

Center Schools bond issue passes

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Center Consolidated Schools Superintendent George Welsh leads a cheer with the help of school board president Michael Lobato after news late Tuesday evening that the the Center School bond proposal had passed.

BY TERESA L. BENNS

SAGUACHE A heavier than usual provisional ballot load and problems with one of the Center polling places slowed down the vote count in the Saguache County Clerk's Office Tuesday, but final unofficial results were in late Tuesday night.

County Clerk Melinda Myers was unavailable for comment Wednesday morning. County Clerk's office employees cautioned that until provisional ballots are counted later this month, all tallies are unofficial. According to another courthouse office, 84 written and 12 electronic provisional votes remain to be counted.

The county clerk and commissioner races are very close and reportedly tallies on two ballot issues the ambulance question and the bond issue for the library both won by slim margins and could easily be affected.

According to Center Consolidated Schools Superintendent George Welsh, reports from all three county clerk offices Saguache, Rio Grande and Alamosa shows the School bond issue passed 496 to 331. Welsh noted that this is a healthy enough margin to assume a win even if all 96 provisional ballots registered "no" votes. When the news was announced at Welsh's home late Tuesday night, bond supporters gathered there for a victory celebration broke out in Viking team cheers.

"By voting to approve the construction of a new PK-12 school facility, Center School District residents have taken the first step in the process of reinvigorating the entire community of Center," Welsh said. "We truly appreciate the opportunity and trust that has been given to us and we will work with all our heart and all our might to make this new school a center for excellence both inside and out."

Unofficial results show that Commissioner's candidate Steve Carlson edged out incumbent Linda Joseph,

winning by a slim margin of 1,119 to 1,092. Unofficial votes also show that Carla Gomez won by a slim margin, taking the county clerk's seat from incumbent Melinda Myers with a 1,101 to 1,116 vote.

Sheriff Mike Norris defeated challenger Richard Pascoe 1,445 to 711 according to the unofficial tally. There is an unconfirmed report, however, that Pascoe and others close to his election effort may challenge the counting process.

One county office reported that the results of the provisional ballot count may not be available until Nov. 13.