



THE CHARGER

Board finalizes decision to close Maple Hill Elementary

AJ Grutsch | editor in chief

The USD 329 board voted 6-0 to close Maple Hill Elementary during a special meeting Monday evening.

Beginning next school year, all of the elementary students will go to Alma.

“By closing Maple Hill Elementary, USD 329 will reduce expenses related to maintaining the building and its facilities, including utilities, maintenance and repairs, saving nearly a quarter of a million dollars annually,” superintendent Troy Pitch said.

The board also voted to change the name of Alma Elementary to Wabaunsee Elementary to signify the unification of the district. The elementary schools will also close two days early in May so staff can begin preparing for the move.

Prior to the special meeting, the board held a public hearing to listen to community member’s opinions on the closure

of MHES. “I know there is not enough room in Alma for the seven classes that are in Maple Hill and all of the teachers,” Maple Hill resident Bethany Moser said.

Listen to the full forum and meeting at whscharger.com.

Board hears updates on tennis courts, girls wrestling, special education

At the USD 329 monthly board meeting March 20, the board heard presentations about a proposal of new tennis courts, feedback about girls wrestling and special education services.

Josh Huske, joined by his daughter sophomore Ava Huske, introduced the idea of adding two new tennis courts to accommodate the growing tennis team.

The tennis team regularly has more than a dozen members, making the two courts at McKnight Park insufficient for

practices. Pickleball lines could also be added to the courts to increase usage from the community.

While 6-8 courts would be needed to host a large tournament, the proposal of two additional courts would add some more space for girls to practice and host small meets. The courts would cost approximately \$100,000, however the board is only being asked to pay for a percentage of the cost.

Huske has a few thousand dollars pledged by several companies and corporations with more on the way for concrete and lights. Fundraising would also have to be done for the nets, which would be done by the tennis team. Huske will also be talking to the city in hopes it will pledge for a percentage of the courts as well.

Next, Wabaunsee wrestling coaches Jason Miller and Tyler Douglass gave a presentation on the progress of girls wrestling.

Douglass highlighted how the girls team had several members qualify for state, while only having a month or two of practice time. These girls also received scholarship offers and invitations to wrestle for other colleges. “She’s [Jenna Donaldson] been recruited by over 25 colleges which is really incredible and exciting,” Douglass said.

Special education director Deb Nauerth presented a progress report of the Wabaunsee co-op special education program with Wamego.

Wabaunsee has 14 service providers to help special education students. Nauerth also announced that there were no certified staff exits. “When I talk to directors all throughout the entire state this is unheard of,” Nauerth said.

In new business, the board approved the modification to the leave policy for classified staff and approved an increase in the fee for Drivers Education to \$225.

2023 Prom to include several events in Alma

Kadence Guinn | staff writer

It’s that time of the year again, and the Wabaunsee High School students are preparing to go to prom Saturday evening.

There have been several changes to this year’s prom schedule and location, here is the official time line for the day’s festivities.

PROM 2023: APRIL 1, “LET’S GLOW CRAZY”

4:45-5:15 p.m. - Promenade at Courthouse

Prom has moved from Newbury to Holy Family Catholic Church in Alma. Instead of promenading into the venue, attendees will be presented at the courthouse. In addition to announcing names, each couple or attendee has a “walk-out song” to accompany their arrival. Community members are welcome to attend. Students will enter on the north door and line up inside, to come out the front doors of the courthouse.

Following Promenade - Class photos / candid at Courthouse

Tracy Capoun and Kaytlyn Meseke will be taking photos, and family members are welcome to take pictures as well. Students need to line up by the north doors at 4:35.

5:40-7 - Mocktails at Flint Hills Yoga Studio

One of the new additions to the schedule are mocktails for attendees and their dates. This is being held at the Flint Hills Yoga Studio and is being put on by Heather Beggs and other parent volunteers. “I was approached by some friends last spring about hosting a prom activity, and I gladly accepted,” Beggs said.

This will be a come-and-go with a couple treats: “faux-cocktails” (mocktails) and a decorated place to take candid photos.

6:30 - Attendees may enter the Hall

Professional photos at the Hall will be available until 8:15, and attendees can begin finding their seats.

7-8 - Dinner

Either chicken alfredo or lasagna will be provided by parents.

8 - Program

In addition to the prom video, class representatives will offer a toast and welcome.

8:30-10:30 - Dance, DJ Jamie Rogers

After Prom 11 - 3 a.m.

Charger U | WHS alumnae student teach through KSU

Baylie Tharman | staff writer

Two former Chargers have started teaching their own students this semester.

2017 WHS graduate Madelyn Michaelis and 2019 WHS graduate Jessica Vanstory are currently student teaching through K-State, and plan to begin teaching their own classes next year.

Madelyn Michealis, high school Family and Consumer Sciences

What made you want to go into the teaching field?

For the entirety of my schooling, elementary through college, I have always had teachers and professors that care deeply about their students and are passionate about teaching. Kids spend more time at school than they do anywhere else and teachers are there during the best and worst moments of their students lives. We have the opportunity to help, support and encourage kids on a daily basis. Having teachers who have cared for and taught me in such special ways, encouraged me to do the same for others.

What’s the best part of teaching?

The best part of teaching is building relationships with the students. There is no greater joy than seeing your students succeed in their activities and watching them grow into the people they are meant to become.

Is there a teacher who inspired you?

There have been many teachers who have inspired me, but there are two who have gone above and beyond in making me the person and



teacher I am today. Carmen Bloomfield, my kindergarten and first grade teacher, and Lisa Hull, my high school chemistry teacher. Both teachers created a classroom environment where students could succeed, gave the best of themselves everyday, and were always available to help. They pushed me to be the best version of myself, held me to high standards, supported me during all of my athletic endeavors, cared for me when I needed it most, and have been my biggest supporters as I transition into becoming a teacher.

Where are you doing your student teaching?

St. Marys High School. It has been the best experience with amazing admin, wonderful teachers, and great students.

What are you looking for in a school?

I’m looking for a school with strong FCS and FCCLA programs, supportive admin, pathway approval from the state, collaboration within CTE classes, and an environment that will support a first year teacher.

Jessica Vanstory, K-12 Music

What made you want to go into the teaching field?

I love service and giving back to the community. Helping others learn through my passion of music is the greatest service I can give.

What’s the best part of teaching?

Seeing the joy and progress that the students are making every day. It’s a great feeling to know that your students are growing and having fun in your class.

What grade do you want to teach?

Either middle school(6-8)



Left: Madelyn Michaelis demonstrates baking skills while student teaching at St. Marys. Above: Jessica Vanstory directs Eudoras band during class.

or elementary school(K-5).

What subject do you plan on teaching?

Either beginning band or general music.

Is there a teacher that inspired you to become a teacher?

Mrs. Yocum first inspired me to pursue music in elementary school. Since then, I’ve had several music teachers shape me into the teacher and musician that I am today. I’m very thankful for all of the educators in my life!

Where are you doing your student teaching?

USD 491 Eudora Elementary, middle, and high school.

What are you looking for in a school?

I’m looking for a school community that supports music and the arts. Music creates an outlet for so many students and should be endured just like any other core class.