

School Board Meeting/Workshop:

February 9, 2015

Subject:

BCMS Fall Activities Report

Presenter:

John Hayden

SUGGESTED SCHOOL BOARD ACTION:

NONE

DESCRIPTION:

As I think back to the fall, I am struck by a number of thoughts. The first is it seems like a long time ago. I am also struck by the feeling that even though it was a long time ago, it seems like it flew by in the blink of an eye. Trying to capture highlights is difficult because the moments are very fleeting. We had larger numbers overall this year than last year. Some sports had bigger years than others, but over all, we saw a nice participation level. Over thirty percent of our students were active in an after school activity.

Cross Country has been a growing sport in our building for a few years. This fall we had fifty-one kids come out to run. This many kids prompted me to add a coach to help Jackie Hillstrom. Of course this sport does not have a field or a court. Kids practice by running throughout the town on sidewalks and side streets. Adding a coach was vital for safety. However, that also provided some great coaching for these kids. Deana Jiagelo, who has an extensive running background and is an energetic new teacher, worked with Jackie. These two ladies did a tremendous job and are very excited for the future of this sport in Buffalo.

Girls Tennis also saw a significant increase in athletes. Twenty-two is a very strong number for us. This growth is not surprising as Krista Stevens is one of the finest tennis coaches around. Kids really enjoy playing for her and we will undoubtedly see an increase in that number. Our program has a reputation in the conference as being one of the better ones around. We usually have more home matches than away because teams want to use our very nice facility with our eight courts. It is awesome to see all the activity on these courts in the fall.

Our Girls Soccer team was lucky enough to add Andy Freschette as a coach this fall. Andy comes to us from the Wright County Soccer Association. He has an extensive soccer background and a real passion for the game. Combining Andy and Ruth Clarke as coaches made for a great program. The two complimented each other well. Forty-seven girls came out this year which is up from last year. We have really improved our connection with the High School program. That connection is going to be a real asset to the High School team as these kids learn the system earlier.

Boys Soccer also added a new coach in Josh Hutchcraft. Josh also came from the Wright County program. He shares Andy's passion for the game and combines it with a natural ability to work with kids. We had thirty-two boys play soccer. In our post-season meeting, Josh talked about trying to find a way to improve the level of competition our boys play. Our conference is not very strong at our level. Schools that do have teams don't have very strong teams. Josh has since been hired as an assistant on the Varsity program. This now means that both the head coach and the assistant coach at the varsity level got their start in our middle school program. This is a very positive connection for our kids and will only improve the over all soccer program.

As we look to the future, I am continuing to look at facilities for our soccer program at the middle school. We currently are using Northwinds Elementary for our practices and games. Having the kids off site has worked but anytime you have to transport kids everyday it can cause issues. With the passage of the levy, the middle school will be getting some changes to our grounds and I am looking at ways we can change things to keep our soccer kids here.

Our big sport in the fall is of course Football. One hundred and thirteen boys came out this fall. Down from the year before, but still very high. Football started this year for our coaches with a meeting before school with new Head Varsity Coach Todd Bouman. Todd has done a great job of bringing new energy to the program at all levels. Meeting with our middle school coaches was very enlightening and allowed for them to get a feel of the kind of

program Todd wanted. Our coaches were excited and it showed in how they coached this fall. Our middle school staff has always had great consistency and that did not change this fall. All eight were back to lead these young men. All of our teams did a great job with the coaches reporting that by the end of the year they all wished they could extend the season because the kids were playing well and they were a joy to be around. Next season should see some football field changes that will greatly improve the experience for the kids and the parents who should be able to sit at the bleachers at Cummings Field.

Volleyball numbers were as high as I have ever seen them. One hundred girls came out and played in the program. It is very interesting to watch a practice with all these kids in the gym. Keep in mind, six girls play at a time. We have implemented a strong intramural program that has teams of girls playing against other teams that stay back when a couple of teams play another school. This helps. Ideally we would like to get more schools to play, and we will continue to look into adding more games. Volleyball is a sport where kids need “touches” or hits. The more they get the better they become. We will continue to try to increase the number of “touches” for our girls. Great coaching is also a reason for such a large number of girls in volleyball and for the amount of girls who indicate they had a great season. This year we had four brand new coaches. I was super impressed with the background of our coaches, and as the season went on, it was clear to see they were all great hires. One need we have in our program is a new net system. One of the first days of practice, these four new coaches who all have volleyball playing and coaching experience, needed help trying to figure out our old system and how to set it up. While one hundred girls looked on, Mr. Erickson and I tried to battle this antiquated system and finally ended up rigging something up to keep the nets up. While we struggled with that, one of our coaches took the girls and was working on serving which meant one hundred girls hitting balls around the gym, a funny scene for sure.

The fall activities season at BCMS had high numbers and a quick pace. I enjoy getting to as many events as possible and watching how well our coaches work with their athletes. They are truly professionals who love kids and provide a wonderful atmosphere for kids in their respective activities. I feel very good about what we provide for kids, parents and families in the Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose School system.

ATTACHMENT(S):

BCMS Fall Participation Report