

**NEW BUFFALO AREA SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR SESSION
Middle/High School Cafeteria
1112 E. Clay Street
P.O. Box 280
New Buffalo, MI 49117
March 9, 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: Werner
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: None
5. Adoption of the Agenda
Motion: Thun
Second: Summers
All ayes, motion carried.
6. Communications
A. Class President: Harper Bowman 11th Grade – Absent
7. Committee Report(s)
Foundation Meeting 03/04/2026
8. Presentation: Chris Beushausen - Fundraising High School Drama Department
Teacher Chris Beushausen shared that the Blue Bison Theatre Player Troupe 11980 is seeking approval to conduct fundraising efforts to support student participation in the Michigan Thespian Conference in December, as well as to help cover costs associated with musicals, including a live pit of musicians, food during Tech Week and after the final performance, and basic individual costume needs. Reported on a conference in East Lansing that provides students the opportunity to connect with other thespians from across the state, attend Mainstage performances, and participate in Thespy auditions, similar to a theater-themed Solo and Ensemble contest. Beushausen noted that previous grants had helped offset costs, but fundraising would help ensure that all interested students can participate without financial barriers. Proposed using the TeamFI fundraising platform to collect donations and requested permission to accept donations during upcoming performances of “The Wizard of Oz,” with proceeds supporting the performing arts program through the Student Activity Account.

9. Presentation: Tracy Ripley - High School Principal

High School Principal Tracy Ripley provided an update on progress toward the school's improvement goals, which are informed by the annual Studer survey of staff, parents, and students. She explained that to support increased math and ELA achievement, Tier 2 students receive targeted support during Advisory based on spring testing data, while Tier 3 students are paired with teachers using fall assessment data. Ripley also noted that the Board approved offering a practice SAT to all juniors last fall, and that monthly data meetings are held with core content teachers to review student progress and develop strategies to support struggling learners. She highlighted the implementation of a Guaranteed and Viable Curriculum to ensure alignment with state standards, appropriate instructional resources, and balanced assessments. Ripley also shared that, to support the goal of maximizing organizational effectiveness, the annual budget is reviewed at the start of the year and included on each month's staff meeting agenda to maintain transparency and awareness.

10. The Superintendent and Technology Director recommend Board approval of the Apple Inc. Education Quote for the lease of district iPads in the amount of \$225,888.00, as presented.

Motion: Vosberg

Second: Donnelly

All ayes, motion carried.

11. The Superintendent and Director of Finance recommend that the Board approve the estimate for the Retaining Wall Project from Nesci Landscapes, Inc. for \$74,270.00, per attached.

Motion: Thun

Second: Donnelly

All ayes, motion carried.

12. Remarks from the Superintendent

- Third Trimester Kickoff: We officially began our third and final trimester of the school year today. It is always an energizing time as our students and staff move into the home stretch of the academic year.
- Spring Sports: Despite the unpredictable Michigan March weather, our Spring sports programs officially commenced today. We are excited to see our athletes back on the fields and courts.
- Cannabis Education Night: In partnership with the Berrien County Health Department, we are hosting an informational session on Monday, March 16, at 6:00 PM.
- This presentation is specifically designed for parents and community members to understand the impacts of cannabis on the developing teenage brain.
- As brain function continues to develop well into the early twenties, this data-driven session is a vital resource for our families.
- NBARA Update: The New Buffalo Area Recreational Authority (NBARA) will meet this Wednesday at 9:00 AM at the Township Hall.
- Softball Field Upgrades: I am pleased to report that work has officially begun on the city owned Field 4 upgrade. This project is supported by the DNR Recreational Passport State grant, and we look forward to seeing these improvements enhance our facilities for both our students and the community.

13. Remarks from the Board President and Members

President Churchill: Thank you to the quick response of the New Buffalo Fire Department, our staff members: Mark German, Corey Hayes, Vanette Smothers, and Kerry Frum for your commitment and care regarding the gas issue event on Friday, February 27.

14. Discussion Item(s)

A. The Superintendent approved the following hire:

JD Burke - Boys Varsity Soccer Coach

~~B. Sale of MacBook Laptops to Students for \$200~~

15. Other Business

Motion by President Churchill to approve the High School Drama Fundraising request, supported by Thun.

All ayes, motion carried.

16. Adjournment

Motion: Thun

Second: Donnelly

All ayes, motion carried

Meeting adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Vanessa Thun, Secretary
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