

**NEW BUFFALO AREA SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR SESSION
Performing Arts Center
1112 E. Clay Street
P.O. Box 280
New Buffalo, MI 49117
January 13, 2025
6:00 PM**

New Buffalo Area Schools will be a beacon of academic excellence and individualized learning, where every student thrives in a supportive and inclusive environment. We will lead in preparing students for future success, driven by strong community partnerships and a commitment to growth and sustainability.

1. Call to Order by Adam Bowen, Superintendent - Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
2. Oath of Office: Jennifer Summers and Greg Vosberg
Pano Arvanitis, Business Manager/Notary Public, administered the Oath to Jennifer Summers and Greg Vosberg
3. Appointment of Temporary Secretary
Ms. Thun accepted the appointment.
4. Roll Call: Denise Churchill, Stephen Donnelly, John Haskins, Jennifer Summers, Vanessa Thun, Greg Vosberg, Lisa Werner
Also in Attendance: Mr. Adam Bowen, Superintendent of Schools
Devinnie Wysocki, Adm. Asst. to Superintendent
5. Presentation: New Buffalo Elementary School Recipient - Janelle Foulk – Golden Acorn Classroom Mini-Grant Recipient.
6. Expressions from the Public: None
7. Items too Late for Printed Agenda: #18 NBARA 2025 Annual Contribution Invoice.
8. Adoption of the Agenda
Motion: Churchill
Second: Summers
All ayes, motion carried.
9. Election of Officers (Meeting turned over to newly elected President immediately after position nomination/voting)

President:

Nomination of: Werner
By: Thun
Support: Summers

Motion to close nomination:

By: Thun

Support: Haskins

Action with Roll Call Vote:

Churchill Y

Donnelly Y

Haskins Y

Summers Y

Thun Y

Vosberg Y

Werner Y

All ayes, motion carried.

Declared President: Lisa Werner – Meeting turned over to President

Vice President

Nomination of: Churchill

By: Thun

Support: Summers

Motion to close nominations:

By: Thun

Support: Haskins

Action with Roll Call Vote:

Donnelly Y

Haskins Y

Summers Y

Thun Y

Vosberg Y

Werner Y

Churchill Y

All ayes, motion carried.

Declared Vice President: Denise Churchill

Secretary

Nomination of: Thun

By: Summers

Support: Churchill

Motion to close nominations:

By: Churchill

Support: Thun

Action with Roll Call Vote:

Haskins Y

Summers Y

Thun Y

Vosberg Y

Werner Y

Churchill Y

Donnelly Y

All ayes, motion carried.

Declared Secretary: Vanessa Thun

Treasurer

Nomination of: Haskins

By: Churchill

Support: Thun

Motion to close nominations:

By: Summers

Support: Churchill

Action with Roll Call Vote:

Summers Y

Thun Y

Vosberg Y

Werner Y

Churchill Y

Donnelly Y

Haskins Y

All ayes, motion carried. Declared Treasurer: John Haskins

10. Adoption of Consent Agenda

Items on the Consent Agenda are to be voted on as a single item by the Board. Board members may remove items from the Consent Agenda prior to vote. Discussion of the items that have been removed can take place at the appropriate time listed on the Agenda.

A. Selection of Regular Meeting Time, Date, Place. (Board Retreat Dates: 02/10/2025 and 07/28/2025)

B. Bonding Authorization

C. Designation of Banks as Depositories/Signatures.

D. Copy Charges

E. Supervision of Election

F. Re-adopt existing Board policies per its authority as a General Powers School District.

G. Post Legal Notices in the New Buffalo Times.

H. Designate Barbara Woerdehoff, Beth Arvanitis, Devinnie Wysocki, Lori Gramelspacher, and Tracy Ripley to issue work permits.

I. Designate Adam Bowen, Superintendent of Schools, or his designer, to sign all necessary paperwork for sale/purchase of district properties and all other documents required by the district.

Motion: Summers

Second: Churchill

All ayes, motion carried.

11. Communications

A. Class President: Jacqueline Behzadi, 9th Grade: Quiz Bowl team has been doing very well this season, last Tuesday they won 1st and 2nd at the home match. Our newly merged girls basketball team with River Valley has been a positive one on and off the court. Winterfest week kicked off with boys volleyball games and poster/banner making. Advisory games will take place through the week, with the Winterfest basketball game on Friday, and events concluding on Saturday with the Winterfest dance at the Grand Beach Clubhouse. Parent Teacher Conferences take place this week. A new student advocate and counselor this year to assist students. Blood Drive will take place on Tuesday, January 28th, students may contribute for two hours of community service.

12. Committee Report(s)

Foundation: December 10, 2024: We have selected the board of the members. Submitted the 1023 application for the 501(c)(3). Submitted licensing documents through LARA. In the process of designing the website and logo, working on top initiatives. This will be a great bridge between the school and the community.

PUD: December 11, 2024: We are trying to close the gap to ensure the properties will be more in line with pricing of community needs. Meeting with State Representative Joey Andrews at the end of the month. The missing middle is what we are trying to accomplish. This is still a work in progress. Churchill commented: It is important to say that we

are all deeply committed and want to move forward with this project but we want to make sure that we are exploring all of the resources and opportunities to receive funding where we can before we take that next step.

Werner: Denise attended the Berrien Cass Board Association meeting. We meet only a couple of times a year and it supports school board members throughout Berrien and Cass county. It is a networking and social gathering to inform board members.

Foundation: January 8, 2025

13. Presentation - Strategic Scorecard

Elementary Principal: Melissa Lijewski

Middle School Principal: Dan Caudle

High School Principal: Tracy Ripley

Principals reported on the Strategic Scorecard that covers: **Academics** - NBAS prioritizes student performance as a key measure of success. Our district provides individualized learning systems that focus on workforce preparation through a guaranteed and viable curriculum. These systems ensure all students receive the essential skills and knowledge for their future. **Growth and Sustainability** - NBAS desires to increase its student and family populations while sustaining its highly qualified staff, finances, programs, and academic excellence. **Culture and Community** - NBAS fosters a sense of belonging by promoting mutual respect, understanding, and collaboration. We strive to create a supportive atmosphere that encourages positive relationships, cultural awareness, and active engagement in school life and beyond. (Report attached)

14. The Superintendent recommends the Board approve revisions to Board Policy 2306, per attached.

Motion: Thun

Second: Summers

All ayes, motion carried.

15. The Superintendent recommends the Board approve the resignation, for retirement purposes, of Keith Carlson with retirement benefits, per attached.

Motion: Haskins

Second: Churchill

All ayes, motion carried.

16. The Superintendent recommends the Board approve the resignation, for retirement purposes, of Robert Hughes, per attached.

Motion: Churchill

Second: Haskins

All ayes, motion carried.

17. The Superintendent recommends the Board approve the Frederick S. Upton Foundation Grant in the amount of \$13,500.00, to provide funding to map the biodiversity of plants and trees for land management, educational opportunities, and community recreation on two parcels of land owned by New Buffalo Area Schools.

Motion: Summers

Second: Churchill

All ayes, motion carried.

18. The Superintendent recommends the Board approve the NBARA 2025 Annual Contribution Invoice in the amount of \$5,000.

Motion: Churchill

Second: Thun

All ayes, motion carried.

19. Remarks from the Superintendent

- PowerSchool Data Breach - NBAS has been part of the nationwide data breach that was associated with PowerSchool. PowerSchool holds student and teacher information such as demographic data. Last week, through collaboration with Berrien RESA, Berrien County Superintendents, and legal counsel, a statement was put out regarding the PowerSchool data breach. That statement is located on our website. At this point and time, which is all the information available to share. Once more information becomes available from PowerSchool on this topic, we will share it with you.
- Cannabis Education - As cannabis dispensaries continue to open in our small community, the topic of cannabis uses, and its impact has become increasingly prominent. Understandably, there has been significant conversation about the role of our schools in addressing this issue. Currently, we educate our students on this topic through required Health classes and visits from our School Resource Officer (SRO), who discusses the use of marijuana and its effects on youth. Additionally, the Berrien County Health Department provides valuable presentations, and our Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) group hosts annual events to promote awareness and responsible decision-making. However, given the current climate and the rising presence of cannabis businesses, we need to enhance our efforts to address this issue effectively. To strengthen our initiatives, the school believes it is vital to bring in professional speakers who can provide impactful, evidence-based presentations tailored for both students and parents/community members. To support this effort, we propose hosting professional presentations on cannabis use, targeting both the student body and the wider community. Each presentation is estimated to cost up to \$10,000, totaling \$20,000 for this initiative. Unfortunately, our school budget cannot accommodate this expense. We hope that the newly established cannabis businesses in our community will recognize the importance of supporting education and prevention efforts and would want to support these efforts financially to have these presentations for our students and parents. A meeting to discuss this further among staff members, SRO, and a select few school board members will be held next Tuesday at 7:25 AM. We hope to find a solution on what is the best way to educate our students and parents to prioritize the well-being of our students and community.
- Conferences this Thursday
- PD - MLK Day Monday
- District Safety Meeting - Focus on Raptor and I Love You Guys' safety language.

20. Remarks from the Board President and Members

21. Discussion Item(s)

A. Appointment of Board Committees:

1. Executive
2. Personnel
3. Curriculum
4. Building/Grounds
5. Berrien County Intermediate School District
6. Berrien-Cass School Boards' Association
7. LRSB
8. PUD - Planned Unit Development

B. Board Appreciation Month - We sincerely thank the members of the Board of Education for their steadfast dedication to creating a supportive and enriching learning environment for all students. Your thoughtful decision-making, visionary leadership, and tireless efforts are essential in shaping the future of our community. The countless hours you invest in addressing challenges, supporting educational initiatives, and advocating for student achievement do not go unnoticed. Thank you for your commitment to education and the lasting difference you make in the lives of so many.

C. The Superintendent approved the following hires:

Baseball Head Coach - Adam Lijewski

Baseball Assistant Coach - Chris Thun

Golf Coach - Ed Fidler

Girls Soccer Head Coach - Natalie Walter

Girls Tennis Head Coach - Dave Kelly

Girls Tennis Assistant Coach - Lisa Price

Middle School Track Coaches: Vance Price, Lisa Knoll, and Leanne Lamport

High School Track Assistant Coaches: Marty McGinn, Matt Johnson

D. Cannabis Education – Student and Parent Sessions

22. Other Business

23. Adjournment

Motion: Haskins

Second: Churchill

All ayes, motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vanessa Thun, Secretary
BOARD OF EDUCATION
NEW BUFFALO AREA SCHOOLS