

## Zac Efron's Middle School Musical!

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As we here in the newsroom are drowning in "High School Musical 3" hype, we'd like to look back to a quieter time, more precisely, to April 2002, when future heartthrob Zac Efron was just 14 years old. The Arroyo Grande, California, native hadn't even left middle school, but he was getting his first press, in the San Luis Obispo Tribune.

Decked out in a blue recycling bag, cowboy hat and fake goatee Zac was photographed as part of a group of students getting ready to perform a skit for a competition in Knoxville, Tennessee. Can't you just see his potential?

He recently spoke with the Tribune about how his life has changed since he took that picture six years ago. "What a weird deal," Zac said. "I never would have expected it. I call home, and we laugh about all this craziness."

Although he's already grown quite a bit from a garbage-bag-wearing middle school student actor, to the star of Disney's most successful movie franchise, it still isn't enough for Efron. "I'm always searching for that project that's just out of reach," he told the paper. "But I think that's important. I want to continue to challenge myself and continue to diversify and play different roles. It would be great to do something next that people wouldn't necessarily expect of me."



*How cute is this picture?!*

One of Zac Efron's first performances in front of the camera. Finale photo from left front Chris Rinacher, 14, Zac Efron, 14, middle Bryce Blue, 13, back row Anthony Martin, 13, Daniel Johnny Angel, 14, and Brogan D. Sterns, 13. State winners going to world competition in Destination [Imagination](#). They are from Judkins and Paulding Middle schools in the Lucia Mar district. Tribune photo by David Middlecamp, April 10, 2002.