

**School Board Workshop:**

**May 12, 2025**

Subject:

2024-25 BHS 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 2024-25 winter season. Coaches, Advisors and Directors have completed a short narrative of their season for you to review. Thank you for supporting activities at BHS!

**BPA**

Business Professionals of America (BPA) – End of Season Review

Co-Advisors: Becky Karna and Mark Tuchscherer (1st year)

The 2024–2025 school year marked an exciting and successful season for our BPA chapter! New co-advisors Mark Tuchscherer and Rebecca Karna saw membership nearly tripled—growing from 5 to 14 active student members. This membership number is very comparable to other schools in Region 1 (excluding Wayzata). There are over 90 different individual and team competitions for students organized under six assessment areas: Finance, Business Administration, Management Information Systems, Digital Communication & Design, Management, Marketing & Communication, and Health Administration.

At the Region competition held in January at Wayzata High School, 12 of our 14 members qualified to compete at the BPA State Leadership Conference in March, held at the Hyatt Regency in downtown Minneapolis. Our students performed exceptionally well at State, with 7 students placing in the Top 10 in their respective events.

Notably, we had one State Champion and another student qualify for the BPA National Leadership Conference, held in May in Orlando, Florida.

*A detailed list of student qualifiers and events from State:*

STATE CHAMP: Kylie Kelm - Integrated Office Applications (qualified for Nationals)

3rd Place: Administrative Support Research - Luke Gramstad (qualified for Nationals)  
4th place: Graphic Design Promotion - Emmerson Breyer  
4th place: Website Design Team - Emmerson Breyer & Daniel Jungwirth  
5th place: Economic Research Team - Kumail Akram, Natalie Desmarais, Cecily Holmberg  
6th place: Fundamental Word Processing - Kylie Kelm  
9th place: Natalie Desmarais - Banking & Finance  
9th place: Luke Gramstad - Economic Research Individual

## **Mock Trial Coach Narrative 2024-25**

Head Coach: Jason Swanson (15th season)  
Asst. Coach: Heather Eld (9th season)  
Atty. Coach: Karen Wolff (19th season)

This year's case is a criminal case. The prosecution (state) brought second degree murder charges to Koren Noble, a business owner accused of murdering one of his top investors during a camping trip to the Boundary Waters Canoe Area (BWCA). The investor, Addison Rogers-Nelson, was found dead along the shore of Disappointment Lake. An investigation led Noble to be a prime suspect once it was revealed after Rogers-Nelson threatened to post negative publicity on social media about Noble's company.

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. It has also allowed larger regions to compete with each other due to no worry for geographic distance between competing teams. For the fifth season BHS was placed in the Greater MN Super Region, comprising of 19 teams, BHS making up two (2) of those 19. 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.

The varsity team finished first overall, and was the only team in the region to finish 4-0 without losing any scoring ballots. It consists of 11 students who are all returners from past seasons. There are six seniors on the team this year. They are: Hope Bjornson, Sophia Clarke, Cici Roder, Carolyn Rokke, Eli Shun, and Karsyn Zumbusch. The junior varsity team placed 9th, finishing 2-2. We were also very proud of this team ranking, considering that all but two of the team members on the junior varsity were made up of brand new participants. The top six teams advance to the final round for the state competition. The top six teams in our region this year were (in order): Buffalo, Bemidji, Cambridge-Isanti, Morris, Battle Lake, and Alexandria. The top three schools that advanced to the state competition were: Buffalo, Bemidji and Cambridge-Isanti.

The state competition included the top 16 teams in the state, and was held at the Federal Courthouse in St. Paul on March 6th and 7th. After three rounds of competition, Buffalo finished 12th of 16 overall. Apple Valley High School was named State Champion and will be representing Minnesota at the National Competition this May.

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 this season. 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.

## **Girls Hockey**

Head Coach: Ryan Huddy (4th year)

Asst Coaches: Billy Lincoln, Jennifer Wallace, Alex Rakos, Nate Johnston

Record 10-15-1. We have taken a lot of steps forward the past 3 years and this 4th season showed all the hard work and dedication the players have put in. We are finally getting to a level where we have the numbers to compete with the bigger schools. This season we had big wins against Eden Prairie and Wayzata along with posting our highest win total since 2019.

All conference awards were awarded to Savana Sabraski and Ava Jovan along with Kaiya Johnson, Avery Corbin and Piper Stodola receiving Honorable Mention.

We finished with the 6th seed for Section play and lost a close game to Bemidji. Girls hockey has a solid foundation for the upcoming 5 seasons with participation and commitment. I believe this will continue.

## **Boys Basketball**

Head Coach: Josh Ortmann (9th Head Coach/13th overall)

Asst Coaches: Ross Mjelde, Jason Sorenson, Joel Squadroni, Mike Curry, Aaron Hegle, Ryan Petersen

Our boys basketball team began the season with a slow start as we worked to find our identity and build team chemistry. Through persistence, hard work, and trust in one another, we found our stride and began to compete with confidence. Along the way, we earned three top-10 wins, proving we could play with the best. We finished the regular season leading the section in wins, a testament to the team's growth and resilience. Earning a three seed in the playoffs was a great accomplishment and showed just how far we came. We were also proud to have two players, Jordy Sorenson and Mitchell Friesz, recognized as All-Conference—an honor well-deserved for their leadership and

performance. On top of that, the team earned Academic Section Champion honors and came just two-tenths of a GPA point shy of being named Academic State Champions, highlighting our commitment both on the court and in the classroom.

## **Boys Hockey**

Head Coach: [Aaron Johnson](#) (12th year @ BHS)

Asst Coaches: Bruce Johnson, Jon Varner, Chris Pullar, Jordan Zelenak

The boys hockey team had a successful 2024-2025 season. On the ice, the team was led by 8 seniors including Harvey Ylitalo, John Manuel, Blake Beckman, Gavin Dahle, Kaleb Schult, Coy Meyer, Cooper Murphy and Luke Berard. The team finished with an overall record of 6-20. 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. The communities of Buffalo and Annandale were very supportive.

All-Lake Conference member was Harvey Ylitalo. We also had 3 players earn All-Conference Honorable Mention - Junior Brandon Rodenwald, Junior Evan Hinnenkamp and Sophomore Cooper Dalbec.

## **Wrestling**

Head Coach: Blake Trullinger (11<sup>th</sup> yr at Buffalo)

Asst Coaches: Jeff Granrud, Josh Lanners, BJ Trende, Eli Riemer

The Bison Wrestling season ended with Senior Ryan Babatz wrestling at the Xcel Center on Saturday night in the AAA 285 pound championship match. In only his second full time varsity season, his hard work and determination led to this achievement. Sophomore Gabe Roehl qualified for the MSHSL State Tournament going 2-2. Sophomore Gabe Roehl and Seniors Aiden Herbst and Max Carter were chosen as team captains for the 25-26 season. The team finished 6-13 overall in duals this season; going 2-4 in Lake Conference duals, beating Edina & Hopkins.

Junior Aiden Herbst and Sophomore Gabe Roehl surpassed 100 career wins while Senior Ryan Babatz finished his Bison Wrestling career with 67 wins. In her first ever season wrestling, Courtney Kotish accumulated 21 wins and earned 4th place in the MSHSL Super Section tournament in Brainerd. Three Bison wrestlers earned Lake Conference First Team Awards: Gabe Roehl, Aiden Herbst and Ryan Babatz. Three wrestlers earned Lake Conference Honorable Mention Awards: Max Carter, Luke Potter and Landon Carroll.

Our 24-25 Varsity Bison Wrestling Team earned a gold Academic award from MN Wrestling Coaches Association with a cumulative GPA of 3.899!

We continue to have a ton of momentum across all levels of our Bison Wrestling program. I'm excited to be leading the program in the right direction.

Go Bison Wrestling! Face the Storm!

## **Buffalo Dance Team**

Head Coach: Mackenzie Ackerman (2nd year)

Asst Coach: Jennifer Thaler, Nicole Olesen, Ashley Buermann

This past dance season was one where BDT took strides into developing our program as athletes to compete at the level of other teams in our conference and state while maintaining a supportive and dedicated team mindset.

All JV and Varsity jazz and kick teams continued to see program high scores throughout the course of our season. We competed with a B-squad jazz team for the first time in program history, led by coach Nikki Olesen. This team allows our program to continue to grow in numbers and support athletes at a variety of levels by focusing on developing technique and building skills. Our JV team, led by coach Ashley Buermann, reached new levels for our program as well. The JV jazz team beat a program high score by 39 points. The JV kick team beat a program high score by 17 points. Our Varsity jazz and kick teams, led by Mackenzie Ackerman and Jennifer Thaler, followed suit with program high scores. By continuing to set new goals and push to new levels, our varsity dance team had an impactful season forever changing our program.

We honored our senior dancers, Gabriella Hegg and Chloe Schroeder, at our end of the season showcase. Parents, friends and families came out to watch their dancers dance one last time while hearing a summary of the amazing things our team accomplished this season. We honored two dancers - Gabriella Hegg and Amelia Hirman, as All-Conference, and three dancers - Chloe Schroeder, Raelie Renko, and Sadie Bienias, as All-Conference Honorable Mention. Our continuous improvements across all levels is a result of our athletes' hard work, determination, and dedication to our team. We have continuously increased expectations and set new goals for ourselves while maintaining a passion and love for dance. We look forward to continuing these growths in the off season and coming back next year stronger than ever!

## **Gymnastics**

Head Coach (Co): Martha Driscoll-Nelson (41 years) / Jon Holtz (21 years)

Asst Coach: Kayla Strom (1st year)

The 2024-2025 Buffalo High School Gymnastics season really was a wonderful one for the athletes and coaches. While the overall record was pretty average, 3W-5L for the varsity team and 4-4 for the JV, due to very stiff Lake Conference competition, the

varsity team spent most of the season ranked among the top 20 teams in Class AA. On top of that, an even more impressive statistic is that every girl on the team had personal career high scores on at least one event. Most gymnasts had career high scores on multiple events. The coaching staff believe this occurred because of the concerned and supportive behavior the gymnasts showed toward their teammates. It truly was a joy to work with a group like this.

Bison Gymnastics was led by four seniors this season: Lydia Field, Annalise Hanson, Kendel Gocken and Lily Jenness, all who have been with the team for multiple years. The scoring leaders on the team were senior Lydia Field and junior Macy DuBois. These two both qualified for the MSHSL State Tournament on Uneven Bars and Floor Ex, where they performed admirably. They also were named All Lake Conference, All Section in Section 5AA and Honorable Mention All State in all events. Other gymnasts receiving awards include: senior Annalise, junior Izzy Kohler, and Sophomore Madi Henry named All Conference Honorable Mention. All Section ACADEMIC awards went to 6 gymnasts (Ellen Ward 9th, Lily Jenness 12th, Elizabeth Ende 8th, Matea Ellis 10th, Maryam Sonbol 8th and Karina Wuollet 8th) with a Cum GPA at or over 3.75, great students as well as hard-working athletes!

The future looks bright for the team as there will be 11 gymnasts returning. Coach Kayla Strom will return as an assistant coach. Coach Jon Holtz has decided to retire from coaching gymnastics after his many years of devotion to the program. Coach Martha Driscoll-Nelson would really like to step back into an assistant coach position. After 41 years, she isn't done with Buffalo High School Gymnastics, but would like to spend some time with her soon to be grandchild. The Head Coach position has been posted and Coaches DN and Strom would love to work with and assist a new devoted "team player" gymnastics coach for the Bison. Please help get the knowledge of the opening to anyone who might be interested and qualified.

## **Girls Basketball**

Head Coach: [Jordan Zrust](#) (1st year)

Asst Coaches: [Stacy Eggers](#), [Barry Johnson](#), [Reese Wishart](#) Jazmen Boone

Our basketball season was successful in the amount of growth we had as a team. We played a schedule that helped us grow and challenged us to become better. We ended the season with a record of 12-15, while competing through the Lake Conference schedule once. We split with Edina, earning us one conference win. We played Minnetonka very close, winning at halftime. There was a lot of energy in the gym during practices and games, there were a lot of lessons that were taught and learned throughout this season. We were on the gold team for AAAA for academics with a team GPA of 3.837.

#### Team Awards:

MVP: Brianna Eggers

DVP: Mia Haugen

Most Improved: Avery Bjorklund

Hustle: Cyre Otto

Bison: Alyana Feekes

#### All Conference Honorable Mention:

Brianna Eggers

Alyana Feekes

### **Knowledge Bowl**

Head Coach: [Brandon Aldrich](#) (6th year)

Asst Coach: [Ryan McCallum](#)

This Knowledge Bowl Season was the best numbers-wise that we've had since I started coaching. We had eight teams consisting of 4-5 players each. All teams saw varying success in their own way across the invitational season. In the postseason, Buffalo's Varsity 1 Team that has been competing together since they were Freshman, qualified for the State Tournament at Cragun's Resort, which was this team's 2nd time going, taking 5th place last year. The team did fantastic at State and took 6th place, which wasn't enough for the podium, but they received the Heritage Spirit Award (an award where the readers/coaches vote on the best team culture). We are looking forward to another successful season next year. All of the teams- Varsity through JV are highly competitive, great leaders, and all-around fantastic students in the BHS community.

### **One Act**

Director, Tracy Hagstrom Durant (31 years at BHS, 45 total)

*Neighbour Rosicky* by Jessica Chipman

Based on the short story of the same name by Willa Cather

19 students participated in the One-Act Play program during the 2024-2025 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. Director, Tracy Hagstrom Durant is always looking for that special educational piece of challenging theater that tells a story and moves people. We have been living through some challenging times and HD felt she and her theatre kids needed to find a play that was positive, happy, taught something and gave people a reason to smile. *Neighbour Rosicky* perfectly fits the bill!

HD believes it is her responsibility to:

- Expose our kids to a wide variety of theater experiences.
- Stretch them as producers of theater.
- Prepare them to be educated, open minded consumers of theater.
- Help these kids develop into GENEROUS, KIND, CARING, HUMBLE HUMANS!

*Neighbour Rosicky* was written by a friend of HD's after she received permission by the Willa Cather estate to turn her short story (by the same title) into a play. 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) spends 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 Play is set in: Bohemia, London, New York and Nebraska  
The Time Period is: 1860's to 1930's

"Neighbour Rosicky" dramatizes an old Bohemian farmer's final days. The story is a character study of Anton Rosicky but also a portrait of a happy, productive family; a philosophical reflection on the place of death in the cycle of life; and a subtle social commentary on the American drive for success at the expense of a full life in the present. It uses flashbacks to contrast Rosicky's past life as a tailor in London and New York with his life as husband and father on a Nebraska farm where his naturally generous spirit and capacity for hard work have matured.

#### 2024-2025 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...again.

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

- BHS Winter Act Participation 2024-25