

School Board Workshop:

October 11, 2021

Subject:

2021 BHS Spring Activities Report

Presenter:

**Nick Guida,
BHS Activities Director**

Suggested School Board Action:

Review

Description:

Will provide activity updates on the following at the Board Workshop:

2021 Spring Season Summaries
2021 Spring Season Participation Report
BHS Activities News

Staff Narratives:

Adapted Softball: Head Coach Diedre Anderson (1 Year)
Assistant Coach Tim Horan (2 Years), Assistant Coach Frannie Pearson (2 Years)

Adapted softball coaches and players were grateful to have a season and finished with a record of 2-5. The co-op includes Buffalo, Monticello and STMA athletes joining together as the Coyotes. We are disappointed to lose our seniors, Brandon Powers, Nathaniel Westphal, Mackenzie Davis and Lexi Georges and we're excited for our many returning players next spring! The CI division did not have a play-off schedule this season but our team showed a tremendous amount of improvement throughout our short season. The Coyotes are proud of our 2 wins, especially with such a young team, changes to coaching staff and adjustments due to COVID-19.

Boys/Girls Track & Field: Scott Palmer (26 years)

The 2021 Track and Field season was like no other, with COVID restrictions and having lost a season to COVID, we had a lot of athletes who were technically freshman athletically speaking and competing for the first time in the premier track and field conference in the state of Minnesota. Although challenging, our athletes persevered and were able to learn a lot not just about the technical aspect of the sport but also about how to set goals, believe in the process, and be a leader as well as how to be a supportive teammate. The growth in all these areas over the course of the season was tremendous.

On the track, the Bison finished in 6th (boys) and 7th (girls) in an extremely tough Lake Conference, but were able to use that valuable experience to finish 5th (boys) and 7th (girls) out 18 teams at the Section 2AA championships and send 11 athletes (16 including relay alternates) to the state meet. Place winners at state were Macario Palomares 2nd in the 100 and 200 wheelchair and 1st in the wheelchair shot put, setting a state meet record with a put of 19' 11.75". Luke Gunderson finished 8th in the shot put, the boys 4x800 finished 8th and that team consisted of Owen Herbst, Jadon Boots, James Dorado and Jared Gregoire. Finally, the girls 4x100 moved up seven places from their seed time coming in to finish 8th and medal; those members were Brianna Shroyer, Brianna Bluiett, Elsa Peterson and Lauren Feddema. In all, the Boys team had 6 performances added to the Bison top ten performance list with one of those performances a state meet record in the wheelchair shot put. The girls team had 4 new entries to the top ten performance list with two new school records in the 100 meters by Brianna Bluiett and Lauren Feddema in the 300 hurdles.

Girls Lacrosse: Head Coach Pete Robson (4th Year)

The 2021 Buffalo Girls Lacrosse season was a fun, challenging and eye-opening season for the team. In the year of COVID-19, just getting the opportunity to play was exciting for our players, coaches and families. Based on "playing vs. not" we had a very successful season!

Heading into the 2021 season, we were facing a shortage of players compared to prior years. After graduating 11 seniors in 2019 then missing the 2020 season, we were left with a fewer number of returning and new high school players than the minimum number of players needed to field both a Varsity and JV squad. Rather than give up on having a JV team, we ended up taking eleven 8th graders and one 7th grade goalie, giving us enough depth for two teams.

Bringing on the younger players turned out to be a great decision. They brought boundless enthusiasm to the JV team which had a successful season, winning many of their contests. They also have become a core group of young players that should help the girl's lacrosse program continue to grow and thrive in future years.

For the varsity team, the combination of having a very young team with many first-time high school players and playing our first season in the Lake Conference, made the season challenging. The team ended up with a regular season 3-9 record, and finished the season 3-10 after a hard-fought first round loss to Rogers.

The team benefitted from a great group of Captains- Ava Herzberg, Alex Mischke, and Bella Weiche, who worked together and with the coaches, to help make the season a positive experience for all the girls on the team. With only one senior graduating this year, the team will benefit from player and coach continuity as a building block for ongoing development.

For the 2022 season, captains were selected by the team and coaches and include two new players: Kinlee Knutson and Victoria Viteri, as well as two returning captains: Alex Mischke and Bella Weiche. We look forward to working with this great group of student athletes over the summer and in the 2021-22 school year and lacrosse season.

BHS GLax players were recognized for their on-field accomplishments including two All-Conference Selections – Eleanor Toussaint and Alex Mischke, and three All-Conference Honorable Mentions – Kinlee Knutson, Maddie Mootz and Victoria Viteri. Eleanor Toussaint earned additional recognition and was named to the All-Section First Team acknowledging her contributions on the field. Collectively, the team participated in a broad range of activities outside of lacrosse, earning many other awards and recognition for their contributions and achievements. We are very proud of such a talented and well-rounded group of young women.

Here is our annual "Top 10 Things We Accomplished Together in the 2021 Season" we shared with the team and parents at our end of season banquet:

10. Welcomed lots of new players - 8th graders especially
9. Survived COVID, quarantines and the stress of a global pandemic
8. We moved to the Lake Conference – and survived
7. Learned to play Lake Conference clean!
6. Discovered that HS girls will run faster for a bag of skittles
5. We did great off the field – good grades, choir, band, other sports and school activities
4. We maintained our clean reputation w/very few yellow cards
3. We found ways to celebrate the little wins and found bright spots in every game
2. Despite many tough games and losses, the team came off the field heads high with smiles
1. We had fun!

We want to thank the many different members of the school and Buffalo community who supported the team this season including: parents, siblings, friends and families and the BHS leadership and administrative teams – especially Barb McIntosh and Vickie Davidson, Kip, Jack, Nick and the health office/COVID team who we know worked extra-hard all year to keep players and coaches safe and able to play the sport we all love.

We also want to thank our team managers; Anna Hipp and Carly Cranston, the many parents who helped capture game stats and film each game and the BHS Girls Lacrosse Booster Club - Jill Mischke, Kristen Gleisner, Lora Toussaint, Bridget Barton, Marci Weiche and Michelle Herzberg - all for their awesome support for the team and coaches.

Finally, a very special thanks to Tom Baumann, the best boss a coach could ever ask for. Thanks for showing us the ropes and giving us the opportunity – we'll miss working with you.

On behalf of Coach Ed, Coach Tony and myself, thank you for the opportunity to continue leading a great group of girls again this season.

Boys Lacrosse: Head Coach - Chad Hayda (2nd year (1st actual*))

The 2021 season was our first real season in the Lake Conference. We finished with a (1-5) record in the Lake - beating only Hopkins and dropping to Wayzata and STMA on the final possession of each game. We went on to go undefeated in out-of-conference play - giving us the #3 seed in sections. We ended the year being the Section 8 runner-up to Moorhead finishing our season off 10-6.

We lost Captain Ashton Pedersen (Jr.) and up and coming Freshman Jack VanderKooi to broken wrists for the year. Griffin Valli had an appendicitis which held him out 4 games (1/3 of the season), and Hunter Dalum missed 6 games with a hip injury. Our JV team (which carried 5-7 swing players) got quarantined leaving us with 4 subs for 3 games - which made for a gruesome week and a half of games, but it got us to be the gritty team I longed for us to be.

2021 was quite the rollercoaster, somehow it turned into a record setting year for us as a program. We went further in the playoffs than boy's lacrosse has ever gone before. Owen Carlson (Jr.) finished the year with 74 points (57 G, 17A) on the year. This broke Buffalo's single season goals record (50) as well as points record (69) both which were formerly held by Noah VanderKooi. Ethan Nuss (So.) also would have broken it this year with 72 points (29G, 43A).

Owen Carlson finished 4th in the State for goals and Ethan Nuss finished 2nd in the State for Assists.

Owen Carlson and Connor Youngquist were named to the All-Conference Team. Ethan Nuss, Turner Stenberg and Braden Moseley received Honorable Mention.

The future is bright for this young squad. We lose some depth from seniors as well as standout midfielder, Turner Stenberg, but are going to be led by 3 super strong seniors in Owen Carlson, Ashton Pedersen, and Connor Youngquist in 2022. The meat of the team was in the class of '23 (Layne Kology, Ethan Nuss, Griffin Valli, Braden Moseley, Malaki Hanson, and Hunter Dalum) which really propelled this team to the highest-level Buffalo Lacrosse has seen to date.

Baseball: Head Coach Mike Beilke (18 years)

The Bison finished the year with a record of 12-11 and a Lake Conference record of 4-8. One of the highlights of the season was a 6-game winning streak to start the season. We were ranked as high as 3rd in the early poles. Cole LaPlante and Ethan Hansen were selected to the All-Conference team and Justin Johnson, Ryan Gaughan, and Evan Soeffker received Honorable Mention Awards. The Bison received a #2 seed for the section tournament. We lost our first-round game to Rogers by a score of 6-5. In the second round we defeated Brainerd 4-0. Ethan Hansen pitched a shutout in that victory. We lost the third-round game to Elk River by a score of 6-4. The All Section Team has not been released at this time. Ethan Hansen was selected to the Metro West All Star Team. Ethan Hansen, Justin Johnson, Evan Forsyth, Cameron Green, Ryan Gaughan, Cole LaPlante, Ben Kragerud and Connor Linz will all be lost to graduation. Thank you to the seniors for your outstanding attitudes and leadership. We are very excited about the players we have returning for next season. We have a wealth of young talent returning. We have several pitchers with varsity experience returning for next season. I really enjoyed coaching this group of young men. Go Bison!!!

Softball: Head Coach Brad Zrust (17th year)

I want to let everyone know that it was a great year for us, even though our record of 8-13 doesn't totally reflect that in wins and losses. It was such a joy to just get out on the field again with everyone. The enthusiasm and energy these girls showed everyday was fun to be around after having to take a year off.

With this being our first season in the new conference, I thought things overall went well. The team was challenged every day and most times we responded in positive ways. I feel as we move forward, things will only get better for softball. Our two lower levels had successful seasons with some great coaches leading the way.

It also was nice to see our girls progress from playing in masks at the beginning of the year to playing with hardly any restrictions at all towards the end. I was happy for them that they could experience this as this is the way they grew up playing the game.

Overall, I believe the girls learned a lot in not taking anything for granted as your season could end at any time. We all enjoyed being back on the field doing what we love.

Boys Tennis: Head Coach Ben Watkins (9th Year)

The Boys Tennis team had their first taste of the Lake Conference this year and although the top two teams in the state were included in their competition, they competed incredibly well. The team ended with an overall record of 11-14 and a conference record of 1-5, picking up their only conference win against rival STMA in a great team win.

To show the growth of our team and the depth of talent, we ended the regular season playing against former Mississippi 8 rivals Rogers, Delano, Monticello and Chisago Lakes. These are teams who we are accustomed to playing tough matches against and teams that have recently beaten us, but of the 28 total possible matches we could have won, we won 27 of the matches - losing only a super-tiebreaker match to Monticello after the team match had already been decided. The Bison played hard and are playing at as high of a level as we have played here in Buffalo. A close 2-5 match vs. Maple Grove showed us that we are capable of playing with and beating pretty much every team in our section.

Sam Shaffer (9th grade) ended the year with the most singles wins (15), while senior David Nunn ended with the most wins in the doubles lineup (14). Sam also had the best winning percentage on the team this year, playing mostly 2, 3 and 4 singles.

We had an incredibly well-rounded team, which allowed us to change our lineup frequently and allow many of our guys to play both singles and doubles throughout the year. We had four players who all earned seeds in the individual section tournament - Turner Marr, Andy Shaffer, Patrick Lubben and Gavin Wyatt - all of which were juniors this year.

Award winners for this year's team consisted of Turner Marr and Andy Shaffer, sharing the team MVP, Nathan Leimer was voted as the most improved player, and senior captain Levi Preugschas was voted as the Bison/Team Spirit Award recipient.

Turner Marr and Sam Shaffer earned 1st Team All-Conference honors, while Patrick Lubben, David Nunn and Levi Preugschas earned Honorable Mention.

Once again, the team earned the All-State Gold award, with a team GPA higher than 3.75, which ended with an average team GPA (top 10 high school GPAs of our section roster) of 3.92, which really speaks to how hard these guys work in the classroom and the incredibly high standard they hold themselves to!

It was an incredible year with a group of student-athletes who refused to give up and continued to improve throughout the season with hard work and great attitudes. I am incredibly proud to coach this group of young men - they inspire me with how well they treat their opponents and each other.

Boys Golf: Head Coach Paul Olson (5th year)

2021 marked the first year for BHS to compete in golf in the Lake Conference. The 2020 season was not played due to COVID-19 protocols. The warm weather in late March allowed for three days of tryouts at Wild Marsh prior to Spring Break. The final roster consisted of a total of 16 players selected to fill Varsity, Junior Varsity and C squad positions. Movement between the teams during the season was performance based.

Wild Marsh Golf Course once again served as the home course for the 2021 Bison Boys Golf Team. After-school tee times were shared with the Girls golf team on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays. Due to league play on Wednesdays, practice shifted to the Golf Masters driving range just outside of the City. The staff at Wild Marsh was very accommodating throughout the season, allowing the team to work on a variety of skills at various locations on the course.

The Lake Conference golf scheduling is considerably different than that of the Mississippi 8 Conference. For 2021, there were 5 Varsity intra-conference competitions. Three of them were "double-duals" with 3 teams competing together at the home course of one of the teams. Coaches were expected to schedule the events by working with the course and the other two teams. The other two events were a conference Mid-Year and Final. With that format, it was necessary for coaches to fill the balance of the golf season schedule with invitationals or arrange for "competitions" with nearby schools. The final Varsity schedule consisted of 16 competitions that included dual meets with Delano and Monticello. The hope is for more intra-conference meets in 2022.

The Lake Conference does not do any scheduling for Junior Varsity golf teams. It was thereby incumbent upon the coaches to develop a JV schedule. BHS JV coach Mark Pokorney was able to schedule 14 competitions that included dual meets and Invitationals. With that number of meets, the coaches were also able to give multiple opportunities to C squad players to compete. The 2021 season marked the debut of the Bison Golf Invitational at Wild Marsh. The event, hosted by the boys' and girls' teams, had been canceled the prior two years due to weather and then COVID-19. The

two-person scramble format of the event versus stroke play made it unique. By all accounts, the 12 teams that took part enjoyed the event and look forward to competing again next season. The Bison pair of Dylan Hart and Harvey Ylitalo captured 3rd place honors for individual pairs. Proceeds from the event were intended to help support the BHS golf programs.

Other team highlights for the season included finishing 5th in the final Lake Conference standings. Three Conference teams were rated among the top teams in the State making for a high level of competition. Conference standings are determined by points awarded during the season. Two Bison players, Arthur Ylitalo and Sam Mahannah, earned All-Conference awards. The season culminated with Bison golfer Arthur Ylitalo qualifying for the State AAA golf meet and then finishing 3rd overall. He established new Bison records for placement at State (3rd) and State scoring with a 7 under 137 (70/67). His score of 67 is also a BHS record for any event.

Girls Golf: Head Coach Tim Murray (1st year)

After the lost season of 2020, Buffalo Golf faced many changes. First was a coaching change after Coach Warpula stepped down after five seasons with great successes. Second was the transition into the Lake Conference alongside some of the best teams and golfers in the state. Third was a large varsity roster turnover. Despite all these changes, the season proved to be a great success on and off the course.

The team consisted of 23 golfers, with 16 new to the team. While in the past, our varsity team was very consistent with the same six golfers participating on the varsity team the entire season, this season saw eleven different golfers on the varsity roster. Allisen Carothers, Olivia Lesch, Vanessa Wong, Laura Ylitalo, sophomore Raegan Wurm, freshman Anna Kugler, and 8th grader Hayley Rohlin lettered as varsity athletes.

As like in years past, the focus was on what we can control and finding successes outside of the "wins" and "losses". Such as...winning Academic All-State. Such as...nine golfers participating in their first varsity match. Such as...being prepared for very early morning competitions. Such as...a fun two-night stay at Headwaters Golf Club near Park Rapids, Minnesota. Such as...five individuals participating on day two of Sections. Such as...celebrating teammates. Such as...enjoying time on the course with opponents. Such as...playing some of the best courses in the state of Minnesota. Such as...cheering on our seniors as they finished a great high school career. Such as...celebrating new golfers' successes. Such as...celebrating our veteran leaders.

Golf is a unique sport in that individuals compete against themselves and against the course. Over the course of a round, our Bison spend four to five hours alongside their opponents helping them find a golf ball (or two), encouraging them with a "nice shot" or "great putt," having conversations about college or mutual friends and more. Our

girls had nothing but great things to say about our new Lake Conference golfers and our section competitors, as well. Over the season, in our conference and section, we competed against four of the eight teams that qualified for state with multiple individuals out of both.

We will continue to work hard and prepare to compete in our conference and section against the best golfers across the state and we will continue to look for successes on and off the course. It was an amazing season with amazing girls that continue to amaze both Coach Murray and Coach Conroy with their positivity, perseverance, patience and purpose. We can't wait for what 2022 has in store for us all!

SPRING MUSICAL: Tracy Hagstrom Durant (28 years), Nick Lostetter (4 years), Co - Directors

A Tapestry of Hope: Our Gift to the Community

Various musical numbers from a variety of shows along with original written materials were arranged by: Tracy Hagstrom Durant, Debb Bestland, Zack Carlson and Nick Lostetter

Music Director: Zack Carlson

Choreographer: Debb Bestland

Tech Director: Greg Bestland

Lighting Designer: Greg Bestland

PAC Manager: David Kilgore

Student Choreographer: Jillian Elton & Julia Carter

Student Stage Manager: Alayna West

Stage Management Consultant: Jamie West

Costumes: Costume Shoppe (Maple Lake), Laurie Hoops, Jodi Klaphake (Volunteers)

Musical Synopsis:

There is no way to fully capture what the last several months have meant to our community, our country and our world. Some students were disappointed that we would not be producing a traditional musical due to COVID and quarantine complications, but working through their disappointment, the cast and crew committed themselves to this unique staged production about finding hope and light amidst the darkness with great determination and commitment. With this production, we attempted to create a piece of theater that focused on hope and belonging, and that sought to connect our community through hope. We selected several different musical numbers from a variety of shows that shared similar themes of hope, redemption and light. We then weaved these songs together with poems and original writings that connected them all together into one performance piece. However, we didn't want it to be like a typical variety show so we worked hard to treat each song like its own mini-show by using unique costumes, lighting and direction that could stand on its own. This

worked better than expected as it created a lot of variety, gave many kids opportunities to be on stage, and provided a COVID safe atmosphere due to the ability to rehearse sections of the show in isolation. As a result, we had a larger variety of kids involved who got excited about theater at BHS and are likely to stay involved in subsequent years.

BHS Performances - April 22, 23, 24 @ 7:30 PM and April 25 @ 2:00 PM.

This year, we featured 34 high school actors along with 30+ students involved in various crews and the pit orchestra. Tickets were available in the high school office at a cost of \$6.00 for adults and \$4.00; they were also available at the door. This year our tech director, Greg Bestland, designed a set that could be used for multiple songs and situations on stage. Multiple students were able to grow their theatrical technical skills in lighting, sound and set construction with Greg's steady guidance.

Zack Carson faced a daunting task this year. Because our show was weaved together using a variety of songs from a variety of shows, Zack had to select, and then arrange the songs in a way that would best highlight each student involved. Zack approached this challenge with a steady determination that paid off by creating a show where there were no "weak parts" and all singers were challenged according to their abilities.

Hagstrom Durant and Lostetter decided to again enter the BHS production in the Spotlight Musical Theater Education Program/Contest through the Hennepin Theater Trust (Mpls.). The Spotlight program provides many benefits to BHS. We received "pre-adjudication" and technical adjudication (focused only on our student technicians) during our dress rehearsals. Our performances were judged by three professional actors/directors/technicians. We received Outstanding (highest honor) Achievement in Musical Theatre, Outstanding Overall Production, Ensemble Performance, Vocal Performance, Student Orchestra, Technical Team, Technical Crew and Light and Sound Board Operators. BHS Theatre made a great impression on the judges as indicated by the awards and honors received!

We are incredibly proud of our entire production staff and all the kids, parents and volunteers that helped to make this one-of-a-kind show a reality and a success. We were also very thankful to be a part of a district that allowed us to have in-person performances so long as COVID safety measures were in place. There is nothing quite like live theater and I am happy that this group of kids and graduating seniors were able to have their moment on stage (or backstage) during such a tumultuous year.

2021 Summer Marching Band: Director Scott Rabehl (13 years)

Challenges:

- Membership was down quite a bit this year (86 kids vs. a typical group of 125 in a "non-trip" year). As we were recruiting the band, it was not even clear that there would be a competitive season. In fact, at the time that rehearsals began

in May, it was still against MN State Law for a marching band to perform on a public street. In the face of the uncertainty, it was a real challenge to get students to commit. Still, our group was one of the largest in the state again. Most bands start rehearsing long before "The HERD" and put in 2 or 3 times as many hours before the school year ends to be ready for early June parades. These heavy rehearsal schedules result in smaller bands. The philosophy of "The HERD" is to rehearse as little as possible during the school year, just once per week for 3 or 4 weeks (5 this year), so that we conflict as little as possible with other spring activities. This allows a larger number of students to participate. However, it means that we cannot participate in any of the early season parades and we must play "catch up" versus other bands that are competing by the 1st weekend in June. This year's band marched in 4 parades during the competitive portion of our season in June.

- Attendance was terrifically spotty for the rehearsals that took place before the end of the school year. It was not unusual for a quarter of the group to be absent at any one time. Because all Winter and Spring sports had changes to their schedules this year, but marching band did not (the season is set by individual community committees and they did not change their dates) there were an extraordinary number of conflicts with the sports schedule.
- Rehearsal facilities were limited this year, both indoors and in the North Lot.
 - There was a significant increase in practices, camps and games in Bison Field East and West during scheduled marching band practices causing a lot of traffic problems in our rehearsal grid on the north edge of the lot.
 - There was a giant pile of dirt dumped in the north west corner of the lot for use during the Tennis Court renovation. This covered a good portion of the band's rehearsal grid and impeded the band's use of the lot as a long-distance practice aide.
 - There appeared to be an increase in indoor activities (eg. volleyball camps in the Main Gym and Dance in the Cafeteria...increased pressure in the BAC as well) the week after school let out...our Sweat Camp, where we have traditionally occupied the entire cafeteria, the entire music suite and the entire Main and West Gyms for the week. As a result, in the mornings, the Color Guard had no indoor facility in which to rehearse. And... if we would have had rain we would have had no place to run indoor rehearsals (therefore the entire Gym needs to be available).
- Many parades were cancelled this summer due to uncertainty and lack of funds. As a result, this was the fewest parades the band has participated in since its inception as a competitive group in 1988.

Competitive Summary:

Since the marching band situation in every town was so varied this year, band directors and the judging association agreed that bands' scores would not be public...just their overall rating. This allowed each band to "compete against itself" rather than other bands. At its four events, "The HERD" received 2 Excellent Ratings and 2 Superior

Ratings. Only six bands in MN received as many as 2 Superior Ratings this year. The band's average score for the year is the 3rd highest in the history of the group.

The season finale will be in Hanover where the band will perform for its hometown fans.

Competitive Recap

	Score
Buffalo	73.7
Foley	79.6
Sauk Rapids	81.2
Lake City	84.5
Hanover	Exhib.

Overall, I would say that we moved up a couple spots in the statewide rankings this year. It is difficult to tell because precise scores were not published. But, by “mining” Facebook, Directors Blogs and Band Websites, I feel confident saying that “The HERD” finished the season ranked either 4th or 5th in the state. The success of the band can be attributed to the significant improvement in the Color Guard, long a weak spot for the band. This season, they started Sweat Camp already knowing their work, allowing the band to enter its first competition at Buffalo Days with a “finished product.”