

# Honors programs on display

By Jake Mosbach Herald Staff Writer

CLINTON — Clinton High School Principal J.R. Kuch was on hand for Monday's school board meeting to discuss various aspects of the school's honors program.

Kuch began the presentation by stressing the importance of pushing students to strive for Honors and Advanced Placement classes, despite the potentially larger and more difficult course load. He explained that the courses were graded on a 5-point grading scale rather than a 4-point scale, meaning that the academic rewards for excelling in the class could be higher.

"Our idea is that it doesn't matter who you are or where you've been, we're going to push you to the extent that you want to go, and maybe a bit further," Kuch said. "Fifty-eight percent of our students are taking a highly rigorous course. We're doing a pretty good job of pushing our kids to their fullest potential."

Many of the advanced courses offered at CHS require at least a Master's Degree teacher qualification — an education level that numerous CHS educators have attained.

Because of this, Kuch says the Honors program at the school can be much more successful than those at surrounding districts.

"For example, we can offer college credit for things like A capella...that's something that not a lot of others around us can because that's the level of instructors that we have," Kuch said.

The future of the advanced classes looks bright, according to Kuch. The principal has been in discussions with districts in the area to further strengthen the programs, such as providing financial assistance to students in the district who wish to enter the courses on the free or reduced plan. The testing process to qualify for the courses can cost up to \$85 per test.

CCSD Superintendent Deb Olson believes the more students that can be exposed to the program, the better.

"Having these kinds of courses available has been one of the reasons why Clinton High School has been ranked in excellence the past three years," Olson said. "We've been ranked as one of the best high schools in the United States because we've been able to offer these. Plus, having 58 percent of our student body taking one or more of the courses is pretty incredible."