LAST CHANCE HIGH

By Tim Kelly
Music by Arne Christiansen
Lyrics by Ole Kittleson

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LAST CHANCE HIGH
A Superhilarious Musical Comedy in Two Acts

Book by Tim Kelly
Music by Arne Christiansen
Lyrics by Ole Kittleson

MUSICAL NUMBERS

OVERTURE ......................................................... Instrumental

ACT ONE

LAST CHANGE HIGH ........................................... Students [Staff]
I’M RUFF, I’M TUFF ............................................. Ranchwear,
Beaumont,
Tadpoles, Evelina,
Security, Fabiola

RAH! RAH! FOR SAN FERNANDO
VALLEY HIGH ............................................ Sally, Gwen, Betty,
Douglas,
Ranchwear, Evelina

HEY, DUDE! ....................................................... Last Change High
Students

COMPUTER ERROR ......................................... Nina, Lydia, Betty,
Douglas, Sally,
Gwen [Students]

LAST CHANCE HIGH (Reprise) ......................... Company

ACT TWO

ENTR’ACTE ......................................................... Instrumental
BREAKOUT ......................................................... Students

SOMETHING BETTER THAN THIS ................... Queenie, Thelma,
Betty, Douglas

TIME FOR TOXIC LUNCH ......................... Bag Lady, Students

24 PORCUPINE LANE ......................... Citizens

A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA ......................... Nina and Company

LAST CHANCE HIGH (Reprise) ......................... Company
## CAST OF CHARACTERS
(In Order of Appearance)

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SYNOPSIS
The main action takes place in Public School Maximum Security, commonly called “LAST CHANCE HIGH”.

ACT ONE
Start of a second semester.

ACT TWO
Four weeks later.

It’s important that the Valley students and the Last Chance High students look as if they are from different worlds. The Valley kids are plainly accustomed to the good life. The regulars at Last Chance High would be at home in a number of locales -- all disreputable. It’s the contrast that makes the whole thing work.

ACT ONE
SETTING: The full STAGE is divided into basic playing “areas.” The main area is STAGE CENTER. It’s a classroom -- or, what appears to be a classroom. The teacher’s desk is RIGHT CENTER. Behind the desk is a standing blackboard. In front of the desk, angled for good audience sightlines, are folding chairs or students’ chairs with armrests for writing. About ten chairs should be enough. Or, three or four benches can be substituted for the chairs.

Crossing UPSTAGE are optional bars -- the sort found in jails and prisons. There is a walkway or passageway behind the bars. Actors ENTER and EXIT from LEFT and RIGHT in front of the bars. [NOTE: If prison bars can’t be managed, CONSULT PRODUCTION NOTES for alternative suggestions.]

The classroom is part of PUBLIC SCHOOL MAXIMUM SECURITY. Referred to, by those in the “know”, as “Last Chance High.”

DOWN RIGHT represents a section of the lovely suburbanite home belonging to MRS. MONICA DILUTH. There’s a designer chair with a trendy floor lamp to one side. On the other side of
the chair there’s a small table with a handsome telephone.
ENTRANCE/EXIT for room is DOWN RIGHT.

DOWN LEFT we have the principal’s office (BRONCO RANCHWEAR). There’s a desk facing out to audience, a telephone, desk chair. Another chair in front of desk. ENTRANCE/EXIT is DOWN LEFT.

If it can be managed, RANCHWEAR’s office should be higher (platform) than classroom -- to give it a “control tower” feeling.

The UPPER STAGE APRON represents a corridor in the school building. LOWER STAGE APRON represents a street.

AT RISE: STUDENTS are lined across the STAGE. Sing to audience --
[NOTE: Sung by STUDENTS OF LAST CHANCE HIGH, but not the VALLEY KIDS. If extra voices are needed, add SECURITY, MRS. TADPOLE #1, MRS. TADPOLE #2, SIGMUND, NURSE and additional STUDENTS, as desired.] (MUSIC: Last Chance High.)

ALL: (Sing.) They say you haven’t got a chance in the world
   And I wouldn’t lie. Kiss all hopes goodbye.
   They say you haven’t got a chance in the world
   Not a chance in the world at Last Chance High.
ANZAC: (Sings.) It’s a jungle. It’s a jungle of misfits and dropouts.
AGNES: (Sings.) We are losers who are hardly the cream of the crop.
DINOSAUR: (Sings.) Ev’ry classroom is a place that is more like a prison.
ALL: (Sing.) No, this isn’t “The Good Ship Lollypop.”
IVY: (Sings.) Take the teachers, well, they haven’t a clue about teaching.
JAWS: (Sings.) No instruction. Not a one who can teach in the bunch.
THELMA: (Sings.) Ev’ry classroom is a jail full of chalk and erasers.
ALL: (Sing.) All day long here the teachers are out to lunch.
   They say you haven’t got a chance in the world
   And I wouldn’t lie. Kiss all hopes goodbye.
   They say you haven’t got a chance in the world
   Not a chance in the world at Last Chance High.
MALE STUDENTS: (Sing.) How are chances? You’ve the chance of a snowball in Hades.
FEMALE STUDENTS: (Sing.) Things are hopeless. It’s a bummer without any doubt.

MALE STUDENTS: (Sing.) So forget it. There’s no light at the end of the tunnel.

ALL: (Sing.) Time to give up because there’s no way out.
And the lunchroom? It’s a zoo that is strictly from hunger.
Ptomaine City. All the gravy and pudding have lumps.
And the menu? Ev’ry day they provide something special.
And what’s special? They bring in the stomach pumps.
They say there’s not the slightest chance you can cope
You are at the end of your rope
Kiss all hope goodbye
At Last Chance High! (At end of song, ALL EXIT except for MRS. TADPOLE #1 and MRS. TADPOLE #2, who are discovered mopping [or sweeping out] classroom. For some odd reason, both women speak with British accents -- like London charwomen.)

MRS. TADPOLE #1: Here we are again, Mrs. Tadpole. Mopping and cleaning, scrubbing and dusting.

MRS. TADPOLE #2: You can’t fault the wages and there’s always plenty of hot tea.

MRS. TADPOLE #1: I like the wages and I like the hot tea. It’s the students in this school I don’t like. They scare me half to death.
(EVELINA CULPEPPER, secretary to the principal, totters IN, LEFT. Steno pad in one hand, pencil in the other. She’s a “grandmother” type. Wears an old-fashioned long dress. Her hair is snow white and she wears tiny eyeglasses. Despite her advanced years, she can totter fast.)

EVELINA: Staff, have you seen Mr. Ranchwear?

MRS. TADPOLE #1/MRS. TADPOLE #2: Something the matter, Miss Culpepper?

EVELINA: New students who weren’t expected.

BEAUMONT’S VOICE: (From OFF LEFT.) Delighted to show you around, Miss Buena Vista.

FABIOLA’S VOICE: Delighted to have you show me around, Mr. Beaumont.

EVELINA: Who’s that, I wonder? You can clean up in here later, Staff.

MRS. TADPOLE #1: Not if them students is in here.

EVELINA: What difference does that make?

MRS. TADPOLE #2: It would be like entering a cage full of wild beasts.

BEAUMONT’S VOICE: I’m certain you’ll find plenty to write about.
EVELINA: (Recognizes voice.) It’s Mr. Beaumont, the district supervisor. (BEAUMONT ENTERS LEFT, arms wide to embrace the room.)

BEAUMONT: And, here, Miss Buena Vista, is the typical classroom at P.S.M.S. Isn’t it grand? (EVELINA motions that TADPOLES should withdraw. They shrug, EXIT RIGHT with their cleaning gear. Following BEAUMONT is a magazine feature writer -- FABIOLA BUENA VISTA. She’s dressed in high fashion. Absolutely nothing rattles her aloof composure.)

FABIOLA: P.S.M.S.?

EVELINA: Public School Maximum Security. But all the students call it "Last Chance High."

FABIOLA: How droll.

BEAUMONT: This is Evelina Culpepper, Mr. Ranchwear’s aged secretary. (To EVELINA.) This is an important journalist, Miss Culpepper. Treat her with respect. She’s going to “write up” this school for Vapid Magazine. (Gestures to the writer.) Miss Fabiola Buena Vista. (Not knowing what else to do after such a buildup, EVELINA stupidly curtsies, puts a finger to her lips as if to suggest "Don’t say anything.")

FABIOLA: (To BEAUMONT.) Isn’t she droll. (To EVELINA.) May I borrow your pad and pencil? (EVELINA hands over pad and pencil.)

BEAUMONT: Miss Culpepper, see if you can find Bronco.

EVELINA: Easier said than done. (She EXITS hurriedly, LEFT. FABIOLA sits, writes.)

FABIOLA: "P.S.M.S. -- Public School Maximum Security -- Last Change High. . . ."

BEAUMONT: This is the end of the road for incorrigible students. One last chance. They’ve been kicked out of every school in the system.

FABIOLA: (Checks her manicure.) Why?

BEAUMONT: Lack of discipline, . . . failing grades due to absenteeism. . . . (As BEAUMONT rattles off offenses, SECURITY, a young man in the uniform of a prison guard, patrols in the passageway behind the bars. He carries a billy club. FABIOLA writes.) . . . never bringing a gym suit to Physical Education, repeated food fights. Using hubcaps from faculty cars for frisbees. They’re a hard lot.

FABIOLA: What about their parents?

BEAUMONT: They never interfere.
FABIOLA: I'm surprised you could find anyone to run such a place.
(SOUND OF WHISTLE from OFFSTAGE LEFT. BEAUMONT turns to the sound. SECURITY EXITS RIGHT.)

BEAUMONT: Ah, but you don't know the principal. (Gestures LEFT.) Bronco Ranchwear. (SOUND OF WHISTLE and BRONCO RANCHWEAR ENTERS. Unlike BEAUMONT, who wears business suit and tie, RANCHWEAR is dressed in military battle fatigues. His trousers are boused, there's a pistol in a holster on his hip. He wears a cap with visor, medals, boots, black leather gloves and sunglasses. The whistle is on a string around his neck and he holds a swagger stick that he occasionally slaps into one gloved hand to emphasize a point.) This is Miss Buena Vista, Bronco. The writer I told you about. She's going to make you famous.

RANCHWEAR: I'd like that very much.

BEAUMONT: Isn't he something, Miss Buena Vista?

FABIOLA: Droll. Very droll.

BEAUMONT: We were about to close down Last Chance High. No one would take the job of principal.

RANCHWEAR: (Barks.) Cowards! Snivelling cowards! That's what they were!

BEAUMONT: Then Mr. Ranchwear appeared from out of nowhere with wonderful qualifications. He is a graduate of Big City University and holds the rank of Captain in the Submarine Corps. (RANCHWEAR snaps to attention, salutes.)

RANCHWEAR: I run this school the same way I ran my troops underwater. I'll make them or I'll break them. It's one or the other. The choice is theirs. (As RANCHWEAR starts to sing, TADPOLE #1, TADPOLE #2, EVELINA, SECURITY and OPTIONAL CHORUS ENTER, join in. MUSIC: "I'M ROUGH, I'M TOUGH.")

Don't you know I'm rough, I'm tough, I'm a macho man who's Tough and rough
And I know my stuff, so don't fool with me. I never Bluff.
I'm just a little sadistic
I give my guarantee
And that guy known as "Rambo" would never play games with me.
Oh, no!

OTHERS: (Sing.) He's rough, he's tough, he's a macho man who's Tough and rough
And he'll never bluff. He knows his stuff.
RANCHWEAR: (Sings.) Don’t you know I’m lean, I’m mean, I’m a Macho man who’s mean and lean.
Like you’ve never seen with no actor on a movie screen.
I never, ever show mercy
I give my guarantee
And even “Dirty Harry” ain’t dirty enough for me.
Oh, no!
OTHERS: (Sing.) He’s lean, he’s mean, he’s a macho man who’s mean and lean
Like no actor on a movie screen.
RANCHWEAR: (Sings.) Don’t you know I flex my pecs, I’m a macho man with pecs
To flex
And in all respects I’m a brawny Brontosaurus Rex.
I’ve won awards for my biceps
I give my guarantee
And Arnold Schwarzenegger had better watch out for me.
Oh, yeah!
OTHERS: (Sing.) He’s a mighty man of muscle
Who is straining at the leash
RANCHWEAR: (Sings.) So feed this tiger beefsteak
’Cause real men don’t eat quiche.
Oh, no!
I flex my pecs
OTHERS: (Sing.) He’s got pecs to flex.
RANCHWEAR: (Sings.) I’m lean and mean.
OTHERS: (Sing.) Like you’ve never seen.
RANCHWEAR: (Sings.) I know my stuff.
OTHERS: (Sing.) He’ll never bluff.
RANCHWEAR: (Sings.) I’m a macho man
Who’s rough and tough.
ALL: (Sing.) He’s rough and tough
Yeah! (At end of song, RANCHWEAR blows the whistle and EXITS LEFT with a military stride. OTHERS follow. Wide-eyed and innocent, four new students ENTER from RIGHT. They are SALLY ARMSTRONG, GWEN DAWSON, BETTY DILUTH and DOUGLAS ALEXANDER. BETTY has a large handbag. Each student carries a folder. They are dressed in teenage casual wear. DOUGLAS has a surfboard [or skateboard].)
DOUGLAS: What a dump!
BETTY: It’s BORRRRRRRRING.
SALLY: Grungy.
GWEN: Awesome.
SALLY: Totally unpleasant. (From LEFT, a Last Chance High student ENTERS. AGNES RASPUTIN. She wears a short skirt, high-heel shoes, bike jacket. A tough lady. Wild hairstyle. Dangling from one hand is some heavy chain. She wears enough makeup to open a cosmetic store. Others stare at her in near-disbelief.)

AGNES: (Circling them.) Well, well, well. (OTHERS exchange a nervous look.) Hey, Anzac! Come look!

ANZAC: (ENTERS LEFT.) So, I’m looking. (ANZAC is the male counterpart of AGNES. A rocker, dressed accordingly. His hair is weird. Both AGNES and ANZAC look positively lethal.)

AGNES: Anzac, you know what I think we’ve got here?

ANZAC: Tourists.

AGNES: From the Valley. Maybe we ought to sell them some protection insurance. Three Valley Girls and friend.

ANZAC: He’s a nerd. I can tell. Nerds I step on. Nerds I squash.

DOUGLAS: (Shoves ANZAC on the shoulder.) Watch it, Gopher Breath.

ANZAC: Why, you! (Shoves back. The Valley Girls are horrified.)

AGNES: (Stepping between DOUGLAS and ANZAC.) Let me handle this, Anzac. (ANZAC steps back and AGNES is face-to-face with DOUGLAS, who doesn’t know quite what to do.) What’s your name, Popeye?

BETTY: His name is not Popeye.

SALLY: His name is Douglas.

GWEN: Douglas Alexander.

AGNES: (Yells.) So, who’s asking youse? (She lifts the chain and the Valley Girls jump away.)

BETTY/SALLY/GWEN: Oh!

AGNES: Get this straight, Popeye, ’cuz I’m only going to say it once. Nobody calls my friend “Gopher Breath”. You can call him "Rat Mouth". You can call him "Grease Trap".

ANZAC: You can call me "Peanut Brain" or "Pumpkin Head".

AGNES: But you can’t call him "Gopher Breath"! Understand?!

BETTY: Deplorable!

SALLY: Vulgar!

ANZAC: You can call me "Vulgar" if you want. I ain’t sensitive.

GWEN: We can see that.

BETTY: I’ll have you know we’re proud to be from the Valley.

AGNES: A Valley Girl is a relic. Something from the prehysterical times.

DOUGLAS: Last year’s Prom Queen used to be from the Valley.

SALLY: San Fernando?

BEAUMONT: No, Death. She sure looked pretty on Prom Night.
BETTY: *(Interested in the "fashion" details.)* What did she wear?
AGNES: Brass knuckles.
BEAUMONT: Who are you two?
AGNES: Rasputin. Agnes Rasputin.
ANZAC: Anzac Caligary.
GWEN: Well, Miss Rasputin, Mr. Caligary, we don’t belong in this school.
AGNES: *(Indicates.)* If youse don’t belong in here, how come that school folder says "transfer." *(AGNES grabs the folder from GWEN’s grip.)*
GWEN: Give that back. *(GWEN attempts to retrieve the folder, but AGNES shoves her away.)*
AGNES: Don’t push your luck, princess. *(Shows folder to ANZAC.)* See what’s written on the front?
ANZAC: You know I can’t read unless it’s printed in big block letters. *(AGNES flips open the folder, scans the contents.)*
AGNES: Uh-huh... uh-huh... uh-huh... according to this here transfer, youse is being moved from San Fernando High to P.S.M.S.
ANZAC: You must be real bad to land in this place. What did you do -- steal a bottle of Diet Pepsi? Ha, ha.
BEAUMONT: It’s obviously a computer mistake.
GWEN: If you don’t mind. *(Grabs back the folder.)*
BETTY: Who’s in charge here?
SALLY: Who’s the principal?
BETTY: We demand to know.
AGNES: Hear that, Anzac? They want to meet the principal.
ANZAC: They’ve got a surprise coming!
GWEN: We’re wasting our time talking to these idiots.
BETTY: Idiots?
AGNES: *(With the chain, to GWEN.)* How would you like me to iron your hair?
ANZAC: I’ll waste Douglas. You total the princesses.
GWEN: They want to fight. Oh, oh!
OTHERS: Oh, oh! *(ANZAC makes a grab from DOUGLAS who uses the surfboard like a shield. AGNES makes a grab for GWEN.)*
BETTY: Stop, stop!
SALLY: Help! Help! *(EVELINA ENTERS from LEFT and sees what’s going on.)*
EVELINA: Security! Security! *(She takes out a whistle and pipes an alarm. GWEN and AGNES are shoving at each other. Same for DOUGLAS and ANZAC. Others huddle together in fear. SECURITY runs IN from RIGHT.)*
SECURITY: Break it up! Break it up! (No luck.) It’s me or Ranchwear!
(On hearing the name “Ranchwear,” both AGNES and ANZAC
turn to mush, heads low.)
EVELINA: Tsk, tsk. Mr. Ranchwear would be so disappointed in you
both. Aren’t you ashamed?
AGNES: (Like a young child.) Please don’t tell him.
ANZAC: We’ll be good. Honest.
SECURITY: You know the rules. No chains during school hours.
Hand it over, Rasputin. (Reluctantly, AGNES hands the chain to
SECURITY.) Now get out of here. Move! (Fast, AGNES and
ANZAC EXIT RIGHT.)
GWEN: It wasn’t our fault.
SECURITY: I hear that a million times a day. (EXIT RIGHT.)
BETTY: (To EVELINA.) Do you teach here?
EVELINA: No; I’m reasonably sane. I’m the school secretary. Miss
Culpepper. (As one, students thrust the folders at her.) What’s
all this?
BEAUMONT: Transfers.
EVELINA: Ah. I understand. You’re the mid-term students. I’ve been
expecting you.
DOUGLAS: It’s some kind of computer mistake.
GWEN: A malfunction.
EVELINA: In that case, Mr. Ranchwear is the man to see.
BETTY: Where do we find Mr. Ranchwear? (SOUND OF WHISTLE
from OFF LEFT.)
EVELINA: It appears he’s found you. (RANCHWEAR thunders IN
from LEFT.)
RANCHWEAR: Did I hear a disturbance?
EVELINA: A minor incident, Mr. Ranchwear. Agnes Rasputin and
Anzac Caligary. Security has everything under control.
RANCHWEAR: Good.
DOUGLAS: Sir, there’s been a mistake.
RANCHWEAR: (Indicates surfboard or skateboard.) What’s that?
DOUGLAS: A surfboard, sir.
RANCHWEAR: We don’t allow surfboards at P.S.M.S. (Shouts.) No
surfboards! (To EVELINA.) I don’t seem to recognize these
young people. What are they doing here? This isn’t visitors day.
EVELINA: (Taps folder.) Transfer students.
RANCHWEAR: Why wasn’t I informed?! (His voice is so powerful,
ALL take a step back.)
BETTY: We’re not really transfer students.
GWEN: It’s a computer mistake.
SALLY: A bug in the system.
DOUGLAS: You'll have to sign a release, sir. Otherwise, they won't let us back in our old school. San Fernando Valley High. (RANCHWEAR is making them edgy. He is glowering through his dark glasses and slapping the swagger stick methodically into his gloved hand. To break the tension, the VALLEY KIDS muster up courage and sing -- MUSIC: Rahl Rahl For San Fernando Valley High. VALLEY KIDS sing.) Owing to a big computer error, we find that we are trapped like rats at dear, old Last Chance High.

The student body get their kicks by keeping us in terror. The principal is more like "Captain Bligh."

We miss our school in San Fernando Valley. A school with quite a different atmosphere.

Old Last Chance is not a lot of fun.

We say it loud and clear.

So will someone please dial nine-one-one (911) and get us out of here?

Take us back, way back, to San Fernando High.

The finest school that ever was in Southern California.

SALLY/GWEN/BETTY: (Sing.) Valley boys are hunky to the max.

DOUGLAS: (Sings.) And Valley girls are really, truly awesome.

VALLEY KIDS: (Sing.) All hail San Fernando!

Tell us that we can go back and we'll pack.

Heading back to San Fernando Valley High.

Take us back, way back, to San Fernando High.

The finest school that ever was in Southern California.

SALLY/GWEN/BETTY: (Sing.) Valley boys are hunky to the max.

DOUGLAS: (Sings.) And Valley girls are really, truly awesome.

VALLEY KIDS: (Sing.) All hail San Fernando!

Tell us that we can go back and we'll pack.

Heading back to San Fernando Valley High. (RANCHWEAR and EVELINA get caught up in the spirit of the song and begin to join the VALLEY KIDS in song leader/cheerleader-type formations.)

ALL: (Sing.) Take us back, way back, to San Fernando High.

The finest school that ever was in Southern California.

RANCHWEAR/EVELINA: (Sing.) Valley boys are hunky to the max.

And Valley girls are really, truly awesome.

ALL: (Sing.) All hail San Fernando!

Tell us that we can go back and we'll pack.

Heading back to San Fernando Valley High!
RANCHWear: (At end of song, RANCHWEAR to VALLEY KIDS.) All of
you -- sit down! (They are so intimidated, they just stand there
staring at him.) Didn’t you hear me? (Sickly sweet.) Ah, forgive
me. You’re new here. You don’t understand the rules. (Sweeter
and sweeter.) When I speak, students obey. They don’t “think”
about obeying. They do it without thinking. A student who
doesn’t think is a good student. Now, I’ll say the words one
more time. Listen carefully. . . concentrate. (Yells.) Sit down!!!
(He looks like a madman. Horrified, the STUDENTS sit, afraid
to move or speak.) Staff.

Evelina: Sir?
Ranchwear: March those transfers to my desk.
Evelina: Yes, sir. Right away, sir. (MISS CULPEPPER quick marches
from the room. RANCHWEAR parades back and forth.)
Ranchwear: I’ve never seen such a sorry bunch of teenagers. I’ll
break you so I can rebuild you. You came to my school as
losers, but you’ll leave with a diploma. Memorize the school
motto -- “Mediocrity is better than nothing.”
Douglas: But, Mr. Ranchwear, sir. We’re not Last Chance material.
We’ve never done anything illegal.
Betty: Everyone knows this is a school for promising criminals,
thugs.
Gwen: (Hand up.) I’d like to be excused, please.
Ranchwear: Why?
Gwen: Because if this goes on much longer, I’m going to need a
barf bag.
Ranchwear: Get this and get it straight, all of you! The system
works. You are transfer students. The computer doesn’t make
mistakes. There is no bug in the system. Unless you’re the bug!
You’ve been transferred here and this is where you stay!
(Bellows.) Security!!! (MISS CULPEPPER ENTERS office, puts
transfer folders on desk, EXITS.)
Betty: (Summons courage, stands.) I’d like to call my mother,
please. She’s probably worried about us.
Gwen: Sally and I are staying at Betty’s house. Our parents are in
Bermuda. A cruise.
Ranchwear: (Snide, mimicking her tone.) “Our parents are in
Bermuda. A cruise.” (To DOUGLAS.) You, surf’s up! (DOUGLAS
stands, petrified.)
Douglas: Me, sir? I mean “I.”
Ranchwear: (Snide.) I suppose you’re staying at “Betty’s”?
Douglas: No, sir.
Ranchwear: (Even snider.) Your parents on a “cruise to Bermuda”?
DOUGLAS: No, sir. They’re on a cruise to the Orient. I take care of myself while they’re gone. Even the cooking. I have a microwave.
RANCHWEAR: Spoiled young puppies. That’s what you are.
STUDENTS: Puppies? (SECURITY ENTERS RIGHT.)
RANCHWEAR: Take these losers down to the cafeteria.
SALLY: We’re not hungry, thank you just the same.
RANCHWEAR: When it’s lunchtime, you eat!
SALLY: (Shaking.) Perhaps I could manage a bite.
GWEN: I hope they have dim sum.
RANCHWEAR: It’s spaghetti pie.
STUDENTS: Gross. (SECURITY takes out a WHISTLE and gives a blast.)
SECURITY: Line up! (Like members of a chain gang, the STUDENTS line up. They are numb with the state of affairs.) Left foot, right foot. Move out. (STUDENTS shuffle OUT, RIGHT. SECURITY brings up the rear.)
RANCHWEAR: Left, right, left, right! (Yells after them.) You will enjoy the spaghetti pie! That’s an order! (He turns to EXIT LEFT, remembers something; yells RIGHT.) And get rid of that surfboard! (He EXITS LEFT and, as he does, BAG LADY, a walking tepee of rags, ENTERS on the LOWER STAGE APRON, EXTREME DOWN RIGHT. She is pushing a shopping cart loaded with junk. She tries to "panhandle" from members of the audience who are sitting in the front row.)
BAG LADY: Hey mister, could you spare a quarter. . . how about a dime. . . nickel? Cheapskate! (Spots someone else as she moves along.) Hey lady, I need a dollar to buy my cat some Friskies. My cat ain’t et for a whole week. . . me, either. . . hey, you, I need bus fare. . . I need an operation. . . (Obviously, there are no donors.) I need something. (She looks up, catching sight of a sign.) What’s that sign? (Squints, reads.) “Public School Maximum Security. . . Abandon All Hope Ye Who Enter Here.” (Sniffs.) I smell spaghetti pie. My favorite. (Pushes cart OFFSTAGE, EXTREME DOWN LEFT.) I’ll see if I can get a handout. (Sings.) "Oh, bury me not on the lone prairie; Where the coyotes howl And the wind blows free." (As BAG LADY starts to cross over, MR. BEAUMONT ENTERS from RIGHT with FABIOLA. She is still taking notes.)
BEAUMONT: The school, of course, is still in the experimental stage.
FABIOLA: It’s a droll concept.
BEAUMONT: Feel free to mention my name in your article. More than once, if you wish. (The school psychiatrist, SIGMUNDA FRAUD, ENTERS LEFT. She wears a white smock, enormous glasses, and is continually grabbing at the air.) Ah, look who's here. Our school psychiatrist. Sigmunda Fraud. Hello, Sigmunda.

SIGMUNDA: (Still grabbing at the air.) Gnats, flies, bugs, mosquitoes. They won't leave me alone. Nasty things. (To the flying "things.") Get away... shoo... shoo.

FABIOLA: Perhaps it's the perfume you're wearing.

SIGMUNDA: I don't wear perfume.

FABIOLA: Perhaps you should.

BEAUMONT: Dr. Fraud, this is Fabiola Buena Vista. She's writing an article about P.S.M.S.

SIGMUNDA: The students here like publicity. They'll do anything to get it. When they get publicity, they want more. Less would be better. They must accept the world the way it is, not the way they fantasize it. (She crosses RIGHT, still fighting off the "flying things.")

BEAUMONT: Did you understand that, Miss Buena Vista?

FABIOLA: Not a word.

SIGMUNDA: Get away... why won't they get away... why won't they leave me alone... nasty bugs... (She's OUT.)

BEAUMONT: Isn't she unique?

FABIOLA: (Matter-of-fact.) She's stark raving mad.

BEAUMONT: (Casually.) Would you like to see the gymnasium? All our students lift weights.

FABIOLA: I imagine they lift anything they can get their hands on.

BEAUMONT: (Indicates RIGHT.) This way. (MR. BEAUMONT guides FABIOLA OFF and RANCHWEAR ENTERS his office, sits behind his desk and opens the transfer folders. As RANCHWEAR reads, SIGMUNDA APPEARS in the passageway UP RIGHT, still trying to escape those "flying things." She crosses and OUT.

EVELINA ENTERS office with clipboard.)

EVELINA: Mr. Ranchwear?

RANCHWEAR: What is it, Staff?

EVELINA: Some wicked student has spray-canned a slogan over the front door.

RANCHWEAR: "Abandon All Hope Ye Who Enter Here"?

EVELINA: You've seen it.

RANCHWEAR: Seen it? I did it. Is that what you wanted to see me about?

EVELINA: No, it's another matter.
RANCHWEAR: Report in!
EVELINA: Awwwuugh! (Recover.) Mr. Ranchwear, I wish you wouldn't bark like that. You make me so nervous.
RANCHWEAR: If you're nervous, see Dr. Fraud.
EVELINA: I'm not that nervous. (Puts down clipboard.) Food supplies, sir. You'll have to sign the invoice.
RANCHWEAR: Give me a pen.
EVELINA: I don't have one. That Fabiola Buena Vista took it and never gave it back.
RANCHWEAR: Fabiola Buena Vista is going to make me famous. I've got to do something spectacular. Something that will make the education world stand up and take notice. (Produces his own pen, signs the invoice, returns the clipboard.) I'd hang on to that autograph. Might be worth money someday.
EVELINA: (Checks invoice.) I've been meaning to speak to you for some time, sir. It's rather important.
RANCHWEAR: Yeah?
EVELINA: We get all these food supplies and the cafeteria never serves anything but spaghetti pie.
RANCHWEAR: Serves Jello, too.
EVELINA: But the students don't like licorice Jello. These invoices list all sorts of good things to eat. (Suddenly, RANCHWEAR flashes anger. He leaps from his chair and begins to throttle poor EVELINA.)
RANCHWEAR: What are you suggesting?! -- What are you driving at?! -- What do you meeeeeeegggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggg
EVELINA: Yes, sir. (BAG LADY, pushing the shopping cart, APPEARS in passageway UP LEFT, sniffing the air, trying to track down the spaghetti pie. She crosses UP RIGHT and OUT. As she EXITS, two girls, each about 18, ENTER the office. Dressed in a conservative, yet pretty fashion, we meet NINA NOLAN and LYDIA COLGATE. RANCHWEAR stands.)

RANCHWEAR: New personnel. Excellent. Names?


RANCHWEAR: Sit. (He indicates the visitor's chair. She sits. Both NINA and LYDIA are taken aback by RANCHWEAR -- his manner, his military uniform. To LYDIA.) Name?

LYDIA: Lydia Colgate.

RANCHWEAR: Sit. (Indicates chair behind desk. She sits. RANCHWEAR gives them a critical eye.) I requested "tough" student teachers. I thought they'd send me some macho types.

NINA: We're here to learn as much as teach.

LYDIA: There's been a computer error. We were supposed to be assigned to the Valley.

RANCHWEAR: (In a rage.) The Valley! The Valley! How I hate the Valley! I don't want to hear any more about computers making mistakes! (Calms down.) Get this straight, Staff.

LYDIA: Staff?

RANCHWEAR: The faculty here is referred to as "staff." My idea. The janitors are "staff," the kitchen help is "staff." Staff, staff, staff. (ISADORA, a maid in the DILUTH home, in uniform, ENTERS DOWN RIGHT with a feather duster. She dusts the chair, the lamp, the telephone.) You have been assigned here and my advice is to make the best of it. You have to pass this course in student teaching if you expect to get your credentials. You know this school's reputation. It's tough. I want my staff tough. Tough, tough, tough! If a student gets out of line -- (He grows in NINA's face.) Crush him! (Slaps the swagger stick on the desk and LYDIA jumps.)

LYDIA: Auuuuuuuugh!

RANCHWEAR: (Checks his watch.) Thirteen hundred hours. Lunch break is over. Time for ABC's. I want you to meet Bobo Elliott. He'll be your supervisor. (He EXITS. ISADORA EXITS. LYDIA and NINA look at one another in bewilderment.)

NINA: He's trying to frighten us. He's furious because we're women. We won't let him defeat us. We will force him to give us a good grade.

LYDIA: I could almost believe you.
NINA: (Resigned.) So could I. (NINA and LYDIA EXIT office and BAG LADY ENTERS from RIGHT, followed by MRS. TADPOLE #1 and MRS. TADPOLE #2. The cleaning women are "in pursuit.")

MRS. TADPOLE #1: You’re not supposed to be in here. (BAG LADY sticks her tongue at them, makes a face.)

MRS. TADPOLE #2: I’ve half a mind to call security.

BAG LADY: Half a mind is probably all you’ve got.

MRS. TADPOLE #1: Out, out! (Head high, BAG LADY EXITS LEFT, pushing her cart.)

BAG LADY: Foreigners!

MRS. TADPOLE #1, & 2: Bag lady! (FABIOLA ENTERS RIGHT.)

FABIOLA: I’d like a word. (Pad and pencil.) To start with, how about giving me your names.

MRS. TADPOLE #1: (To FABIOLA.) I’m Mrs. Tadpole.

FABIOLA: (Writes.) "Mrs. Tadpole..." (To MRS. TADPOLE #2.) And you?

MRS. TADPOLE #2: I’m Mrs. Tadpole.

FABIOLA: Two "Mrs. Tadpoles"?

MRS. TADPOLE #1: Most people think we’re related, but we ain’t.

FABIOLA: You’re British.

MRS. TADPOLE #2: They can’t get anyone to work here, so they sent all the way to London.

MRS. TADPOLE #1: As soon as the semester is finished, we’re out of here. Good riddance to Last Chance High.

FABIOLA: You take a dim view of this school experiment?

MRS. TADPOLE #1: This isn’t a school, dear. More like a zoo.

FABIOLA: Which way to the cafeteria?

MRS. TADPOLE #2: Follow your nose. When you have to hold it, you’re there.

FABIOLA: (EXITS RIGHT.) Droll. Very droll. (SECURITY ENTERS in passageway UP RIGHT, RATTLING his billy club against the bars.)

MRS. TADPOLE #1: How about a drop of tea, Mrs. Tadpole? (They EXIT RIGHT as RANCHWEAR ENTERS LEFT.)

SECURITY: Psssst. Ranchwear. (RANCHWEAR steps to the bar. They whisper like conspirators in the dark. SECURITY takes out some paper.) I got the pencil invoice here.

RANCHWEAR: I’m listening.

SECURITY: (Checks invoice.) Two gross red pencils. Three gross green pencils. Five gross lead pencils.

RANCHWEAR: Give me that.

SECURITY: You got it. (He hands the paper through the bars. RANCHWEAR takes it and slips it into his pocket. As he does
so, a faculty member, BOBO ELLIOT, ENTERS LEFT. BOBO wears a track suit and a baseball cap. He's pleasant and likeable, but "punchy."

BOBO: Afternoon, chief.
RANCHWEAR: Ah, Bobo. Ready for class?
BOBO: I'm ready, but I forgot what it is I'm supposed to teach.
(SEcurity EXits.)
RANCHWEAR: You'll think of something. Why are you wearing a track suit?
BOBO: I run on the roof.
RANCHWEAR: You could fall off.
BOBO: I have. Twice. (NINA and LYDIA ENTER LEFT.)
NINA: This is the classroom?
LYDIA: Looks more like a prison cell.
BOBO: Don't say that word. Mr. Ranchwear don't like that word.
NINA: What word?
BOBO: Prison. (Realizing he's said it, too, BOBO slaps his hand over his mouth.) Oooooooooh.
RANCHWEAR: Prison, prison, prison! No one says that word, understand?! This is not a prison. It's a high school...a high school!
BOBO: Right, chief. (He comes to attention, salutes. NINA and LYDIA stare, still in a state of semi-shock.)
RANCHWEAR: Bobo, these are two new student teachers. They'll be with us for a while.
BOBO: Swell. (Delighted with the new arrivals, BOBO starts to cross, hand out for a friendly greeting.) Nice to meet you. (Just as BOBO is about to take NINA's hand, RANCHWEAR slaps down his swagger stick on the unfortunate man's wrist.) Auuuugggh!
RANCHWEAR: You know I don't allow familiarity between staff members.
BOBO: I forgot.
RANCHWEAR: Next time you'll remember. Teach them everything you know, Bobo.
BOBO: That won't be much.
RANCHWEAR: Every bit helps. (He strides OFF, LEFT.)
NINA: Goodness, Mr. Elliott, did he hurt you?
BOBO: Naw. Nothing hurts me. (Suddenly, he begins to dance about like a punch-drunk boxer, tossing jabs.) Don't let this baseball cap fool you. I used to be a boxer.
LYDIA: You mean a prizefighter?
BOBO: Yeah. Only I never won any prizes. (Stops.) Call me Bobo. Everybody does.

NINA: Uh, what do you teach, Bobo?

BOBO: I used to teach Bulletin Board Reading, but no one was interested. Then, I taught Fire Drill. After that, I taught Car Wash.

LYDIA: "Bulletin Board Reading", "Fire Drill", "Car Wash"?

NINA: I never heard of such a curriculum.

BOBO: What's that?

LYDIA: What's what?

BOBO: What she just said.

NINA: Curriculum?

LYDIA: You mean to tell us you don't know the meaning of the word "curriculum"?

BOBO: (Looks OFFSTAGE.) No, but I know the meaning of the word "trouble"! And here it comes! Take cover! ([NOTE: As soon as BOBO says "trouble", we hear a LOUD ROAR from "STUDENTS" who are galloping for the classroom, from LEFT and RIGHT. If, to this UPROAR, can be added the sound of a RINGING BELL -- it will prove most effective.] BOBO scurries behind his desk and ducks from sight. LYDIA and NINA cling to one another for protection as the P.S.M.S. STUDENTS thunder IN. The STUDENTS are dressed in a variety of costumes -- all quite mad. Leather jackets, tank tops, short skirts, far-out hairstyles. Some wear Levis, some wear s'map dance outfits. Some are merely grotesque. One is made up like something from the cover of a heavy metal album. The STUDENTS are undisciplined, unruly, loud. One has a musical instrument [maybe saxophone or trombone] and hits an occasional note. Someone carries a radio. The ENTRANCE is wild, and the crazier the STUDENTS look, the more hilarious the audience response will be. Any number can be utilized, but the main, uh, "personalities" are: DINOSAUR, JAWS, NO NAME, GUMBY (males). The females are: IVY VINE, THELMA BAYSWATER, QUEENIE TUPPERWARE. With the group are ANZAC and AGNES. STUDENTS chew gum, file nails, comb hair, drink cola, scratch, check their appearance in pocket mirrors. LYDIA and NINA are so stunned all they can do is stare and continue to cling to each other, afraid that anything might happen. STUDENTS sing. [MUSIC: Hey Dude!] DINOSAUR, JAWS, NO NAME, GUMBY, ANZAC, IVY, THELMA, QUEENIE, AGNES and ALL LAST CHANCE HIGH STUDENTS. Does not include the
VALLEY KIDS. NOTE: Solo "put-downs" are directed to the nearest person and not to any specific student.)

ALL: (Sing.) Hey, dude,
Come on, tell me what’s hap’nin’ with you.
Hey, dude.
Come on, tell me the latest. What’s new?
Dude, are you bummed-out and not in the mood?
Dude, or is it just a bad attitude?
Hey, dude,
Are you fed-up and stressed-out with school?
Hey, dude,
Or is ev’rthing kick-back and cool?
Dude, are you simply undone and unglued?
Or just psyched to a high magnitude?
So, what’s hap’nin’ with you now, hey, dude?

DINOSAUR: (Spoken, to nearest STUDENT.) Hey, Bonehead. What do you mean a bad attitude? You are the one always undone and unglued. (Sings.) Hey, Snake,
You’re a pain. You’re a real bellyache.

JAWS: (Sings.) Hey, Stupe,
You’re an "A-number-one-nircompoop."

NO NAME: (Sings.) Dork,
is it true you were brought by the stork?

GUMBY: Goon,
you’re a comic. A real "looney tune."

ANZAC: (Sings.) Hey, Bum,
You’re no cake, you’re a leftover crumb.

DINOSAUR: (Sings.) Hey, Geek,
Join a circus. Be "freak-of-the-week."

ALL: (Sing.) Dude, are you simply undone and unglued?
Or just psyched to a high magnitude?
So, what’s hap’nin’ with you now, hey, dude?

IVY: (Spoken, to nearest STUDENT.) Listen, Dimwit. What do you mean undone and unglued? I am always psyched to a high magnitude! (Sings.) Hey, punk,
Change your socks ’cause you smell like a skunk.

THELMA: (Sings.) Hey, Louse,
You got ears just like "Mickey-the-Mouse."

QUEENIE: (Sings.) Jerk, just the sight of you makes me berserk.

AGNES: (Sings.) Rat, you’re a rodent. Can’t argue with that.

JAWS: (Sings.) Hey, slob,
Look at you, "The return of the Blob."

ANZAC: (Sings.) Hey, scum,
You’re not only a bum, but you’re dumb.

ALL: (Sing.) Dude, are you simply undone and unglued?
Or just psyched to a high magnitude?
So, what’s hap’nin with you, hey, dude? (At end of song, the
STUDENTS seat themselves. NURSE, in white uniform, ENTERS
and moves among the mob. No one pays her attention. She
takes someone’s pulse... puts her hand to a forehead to check
for fever... checks an eye... puts a Band-Aid on someone.
Eventually, she makes her way to NINA and jabs a thermometer
in her mouth. Checks it, EXITS.)

DINOSAUR: I’m thinking about breaking out --
QUEENIE: With what -- zits?
OTHERS: Ha, ha, ha.
JAWS: Somebody swiped my Mars candy bar.
NO NAME: Is that the one you swiped from me? I wasn’t finished
with it.
JAWS: I noticed. (Slowly, BOBO comes into view from behind the
desk. He is waving a white flag. Feebly, he makes an attempt
to get the class’s attention.)

BOBO: Students --
GUMBY: Anybody wanna buy a tape deck?
IVY: Is that my tape deck? Thief!
STUDENTS: Thief! Thief! Ha, ha, ha.
THELMA: Did you get a load of those Valley kids in the cafeteria?
QUEENIE: Like they say in the stockyards -- lambs to the slaughter.
OTHERS: Ha, ha, ha!
BOBO: Could I have your attention... please?
STUDENTS: Hello, Bobo!
BOBO: If you don’t behave, I’ll have to get Mr. Ranchwear.
STUDENTS: (Aghast.) Ranchwear! (On the instant, all is calm. The
STUDENTS sit up straight in their chairs [or on the benches].
The name “RANCHWEAR” strikes fear in their hearts.)
BOBO: That’s better. See, you can be good students and good
citizens when you want to be.
STUDENTS: (Singsong.) Yes, Mr. Elliott. Thank you, Mr. Elliott.
BOBO: We have two student teachers with us today. So, I want you
to be on your best behavior. (As one, STUDENTS turn and
stare at NINA and LYDIA hard.)
IVY: They look like undercover cops.
NINA: I’m Miss Nolan and this is --
LYDIA: (Smiles.) Miss Colgate. We’re happy to be here, even if it
was the computer’s fault.
JAWS: Who cares? (STUDENTS continue to stare. LYDIA whispers to NINA.)
LYDIA: I get the feeling they don’t like us.
NINA: Ssssssh.
BOBO: I’ll take attendance. (Gets record book, flips open to some page. Quickly, he reads out a STUDENT’s name and, as soon as he does, the STUDENT stands, responds, and immediately sits again.) Dinosaur.
DINOSAUR: Present!
BOBO: Jaws.
JAWS: Present!
BOBO: No Name.
NO NAME: In view!
BOBO: Gumby.
GUMBY: On the nickel!
BOBO: Ivy Vine.
IVY: Present!
BOBO: Thelma Bayswater.
THELMA: Like always!
BOBO: Queenie Tupperware.
QUEENIE: (Sweetly.) Present, Mr. Elliott.
BOBO: Anzac.
ANZAC: You got me.
BOBO: Anguish Raspy.
AGNES: That’s "Agnes." Agnes Rasputin.
STUDENTS: Ha, ha, ha. (NOTE: If additional STUDENTS are used, think up some "imaginative" names for them -- "BEAST" -- "SPIKE" -- "LULU," etc.)
BOBO: Today’s lesson is... uh... uh...? DINOSAUR: Bulletin Board Reading...?
BOBO: No.
IVY: Car Wash...?
BOBO: Wait a minute. It’ll come to me. (Thinks... and thinks... and thinks some more.)
NINA: (To LYDIA.) Do you think the Board of Education knows about this?
LYDIA: This could never happen in the Valley.
BOBO: I remember.
DINOSAUR: Give yourself a gold star, Bobo.
BOBO: (To AUDIENCE.) I get no respect. (To CLASS.) Art Appreciation. I’m supposed to teach Art Appreciation. Ivy will pass out the crayolas.
NINA & LYDIA: Crayolas? (IVY steps to a desk drawer, opens it and
takes out a box of crayolas. She passes them out, returns box
to the drawer, resumes her seat. While this crayola business is
going on, BOBO produces a large, framed painting from
behind the desk. It's supposedly one by the dwarfish French
painter, Toulouse-Lautrec.)

BOBO: Pay attention, class. I'm going to ask a question. (Pause.)
Who painted this?

QUEENIE: I'm not taking the rap for that.

THELMA: Hey, look, guys. That picture was framed!

STUDENTS: Ha, ha, ha.

LYDIA: Excuse me, Bobo -- I mean "Mr. Elliott." You're holding the
picture upside down.

AGNES: Looks better that way!

STUDENTS: Ha, ha, ha.

NO NAME: Mr. Elliott, who is the painter?

BOBO: I think this is a painting by Pablum Picasso.

NINA/LYDIA: Pablum?


BOBO: Maybe it's Stevedore Dooley.

BETTY: Salvador Dalí!

QUEENIE: It's probably signed. Check it out, Bozo.

BOBO: Good idea. (He can't find the signature because the
painting is still upside down. He turns the frame right-side up,
checks the signature.) Here it is -- (Reads.) Toulouse-Lautrec.

THELMA: Stupid kind of name.

GUMBY: How do you spell it?

QUEENIE: "T" "T".

OTHERS: Ha, ha, ha.

BOBO: Pay attention and learn something.

JAWS: That'll be a novelty. (BOBO steps to the blackboard, picks up
a piece of chalk and in big bold letters spells out the name.
[NOTE: Blackboard can be eliminated from STAGE picture by
simply having BOBO verbally spell out the letters])

BOBO: Toulouse-Lautrec. (Writes in large letters.) Capital "T." (As he
writes, he speaks the letter.) "T"-o... capital "L"-o-s-e-a --
capitol "T" again. . . r-u-c-k.

NINA/LYDIA: To Lose A Truck?

BOBO: (Puts down chalk.) Now, who can tell me the primary colors?

DINOSAUR: That's easy.

GUMBY: Black and blue!
STUDENTS: Ha, ha, ha. (Suddenly, BOBO suffers a spell of "punch-drunk." In his boxing stance, he bounces about the room sparring with an imaginary partner. STUDENTS applaud.)

AD LIBS: Atta boy, Bobo!
   You can go six rounds!
   At least!
   Jab 'im in the ribs!
   Use your left!
   He's weakening!
   Come in close! (BOBO stops abruptly, takes out a WHISTLE and gives it a loud blast.)

BOBO: Who's for a fire drill? (A cheer goes up and STUDENTS thunder OUT, LEFT and RIGHT -- practically trampling NINA and LYDIA. As BOBO and STUDENTS dash OFF, BETTY, with her large handbag, ENTERS -- trying not to get knocked to the floor.)

BETTY: Watch it... people walking here...

NINA: "To-Lose-A-Truck"?

LYDIA: Don't forget Pabulum Picasso... Stevedore Dooley. (Because of their appearance, BETTY can tell they're "outsiders.")

BETTY: New students? Don't tell me. Let me guess. It was a computer error. (All THREE move CENTER.)

NINA: We're not students.

LYDIA: We're student teachers.

NINA: But you're right -- blame it on the computer. (As song begins, DOUGLAS, GWEN and SALLY ENTER. Some STUDENTS can be added. [Music: Computer Error.])

TEACHERS: (Meaning NINA and LYDIA, sing.) Macintosh, Apple,
   Apple, I.B.M., Macintosh, Mac --

STUDENTS: (Sing.) Macintosh, Apple, Apple, I.B.M., Macintosh, Mac --

TEACHERS: (Sing.) Macintosh, Apple, Apple, I.B.M., Macintosh, Mac --

STUDENTS: (Sing.) Macintosh, Apple, Apple, all of them losing their knack.

TEACHERS: (Sing.) Glitches and stupid bungles
   Blunders are gumming the works.

STUDENTS: (Sing.) Glitches and stupid bungles
   Blunders are gumming the works.

TEACHERS: (Sing.) Boy, what a mess!

ALL: (Sing.) We've got a major malfunction.
   Computer error!
   A muddle and a botch.
This crazy rigmarole takes its toll
heads should roll.
What a super dooper bloopers!
The system must be down
But so are we!

**TEACHERS:** *(Sing.)* Macintosh, Apple, Apple, I.B.M., Macintosh, Mac

**STUDENTS:** *(Sing.)* Macintosh, Apple, Apple, I.B.M., Macintosh, Mac

**TEACHERS:** *(Sing.)* Macintosh, Apple, Apple, I.B.M., Macintosh, Mac

**STUDENTS:** *(Sing.)* Macintosh, Apple, Apple, all of them losing their knack.

**TEACHERS:** *(Sing.)* Glitches and stupid bungles
Blunders are gumming the works.
Boy what a mess!

**ALL:** *(Sing.)* We’ve got a major malfunction.
Computer error!
A muddle and a botch
Come on, give us a break, this mistake takes the cake.
Please inspect it and correct it.
We really hate to grapple
With another rotten "Apple."
They system must be down
But so are we! *(At end of song, DOUGLAS, GWEN and SALLY, extra STUDENTS EXIT.)*

**BETTY:** My friends and I are from the Valley. We don’t belong here.
Mr. Ranchwear won’t sign our transfer papers and he won’t let us use a telephone. Did you know all the doors are locked -- from the inside.

**NINA:** If you want to make a telephone call, I could do it for you.

**BETTY:** No need. *(She puts the large bag on a bench and from it takes a cordless phone. She pushes a button.)* It’s automatic dialing. *(PHONE RINGS in MRS. DILUTH’s home ONCE -- TWICE -- THREE TIMES. ISADORA ENTERS and picks up the receiver on the third ring.)*

**ISADORA:** Diluth residue.

**BETTY:** Not residue, Isadora -- *residence*. You’re supposed to answer the phone and say "Diluth Residence."

**ISADORA:** Hello, hello?

**BETTY:** It’s me, Isadora.

**ISADORA:** Who?

**BETTY:** Betty.

**ISADORA:** She isn’t in.
BETTY: I’m Betty.
ISADORA: Betty who?
BETTY: Betty Diluth! I live there!
ISADORA: Oh, hello, Betty. Someone just called for you. I told them you weren’t in.
BETTY: (Trying to control her temper.) Isadora, I want to speak with Momsy.
MRS. DILUTH’s VOICE: (From OFFSTAGE, DOWN RIGHT.) Who is it, Isadora?
ISADORA: Someone named Betty.
MRS. DILUTH’s VOICE: Betty? (MRS. DILUTH ENTERS. She wears an expensive dressing gown. Her face is covered in cold cream and her hair is in rollers. She takes the receiver from ISADORA who EXITS.)
MRS. DILUTH: Hello, dear. I’m glad you called. Your father and I have decided on a cruise. We’ll be gone for several weeks — we’re catching the ship in New York. We’re flying out in an hour.
BETTY: No, no, Momsy. You can’t do that. You don’t understand. I’m trapped in this awful high school.
MRS. DILUTH: Nonsense. You loooooove school. (As the conversation becomes more frantic, NINA and LYDIA move in close, ears pressed close to the phone.)
BETTY: It isn’t the kind of school you loooooove.
MRS. DILUTH: You and Gwen and BETTY: The principal is a Sally are grown-up young Martian and he’s mean ladies, so I know I can trust and nasty. . . and he won’t you. . . I’m putting you on sign us out and the students are all criminals your best behavior. . . no and they want to beat up party animals in the house. . . on us. . . and they have to leave all the cooking and eat spaghetti pie all the housework to Isadora and study hard.
MRS. DILUTH: (Continued. Smacks the sound of kisses.) Goodbye, precious. . . I will mail you a nice postcard from Bora Bora. (She hangs up, EXITS.)
BETTY: (Continued.) . . .and they have guards and someone tried to sell Douglas a switchblade. . . and I need help. . . Hello, Momsy? Mother?
NINA: Did she hang up?
BETTY: Worse than that. (Can’t believe it.) She’s gone on a cruise! (SOUND OF WHISTLE BLOWING and RANCHWEAR marches IN quickly from LEFT.)
RANCHWEAR: Everybody in here! Now! (He blows the WHISTLE again and all the STUDENTS, including DOUGLAS, GWEN, SALLY hurry IN from LEFT and RIGHT. FAST. SECURITY hurries them along. They surround RANCHWEAR in something of a semicircle. Some might stand in passageway, hands on the bars. [NOTE: OTHER ACT ONE CHARACTERS can be added, if desired.] Hear this and hear it good! There are going to be some changes made at P.S.M.S. I've been too soft. (Grins.) It's my nature.

STUDENTS: Soft?
NINA: What kind of changes, Mr. Ranchwear?
RANCHWEAR: I'm putting in a dress code.
STUDENTS: Ugh.
   Oh, no.
   Not that.
RANCHWEAR: A new discipline code, as well.
QUEENIE: What kind?
RANCHWEAR: Look up the meaning of the word -- severe.
STUDENTS: Ugh.
   Oh, no.
   Not that.
RANCHWEAR: (Cobra smile.) Here's the best part. Students will remain at P.S.M.S. until the end of the semester! No going home -- not even on weekends. Last Chance High is where you stay -- day and night! Locked up!

STUDENTS: No! No! No!
BETTY: Locked up? Why, Mr. Ranchwear, why?
RANCHWEAR: It'll guarantee one hundred percent attendance.
AGNES: What about Visitor's Day?
RANCHWEAR: There won't be any Visitor's Day because there won't be any visitors.

STUDENTS: Noooooooooo visitooooooors?! (MUSIC: Last Chance High [Reprise]. Finale ACT ONE.)

ALL: (Sing.) How are chances? You've the chance of a snowball in Hades.
   Things are hopeless. It's a bummer without any doubt.
   So forget it, there's no light at the end of the tunnel.
   Time to give up because there's no way out.
   They say there's not the slightest chance you can cope
   You are at the end of your rope
   Kiss all hope goodbye
   At Last Chance High!

END OF ACT ONE
PRODUCTION NOTES

ON STAGE, ACT ONE: Classroom: Teacher’s desk, chair, optional blackboard with chalk. White flag on stick, framed painting (behind desk). Record book, box of Crayolas (in desk drawer). Folding chairs or students’ chairs with armrests (about 10 chairs) -- or substitute benches (3 or 4).

Diluth Home: Designer chair, floor lamp, small side table with telephone.

Principal’s Office: Desk with telephone, chairs (2).

BROUGHT ON, ACT ONE: Mops or brooms (TADPOLES); pad and pencil, whistle (EVELINA), billy club, whistle, paper (SECURITY); whistle, swagger stick, watch, sunglasses, pill bottle, pen (RANCHWEAR); folders (VALLEY STUDENTS); large handbag with cordless telephone (BETTY); surfboard or skateboard (DOUGLAS); length of chain (AGNES); shopping cart with assorted junk (BAG LADY); large eyeglasses, white medical smock (SIGMUNDI); clipboard (EVELINA); duster (ISADORA); musical instrument, radio, combs, hand mirrors (P.S.M.S. STUDENTS); Band-Aid, thermometer (NURSE).

BROUGHT ON, ACT TWO: Tin cups (STUDENTS); small notebook (BEAUMONT); cigar box with money bills (RANCHWEAR); -- in desk; mop (TADPOLES); clipboard with invoices (EVELINA); blue exam books (NINA); shopping cart with large pot, bowls, white smock (BAG LADY); pills (NURSE); notebook, camera, snapshot (FABIOLA); colored balloons (BETTY, SALLY, GWEN, SCOUT, CITIZENS); watch, envelopes with money bills (BRAMWELL); bucket, pushbroom (MRS. TADPOLE #1); card (SCOUT, CITIZENS); box of cookies (SCOUT); rope (SECURITY); handkerchief (BEAUMONT); invoices, police badge (EVELINA); straitjacket (RANCHWEAR).

SOUND: Sirens, alarms, whistles [Breakout].

COSTUMES: Modern. Any special requirements are mentioned in the script. If the STUDENTS can wear drab uniforms (baggy overalls, for example) for ACT TWO, it helps to reinforce the prison effect. If full uniforms are out simply substitute fatigue jackets or denim shirts -- whatever works.

LIGHTING: Optional spotlight(s) for breakout. If possible, dim down the classroom whenever scenes are played in office, corridor,
Diluth home, street -- unless there is some "action" going on simultaneously in the classroom. Nice "prison" effect can be achieved by overhead lighting in passageway behind the bars.

ABOUT THE BARS: This is strictly an "atmospheric touch" since the bars don't "slide" open (if you could manage that -- great) and ENTRANCES and EXITS are made IN FRONT of the bars. They can be realistic or merely suggestive. Another way to go is to eliminate the bars and use a section of "wire fencing" -- like the fencing found in most school yards. It doesn't have to run the full length of the stage. If need be, the bars and/or wire fencing can be eliminated.

FLEXIBLE CASTING: If you wish a smaller cast, doubling is easily managed. For example, NURSE, SIGMUNDA, BRANWELL could portray citizens. Some roles could be combined, NO NAME and JAWS, THELMA and QUEENIE, etc.

If you want a larger cast, add EXTRA STUDENTS, CITIZENS, SECURITY.

Any number of roles can be changed from female to male: SIGMUNDA (Sigmund); SCOUT, one of the Tadpoles can become "MR. TADPOLE". One or two of the girl students, with a change in name, can be switched to a male character.

Some male roles can be changed to female -- SECURITY, BEAUMONT, BOBO, GUMBY, etc.

Use the flexibility in casting to cover your individual production needs.

ABOUT THE STAGING: The show must move. No dead spots. There is never a moment when something isn't happening on stage. Speak the dialogue loud and clear. The split second a scene ends the next scene is beginning. Avoid choppiness.

REMEMBER: Don't speak lines while your audience is laughing. Wait until it quiets down.
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