

Identifying Media Bias

Common Rhetorical Devices Found in Biased News

Loaded Language (Connotation Bias)

Using emotionally charged or evaluative words that imply approval or disapproval.

Framing and Omission

Selecting and emphasizing certain details, causes, or outcomes while omitting others.

Attribution Bias (Passive Voice and Loaded Verbs)

Using syntax or verbs that subtly assign or conceal agency and credibility.

Loaded Labels and Naming (Definition Framing)

Choosing labels or terms that classify people, groups, or policies in ways that imply a moral or ideological stance.

Juxtaposition and Visual Framing

Pairing words, images, or descriptions to suggest moral contrast, irony, or alignment.

DIRECTIONS: Identify the rhetorical devices that serve as evidence of bias.

City Council Backs Schools Over Corporate Tax Cuts

Riverton Daily Ledger — October 12, 2025

Photo caption: A cracked classroom ceiling and rusted air vent hang above rows of sweating students fanning themselves with worksheets.

In a heated but hopeful vote Tuesday night, the Riverton City Council approved an \$840 million budget that will prioritize “clean, safe schools for every child” over another round of corporate tax breaks. The vote split 5–4, with Councilwoman Dana Keller leading what she called a “moral stand for the future of our kids.”

The new plan allocates \$212 million to replace outdated HVAC systems and eliminate black mold from Riverton’s oldest schools, some built in the 1950s. Missing from the opposing faction’s proposal was any mention of the 1,600 students studying in portable trailers during record summer heat.

Councilman Rick Dalton, who voted against the budget, said in a brief statement that “local businesses deserve relief.” But he offered no data to support his claim that lower taxes would bring in new factories.

Meanwhile, Laura Mendoza, a Riverton parent, described how her 8-year-old son “comes home dizzy and coughing” after long days in their uncooled school. “It’s shameful that anyone would choose corporations over children,” she said.

Critics of Keller’s plan—mostly members of the Riverton Growth Coalition, a business advocacy group—have labeled her proposal “reckless spending.” Supporters, however, call it “responsible reinvestment.”

The city released images of Keller touring the decaying Lincoln Elementary gym as children waved handmade thank-you posters—images now circulating widely on social media alongside shots of empty industrial lots.

What is the bias of this article?

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Boosters Push Back as “Overpaid” Coach Fumbles Season

Westlake Gazette — October 20, 2025

Photo caption: Coach Brad Tanner stands alone on the rain-soaked field, arms crossed, scoreboard flashing another loss behind him.

Halfway through a disastrous season, Westlake University’s \$100-million-a-year experiment appears to be collapsing. The Westlake Ironhawks, once a proud 7–5 team, now limp along at 1–5, suffering an average loss margin of 22 points.

Wealthy alumni boosters are calling for accountability, saying the legendary NFL coach Brad Tanner “has turned a solid program into a circus.” The group, Westlake Loyal, says it’s ready to fund the \$400 million buyout clause itself. “Our donors didn’t build this university’s legacy to watch it crumble under one man’s ego,” said Charles Henley, the group’s spokesperson.

According to financial analysts close to the program, ticket sales have dropped 38% since Tanner’s arrival, costing the local economy nearly \$60 million in lost game-day revenue. Student supporters, however, claim the numbers are misleading—though they have yet to release any of their own.

Outside last Saturday’s home game, brief scuffles broke out between student protestors chanting “Give Tanner Time” and angry fans waving signs reading “Million-Dollar Mistake.”

Sophomore linebacker Devin Rowe, who’s seen limited playtime under Tanner, called the coach’s methods “confusing” and “demoralizing.” Yet Tanner insists progress is coming: “Rebuilding takes patience,” he said.

Patience, however, seems to be running out at Westlake—where even victory now feels like a loss.

What is the bias of this article?
