

THE CHARGER

WHS struggles to find subs

Kaytlyn Meseke
@Kaytlyn_nelle

Finding a substitute teacher is becoming increasingly difficult for Wabaunsee teachers.

The district find substitutes through an automated website program called Frontline, formerly known as AESOP. Teachers and staff use the program to submit a need for a sub and it automatically calls out to a list of substitutes until someone accepts the position. When the subs receive the call they can either accept or deny the request.

WHS secretary Jeanne Perry said that the program usually works out great, but can be a problem with a small amount of substitutes that the district has. The district has around 15, and long term subs minimize that small number.

A problem with the program is that it doesn't always fill the needed substitute position. When this occurs, an extra step is taken to fill it. "It is Carrie (Boeckman) and I's job for the high school to personally call a few people and ask them to maybe pick up at least half a day," Perry said, "But if we can't convince someone then we have to look at the different plan periods and piece it together."

The number of times the school has been unable to find a sub has increased this year. First semester included multiple interim teachers that were gone frequently. The district has also suffered from losing a few good, reliable substitutes due to retirement and other jobs. Long term subs will also make an impact this spring for maternity leave along with many teachers needing subs for fourth hour to leave for spring sports and activities.

In desperate situations, some classes are supervised in the library, or a teacher may watch multiple classes.

Becoming a substitute teacher in the state of Kansas requires a substitute teaching license. These requirements include having a degree, completing a teacher preparation program and passing a background check to be able to apply. Anyone interested can apply at usd329.com.

Substitute Peggy Adams has been subbing for more than 20 years. She said she receives calls 3-4 times a week. "I enjoy being around the students," she said. "I learn something from them or the lessons every day I work."

Scholars Bowl returns to state

Sean Dugger
@seandugger01

Wabaunsee scholars bowl finished second at the regional tournament, qualifying to state for the second consecutive year.

Seniors Maddie Alderman, Luke Barber, Jarett Bolinder, Sean Dugger, and Dillon Spellman placed second after 13 rounds in the regional tournament that took place at WHS. Alderman lead the team by scoring 360 points with Spellman scoring 100 points and Barber not far behind with 90 points.

"We've been competitive at every meet this year, so I knew we were an experienced team with a chance to have a lot of success," scholars bowl coach Brendan Praeger said.

The format of the tournament separated 16 attending teams into two pools of eight teams each. After playing a round against all teams in their respective pool, the top three continued on towards the championship rounds.

Pool play began poorly with the first match against Kansas City Christian. The team was filled with nerves, competing at home with familiar spectators, judges and moderators. Faced with a difficult selection of questions, the team was destroyed, 80-20 to begin the tournament.

"It was a sketchy way to start the tournament, but we knew it was far from the end," Spellman said.

The team rebounded to win its next five rounds against Horton, McClouth, Mission Valley, Rossville and Valley Heights. The Chargers dropped the final round of pool play 40-50 against Jefferson County North, ending 5-2 and resusulting in a



WHS scholars bowl does a buzzer check in the finals round against Northern Heights. The Chargers dropped the match 40-50, finishing second and qualifying to state for the second straight year.

tie between Jefferson County North, Mission Valley and Wabaunsee.

"Pool play ending in a three-way tie for second made us very nervous heading into the championships," Alderman said. "Learning that we would have to compete against three private schools did not help with the nerves."

Tie-breaker rules landed the Wabaunsee team on top of the tie giving them second place in the pool. The six teams in the championship rounds would compete in a round-robin with the top three qualifying for a trip to state. The first three rounds took away the nerves as they resulted in a victory over three private schools. The fourth round was against Northern Heights, with both teams entering the match undefeated.

"Northern Heights was 6-1 in pool play, and they had done well at other meets this year. I had the feeling it would end up being the championship match," coach Praeger said.

A close 10-point match allowed Northern Heights to

take sole possession of first place.

"There were a few questions where we were simply beat to the buzzer," Praeger said.

With only one loss, a state trip was almost guaranteed, but one last match against Mission Valley would confirm it. Having beat the opposing team before in pool play, the team was confident a victory was in sight.

With only a 5-point lead going in the final question, the year-in review category, the match was intense. Alderman sealed the victory with a buzzer race to answer a question about Rosie the Riveter.

"As soon as I hit the buzzer, I heard the other team sigh and it made me nervous, but I was glad I didn't mess up," Alderman said.

The Chargers placed fourth at last year's state tournament, and look to bring home a bigger trophy this year.

The state tournament begins at noon Saturday at Inman High School. Follow their progress on the Charger Twitter page.

6 FBLA members place at district competition

Hannah Mumpower
@Hlmump01

Seven FBLA members travelled to Herington High School January 21 to compete at the Kansas FBLA District III Conference.

This was the first District Conference WHS FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) attended in three years as complications with weather had canceled the conference the last two years. "This was the first time any of our students have been able to experience a district conference," adviser Jeron Weisshaar said.

Attending the conference were juniors Laurel Barber, Hannah Mumpower, Sierra Quathammer and Falisha Willier, sophomore Reagan Kelley and freshmen Kara Hafenstine and Mayah Mumpower.

"I thought it was a good experience for my first year in the club," Kara Hafenstine said. "I didn't have that many events to do so it was kind of boring, but adding events over the next few years will make that better." Hafenstine competed in Introduction to Business and placed 3rd in Introduction to Business Communication.

Reagan Kelley placed 5th in Business Law and 2nd in Hospitality Management. "It was stressful but fun at the same time," Kelley said. "It was a good learning experience."

WHS FBLA had four other individuals place in events. Hannah Mumpower placed 2nd in Economics, 3rd in Personal Finance, 4th in Healthcare Administration and 6th in Journalism. Sierra Quathammer placed 9th in Agribusiness and participated in Accounting I. Laurel Barber placed 8th in Public Speaking and 10th in Help Desk. She also participated in Personal Finance. Mayah Mumpower placed 8th in Introduction to Financial Math and participated in Introduction to Business Communication. Falisha Willier participated in Accounting I and Business Law.

All WHS FBLA members who competed at District competitions will have the chance to compete at the State FBLA Conference in Topeka, April 1-3. Members who place in the top three in their events at State will advance to the National FBLA Conference June 29-July 2 in San Antonio.

"Not knowing what to expect or how it works, I think the group did an exceptional job with their events," Weisshaar said.

Tech. director reflects on time at USD 329

Eleanor Badeker
@ellybadeker

In technology director Austin Lawrence's nine years at USD329, he oversaw big changes in the technology, including internet improvements and the introduction of iPads.

Lawrence left the district in January for a similar position in Hanover.

He had many roles at Wabaunsee. In addition to being IT director, Lawrence coached girls basketball for six years and football for one. He has also helped teachers to decide on curriculum to work with technology.

When Lawrence first arrived, the separate school buildings in the different towns each had their own internet service provider. Lawrence worked to consolidate the system, and now all the schools in the district get service from one tower with one internet provider. Lawrence also played a large role in better equipping the classrooms. The schools went from

each having one mobile projector that was rolled from room to room to having projectors in almost every classroom. Each room is also equipped with an Apple TV, a device that makes student's presentations and other classroom activities easier.

"Austin was a big help when it came to technology. I started around the same time he did and the progress we've made has really benefited the students," journalism teacher Brendan Praeger said.

Originally the schools were all computer-lab-based. "My second year here, the goal was to get every school two computer labs," Lawrence said. The junior high and middle school also got mobile labs with laptops. In 2014, the district transitioned to the current system of 1-1 technology by giving every student an iPad. "It was just as cost effective to either upgrade the computer labs or give every kid their own device," Lawrence said.

Lawrence also oversaw security for the district. There are now 75 cameras district wide compared

to the original number of only 10, and all buses are equipped with cameras. The phone system was also modified so that instead of having to make a long distance call between school buildings, the phones are all on an extension. Another major change that Lawrence oversaw was the transition from server to cloud. All the student's documents used to be stored on physical servers. Now, all documents are backed up to the "cloud" using Google.

Currently, the district is working on changing the internet service from the tower to fiber optics, which is a technology that uses glass or plastic threads to transmit data. Fiber internet is faster and less likely to go down in a power outage.

Lawrence's new position is the District Technology Coordinator at USD 233. The district uses Chromebooks instead of iPads, and Lawrence is excited to learn about new technology. "For IT people that's always exciting," Lawrence said, "instead of doing the

same thing over and over I get to mess with some new technology," Lawrence said he looks forward to having the opportunity to write new district policy about technology.

While Lawrence has already started his new position, his wife Cindy, a teacher at Paxico Middle School, will remain until the end of the school year. The couple is also expecting a third child this spring.

Both Austin and Cindy are originally from Hanover, so moving back is significant to them. "We're moving back home," Lawrence said. There will be familiar faces at his new job. "I actually get to work with some of my old teachers that I went to high school with," Lawrence said.

After spending so many years at Wabaunsee, Lawrence said he will miss some things when he leaves, like the small community and the nice facilities at the high school. "Coaching sports was always very enjoyable. I probably won't have that opportunity up in Hanover," Lawrence said.

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