

Board discusses construction in work session

Eleanor Badeker, Kaytlyn Meseke
@ellybadeker, @kaytlyn_nelle

The USD 329 BOE met Monday for a special meeting to discuss the bond options. Discussion included a new option and questions for the previous bonds discussed. Here are some highlights from the discussion.

Option 12

A new option was introduced to the board members. Option 12 is an \$8.1 million bond that includes closing PMS and MHES, moving sixth grade to WJH and moving fifth and all elementary students to Alma. \$4 million would be set aside for general maintenance for the buildings and of that, \$800,000 would go to improving the AES kitchen.

How will 7-8 fit in the high school?

The board questioned, if they went with Option 11, how the seventh and eighth graders would fit. The architect showed them certain diagrams on how it could potentially be done. She suggested that their classes would all be on the third floor, to lessen the interference with high school students. She also suggested that the old gym and locker rooms could be renovated for them. A plus with 7-8 coming to the high school is that they could start the CTE classes sooner, and the district would then receive more money from the state.

Potential for extra security

Tony Conrad asked if there was potential for a breezeway to be added to connect the old building to the new building at the high school if it was kept. With the breezeway there would be more security for the fewer times between buildings. He stated that the shop buildings will always be hard to strengthen security though.

Gym Dividers

Steve Murray questioned how three teams will benefit from two gyms, one with a divider, during certain seasons. He said that it wouldn't be the varsity or JV teams that would suffer in the crowded space, but instead it would be the C teams. It was then suggested that the junior high could still be bussed back to Paxico for practices.

Getting the bond right

The board members expressed its aim to consider the future of the proposed bond, so that in 20 years the district doesn't have to consider another. They mentioned that some options may not have include money for renovations, which could mean the high school might need to be heavily renovated in 20 years. Justin Frank said that he wants the new buildings to last just as long as the ones we have now.

Bussing Problems

The board members all agreed that bussing around the district is inefficient. It is no secret that students are on bus rides for two and a half hours a day. Kelly Oliver compared our district size to others and found out it is similar to most in the area. Justin Frank said it would be cheaper to fund gas and more drivers, instead of building schools in different towns.

What's Next?

The board plans to set goals for the future at the board meeting next Monday. They will decide if they want to propose a bond before January 13 to make the deadline to have an election in April. If they feel that they are rushing it, then they will wait for the November election.

Drama prepares for fall play, 'Crumpled Classics'

Mayah Mumpower
@MayahMumpower

The WHS drama class is producing *Crumpled Classics* for the fall play on December 14.

The comedy by Craig Sodaro is filled with modernized versions of classic plays including *Romeo and Juliet*, *Frankenstein*, *Sherlock Holmes*, *The Legend of Arthur* and *Phantom of the Opera*.

Senior Brendan Duggar said, "I think the audience will enjoy it because since they already know the idea of the classics and the play is just a "modernized" version of the classics with added humor."

The students have been working very hard to pull the play together. They have to memorize

their lines and get in character. Freshman AJ Grutsch said, "It's difficult to remember lines but after some time this becomes easier."

One of the most challenging parts of the rehearsal for the past few years is the fact that people often miss the class due to other activities. Director Brendan Praeger said it has been less of an issue than in previous years though. "The 7-period schedule has really made rehearsals better. It was hard to get them to focus for an hour and a half the last few years, but a focused 45 minutes each day has gone well. It's a class that really can't be productive if a couple people are gone though, so that's always a challenge."

Play rehearsals take place entirely in-class, so the students

don't have to rehearse after school. "That was a decision I made when I took over the drama program," Praeger said. "Too many of the kids have jobs and other activities, so we need to prepare in the time we have." Changes to the schedule haven't been entirely helpful though. "Drama is at the same time as choir this year, so we lost a few kids. We didn't have enough in class to fill the cast list, so we had to recruit a few other students for small roles. We want them to miss other classes as little as possible, but it was necessary to perform the play."

The students have had several weeks to prepare for their roles. Junior Melissa Campbell plays Abigail, a girl who likes to be in charge of her peers, with high expectations. She also plays in Joni

Watson, a version of John Watson from the Sherlock Holmes stories. "I've prepared for both Abigail and Joni by becoming more confident in front of my friends, learning to speak from the gut and speak louder, and learning to be more 'bratty' for the role of Lola in 'Frankenstein,'" Campbell said.

Other cast members include Jayna Keller, Austin Henderson, Gabby Simmons, Justice Houston, Ashley Piper, Rebekah Stuhlsatz, Eli McDaniel, Richard Philbrook, Sierra Quathammer and Reagan Kelley.

The show starts at 7 p.m. December 14 in the high school auditorium. Student tickets are \$3 and adult tickets are \$5.

WINTER SPORTS PREVIEW

Students look to play important roles on each team

Winter sports season heats up this week with basketball at Axtell Friday and Wrestling at Mission Valley Saturday. The Charger spoke to Varsity and JV players from each sport for a preview of the season.

SENIOR MADDY HUTLEY
Girls Basketball

What are your expectations for the team this year?

"We're gonna have to work hard to get our wins. I just expect our team to work hard."

What are the biggest challenges you'll face as a team?

"We just have to play together and need to stay together if we're losing a game."

How do coaching changes affect the team?

"We all miss coach Perine a lot, but coach Keller has set us at a high standard as a team."

Who are the team's leaders?

"The seniors."

What does basketball mean to you?

you?

"I love basketball, it's always been a big part of my life. Practices are fun, even when they suck."

SOPHOMORE BRAYDEN MESEKE
Boys Basketball

Describe your relationship to basketball. Why is it important to you?

"I've played since first grade in the rec and then I started travel ball in third grade. I've always been a sports fan and enjoyed watching basketball. I even got a basketball goal for one of my first birthdays and I started shooting hoops afterwards, but it took me five hours to finally make it."

How do you feel about the new coaching change?

"I like him a lot and I've seen a lot of improvement in the team already throughout the season with his coaching."

How did the team do over the summer?

"We went 3-3 in the two summer tournaments. The ones we lost we competed well."

Who do you think are the team leaders?

"Seniors Chad Chambers and

Jackson Frank and junior Dawson Schultz."

What are the team's goals?

We all want to go to state. That's the ultimate goal. We for sure want to improve and win more games. We need to win those games, so we can have a winning culture to help finish those close games.

Personal Goals?

I want to get all league and lead our team to state.

JUNIOR ELI MUMPOWER
Wrestling

Describe this year's team.

Seven members. We're fairly new. Only a couple people have experience. I think we have a lot of potential.

What are the team's goals?

We want to send a few people to state. It wasn't fun staying home last season.

What do individuals need to do to find success this year?

I need to avoid stupid mistakes. Derek Wallin should be good. He just needs to be smart. Jackson Havenstein was hurt last year, so we haven't really seen him compete. We hope he can gain some technique and win some matches.

Why is wrestling important to you?

It's a good full-body workout. I like that it's more of an individual sport — there's no one to blame but yourself.

What meets do you most look forward to?

Silver Lake and Clay Center are important, and of course league and regionals.

You're a 3-sport athlete. How do other sports help you in wrestling and how does wrestling help you in other sports.

XC keeps me in good shape so I can go a full match. Wrestling keeps my whole body in shape for baseball.

FRESHMAN SHAYLEE HEIDEMAN
Girls Basketball

What excites you about starting high school basketball?

"Getting to be competitive and getting to be with the team again."

What are you nervous about?

"Probably messing up a lot."

As a freshman, what are your goals for the season?

"To become better at basketball. Try to get along with everyone and just enjoy the season."

Describe your relationship to basketball. Why is it important to you?

"It's been my favorite sport since I was little. I really like it. It's important because it's my escape from things."

What are the strengths you will bring to the team?

"I think that I am a good shooter and I have been working on it."

How did your class do last season? What will the class of 2023 bring to the WHS program?

"We didn't do so bad, but also not too good. We got 5th at league last year. As a class we are coachable."

FRESHMAN ELI OLIVER
Boys Basketball

What excites you about starting high school basketball?

"The new coach and I'm ready to play the game I love."

What are you nervous about?

"Playing against older kids who have more experience."

Describe your relationship to basketball. Why is it important to you?

"I've played since kindergarten and started playing on traveling teams in second grade. My family all love to play it and it's always been a big part of us."

How did your class do last season?

"Pretty good. We beat the number one team in the tournament, but lost the next one and ended 5th at league. We lost some close games in the season."

What will the class of 2023 bring to the WHS program?

"We can eventually be assets for the varsity team and win more games."

