

WESTWORLD



West unfairly labeled a failure

Suhail Ansari
World Editor

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) has provided several entertaining acronyms to educators across America, including Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), among many others. Although these acronyms do not directly affect students, various other aspects of the act have been designed to do so, but those aspects rarely meet up to their ambition.

NCLB seeks to ensure that all students in the U.S., from primary to secondary school, are 100% proficient in the areas of reading and math by the goal year 2014. This will be ensured by meeting AYP, a standard established by each individual state, according to *The New York Times*.

According to Principal Kaine Osburn, the goal of the law is its namesake: no child should be left behind. In that spirit, subgroups of different ethnic and economic classifications are established to guarantee that everyone's needs are met equally. Every subgroup of 50 or more students at a particular school needs to pass or else the whole school deals with the label of "failing."

Graduating 92 percent of its students, West offers an individual support system for any student who seeks it

West sadly has failed to meet these standards for a number of years and failed during the 2007-08 school year because some subgroups did not meet AYP.

Any District 219 administrator is rightfully able to gloat about having one of the premier fine arts department in the country. West helps foster growth in the areas of art, music and theater, among others. Graduating 92 percent of its students, West offers an individual support system for any student who seeks it. If fine arts do not do it for one, then there is a wide array of Advance Placement classes for those willing to expand their minds by taking more challenging classes.

All these great attributes of the administrative and staff community are present, and yet the school is a "failure." Instead of being labeled with such an insulting term, maybe a clearer picture should be focused on the school's efforts to increase test scores. West is currently in a phase of restructuring, in which different strategies are taught to teachers to increase the effectiveness in learning.

The staff is trained through a special set of strategies for improving their teaching skills, an individual director of the English Department is now available for one school rather than two, single-gender homerooms have been implemented to create a more comfortable environment to foster learning, and the school has gone above and beyond in offering a specified amount of free private tutoring to students in the failing subgroups.

Although West has a responsibility to take care of those students as well, it is just blatantly unfair to label a school failing just because of a four-hour seated exam

Letters were recently mailed home to the students of those subgroups saying that several private tutoring companies will tutor students for up to \$800, courtesy of the district. I applaud the district for constructing such a creative and resource-intensive program. Although it is unfair that West is labeled as "failing," this school has jumped through hoops to make every possible opportunity for improvement in the curricula.

According to Osburn, about a quarter of each graduating class has transferred into West from another school, and the many of those students are failing the standardized tests are those transferees. West has a responsibility to take care of those students as well and it is blatantly unfair to label a school failing just because of a four-hour seated exam.

Both sides of conflict felt at West

Suhail Ansari
World Editor

"I teach a large unit on the Israeli-Palestinian situation in my global studies class each year. It is by far the unit that I have to revise the most as each year; recent developments [put more blame on one side or another]," global studies teacher Joseph Meyer said.

Some put the blame on Palestine for firing rockets into large Israeli cities.

"Israel has a right to exist as a sovereign nation and has been recognized by most countries today. If any other country were being bombed by [a foreign entity], an invasion would be completely justified as the rockets violate the country's sovereignty," said junior Avi Schneider, who is of Jewish heritage.

Others feel that Israel is the one to blame as they have suppressed the Palestinians economically.

"I do not see any viable two-state resolution in the future because Israel has economically and socially oppressed the Palestinian people to the brink of extremism. The only way such a solution could work if all the settlements were removed and Jerusalem was under complete control of the Palestinians," said junior Lina Suleiman, whose family hails from Palestine.

According to *The New York Times (NY Times)*, the ceasefire agreement with Israel and Hamas expired Dec. 28 and Hamas launched a fresh round of missiles into several densely populated cities. In return, the Israeli Strike Force launched an invasion of

Gaza which has claimed up to 1,000 innocent civilians. Hamas demands that the Israeli 18 month economic embargo of Gaza come to an end, along with the reopening of the Palestine-Egypt border for regular commerce.

Meyer goes into depth about the views of both sides of the story in his class.

"We tend to discuss the similarities between the wall surrounding the West Bank and the Berlin Wall," Meyer said. "Although the Israelis put strict rules on the freedom of the Palestinians, Israel is just trying to root out Hamas, which has been attacking the Israeli soil. The class discusses the many humanitarian abuses of the Palestinian people, but also looks at how Hamas' policies might have helped institute this abuse."

Sometimes the discussion can get heated in Meyer's class. "I try to show both sides of the picture equally, but the Palestinian sympathizers always claim I am pro-Israel, and the Israeli sympathizers claim I am pro-Palestinian. Regardless, I think this problem can be solved if Israel would agree to return to its 1960 borders," said Meyer.

Many see this as a religious issue, but Qur'an Study sponsor Williams said that is a false notion.

"The religious issue with this conflict is just the smokescreen. A two-state solution is not viable because it is not working right now," Williams said. "What needs to happen is the Palestinian people need to be allowed to earn a fair living for themselves and the social tensions that lead to violence would be removed. Just look at America, people of all backgrounds are allowed to earn a living, and we get along relatively peacefully."

Recession: teens need not apply

Helen Salamanca
Staff Writer

"I recently got laid off from my job at [Super H Mart's] Bini Bakery due to the faltering economy," junior Jin Park lamented.

"We used to make a profit of over \$4000 per day when the minimum profit was only \$3500. Before I lost my job, we were making less than \$2000 per day," Park said. "Currently, I am searching for a new job but it will be difficult due to the economy. Hopefully, the economy will be better with Obama as president."

CNN recently reported that the nation's deep recession has taken a toll on many businesses that are trying to hire new or seasonal employees. Last summer, 16-19 year olds were given around 1.2 million jobs during the months of May, June and July, the smallest gain in teen summer employment since 1958. That was before the full impact of the recession sent unemployment figures skyrocketing. This summer could be even tougher for teens.

"I think that we are probably at the beginning of [the downfall] and it is scary to think of how extensive it can be when it is considered how much it is linked to many businesses," math teacher James Krzeminski said. "I do not [sympathize with]

teenagers that are working just to get extra cash. However, there are teens out there that are supporting their families through these part-time jobs."

The *Boston Globe* reported that some stores and businesses are reluctant to hire teenagers when adults are in need of jobs.

CBS News recently profiled Pat Driscoll, the director of Girls, Inc., which assists teenagers in search of jobs. Her annual summer routine includes getting jobs for 40-50 teenagers; this year, however, she has helped only 25 teens find jobs for the upcoming summer.

Other teenagers find that their existing jobs have been altered to accommodate older employees more in need of income.

"There is a college student at my job who used to be a stocker [at Jewel] and now his job completely changed to bagging groceries," junior William Camacho said. "I think the reason why his job position changed so fast is because [Jewel] either found a replacement for his old position or just wanted to cut back on money," Camacho added.

According to an interview with the *Denver Post* director of the Center for Labor and Market Studies at Northeastern University in Boston Andrew Sum said, "the youth-labor market has really collapsed in the last seven or eight years."

Sum added that teen employment for this summer will mark a new all-time low.

Memory of Casimir Pulaski provides day off

Daniel Blazek
Staff Writer

"I honestly have no clue what he did," junior Adam Provost said.

Sophomore Kaitlin Blazek added, "I know of him, but I don't exactly know who he was."

Senior Kevin Thai no doubt spoke for many, asserting, "I don't really know, but we get a day off from school because of him, so it is all good with me."

The man, the myth, the legend: Casimir Pulaski. Residents of Illinois know the name, but how many actually know just who this guy is? After all, he could have been an important politician or the local ice cream man for all we know. For those who have no clue, the mystery shall now be revealed.

According to www.enotes.com, Pulaski was born on March 4, 1747, and was given the name Kazimierz Pulaski as he entered this world for the first time in his family's estate of Warka-Winiary, Poland, which is about 40 miles southwest of the capital of Warsaw. He was the second son and one of eight children of his father, Josef Pulaski, and his mother, Marjanna Zielinska. His family was among the wealthiest of Poland's lesser nobility, and he grew up in beneficial circumstances leading into his career in the Polish army.

As noted on www.polskiinternet.com, he quickly rose through the ranks as a skilled soldier, became a military commander for the Bar Confederation and swore to fight against the Russian domination of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth. The uprising evidently failed, and to make matters worse, he was framed for attempting to assassinate the king of Poland. For this, he was exiled to France and spent a portion of his life there until

he heard of a revolution occurring in America. He investigated the matter and ran into Benjamin Franklin in Paris, which led Franklin to recommend him to George Washington, who invited him to emigrate to America.

His citation on www.polskiinternet.com reveals that after coming to North America, Pulaski decided to do everything he could to help end the Revolutionary War and contributed in countless ways. He used his professional battle experience to quickly rise to the ranks of general in the Continental Army; in this capacity, he trained American soldiers and cavalry, earning him the nickname "the father of the American cavalry." He put his life on the line for the United States, and this sealed his fate as he died from severe wounds in the Battle of Savannah on Oct. 11, 1779.

The U.S. has found many different ways to honor the memory of this war hero, the most notable being Casimir Pulaski Day, which is celebrated on the first Monday of every March in the state of Illinois. According to www.nationmaster.com, the idea for a bill setting aside this holiday was presented by state senator Leroy W. Lemke, a Democrat from Chicago, and was enacted a law on June 20, 1977. Other ways include numerous elementary schools across America named in his honor, and Chicago, street renamed Crawford Avenue Pulaski Road in 1933. The website www.wikianswers.com states that the street name was changed by then-Mayor Ed Kelly to please one of his supporters. Unbeknownst to most people, a battle raged in the courts for 20 years to protest the changing of the street named, but the Supreme Court of Illinois ruled that the property owners could not control the naming of a street in 1952.

This Pulaski Day, while reveling in the day off, take a moment to remember the contributions of this Revolutionary War hero.

219's invested money safe, unlike economy

W Zoe Ljubic
Editor in Chief

"I do not believe that the school should be speculating in taxpayers' money. As long as everything [Niles Township District 219 invests in] is tightly regulated and secured, it is okay for [the school] to disperse the money," junior Ilya Raskin said regarding the district's investments.

Due to the poor economy, one might think the terrible downturn has affected the district for the worse; however, District 219 is not losing any money, according to district administrators.

"The investments that [Niles Township District 219] has are regulated tightly and well prepared for [what the economy brings us]," Assistant Superintendent for Business Services Paul O'Malley said. "[Economic] policies are limited because we can easily lose everything if they are not collateralized."

According to Niles Township School Treasurer Marty Paltzer, District 219 receives money from several sources, including the following: local sources (such as property taxes and school fees), state sources (such as grants), federal sources (special grants) and other sources (such as bond issues).

"What tends to happen is the district gets most of the money in two installments, and then, it uses the money as it needs it. It would be like if you had a job and you got your whole salary paid in two checks: one check at the beginning of the year and one check in the middle of the year," Paltzer said. "So, the district has to invest the money from the time it comes in until the time it gets spent."

Paltzer said that the interest the district receives goes straight into the district funds. That way, it is available to be spent on the district's expenses as needed. He added that the goal is to try to spend a little less each year than the district receives.

"[District 219] invests its money in various [ways]. Some of it goes to cash accounts like checking accounts. We have some money market accounts from local banks and some pool investment funds," Paltzer said. "Pool investment funds are funds that are like money market accounts but are established

through the State of Illinois from the public funds act."

Paltzer said the district also have fixed securities, which range from spending deposits to treasury securities, agency securities and national securities. These securities are negotiated instruments, or proof of payment of money that is capable of transfer by negotiation, that represent financial value.

Luckily, District 219's investments are monitored closely enough so that it is not possible to lose any money.

"We have not lost any money because we have such tight regulation," Paltzer said. "We have been affected because of

Industrial Average over three percent on Feb. 24.

However, District 219's investments have been protected from the recession for the most part, according to Paltzer. The school board is anticipating another six-nine months of similar economic activity to what we see now, Paltzer said.

"Hopefully, by the last quarter of this year or first quarter of next year, the economy will begin to pick up, and things will come back to normal," Paltzer said.

According to Paltzer, many people fear that subprime lending, and its negative affect on banks, will transfer to District 219's investments. While subprime lending provides credit to borrowers who do not meet prime underwriting guidelines and encompasses a variety of credit types—including mortgages, auto loans and credit cards—Paltzer made it clear that there is nothing to fear.

"District 219 does not have any exposure to any subprime lending at all," Paltzer said. "There is no exposure there so we don't have any break downs, we don't have any investments that will not mature. We are expected to be paid for everything we have."

The students expressed appreciation of the secured investments.

"As long as [the administration] is making the right decisions, we should be okay," freshman Milos Jovic said. "After all, the money is going straight to our benefit."

Sophomore Micah Simon concurred.

"It is really nice to hear that the administration is taking full responsibility and caution [as] to what exactly happens to the money that comes into [the district]," Simon said.

"The State of Illinois and trustees of schools have laws that are specifically designed to regulate investments," Paltzer said. "We use this day to day to make sure we invest in the right stuff."

The profit district accumulates is used for educational programs and construction projects, building maintenance and insurance fees, according to Paltzer.

"[The money's] application should be directly to the students, and it should be well known by the students," senior Nimra Elahi said. "The money should be invested for the common good of the students."

Still bearing down

Stocks lost another 250 points Monday, sliding to their lowest level in more than 11 years. Closing prices daily since 1997:



District 219's assets have remained relatively safe in regard to the current economic situation.

Photo courtesy of ASNEKRT Campus

interest rates, so the money that is being invested is now earning less of a rate of return than our typical rate that we see."

Federal Reserve chairman Ben Bernanke expects a recovery from the current recession by the end of 2010, according to *The New York Times*. The recession has lost billions of dollars to many investors, including school districts. Bernanke's remarks came amidst the passage of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 which seeks to reverse the vicious cycle of negative feedback of the economy. This federal reassurance of economic help prompted investors to raise the value of the Dow Jones

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WESTWORLD

'Saved by an Angel' spreads message

by Sarah Espinosa
Staff Writer

Holocaust survivor Leon Leyson presented "Saved by an Angel," in the Robert L. Johnson Auditorium on January 29.

The presentation chronicled his narrow escape from the horror of German concentration camps during World War II. Leyson was the youngest person to be on Oskar Schindler's list of Jews sheltered by the Sudetan/German industrialist in his factories, an act of courage later chronicled in Steven Spielberg's film of the same name.

Born Leib Lejzon in Narewka, Poland, in 1929, Leyson was part of a large family, all but one of whom (an older brother) were rescued by Schindler. Leyson is the youngest survivor of Schindler's list.

April marked the 100th anniversary of Schindler's birth, which Leyson said prompted him to share his story, which he has not discussed for nearly 50 years.

Although Leyson took a light hearted approach to his story, he didn't sugar coat the rough parts. He spoke about how small decisions such as carrying up the right size rock up a hill could determine life or death. He also talked about how short the food supply was in the Krakow ghetto in which his family was imprisoned by the Nazis. Leyson spoke of helping the family in the apartment above his in exchange for four inches of a loaf of bread with which his mother would feed the entire family.

Leyson told the story of ordeal in the ghetto and how he was saved by Schindler, in whose factory he worked when he was

13. He spoke with Schindler on a nearly daily basis. Schindler gave him extra rations and made sure to try and save his entire family.

According to Leyson, Schindler was a German factory owner who went to Poland planning to profit off of what amounted to Jewish slave labor under the Nazi occupation. After becoming

found Leyson's mother and told her she would soon be reunited with the rest of the family.

Later, a transport of women working for Schindler, including Leyson's mother and sister, was accidentally sent to the notorious Auschwitz concentration camp. However, Schindler bribed Nazi officers to make sure the women would safely return to his

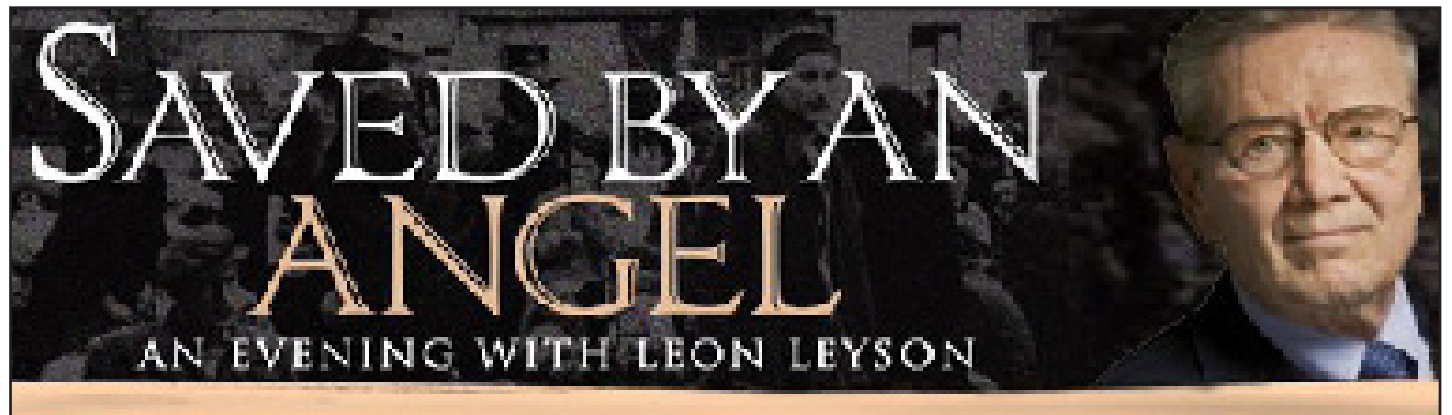


Photo courtesy of Jewish Learning Institute

aware of the Nazi's plan to exterminate the Jewish people, Schindler decided to save as many as he could from the gas chamber. Leyson's mother was on the list of those to be spared, but Leyson, his father and his brother were not. As they were put in groups to be sent away, Leyson was able to attract Schindler's attention as he came to see his workers off. The businessman immediately took his father and the two brothers back into his custody and made sure they would get to stay. Later, Schindler

factory. Leyson said his mother was headed for the gas chamber at the camp when she found out she was saved. Schindler saved a similar transport of men, including Leyson and his father, when it was routed to another death camp.

"That is the kind of man he was," Leyson said.

After he was rescued by and taken to the United States and has lived in California since his emigration. Leyson is now a retired teacher and travels around the country telling his story.

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**Source: Iowa College Student Aid Commission

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TEST YOUR
black history
 KNOWLEDGE

It's 2009 and black Americans are making historic strides. This has certainly been an era of firsts. But we can't tell you what they all are. That's the point of this Black History Month Quiz, along with reminding you of past achievements. Grab a piece of paper and test your knowledge on these freehand questions (no multiple choice guessing for you!). Let's see if you have been taking notes about these important facts.

— Bridgette A. Lacy and Kristin Collins, McClatchy Newspapers

1 Name the first black head coaches to lead their teams to the Super Bowl.



2 Name the first black actress to win an Academy Award for Best Actress.



3 What religious denomination was founded by blacks who objected to sitting in a separate gallery during church services?



4 President Barack Obama talks a lot about his mixed heritage. Identify where his mother and father were born.




5 What constitutional amendment, ratified in 1868, guaranteed equal protection under the law for all people?



6 Where was the first sit-in at a segregated lunch counter, staged by four black students in 1960?



7 In 1924, Gwendolyn Brooks was the first black person to win the Pulitzer Prize, winning for poetry. True or False?



8 The movie "Something the Lord Made" is based on the true life of:




9 Name the black filmmaker who made a documentary about Hurricane Katrina.




10 Charles Waddell Chesnut, an honoree in the popular Black Heritage commemorative stamp series issued by the U.S. Postal Service, is considered the first black writer to receive major acclaim. True or False?



11 What Supreme Court case established the "separate but equal" doctrine in 1896, laying the groundwork for Jim Crow laws all over the South?



12 Name the Edward P. Jones book that won the 2004 Pulitzer Prize.




13 Name the first black male and female winners of the Grammy awards.



14 What events prompted the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (popularly, the Kerner Commission) to warn in 1968, "Our nation is moving toward two societies, one black, one white — separate and unequal?"

15 Who is Joseph Lowery?



ANSWERS: 1. Both the Chicago Bear's Lovie Smith and the Indianapolis Colts' Tony Dungy became the first black head coaches to take their teams to the Super Bowl, when the two met in the 2007 game. The Colts won the game 29-17. 2. Halle Berry won the Best Actress Oscar in 2002 for her roll in "Monster's Ball." 3. African Methodist Episcopal. 4. Barack Obama, Sr., was born in Kenya. Obama's mother, Ann Dunham, grew up in Kansas. 5. The Fourteenth Amendment. 6. At a Woolworths department store in Greensboro, N.C. 7. False. Brooks became the first black Pulitzer winner in 1950. 8. Vivien T. Thomas, a black surgical technician. 9. Spike Lee made the documentary, "When the Levees Broke: A Requiem in Four Acts." 10. True. 11. Plessy v. Ferguson. 12. "The Known World." 13. In 1958, both Count Basie and Ella Fitzgerald won at the first Grammy Awards. 14. More than 100 inner city riots in the summer of 1967. 15. Rev. Joseph Lowery in a United Methodist minister and a leader in the Civil Rights movement. He delivered the benediction at the 2009 inauguration of President Barack Obama.