

**NEW BUFFALO AREA SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR SESSION
Performing Arts Center
1112 E. Clay Street
P.O. Box 280
New Buffalo, MI 49117
July 27, 2026
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 President Denise Churchill - Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
2. Roll Call: Denise Churchill, Stephen Donnelly, John Haskins, Jennifer Summers, Vanessa Thun, Greg Vosberg, Lisa Werner
Absent: Vosberg
Also in Attendance: Mr. Adam Bowen, Superintendent of Schools
Devinnie Wysocki, Adm. Asst. to Superintendent
3. Expressions from the Public: None
4. Items too Late for Printed Agenda #16 Discussion Item C Hire (Giannetti)
5. Adoption of the Agenda
Motion: Thun
Second: Werner
All ayes, motion carried.
6. Adoption of the 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. Minutes:
Meeting Minutes June 22, 2026
Meeting Minutes July 8, 2026
Meeting Minutes July 13, 2026, Regular Session
Meeting Minutes July 13, 2026, Special Session (Joint meeting with River Valley Board of Education)
 - B. General/Associated Funds - Bills Payable:
 1. General Fund: \$776,674.30
 2. Payroll: \$1,217,748.80
 3. Food Service: \$15,458.32
 4. Scholarship Fund: \$6,873.00
 5. Public Improvement: \$17,658.41
 - C. Financials
Motion: Werner
Second: Summers
All ayes, motion carried.

7. Communications: Resignation letter (Nate Tripp Jr.)

8. Committee Report(s): None

9. Presentation: Technology Director - Jacob Stella

Technology Director Jacob Stella provided the Board with a Technology Update, highlighting significant advancements made throughout the district. The presentation included district-wide network infrastructure upgrades, increasing network speeds to 10 Gbps through new fiber-optic cabling, expanded connectivity to outdoor facilities, and the installation of rooftop antennas to accommodate the transition away from copper landlines. Mr. Stella also shared updates on the district's transition from Chromebooks to iPads, noting positive feedback from elementary and middle school staff and students, while the high school will continue utilizing MacBook Airs and evaluate future device options. Additional updates included the successful implementation of the Bloomz communication platform, expanded online forms and payment capabilities, enhanced security measures through additional cameras, access control, emergency notification integration, and expanded vape detection sensors. Upcoming technology initiatives include replacing wireless access points, upgrading the district's intercom and phone systems, modernizing digital signage, and exploring the opportunity to become an official CLEP testing center. The presentation concluded with appreciation for the Building Technology Coaches and the Board of Education for their continued support of the district's technology initiatives. (Full Report Attached)

10. Presentation: Daycare Director - Kate Nicolai

Daycare Director Kate Nicolai presented the New Buffalo Area Schools Daycare annual report, highlighting the program's continued growth, commitment to high-quality early childhood education, and strategic initiatives supporting children, families, and staff. The presentation reviewed the daycare's mission of providing a safe, play-based learning environment, increasing enrollment, investments in educator recruitment, professional development, and staff recognition, as well as expanded access to childcare through state assistance programs and community partnerships such as MI Tri-Share. Mrs. Nicolai also shared positive parent survey results, including a 96.2% overall satisfaction rate and 100% positive ratings in several key areas, while recognizing the dedication of the daycare staff. Additional highlights included community outreach efforts, development of an educator pipeline through credentialing and high school partnerships, and future goals focused on expanding educator mentorship, strengthening community partnerships, and exploring the creation of a dedicated Early Childhood Education Center to provide a seamless continuum of care from infancy through preschool.

11. The Superintendent recommends the Board approve the July 2026, Thrun Board Policy Updates.

Motion: Summers

Second: Donnelly

All ayes, motion carried.

12. The Superintendent recommends the Board approve hiring Susan Martinic for the position of Food Service Director.

Motion: Thun

Second: Summers

All ayes, motion carried.

13. The Superintendent and the Curriculum Director recommend the Board approve the K-12 Curriculum Cycle Plan, as attached.

Motion: Summers

Second: Werner

All ayes, motion carried.

14. Remarks from the Superintendent

- Last week of Day Camp and Summer School.

- Multiplex Turf Installation: completed by the end of this week.
- Track & Field Resurfacing: starts next week.
- Boiler Replacement: 75% completed.
- Middle School / High School Roof Replacement: shingles completed. Metal roofs are in progress.
- PA System & Wireless Access Points: Cable pulling is ongoing and will continue through the end of July. Once the wiring is complete, installation of classroom clocks, speakers, and PA equipment will begin. The new wireless access points are scheduled for installation in early August.
- Concrete Work: Concrete behind home plate at the baseball field will finish this week. Once this phase is finished, crews will transition to replacing damaged concrete pathways around the Middle School/High School building.
- The building trades storage building concrete was completed last week.
- Asphalt: on Monday, the asphalt company will start their work resurfacing the transportation lot. Next week the MS/HS West lot will be resurfaced.
- Lockers: are currently being manufactured by there is no installation date established.
- 3 Science Rooms, Elementary Art Room, and closet floors: will be completed by the end of this week.
- Tree Trimming: around the whole district last week.
- Multiplex lights are installed and testing is scheduled for this week.
- Baseball lights are installed and testing is scheduled for this week.
- Elementary LED classroom lights are upgraded, and they will move over to the MS/HS in a few weeks.
- Skylights at the elementary school have arrived and will be installed in the weeks to come.
- Skillman, a construction management firm, is overseeing the major projects and Mark is handling the rest and doing a good job as there is a lot going on.

15. Remarks from the Board President and Members

Donnelly expressed his appreciation to Sophia Giannetti and Emily Keller for their exceptional work in coordinating the Day Camp program and acknowledged the program's overall success.

President Churchill: Tickets are now available for the "Up on a Hill" Fall Music Festival, benefiting the local nonprofit Neighbor by Neighbor that supports our community. Join us on September 2, 16, and 30 for an evening of live music while supporting a great cause. Purchase your tickets at neighborbyneighbor.org

Also, the Board will need to discuss the proposed middle school sports merger for basketball and cross country to prepare for taking formal action at the next regular Board meeting.

16. Discussion Item(s)

A. Emily Zablocki-Kohler: Resignation - High School Principal, effective July 21, 2026.

B. Nathaniel Tripp Jr. — Resignation as Paraprofessional, effective immediately.

C. The Superintendent has approved the following hires:

Martin McGinn - Percussion Tech

Nick Falace - Brass Tech

Allyson Hatter - Color Guard Coach

Arturo Alfaro-Manriquez - Woodwind Tech

Sophia Giannetti – 6th Grade Volleyball

D. Graduation is scheduled for Friday, June 4, 2027, at 6:00 p.m.

17. The Superintendent recommends the Board convene into Closed Session per Section 8(a) of the Open Meetings Act to conduct a superintendent's mid-year personnel evaluation.

Motion: Summers

Second: Werner

All ayes, motion carried.

(7:02 p.m.)

18. The Superintendent recommends the Board reconvene into Open Session per the Open Meetings Act.

Motion: Werner

Second: Donnelly

All ayes, motion carried.

(7:45 p.m.)

19. Other Business

20. Adjournment

Motion: Donnelly

Second: Thum

All ayes, motion carried

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Vanessa Thun, Secretary

BOARD OF EDUCATION

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