

# Dancing with the stars of Wahlert

by Anna Sigwarth  
of *The Gleaner*

Many people don't consider dance to be a sport because of the costumes and artistic aspects, but dancing requires a lot of skill and hard work. As the dance team brings home a state championship title in both their jazz and contemporary routines, students wonder why the team will not receive a banner in the gym.

The team also won first place at their state competition in December of 2019, yet no banner was hung. The controversy continues to heat up as students question why the team does not receive the same recognition as other sports.

Lizzie Kann, '22, believes that dance should be considered a sport at Wahlert. Kann said, "We put a lot of time and practice into preparing our routines. Just like in sports, building muscle and en-

durance is super important in dance; it's more than just halftime entertainment."

Football player Will Poppe, '22, agrees that the dance team should receive banners to recognize their accomplishments. "Dance is a team activity with a competitive nature, and I'm sure they have their physical challenges like most sports," Poppe said.

If most agree that dance should be a sport at Wahlert, then why don't they have a banner? Athletic Director Mr. Tom English understands the reasoning and agrees that the dance team should have recognition, but he cannot hang a banner in the gym.

English said, "Dance is not sanctioned as a sport in the state of Iowa. Wahlert and most schools only recognize the sports that are sanctioned by the Iowa High School Athletic Association."

Along with the dance team, women's wrestling is



**The dance stars of Wahlert**

The girls dance team celebrates their two state titles. Front row: Lydia Foy, Abbie Keller, Ava Hoelscher, Lizzie Kann, Lilly Bonnet, Josie Wolbers. Back row: Clarissa Haugen, Izzy Unga, Ella Kelleher, Abby Horsefall, Lily Morarend, Grace Kluesner, and Blair Hughes.

also not sanctioned by the state yet, and they would not receive a banner if they won a state championship title.

"In order for the state of Iowa to sanction a sport, they need to have a certain

number of high schools that are fully committed financially and that have a certain number of girls to guarantee a season," English said.

Although a 70th banner will not be hung for the

dance team, they should still be recognized for their hard work. Be sure to congratulate the dancers and support them at upcoming basketball games during halftime performances.

## Editorial

# Forgotten talents of Wahlert

by Zoey May  
of *The Gleaner*

Since the opening of Wahlert Catholic High School in the fall of 1959, the school has, according to its website, won "69 athletic championships and counting." These championships, as well as second or third place state wins, are celebrated throughout the school; in the gym, students and staff can look at banners that mark Wahlert's first place state victories, and in the lobby, glass display cases show off every team trophy and individually recognized athlete.

As the debate continues on whether dance should be considered a sport or not, and therefore receive schoolwide recognition, it begs the question of why an activity needs to be a sport to be acknowledged in the first place.

There are 26 different activities considered "clubs" at Wahlert. Across these clubs, countless teams and individuals have gone almost, if not completely unnoticed despite

wins at the state or even national level.

Besides dance, the Thespians, Robotics team, and Creative Writing Club have each won competitions that would be considered display-worthy if treated equally to their athletic counterparts.

It is not as if the school lacks any and all space to display non-athletic awards. When discussing potential ways to pay tribute to clubs' accomplishments, one area that was repeatedly mentioned during *The Gleaner's* staff discussion was the empty counter that stretches across the entire cafeteria that students are expressly forbidden to use.

I guess my question is, if a fourth place state golf title is supposed to

be impressive enough to be shown off, then why is a medal shipped directly to Wahlert from a national competition with over 80,000 applicants across more than 230,000 entries in which less than 1 percent win returned to the winning student because "There's nowhere we can put this"?

For students talented in spheres outside of athletics, Wahlert sends the message that their accomplishments do not matter.

As such, *The Gleaner* believes that for Wahlert to have a more inclusive environment for its student body, it is paramount that students' accomplishments are recognized whether they are star athletes or star musicians.



**Athletes only**

A plaque celebrating Wahlert's fourth place win at golf state sits in the school lobby.



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