

If I Were Superintendent

IT SEEMS THAT I AM QUALIFIED TO WRITE this article for two reasons. First, Principal McWilliam's assistant, Mrs. Zandi, is a friend of my family. Second, my name is Tom Leonard.

Neither qualification would be impressive on a resume, but having the same name as our district superintendent could have its advantages. On the first day of school, and every time I have a substitute teacher, I get the typical array of questions, such as, "Are you related to the superintendent?" Or, "Are you the superintendent?"

I usually have a little fun and say he is my dad or uncle, and I like to think it might get me an additional point on a quiz or something. Unfortunately, outside of playing on someone's occasional gullibility, having the same name as the superintendent hasn't given me an edge. I'd like to change that.

To start with, I think a front-row parking spot at the high school would be reasonable. It just doesn't seem right that Tom Leonard should have to ride the bus for 40 minutes every morning or walk all the way from a remote parking lot on Lageschulte Street. In addition, I think I should decide when we have snow days. No offense, Dr. Leonard, but we had several record-breaking snowfalls in February and we didn't even get one snow day? C'mon! Not only snow days, but I think we should also implement "sun days." Days when the weather is so unexpectedly beautiful that I cancel school so all the children of Barrington 220 can head outside to absorb their vitamin D. Finally, and most seriously, I would love to have the opportunity to change a few things around Barrington High School.

First, I would like to see an open campus. I'll be a junior next year, so let's say all juniors and seniors can leave campus for lunch. I understand an open campus is a very difficult policy to supervise. So maybe a way to get kids the food they want, without the conflicts of an open campus, would



be to do something like the "IT" Campaign did this year, with different vendors coming to the high school to sell food. The lines were crazy, but everyone loved it. I know it made me look forward to coming to school, and I think it was one of the coolest things the school has ever done. We'll start out slowly. As "superintendent," I propose every Friday is "Outside Vendor" day in the cafeteria.

Second, I would like to do something about the early start time we have at BHS. Year after year, my fellow students and I are reminded how important it is to get a good night's sleep. We're told to get at least nine hours of sleep each night to maximize our emotional well-being and learning potential. But with a 7:20 a.m. start time, and bus

routes starting by 6:10 a.m., most kids find themselves getting up by 5:45 a.m. or earlier during the school week. BHS students would have to go to sleep by 8:45 p.m. each night to get our prescribed nine hours.

For the thousands of BHS students involved in extra-curricular activities, there is even less time to spend at home on schoolwork and sleep. I, for example, am on the volleyball team. On a typical (non-game) day, I find myself arriving home at 6:30 p.m. after practice to eat dinner and make my way to my room to get started on homework by 7 p.m. If I were to go to bed at 8:45, that would leave me only an hour and 45 minutes to do all my homework. I might be able to finish work for