

School board plans to demolish LCHS over the summer



A construction worker reviews demolition plans, clearly blissfully unaware of the crime he is committing. Current plans set by the school board have County being demolished this summer. Photo by Berek Harrison.

William Kluttz | Managing editor

Often referred to as the eighth wonder of the world, Loudoun County High School is set to be demolished this summer. This shocking news came from a statement from the school board last night. Revered at the time of construction as the greatest architectural achievement since the pyramids,

LCHS has been a pillar of American ingenuity since the time of its construction in 1954. With its four iconic tuscan columns and rows of windows facing to the south like an army of strong soldiers, how could anyone want to tear down this noble structure? That doesn't even mention the iconic cupola. Although rumored to be slightly unstable, this cupola,

which is the culmination of the workings of Islamic architects in the eighth century and is adorned by four decorative fiberglass urns, is a showcase of human ingenuity that deserves to be preserved, not destroyed. Above all, this is a school of tradition. From the annual gas-leak scare to flooding bathrooms, it's simply a crime to tear down this beloved structure. The school board is claiming that their reason for wanting the school to be demolished is for student and staff safety. Who cares if there happens to be traces of asbestos in the walls, or if the water fountains break from time to time? This building is teeming with school pride. One look at the hallways during spirit week confirms this. Who would want to take that away? The demolition process will begin in late June and end in mid-August. Although it hasn't been officially decided what will become of the site after County is gone, ideas mentioned by school board members included a free-range petting zoo, a Las Vegas Raiders team store, or the world's eighth largest ball of twine. Is this some sort of cruel joke? None of these options could ever come close to replicating the majestic building. It's like knocking down the Eiffel Tower to build a Popeyes. Adding to the madness, in order to save money in the demolition process, the school board is al-

lowing students and staff to help demolish the school as part of the county's "publicly funded rage room project," or PFRRP for short. Participants will be given a sledge hammer and one hour to demolish as much of the school as possible. This is ridiculous. Any kind of sicko who wants to take part in demolishing this great building should be ashamed of themselves. County has been a source of jealousy for every other school in Northern Virginia. The school board gave no indication as to where it will transfer all of County's students, but any other school is bound to feel like a hamster cage compared to the Taj Mahal that is LCHS. When one thinks about the year 1954, several things will come to mind. The Eisenhower Administration. The invention of the Wiffle Bat. Loudoun County High School. Take away the fact that President Eisenhower has been dead for over fifty years, and trying to imagine life without one of these things is nearly impossible. Great American architecture has always been in notably short supply. The Golden Gate Bridge isn't actually gold, and the Empire State Building has just never felt tall enough. So why anyone would take one of these few great structures away is beyond understanding. But apparently, nothing is sacred, and this proud building will be reduced to a pile of rubble in the coming months. •

'We have entered the PLATINUM AGE of education in Leesburg.' New school principal's unpredictable decisions lead to numerous controversies

Karan Singh | Managing editor

Talk of a new school had been floating in the air for quite some time, however, most did not think that Leesburg needed another high school and found it hard to believe that the new school would actually open. So when Elephant's Trunk High School started their first official school year last fall, many were left in disbelief. In just its first year, the school has already been involved in numerous controversies, at the center of which lies its principal, **Clyde Barrow**. Previously working as principal at a nearby elementary school, where he spent four years, Bar-

row has been known for his numerous scandals. So, when the school board announced that he would take the job as principal at Elephant's Trunk, parents were concerned for the safety and well-being of their children. Due to a school board issue that occurred a few years ago at his old school, parents have been skeptical about Barrow's position at Elephant's Trunk, some even saying that he's incapable of taking the job. His first week as principal, to help keep some semblance of his reputation alive, Barrow took to his X account to provide the community with reassurance as he stepped up to the role.

"We will make this town the BEST it's ever been," the tweet read. "We have entered the PLATINUM AGE of education in Leesburg." In an effort to "increase the quality of the school," Barrow stated that he would be pulling the institution out of the school board's jurisdiction. Surprisingly, a couple weeks ago, the school's administration got the proposal approved and has left the united coalition of schools in the county. At the time of writing, they are one of only four of the ninety-eight schools in the entire county that aren't involved with the school system. "That was a big one," Barrow

said when asked about his decision to pull the school out of the county-wide system. In order to secure funds for the school's private future, Barrow has begun meeting with his close-knit educational team to brainstorm ideas to raise and obtain money. Already suspicious of his actions, parents were completely thrown off by Barrow's decision to leave the county school board. Concerned about what an independent school could lead to, such as high tuitions and a lack of connection with neighboring schools, they have begun to pull their kids out of the institute.

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Spring spirit week: remembering our school history

Scarlett Ashford | Copy editor

This spring’s spirit week was characterized by walking trash cans and students and teachers wearing blankets as a reminder of all the disasters the school has experienced within the past two years.

Monday: The Gas Leak

To commemorate the first school disaster, the gas leak of 2023/2024, students brought blankets in memory of the two hours spent waiting in the football stadium.

“It was really scary,” junior **Shane Hughes** said. “No one knew what was happening and teachers didn’t have very many answers.”

Students waited outside in 39 degree weather that day for about an hour and half until staff moved students onto buses to stay warm while the gas leak was dealt with.

“I never leave home without a blanket anymore,” junior **Elizabeth McMarty** said.

According to school administration, this was the first in a series of disasters that “just comes with being in an old building.”

“That gas leak really was the game changer,” McMarty said. “Ever since then it feels like everyone’s just been waiting for something to happen.”

Lo and behold, it did.

Tuesday: The Hold Epidemic

The year had just started, but by the end of the first quarter, five holds had required staff and students to remain in their classrooms.

“The first time we had a hold, everyone was panicking, but once

it kept happening everyone just seemed to adjust,” senior **Jerry Maguire** said.

Students decided to come to school dressed as dinosaurs since each time there was a hold, the raptor alert would begin blaring.

“My friends and I were really curious about what was happening in the halls during the holds, so we’ve been hiding secret cameras throughout the school,” Maguire said. “Hopefully we manage to catch whatever’s going on.”

Wednesday: Exploding Sewage

One of the most recent and major disasters of this school year was the sewage leak causing a horrid smell in the music hallway.

“After the sewage leak, every-time I have band I keep thinking I can smell it,” sophomore **Penelope Jackson** said. “Now I make sure to wear a mask at all times, and I take big gulps of air every 45 seconds.”

Due to the terrible smell, everyone thought that the sewage leak was actually a gas leak. In remembrance of the smell, students dressed in green colors, and some went so far as to wear a trash can costume.

Thursday: Bring on the Legionnaires’!

2024 was the school’s 70 year anniversary, and seemingly as a reminder of the building’s age, some of the water fountains were found to contain a dangerous level of Legionnaires’ disease. Inspired by this, students showed up with white wigs, wearing “grandparent clothes.” However, some students wanted to take an alternative approach.



Students dressed up in hazmat suits make their way back from lunch. Despite the uncomfortability of the suits, the students are enjoying the experience, and are excited to promote school spirit. Photo by the bacteria in the walls.

“I really wanted to lean into the disease part of it, so I decided to wear a hazmat suit instead,” junior **Harry Smith** said.

Other students wore lab coats, and as part of a spirit week activity, biology and chemistry classes collected water samples from the water fountains and tested the pH.

“I bought a plague doctor mask when I used to be obsessed with medieval history in college, and now I have the chance to wear it,” history teacher **Wilma Churchill** said.

Friday: It’s raining...inside?

Who can forget the morning that began not with the school bell, but instead with a massive leak in the ceiling resulting in a puddle of water on the floor? The area of the hallway was blocked off, and the issue was resolved. Despite life continuing on

as normal, it was just another disaster to add to the list.

In response to this, students brought umbrellas and raincoats to school.

“I’m even wearing my wellies,” **Eliza Smith** said. “Me and a couple of other students are trying to convince the teachers to use a hose to make puddles outside to jump around in.”

Although many of the students are having fun with spirit week, others see it as an opportunity. In light of this, the school decided to have everyone gather on the lawn with their umbrellas to spell out “LCHS.”

“I think it’s really fun that we’re doing this,” Jackson said. “Being able to have fun while remembering all the crazy things that’ve happened can help bring everyone together.” •

The Earth is flat now and LCHS has opinions



Members of the Space Club put on a special presentation for all the science classes during the first week of April, demonstrating that the Earth is clearly flat. Afterwards, the club sold tin foil hats as a fundraiser to purchase new science textbooks for the school. Photo by tin foil hat-wearing astronaut.

Brooke Young | Guest writer

Things have been shaken up around the world—especially for kids in Loudoun County High School. After the recent revelation that our Earth is in fact not round, but flat, LCHS students have now been given an additional hour long class reinforcing the informa-

tion provided to them about our planet. Unfortunately for them, this includes extending their school period from 4:18 to 5:18.

“This is ridiculous! Is it even legal to keep kids in school that long about something so irrelevant?” said a non-believer LCHS parent, **Sue Flay**. Students have expressed mixed feelings about the

new policy, some interested in the new scientific information, others skeptical.

“No, it’s fine I just...didn’t think it’d be flat, is all,” exclaimed an LCHS student, **Zoltan Pepper**.

Along with the new class period, members of the Loudoun County Space Club have begun creating tin foil hats for the whole school. “I mean it really is just amazing what they’re doing for us. Our school community truly feels more united together,” said Principal **Carol L. Ling**. “Although when I wear mine, it’s been feeling more and more like I can’t take it off. Maybe I just need to get used to it!” she adds.

A local Costco has reported a 325% increase in aluminum foil sales. Students seem to find the tin foil hats as a fashion trend, and love styling them. “I love pairing my hat with some chromewear. You don’t know what that is? It’s like...metallic clothes! I’ve bought a ton to go with my hat. It’s like I can’t take it off!” **Ella Vader**, an LCHS student exclaimed.

“It’s stuck to my head. You

have to warn them. It’s stuck to my head!” **I.P. Dailey** had cried to our interviewer.

Although previous research clearly showed a round Earth, which led to the production of countless globes over the centuries, some students are relieved that the truth has finally been set free.

“It’s so obvious that it’s flat,” sophomore **Jan Doe** said as she adjusted her tin foil hat. “Like, when you look down the hallway, it’s flat. It’s straight. You can see the end. Just like the Earth.”

Of greatest relief was the collective statement from several astronauts who spent time on the International Space Station. “We thought we were seeing clear visual evidence of a round Earth,” **Marcus Saturn**, an astronaut, said. “We even thought we were using proper math to calculate our orbits around a globe. We were relieved to learn that all of those mathematical fantasies were just hallucinations, a byproduct of the lack of oxygen we experienced as we orbited—I mean, floated—high above the plane that is our home.” •

Loudoun County High School sold in shares to corporations

Kelsan Giamporcaro | Guest writer

Due to a lack of government funding, LCHS staff and the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors authorized the selling of the school for 100 shares for one million dollars a share. While many students and staff criticized the move, their main concerns of having to pay for the cost of private schools faded after the board of directors announced that there would be no fees associated with attendance. This begs the question, why would corporations buy expensive shares of a school that generates no revenue?

The board of directors recently launched projects to expand their gourmet food and technology departments at the expense of the other departments. While students and teachers in those programs were at first happy with this change, they quickly questioned the motives behind expanding the programs.

“Instead of my usual lesson plan, I was instructed to teach how chocolate was made,” gourmet foods teacher **Andy Policeman** said. In the following days, students reported that instead of learning new recipes and dishes, they spent most of their time making chocolate. “Usually we are allowed to take our food home, but this time, whatever we made suspiciously disappeared at the end of the block,” senior **Mikhail Heavener** said. Gourmet foods, historically an elective, was later made

into a required class, and everyone in the school was required to take at least two classes per year. “I like gourmet foods, but being required to use up a quarter of my blocks just to graduate is a bit much,” continued Heavener.

In addition to the expansion of gourmet foods, computer science classes were also expanded and renamed to computer engineering. “In my computer science class, we typically learn how to program and create algorithms using languages. However, we’ve now started transitioning into making circuits and computer parts. I love getting hands-on experience with building computer parts, but every class is the same. We don’t learn anything new, and we’ve now started working with heavy, dangerous machinery,” senior **Quin Holmburger** said. Like the gourmet food classes, products made by students seemingly disappeared at the end of each block, and computer engineering was made a required class. Driver’s education also experienced a major change to their program. Students instead of driving cars, found themselves making them.

After we questioned the board of directors on these measures, they responded, “we undertook this project in the interest of education and for the good of students.” After the additional spending of millions of dollars in buying machinery and equipment for the school, the board of direc-

tors felt they needed to reduce the costs of education. Many teachers of Science, Art/Music, English, and History experienced salary cuts, and an estimated 10% of teachers were laid off for unspecified reasons. “I don’t know why I was fired, they never told me! Teaching the great works of literature allows students to live countless lives within the pages of a book. Why would an administration want to cut that experience?” English teacher **Vallet Egg** said. When the board was questioned on the layoffs, one of the members responded, “It’s great knowing that slashing all programs and salaries doesn’t affect me because I’m not a member of the Parasite Class.”

The board of directors also decided to lift the phone ban and encouraged students to use their phones for “educational purposes.” While students were initially excited about this news, the board got rid of the standard issued Chromebooks and mandated that all education take place on personal devices. This was proven to be inconvenient for lower-income students as they now had to either use their phones or provide their own laptop. “I love being able to use my phone, but I hate writing essays and making presentations with them. As crappy as the Chromebooks are, I wish I had them back,” senior **Terik “Berush” Harrison** said. Students were later required to download an app that

allowed them to submit assignments directly from their phones; however, some students found themselves getting harsh punishments for unspecified “uneducational activities.” When interviewed, all students admitted to have sent private texts to their friends about their distrust in the new management, but never publicly shared their views prior to the interview. This raised questions about the capabilities and purpose of the new app.

Some of the more outspoken students organized demonstrations. A specific “Stand Up for Science” protest was held after science classrooms were turned into makeshift factories. Slogans like “Keep Science Strong” and “Science Cannot Be Silenced” could be heard on the front lawn and were displayed on many signs. Despite having gotten permission from the school administration, all students involved were sentenced to permanent in-school suspension without parole and were required to serve their detentions in the gourmet food or computer engineering classes. Protestors that had previously transferred from other schools faced a different kind of punishment. “If you come here from another school and try to bring anti-education to our school, we will immediately expel you,” the president of the board of directors said. “One thing I do is, any student that protests, I throw them out of the school. As soon as they hear that, they’re going to behave.” •

THE CROSSWORD: April Fool’s Edition

Taylor Helfer | Editor-in-chief

Find the answers to these clues by reading our articles in print and online. Answers are found in both our regular April and April Fools editions.

DOWN:

- 1. Overlaying color of D.C. fashion week collection
- 2. Theme of this year’s cabaret performance
- 3. In satire, “new principal”’s last name
- 4. Pride Prom: ____ garden
- 6. Number of breakout speakers in the women’s summit
- 8. Number of records broken by swim team this year

ACROSS

- 3. Upcoming book written by Time 100 voices and business owner Bellen Woodward
- 5. Name of the new AI that cannot be installed on Chromebooks
- 7. Club closely tied to Teacher Cadet class
- 9. In satire, Tuesday’s theme, ____ epidemic
- 10. In satire, hats worn by flat earthers



Find more answers online at CountyChronicle.org

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“When my son first transferred to this school a few months ago, we had high hopes, as the building would be completely new and he could get to live a great high school career,” one mother said. “Now, we want him to transfer out of Elephant’s Trunk.”

While allowing a county-funded school to fall into the hands of a private market is regrettable under normal circumstances, in this case, the school was becoming a lightning rod for the press in the county, and having it out of their control might be best for all.

“We wanted to be out of the national spotlight,” superintendent **Marshall Doug** said, concerned and embarrassed after hearing news of the rules and regulations Barrow has begun putting in place.

To keep students happy, Barrow has also said that he will be backing out of SOL testing.

“Our NEW & IMPROVED plan: NO MORE SOLs,” his tweet read. “Students will no longer have to sit through BORING and TREACHEROUS tests.”

Upon hearing the news, the entirety of the student body at Elephant’s Trunk rejoiced, praising their principal’s decision.

While many students are happy that they’ll no longer have to take standardized tests, others are grateful to Barrow for alleviating the stress from their classes, one student even exclaiming that “now I can fail in peace because there’s no end-of-year test I have to study for!”

Similar to his decision to pull out of the county-wide school system, Barrow has also decided to defy nutritional guidelines, making school lunch a carnival for students.

“MORE ice cream, MORE candy, MORE fun!” read a tweet from the principal regarding the matter.

Though this action has only furthered students’ joy in their principal, parents were shocked to hear the news of the scarce nutrition plan.

“How am I supposed to know that what my child is eating in his school lunch is healthy for him?” one parent asked.

In a tweet, Barrow replied: “Don’t like the idea of no nutrition? PACK YOUR KIDS LUNCH! Don’t be LAZY parents! Do something!”

Barrow has also said that this decision will likely increase parent involvement in students’ lives, as many parents will be encouraged to pack their child’s lunches and send food from home once seeing the food that will be made available to students in the school cafeteria.

To “further his authority” (as

he, himself, claimed in yet another tweet), the school hosted a “wing renaming” ceremony last week.

The right half of the main hallway on the second floor of the school was renamed as “The Wing Above My Office.”

Named by Barrow himself, the wing, with a brand new banner that hangs from its walls, was reopened for the public. The ceremony, which also featured a parade of school staff and Barrow’s family members, started at the principal’s office.

Then, the entourage made its way up the stairs and into the hallway directly above the principal’s office, and eventually ended in front of a red ribbon tied to a curtain that enclosed the wing from being seen.

As Barrow cut the ribbon, the curtain fell, and the new hallway was revealed, covered in pictures of Barrow in frames of gold and cutouts of his face placed along each of the lockers along the walls.

His customary speech after the ribbon cutting told a lot about his upcoming plans for the school.

“We are only getting started,” Barrow said, referencing the numerous decisions his administration has made in relation to the school. “What’s to come is even better.”

In the same speech, Barrow announced that a new educational consultant would be getting hired. In fact, he stated, “the new consultant is here with us right now.”

“Meet Mr. George,” Barrow said. “He will be handling staff-related matters from here on out.”

As of a week later, **Dylan George** has become infamous for his strict and disciplinary nature. We’ve received multiple reports of numerous teachers that he has fired from the school.

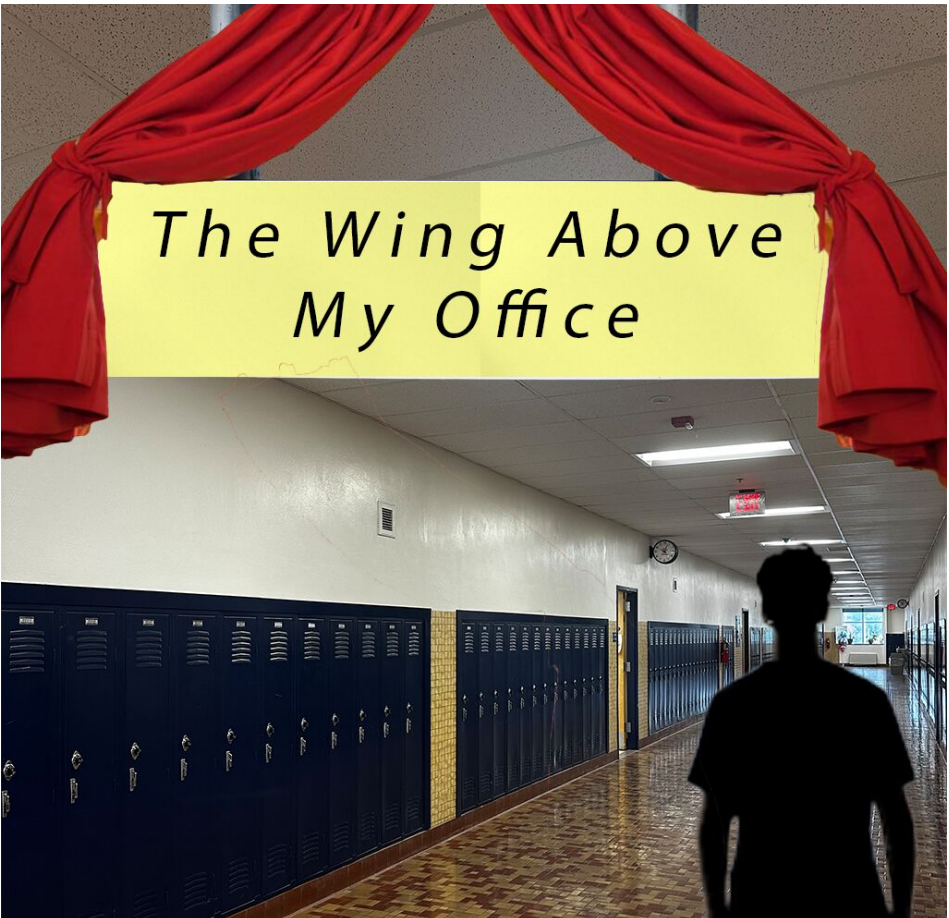
One teacher revealed that she was fired simply for drinking coffee while she was printing papers for her class.

“He comes up to me and goes, ‘Socialising and drinking coffee is not what we pay you for,’” she said. “He basically fired me because I was talking to my fellow teachers while waiting for the printer to finish copying all the papers for my test.”

Like her, many other employees who have been fired from the school for similar reasons complain about the educational consultant.

“I have been a teacher for over 20 years,” former math teacher **Deborah Walker** said. “I thought Elephant’s Trunk would be a good place for me, since it’s a completely brand new school. I didn’t expect this.”

Following a plethora of complaints against the school administration, Barrow attempted to relieve some of the tension on his



Clyde Barrow gazes upon the hallway he previously renamed to “The Wing Above My Office.” The hallway remained vacant since its opening as students avoided entering its halls. Photo by [REDACTED FOR THE SAFETY OF THE PHOTOGRAPHER].

X account.

The tweet read: “We are fostering a POSITIVE environment for students. TEACHERS, you MUST work. We will NOT TOLERATE LAZINESS or ANY sort of UNPRODUCTIVENESS”

The tweet also featured a link to the school’s official website, with a list of new rules and procedures. The rule regarding teachers and the work they do, formally titled “End Laziness,” has had an addition to it since its approval.

Along with working for the entirety of the time they are at school without pause, teachers must now also either “document their work or resign.”

Though controversies have rocked the building this year, parents are relieved that the school year is coming to an end. Many believe that summer break is the perfect time to transfer their kids out of Elephant’s Trunk and into a different school, while others look forward to graduation.

However, these hopes and wishes were soon extinguished as Barrow announced his biggest change, yet.

“We think it’s stupid, so we won’t be having one this year,” Barrow said in a tweet. “Students, NO MORE GRADUATION.”

Concerned and completely thrown off, students have become distressed following the news of the new change to the cherished end of the year event.

“What?” exclaimed one shocked student. “Who let him become principal? What is he doing in that office and why is he taking away my privilege to walk across the stage and get my diploma?”

A common pattern under this school administration, Barrow once again took to his X account

to share some insights regarding the issue.

“We will be saving OVER \$7,000 by NOT participating in GRADUATION,” the tweet read. “These funds can be used to help supply our DELICIOUS ICE CREAM, which has started being provided to STUDENTS following MY DECISION to disregard school nutrition!!!!!!!!!!!!!!”

Though this change directly impacts students, parents seem to be the ones most affected by it.

“I can’t believe this right now,” stated **Lisa Michigan**, mother of a senior who would’ve been graduating this June. “How is he even allowed to do such a thing?”

It seems as though this may have been the breaking point for Barrow and his time in office. The student body and their parents have taken to X to comment on Barrow’s previous tweets, leaving notes depicting their negative emotions following his graduation shut down.

Though still a few months ahead and still having the capacity to change his mind, after Barrow’s graduation change proposal, many have become curious as to what else he may do, questioning where all this authority came from. Others, like parent **Johana Sampson**, just “want him out.”

With less than two months left of the school year, it is extremely uncertain to predict what will become of the school and those associated with it.

In his most recent tweet, Barrow gives insight as to what the future contains: “This is JUST THE BEGINNING. We WILL NOT STOP until we become the BEST and GREATEST SCHOOL in the WORLD!!!!” •