

Board approves bond option for community vote

Kaytlyn Meseke
@kaytlyn_nelle

After many board meetings discussing the facilities and bond options, the board was able to pass a motion for an election to occur on May 16 at 6 polling places in the district for the potential 25 year bond, on Option 16.

The regular board meeting started with continued discussion to answer a few leftover questions over the facilities. Once the board had most of their questions answered, a motion was made for Option 10 to be the option moving forward. The potential K-12, Option 10, was seconded, but failed with a vote of 2-5. Seconds later, another motion was made, but for Option 16. The motion was seconded, and passed 4-3. Now it is up to the community to vote either for or against the K-6 in Paxico and 7-12 in Alma.

Most of the board members said that their areas favor Option 16, especially Paxico and Maple Hill, but most of the board was also favoring it. "While I think one location would be our most efficient option, I think Option 16 is probably our best compromise," Kelly Oliver said.

The main plan for the board was to unify the district, in whatever way they can. With option 16, MHES and AES students will be unified starting in kindergarten instead of fifth grade. Board member Tony Conrad said that when he was in school, once they reached freshman year Maple Hill and Alma were enemies.

"I think these kids are stronger because they have more time together, and I do think it's very important that the kindergarteners start together, that's only gonna make it better," Conrad said, "When it was K-8 we came into this high school as enemies. We played each other [in sports] for two years. I mean, we had people jumping schools to be on a better basketball team. So I think the unification part is getting better over this time frame."

Not only will this unification hopefully benefit the students, but it will also benefit the parents. Oliver said once fifth grade happens, class parties and field trips are rare. Due to this parents don't have the chance to get to know each other once their kids unify at middle school. With unification occurring in kindergarten, the parents will also get to learn more about the students and parents sooner.

Although they decided on an option, the board members still have disagreements. Jerome Hess has said he is not in favor of either Option 10 or 16. Hess raised concerns for the increasing taxes for land owners. "I get so tired of this. All of you, all you can think about is what's best for the kids and that's spending the most amount of money," Hess said.

Now that the board has made a decision, president Justin Frank said that the board needs to get behind the one option no matter if they agree or not. "Whether it passes 4-3, 5-2, 6-1, at that point, the board becomes unified. The board takes whatever decision was made. Whether it was your thought, your idea, your approach, and you unify. You get behind it, and you start working in your communities for that process," Frank said.

SIGNING DAY

BARBER SIGNS LETTER OF INTENT

Austin Henderson
@whscharger

Senior Laurel Barber signed her Letter of Intent on December 14 to play volleyball for Ottawa University.

Barber also recently decided to become a dual-sport college athlete and throw javelin as well.

"I chose Ottawa because it had a small town feel that I grew up around and that I really liked," Barber said. "Ottawa also has the big town feel that I am really excited to experience since I have never lived in one before. The people at WHS have always pushed me to do my best and it has taught me how to multitask and work hard. Wabaunsee has also taught me how to support everyone around me because that will only make you better."

Principal Jan Hutley spoke at Barber's signing ceremony. "I don't even know what to think as a parent, having a child alongside so many talented, hard working people," Hutley said. "It's definitely making them all better."

Along with her friends and family some of her coaches were also there to give their thoughts about her as an athlete.

"I remember watching Laurel back when she was a little kid watching her older sister," volleyball coach Tracy Capoun said. "It seems that Laurel has just grown up around volleyball, and she just loves it, and I love watching her play since you can tell how much she loves volleyball. I'm really glad that she is going to be able to continue playing for four more years."

GILBERT, WOLLENBERG SWEAR INTO MILITARY SERVICE

Hannah Mumpower
@Hlmump01

Senior Eli Wollenberg was sworn in to the Air National Guard Friday by his grandfather



Top: Senior Laurel Barber poses with her mother Angie Barber and father Dylan Barber during her signing ceremony December 14. Barber will play volleyball and throw javelin at Ottawa University. Above: Senior Eli Wollenberg is sworn in to the air national guard by his grandfather. Senior Frank Gilbert also committed to the U.S. military Tuesday afternoon.

Dick Wollenberg who served in the Army for 43 years, achieving the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Wollenberg joined the Air National Guard for benefits such as 100 percent tuition assistance and healthcare benefits. He felt very honored to have his grandfather swear him in.

"It was pretty cool," Wollenberg said. "I got pretty emotional because he was sworn in by his father, so it runs in the family."

Wollenberg would like more people to think of military service as a career.

"I suggest more people try because then they would get

more access to a college degree," Wollenberg said. "You have better chances of making it in the world."

"Eli has worked hard to prepare for his future and I know he will serve his country well," Hutley said.

Senior Frank Gilbert swore in to the Army Guard on Tuesday.

When asked what brought about his decision, Gilbert said "It sounded like fun."

"Frank has matured into a responsible young man and I am so proud of his dedication to our country," Hutley said.

Athletes join club sports for competition

Lauren Schutter
@schutterlauren

A large number of Wabaunsee students compete in school-sponsored sports, but only a select group compete in competitive, traveling, or club sports.

Club sports give athletes the opportunity to improve skills in the off-season, play in front of college scouts, and let talented, small-school players compete against larger teams. "You will be able to see the difference in players. These kids are able to play basketball longer, which builds their basketball IQ. From [Spradling Skills Academy, SSA] they are getting a lot of information from very good coaches that played in college," head boys' basketball coach Christian Ulsaker said.

To be part of a club sport, an

athlete must go to a scheduled tryout for the team and demonstrate their skills through drills and position-specific assessment. Following the tryout, the coach will notify the athlete if they will be joining the team. Athletes selected will attend team practices, get team gear, and compete against their own age group or older.

Female athletes compete with Wheat State Elite and advance their skills in Darting Basketball Academy. Senior Maddy Hutley has been competing with Wheat State Elite, and says "It has allowed me to play against girls who are bigger, stronger, and better than me. This has made me a smarter, well rounded player. It has also allowed me to make lifelong friendships with people I never would have met and opened the door to many

opportunities."

Former Wabaunsee and current Washburn University basketball player Abby Oliver said club basketball benefited her. "It gave me some exposure to a faster pace game and to play against experienced players. It also allowed me to be around past college players and receive insight from them," Oliver said.

Another team benefiting athletes is SSA Basketball Academy. "I wouldn't say that it's necessary, but you can see the difference in players and it's very helpful in getting college looks," says Ullsaker. Sophomore Brayden Meseke has played for SSA for three years and has brought experience to the team. "It helps me to go against tougher competition and helps bring a winning culture to Wabaunsee," Meseke said.

OPINION

'Parasite' shows foreign films are worth exploring

Eleanor Badeker
@ellybadeker

At the Oscars Sunday, the South Korean movie "Parasite" won best picture.

A movie wins best picture every year, but what's special about "Parasite" is that it's entirely in Korean. It's the first non-English language to ever win best picture.

"Parasite" also took home awards for best original screenplay, best international film and best director.

The Oscar's recognition of a film like this is a reminder that we don't have to understand the language of a movie to enjoy it and take meaning from it.



"Parasite" director Bong Joon Ho

Many people don't watch foreign movies because of subtitles, and the abundance of English language movies they could watch instead. But translations of conversations aren't very hard to read, and once you get used to subtitles, the movie flows just as easily as in English. With streaming services like Netflix, foreign language films are easy to access.

Exploring films made in other countries allows viewers the opportunity to experience another culture from the comfort of their couch. Movies can convey the thoughts and emotions of a culture, so as well as taking in the movie's plot, you can gain a greater understanding of foreign countries.

Finally, foreign language movies are fun. They're entertaining and the cultural differences and quirks keep them interesting. They can offer a refreshing change from the formulaic Hollywood movies that make up the mainstream.

Experiencing entertainment from outside the mainstream is enriching. When I started listening to Korean music, the language difference was part of what made it interesting. It easily opened me up to a whole new area of the world, simply by listening and watching.

At the Golden Globes, "Parasite" director Bong Joon-Ho said, "Once you overcome the one-inch tall barrier of subtitles, you will be introduced to so many more amazing films."

We should all explore more art from around the world.

GREAT FOREIGN MOVIES AVAILABLE ON NETFLIX

- Roma, Mexico (2018)
- Jiro Dreams of Sushi, Japan, (2011)
- A Separation, Iran (2011)
- Ip Man, China (2008)
- Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon, China (2000)
- Okja, South Korea (2017)