

Camera bill sparks attention at Durant

By Kennedy Schumacher

A recent bill shot down in the Iowa House would have required cameras in the classroom, an idea that has sparked the attention of Durant staff and students.

Some students and teachers feel that the bill would have been a “violation of privacy,” said sophomore Landon Marth.

“I feel that it’s not safe for students,” said Marth.

Sophomore Addison Schuett feels similarly about the bill.

Schuett believes the bill is unnecessary and “doesn’t know who is going to benefit from it.”

Schuett explained she feels it’s a situation where “if you go looking for problems, you’re going to find them.”

She suggested that if parents have concerns about what their child is doing in school, they could reach out to their child’s teacher.

“I think it’s being proposed because people want more transparency in the classroom, and they feel that this [bill] is the way to do that.” With that being said, Schuett said “there are other ways to go about it.”

Schuett said that some teachers already have started to post the curriculum for their classes online, so parents could easily find what their child is learning in that class.

Industrial tech instructor Mr. Tim Rouse isn’t new to having cameras in the classroom. Mr. Rouse has cameras in his shop and also one in his classroom, and he feels that the Iowa Legislature could bring this bill back in the future.

“I’d always have documentation of what is going on in my room,” he said.

Mr. Rouse explained that cameras “work great for insurance reasons,” specifically in the shop.

Social studies teacher Mr. Matt Straube understands why people would be in favor of the bill. He pointed out the bill is “providing clarity and transparency, so parents can see what is going on in their child’s classroom.”

Student mentor program to begin next school year

By Kiyah Daily

Student mentors will look to stop bullying before it starts next year with a new program called the Mentors in Violence Prevention [MVP].

This program will be peer led, but the high school girls’ basketball coach and 7-12 at-risk associate Mr. Ross DeLong will be leading the student mentors.

The rest of the staff includes counselor Mrs. Kristy Badtram, director of instruction and innovation Mrs. Maria Brown, high school principal Mr. Joel Diederichs, and student services director Mrs. Jenny Dittmer.

Durant decided to adopt this program because the school is looking for more resources and strategies to provide a positive program for the incoming freshman and to strengthen the culture of the school.

With this program, juniors and seniors next year will be teaching the incoming freshmen about “violence among students, bullying, and everyday things that high school kids are going to encounter,” said Mr.

Durant already has cameras in multiple parts of the school, and Mr. Straube said, “I’m not opposed to the idea of having cameras in classrooms.” However, if the law ever did pass, Mr. Straube believes “it would lead to another mass resignations of teachers.”

Mr. Straube believes that politicians aren’t looking at the big picture with a bill like this. Families who have signed a waiver stating that their child is not to have their picture taken at school and children in foster care wouldn’t be allowed to be on camera.

Superintendent Mr. Joe Burnett also feels the bill would have been “a game changer on students’ privacy.”

There are several students at Durant who have already signed privacy waivers, said Mr. Burnett.

The bill’s sponsor, Republican State Rep. Norlin Mommsen of Dewitt, had the goal of showcasing the good work of teachers with the bill, according to news reports.

Two attempts to reach Rep. Mommsen by the *Chronicles* staff were unsuccessful.

Mr. Burnett doesn’t believe the bill would have showcased the good work of teachers.

“I’m not sure that would be the case,” said Mr. Burnett. “At the end of the day, we’ll support whatever the legislature tells us, but I don’t think it’s practical and would be a positive towards improving education.”

Marth feels the bill could allow parents and higher positioned officials to “closely monitor the acts of teachers.”

Parents want to monitor the way their children are being taught, especially if it goes against their beliefs, said Marth.

It seems like “a way of surveillance over our youth,” he said.

Mr. Straube believes that government officials not trusting teachers is concerning. If government officials want cam-

eras in classrooms, should there also be cameras in the government officials’ offices, he said.

DeLong.

Students will have to fill out a written application, and a committee will then decide which students it wants to interview. After the committee interviews later in the spring, it will select the mentors.

Each year the committee will open up the application process to all the juniors, and it will evaluate the process yearly.

This program is trying to encourage students to stand up when they see an act of bullying and not be afraid of speaking up.

According to a statement put out by the MVP team, “When the students facilitate, we believe they will make a strong and positive impact with their peers.”

The statement also says, “MVP helps to create a climate in which abusive attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors are seen as unacceptable, uncool, and unwelcome.”

Juniors Max Thoma and Skylar Larion are a couple juniors that are interested in being a mentor.

“I had a rough freshman year,” said **See MENTOR, page 2**

eras in classrooms, should there also be cameras in the government officials’ offices, he said.

Classroom discussion would also be greatly affected.

“It could stifle discussion because kids might be worried about talking out, knowing that other people are watching,” said Mr. Straube.

Mr. Straube understands the effects the bill might have on teachers and education in general if it were ever passed.

“I feel like it’s a further attack on

education,” said Mr. Straube. “It’s another negative aspect for schools. It’s punishing schools, punishing teachers, and punishing students.”

Mr. Straube also feels that there is nothing being done to assist in the nationwide shortage of teachers.

“What are we doing right now as a state or country to encourage people to go into the teaching profession? These types of bills don’t encourage that. How are politicians helping with these teacher and staff shortages? They’re not.”



Photo by Carlie Jo Fusco

Senior Ethan Gast wrestles in the state tournament against Ethan Egli of Manson Northwest Webster. Gast won 6-0 to advance to day 2.

Gast returns to state

By Ally Happ and Carlie Jo Fusco

Senior Ethan Gast returned to Wells Fargo Arena in Des Moines hungry for redemption.

During the Iowa High School State Wrestling Tournament held on February 16-19, Gast wrestled in the 126-pound bracket again this year after going 0-2 at last year’s tournament.

“It felt good to get the opportunity to prove to myself that I can compete with the best,” he said.

“My main focus coming into state was just to enjoy the experience. I knew that it was going to be my last time wrestling for Durant so I wanted to give it

my all.”

He polished off his high school career with a record of 40-7 after losing two of three matches in Des Moines. His first match was against Kyler Knaack of Don Bosco, where he came up short 6-2.

He won his second match against Ethan Egli of Manson Northwest Webster 6-0 to advance to the next day of wrestling.

Unfortunately, he lost his third match 12-4 against Tanner Arjes of North Butler-Clarksville.

On February 12, Gast wrestled at the 1A district tournament in Cascade.

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Durant girl is first in history to qualify for state bowling

By Zachary Pearlman

For the first time at Durant High School, three bowlers went to state for their individual performances, including the first girl to ever qualify.

These three are senior Kayden Johnson and siblings senior Ethan Schlapkohl and sophomore Brooklyn Schlapkohl.

The state meet was held at Maple Lanes in Waterloo on February 22. There, Johnson and the Schlapkohls bowled for an individual state title.

The three Durant athletes did not make it to the final round of eight with Ethan Schlapkohl placing 20th overall for the boys. Ethan’s three-game series was 604. Johnson followed behind with a total pinfall of 564, giving him 24th place.

Brooklyn Schlapkohl finished 22nd in the girls’ individual tournament. Her series total was 477 pins.

For Johnson, this was his fourth trip to state.

He said he was the alternate his freshman year and bowled as part of the team his sophomore year. He placed fifth his junior year as the lone Wildcat to qualify.

“My junior year, it was really different because it’s your first time bowling alone [individually] and to go out there, not play a whole season, and come back placing fifth in the state is a really cool experience,” said Johnson, who struggled with an injury to his bowling hand most of the year.

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