



Burlington Middle School

Unified School District #244

720 Cross Street, Burlington, KS 66839

P (620) 364-2156 F (620) 364-8560

Dear Board of Education and Superintendent Biehler,

It is wonderful to have both our students and staff back in the building. The 2026–2027 school year is off to an excellent start at BMS, and that is a true credit to our outstanding staff and their commitment to creating a positive learning environment for our students.

During our Back-to-School professional development, we revisited the High Impact Instructional Practices and Strategies (HIIPS) from both HIIPS 1 and HIIPS 2, which our staff completed during the 2025–2026 school year. Our focus was not simply on reviewing the strategies, but on putting them into practice immediately within our classrooms.

Staff were challenged to select and implement at least one HIIPS strategy at the beginning of the school year. They embraced that challenge and ran with it. We have already seen staff intentionally incorporate these high-impact practices into their lessons, creating more purposeful opportunities for student engagement, learning, and understanding.

Seeing these strategies move from professional development into daily classroom instruction is exciting. It demonstrates our staff's willingness to continually grow as educators and, more importantly, their commitment to doing what is best for our students. This is a great way to begin the 2026–2027 school year, and I look forward to seeing how our continued focus on high-impact instructional practices positively impacts student learning throughout the year.

This year, our Back-to-School Nights were very well attended by students and their families, with more than 97% participation across both evenings. The feedback we received, particularly from our 5th grade parents, was overwhelmingly positive again.

For 5th grade, we began the evening with a welcome in the gym, where teachers shared important information to help students and families prepare for a successful transition to middle school. Following the welcome, parents and students had the opportunity to walk through their child's schedule, visit classrooms, meet teachers, and become familiar with the building and daily routines.

For grades 6–8, families also had the opportunity to follow their student's schedule and visit each classroom. This provided teachers with an opportunity to begin building positive relationships with students and families.

Our current enrollment at BMS is **230 students**.

Our current enrollment by grade level is:

- **5th Grade:** 56 students — 25 females / 31 males

- **6th Grade:** 53 students — 25 females / 28 males
- **7th Grade:** 59 students — 19 females / 40 males
- **8th Grade:** 62 students — 30 females / 32 males

Overall, our enrollment remains relatively stable at BMS.

Our fall sports teams have been working hard in preparation for the upcoming season, and it promises to be an exciting time for our BMS student-athletes. Participation numbers remain strong, reflecting the continued interest and commitment of our students to extracurricular activities.

- Football: 30 participants — 14 seventh graders and 15 eighth graders, with one manager
- Cross Country: 10 runners — 9 seventh graders and 1 eighth grader
- Volleyball: 33 participants — 14 seventh graders and 18 eighth graders, with one manager
- Dual-Sport Participation: 2 students are participating in both volleyball/cross country and football/cross country

The BMS Wildcats kicked off fall competition on Friday, August 28, with volleyball hosting Paola. Football opened its season on the road against Anderson County, while Cross Country began competition with the Wildcat Classic at John Redmond on Saturday, September 5.

We completed our FastBridge testing during the week of August 24–28. The data gathered will provide valuable information about student performance and help guide whole-group interventions in both Math and Reading at each grade level. Staff will use this information to identify areas of need, target instruction, and provide appropriate support as we begin the school year.

We will continue to recognize and celebrate our students and staff through our 8 Keys of Excellence program and Staff Member of the Month recognition. These programs provide meaningful opportunities to highlight the accomplishments, character, dedication, and positive contributions of the individuals who make BMS such a great place to learn and work.

Both programs are generously sponsored by Kent Medlock with Fittings Export and Clint Belcher with The Appliance Store. Their continued support allows us to recognize and celebrate our students and staff throughout the school year.

A huge thank you to Kent and Clint for their ongoing generosity and commitment to BMS. Their support of our student and staff recognition programs is greatly appreciated and makes a positive difference in our school community.

Matt Spring
BMS, Principal
GO WILDCATS!!