

# Varsity Basketball Teams Make Way through District Play

by staff reporter **Syeda Gilani**

The men's varsity basketball team started district play on Dec. 18 against Round Rock High School.

With an even number of four losses and four victories, the team heads its way towards playoffs with high hopes and

expectations, due to their high scoring victories.

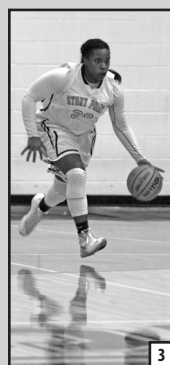
The women's team continues to work to get better, with more losses than victories. However, the ladies also have some high scoring victories against Dickinson High School and Lake Travis High School.



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photos by yearbook staff

1. Senior Kyle Banks blocks his opponent.
2. As he runs towards the basket, senior Philip James defends the ball.
3. With the ball, junior Tiara Bradshaw runs towards the basket.
4. Dodging the opponent, junior Soteria Banks runs to score.
5. Senior Blake Buckner watches and gets ready to snatch the ball.
6. Senior Alexis Moore grabs the ball from his opponent.
7. Buckner defends the ball from the opposition.

## Essential Exercise Extremely Necessary

Obesity epidemic makes focus on physical education necessary

**Sports OPINION**



by staff reporter  
**Caleb Wiesenhutter**

Since the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001, 44% of school administrators have reported cutting significant time from Physical Education classes and elementary recess in order to provide more time for subjects such as reading and math.

While this nation's educational concerns are founded on fact and reason, there's other substantial data that makes cuts to physical education a bad idea.

Currently a third of children in the United States are overweight or obese. Meaning, one third of American children are at a greater risk of developing costly diseases, such as type 2 diabetes, than their more healthy counterparts. Yet, schools are dropping physical activities and requiring unhealthy and healthy students, alike, to sit sedentary positions and consume more book knowledge. Essentially, these schools are putting testing before students' health, and that should never be the case.

Before 2001, students had an average of 45 minutes per day, 225 minutes per week, to work out in P.E. It is crucial that, with today's obesity epidemic, students still get this time. Quality fitness programs improve students' overall well being and assure that students will have a foundation to create their own version of a life long, healthy lifestyle.

Even though cuts in programs have been cited as the main issue with physical education, schools with full P.E. programs also need to look at what they are doing to support healthy lifestyles. It's an issue when students are not using time for physical education wisely, such as when students in the school's P.E. classes choose to sit in the bleachers and use class like an off period rather than exercise. The problem gets worse when, for some students, P.E. has recognizably become a free credit and a good grade for completing very few activities.

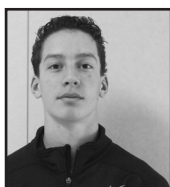
It's even a larger issue and step back in fighting obesity, when coaches find themselves stuck between what they know is important in terms of physical activity and what districts or campuses ban, such as rules prohibiting a requirement of running. Professional coaches should be able to evaluate each student's ability in regard to physical ability and create individualized work out plans rather than be banned from having students complete much needed, healthy activities.

With technology drawing students' attention more than biking, hiking, running or any other active games, it is imperative that the one physical education course that students are required to take during their four years of high school be impactful.

Physical activity improves fitness, lowers risks of obesity and helps youth build strong muscles and bones. Studies have also shown that activities help youth develop greater attention spans and have better academic performances. Also, research has shown that physically fit students are less likely to miss school and partake in risky or uncivil behaviors.

Physical activity is so much more than a way to burn some energy. To avoid risking students' futures, schools must lead the way in teaching students about the importance of living a healthy lifestyle and engaging in physical activity. To help students avoid early mortality rates and lifelong sicknesses, schools can't give students opportunities to opt out of exercising, or they can't help students develop the idea that it's okay to sacrifice health for book knowledge. It's just not healthy.

## Junior dedicates time to make a baseball championship a reality



Junior Marcos Castillo

**First day of practice**  
January 29

**First scrimmage**  
February 8  
5:30 pm – 6:30 pm  
vs. Temple  
@ Temple

**First district game**  
March 15  
7:00 pm – 9:30 pm  
vs. Round Rock  
@ Stony Point

**Varsity coach**  
**Head Coach**  
Tom Collins

submitted by **Salvador Apud-Martinez**

The sun rises and gleams down on the Tiger Diamond as a summer breeze caresses the deep red infield clay on the first day of off-season. Junior Marcos Castillo steps on the field, glove in one hand and bat in the other. As his turn to hit arrives, Castillo takes a deep breath and begins his confident gait towards the batter's box. Entering the box, one foot at a time, he begins his grind to make the dream a reality.

Off-season, the time where success is earned with each drop of sweat. When every goal in the horizon is reachable, with proper work ethic. Every day is a new day, filled with opportunities to become

the best version of yourself or 'beast mode', as Castillo sees it.

"I train like I'm second place, but act like I'm number one," Castillo said.

As a sophomore, Castillo earned the right to be on the varsity baseball program, and as the season progressed, became the starting Center Fielder. He helped the team make it to the 2015 playoffs, but they suffered a series loss against Lake Travis and were eliminated. The team has made it to playoffs 7 consecutive years, but this year holds the hope to make the dream a reality and the opportunity to dog pile at the Dell Diamond.

"We need to work as a team," Castillo said. "We try to keep competition

with each other to prepare mentally."

Every player on the team must share the same goal, the same objective, and the same dream.

Castillo, thinking of helping his team win the District Championship and State, constantly works hard to reach full potential. "I try to do my best," Castillo said. "Be the best I can be for the team and the best player on the field."

Focusing on the moment and having 'short term memory' is not easy but Castillo stays faithful to his own custom focus routine that involves breathing, visualizing and clearing the mind.

"When I'm out of my routine, I try to get back on track and figure out

what I'm doing wrong," Castillo said.

Daily baseball practices are the highlight of his day, and with a goal to improve his skills and sportsmanship, every time Castillo steps on the field, he gives it everything he's got.

The way you practice is the way you play, and Castillo takes that to heart by proving that he takes his practice very seriously. He uses his practice time to tone his skills and improve teamwork, organization, and strategy.

"I look to do the best I can, and make the most out of my practices," Castillo said. "I focus on the now, focus on Today, and getting better every single day."