discuss their favorite K-Pop idols and share their love for Korean culture.

Senior Caden Parker is the president of K-Pop club, and she has watched K-Pop grow into the mainstream.

“It’s pretty awesome that it’s reaching more of a global audience, I feel like it gives people more of an opportunity to connect across cultures,” Parker said.

As K-pop grows worldwide, from being called “weird” to now becoming a booming industry, K-pop has been a powerful interest for members of K-pop club, bringing different students together through a shared love of music and culture.

Another member of the club, Panda Akue, sees K-Pop being mainstream as good for the industry. “I feel like that’s great for the industry. It’s also great for the people coming in to listen to and listen to and discover new music,” Akue said.

Freshman Ana Longino Lucio said, “People have been getting into K-pop more, switching up their music taste and getting into the Korean culture. People found it weird to like K-pop and like it was weird and

it wasn’t mainstream, but I’m actually happy now more people are more inclusive.”

Dancing is a key part of K-Pop, and it is what pulled Akue into K-Pop. Currently her favorite band is Seventeen.

“What helped pull me in was the crazy

moves,” Akue said.

Longino Lucio’s favorite band is Twice, and the reason she got into K-pop was her sister “My sister showed me her favorite group and showed me each member to learn each of their name,” she said.

Parker, the K-pop club leader, loves Tomorrow X Together. The reason she got into K-pop was the amazing videos.

“I got into K-pop because of the creative visuals and the effort that goes into music Video production,” Parker said.



Members of the K-pop club pose during a weekly meeting

ALEX TAMANG | The Register

‘Kiss All The Time. Disco, Occasionally.’ marks return of Styles

Isabella Smith
staff writer

After three long years, Harry Styles made his comeback on March 6 with the release of the highly anticipated dance-pop album “Kiss All The Time. Disco, Occasionally.”

The album was first teased in January with posters and billboards of the crowd from the final show of his previous world tour with the message “We Belong Together” written on them. These cryptic clues started showing up in major cities all over the world, including New York City, Paris, Berlin and São Paulo.

After a week or so of fans’ theorizing and clowning, the album was officially announced on Jan. 15, as well as a single announcement just five days later. “Aperture,” the album’s first

single, was released Jan. 23 and set the tone for the rest of the album by debuting at No. 1 on the Billboard Hot 100.

This synth-pop track quickly became a favorite for me as it was unlike anything I’ve heard before, which is hard to do in the current music industry. I loved the slow-building structure and experimental techno beats—but after hearing the entire album, “Aperture” isn’t even in my top five.

When listening to albums for the first time, my brain likes to compartmentalize each song into an “immediate favorite” category and a “good/just okay” category. That second category was never used once as I listened to Styles’ album.

Each song seemed to somehow be

better than the last, and after approximately 50 relistens, I still don’t think I could give a permanent ranking. Though my rankings of favorite tracks of the album tend to move around, “Carla’s Song” has been my all-time favorite from the beginning.

“Carla’s Song” is the epitome of this album’s overarching theme of discovery and acceptance, or life itself. “It’s all waiting there for you” is a lyric from this song that I think encapsulates the essence of this album especially.

“Kiss All The Time. Disco, Occasionally” was written during Styles’ three year break away from the spotlight, so many of the songs reflect this sense of self-discovery and peace. Tracks such as “Season 2 Weight Loss” and

“Are You Listening Yet?” are examples of him coming to terms with the level of fame he’s spent over half his life living in.

Sonically, upbeat dance-pop and synth influences shine through in songs like “Ready, Steady, Go!” and “Dance No More,” balancing out some of the heavier themes of the album. One of the best parts of Styles’ projects is how he is able to blend upbeat pop hits with the mellow, more personal deep cuts.

As a lifelong fan, this album has already become one of my all-time favorites not only out of Styles’ work, but out of every other album I’ve heard. It is by far his most personal and raw album to date yet is still relatable and hard-hitting for any listener.

Movie-packed spring and summer, big movies to be released

Suri Alvarado
staff writer

A lot of people are already talking about how exciting this year will be for movie releases, with this hype not slowing down anytime soon. It really feels like one big movie event, with fans of every genre having something to look forward to in the coming months. Here is a list of the most expected films for the rest of 2026.

In April, the Mario brothers will make their comeback to theaters with “The Super Mario Galaxy Movie,” (April 1) a continuation fans have been waiting for since 2023. Moving beyond the Mushroom Kingdom, it explores a more cosmic setting and expands the Mario Bros. cinematic universe.

The newest A24 production “The Drama” (April 3) stars Zendaya and Robbert Pattinson in a dark comedy thriller. It’s a tense psychological story about love and secrets, rather than a traditional romance film.

“Michael” (April 24) will tell the story of the King of Pop, Michael Jackson. The film stars his nephew, Jaafar Jackson, in the leading role and is expected to be one of the highest grossing biopics. With fans most probably singing and dancing along to his music in theaters.

“Backrooms” (May 29) will be another of A24 production releases this year. Directed by Kane Parsons, the creator behind the viral YouTube found-footage series. Expanding his unsettling, creepy, liminal world into a full cinematic experience. It’s already shaping up to be one of the year’s favorite horror releases.

In the summertime, there will be a mix of science fiction, adventure, comedy and superheroes.

Packed with childhood memories and 80’s nostalgia, “Masters of the Universe” (June 5) is set to hit theaters. The film looks a bit crappy, but I think I’m going to love it, my only concern is the decision casting of Skeletor’s voice, played by the “franchise killer,” Jared Leto.

From legendary director Steven Spielberg, “Disclosure Day” (June 12) explores aliens in a way we haven’t seen before, asking what we would do if we discovered we were not alone in the universe.

Next is “Toy Story 5” (June 19), a movie many did not ask for, but one that looks more promising after its trailer. The story focuses on electronic devices replacing traditional toys. The most entertaining of today vs. the most entertaining in history.

Later that month, a major DC fan favorite arrives with “Supergirl” (June 26). Starring Milly Alcock as 21-year-old Kara Zor-El, the film will follow an epic journey of justice. Inspired by the “Woman of Tomorrow” comic arc, it focuses on a cosmic revenge mission. From one of the most acclaimed directors, Christopher Nolan, “The



Juliano Krue Valdi attends the international premiere of "Michael," the biopic about pop legend Michael Jackson, in Berlin, Germany, April 10. Valdi plays a young Michael Jackson in a biopic about the pop star.

MADJA WOHLLEBEN | Reuters

Odyssey” (July 17), based on the story from the same name, will follow Odysseus’s 10-year journey back to Ithaca after the Trojan War. Packed with actors like Matt Damon, Anne Hathaway, Jon Bernthal and Mia Goth, it has been sold like the biggest cinematic event of all time, so I really hope it is.

Arguably the most expected movie of the year, “Spider-Man: Brand New Day” (July

31), will follow an adult Peter Parker, played by Tom Holland, living completely alone while protecting New York City full-time. Since 2021, Spider-Man fans have been waiting to see the character return to the big screen, and they may get to see a more classic version of the friendly neighbor hero. Having the same struggles and experiences that make Peter Parker, well, Peter Parker.

"Totally 80's Prom," totally tubular



Photos from "Totally 80's Prom," taken April 10-11.

CHS golf tournament to move clubs

Katie Besancon
managing editor

For 15 years, the Central High School Foundation has held an annual fund-raiser golf tournament at the Field Club of Omaha Country Club. Beginning this year, the tournament will move to The Players Club Country Club at Deer Creek.

this is a golf tournament where many staff, alumni and even students participate and volunteer in bringing the Central high community both past and present together.

The reason behind the move is because the event had outgrown Field Club of Omaha. “We have more space now and already have more than 144 golfers signed up to date. At Field Club, the maximum number of golfers we could accommodate was 144,” said Michele Roberts, executive director of the foundation.

Field Club is a country club that offers 18 holes of golf, a standard around the city.

However, the Players Club is the only private 27-hole club, meaning not only is the foundation expanding the number of holes available, they are also increasing the number of players that can attend.

This move west was initially pitched by the foundation to past participants through a survey seeking feedback on the format and the location of the event. This would ensure that those who have participated in the past are excited and approve of the move.

The foundation uses many Central community members to help run the event, and it had to consider if the number of volunteers would be affected due to the distance from Central, as Players Club is located near 120th and State, opposed to Field Club near 36th and Center.

This proved to not be an issue, as both current and retired teachers will continue to help operate the tournament again this summer. However, due to the larger scale of the

tournament, “the numbers needed will need to be increased to accommodate the additional holes,” Roberts said.

“We are fortunate that we always have a lot of people volunteering to help out with the day,” Roberts said.

The tournament as a whole is experiencing changes beyond just the location. In previous tournaments, when playing the standard 18-hole course, there would typically be one designated hole for a participant to win a car if they hit a hole in one. This year, because they are expanding to a total of 27 holes, there will be several holes where this is an opportunity.

With the foundation making the change to Players Club this year, there is a floating question around if this will be the new home base for the tournament. As of right now, the foundation has signed a three-year contract with the club and will host the tournament there through 2028.

“We hosted the golf outing at FCO for 15 years, so we don’t tend to jump around,” Roberts said.

Many Central supporters are still going to participate. Math department head and head golf coach Brent Larson said in an email, “Last year, we came out on top, so this year we must go back to defend our title! It doesn’t matter where the event was held this June, we were going show up for another year.”

The foundation uses the money from these events to support classes such as epidemiology and infectious diseases, attend field trips, and participate in various competitions like the University of Nebraska Omaha language fair.

“Golf is the fun part, but how the CHS community supports the Foundation and how the Foundation turns around and supports the students and staff of CHS is what matters,” Larson said.

Unified basketball brings out student crowds

Noah Sipe
staff writer

Central hosted its first unified basketball game against Buena Vista on March 25. Organized by ACP teachers Sabrina Marschner-Fant and Jamie Johnson, the game was hosted during the school day.

The energy in the gym was electric. Spirit

poms were handed out in both schools’ colors to show support.

“It was good to see students coming to support,” Johnson said.

This game was a huge opportunity for the kids. “Most of the time the kids are just with each other all day, they don’t have much opportunities to kind of be supported or even

be part of gym education here at Central,” Johnson said.

“I truly think it meant more to the kids because they don’t get to have many opportunities to experience what the other kids at Central might feel,” Johnson said.

Central has not hosted a unified event since unified bowling in 2022, so given the

circumstances this event was a success

“It means a lot to us in the sense that Central has not really been able to do things like this in a while. It’s eye-opening, so it was awesome,” Fant said. “Planning this for the first time took a couple weeks; we had to find all the bits and pieces and put them together.”



Unified athletes compete in the game against Buena Vista on March 25 in the gymnasium.



BRADLEY SMITH | The Register

Nebraska men’s basketball finishes historic run in Sweet 16

Steven Dickerson
editor in chief

The University of Nebraska men’s basketball team’s historic run came to an end on March 26. The team, which went 28-7, racked up the most wins in school history and finished tied for second in the Big Ten conference at 15-5, along with Illinois and Michigan State.

The team first made history by starting the season with a 20-game win streak, breaking the previous school record of 10 set in the 1977-78 season. Nebraska also achieved the highest ranking of any school in the state later in the season, being ranked fifth in the country on Jan. 25. They would ultimately lose to third-ranked Michigan, 75-72, on Jan. 27, ending the streak, but finished the regular season strong.

Cornhusker success continued to the postseason, making the NCAA tournament in the West region as a No. 4 seed. In the round of 64, the team finally won the first

tournament game in school history on March 19 76-47 over 14-seed Troy.

“It’s almost like a storybook ending getting this tournament win, because I’ve been saying all week it kind of felt like the last thing that we needed to do to get this program on top,” senior guard Sam Hoiberg told Husker247 following the win.

The Huskers shocked the nation once again on March 21, beating 5-seed Vanderbilt 74-72 in a thrilling buzzer-beater. Surviving the round of 32, the team moved on to the Sweet 16 for the first time in Nebraska history. On March 26, in the Sweet 16 game versus rival 9-seed Iowa, Nebraska fell 77-71 to end an historic season.

“This one hurt,” junior forward Pryce Sandfort said following the loss.

“The end of the season may not have been what everyone wanted, but that does not dismiss the history made this season,” said Isabel Hoiberg, a 2024 graduate of Central and Head Coach Fred Hoiberg’s niece.

The basketball team’s success has only increased under Fred Hoiberg, who finished his seventh season with the Huskers and was named the Associated Press National Coach of the Year. He also won Big Ten Coach of the Year and signed a three-year extension with Nebraska in March.

“Seeing his success made this season even more sweet,” Isabel Hoiberg said.

The Huskers had many standout players, but seniors particularly powered their success. Senior forward Rienk Mast, who is from the Netherlands, led the team in rebounds per game at 5.8. He also scored 13.3 points per game. Guard Jamarques Lawrence averaged 9.8 points per game and was key to the offense.

Sam Hoiberg, Isabel Hoiberg’s cousin and Fred Hoiberg’s son, led the team in assists and steals per game, at 4.5 and 2, respectively.

“This season has meant so much, especially to Sam,” Isabel Hoiberg said.

Perhaps the team’s star player, though,

was Sandfort, who transferred from Iowa this year and led the Huskers in points per game with 18.1.

“It is clear the Huskers got a clear-eyed assassin — a deadly hired gun with a quick draw, a willingness to fire from anywhere and the ability to shut out everything and everyone while on the basketball court,” Nebraska sports commentator Mike Schaefer said in an article about Sandfort.

Sandfort was lights out from the three-point range nearly all season, contributing heavily to the team’s success. The Huskers announced he will return for his senior season on April 13.

The question remains for Nebraska basketball to answer next season: was this year a fluke or the start of a new era?

“I cannot wait to see what the next seasons will hold,” Isabel Hoiberg said.

This was the best March Madness tournament in years

Katie Besancon
managing editor

The 2026 Men’s March Madness tournament was one for the books. As someone who was not the biggest fan of watching men’s basketball prior to the 2025 – 2026 season, this March Madness and season as a whole felt different. It was the first time in a long time where teams ranked top 10 who had not been there in a while like, Miami (Ohio) and California Baptist, stayed in the ranks. This created an environment that continued to pull people towards watching these games.

Millions of people filled out brackets based on the seeds and ranks from the season, but many of the logical picks would break the perfect bracket.

Games such as 12th seeded High Point University’s win over fifth-seeded Wisconsin (83-82), ninth-seeded Saint Louis’ win over eighth-seeded Georgia (102-77), eleventh-seeded Virginia Commonwealth University’s (VCU) win over sixth-seeded North Carolina (82-78) and eight-seeded Villanova’s loss to ninth-seeded Utah State (86-76) all being upsets many did not predict within the first round breaking thousands of perfect brackets

nationwide.

High Point University made a name for itself not only in their game of basketball but in their fans’ support for the team. The school chartered a plane where more than 200 students were flown out to watch the men’s first round game in Portland, Oregon, creating an environment that would take them dancing into the second round, where they would fall to Arkansas 94-88.

Not only were the upsets a prominent part of the tournament, it was also Nebraska’s first time winning a March Madness game. Prior to this tournament, the Cornhuskers had eight tournament appearances. This year was the first time they not only won a game, but would advance to the Sweet 16, where they fell to Iowa 77-71.

I, however, am a huge Michigan fan, and have religiously kept up with their season this past year. This influenced my desire to watch March Madness, as I was not only watching Michigan’s games, but I was watching all the others to see who could possibly match up with them.

A large number of games were either blowouts or a game that was on the verge of overtime. According to ESPN, 13 of the

first-round games were decided by 20 or more points. For instance, the second-round games like fifth-seeded Texas Tech win over fourth-seeded Alabama where Alabama had won by 25 with a final score of 90-65, something that you rarely see once entering the tournament let alone multiple rounds into the tournament.

This is in comparison to fifth-seeded St. Johns win over fourth-seeded Kansas and while neither team looked like they were playing their best game of basketball, the game still came down to a buzzer beater by St. John’s, keeping fans on the edge of their seats until the last possible moment.

Over the last couple of years, a trend has started to form. The 2026 tournament turned out to be the tournament with the most upsets by a larger margin. In 2024 there were only seven games with a 20 or more-point margin with 16 games being double-digit winners. These score differences don’t just represent a high level of talent in teams, but an increase in the variation of teams making an appearance in the tournament.

The blowouts were not just early in the tournament either. In the Final Four Michigan played Arizona, where it is a matchup between

two No. 1seeded teams, who have both been ranked all season long, but Michigan still managed to beat them by 18. This follows Arizona’s first three tournament games where they had not trailed at any point in those games and would beat Arkansas by 21.

This tournament is turning out to be the best in years due to the record-breaking viewership. According to ESPN, the average viewership of the tournament games has been 10.9 million, across a total of four different streaming services, marking a seven percent increase since the 2025 tournament and the highest since 1994.

This includes games like Duke versus UConn, which averaged 18.9 million viewers partially due to UConn’s intense comeback after being down 19 and ending the game with a three-pointer putting them up by one point to win the game. This comes before a record-breaking national championship game between No. 1 seed Michigan and No. 2 seed UCONN, which averaged 18.3 million views and skyrocketed to 20.4 million during the last 15 minutes of the game becoming the most watched championship game since 2019 according to NCAA.

The best and worst brackets of March Madness 2026

Grace Sunseri
copy editor

Every year, millions of fans, and non-fans, fill out brackets for the NCAA Men’s and Women’s basketball tournaments. This has become a tradition for the 68-team tournament, with the odds of a perfect bracket being nearly impossible.

The odds of a 100% perfect bracket are 1 in 9.2 quintillion for non-fans, or if decisions were made by a simple coin flip. To visualize this number, 1 quintillion is one billion billions. If you are a fan who knows and follows basketball, the odds are slightly better: 1 in 120 billion. Both odds are according to the NCAA. There has never been an official perfect bracket in the tournament’s history.

Senior Noah Smith’s men’s bracket had a 99.6% accuracy. Despite his excellent bracket, he is not an avid basketball fan.

“I wouldn’t consider myself a fan, although I occasionally will see some updates on Twitter (X) or Instagram,” Smith said. Smith mentioned the only pick he was confident in was the Michigan pick to win the men’s national championship.

AP/Honors Biology Teacher Kristoff Berzins’ bracket had around a 55% accuracy.

“I was not confident at all,” Berzins said. “I am not a college basketball fan at all, but my wife is a huge fan, and the brackets help me get engaged with a sport she loves.”

Both said this is a yearly tradition for them, with the Berzins challenge having a reward. “I usually play with my wife where the loser has to take the winner to a fancy dinner at a restaurant of their choice,” he said. “So really it’s a win win!”



Left: Noah Smith's Men's NCAA Tournament bracket, made through ESPN. Right: Kristoff Berzins men's NCAA tournament bracket, also made through ESPN. Photos Courtesy of NOAH SMITH AND KRISTOFF BERZINS

Round 1 of NFL Draft had surprises, trades, and major picks

Noah Sipe
staff writer

Round 1 of the NFL Draft was April 23 and was hosted in Pittsburgh for the first time since the late 1940s.

The Las Vegas Raiders are going to be set for the future with their selection of Indiana quarterback Fernando Mendoza. He was the obvious choice for the first pick. So much so ESPN was already stating stats that he will be only the fourth QB to win the national title, Heisman Trophy and be selected as the first pick in the NFL draft.

The New York Jets selecting Texas Tech defensive end David Bailey in my eyes was the right decision. He was not looked at as the best prospect in the draft. But he has the mechanics to be a great player in the league. He had 14.5 sacks in his final year of college, second most in the FBS last season.

Notre Dame RB Jeremiah Love was not a shocking early pick. But I did not expect it to be this early and to the Arizona Cardinals of all teams, who have a veteran RB in James Connor. It was impossible for the Cardinals to pass up on his explosive talent.

Big trade! The Kanas City Chiefs traded their ninth, 74th and 148th and picks to the Cleveland Browns for the sixth pick. The player they likely wanted to snatch Ohio State linebacker Arvell Reese was selected right before by the New York Giants. I believe that LSU cornerback Mansoor Delane would’ve fallen to the ninth pick. The Chiefs got the cornerback they were not going to risk losing.

Utah Offensive Lineman Spencer Fano was taken by the Browns at nine. A small tackle who I believe will bust in the NFL.

Miami Offensive Lineman Francis Mauigoa

taken at 10 by the Giants who will have the better career.

The Dallas Cowboys needed Ohio State Safety Caleb Downs and likely got the steal of the draft at 11. Downs will help improve that with his football IQ, versatility and explosiveness.

Rueben Bain Jr fell all the way to 15 to the Buccaneers. The most explosive prospect left on the board goes to a win-ready organization in the Buccaneers. Nobody should have let him fall this far to a team of this caliber.



Indiana Hoosiers quarterback Fernando Mendoza is selected by the Las Vegas Raiders as the number one pick during the 2026 NFL Draft at Acrisure Stadium in Pittsburgh.

KIRBY LEE REUTERS

Late free agency moves reshape NFL landscape ahead of 2026 season

Charli Tobin
sports editor

NFL free agency is just about to end, and there have been some major splashes that could shake up the 2026 NFL season.

With some of the best teams in the league gaining even better stars, and some of the worst teams getting stars and major teams losing major players, the 2026 season should be exciting.

The Kansas City Chiefs signed the Super Bowl MVP, running back Kenneth Walker after a disappointing season. Travis Kelce regressed last year, and Patrick Mahomes is recovering from a torn ACL. Along with the run game being almost nonexistent and missing the playoffs for the first time since 2014, the Chiefs dynasty looked to be coming to close until the signing of Walker. Not only that, but they traded cornerback Trent McDuffie to the Los Angeles Rams for another first round pick in the 2026 NFL draft, and signed quarterback Justin Fields to back up the recovering Mahomes.

The Las Vegas Raiders, after being the worst team in the league, had to have a massive offseason to even be competitive next year, and they did. They retained defensive end Maxx Crosby after a trade to the Baltimore Ravens fell through and hired the most promising young head coach in Klint Kubiak. They also signed one of the best centers in the game in Tyler Linderbaum and key defensive players to back up Crosby in linebackers Nakobe Dean and Quay Walker. They also signed quarterback Kirk Cousins to help mentor first overall pick Fernado Mendoza.

The New York Giants, after drafting three stars in the 2025 draft, failed to capitalize on their rookie talent. But, with healthy stars, the team is ready to succeed. The new coach hire of former Baltimore Ravens head coach John Harbaugh brought along several key Ravens players- tight end Isiah Likely and fullback Patrick Ricard. The Giants have definitely upgraded their roster and could make a splash next season.

The Atlanta Falcons are the first big losers

of free agency. The biggest signing they made was quarterback Tua Tagovailoa on a veteran minimum contract. This signing isn’t the worst move they made, as having two left-handed quarterbacks will make it easier on the wide receivers if they switch quarterbacks mid-game. Other than that, they made very small signings, including wide receiver Jahan Dotson, right tackle Jawaan Taylor, running back Brian Robinson, Jr. and linebacker Christian Harris.

These signings are to account for the loss of several key players, running back Tyler Alger, linebacker Kaden Ellis, wide receiver Darnell Mooney and the retirement of right tackle Kaleb McGary. The reason why the Falcons may have not looked to sign bigger players was because they have very limited cap space and have several large signings looming over them, including the signing of tight end Kyle Pitts and wide receiver Drake London.



Apr 23, 2026; Pittsburgh, PA, USA; The 2026 NFL Draft logo on the theater stage at Acrisure Stadium in Pittsburgh.

KIRBY LEE | Reuters

Central boys volleyball starts for spring season

Isabella Smith
staff writer

The boys volleyball club has started up for its second year at Central with coaches Ariel Gass and Jackson Jordan helping to make it possible.

Gass started the club after seeing interest at orientation while running a table for girls' volleyball. While there aren't enough players to do matches against other teams, the club mainly runs drills and perfects techniques.

"Competition wise, we don't necessarily have teams that we compete against so what I'm really focusing on is skills," Gass said.

For example, the team started out with some basics last week such as setting, serving, passing and working on keeping the ball under control. "There are some serious hits,

some serious digs, and it's a ton of fun. It's super-fast-paced, and I think anyone would be able to enjoy it," Jordan said.

In Nebraska, boys' volleyball is not a school sanctioned sport. As of May 2025, it is in 36 other states. Boys volleyball not being school sanctioned in Nebraska has numerous downsides including lack of competition and certain resources, but the biggest for this team is the dedication.

"They don't think it's as big of a deal. So, it's not as likely that people might come out for it," Jordan said.

Despite this, there are some benefits that have come from the lack of state recognition, one of which is how the smaller group of students is easier to coach.

"I'm just kind of getting to know the

students that I probably wouldn't have otherwise academically. So, now I get to see them in a different light, I can nitpick a little bit more and have higher expectations," Gass said.

For sophomore Tae Nar, one of the players on the team, boys volleyball not being school sanctioned doesn't impact him all that much anyway.

"There are still other boys I can play outside of school with, and they sometimes join from time to time. It's still a fun experience," Nar said.

While boys volleyball has been gaining popularity around the country, there are still many misinterpretations over the sport, especially regarding gender. Volleyball has always been more popular as a girls' sport,

and many still think of it as just that.

"We have the facilities, we have the ability to do it, but no guys are really playing. So, I would like to see it get switched to not such a gender exclusive sport," Jordan said.

In recent years, this connotation has slowly been erased, so it's the coaches hope that more students want to join boys' volleyball in the future.

"I'm interested to see how it grows in the coming years. This being our second season, I want it to start spreading a little more," Jordan said. answered. You just probably have to wait and see how it goes and keep adapting as you hit each situation," he said.

Hiley leaves legacy, owns multiple records

Usama Muhannad
contributing writer

Omaha Central's Carter Hiley wrapped up his swimming career by dominating the 200-yard individual medley title at the NSAA State Championships on Feb. 28. He clocked in at a 1:49:99, seconds finally breaking that sub 1:50 barrier he'd been eyeing for a while.

Hiley is also leaving Central as one of the most decorated swimmers in Central and Omaha Public Schools history, holding the OPS record in the 200 IM and 100 freestyle, and eight Central records – seven individual events and one relay.

He went into the state finals seeded behind an old friend and competitor at Milard North, Matt Brailita, but even when the pressure was at its peak, Hiley found another gear. Even though he wasn't the favorite on paper, his competitive drive, styled by a decade of racing Brailita, pushed him to the top of the podium.

"Matt has been a good friend of mine since I was 9. We've been racing each other forever. I just wanted it so bad. I spent so much time and so much energy toward it," Hiley said.

What made this race and win so

impressive is the comeback from the skiing in August 2023 that gave him a sprained MCL and dislocated kneecap. While most people would've ended their season and moved on, Hiley turned his rehab into a comeback story. He spent many months in rehab and recovering just to get back in the water, and when he finally did, he realized that he'd gotten faster than he'd ever been just in time for his senior year.

Hiley's not just known for his trophies and records. He sets the standard. Hiley's head coach, Kristoff Berzins, said Hiley's dedication is rare.

"He works really hard, sometimes I have to tell him to cool off, because he'll work through sickness," Berzins said.

Hiley's leadership, from the time he was a freshman, and example means Hiley leaves behind a big legacy.

"Carter's always been locked in on swimming. I saw it on day one. We could already tell that Carter was a special case of swimmer that schools like Central only get once every couple of decades," Berzins said.



Senior Carter Hiley gasps for air at a swim meet Jan. 8 at Norris Middle School.

BRADLEY SMITH | The Register



Senior Carter Hiley performs the backstroke during a swim meet Jan. 8 at Norris Middle School.

BRADLEY SMITH | The Register

FUTURO POR VENIR

Central realizará una transición de jefes de departamento a especialistas en currículo para el año escolar 2026-27.

| Paula Gutierrez Martinez
editora de noticias

El personal de las Escuelas Públicas de Omaha (OPS) en las áreas de instrucción y apoyo curricular, menoración escolar, y servicios de talento trabajó con la directora de Central, Dionne Kirksey, para llegar a esta decisión, con el objetivo de mejorar tasas de asistencia, graduación, y cumplimiento académico, entre otras métricas.

A mediados del año escolar 2025-26, el 34.9% de los estudiantes no estaban en camino para graduarse. De los 2.382 estudiantes inscritos en el primer semestre, el 21.70% presentaba un riesgo moderado de absentismo crónico, y el 35.10% registraba un absentismo severo, lo que significa que estuvieron ausentes durante al menos el 20% del tiempo de clase.

Con respecto a la decisión, Kirksey dijo, “Debo mirar donde estamos, pero lo más importante, necesito mirar en donde necesitamos ir y cómo podemos cerrar cosas.”

Aunque la decisión tiene como propósito mejorar el ambiente de aprendizaje de Central, existe una gran inquietud entre los profesores respecto a las posibles desventajas, así como dudas sobre la necesidad de este cambio.

Los jefes de departamento se diferencian de los especialistas en currículo en que estos últimos enseñan un horario parcial. La otra parte de su carga laboral está dedicada a visitas de asistencia, observaciones y evaluaciones de profesores, y la gestión del presupuesto departamental y horario anual de enseñanza. Más allá del trabajo que realizan dentro de sus propios departamentos, los jefes de departamento deben asistir a las reuniones de jefe de departamento, administrativas, y a nivel de distrito. También trabajan con expertos en la instrucción de currículo.

Central tienen 14 jefes de departamento y tendrá seis especialistas en currículo el año que viene. De estos seis, tres son actuales jefes de departamento: el jefe del departamento de inglés Jon Flanagan; el jefe del departamento de estudios sociales Jimmie Foster; y el Director del Programa de Bachillerío Internacional Paul Nielson. La Dra. Christy Flaherty-Colling, quien supervisara el currículo de ciencia el año que viene, es la actual coordinadora de itinerarios y proyectos especiales.

Los otros especialistas de currículo serán Jeff Mount, un profesor de música, y Jillian Roger, quien actualmente es una profesora de ciencias sociales en Marian High School.

Una preocupación común entre los profesores es que a condensar los departamentos podrían perder apoyo específico por asignatura si el especialista de currículo carece de formación en la asignatura bajo su supervisión.

“Cuando me convertí en profesora de instituto, tuve que hacer una clase de métodos y prácticas en inglés y en historia. Tuve que aprender las mejores prácticas para darle instrucción a los jóvenes en esas áreas de estudio, y no eran lo mismo. Eran dos clases diferentes,” dijo la profesora de estudios sociales Casey Denton.

Foster, quien asumirá el rol de especialista en currículo para supervisar los estudios sociales, los idiomas del mundo, y la educación física, abordó estas inquietudes al referirse a los desafíos particulares que previo que surgirían de la transición.

“He sido de ciencias sociales de pies a cabeza desde que estoy en este edificio, así que probablemente sería difícil no pensar primero

en estudios sociales,” dijo. “Eso probablemente será algo de lo que tendré que recordarme constantemente.”

La Dra. Collette Nero, Directora de Talento en OPS, reconoció que un especialista de currículo quizás no poseería un conocimiento profundo en todas las asignaturas, pero mantiene que la instrucción que imparten esta más orientada hacia las mejores prácticas educativas, independientemente de la materia.

“Los profesores son expertos en su contenido. Y tenemos, a nivel del distrito, consultantes de enseñanza y aprendizaje que poseen el conocimiento del contenido. El especialista en currículo realmente se está centrando en cómo logramos dar vida al currículo y cómo podemos apoyar a los profesores para conseguirlo,” afirmó Nero.

Nero enfatizó que el apoyo docente siempre conlleva un proceso de aprendizaje colaborativo. En los casos en que un especialista en currículo deba impartir instrucción específica sobre un natu-rismo, se dispone en recursos similares, tales como consultores de enseñanza y aprendizaje o alianzas universitarias. Los directores que carecen de experiencia en determinadas áreas de contenido también utilizan estos recursos para su formación.

OPS típicamente no fomenta ni recomienda un modo educativo sobre otro, dijo Nero. En su lugar, los oficiales del distrito discuten las ventajas y desventajas de cada modelo; en este caso, decidieron que Central podría beneficiar del cambio, dado que la división de funciones de los jefes de departamento limita el apoyo disponible en Central. Central es la única escuela de OPS con jefes de departamento.

“Al observar los modelos diferentes que hay en lugar por todo el distrito, quieres asegurarte de que cada escuela tenga los recursos adecuados y de que estemos aportando una experiencia consistente en todas nuestras escuelas,” dijo Nero, “Queríamos asegurarnos de que Central tendría el beneficio de ese apoyo adicional en su equipo directivo.”

El profesor de ciencias Matt Hamill no cree que el cambio a especialistas en currículo esté relacionado con las puntuaciones.

“Si estuvieras tomando la decisión basándose en los resultados académicos, Central High ha sido y sigue siendo la escuela de mayor nivel académico en OPS,” dijo Hamill.

Según los datos del estado del Nebraska, Central ha superado consistentemente el promedio del distrito en las tasas de graduación y en el nivel de competencia en el ACT. En el año escolar 2024-25, la tasa de graduación de Central superó el promedio de todo el distrito por un 3.5%. El porcentaje de estudiantes de Central que alcanzaron los puntos de referencia del ACT de Artes del Lenguaje Inglés (ELA), matemáticas y ciencias fue más de un 75% superior al promedio del distrito en cada uno de los exámenes. Por ejemplo, el 20.78% de estudiantes de Central alcanzaron el criterio de refrenenos del ACT para ELA, lo cual representa un 86% más que el 11.16% de los estudiantes en todo el distrito.

Son embargo, la tasa de absentismo crónico de Central ha aumentado anualmente en alrededor de un 2% desde 50.95% en 2020-21



El profesor de matemáticas Brent Larson da clase a una clase de segundo año.

IZABELLA KAMMERER | El Registro

a 58.88% en 2024-25. En contraste, la tasa del todo el distrito se ha mantenido estancada en poco menos del 40%.

“Yo creo que Central es excepcional. Y creo que Central ha tenido muchas tradiciones y sistemas e instituciones históricas que le han permitido mantener un cierto estándar de excelencia a lo largo del tiempo. Y creo que el modelo de jefe de departamento es una de esas cosas,” dijo Denton.

Nero no está segura de que el modelo de jefe de departamento sea un factor que contribuya directamente al rendimiento académico superior de Central en comparación con otros institutos de OPS.

“Imagínate si Central tuviera personal adicional dedicado a tiempo completo en eso; podrían profundizar en esos datos, ya que todos tienen margen de mejora. Por lo tanto, incluso si [Central] obtiene mejores resultados que otras escuelas, todavía hay un apilo margen para crecer,” dijo Nero.

Eric Behrens, quien será el director de Central el año que viene, trabajó con los especialistas en currículo como subdirector por tres años en Westview High School.

“Si las cosas están alineadas adecuadamente y se usa la posición en la manera correcta, puede ser un activo tremendo para los estudiantes y las aulas,” le dijo al Register en un artículo del 25 de marzo.

Desde una perspectiva administrativa, el jefe del departamento de matemáticas Brent Larson entiende porque un modelo de especialista en currículo podría ser más beneficioso.

“Si tuviera un maestro al que necesitaría ir a observar, o a quien tuviera que ir a ayudar, en este momento mis únicos bloques disponibles son el primero y el cuarto. Si hubiera un maestro que necesitaría ayuda durante el segundo o el tercer bloque, estaría ocupado y no podría ayudar,” dijo Larson.

Larson no solicitó el puesto de especialista en currículo debido a lo mucho que disfruta estar en el aula. La jefa del departamento de ciencias, Tracy Rumbaugh, eligió no postularse por razones similares.

“Como una persona que ocupa el cargo de [jefa de departamento], cada año resulta más difícil hacer mi trabajo y dividir mi tiempo igualmente entre ambos puestos y dividir la forma en la que pienso igualmente entre ambos. Por lo tanto, lo apoyo. Sin embargo, desde la perspectiva del ‘no,’ creo firmemente en la filosofía del jefe de departamento,” dijo

Rumbaugh.

Los profesores como Hamill y Denton reconocen

con los especialistas en currículo podrían reconocer buenas prácticas de enseñanza a

pesar de su formación, pero mantienen la superioridad del modelo de jefe de departamento porque los jefes de departamento activamente enseñan en el aula.

“Parte de lo que hace que nuestros jefes de departamento sean tan grandes es que están en el aula. Y, dado que están en el aula cada día, eso les otorga una mayor empatía y comprensión,” dijo Hamill.

En una encuesta realizada al personal de Central, los encuestados indicaron los métodos que consideraban más eficaces para propiciar los cambios que el distrito espera lograr con la transición hacia los especialistas en currículo. La alternativa más popular fue modificar el horario estudiantil a uno de nueve periodos o de bloques modificados, el cual Central implementará el año que viene. Otras soluciones incluyeron una mayor rendición de cuentas por parte de los estudiantes y los padres en lo referente a la asistencia, así como mayor apoyo a los profesores sin restricciones innecesarias.

Foster estaba fuertemente a favor de mantener vigente el modelo actual. Sin embargo, una vez que quedó claro que Central haría la transición a especialistas en currículo, solicitó el puesto porque quería asegurarse de que Central continuara en una dirección que beneficiaba tanto a la instrucción como a sus estudiantes.

Foster cree que su trabajo como especialista en currículo conllevará algunas responsabilidades adicionales, pero no tiene certeza sobre la naturaleza exacta de las mismas. Mostró empatía ante las inquietudes de los profesores sobre la posible reducción del Dori específico en cada asignatura.

“Creo que es una cosa que no tiene respuesta. Probablemente lo único que queda es esperar a ver cómo se desarrollan los acontecimientos e ir adaptándose a medida que surja cada situación,” dijo Foster.

- Traducido por Paula Gutierrez Martinez.

Dos miembros del personal de Central se jubilarán al final del curso escolar con Kirksey

Steven Dickerson
jefe de redacción

Tras décadas de servicio conjunto, el decano de estudiantes William Canney y la profesora de inglés Marcella Mahoney se jubilarán de Central High School al finalizar el curso escolar 2025-26. Estos dos profesores son los únicos miembros del personal que se jubilan este año, aparte de la directora Dionne Kirksey, quien marcó la vida de innumerables estudiantes y dejó un legado sólido.

Canney ha sido decano de estudiantes durante sus 18 años en Central.

Antes de llegar, enseñó en North High School durante tres años, pasó cuatro años en la Universidad de York y otros seis años enseñando en Texas. Cuando se abrió un puesto de decano en Central, dijo que la decisión fue sencilla.

"Quería pasar a la administración," dijo Canney.

La conexión de Mahoney con Central es más profunda. Ella ha impartido clases de inglés en Central durante 29 años. Ha dedicado 33 años a OPS, incluyendo su etapa en Norris Middle School antes de incorporarse a CHS. Su camino hacia Central comenzó durante su primer año en la Universidad de Creighton, cuando un curso introductorio de educación le exigía completar horas de observación en la clase de inglés de honor de la Sra. Terrie Saunders en Central.

"Me impresionaron al instante los estudiantes, así como el esfuerzo que dedicaban a sus trabajos y su preparación para las clases" dijo Mahoney. Un curso posterior con el legendario jefe del departamento de inglés, Dan Daly consolidó su objetivo. "sabía que mi meta final en educación era regresar a Central."

A pesar de sus diferentes roles, los dos coincidieron en que la parte más gratificante de sus carreras ha sido ver la evolución de los estudiantes a lo largo del tiempo. Para canney, esto significaba ver a los estudiantes de primer año crecer y recibir su diploma cuatro años después.

"Me llena de Orgullo ver como los estudiantes de primer año maduran hasta convertirse en estudiantes de último año y verlos graduarse", dijo Canney

Para Mahoney, los recompensas han llegado de una forma distinta: notas escritas

a mano y correos electrónicos de exalumnos, que a veces llegan años después de su graduación, comento que ha recibido cerca de un centenar de mensajes de este tipo, en los que atribuyen a su enseñanza de escritura un papel fundamental en sus experiencias universitarias y profesionales.

"Lo que más valoro son las amistades que he forjado con mis colegas y las notas de agradecimiento que recibo de los estudiantes años después", dijo Mahoney "Nuestro equipo está compuesto por seres humanos increíbles"

"Ella es un icono; ella es el departamento de inglés de Central", dijo Anna Wiksell, colega y maestra de inglés.

Los dos también han sido testigos de cómo Central ha cambiado considerablemente a lo largo de sus años de maestros. Canney señaló los cambios en las necesidades de los estudiantes desde la pandemia de COVID-19, destacado que, en la actualidad, una proporción mayor de alumnos requiere apoyo adicional en comparación con años anteriores.

"En general, dese la llegada de COVID, se han vuelto más necesidades. no todos, pero hay un grupo mucho más grande de lo que solíamos ver", dijo Canney. También comento que ciertos patrones de conducta se han vuelto más frecuentes, como la inasistencia a clases. Mahoney coincidió con eso.

"Los periodos entre clases antes eran muy ruidosos, y lleno de estudiantes hablando uno al otro, parando en sus casilleros para sacar libros", dijo Mahoney. "durante las clases prácticamente no había nadie en los pasillos, menos que los guardias de seguridad y los



Mahoney arriba, Canney abajo.



NEVEAH WILSON | El Registro

estudiantes auxiliares de la oficina. Eso es, sin duda muy diferente ahora"

Cuando se les pregunto qué es lo que más extrañarán, los dos dijeron a las personas que los rodean. Canney menciona las relaciones forjadas a lo largo de casi dos décadas en Central.

"Extrañare a los estudiantes, extrañare a los padres y, por supuesto, los maestros y colegas con los me he hecho muy cercano", dijo Canney

Mahoney, quien durante los últimos cinco años se ha dedicado exclusivamente a enseñar a estudiantes de primer año, comento que extrañara

ver el crecimiento de esos alumnos a lo largo de su carrera en Central, planea visitarlos cuando su agenda se lo permita.

"He disfrutado especialmente de varios de mis alumnos de noveno grado este año en el equipo Crandell", dijo Mahoney

Para el próximo decano, Canney enfatizo lo importante que es tener paciencia y la importancia de establecer una conexión personal con los estudiantes.

"Comprométanse con esto con una mente abierta y sean muy pacientes; pero trabajen en forjar relaciones con los niños para evitar que surjan conductas problemáticas", dijo Canney.

El consejo de Mahoney fue directo y contundente. Insto al personal a confiar en su propia experiencia y a oponerse cuando las reglas no beneficien a los estudiantes.

"Usted es un profesional titulado que conoce su materia y a sus estudiantes mejor que cualquier otra persona en el edificio y en las oficinas del distrito", dijo Mahoney. "Nunca dude en cuestionar o poner en tela de juicio las políticas, los programas o los procedimientos cuando estos no redunden en

el mejor interés de preparar a los estudiantes para crecer académicamente y demostrar responsabilidad personal".

Al jubilarse, Canney afirmó que su prioridad era el descanso. Él y su hijo, los dos originalmente de Texas, están considerando regresar a vivir allí en algún momento, aunque señalo que esto no ocurrirá en un futuro inmediato.

Mahoney, por el contrario, no se retira en absoluto de la docencia. El próximo año impartirá la asignatura de Artes del Lenguaje Ingles a alumnos de octavo grado en la Escuela Católica St. Patrick, en Elkhorn, regresando así a sus raíces como maestra de octavo grado.

"Aunque me retiro de las Escuelas Públicas de Omaha, no me retiro de la enseñanza", dijo Mahoney. "En cierto modo, regresare al lugar donde comencé mi carrera: enseñando octavo grado en la escuela Secundaria Norris. Me entusiasma los desafíos que formaran parte de este nuevo capítulo".

Los dos afirmaron que, a pesar de las exigencias de sus carreras, no tienen ningún arrepentimiento. Cuando se le pregunto si valió la pena convertirse en decano, Canney no dudo.

"Definitivamente vale la pena, sin duda alguna", dijo Canney. Recordó haberse encontrado con exalumnos en lugares públicos años después de su graduación. señalo que el éxito de ellos es un recordatorio de la razón por la que, en primer lugar, decidió asumir ese cargo.

"Veo a niños en la calle después de que se gradúan, y se acercan", dijo Canney. "Espero que tengan éxito".

Mahoney se hizo eco de ese sentimiento, destacando la perdurable solidez del departamento que ella ayudo a construir. dijo que le da tristeza que se haya eliminado los cargos de jefes de departamento en toda la institución Central, pero expresó su confianza en el futuro del departamento de ingles bajo la dirección de Jon Flanagan, actual jefe del departamento y futuro especialista en currículo.

"El departamento de inglés de CHS es la piedra angular de nuestra escuela, y siempre considerare un honor haber formado parte de él", dijo Mahoney. "Sin duda, estamos en buenas manos con él al mando". **-Traducido por Bri Martinez.**

El ex campeón de vallas regresa a Nest como profesor de inglés

Haydee Olvera-Carcamo
escritor colaborador

Wayne Reynolds es un graduado de Central en 1999 y campeón de atletismo que ahora enseña y entrena en su alma mater. Es tres veces campeón estatal y tiene el récord de 300 metros de vallas de Central.

Ganó el primer lugar en su último año en los 300 metros intermedios vallas con un tiempo de 38,56 segundos, ganando también el primer lugar en los 110 metros vallas de altura, con 14,28 segundos. En su tercer año, ganó el primer lugar en los obstáculos de 110 metros de altura a 14,54 segundos.

Reynolds también ganó el campeonato de maestro al aire libre de 110 metros de

atletismo de EE. UU. en la categoría de edad de 40 años en 2022.

Nacido en Atlanta, Georgia, se mudó a Omaha en los años 80 y fue a la Central High School y más tarde estudió en la Universidad de Dakota del Sur. Estudió negocios, pero con el tiempo cambió a la enseñanza ya que estaba más interesado en la enseñanza porque le encanta inspirar a los demás.

También estuvo entrenando durante 2019, pero tuvo que hacer una pausa debido a la pandemia. Después de la pandemia, fue nombrado entrenador de atletismo del jefe durante el año escolar 2023-24.

Además de ser el entrenador de atletismo, en enero regresó a Central como profesor de inglés para estudiantes de primer

año y último año.

Dijo que la enseñanza es más satisfactoria para él que cualquier cosa que haya hecho en el mundo corporativo, ya que puede dar forma a mejores conexiones alrededor de la escuela con los estudiantes y otros profesores. Es apreciado por los estudiantes y otros y se enorgullece de ser un Águila Central.

"Quiero decir, la gente me ha ofrecido comida solo porque llevaba un sombrero central", dijo Reynolds.

Jodie Martínez fue su profesora de inglés cuando estaba en la escuela secundaria. Ella dijo que él era un estudiante extrovertido y conocido por mucho por buenas razones, y que está contenta de tenerlo de vuelta.

"Para que un antiguo estudiante de Central que se graduó de Central regrese aquí, sabes que tienen el corazón en el lugar correcto", dijo Martínez.

Reynolds era conocido por estar involucrado en cosas que hacían mejorar la comunidad a su alrededor, dijo Martínez.

"Le gustaría involucrarse en las cosas, y mejorar las cosas, y simplemente ser una parte activa de toda la escena escolar. Y era muy popular, como casi todos los niños sabían quién es y por una buena razón", dijo Martínez.

-Traducido por Jasmin Gutierrez Garcia

El club K-Pop da la bienvenida a todos los que aman el fenómeno global

Alex Tamang
escritor colaborador

Durante la última década, el K-pop ha crecido en todo el mundo, se ha convertido en un fenómeno cultural global en el mundo occidental, por lo que sucede que hay un club de K-Pop en Central.

Los miembros dicen que es una comunidad muy acogedora donde los estudiantes pueden reunirse, divertirse, discutir sus ídolos favoritos de K-Pop y compartir su amor por la cultura coreana.

Senior Caden Parker es la presidenta del club K-Pop, y ha visto cómo el K-Pop se ha

convertido en la corriente principal.

"Es bastante impresionante que esté llegando a una audiencia más global, siento que le da a la gente más oportunidad de conectarse entre culturas", dijo Parker.

A medida que el K-pop crece en todo el mundo, pasando de ser llamado "raro" a convertirse ahora en una industria en auge, el K-pop ha sido un gran interés para los miembros del club de K-pop, reuniendo a diferentes estudiantes a través de un amor compartido por la música y la cultura.

Otro miembro del club, Panda Akue, ve que el K-Pop es tan bueno para la industria. "Siento que eso es genial para la industria.

También es genial para las personas que vienen a escuchar, escuchar y descubrir nueva música", dijo Akue.

La estudiante de primer año Ana Longino Lucio dijo: "La gente se ha estado metiendo más en el K-pop, cambiando su gusto musical y entrando en la cultura coreana. A la gente le pareció extraño que me gustara el K-pop y como si fuera raro y no fuera convencional, pero en realidad estoy feliz de que ahora más gente sea más inclusiva".

Bailar es una parte clave del K-Pop, y es lo que atrajo a Akue al K-Pop. Actualmente su banda favorita es Seventeen.

"Lo que me ayudó a atraer fueron los

movimientos locos", dijo Akue.

La banda favorita de Longino Lucio es Twice, y la razón por la que se metió en el K-pop fue su hermana. "Mi hermana me mostró su grupo favorito y me mostró a cada miembro para aprender cada uno de sus nombres", dijo.

A Parker, el líder del club de K-pop, le encanta Tomorrow X Together. La razón por la que se metió en el K-pop fueron los increíbles videos.

"Me metí en el K-pop por las imágenes creativas y el esfuerzo que se dedica a la producción de videos musicales", dijo Parker. **-Traducido por Jasmin Gutierrez Garcia**