

School Board Workshop:

March 9, 2026

Subject:

BCMS Activities Fall 2025 Report

Presenter:

John Hayden
BCMS Activities Director

SUGGESTED SCHOOL BOARD ACTION:

Report only.

DESCRIPTION:

Our Cross Country program had a tremendous fall season, highlighted by a significant increase in participation compared to last year. It was great to see so many students willing to challenge themselves and represent our school through distance running. Veteran coach Paul Anderson returned to lead the program, and with the larger numbers we were fortunate to add Courtney Adair, a Health ESP at Tatanka, to help coach the team. Paul and Courtney worked very well together and did an outstanding job organizing practices, encouraging our runners, and helping them grow throughout the season. Our meets took place mostly in the metro and south metro areas, where our students competed against very strong programs and represented our school extremely well, finding success in many of the races throughout the fall.

Our Girls Tennis program had another strong fall season, led by veteran coach Jeff Lindstrom, who has graciously chosen to work with our middle school athletes the past couple of years. Participation numbers were up again this fall, which is a great credit to Jeff's ability to connect with students and create a program where kids feel welcomed and excited to play. One of the highlights of the season was hosting our end-of-the-year tournament here at BCMS. Jeff did a fantastic job organizing the event, bringing together BCMS, STMA, and Becker for a two-day singles tournament. All three schools reported that their athletes truly enjoyed the experience, and it was such a positive event that we plan to continue it as a yearly tradition.

Our Girls Soccer program saw a slight drop in numbers this fall, which at times put us in between having enough players for full A and B games and needing to adjust formats or occasionally forgo a B game. Coach Caleb Quernemoen did an excellent job navigating those situations and keeping the focus where it belongs—on giving our girls meaningful opportunities to compete and improve. Caleb is very passionate about the program and worked hard to put the girls in competitive situations that challenged them while still making sure they were not overwhelmed by stronger teams. Throughout the season we saw a great deal of growth from the players, both in skill and confidence. By the end of the season, it was clear that our girls soccer program has a lot to be excited about moving forward.

Our Boys Soccer program continues to be very healthy in terms of participation, and we are seeing steady growth as the program develops into a strong feeder for our high school team. Coaches Ashlyn O'Connor and Jan Fournier returned again this season and did an excellent job helping our players improve their skills and understanding of the game. Ashlyn also does a great job holding her athletes accountable in the classroom, regularly checking grades and following up with students who may need a reminder that being a student comes first. One ongoing challenge for both of our soccer programs is the level of competition available at the middle school level. We do not get many true "A" level games within the Mississippi 8, and the Lake Conference has limited middle school opportunities. Because of this, Buffalo and STMA have been working together with other schools to find better competitive options, and we have been very proactive in trying to develop a solution moving forward.

Our Football program saw participation numbers dip slightly from last year, but that is mostly a reflection of how unusually high our numbers were the previous season. Even with that small drop, participation remains very healthy and continues to provide many students with the opportunity to be part of the program. One of the greatest strengths of our football program is the consistency of our coaching staff. Corey Moore, Eric Cagle, Barry Johnson, Joel Gilmer, Joey Hartfiel, and Tyler Reiss have coached together for many years, and that stability makes a big difference for our athletes. They work extremely well together and do a great job developing our players both on and off the field.

Another strength of our program is the strong connection with the high school. Coach Litterer continues to do a great job helping align the different levels of football within BHM, and our middle school coaches have really appreciated that partnership. The level of competition in the Mississippi 8 Conference is also very strong, which provides our players with great game experiences against teams like Becker, Monticello, Princeton, and two teams from STMA. Overall, we are very pleased with the continued growth and progress of our football program.

Our Volleyball program continues to grow at an incredible rate. Last year I reported that we had the largest number of participants in program history with 101 girls. This fall we surpassed that mark again with 119 girls participating. When you consider that a typical match involves an 8th grade A team, an 8th grade B team, and the same for 7th grade—with only six players on the court at a time—it becomes a real challenge to create a positive and meaningful experience for that many athletes. One thing that has always been non-negotiable for us at BCMS is that we do not cut students, and we remain committed to providing opportunities for all girls who want to participate.

To help create more playing opportunities this season, we expanded our schedule beyond our regular league opponents. We added matches with Eastern Carver County (Chaska and Chanhassen), Eden Prairie, and Orono, in addition to our Mississippi 8 schedule. On many game nights we had two different schools competing against our 7th grade teams and two schools competing against our 8th grade teams, which created a very busy and sometimes chaotic schedule. Even with the expanded opportunities, we recognize that it still did not create the positive experience for every player that we strive for. Our coaches have worked

extremely hard over the years to make this program successful, and I am very proud of their efforts. We already have additional ideas we plan to implement next season as we continue working toward keeping participation numbers manageable while still providing a great experience for our girls.

Overall, eclipsing last year's participation numbers across our fall programs was a great accomplishment. It speaks to the strong culture we have built around activities at BCMS and the value our community places on getting kids involved. Just as importantly, it is a testament to the families of BHM who consistently support their children and encourage them to take part in positive, healthy opportunities outside the classroom. Our coaches continue to do an outstanding job creating environments where students feel connected, challenged, and proud to represent their school. When you step back and look at the entire season, it truly was a great fall for our students and our activities program.

ATTACHMENT:

- BCMS Activities Participation Fall 2025