



# THE CHARGER

## KAY project promotes mental health

Mayah Mumpower | news editor

The Wabaunsee KAY club received a Be the Spark grant through Blue Cross Blue Shield to create a room in the high school to help focus on mental health.

Over the past few months seniors Emma Alderman and Mayah Mumpower have talked to principal Jan Hutley, guidance counselor Kevin Sullivan, and mental health liaison David Amer about implementing the Be the Spark Room.

“It’s been difficult trying to finish this project so that it can be implemented because we have been working on it for three years now,” Alderman said.

The KAY BTS room is meant to be used as a safe space students may go to if they are feeling overwhelmed and are unable to stay in class.

Two years ago the KAY officers applied for the grant focusing on mental health. After receiving the grant, the club went to work cleaning out and repainting the room they were going to use. Students of Brianna Guinn’s art class even painted a mural in the room to help brighten it up. By the end of the school year the room was finished.

“It was my favorite project I ever worked on, and even though it was halted quite a bit by Covid, I hope students can benefit from its use,” former KAY president Emma Frey said.

In order to use the room, a student has to ask the teacher and the teacher must approve or the teacher can refer a student to the room if they are visibly distressed. From there, the teacher calls the office and the student must check into the office before going to the room. This allows the office to know where a student is for supervision and in case they need to miss part of their next class as well.

“We hope that students will feel comfortable in the room if they need to use it and that it can be utilized for the purpose intended,” Alderman said.

### If you need to use the mental health room:

1. Ask your teacher. Maybe write a note or send an email if you want to notify them confidentially during class.
2. The teacher will notify the office so they can make sure an available adult can check on the student.
3. Report to the room, behind the counselor’s office, and take a short break until you’re ready to return to class.



**Above:** Sophomore Weston Johnson wrestles an opponent from Baldwin at Council Grove. Johnson finished 2nd with a record of 4-1 **Far left:** Sophomore Victor Buchanan wrestles a Wichita South opponent. **Left:** Sophomore Cody Berkenmeier wrestles a Wichita South opponent. He placed 3rd with a 2-2 record. Photos by Mayah Mumpower.

## Changing Covid protocols cause confusion

Emma Alderman | editor in chief

Frequent changes to USD 329 COVID-19 protocols have made the rules difficult for some students and families to follow.

“We get these differing constant changes, not that “science” doesn’t change or shouldn’t be challenged, but then that loses trust,” superintendent Brad Starnes said.

One of the biggest causes for confusion is that the definition of close contact always seems to be changing.

The CDC currently defines close contact as someone who was less than six feet away from an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period. There is an exception for students in K-12 indoor classrooms that excludes students between three to 6 feet of an infected student if both the infected student and the exposed student(s) correctly and consistently wore masks the entire time.

The confusion over close contact is no longer a worry for the district, due to the fact that there will no longer be any contact tracing done by the schools. The reasoning behind this decision was revealed in a letter released by Starnes on Monday of last week.

To help alleviate some of the pressure on our schools, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, along with the Kansas State Department

of Education, support schools implementing a 30-day temporary suspension on all contact tracing activities. “Our testing

“If you’re sick, stay home because even if it’s the flu or something else — it’s still something that can be spread.” — district Covid coordinator Charmin Miller

has gone down and everyone has started understanding the close contact definition better,” district covid coordinator Charmin Miller said.

Another recent change has been adjustments to the quarantine and masking periods for a confirmed positive case. After having tested positive for COVID-19, a student or staff member must then quarantine for 5 days. The first day that symptoms appear does not count for the 5 days due to it being labeled as day 0. After the five-day quarantine a student or staff member can return to school as long as their symptoms are all gone and they were a mask. After wearing a mask for 5 days the student or staff member may return to normal.

As of Friday, 16 WHS students were in either the quarantine or masked return periods.

“It goes back to the old rule of thumb, if you’re sick, stay home because even if it’s the flu or something else — it’s

still something that can be spread,” Miller said.

The Covid protocols aren’t the same for everything

though. For example, masks are still required for all students when riding buses. The Kansas State High School Activities Association also has different protocols than the school district. During the ten-day period after a positive test, athletes may not participate in sports for practices or competitions. After that they must have one practice before they can compete.

“A player should at minimum participate in at least one team practice before returning to formal competition for coaches to assess the student’s overall physical conditional status and the student’s readiness for competition,” athletic director Jeron Weisshaar said.

So far Wabaunsee High School has not had to cancel any sporting events due to Covid. The Marysville wrestling meet was in jeopardy due to Covid but was ultimately canceled because of bad weather. The junior high on the other hand had to cancel or reschedule 7th and 8th grade girls

## Question of the week

No offense to the NHS coffee stand, but Alma isn’t a great place to find a good cup of coffee. When WHS students do get a chance to try something fancier, their orders can be pretty elaborate. Match the following coffee orders with the correct thirsty student.

**Students:** Payton Wurtz, Sydney Holthaus, Heather Baker, Bryton Reves, Paxton Meyer, Lauren Schutter, Lanson Parry, Robert Potter, Kwinton Willier, Ally Garst, Annie Wright, Danielle Murphy (Answers below)

1. “Brown sugar shaken espresso with sweet cream cold foam and light ice.”
2. “I’ve never been to Starbucks.”
3. “I get a size trenta strawberry açai refresher with apple juice instead of lemonade.”
4. “Buy 1 get 1 cookie for free at Barnes and Noble.”
5. “Skim milk, almond milk latte with one pump of sugar free vanilla, 1/18 pump of hazelnut, and 1/73 pump of caramel, with dairy free, sugar free, flavor free whipped cream.”
6. “I either get a trenta cold brew with 6 pumps vanilla and sweet cream cold foam or a strawberry and cream frappe.”
7. “A Scooters Caramelicious Iced Blender. It’s (CHEFS KISS).”
8. “Venti brown sugar oat milk shaken espresso with sweat cream cold foam.”
9. “Grande iced white mocha with vanilla cold foam and caramel drizzle.”
10. “Tall double Java chip frappuccino without whipped cream.”
11. “Iced chai tea latte with vanilla sweet cream cold foam.”
12. “Hot chocolate.”

### THE CHARGER

Editor in Chief  
Emma Alderman

Adviser  
Brendan Praeger

“The mission of the Charger newspaper and related media is to inform the students and school community about relevant issues in a fair, accurate and timely manner, to advocate for all students and serve as an open forum for student free speech.”

Read online at [whscharger.com](http://whscharger.com).

**ANSWERS:** 1. Sydney Holthaus 2. Lanson Parry 3. Lauren Schutter 4. Robert Potter 5. Payton Wurtz 6. Kwinton Willier 7. Ally Garst 8. Annie Wright 9. Paxton Meyer 10. Heather Baker 11. Danielle Murphy 12. Bryton Reves