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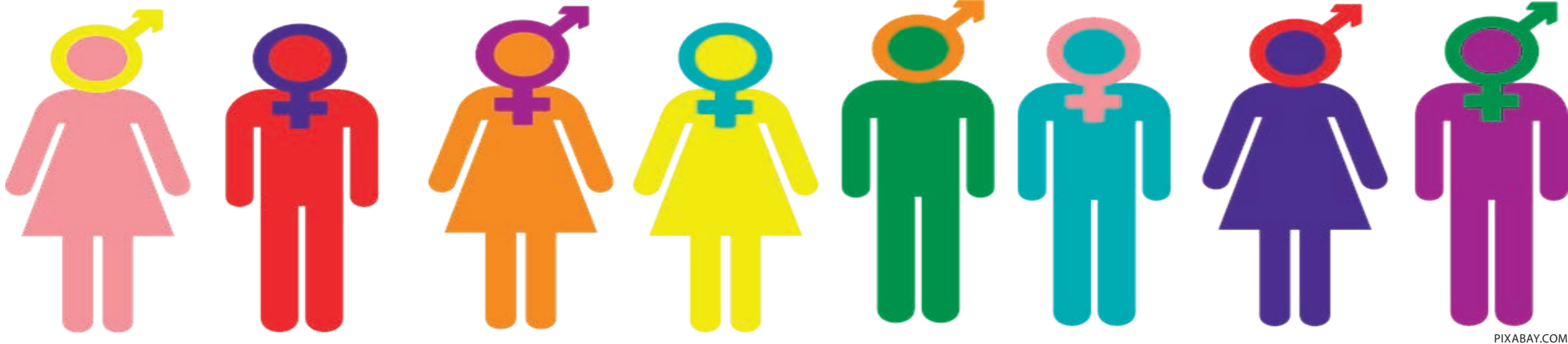
Left: Unique rooms featured throughout the building. Head to page 4 to find out more.

NORTH POINTE

GROSSE POINTE NORTH HIGH SCHOOL

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State proposal allows students to choose gender

By **Jen Kusch & Trevor Mieczkowski**
SENIOR ASSISTANT EDITOR & ASSISTANT EDITOR

Michigan's State Board of Education is currently debating new legislation which, if enacted would make schools adapt to the needs of their transgender and non-binary (such as gender-queer or genderfluid) populations.

The proposed changes would overhaul these students' experiences at school, melding their educational life with their identified gender. Students would be allowed to use the bathrooms and locker rooms of the gender they identify with (or be provided with non-gender facilities), as well as be called on in class by their preferred name, have an email and all school records correspond with their preferred name. All of these adjustments can also be made without notification of the students' families, if the student chooses to maintain their privacy from their guardians.

As of right now, according to superintendent Dr. Gary Niehaus, students in the Grosse Pointe Public Schools System are privately accommodated based on their individual situations.

Sophomore Lee Daniel identifies as genderqueer, and does not identify solely as male or female.

"I think the guidelines could be really beneficial to LGBT kids, especially those who don't have very accepting families," Daniel said. "I think it could make schools a safer and more inclusive place, it would be good for everyone involved."

Like Daniel, junior Annabeth Lombardi sees this as beneficial to his/her (Editor's note: Lombardi asked to be referred to as he/she) community. Lombardi was born biologically male but identifies as genderfluid. He/she does not identify as male or female, but as both, and this identity can often fluctuate. Lombardi feels that this brings more to his/her educational experience than just a safe environment.

"To me this brings what I feel is a basic freedom to the LGBTQ community," Lombardi said. "Having the school call you by the name that you are comfortable with is what most of the transgender and gender-queer kids dream of."

Due to family issues, Lombardi uses his/her educational hours as a time to learn more about him/herself, and this legislation could help with his/her self-discovery process.

"I've grown up in a conservative family so I have had to keep it on the down low at home," Lombardi said. "But (at school), I am very colorful."

According to www.tgmentalhealth.com, high school is a particularly hard time for transgender and nonbinary student because the body is beginning to change and many of the physical changes don't match with the mental changes. Daniel knows first-hand what it feels like.

"It leads to a lot of self-esteem issues and a lot of discomfort

“Having the school call you by the name that you are comfortable with is what most of the transgender and gender-queer kids dream of.”

Lee Daniel

SOPHOMORE

because you don't feel like you fit in with anyone else and especially if you are someone from an area where there isn't a lot of conversation about being trans or nonbinary," Daniel said. "It made me feel really alone."

Psychology teacher Jennifer Weisbrodt agrees that psychological damage can be done when students can't be who they are.

"Personally, after listening to accounts of transgender youth, and their struggles with depression and suicide, if there is something we could do to make their lives easier, like providing transgendered bathrooms, I think it should absolutely be done," Weisbrodt said.

Some North students also have voiced concerns over the proposed changes. Junior Nick Burguron has reservations about the legislation.

"I just mean I think it is weird, personally, having a transgender person being in my bathroom, I would just be weirded out," Burguron said. "Instead of allowing them in the bathrooms and allowing them to do what they want in the bathrooms, they should make their own stalls and own area in the bathrooms, strictly for them."

However, Burguron doesn't stand alone in his beliefs. There are opponents to the legislation in debate. State senator Tom Casperson has introduced an opposing bill that would limit transgender usage of school bathrooms. The law would require trans students to obtain written consent from their parents before they could use the restrooms that correspond with their gender identity. It would also forbid them from using these facilities if they are in use or could be in use.

Casperson believes that his counter-bill will maintain other students' privacy and parental oversight.

The debate surrounding access to restroom and locker room facilities for students that do not identify with their biological gender has gained steam in recent years. Maine's supreme court recently heard a case related to this issue and ruled that denying a transgender student the right to use a student bathroom that corresponded with their gender was discrimination.

Even with these concerns, Daniel believes people opposing this legislation are overreacting.

"I think that everyone's biggest concern is always bathrooms and who is using with bathroom," Daniel said, defending the guidance. "But the thing is, most people are using a bathroom that a transgender person has used without realizing it, and it doesn't really cause any problems."

The debate over the guidelines, which are expected to be voted on by May, will continue to spark debate in schools across the state.

Students re-evaluate study programs after terrorist attacks

By **Alex Harring & Tommy Tefts**
ASSISTANT MANAGING EDITOR & ASSISTANT EDITOR

In the wake of the Brussels bombing, Texas Tech University officials cancelled their Belgian study abroad programs.

However, terrorist attacks like the one in Brussels aren't just concerning to college students studying abroad. High schoolers who go overseas face many of the same problems as those who attend universities.

Sophomore Bella Gallant plans on traveling to Guatemala through Global Leadership Adventures (GLA) before she graduates. At first, her father was hesitant to let her go, but became more comfortable after he talked to someone who already traveled with GLA and understood the benefits and risks.

"My dad met this girl in Mexico, and she she went on one, and he was like 'now you can go,'" Gallant said. "Compared to studying abroad, I think it's kind of different. This is more like service, compared to studying abroad. (Studying abroad is) getting an education about a different country or culture,

and this one is more about helping others."

GLA is a Peace Corps-inspired program for high schoolers around the world. According to their website, the company has a five-point system for staff members to follow while on the trips. The points ensure safe lodging and transportation, clean food and water, staff supervision, expert knowledge of the area and a full-service hotline for parents.

Junior Mackenzie Simon traveled to Thailand through GLA over the summer, after a friend's brother told her family about the program. She is participating in GLA's India program this summer.

"We did cultural activities like riding elephants, visiting temples, talking to monks and just exploring the city," Simon said via email. "We also did service such as painting an orphanage and playing with the kids at the orphanage and teaching English at an elementary school."

GLA devotes a portion of tuition into emergency evacuation so students can vacate quickly during crises. Staff members also set rendezvous points. These are locations where

**Kolodzik Biz Scholar**
@KBS_UC

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Our KBS students in Belgium are safe and well, they are staying in contact with UC regarding the situation. Please send prayers their way.

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everyone agrees to meet and tend to be the closest airport in the country.

Participants stay at home bases during their trips, which are usually located in rural parts of the country students are visiting. Senior enrollment adviser Tim Easley believes that by housing students outside of city centers there is a lower risk of danger.

"We keep safety at the forefront of every bit of thinking we're doing, every decision we make," Easley said. "Each country has its own very

specific emergency protocol procedure to follow—should there be some sort of catastrophic event—meaning we know the closest and quickest routes to the borders."

Many programs and universities have committees in place to review emergency procedures and study abroad locations.

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"I often overlook all the good Grosse Pointe has given me."



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Zayn's album was released on March 25. Find out more on page 6.

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"The most exciting time in our lives is also the most dangerous for many of us."



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