

THE CHARGER

McFarland students to attend Maple Hill next year

Emma Alderman | news editor

The USD 329 board made changes that will affect next year's elementary students at its meeting Monday night.

The board voted to change the variance line between Alma and Maple Hill Elementary schools to send McFarland students to Maple Hill. The vote went 4-2 with Jim Vopata, Jerome Hess, Tony Conrad and Kelly Oliver voting to change the line whereas Justin Frank, and Callie Meinhart voted against it. At the start of next school year, McFarland students will be included in the Maple Hill Elementary classes. The board hopes this will help even out the class sizes between the two schools.

The Board discussed and approved the COVID exit plan. All USD 329 schools will maintain mandatory masks until after May 19, the last day of school. After that it will be optional in school buildings and the buildings will be open to outside groups. Weight room cards will be shut off and new ones will be started June 1 for people who have paid the \$30 fee.

"From the beginning of this we made the vision that we're going to control what we can control and so we're going to continue to do that in regards to our covid reopening plan," Superintendent Brad Starnes said.

During Principal Oliver's report he acknowledged Peyton Wurtz for breaking the junior high 1600 record during the home meet last Friday.

The board approved a plan to use remaining COVID funds to provide a five hundred dollar stipend for staff.

The board approved the hiring of Cody Gilmore as a WHS assistant football coach, bus driver and teacher aid as well as Clinton Firstbrook as an emergency substitute teacher. The board also approved multiple resignations throughout the high school such as Carrie Boeckman from her position as assistant secretary and Joey Heersche as high school and junior high wrestling coach. Heersche also resigned from his position as elementary school PE teacher. The high school also gained a library media tech, Kristen Broth, who was previously the junior high library media tech.

Reves signs with Emporia State track

Staff reports

Senior Jace Reves announced his intent to continue his track career at Emporia State in a signing ceremony Monday at the WHS track.

Reves was a state placer in 2019, finishing 8th in the 800. This season he competes in the 800, 4x4, 4x8, and 4x1, with a solid chance at returning to state in each event.

Reves said he chose Emporia because of the people and the community. "The coaches and athletes were really nice when I visited," he said. "Coming from a small school to a smaller college community will be better."

Reves mother Wendy said she was excited about his choice. "We visited a couple of times and it felt like it's a good fit. The coaches have been interested in him since his sophomore year," she said.

Reves expects to compete in the 800 next year, but plans to do whatever the coaches ask. "I'll do the 800 and whatever else they tell me. I'm sure they'll throw me in the mile or 400. I have a choice between doing cross country or just doing cross country workouts, so I'll see what I'm feeling when the season starts."

Reves, who competed in a

sport each season of his four years at WHS, said his time as a Charger taught him how to deal with adversity. "Rutledge talked about dealing with adversity in football, and Ulsaker always talked about basketball being a game of runs. We deal with weather and injuries in track. Each coach works to keep us focused, which is something that will probably help me in college as well."

Track coach Roger Alderman said "Jace is one of the toughest competitors to come through our program. It's exciting to see him earn the opportunity to continue his track career at Emporia State."

Basketball coach Christian Ulsaker said "Jace is a true example of what a Wabaunsee athlete should strive to be. He helped the football team to its first playoff win in 37 years. He helped lead a basketball team that finished 2nd in State and he is considered one of the top runners, if not the top runner, on the track team. What Mr. Reves is as an athlete does not compare to who he is as a person. He is kind hearted and exemplifies what it means to be a team player. It was an honor to coach Jace and I wish him nothing but the best in the years to come."



Senior Jace Reves signs to continue his track career at Emporia State. From left: Bryton Reves, Steve Reves, Jace Reves, Wendy Reves and Carson Reves.

Football coach Jess Rutledge said it was a privilege to coach Reves for four years. "He was dedicated and never missed a summer session or practice because he dedicated himself to the team and always did whatever he needed to do to help the team. I've had him in basketball the past two years and he is the hustle and glue guy that does the nitty-gritty. He dives for every loose ball, defends the best player on the other team, will battle the tallest guy for the rebound, and nobody beats him down the court. It's phenomenal to watch, and without him, we wouldn't have had the seasons that we had in football and

basketball. That team-first attitude is why he's now on scholarship to run in college."

Principal Jan Hutley said "Jace is not only an incredible athlete, but more importantly, someone who is polite and has a good heart. He deserves the recognition of a scholarship and the Emporia State Track Team will be better with him as part of it."

Reves said the highlights of his athletic career have been playing in a basketball championship and placing in the 800 his sophomore year, but with league, regional and state track meets ahead, he hopes his biggest highlights are still to come.

Graduating senior shares advice for underclassmen



Emma Frey | editor in chief

I'm in no way shape or form the best person to be sharing advice, but I've lived an interesting life to say the least and I feel like I have some knowledge to impart on underclassmen.

First, I'd like to say that it does go by fast. You'll have many enjoyable experiences in and out of school throughout the next four years, and as much as you want to grow up faster, it'll come fast enough. Try your best to slow down and live in the moment. This is a skill that will serve you well the rest of your life and something I wish I learned how to do sooner. Don't take anything for granted, from spending time with your friends to joking around at lunchtime. These are the little moments you'll miss when you're moving away from your childhood best friends. Slow down and enjoy childhood before you're on your own being an adult.

Next, I'd like to be a little hypocritical considering my last statements. High school is fun, sure, but it is not the best time of your life in any way. It can be miserable, and it definitely will

be at times. Life is a series of ups and downs and when you're at your lowest just know that there's light at the end of the tunnel. You have your entire life ahead of you. If you're in a dark place please just reach out for help, there's lots of resources to help you through bad times and lots of people who care about you.

If you have the chance, get out of Alma. Get out of this small town environment and learn about the world. There's a lot of sheltered and prejudiced views in a place like this, and the real world is much different. You're going to find people who accept you for who you truly are and don't shove their opinions down your throat. It's OK to think for yourself and take a stand on things you believe in, even if your peers call you a communist over it. Also, travel as much as you can and see the world. It's an investment but you should do these things when you're young and never live with regrets. Whatever choices you make lead you to becoming the person you're meant to be, good or bad.

There's going to be a ton of pressure and temptation in environments like this. It would be silly for me to tell you all not to drink or do drugs, because I'm sure some of you are going to anyway. What I will say though, is be safe and think of others before entering dangerous situations. Don't drive intoxicated ever, call someone whether that

be a parent or a friend. Along with that, don't let your friends drive intoxicated, you could be the last barrier between them and an accident. Stay away from as much as you can, it's a bad path to go down and addiction is a disease that can ruin your entire life.

Next, not everyone is going to help you in high school. You're going to have a mix of good and bad teachers. It's something that might take you a little bit to figure out, but when you do there's ways to help yourself. Find the teachers who care about you as a person and an individual. It's likely that they'll go out of their way to help you with assignments, even if they teach a completely different subject. Sometimes you're going to have to sit down and teach yourself. This is something that will serve you well in the real world, because simply put, most people in life don't care about anyone but themselves. You'll have to find who does care about you and stick with those people. Some classes and teachers will make you miserable, but it'll be over soon enough. If you have issues with a teacher, you should talk to someone. Even if it's met with little to no help, which it often will be, you're learning how to advocate for yourself which is something you should never stop working towards.

Lastly, relationships are not the end of the world. Never let another person determine your

worth. There's a slim chance you're going to be with your high school girlfriend or boyfriend for the rest of your life, and as unfortunate as that is it's an experience you'll have for the rest of your life. It'll teach you how to care for someone else and what not to do. Don't let anyone disrespect you or treat you badly, it's OK to leave those situations even if it's hard emotionally. You're more valuable than that, and the sooner you learn that the better. Don't let people pressure you into things, but if it happens know that it's not your fault. There's a lot of awful people in the world that will take advantage of you, and if you're a girl it's more likely it'll happen to you. You never know who, sometimes it's even people you trust and have been friends with for years. If you have a bad feeling about a person, trust your gut. Especially in small towns there's going to be a lot of victim shaming and protection of your abusers, but again, you are worth so much more than the things you've been through. Get help when you need it, there will be people who will listen and help you and there's many resources to help you through trauma.

There's no way I can adequately prepare you for high school or life, many lessons you'll have to learn for yourself. I hope that some of this will be helpful though, and I hope you all have an amazing and fulfilling high school experience.