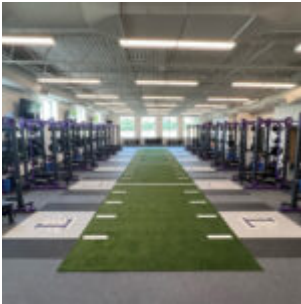


# New improvements bring excitement to Louisburg athletics



*The new weight room at Louisburg High School is one of several improvements the district made thanks to the passage of the bond. Improvements also included a new wrestling room, gymnasium floors and indoor batting cages.*

Patrons of USD 416 had a chance to look at many of the new improvements made to Louisburg schools thanks to the passage of the bond in late 2020.

For those that are fans of Louisburg High School athletics, that bond provided the Wildcat student athletes with several up-to-date amenities.

Students came back to school Tuesday and saw a brand new weight room, wrestling room and gymnasium floors in both the main and auxiliary gyms.

They are updates that were years in the making and ones many students will get to enjoy.

Improvements were also made to Louisburg Middle School and Broadmoor Elementary, along with a renovation of Circle Grove.

“I am so proud and privileged to be part of a district and community that supports projects such as the renovations at the high school to continue to provide the best opportunities

for pre-K through twelfth grade students in Kansas,” Louisburg assistant principal and activities director Michael Pickman said.

The new gym floors were put down over the summer and are lighter than the previous surface. Just off of the gymnasium, a multipurpose room was created, which includes the weights and wrestling additions.

Later in the year, new indoor batting cages for the baseball and softball teams will be added atop the mezzanine of the main gym. The high school cheer team will move to the old wrestling space and will use that area to practice.



***Pictured is the Wildcat logo in the middle of the new gym floor in the high school.***

“I am beyond excited at the renovations of the main and auxiliary gym floors and the addition of the multipurpose room for both our academics and activities at the high school,” Pickman said. “The gym floors are brighter and graphics and colors updated to look more modern and brighter. From the community who get to watch events and request use of the spaces to the students and athletes who use the gyms daily, it shows the commitment we have to the quality and aesthetic of

our facilities in the district.

“The pride it instills in our kids and community to the energy when in a brighter and updated space all benefit the academic focus and rigor and the competitive spirit in our activities. The new weight room and wrestling room in the multipurpose buildings simply have to be seen in person to appreciate, but it is a marvel of tax dollars spent well and for good purpose. More space means more availability to offer the weights courses and for creative use of the space.”

Louisburg’s new weight room is more than twice the size of the old space and allowed the school to replace equipment that was decades old. It will also allow for more weight-centered classes.

The school acquired 12 Hammer Strength power racks, new bars and weights for each rack, new dumbbells, new bumper plates, a new exercise bike, along with landmine and glute/ham raise attachments on each rack.



The Louisburg logo is plastered in front of each rack, and the room also has a strip of artificial turf down the middle. TV screens are also included on each side of the room, along with a projector screen on the end.

LHS weights instructor Ty Pfannenstiel believes the weight room will provide a new excitement among the students and will provide a safer space to work.

“The new space also allows for us to get more students enrolled in weights class,” Pfannenstiel said. “We have 12 new racks and can fit four athletes per rack, so we can have 48 kids in class. On any given school day, we can have up to 192 students moving through that weight room. You also have to remember that the weight room is being used year round.

“We run close to 200 kids through each day in the summer. There’s not a busier room in our school and it’s being

used almost 365 a year. The layout of the new weight room makes it more functional. We no longer have kids trying to dodge each other when power cleaning. This new space is definitely a much safer environment.”



Not only will students see a benefit of the new weight room, but the athletic programs will see a renewed excitement as well.

“I think the new space is going to help coaches to get their kids to buy into strength training,” Pfannenstiel said. “We’ve already seen an increase in enrollment, because kids want to be in here. There are a couple of our sports programs that have close to 100 percent of their athletes enrolled in weights. We would be thrilled to see all of our programs get to those numbers. All of our athletes, no matter what sport affiliation, can benefit from getting stronger, more explosive, and faster. There’s not a better facility in the state of Kansas for that to happen than right here in Louisburg. I’m proud of our community for making the investment in our kids.”

Wildcat wrestlers will also have a new home and their own room for the first time in school history. Most recently, the

wrestlers practiced behind the bleachers atop the mezzanine of the main gym.



Now they have their own practice room that is big enough to hold two mats and also features projector and television screens.

“This new facility has been a long time coming, and I’m so excited for the chance to have a home of our own,” Louisburg coach Bobby Bovaird said. “Not only do we have our own dedicated space, but it’s an environment that’s conducive to teaching the sport. For the past 12 years that I’ve been here, during wrestling season I put such a strain on my voice just to be heard during practice. We used to compete with all of the sounds from the gym after school – bouncing basketballs, whistles, warm-up music for games, crowds, etc. There was never a door to close to shut out the noise or keep out spectators. Now, we’ve got a facility that not only looks amazing, but will also allow the coaching staffs for the high school, middle school, and youth club to be able to talk and teach.”

Youth wrestling and middle school programs will also be able

to use the facility and Bovaird hopes the new room will help continue to grow the sport of wrestling, especially as the school tries to build a girls wrestling program.

“The sport of wrestling in Louisburg has always had some amazing athletes, coaches, and supporters,” Bovaird said. “This new practice room will be an outstanding addition to the program. We’ll be able to keep our mats down year-round, which means our youth club can continue practicing after the high school season has ended. In the past, as soon as high school state was finished, the mats were rolled up and the batting cages in the old space came down, and we were pretty much homeless. As our youth wrestlers gear up for the end of their season, which goes into March and April, they now have a place where they can maximize their time – no more rolling out temporary mats on the other side of the gym, the aux gym, etc. Plus, we can now have our club offer spring freestyle and Greco-Roman practices, as well as fall practices for those who want to get on the mat.

“Having our own ‘home’ also means that we’ll have the chance to instill more of a sense of responsibility in our athletes. This is our space, our room, so we’re the ones who take care of it. I’m just so thankful to the community for supporting this part of the bond issue, and I’m so thankful to the administration. When I first came to Louisburg, I was told that a wrestling room was a part of the long-term vision for the district, and now it’s come to fruition. What started with the USD 416 vision all those years ago is now here, and we’re ready to show our gratitude.”