

School Board Workshop:

February 10, 2025

Subject:

BCMS Fall Activities Report

Presenter:

**John Hayden,
BCMS Activities Director**

SUGGESTED SCHOOL BOARD ACTION:

Review

DESCRIPTION:

Numbers were up this fall in Cross Country. Last year we were at fourteen, this year up to twenty-two. Even adding a couple of female runners this year. Paul Anderson was back to coach the kids again this year. He has done a great job of integrating us into the schools in the metro area which has been great for our kids. Like so many of our programs, the more we compete against Lake Conference schools at the middle school level, the better our high school teams will be.

Having Ben Watkins again coach the girls tennis team is such a great thing for our kids. Ben is such a popular person. The girls have a great time playing for him. He is also a huge advocate for the sport here in Buffalo, so equipment, supplies, etc., are always kept up and in great shape for the kids. Ben's popularity is easy to see by the fact that we went from eight girls last year to twenty this year. Those are good numbers for our program. One of the issues we have in girls tennis is finding competition. Most schools in the Mississippi 8 have 7-12 programs so the 7th graders are up at the high school level. We are always working to find good competition. This year we played STMA three times because they have a lot of girls and are usually good competition.

Girls soccer numbers dropped this year. The twenty-three girls we had out is a nice number to manage and get in games, but we would like to see more. Caleb Quernamoen coached this team for the first time. He was a little reluctant because of his time, but by the end of the season, he reported that he really enjoyed it and felt that he saw a lot of growth in the team. Caleb is a young, second year teacher who does a great job connecting with kids. He is a competitive person and knows the game of soccer very well. Again, finding competition was a problem.

Boys soccer numbers went up to thirty this year. I believe that is testament to our two coaches Ashlyn Claseaman and Jan Fournier. These two do a great job of coaching the boys. Both love the game, but also enjoy coaching kids. They are teachers and it is fun to see the members of their teams hanging out in their classrooms. What they

both do well is hold kids accountable both on the field and in the classroom. The competition situation is even worse for the boys than it is for the girls. There are very few teams to play at this age.

Football continues to be our biggest sport. This year we suited up one hundred and fourteen kids. Up from ninety-four last year. The results on the field were not what we had hoped. If you remember last year, we had a tough time at the 7th grade level. This year, that struggle continued with those same kids as 8th graders and the 7th grade group had their own struggles. Our coaches in football have all been around a little while, and all want to make sure we learn and grow from this year. In my post season meetings with the football staff, we came up with a number of things that we believe will help improve our program for the kids. An area we want to stress more is getting kids ready for what they will see at the high school level. That has not been something we have stressed enough our staff thought. Coach Litterer has been actively helping with that. One major undertaking this past summer and fall was the transition from purple middle school helmets to white ones. Football helmet companies have created a nice business for themselves. Essentially, helmets are to be re-conditioned every year, or at least every other year. After ten years the helmet needs to be thrown away as they won't take any liability for it any more. Coach Lit strongly wants to bring all levels of football in Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose together into one larger yet more consistent and cohesive program. That includes having all levels in the same White helmets. BCMS was faced with the decision to either re-condition half the purple helmets for one year of use and purchase new white ones for the other half, or choose not to waste the re-conditioning money and instead purchase all new ones. We determined that purchasing all new was the most fiscally responsible thing to do in the long run while a little painful in the first year. Another decision that was made was that we are now going to allow athletes to bring their own helmets. We never allowed that in the past. The hope would be that this will cut down on our helmet costs going forward.

One hundred and one. That is not a typo. That is the number of girls we had participating in **volleyball** this fall. That is by far the largest number of girls we have had in volleyball. The number was split evenly between both grades. We have tried a number of things over the last few years to control the number of girls because when you consider six play at a time in a game, that is a lot of girls to try to get touches. Once again we had to hire an extra coach. We divided each grade level into multiple teams and did our best to make a very confusing schedule make sense for parents and families. Because we play other schools' A teams, we have to have an A team. So we end up with one A team and multiple B teams at each grade. It can be very challenging finding games for this many kids. Luckily over the years we have developed great relationships with other schools. Even though they didn't have near the number of kids we did, other schools were willing to add games so we could get games for kids. Communication also is a challenge with this many participants. Making sure parents know when their kids are playing and when they are staying

home is important and can get confusing. Our coaches did a great job despite feeling overwhelmed at times.

I love the fall because of the excitement for the new year, and because we are at our busiest. It really is rewarding to see so many kids taking advantage of opportunities we have for them. I also want to give credit to Kelley Jaszewski, the Activities Secretary. She does so much to keep our department running and providing these opportunities. Without her we would not be able to run so effectively.

ATTACHMENT(S):

- **BCMS Fall Participation Report 2024-25**