

**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 10, 2025
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 Lisa Werner - Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
2. Roll Call: Denise Churchill, Stephen Donnelly, John Haskins, Jennifer Summers, Vanessa Thun, Greg Vosberg, Lisa 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: Ellen Ripley - 12th Grade:
Start of 3rd Trimester and kids are relieved to be done with exams. Rock/Paper/Scissors Day was enjoyed by students and staff. Boys Basketball District Finals/Quiz Bowl (State), Little Shop of Horrors Musical scheduled for 3/14 and 3/15 at 7:00PM and 3/16 at 2:00PM.
7. Committee Report(s)
Foundation Meeting: 3/5/2025
8. Presentation: Brian Williams & Tom Rowland - Summer College Baseball League
Brian Williams & Tom Rowland spoke about a potential summer league that could allow opportunities for our students, such as interning to announce/broadcast games, handle media relations, live streaming games, and business operations to provide real life experiences. Fundraising for student programs through raffle and concession sales. This would be advantageous for the community and the school as a whole. Both Brian and Tom have children in the New Buffalo School District and are excited about the potential opportunity for students and the community.

9. Presentation: Tom Whitsel - Transportation Director

Spoke about the transportation department and touched on the continuing education and safety training that is consistent with all drivers. The district has eight drivers and utilize BusRight School Bus Management that enhances student safety, streamlines bus communication, and manages routes at the touch of a button. Currently, the district has traveled over 100,000 miles transporting students in the safest manner. A reminder that our district bus drivers are the first to say “hello” to our students and the last to “good bye,” they are the bookends of a child’s school day.

10. Presentation: Kate Nicolai - MiAeyc Policy Forum/Washington, D.C.

Spoke about attending the National Association for the Education of Young Children Policy Forum in Washington D.C. She spent three days networking with childhood educators and policy makers and touched on issues that impact families, young children, and those that teach them. The conference was made possible through a scholarship from the MiAeyc.

11. The Superintendent recommends that the Board approve the New Buffalo Community Education Foundation's use of the NBAS-approved logo for marketing purposes.

Motion: Thun

Second: Vosberg

All ayes, motion carried.

12. The Superintendent recommends the Board approve grant applications for the Planned Unit Development as outlined below:

Senator Peters Congressional Directed Spending Grant

Senator Walberg Community Project Submission Grant

Senator Slotkins State Grant

MSHDA Grants (as applicable)

Motion: Churchill

Second: Donnelly

All ayes, motion carried.

13. Remarks from the Superintendent

- Over the past two years, we have been exploring potential improvements to the school-owned baseball field, aligning our efforts with the enhancements made to the city-owned softball field. In recent months, we have engaged in extensive discussions with architects and field experts, and through this process, new ideas and opportunities have emerged.

As we consider the long-term vision for this project, we anticipate implementing improvements in phases. We are fortunate to have individuals committed to making significant financial contributions through the foundation, and we are also exploring the potential of hosting a summer college league, which could further support future enhancements. Given these financial opportunities, it is important to be strategic in our planning to ensure we maximize the impact of these investments.

Currently, we are evaluating the feasibility of installing a turf infield while maintaining a natural grass outfield. This hybrid approach would allow for greater field utilization, benefiting not only our JV and Varsity baseball teams but also accommodating younger age groups, including Pony League and other community programs. While the initial cost may be higher, the long-term savings in maintenance are substantial. A turf infield eliminates the need for reconstructing batters’ boxes, pitching mounds, and basepaths, as well as routine mowing, irrigation, dragging, raking, and lining. Additionally, turf significantly reduces game postponements due to weather, as its advanced drainage system ensures playability even in challenging conditions.

Another key aspect of our plan is to relocate home plate so that both the softball and baseball fields share a common backstop area. This adjustment opens the door for a future multi-use facility, where spectators can conveniently watch both games while having access to shared amenities such as restrooms and concessions.

Finally, we are excited about the potential to bring a summer college league to our community. This opportunity could not only enhance the use of our facilities but also contribute to the overall growth and development of our baseball program and allow student participation in radio broadcasting and video production. Tom and Brian are here this evening to provide an overview of how this initiative aligns with our vision for the field's future.

While the district remains committed to making improvements that primarily benefit our high school student-athletes, the support of the foundation and the summer league presents an opportunity to introduce additional enhancements that might not otherwise be feasible.

- **Today**, we began the third and final trimester of the school year. Last Thursday and Friday were exams. On those days there were half days for grading and report cards.
- **Key Card System**: there are 9 more doors to finish out the project. These units must be ordered and take 6 - 8 weeks to arrive. The new intercom systems to buzz into the buildings are having software issues that need to be fixed. We anticipate those being resolved by the end of this week. Otherwise, everything is functioning. We just are learning a lot with the system and how to manage it.
- **Emergency management system** Raptor is up and running. All district employees were trained on how to use Raptor.
- **Budget Season**: all principals and directors are submitting their budget requests for review. Pano and I will go through this in detail in April.
- **There is a Rec Authority meeting** this Wednesday in which I anticipate the Rec Authority selecting an architect to move forward with the city owned softball field for improvements.
- **Blood drive** will be held in the Blue Gym Monday, March 24, 2025.
- **Planning** for the district storage building next to the transportation garage is moving forward. This week, architects from Tower Pinkster will be on-site to provide our building trades students with a hands-on learning experience. They will demonstrate how they translate ideas from initial needs and planning meetings into detailed building designs using CAD systems.

During these discussions, we discovered that several plotted roads run through our property. We are actively working with the city to remove these plotted roads and consolidate all district-owned properties under two tax IDs. Currently, multiple tax IDs exist for our properties on Clay Street, and streamlining them will help simplify management and future planning.

14. Remarks from the Board President and Members

15. Discussion Item(s)

- A. Jeanne Przystup - Resignation due to retirement, effective June 9, 2025.
- B. The Superintendent approved the following hire:
Corey Hayes - Maintenance Technician

16. Other Business: None

17. Adjournment

Motion: Churchill

Second: Donnelly

All ayes, motion carried

Meeting adjourned at 6:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Vanessa Thun, Secretary
BOARD OF EDUCATION
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