



## MEET THE PANEL

From left:

**MEGAN SANABIA**, 18, of Driggs, is a Teton High School senior. She's done cross country, track, choir, band, and participates in high school rodeo.

**EDNA DIAZ**, 15, a sophomore from Driggs, has been a Teton cheerleader since she was in seventh grade, including Redskins varsity cheerleader for the past two years. Diaz is also in the THS Ambiance Choir, and is a member of the Latino Club.

**JASON CLARK**, 17, a senior at THS, is from Victor. Clark played basketball all four years and is a National Honor Society member. He's a huge supporter of THS programs as a spectator including volleyball, football, baseball games and music.

**MIKE PARRI**, 17, a THS senior, is from Victor. Parri did cross-country and is soccer captain. He's participated in Quiz Bowl, track, music and belongs to the NHS.

**SAM MATELICH**, 18, of Teton, is a senior at THS. Matelich participated in debate and has been in Quiz Bowl, "which is like my favorite thing I've ever done." He was also in the THS Business Professionals of America program.

**PARKER JOHNSTON**, 18, is a senior at THS, also from Victor. Johnston was in debate for 2.5 years and was captain of the team last year. He's done Quiz Bowl for two years, has been in the music department and did a year of Yearbook.

# Students sound off on extracurricular cuts

**Ken Levy**  
TVN Staff

*Part four in a series on school funding*

Six Teton High School students shared their thoughts on the school's extracurricular activities and potential for at least some of those to be cut in 2014 due to budget constraints.

Students who participated in the informal roundtable Feb. 22 include:

- Jason Clark, 17, a senior at THS, from Victor
- Edna Diaz, 15, a THS sophomore from Driggs
- Parker Johnston, 18, a senior who lives in Victor
- Sam Matelich, 18, also a senior, from Teton
- Mike Parri, 17, a senior from Victor
- Megan Sanabia, 18, a THS senior from Driggs

### Supplemental levy meeting

Monday,  
March 4, 7  
p.m. at Victor  
Elementary

Although all but Diaz are seniors, and budget cuts, if they come, won't take effect until after they graduate, "the things I liked the most about the school are the extracurriculars they're thinking about cutting," said Parri. "I feel like that's an important part of just getting through school and making those connections you can't get just in the classroom, and learning how to socialize beyond a learning environment."

But Matelich said he thinks of school more on the academic side.

"I've actually looked at how much this would cut. It's a little over 3 percent of our current extracurricular budget," Matelich said. "The way I see it, that's not a huge deal if it's going to help us survive, if it's going to help us get through with a better education for the following years. It's worth it."

But, said Johnston, for many students,

**Students** continued on A13

participating in extracurricular activities is their motivation for going to school.

“If we take away those, it kind of takes away the incentive [for those students] to come to school,” he said.

Diaz said “it’s not a good idea” to cut athletic programs because those are key motivations to keep her grades up. Good grades are a prerequisite to participating in extracurricular activities, she said.

For Matelich, the big picture of the potential 3 percent cut is that changes may not even be visible. With that reduction across the extracurricular board, “we might see a [few] dollars in each program go.”

For others, it’s a matter of prioritizing. For example, Johnston said he doesn’t see the necessity of the band going to Denver or Salt Lake City, “driving five hours, renting a shuttle bus.”

Diaz, who sings in the Ambiance Choir, said that while going to music workshops is a good way to meet people by traveling to other schools, the district should consider cutting those if they get too costly.

Although music is very important to her — she wants to enroll in a performing arts college in New York — she believes those workshops should be cut before other academic programs.

“But don’t cut [music] classes,” she said.

**Just the presence of an athletic event strengthens bonds between students and community. That’s beneficial in the long run.**

Parker Johnston

Athletics should have precedence in being saved, Johnston said. But Matelich said he’d rather see the cuts in athletics before any cuts might come into academics. He rues the possibility of cuts to the Quiz Bowl.

Academic extracurricular programs are “already running on pretty little compared to the athletic,” Matelich said.

“Just the presence of an athletic event strengthens bonds between students and community,” Johnston argued. “That’s beneficial in the long run.”

Clark said he’d much rather see cuts in extracurricular activities than academics, but agreed that extracurriculars are a “huge part of developing social skills and responsibility.”

Clark played basketball all four years and is a member of the National Honor Society. He’s also a huge supporter of THS programs as a spectator including volleyball, football and baseball games and watching and listening to musical performances.

Sanabia said she’s seen her younger brother “really progress as a person and step out there with his sports teams, and that’s really made him friends and really matured him. I’d hate to see kids not be able to do that.”

Potential cuts in winter sports “are just

pocket change in the grand scheme of things,” said Johnston. “It’s only \$3,000 out of a half million cut we’re going to have to make.”

“Eventually, though, it does add up,” said Parri.

Matelich indicated winter sports aren’t as popular as others, especially in the senior class.

“If it’s a program that kids aren’t utilizing and it’s not popular, then \$3,000 outweighs the program itself,” he said.

“Winter sports take away from academics,” said Johnston. “It cuts the day in half that we could be devoting to school.”

If class times are cut because of winter sports, “we don’t get through a lot, and a lot of times you feel like nothing gets done,” said Matelich.

Johnston said in the middle school, winter sports cut class times to 20 minutes or so, and a lot of classes are a lot less productive than they could be.

Sanabia said she has wonderful memories about participating in programs in elementary and middle school and would rather see cuts at the High School go toward those programs.

A lot of kids get scholarships to go to

college for their sports ability, said Sanabia, and “it’s important that we can really help them get [those] with our teams.”

Diaz agreed. Some students, she said, take athletics more seriously than their education, while the opposite is true for others.

“I’d much rather see tightening in every budget, just a few dollars, than see anything cut,” said Parri, “because I know every program has influenced and positively affected some students, at least one.”

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Mike Parri

## TVN en Español

Los estudiantes dejan oír su voz acerca de los cortes en actividades extracurriculares. Seis estudiantes compartieron sus opiniones acerca de los recortes presupuestos para el año 2014. Para algunos estudiantes, la participación en actividades extracurriculares es una forma de motivación para la asistencia de algunos estudiantes mientras que para otros es una pérdida de tiempo, como Winter Sports, aunque solo cuesta \$3000 y es una cantidad pequeña comparada con otras actividades.

Sam Matelich dijo, “Si nos va a ayudar a salir adelante y seguir obteniendo la educación que ahora recibimos, vale la pena.”

Por: Arely Baez & Andy Bocardo