

THE CHARGER

Lawrence, Delfelder to leave

Kendyl Bolinder
@BolinderKendyl

Two Wabaunsee staff members will be leaving the district for new opportunities.

Technology director Austin Lawrence announced he is leaving after nine years serving on the Wabaunsee staff. Lawrence accepted a job as I.T. Director at Hanover-Barnes-Linn school district in Hanover, where Lawrence and his wife Cindy are from. They plan to build a house and raise their family there. Cindy, who currently teaches fifth grade math and science at Paxico Middle School, will stay until the end of the school year.

"What I'm excited about with this new job is that it's basically an opportunity to come in and improve another school district," Lawrence said.

Although Lawrence is excited about this job opportunity, he says he will miss Wabaunsee greatly.

"The things we go through in life are sometimes bittersweet, and we all have them. This is one of those moments for me. I really cannot put into words how great all of you have been over my nine years here. You are a great group of people to work with and I wish you all the best in your future endeavors," Lawrence said.

English teacher Laura Delfelder will be attending Veterinary School at Kansas State University this fall. She has wanted to be a vet her entire life, so this was an opportunity she couldn't pass up. She is excited to continue her education, because she really enjoys learning. She'll be at WHS for the rest of the year.

What Delfelder will miss most about teaching is her students.

"I'm gonna miss my students. That's like the one thing that makes me almost want to cry thinking about," Delfelder said.

"I'm going to miss my English classes, but can't wait to move onto the next chapter."

The Charger

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ROYALTY



Candidates Luke Barber, Alyssa Lohmeyer, Kassidi Huff, Conner Brown Queen Maddie Alderman and King Austin Magette, Kylie Evens, and Tanner Imthurn with attendants Arora Adams and Luke Shepard stand at half court after the ceremony.

EDITORIAL BRIEFS

Staff taking new jobs

It's sad to see Delfelder and Lawrence leave, but we're happy for both of them. Good luck in new positions and careers!

Winter weather causes headaches

Snow on Fridays is a tragic waste of a potential snow day. It also stinks for wrestling to lose meets. We hope things cooperate this weekend, or maybe the snow will stretch into next week so we can play video games and binge Netflix on a snow day.

Girls tearing up the court

Girls basketball is ranked #4 in 2A in the Kansas Basketball Coaches Association poll. They'll face tough competition this week at the Royal Valley Tournament.

No dancing at WHS

NHS had to cancel the Winter Royalty dance after the games Friday. While most students were ready to head home after a long week, it's a shame that NHS lost its biggest fundraiser.

ASVAB

Juniors spent Tuesday morning taking the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB). It's good to get an idea of our strengths, but the test process was confusing and unorganized.

District hires social worker

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Wabaunsee gained a new staff member, Melissa Watson, as the district Crosswinds School-Based Case Manager.

Watson will continue working with her current Crosswinds clients, some of whom are in Wabaunsee schools. She will provide social and emotional support to any K-12 students. In the future, she hopes to provide group work and in-service trainings.

Annie Frank, who is employed by the district's service education cooperative with Rock Creek and Wamego, will still work primarily with students on IEPs.

Watson said her role will provide several benefits to the district. "The number one benefit will be bridging the services between the school and Crosswinds. I will be able to provide services to students that might not be able to get services and facilitate the referral process for Crosswinds. Another benefit is I am more accessible for crisis situations and I am able to implement necessary interventions."

Staff members have been instructed to complete a Google Form recording observations of students displaying red flags. They will refer any students who exhibit alarming behaviors, such as isolation or other apparent struggles to Watson. Teachers are urged to call, text, or email her in crisis situations, when immediate help is needed.

"I am working with teachers and principals to identify crisis situations that may need immediate assessment and interventions that I can provide," Watson said.

Wagner meets birth family

Emma Frey
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Over winter break, senior Makayla Wagner met with her birth mother and sister for the first time since being adopted by Heather and Jack Wagner in 2002.

"We adopted Makayla on the very first national adoption day that Shawnee County observed," Heather Wagner said, "that was October 18, 2006."

Prior to contacting her birth mother, Makayla knew relatively little about her birth family. "I didn't know a lot, not a lot at all," she said. "I was very young." Makayla even had doubts about ever getting in contact with them. "I didn't think that they wanted to talk to me or that they didn't even want to meet at all."

In order to meet or contact her birth mother, Makayla had to be eighteen. "When we adopted the kids we told them that when they turned eighteen, if they wanted to find their birth families we would help them do that," Heather said. Makayla came to her mother shortly after her birthday in October and said that she wanted to find her birth mom. "I asked her how she wanted to proceed," Heather said. Makayla wanted to talk to her grandmother, who was her foster parent prior to being adopted.

"We went up and we started talking to my mom. Makayla had some questions, they were answered, and then we actually found their family on Facebook," Heather said. Makayla then corresponded with her birth mother for the first time since being adopted.

Makayla's fears soon turned into excitement after reaching out for the first time. "Me and my grandma and my mom reached out to her," she said, "She told me she was really excited because we hadn't talked in years, but she was kind of nervous."



Makayla Wagner (front middle) poses with her birth mother and sister (front row), and her adopted family. Makayla met her birth family for the first time over winter break.

Heather said she was excited for Makayla. "I have been totally OK with both of my kids finding their birth families. If they want to find them great, if they don't that's fine too," Heather said. "I have had the opportunity and been blessed to raise them and keep them alive."

When details were finalized, Wagner, accompanied by her mother, met with her birth mother and sister. "I was kind of nervous to meet them but also happy," Makayla said.

"It went well, we laughed a lot." "My favorite part was hanging out with my sister and going to Chuck E. Cheese's."

Heather said meeting them was a wonderful experience. "We laughed, we cried, I finally for the first time got to see how Makayla was made up." Heather Wagner said she can see many similarities between Wagner and her birth

family. "It's just been a wonderful experience for us."

"It has created a whole new world for Makayla," Heather said. Makayla is often excited, but still gets a little nervous, but has learned so much. "When you are adopted there's a lot of unknowns, like family history but by meeting them she has had the opportunity to learn."

Makayla plans to stay in contact with her birth family as they are planning to moving to Kansas City. She hopes to make many new memories and learn more about her family history.

"If you ever have the opportunity to adopt a child, I think that is one of the best ways if you can't have children of your own to become a parent," Heather said. "They deserve forever families, just like you have yours and I have mine."