

**School Board Workshop:**

**May 13, 2024**

**Subject:**

BHS 2023-24 Winter Activities Report

**Presenter:**

**Nick Guida, BHS Activities Director**

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**SUGGESTED SCHOOL BOARD ACTION:** Report

**DESCRIPTION:** Season Summaries

Buffalo High School successfully completed its activities for the 2023-24 winter season. Coaches and Advisors have completed a short narrative of their season for you to review. Thank you for supporting activities at BHS!

### **Spring Play - Treasure Island**

Director: [Debb Bestland](#)

Over 40 students showed up for auditions for our spring play, Treasure Island. This is the most auditioning in spring since before the pandemic. A lot of the rise in interest is due to students who have participated in the middle school play taking interest in continuing with theatre. As one student put it regarding theatre, "...it helped me grow and actually find people that suit who I am and can bond with non-stop." It is truly a community of like-minded people. Twenty-one students were cast in the show with Isaac Ryder assigned as Student Director and Jacob Bull assigned as Student Tech Director. Twenty-six additional students were signed in as tech build crew for the show. Ten students were assigned to the run crew from this group. As a run crew they dressed as pirates and helped with scene changes by singing old sea shanties as they moved the set. In the booth working with the sound board were Emily DeWolff and Olivia Stoope, and at the recently donated light board were Jojo Nosbush and Kylie Kelm. Stage manager Britt Drennan and assistant manager Margot Miller were also working in the booth. The cast represented all grade levels including seven seniors: Kadin Anderson as Long John Silver, Olivia Benson as Job Anderson, Maddy Benzer as Joan the Goat, Neve Elo as Dr. Leversey, Franklin Groth as George Badger, Merridew Knoel as Israel Hands, and Olivia Telecky as Red Ruth. Jim Hawkins was played by Avery Russek. The complete cast list is included below.

The spring show is always hit with budget issues as the fall musicals are expensive and seldom leave much left to work with. We have developed a phrase "design by find" to describe how we put together our show. Kim Atkins (parent and teacher) and Jill Russek (parent) were in the dressing room cutting, sizing, and repurposing clothes to create our look. Mike Trossen (former student parent) continues to help with the set crew giving advice and helping to keep a watchful eye on students and their safety. A

big thank you is needed for each of these adults as they do this work without contract and without pay. We are so grateful for them. I want to say a special thank you to Greg Bestland. He took on a tough set build with this show as well as designing the lights. I don't think people realize the amount of work he does during a show to keep things moving and to clean up and organize when we are done.

I thoroughly enjoyed doing the show this spring. Having a large audition turn out made casting the show a challenge! The final cast and crew were great to work with and I'm proud of them all. Thank you for the opportunity to continue working with the students at BHS.

Cast:

Isaac Ryder	Student Director
Kadin Anderson	Long John Silver
Kaylee Anderson	Silent Sue
Aiden Atkins	Blind Pew
Olivia Benson	Job Anderson
Maddy Benzer	Joan the Goat
Neve Elo	Doctor Livesey
Dalinda Gravley	Lucky Mickey
Franklin Groth	George Badger
Averi Hausladen	Ben Gun
Kyler Jaunich	Grey
Lily Kinches	Grandma
Merridew Knoell	Israel Hands
Madeline Krinke.	Mrs. Crowley
Ben Krinke	Black Dog
Elliott Lien	Captain Smollet
Guthrie Lostetter	Killegrew the Kind
Lucas Louwagie	Squire
Quinn Nusman	Dick the Dandy
Avery Russek	Jim
Olivia Telecky	Red Ruth
Wesley Wistrom	Billy Bones

Tech crew:

**Run Crew:** Gloria Mendez, Samuel Trosvig, Tuuli Youngquist, Jocelyn Ledesma, Ty Dubois, Lilah Dongoski, Ella Howe, Laryssa Laho, Marcus Russell, Harrison Klaphake (Also Shanty Man).

**Build Crew:** Mackenzie Amacher-White, Brayden Block, Jacob Bull, Emily DeWolfe, Charity Doan, Lilah Dongoski, Britt Drennan, Ty DuBois, Charlotte Eby, Ella Howe, Kylie Kelm, Harrison Klaphake, Laryssa Laho, Jocelyn Ledesma, Gloria Mendez, Margot Miller, Mitchell Nosbush, Jojo Nosbush, Kat(Kaitlyn) Reeves, Olivia Stoopes, Samuel Trosvig, Sylvia Warolin, Tuuli Youngquist, Marcus Russell, Greta Winger

## **Mock Trial**

Head Coach: Jason Swanson (14th season)

Asst. Coach: Heather Eld (8th season)

Atty. Coach: Karen Wolff (18th season)

This year marks the youngest varsity team that I have coached, replacing last year's team as the youngest that I have coached. We had one returning varsity member, Elizabeth Bolin. She was also the only four-year member of Mock Trial this year. We also welcomed senior Jessy Huerta Jarquin up from the JV team. We graduated six seniors the previous year, and we say goodbye to Jessy and Elizabeth this year. They will be missed, as they are very strong assets to the team.

This year saw less committed interest than last season. There were originally 32 team members, but some struggled to commit, and others had scheduling conflicts that did not allow them to continue. We managed with two teams instead of two. Two teams is typical, as we have only seen three seasons with three teams in the 14 years I have been coaching. Two teams versus three gives us a little bit less of a strategic advantage, as we are not able to see as many teams, and practice as many theories of the case during the season.

This year's case was a criminal case. The prosecution was the state suing a business for alleged dumping of a toxic chemical from their printing factory into a local river. The chemical in question, a made-up substance known as jaundithium, is not naturally occurring, and is a forever chemical. The defense argued that it was impossible to determine the exact source of the chemical, as there are two printing plants on the same river who both use the same chemical. The competition this year was in a hybrid format. Half of our trial competitions during region play were in person, and the other half in an online format. This was due to a continued backlog of court cases, and little availability of courtroom space. For the fourth season BHS was placed in the Greater MN Super Region, comprising of 20 teams, BHS making up two (2) of those 20. Mock Trial is unique in that during competition, there is no difference between V and JV. All teams are competing together in the region, regardless of varsity or junior varsity status. Both Buffalo teams performed well, but not as well as we had hoped. The varsity team finished 8th overall, and the junior varsity team placed 12th. The top six teams advance to the final round for the state competition. The top six teams in our

region this year were: Battle Lake, Morris, Apollo, Bemidji, Cambridge-Isanti, and Cloquet. The top three schools that advanced to the state competition were: Battle Lake, Bemidji, and Morris. This was the first appearance at the state competition for both Battle Lake and Bemidji.

The coaches and I agreed that this season was a challenge due to some of the commitment issues we observed among some team members, as well as the fact that many were new, or only had one season of experience entering this season. I would especially like to thank our attorney coach Karen Wolff, who spent a lot of time with the teams this season to help them through the challenges. Karen is an invaluable member of this organization each year, and has been since the 2007 season. She volunteers her time, energy, and expertise, as well as a great sense of leadership and humor that allows this group to grow to their full potential each year.

### **Boys Hockey**

Head Coach: Aaron Johnson

The boys hockey team had a successful 2023-2024 season. This year marked the 50th anniversary of Boys High School hockey in Buffalo. To celebrate we had a great Alumni get together in December to honor former players and coaches. Part of the celebration was a 50th anniversary team that included 20 former players and recognition to former coaches, parents, volunteers, and booster club members who have helped build Buffalo High School Hockey.

On the ice, the team was led by nine seniors including senior captains Max Varner, Eli Tiernan and Ethan Sladky. The team finished with an overall record of 10-17-1. We again played one of the toughest schedules in the state. (11th hardest according to the polls) The tough schedule helped us grow and get better as the year went on and helped us play in the section championship game for only the 2nd time in school history. Although we came up short it was a great experience. The communities of Buffalo and Annandale were very supportive with standing room only crowds for our playoff games.

All Lake Conference members were Max Varner and Eli Tiernan. We also had three players earn All-Conference Honorable Mention: Senior Gri Lind, Junior Harvy Ylitalo, and Sophomore Evan Hinnenkamp.

### **Wrestling**

Head Coach: [Blake Trullinger](#) (10 BHS/12 overall)

Asst Coaches: Jeff Granrud; Josh Lanners; Eli Riemer; Jonah Anderson, Jeff Granrud Sr. The Bison Wrestling season ended with Junior Ryan Babatz and Freshman Gabe Roehl qualifying for the MSHSL State Tournament. Both were nominated to be the 2024-25 team captains, along with Junior Marcus Boeckers and Sophomore Aiden Herbst. The team finished 3-14 overall in duals this season; going 1-5 in Lake Conference duals, beating Minnetonka at home.

Senior Jacobee Scherber surpassed both 50 and 75 win marks this season while enroute to a 28 win season. Three Bison wrestlers earned Lake Conference First Team Awards: Gabe Roehl, Aiden Herbst, Jacobee Scherber. Two wrestlers earned Lake Conference Honorable Mention Awards: Dylan Keeler and Ryan Babatz.

Our 2023-24 Varsity Bison Wrestling Team earned a gold Academic award from MN Wrestling Coaches Association with a cumulative GPA of 3.76!

We have a lot of momentum across all levels of our Bison Wrestling program, and I'm excited to be a part of our bright future.

Go Bison Wrestling! Face the Storm!

### **Buffalo Dance Team**

Head Coaches: Jennifer Thaler and Laura Donely Skelton

This season was a season of rebuilding for the dance team. Our team was smaller, with 18 dancers after losing 10 graduating seniors the previous season. We had more underclassmen leading the way for our new dancers. Despite the smaller numbers we had a great season! Our dancers were truly working as a team and we were able to get much closer than in previous seasons. We continued to see increased scores in both jazz and high kick at each of our meets, finishing with season high scores. We also had a program high score in High-Kick. Both varsity and JV teams grew a lot and learned many new skills-- we are so excited to see the talent continue to grow in the coming seasons.

In addition to this, we also welcomed some new members to our coaching staff-- former BDT dancer Kailee Jarland joined us as an assistant coach, and Mackenzie Ackerman, a new math teacher at BHS joined on leading our JV program. This was a great opportunity for her, as the JV team was made up almost entirely of new dancers. Mackenzie will be continuing with our varsity program next season.

Some team highlights were our annual overnight meet. This season we chose to attend the New Prague invitational and spent the night at Shakopee. This opportunity is a great bonding experience for us and a season highlight for many of our team members. Another highlight for our team was hosting the Lake Conference Finals event in January. This event brings together all of the Lakes Conference teams for our final conference meet. At this event we were able to recognize conference seniors, as well as our two graduating members: Kailey Shaap and Josie Halderson.

Kailey Shaap and Amelia Pence were recognized as All-Conference dancers, while Amelia Hirman, Emma Zelinski and Rylee Tetrault were recognized as Honorable mention dancers at our Conference Finals event.

We are so proud of all that the team accomplished this season. The dancers worked incredibly hard and came to practice every day with a positive attitude and ready to give it 110%.

## **Gymnastics**

Head Coach: [Emily Schumacher](#) - 1st year

The 2023-2024 Buffalo gymnastics team had a great season with a large focus on team and leadership! We had a team consisting of 21 gymnasts and 2 managers. We wrapped up our season with a 5-6 Varsity Team Record and an 8-3 JV Team Record. The Buffalo Bison gymnastics team was led by captains Zoey Manthei and Kaylee Dehmer along with our two seniors Josie Roskowiak and Theresa Schiedlmeier.

The Bison gymnastics team had two athletes advance to the State Meet, Lydia Field and Kaylee Dehmer. At the State Banquet, the Bison gymnastics team was named "23-24 Section Academic Champions", and Martha Driscoll-Nelson was named "AA Assistant Coach of the Year."

### Awards:

All Conference Honorable Mention: Kennedy Sarvie, Macy DuBois, Isabel Kohler

All Conference: Lydia Field & Kaylee Dehmer

All-Section Academic: Maryam Sonbol, Karina Wuollet, Ellen Ward, Courtney Kotish, Kennedy Sarvie, Lily Jenness, Kaylee Dehmer, Zoey Manthei, & Theresa Schiedlmeier

All Section: Kennedy Sarvie–Vault, Macy DuBois–Bars & Floor, Isabel Kohler–Vault & Floor, Lydia Field–Vault, Beam, Floor, & All-Around, & Kaylee Dehmer–Vault, Bars, Floor & All-Around

Honorable Mention All-State: Macy DuBois–Floor, Isabel Kohler–Floor, Lydia Field–Vault, Beam, Floor, & All-Around, & Kaylee Dehmer–Bars, Beam, Floor, All-Around

### Team Awards:

Most Improved: Ellen Ward & Isabel Kohler

Rookie of the Year: Macy DuBois

Hardest Worker: Isabel Kohler

Most Valuable Gymnast: Lydia Field

Most Dedicated Gymnast– "The Spirit of the Bison": Kaylee Dehmer

## **Boys Basketball**

Head Coach - Josh Ortmann

The boys basketball team finished with an overall record of 13-15. It was a fun season that had many moments of growth, success, adversity, and everything in-between. The one accomplishment that we are most proud of is that we finished the season as the Section 8AAAA Academic Champions with a team GPA of 3.65. We obviously love to see the on court success that the kids display on a regular basis, but it is important to acknowledge how great our students athletes are in the classroom.

If you are a regular fan of the boys basketball program, you are familiar with our Coaches vs Cancer event. This was a night where the boys and girls hosted STMA in a double header. The boys won an extremely tight, high energy game to cap off the night. As fun as that was, the most important part of the night was honoring two people within our community who are currently battling cancer. Between the fans and families of Buffalo and STMA, we were able to raise over \$20,000 for Sarah Parker and Laura Barta-Lindquist. Everyone is going through something that no one knows anything about, and to see our basketball community come together like they do each year truly is something special.

Throughout the season we have many different types of games. In our home gym, the Bison knocked off an extremely talented Eden Prairie team during conference play. Early in the season we had a tough buzzer beating loss up at Brainerd. Fortunately, we had an opportunity to play them again in our gym during playoffs. The crowd was electric, the atmosphere was second to none and the boys pulled away with a big first round win against the Brainerd Warriors.

We are extremely proud of our student athletes on and off the court. Thank you for giving the commitment that you do as an administrative staff and school board.

Team Awards went as follows:

All Conference: Grady Guida and Brody Wishart

All Conference Honorable Mention: Kai Penney, Torii Johnson, Ty Torgrimson

Team MVP: Grady Guida

Mr. Defense: Trevor Kotilinek

Mr. Practice: Wyatt Jayson and Quinn Janke

Mr. Hustle: Mitchell Friesz

Most Inspirational: Torii Johnson

Most Improved: Trevor Kotilinek

## **Girls Basketball**

Head Coach - Stacy Eggers

Our basketball season was full of both challenges and successes. Our team went through an extremely challenging schedule and we faced numerous opponents that were top in the state. The girls grew individually and collectively as they built on their successes. We ended the season with some big wins including a section win against Rogers and a conference win against Edina. Our players, managers, and coaching staff stayed extremely positive throughout the season and we enjoyed the opportunity to be a part of the game that we love. There is a positive energy in the gym with this program and all of the girls can be proud of the impact that was made this season!

## **Knowledge Bowl**

Head Coach - [Brandon Aldrich](#)

The main highlight this year was our Varsity 2 Team competing at state and taking 5th place. We actually had two teams that were state ready, both competing at regions. We had two teams at state a couple of years ago, but it wasn't quite in the cards this year. We had major success throughout each invitational with many of our teams placing in the top 5. Our JV 2 Team placed 1st at JV Finals. We had a fantastic season with lots of growth from each team, and we can't wait for next season.

## **Girls Hockey**

Head Coach - [Ryan Huddy](#)

Record 3-18-5. Though we did not have the outcome in the Win column that we wanted we were a very competitive team in all of games. We had 5 ties and 9 one goal games, which showed our players that we are very close to our goals as a program.

Our team was led by captains Kaiya Johnson, Grace Bergstrom and Linnea Preugschas. We had a very big win this year in Wayzata against the Trojans. Our goalie Ava Jovan set the all-time saves record for the program as well as making the All-Conference team. Kaiya Johnson (Jr) and Piper Stodola (Fr) both made All-Conference Honorable Mention.

We will have our largest numbers of players enter the program over the next few years since we left our Co-op with Delano. It is great to see the participation in hockey.

## **One Act**

Head Coach - [Tracy Hagstrom Durant](#)

Triangle Factory Fire Project

By: Christopher Piehler with Scott Alan Evans

20 students participated in the One-Act Play program during the 2023-2024 season.  
\*\*\*The MSHSL only allows a competition ensemble of no more than 20 students.\*\*\*

Play selection is key to success in the competitive One-Act play arena. This year, director Tracy Hagstrom Durant selected the Triangle Factory Fire Project, another moving and educational piece of challenging theater that tells an important and painful true story in American history. This particular play stretched the students as theater producers and further prepared them to be educated, open-minded consumers of theater. The Triangle Factory Fire Project is a heartfelt look at loss.

The March 25, 1911, Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire in a New York City sweatshop was the worst industrial disaster to take place in New York prior to 9/11. The Triangle Factory Fire Project is a painful look into this event in American history that significantly impacted the world we live in today. The students (and director) learned so much through research, rehearsal and performance. Once again, the theatre students worked diligently and produced another winning show. Relationships were formed and



tremendous education took place. Although they missed a trip to the State Festival by one point...this experience was a GREAT SUCCESS!

\*\*\*From HD\*\*\*

One of my most important education goals is to teach our students how to both win and lose with grace. I wish each school board member and administrator could witness our kids managing both of those opportunities. When the kids win, they are not haughty or arrogant but instead modest and humble. When they lose, they control their emotions and congratulate the winners. Regardless of the outcome of each competition, the entire ensemble (both actors and technicians) spend a great deal of time discussing, analyzing and learning from each play we saw. This is often the kids' favorite part of the One-Act Play experience. It certainly is mine.

Synopsis: The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire of 1911 took the lives of 146 workers, most of whom were young women immigrants between the ages of 13 and 23. This tragedy was among the worst industrial fires in New York City history, but its aftermath was even more shocking. Beyond the very dramatic human story, and the historical, political and social ramifications that resulted from this seminal event, the play explores the continuing modern-day concerns of corporate greed and responsibility and the moral and ethical issues surrounding the question. What is the value of a human life? The Triangle Factory Fire Project paints a heartbreakingly clear picture of a disastrous day in American history and explores the human toll such a tragedy takes on us all.

2023-2024 Season Performance Record

Lakes Conference – The Lakes Conference does not have a One-Act Play Festival.

Sub-Section 5AA – 1st place

Section 5AA Finals – 2nd place - missed a trip to the State Festival by one point.