

**School Board Meeting/Workshop:**

**February 8, 2016**

**Subject:**

BCMS Fall Activities Report

**Presenter:**

**John Hayden**

---

**SUGGESTED SCHOOL BOARD ACTION:**

None

**DESCRIPTION:**

Fall is such a great time in secondary schools. The excitement of the new school year and the optimism of new sports seasons makes the time fly by. Middle school kids are even that much more energetic. It really is a fun time in our department.

It was a great fall for our Cross Country team. Coach Jackie Hillstrom was back along with her great energy, passion and organization. Along with Jackie come kids. Jackie does a great job of getting kids to come out and run. Because of the high number of kids, we added Paul Anderson from the high school as a second coach. Paul was equally as good with the kids this fall. Our team had a record number of kids with an almost equal number of boys and girls. It has been a real joy to watch this program grow over the years.

It was another great fall for girls tennis. Coach Krista Stevens again did a great job and had a nice number of girls out. While we were two girls short of last year, we actually had three girls playing with the high school team. That means we actually had one more than last year. One of those girls was Coach Stevens' daughter, who is not only a great tennis player but is truly a Student of Distinction. I do have some bad news to report regarding tennis however. Krista Stevens has been with us for a number of years coaching both boys and girls. However, as a mother with high school age kids, I knew it was only a matter of time before we lost her to watch her kids. That day came at the end of the season this fall. Krista gave me the news I knew would be coming some day. She will be helping out at the high school I am sure. We will miss her and will be waiting for the day we are able to bring her back.

Girls Soccer started with a real struggle. Soccer is a sport where finding coaches and officials can be a problem. This year we had that problem with our girls program. Coach Ruth Clarke had informed me she was ready to take a step back after anchoring our staff for years. However, she proved her loyalty to this program and our department and came back to take the head role when she realized we were not able to find an appropriate replacement. I am so thankful for Coach Clarke. She took on the job with complete commitment. A highlight of the season was having Alexandria come down for a match. It was a lot of fun to compete against a school we don't get to very often.

Our Boys Soccer program had better luck finding a new coach. A couple weeks before the start of school, I asked our new Phy. Ed. teacher, Kevin Kray, if he would be interested in coaching.

He told me he hadn't played since he was in Middle School, but he was willing to do it. He spent time reading some books and watching some videos and happily took to the task. It turns out Kevin is like a pied piper for kids. Kids love being around him and that includes playing for him. Our boys' soccer numbers were way up from a year ago. That is directly attributable to Kevin. He was also able to help these kids grow as soccer players and the team improved throughout the year. I was very excited when Kevin told me he enjoyed the season and was looking forward to coming back next year.

It was another great football season. Numbers were again very high. Our coaching staff remained largely intact and their experience helped our kids continue to get better as the season went on. Our eighth graders were solid both on the 'A' and 'B' teams. This group of 49 kids sent a message to the rest of the conference that Buffalo football is on its way up. They were not only competitive, but were the better team most nights. Our seventh grade team added Dave Holler as a coach. He is a counselor working with our seventh graders, so it was a great connection. We were also lucky enough to add John Gunderson as a volunteer coach at this level. He was willing to come out and bring some of his expertise as a former varsity assistant to help these kids. Another sign of good things to come in this program.

Volleyball numbers were down this year. They were actually down quite a bit. However, that is a little deceiving because last year's numbers were the highest we have seen. Probably too high to make it a quality program for our kids. Seventy-nine girls is still a lot when you figure we are only scheduled to play one A match and one B match per grade level. Again, our intramural program helped make this a manageable situation this fall. Three of five coaches were new this year. Returning coach Julie Neby did a great job of leading this group. We addressed the net issues we had by taking the poles in and having them sand blasted. That seemed to make the system work better this year. We also added some new nets. I believe our volleyball program has been and will continue to be a strong feeder program for the high school.

I mentioned that we had three tennis girls play up with the high school. This gave us an opportunity to use our "Play up" process. It seemed to work very well. Conversations were held regarding the value of the experience for the girls, whether or not they were emotionally, academically and socially ready for this kind of move. Also, we were able to discuss whether these girls were going to displace any high school students already playing at the high school. These conversations included parents, coaches, high school activities personnel and middle school activities personnel. It was a thorough process that included many voices and worked very well.

## **ATTACHMENT(S):**

BCMS Fall Participation Report