

Class
DISMISSED

CONGRATULATIONS

**Newcastle High School
Class of 2026**

**Meet our
graduates, who
share their memories
and plans for the future!**



First Northern Bank
of W Y O M I N G



Brought to you by local businesses and the **News Letter Journal**



Cole Allison

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Eric and Rachael Allison

What are your plans after graduation?

I plan to take a gap year and go to cosmetology school in Rapid City, South Dakota.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

I will remember my junior year prom, all of the art projects I did, and hanging out with my friends.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

I imagine myself moved to a slightly bigger city and working full time as a beautician.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

My hairdresser of many years told me that the effort you put into your craft will show through no matter what.



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Veronica Ayers

Nickname: Vern Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Pete and Sandy McFarland

What are your plans after graduation?

I plan to go to a college with a criminal justice program.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

Some of my favorite teachers, Mr. Peterson and Mrs. Colgrove, and some of the good times I had in swim with my best friend, Jaydenn.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Ten years from now, I see myself hopefully working as a criminal investigator like I wanted to for a long time.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

I've been told a lot of great advice — starting with my peeps I live with, my teachers, and my closest friends.



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Simon Bau

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Paul and Dottie Bau

What are your plans after graduation?

I am going to travel with friends down to New Mexico and look for a job opportunity down there. I also intend to enjoy every second of freedom that I have from school and its troubles.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

I'll remember the highs and the lows of my years. I'll more than likely remember pole vaulting the most.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Ten years from now I see myself not in Newcastle.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

I have received a lot of advice from many people, but someone who has given me advice that has truly stuck with me is my dad. He told me, "He who hesitates is lost."



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Brooklyn Benshoof

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Julie Schofield and Danny Benshoof

What are your plans after graduation?

Attend The Salon Professional Academy in Rapid City, South Dakota, for cosmetology.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

The thing I will most likely remember would be being in sports like basketball and volleyball, and getting the chance to play with all my friends. Also getting to be involved in FFA and it teaching me so much and getting to experience everything.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

I imagine myself owning my own salon in Newcastle.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

My papa has given me the best advice; he always says, "Enjoy it while it lasts and cherish all the memories it has given you," and this will always stick with me as he has supported me through everything and pushed me to do the best.



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~ ~ ~ Congratulations! ~ ~ ~

Kaitlyn Blumenthal

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Nick Blumenthal and Rachel Hodge

What are your plans after graduation?

I plan to attend Black Hills State University in Spearfish, South Dakota, earning a major in business and minor in studio art.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

I believe I will remember the family I made with the cross country team, all the lunches sitting in Mr. Peterson's classroom, and the connections I have made with specific students, teachers, and community members.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Hopefully graduated college, married with kids, and starting a book store.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

Morgan Loepp always tells the FFA chapter to be a honey badger, and Sally Hoover has told me to move my arms and keep swimming.



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Jack Bower

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Jack and Anna Bower

What are your plans after graduation?

Get a good job.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

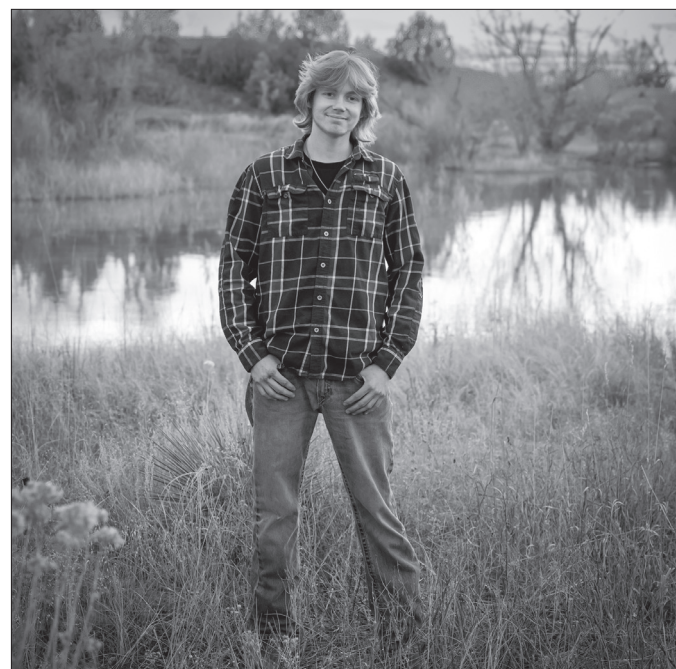
All my friends and stuff.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

In my own house.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

My friends told me to focus.



• Sponsored by Elliott Chiropractic •

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Callie Christensen

Nickname: Callie Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Wade and Tonya Christensen

What are your plans after graduation?

I plan to attend Grand Canyon University in Arizona and major in biology, then to attend medical school to become an anesthesiologist.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

I think what I will remember most about high school is all of the clubs I was involved in. Mainly, FFA it has had such a great impact on my life and I will cherish both the lessons and memories for a lifetime. Throughout my past four years I served as an officer for five different clubs, and I think the passion, dedication, joys and stress will be something I always remember.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Ten years from now I imagine myself completing my residency in medical school, and finalizing my journey to becoming an anesthesiologist. Hopefully when I turn 30 I will be in a financially stable position, starting my career and paying off my school debts, then I plan to start a family.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

Morgan Loepp has given me the best advice during my school years. Morgan is my FFA advisor and agricultural teacher. She helped me reach the national level for Extemporaneous Public Speaking and has given me millions of pep talks through the years. She always reminds me to be a honey badger, which means to stay feisty and competitive and never back down.



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Drew Conzelman

Nickname: Drewskii Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Matt and Kim Conzelman

What are your plans after graduation?

My plans after graduation are to attend Black Hills State University and get a degree in exercise science.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

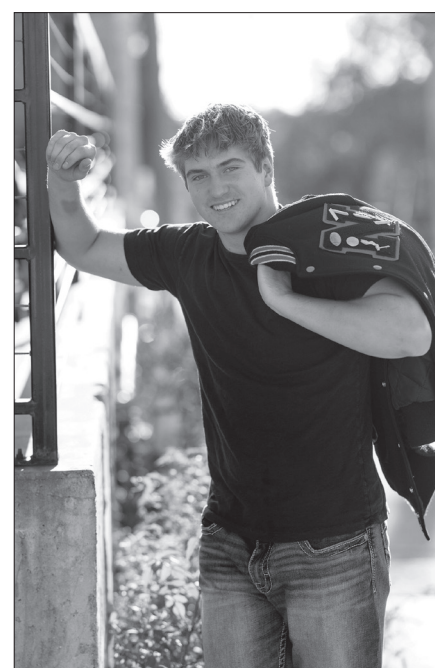
The exciting playoff football games I played in, and the teachers and coaches who impacted me.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Ten years from now, I imagine myself working at a high-performance sports center as a physical therapist or athletic trainer.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

Dave Christiansen, one of my high school football coaches, said, "You have two choices in life, you can either choose to be average or you can rise up to the occasion and put in the work and become the best version of yourself."



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Aiden Cummings

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Jared and Nicole Cummings

What are your plans after graduation?

To go work and then go to a trade school for welding.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

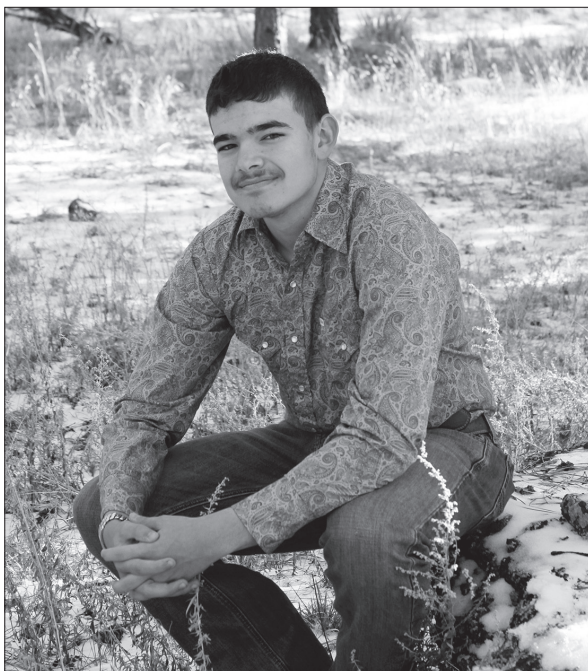
The friendships that I have made.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

I imagine myself having my own welding business.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

I would say that my dad has given me the best advice throughout my school years.



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Samuel Cunningham

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Casey and Stephanie Cunningham

What are your plans after graduation?

Attend John Brown University, majoring in mechatronics engineering and run for their track team.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

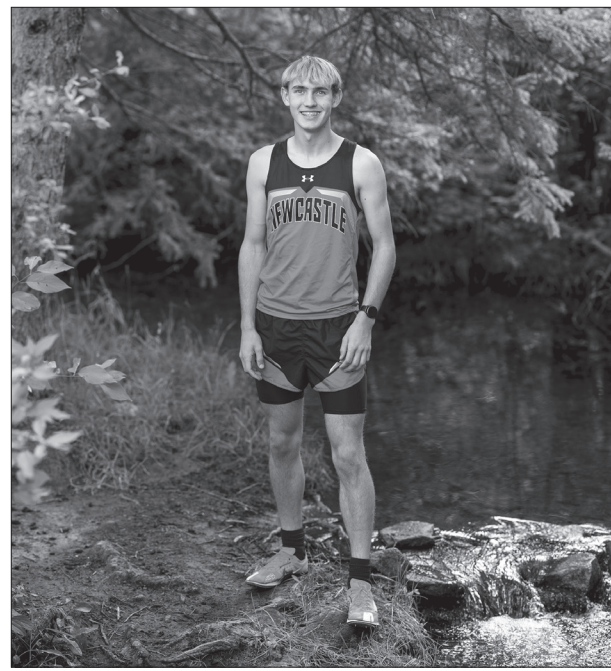
No response.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

No response.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

No response.



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Brayden Derifield

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Kanoah Derifield, Stephanie Derifield

What are your plans after graduation?

My plans after graduation would mostly be working as a mechanic.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

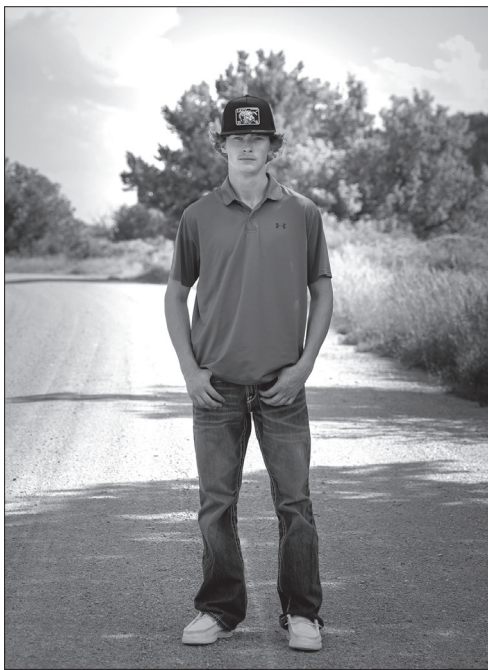
When I look back on high school years later, the things I'll remember is getting in trouble.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

I imagine myself ten years from now would probably be working as a mechanic making good money.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

I believe my mother has given me the best advice in my school years and just staying ahead in school.



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Faith Dixon

Nickname: Tink Tink and Fay Fay Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Leslie Dixon, Brandy Dixon

What are your plans after graduation?

I am planning to wait two years, then start taking classes to be a certified nursing assistant or emergency medical technician.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

Something I will remember the most in high school is the teachers helping me or other students understand something we did not get or having a hard time understanding the work. The teachers help out students for as long as they can or have them come in during lunch or ER time to help with understanding the work.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

I can see myself as a mom and working as a certified nursing assistant or an emergency medical technician. I could also see myself being a stay-at-home mom or wife and doing little jobs off to the side like babysitting or watching dog/cats or helping clean someone's house.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

My stepmom was the one who gave me the best advice in school. She would tell me to just remember how far I had come, and to kill people with kindness. Without her, I don't think I would have made it out of high school.



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Cole Erb

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Steve and Wendy Erb

What are your plans after graduation?

I currently plan to attend Casper College to study for my degree in business administration.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

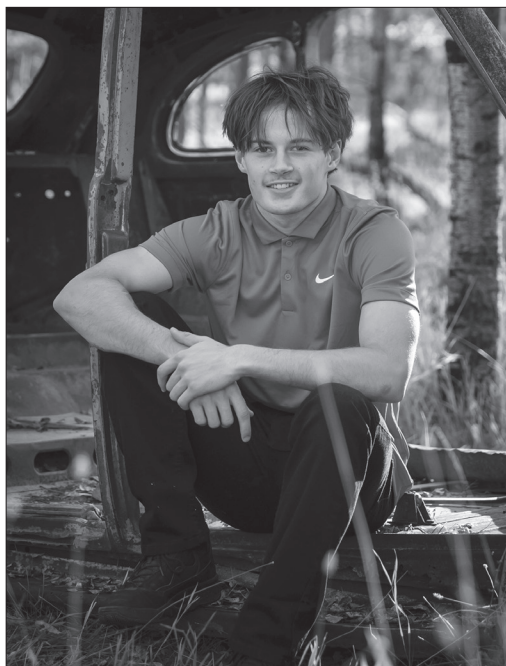
The thing I will remember most is my peers who surrounded me and helped me grow.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Ruling the world.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

I don't believe that I could narrow it down to just one, all of my teachers have given me a great deal of knowledge.



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Preslee Fitzwater

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Billy and Michelle Fitzwater

What are your plans after graduation?

I plan to attend the University of Wyoming upon graduation. I will study kinesiology and psychology with a minor in honors, through their Honors College.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

When I look back on my high school career, I will remember all the privileges and opportunities I had. But most of all, I will look back on my village, the people that pushed me and supported me to be better and do better — I would be nothing without them.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

In ten years I hope to be graduated with a doctoral degree in something I love doing. I hope to be chasing opportunity and settling down in an occupation that I love and will be successful in.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

Although a lot of people have offered advice I appreciated through the journey, my mom has always given me the best advice. Our song is, "I Hope You Dance," by Lee Ann Womack, and my mom never fails to remind me through this song she hopes I dance through life, taking every opportunity to grow, but reminding me to be grateful for all the experiences that got me to this point.



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Trayden Gramkow

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Kristy Gramkow and Zachary Derr

What are your plans after graduation?

My plans are to go to a trade school and start welding.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

I will remember friends the most and all memories that come along with high school.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Working on welding pipes and other structures for the pipelining business.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

My mom has and it's do what you're afraid of. To me this has given me the courage to do things.



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Rurik Herrberg

Nickname: Rook Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Libby Huber

What are your plans after graduation?

Attend Casper College and get accepted into the radiology program.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

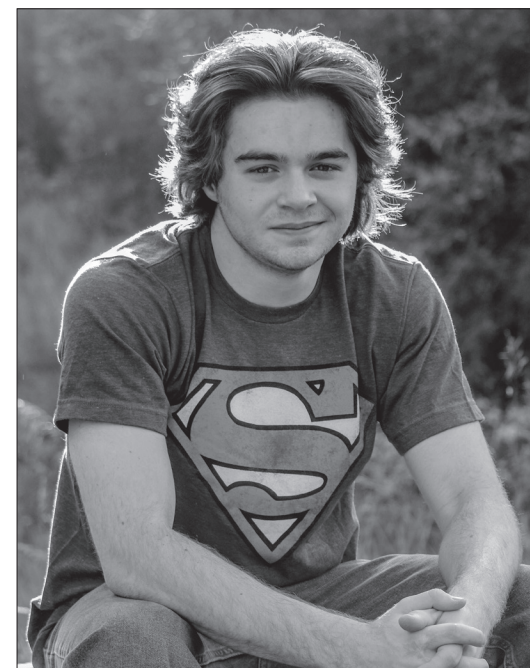
Sophomore year regionals in track.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Vandalizing Lambeau Field with my family, just kidding. I hope to be living somewhere coastal with a stable job.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

Nate Strickland: "Your mistakes are what made you who you are, so try to appreciate how stupid you once were."



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Austin Hicks

Nickname: Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

What are your plans after graduation?
No response.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?
No response.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?
No response.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?
No response.



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Jyzelle Hinshaw

Nickname: Z or Ziggy Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Mike and Amanda Hinshaw

What are your plans after graduation?

My plan after graduation is to work with my certified nursing assistant license until I figure out which career path I am going to choose, between nursing or cosmetology.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

When I look back on high school in later years, the thing I will remember most is the different sport team memories of bus trips, or tournaments, as well as the friend groups I have made.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

I imagine myself being successful in the career that I choose, living in some town in South Dakota, as well as having good friends and a family.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

The person who gave me the best advice during my school years would be Mr. Peterson. He always has something genuine to say to help you through a decision. Mr. P has encouraged me to get my CNA license and further my education through the medical field.



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Kianah Holland

Nickname: Kiki (for a select few) Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Sean and Camryn Holland

What are your plans after graduation?

I was originally planning to go to college and major in bio-medical science, but I realized that I am not ready whatsoever and it is very expensive. I now plan to try to find some online classes to take during the following year and work a lot to save up for college.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

I will remember that hard work will pay off in the end as long as you keep pushing yourself. Also, I realized it is okay to feel lonely as long as I know I have myself.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

I imagine myself maybe still in medical school or doing residency for my career.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

I would say that I got the best advice from Mrs. Gregory. She really helped push me to get me to the spot I am at now. It was more of her actions, she would help me with better and effective ways to cope.



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~ ~ ~ Congratulations! ~ ~ ~

Kathryn Huber

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Hayden and Shannon Huber

What are your plans after graduation?

My plans for after graduation are to attend the University of South Dakota and get a degree in legal studies.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

Looking back on high school in the future, I will most likely remember all of the friends I have made in classes and in the sports I have done.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Ten years from now I imagine myself living in a big city, working in a law firm. I also imagine living in a nice house with lots of animals.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

My dad has given me the best advice. He always tells me to do what is best for me even if my decision isn't always the popular one.



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Astrid Karr

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Trae and Siri Karr

What are your plans after graduation?

I plan to stay another year or six months to save up enough to move over to Rapid City to get an apartment, and from there go to college online for a bachelor's degree to be a teacher.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

Spanish and culinary class, because I felt welcomed and there were fun activities.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Becoming a teacher and having a better car and live in a cool apartment.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

Mrs. Munger, she told me that things may be hard now, but I'm strong and I can make it through. She always offered to help throughout the years.



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Brynne Kilby

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Nita Kilby

What are your plans after graduation?

After graduation I plan to go to Black Hills State University and major in elementary education. After college I will find a job in a school somewhere, probably in Wyoming and begin my teaching career.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

The thing I will remember most when looking back at my years in high school will be the memories I made in the classroom and all the people who made it bearable.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

In 10 years I imagine myself in a nice house with my three kids and husband. I will be working at an elementary school doing what I have always dreamed of.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

The best advice I was given was from my old choir teacher from when I lived in Casper. He told us, "if someone says you suck it's probably because they suck." It really taught me that I shouldn't care what other people think and I should just be me!



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~ ~ ~ Congratulations! ~ ~ ~

Isabella Klein

Nickname: Izzy Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Kimberly Klein

What are your plans after graduation?

To go to college and do the first two years of criminal law and criminal justice so that way I can get my associate's degree.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

How caring the staff were and how amazing Newcastle High School is, but mainly I'll remember how nice and awesome Mr. Hoffman and Mrs. Gregory are.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Ten years from now I imagine myself hopefully being either a judge or a lawyer.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

The person that has given me the best advice this year would have to be either Mrs. Gregory or Mrs. P. Mrs. Gregory told me when I wanted to give up on going to college, she said that no matter how hard it gets never give up on your dreams.



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Baleigh Knight

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Kody and Amber Knight

What are your plans after graduation?

After graduation, I plan to attend the University of Wyoming down in Laramie and use my associate's degree to get a bachelor's in criminal justice and psychology within two years.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

I will remember my friends; they helped to contribute to some of my fondest memories from high school. We laughed, cried, and enjoyed the little things together, and for that I am grateful.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

I imagine myself living in Laramie, having a job that positively affects my community. I see myself living a happy life, surrounded by those who I love.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

The best advice I got during these years is from my dad. He told me to not wish my time away, and to enjoy the little things as they happen.



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Maggie Lacey

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Patrick and Christa Lacey

What are your plans after graduation?

I plan to attend Eastern Wyoming College in Torrington for their barber technician program. After that I plan to move to Iowa.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

I think what I will remember the most is opportunities I have been given through art. I'm glad I've been given the chance to try so many different forms of art and fall deeper in love with art.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Ten years from now I hope to live in Iowa close to my sister and own my own barber shop. I also hope to be married.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

I think some of the best advice I have received through my school years is from my mother. She has always told me to be myself and people who like me for me will find me.



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Thomas Lake

Nickname: Tommy, Tom, I don't mind Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Jason and Debra Lake

What are your plans after graduation?

Unsure

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

The fun experiments I got to do.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Most hopefully getting set in a career.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

Mr. Peterson told me there are lots of possibilities and things to do in the world.



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Tatiana Lepine

Nickname: T Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Mark and Kim Washburn

What are your plans after graduation?

After graduation, I will graduate back in France, and I plan to go to college, either in France or in the U.S. to study cellular and molecular biology or physics.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

I will mostly remember the school year I had the chance to spend in the United States.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

No answer

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

All the people who encouraged me to do an exchange year and to follow my dreams.



▪ Sponsored by Edward Jones ▪



Laila Lopez

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Javier and Kami Lopez

What are your plans after graduation?

My plans after graduation are to go to Black Hills State University to study either nursing or teaching.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

One thing that I'll remember from high school will be the teachers that have both helped me grow and that have supported me through everything and that have supported my dreams.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Where I imagine myself in ten years is to be out of college with a stable job.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

The person that has given me the best advice would be Mrs. Pehringer. She told me that no matter what, that it's okay to cry when you need it and that hiding your emotions isn't healthy.



▪ Sponsored by Newcastle Vision Clinic ▪

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Spencer Lorenz

Nickname: Spence Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Jade Stoudt and Shane Lorenz

What are your plans after graduation?
Move to Cheyenne and explore my options.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?
My friends and I messing around in class, and getting to have friendships with great teachers and great people.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?
Hopefully married with my life in order. If not, I just hope I'm at a comfortable point in life.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?
Many of my teachers have given me good advice, unfortunately I don't remember what they said.



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Courtney Matthews

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Casey and Savanna Matthews

What are your plans after graduation?
I'm going to work some and hopefully travel around the country as much as I can before settling down and finding a career.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?
I think I'll remember my wrestling career more than anything. Not necessarily my performance, but the lessons, friends, and family I made along the way.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?
Hopefully I'll be traveling the world.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?
Numerous people have told me to never quit over the last few years, whether that's correlated with assignments or sports, my dad, coaches, and teachers always told me to never quit.



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Collin McConkey

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Justin and Jade McConkey

What are your plans after graduation?
Attend Casper College and attain a radiography degree.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?
Sports trips with the fellas, fun classes, and science classes.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?
Traveling as a radiography technician, so I am unsure.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?
My father told me to find a job that I have an interest in and go for it. So I did.



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Colin McVay

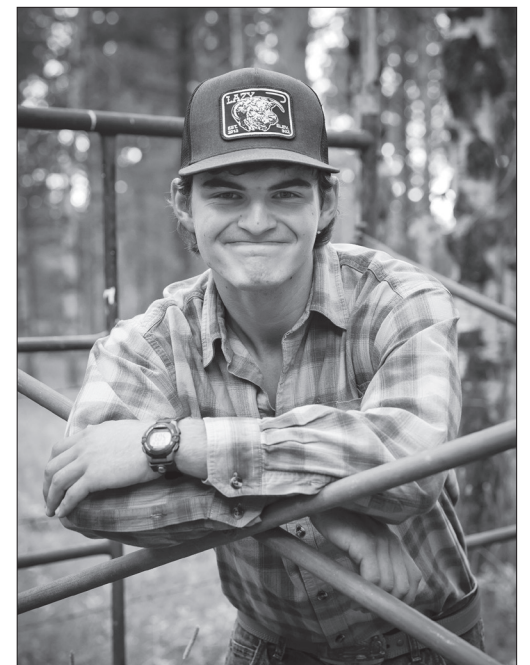
Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Bryan McVay

What are your plans after graduation?
To work, hopefully my summer job extends into a full-time job.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?
I'll remember a lot, bad times, good times, mistakes, but mostly I'll remember spending time with my buddies, and regret not spending more time with them.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?
Unsure, hopefully a calm life with my dog.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?
My dad: never look back, always look forward.



▪ Sponsored by Farm Bureau/Holly Borton ▪



Kahlen Mullen

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Clint and Amber Mullen

What are your plans after graduation?

After graduation, I plan to move back to my hometown and continue my education.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

Looking back, I will remember the teachers who motivated me and pushed me to succeed in my highest potential. I will also cherish the growth of watching myself along with my classmates succeed, and experience change throughout these four years.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Ten years from now I can imagine myself going with the flow and living my best life. I'm not sure what that looks like, but having more wiener dogs sounds like a good start!

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

During my high school years, I received the best advice from my older sister. She has helped guide, and support me, in every way possible, making it known that she is proud of me.



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Myreli Munoz

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Jose and Adela Munoz

What are your plans after graduation?

I am attending cosmetology school in Rapid City at The Salon Professional Academy.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

My friends and all the memories I was able to make and cherish with them.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Living in Wyoming, having my own salon, and hopefully married with three kids.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

Probably my sisters: "Prioritize your assignments and turn them in on time. It's a simple thing that can make a difference in your grades."



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Yaquelin Munoz-Galvan

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Gustavo and Alejandra Munoz

What are your plans after graduation?

After graduation, I plan to attend college and major in dental hygiene and build a career in the dental field.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

When I look back on high school, I'll remember the lessons learned, the challenges I faced, and how those experiences helped me become more independent.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

In ten years, I see myself successfully working in my dental career, possibly owning my own dental office, building a family and creating a stable life in Mexico.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

The best advice I received came from my parents: "Echale ganas mi liny," which means to give my all and keep pushing forward. They also reminded me that, "Anything in this world can be achieved. God first, because he will guide us." Their words taught me to work hard, stay focused, and believe that I can achieve anything I can set my mind to.



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Jaydenn Nelson

Nickname: Jayd, or my dad calls me Bug Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Gerald and Christen Gesinger; Will and Nicky Nelson

What are your plans after graduation?

I want to take a gap year and save up some money, then I will go to Rapid City to go to cosmetology school.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

I will remember all the teachers and friends that pushed me throughout high school and made me the best version of myself.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

I imagine myself in a big house in the country with a lot of plants and animals, while pursuing my cosmetology dreams.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

I would say my three best friends, Vern, Sherri, and Kathryn, have given me the best advice throughout school. It isn't just one thing they have said, it is everything. They tell me the truth even if I don't want to hear it, and they have just been there through all the ups and downs of high school.



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~ ~ ~ Congratulations! ~ ~ ~

Archer Ohnstad

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Aaron and Lisa Ohnstad

What are your plans after graduation?

I plan to go to the South Dakota School of Mines fall of 2026 for mechanical engineering.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

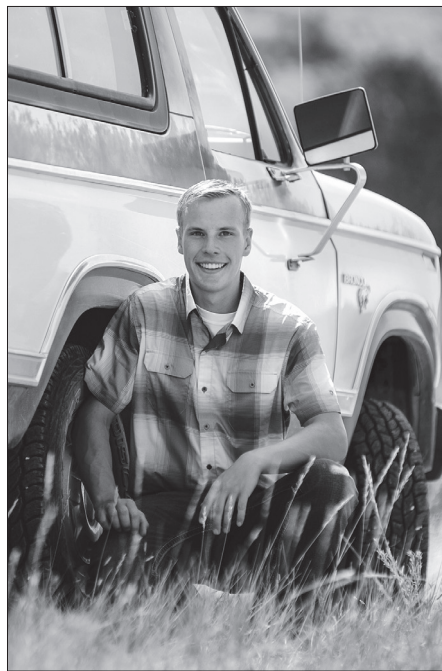
All my fun projects that I did in the science department and adventures with my friends in the canyon during cross country.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

I imagine myself in ten years being five years into a stable job, purchasing my first home and exploring the world around me on the weekends.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

The person who has given me the best advice during my high school year was my mom, who has always encouraged me to have fun, but also pursue something greater for my future.



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~ ~ ~ Congratulations! ~ ~ ~

Sydney Pederson

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Mike and Jennifer Pederson

What are your plans after graduation?

I plan to attend Mount Marty University in Yankton, South Dakota, and continue my academic and athletic career.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

When looking back I will always remember my time playing sports and being involved in school activities.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

In ten years I can imagine myself hopefully graduated and started in a workplace where I can utilize my degree.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

Someone who has given me the best advice during my school years is Mr. Von Eye. He has not only made an impact on me personally, but also on my classmates. Mr. Von Eye does a great job prioritizing school involvement and recognition.



▪ Sponsored by Rhoades Dental ▪

~ ~ ~ Congratulations! ~ ~ ~

Cort Perino

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Wade Perino and Cassie Kruger

What are your plans after graduation?

I plan to continue to work for Rick's Electric and on my family's ranch.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

What I would remember most about high school is my years in football and hanging out with my friends.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

My best guess is being an electrician and working on the ranch.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

Mr. Conzelman. Many of his pregame speeches have had a lasting impact. It is hard to narrow it down to one singular piece of advice from him.



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~ ~ ~ Congratulations! ~ ~ ~

Abigayle Pounds

Nickname: Abby Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Eraclio and Misty Martinez

What are your plans after graduation?

I plan to go to Eastern Wyoming College to get a degree in agricultural business and animal science. I plan on ranching and doing rodeo.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

I will remember writing a lot of essays and turning into the person I have become.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Ranching on my own land and traveling for rodeo.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

My dad, David Pounds, gave me the best advice during all my years, "Just because they don't like you doesn't mean anything," and "Take the hard classes because they will push you harder and get you further in life."



▪ Sponsored by A-1 Agency Insurance ▪

~ ~ ~ Congratulations! ~ ~ ~

Reagan Redding

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Hale and Alicia Redding

What are your plans after graduation?

Attend Casper College for agribusiness and then continue at West Texas A&M. I will continue to grow my Club Lamb operation and start my own business selling feed and show supplies to the youth of the livestock industry.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

I will remember the memories and friends I have made with everyone as well as the teachers who made high school more and more enjoyable.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

I imagine I am raising show lambs somewhere warm with no snow. Running my own agribusiness and helping kids with their show stock.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

My cousin, Karina Mysse, who was a 2023-2024 Wyoming state FFA officer, told me to have more gratitude than attitude and to try new things that may feel unenjoyable at the time but will prove to be the most important later on.



▪ Sponsored by Sagebrush Market ▪

~ ~ ~ Congratulations! ~ ~ ~

Jace Rich

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Justin and Zannie Rich

What are your plans after graduation?

I plan to attend Casper College and major in agribusiness and agricultural communications while being on the livestock judging team.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

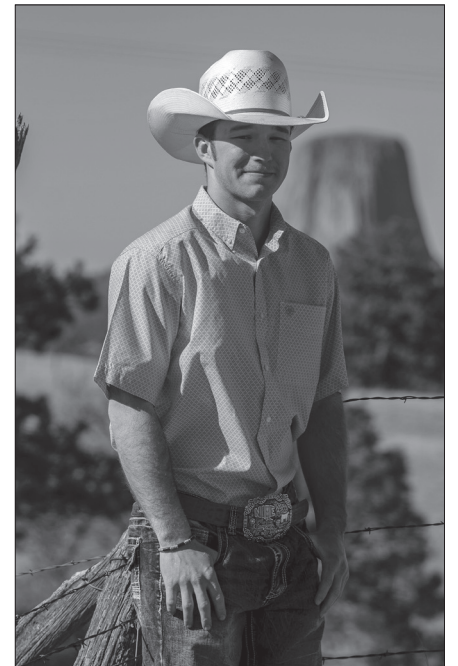
I will definitely remember my high school football career, and my FFA career at Newcastle High School.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Ten years from now I imagine myself waking up to some good donor cows and being one of the bigger well-known names in the show industry.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

Sturge told me once, "It is just a chapter of your life, it is not the end of the book, it is just a chapter," as in, just get through it, get it done.



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~ ~ ~ Congratulations! ~ ~ ~

Riley Rich

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Garrett Rich and Brandi Wolfe

What are your plans after graduation?

To work for a year then possibly trade school.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

Summer time hanging out with friends.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Hopefully with a good job and a house, possibly wife.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

My dad, and he just tells me to think before I act.



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~ ~ ~ Congratulations! ~ ~ ~

Maria Sandvold

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Adam and Heather Ertman

What are your plans after graduation?

Go back home to Norway and finish my last year of high school, then go to university and probably get a degree in international relations or something.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

Probably track and all the friends I made here.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Hopefully I have my bachelor's and master's degree and have a job I enjoy. I see myself traveling a lot and attending as many concerts as possible.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

This wasn't said to me personally, but a wise woman named Taylor Swift once said, "if they don't like you for being yourself, be yourself even more." She also said "haters gonna hate."



▪ Sponsored by 21 Wellness Coalition ▪



Keith Simmons

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Patrick and Aimee Simmons

What are your plans after graduation?

My plan after graduation is to move to Gillette and start my work life, and try to be stable as possible and go from there.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

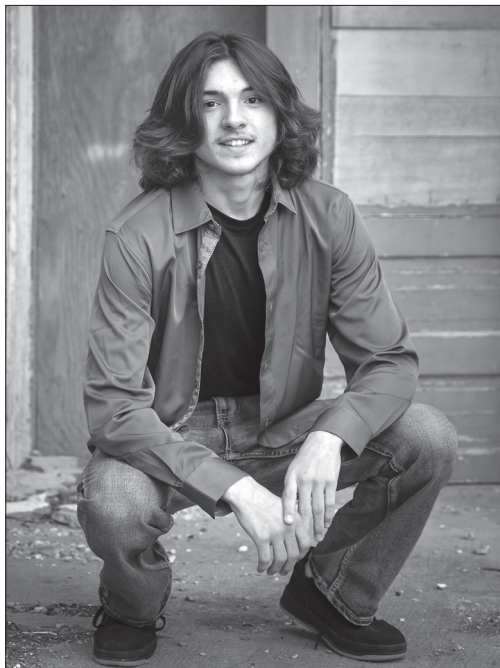
All the memories of my friends and family and my girlfriend.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

I honestly don't know, but hope to be making an honest living.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

The person who gave me the best advice would have to be my grandma: "don't forget who helped when nobody else would."



▪ Sponsored by Chick Financial ▪



Hanna Skold

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Levi Tacy, Rebecca Tacy

What are your plans after graduation?

Travel all over the world and then continue my studies in law.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

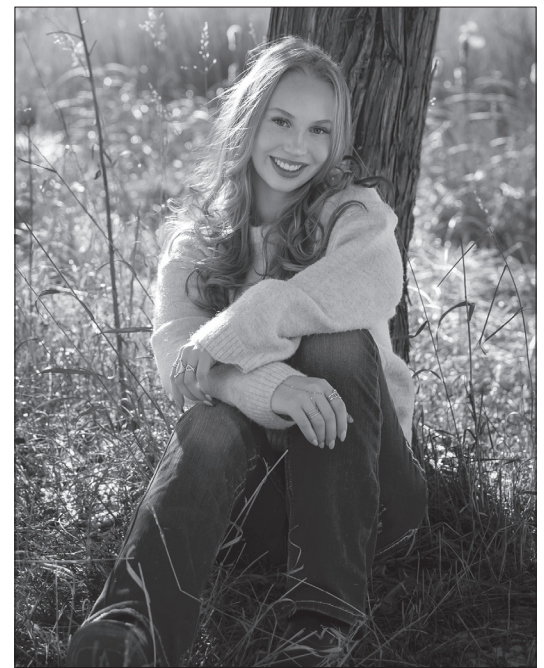
All the amazing people I have met and how much I have grown.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

In ten years, I hope to have traveled to as many countries as possible and to be working as some type of lawyer.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

A teacher once told me that you can achieve whatever you set your mind to, as long as you work for it.



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Madison Sterriker

Nickname: Maddie Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Drew Dresen and Kelly Page

What are your plans after graduation?

After graduation I plan to go to Eastern Wyoming College for cosmetology.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

Looking back at high school in later years, I think I'll remember my friends, and teachers I made great bonds with, and the sports I managed throughout the years.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Honestly I have no clue, I would like to say I might have a family by then, but truthfully I have no clue.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

I would like to say Mr. Peterson. There really isn't a specific thing that he said, but he has always given me the best advice when I come to him for help, and although he might tease me for it he always has my best interest in mind.



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Tyler Stith

Nickname: 2G Dooley Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Mike and Megan Stith

What are your plans after graduation?

Work on family ranch, then go to WyoTech for applied welding, then get my associate's degree in business management.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

I'll always remember my state trips and goofing off in Scribbs' class.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Welding some pipe in a rancher's pasture.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

*Go be a honey badger
— Morgan Loepp.*



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Theodore Troftgruben

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Brad and Jessica Troftgruben

What are your plans after graduation?

This summer I am wildland fire-fighting with the Bureau of Land Management. In the fall I will be guiding elk hunters on backcountry horse packing trips near Dubois, Wyoming. After that I am as free as a bird and do not have any official plans.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

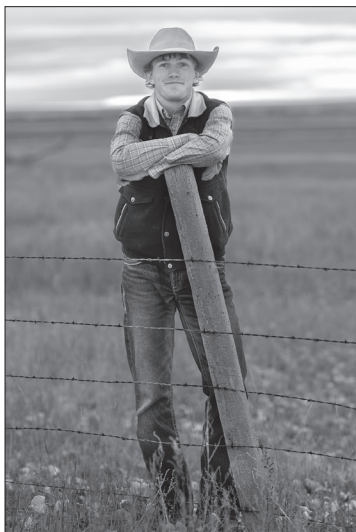
I think that the most memorable part of my high school career will be how often I got to do whatever I wanted to do.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

I imagine that in ten years I will be running around somewhere doing what makes me happy.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

Both coach Conzelman of the Newcastle football team and Coach Von Eye of the Newcastle basketball team have given me great advice. Coach Conzelman always said that the only two things you can control are your effort and attitude. Coach Von Eye came up with a motto for this year which was, "Do all with great energy."



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Nathan White

Nickname: Nate Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Jessie and Brandi Williams

What are your plans after graduation?

Going to try and get into a cheap trade school. Then build on those skills and get a well-paying job.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

I will remember all the football games and the bus rides home. All the memories from the track meets and pole vault.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

Hopefully settled in a house with a wife and kids.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

Mr. Conzelman: "Play hard, have fun."



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Noah Williams-Gardner

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Tegan Gardner

What are your plans after graduation?

I plan on going to a trade school after graduation.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

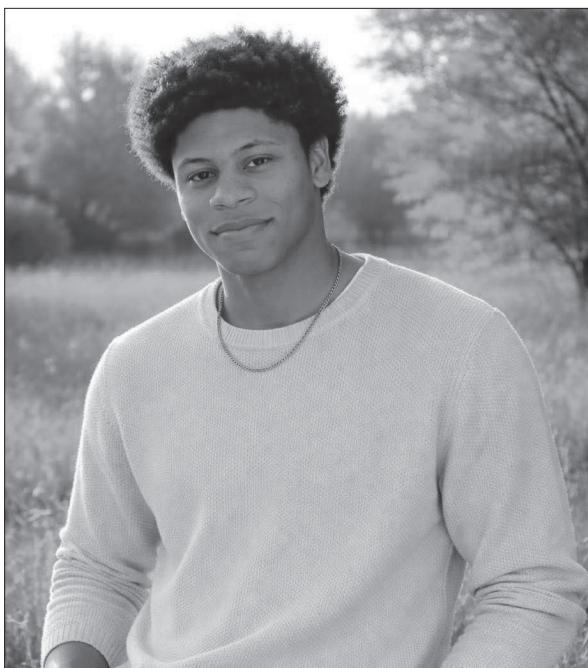
I'll remember all the moments I enjoyed with my friends and teammates.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

I see myself enjoying what I've made of life.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

My mom. She said, "Always push yourself to do your best, don't be mediocre."



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Homeschool Class of 2026



Karen Slagle

Parent(s)/Guardian(s): Allen and Ann Slagle

What are your plans after graduation?

I am planning on going to Jackson Hole Bible College this fall.

When you look back on high school in later years, what will you remember most?

I will remember going to youth group and my literature course.

Where do you imagine yourself ten years from now?

I imagine myself as someone who is living out God's will for my life in whatever way that is.

Who has given you the best advice during your school years? What did they say?

No response.



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Peterson and Pehringer to be 2026 commencement speakers

Michael Alexander
NLJ Reporter

At their graduation ceremony on Sunday, May 17, the Newcastle High School graduating class of 2026 will have two commencement speakers. They are NHS science teacher Nicholas Peterson and NHS English teacher Erika Pehringer.

Before their class meeting on Feb. 25 to decide on a commencement speaker, the seniors had already agreed on whom they would like to take on the responsibility. In an interview with the News Letter Journal, senior Baleigh Knight said that she and fellow senior Kathryn Huber suggested nominating Peterson.

"I'd say he is probably the teacher closest to our class," she said.

Other seniors, such as Brynne Kilby and Kahlen Mullen, also recommended including Pehringer.

According to senior Callie Christensen, the two teachers were a natural selection. Like Knight, she noted the close rapport between these two educators and the senior class.

"We basically chose them because they're young teachers, and we think they connect to our class and do really well teaching each of us and understanding our emotions," she said.

Christensen also mentioned another reason for their selection of Peterson.

"He showed up at the same time as us, and he is leaving with us," she said.

That is, the science teacher had the class of 2026 as students during his first year at the high school, and he is teaching them during his last year with Weston County School District No. 1, as his position was one of those eliminated in the district's reduction in force. This fact makes the commencement speech a bittersweet occasion, yet Peterson is treating the opportunity as celebratory.

"Personally, for me, it just feels kind of like a good last hurrah," he said.

Like Peterson, Pehringer also taught the class of 2026 during her first year at NHS. After a sudden teacher resignation in March 2023, the NHS alum helped out her alma mater by filling that position until the end of the school year. Then in 2024, she was hired as an English teacher at the high school, instructing the same group of students as juniors.

The Newcastle native said she is honored to be one of the commencement speakers.

"I've known so many of these kids since they were really young," she said. "And getting to see them go through school and graduate is exciting. And to be picked as someone they trust to speak on their behalf even more so."

While grateful to be chosen by the graduating class, neither was especially surprised.

"Some of the girls had floated the idea that they might pick us earlier in the year," Pehringer said, "but that was so long ago. I thought they would pick someone else by



Photo by Michael Alexander/NLJ

The Newcastle High School Class of 2026 selected English teacher Erika Pehringer and science teacher Nicholas Peterson as their commencement speakers.

the end, but no, here we are."

Despite anticipating that they might be chosen, the duo was slightly flummoxed by the speech-writing process.

"We definitely didn't know what we were doing or how to structure it," Pehringer said.

Fortunately, they were able to turn to Principal Bryce Hoffman for help. Hoffman has served as a commencement speaker twice before and was able to give the pair some pointers on how to structure their speech.

"Once we figured that out, it was smooth sailing," Pehringer said.

With a clearer idea of how to compose their speech, the teachers were able to hammer it out in a couple of hours, and fittingly, they color-coded their manuscript the same way Pehringer has her students highlight their essays.

Not wanting to give away too much, Peterson and Pehringer did share a couple of the themes of their speech. They intend to impart the importance of being true to oneself as well as recognizing students, especially those "underdogs" who do not always get the spotlight. Peterson also said he will reiterate a message he has

given to his students in class.

"I'm going back to something that I've always pushed these kids to strive for," he said. "One of my key talks I always have with a new class is the power of yet."

This, he explained, is the recognition that failure is not the end of an effort and that with enough determination, any goal can be realized.

Attendees can expect a speech that matches the personality styles of the two speakers. Peterson and Pehringer will integrate not only props but, in true Mrs. Pehringer fashion, some Taylor Swift quotes as well.

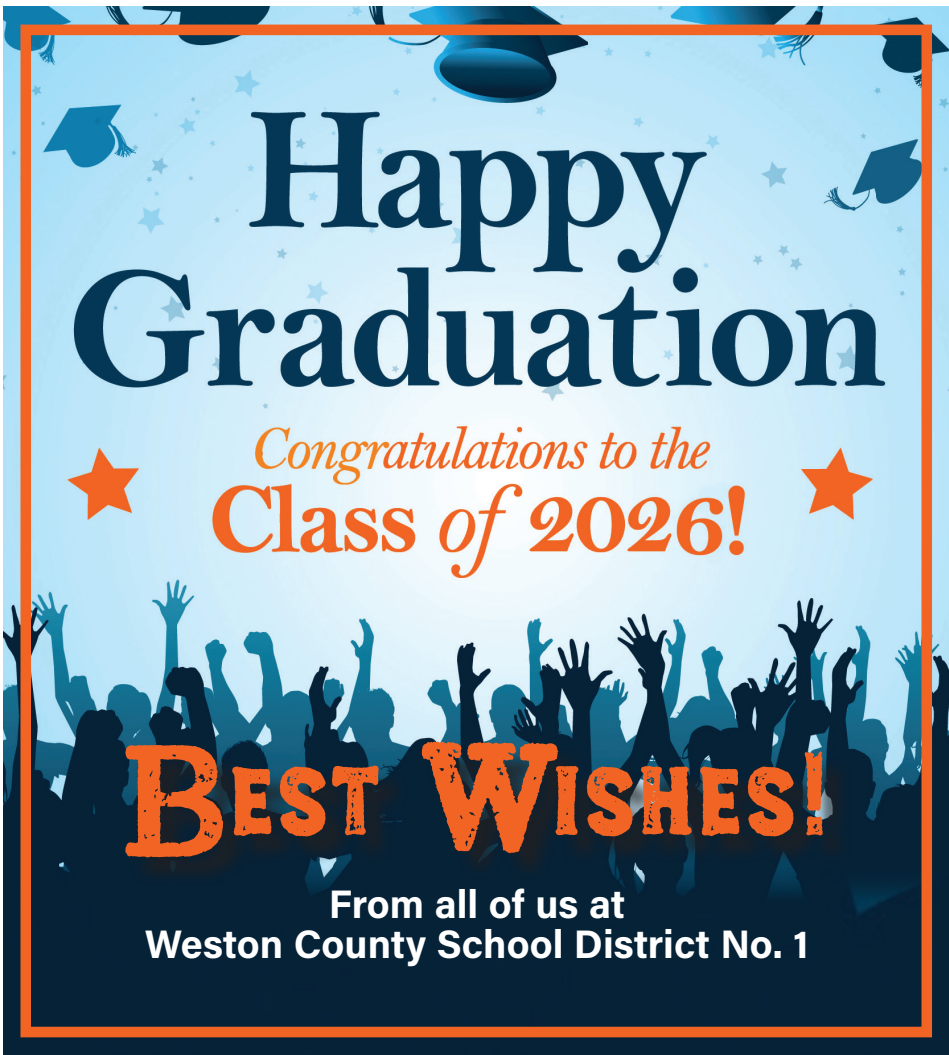
Both speakers admit that they are likely to become emotional during their speech.

"I'm a little bit of a crier," Peterson said. "I might get a little choked up."

"Most people know that I'm kind of a crybaby," Pehringer said. "I'm not above crying in front of my community."

Despite the bittersweet nature of the class of 2026 — a class with a close connection to Peterson and Pehringer — leaving high school, the duo ultimately hopes these students take away a positive message.

"Life is going to get pretty sweet after they graduate," Pehringer said.



Newcastle High School Commencement

May 17, 2 p.m.
at Crouch Auditorium



Speakers:

Erika Pehringer and Nicholas Peterson

Class Colors:

Black and orange

Class Song:

You're Gonna Go Far – Noah Kahan

Class Motto:

"Beginnings are usually scary, and endings are usually sad, but it is everything in between that makes it all worth living."

– Bob Marley

Class Flower: Rose

Class of 2026 Valedictorians:

Callie Christensen, Preslee Fitzwater, and Collin McConkey