

Agenda of Regular Meeting

The Board of Trustees Van Buren ISD

A Regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Van Buren ISD will be held January 2, 2025, beginning at 4:00 PM in the Van Buren Conference Center
490 S Paw Paw Street
Lawrence, MI 49064.

The public is invited to attend the Van Buren Intermediate School District Board of Education meetings. If you require an accommodation to access these meetings or would like to provide input or ask questions on any business that will come before the Van Buren Intermediate School District Board of Education at the meeting, please contact Dave Manson, Superintendent at dmanson@vbisd.org.

The subjects to be discussed or considered or upon which any formal action may be taken are as listed below. Items do not have to be taken in the order shown on this meeting notice. Unless removed from the consent agenda, items identified within the consent agenda will be acted on at one time.

I. REGULAR MEETING

A. Approval of Draft Agenda (**ROLL CALL VOTE**)

B. Consent Agenda - (**ROLL CALL VOTE**)

1. Minutes

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The Van Buren Intermediate School District Board of Education's regular meeting was held in person on **December 4, 2024**, in the Board of Education office. It was called to order at 4:00 PM. The following board members were present: Faul, Kent, Makay, Weiss, and Middaugh.

Kent moved to approve the December 4, 2024, draft agenda as presented. Supported by Faul. Roll call vote. Makay – yes, Faul – yes, Kent – yes, Weiss – yes, and Middaugh – yes. Motion carried.

Makay moved to approve the Consent Agenda (*November 6, 2024, Minutes; Composite and Summaries*). Supported by Faul. Roll call vote: Faul – yes, Kent – yes, Weiss – yes, Makay – yes, and Middaugh – yes. Motion carried.

Faul moved to approve the Board/Superintendent Travel for December 2024. Supported by Weiss. Roll call vote. Kent – yes, Weiss – yes, Makay – yes, Faul – yes, and Middaugh – yes. Motion carried.

Thanksgiving Dinner for Bert Goens Learning Center students and staff was held on November 21, 2024, and Board members Middaugh, Kent, Weiss, and Makay helped serve the meal. Department updates were made by Melissa Corona (Instructional Services), Britani Olds (Human Resources), Angie Gutierrez (Multilingual Migrant Services), and Robert Smith (Career & Technical Education), along with the Superintendent update from Dave Manson.

Weiss moved to approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED that the VBISD Board of Education approve upon receipt by Owen-Ames-Kimball Co. of the appropriate documentation, contracts be awarded to these contractors and suppliers by Van Buren ISD.

1	Demo Specialized Demolition, Inc. (Hamilton, MI)	\$ 49,500
2	Concrete Early & Associates (Allegan, MI)	\$ 43,400
3	Masonry Burggrave Masonry, inc. (Belding, MI)	\$ 156,041
4	Metals Rail Components, Inc. (Muskegon, MI)	\$ 158,000
5	General Trades MHS Custom Builders (Galesburg, MI)	\$ 80,160
6	Joint Sealants Slager Restoration & Sealants (Vandalia, MI)	\$ 3,145
7	LPDA Bouma-Betten Construction, Inc.	\$ 76,330
8	Flooring Sobie Company (Grand Rapids, MI)	\$ 48,360
9	Painting Eckhoff & Devries Painting and Wallcovering (Wyoming, MI)	\$ 13,545
10	Operable Partitions Bareman & Associates, Inc. (Jenison, MI)	\$ 29,555
11	FSE Great Lakes West (Kalamazoo, MI)	\$ 817,099
12	Fire Protection Triad Fire Suppression, Inc. (Grand Rapids, MI)	\$ 14,175
13	Mech./Plumbing Kalamazoo Mechanical, Inc. (Kalamazoo, MI)	\$ 481,006
14	Electrical Hi-Tec Electric (Portage, MI)	\$ 350,200
15	AV Parkway Electric & Communications, LLC (Holland, MI)	\$ 63,043
16	Cabling The DataCom Group, Inc. (Holt, MI)	\$ 7,875

Supported by Kent. Roll call vote. Weiss – yes, Makay – yes, Faul – yes, Kent – yes, and Middaugh – yes. Motion carried.

Makay made the motion to approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves an additional Assistive Technology Provider position (5 days per week), in response to (a) the growing student need, (b) the growing research that supports an increase in these services, and (c) the need for succession planning effective immediately.

Supported by Faul. Roll call vote. Makay – yes, Kent – yes, Weiss – yes, Faul – yes, Middaugh – yes. Motion carried.

Faul moved to approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approve the employment of Margarita Carrillo, Bridge Team Consultant, with an annual salary** of \$52,098.00 effective 12/2/24. ***Salary may be prorated based on start date*

Supported by Weiss. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Weiss moved to approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED that the Board of Education accept the resignations of Heather Macyauski, Graphic Design Instructor, effective 11/29/24.

Supported by Makay. Voice Vote. Motion carried.

Weiss made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Supported by Faul. Voice Vote. The meeting adjourned at 5:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



John Faul, Board Secretary
Van Buren Intermediate School District
Board of Education, Lawrence, Michigan

A Special Board Work Session meeting of the Van Buren Intermediate Board of Education was held in person on **Tuesday, December 17, 2024**, at the Van Buren Conference Center in Lawrence, Michigan. The following board members were present: Makay, Weiss, Faul, Kent, and Middaugh. Also present: Dave Manson.

The meeting was called to order at **9:00 am** by President Middaugh. The following items were discussed and reviewed by the Board:

- 1) Special Education – *Katy Holverstott*
- 2) Early Childhood - *Susan Reynolds*
- 3) Technology Services – *Damian Koob*
- 4) Instructional Services – *Melissa Corona*
- 5) VB Tech – *Robert Smith*
- 6) Superintendent’s Mid-Year Evaluation and Staff Feedback- *Manson*
- 7) District Improvement Plan – *Manson*
- 8) Thrun Policies – *Manson*
- 9) Proposed Non-Union Wage Adjustments – *Manson*
- 10) Construction Projects – *Manson*

The meeting adjourned at **2:30 pm**.

Respectfully submitted,



John Faul, Board Secretary
Van Buren Intermediate Board of Education

VAN BUREN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
DECEMBER 2024

VOUCHERS

Imprest Fund	867,524.03
Payroll Fund	4,307,749.19
Purchasing Cards	80,366.05
EduStaff ACH	16,694.26

PAYROLL SUMMARY

General	1,132,555.85
Special Education	2,443,820.43
Vocational Education	731,372.91
Student Activity Fund	-
Food Service Fund	-
Total	4,307,749.19

IMPREST VOUCHER SUMMARY

FUND	CHECKS	TRAVEL	PURCHASING	TRFS/SALES	TOTAL
General	296,367.42	-	31,036.75	(13,649.82)	313,754.35
Special Education	300,785.42	-	18,926.11	3,718.77	323,430.30
Vocational Education	270,371.19	-	30,349.45	9,931.05	310,651.69
Capital Projects	-	-	-	-	-
Food Service	-	-	-	-	-
Student Activity Fund	-	-	53.74	-	53.74
Total	867,524.03	-	80,366.05	-	947,890.08

**VAN BUREN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
DECEMBER 2024**

BUDGET TO EXPENDITURE COMPARISON 24-25

FUND	BUDGET	ACTUAL & ENCUMBERED EXPENSES	UNENCUMERED BALANCE	YEAR TO DATE VARIANCE
General	26,221,227	8,788,932	17,432,295	3,229,130
Special Education	43,256,264	14,513,925	28,742,339	5,311,863
Career Tech Education	17,411,809	5,768,787	11,643,022	2,211,626
Food Service	10,972	-	10,972	5,029
Capital Projects	-	-	-	-

CASH FLOW SUMMARY

	ENDING BALANCE 11/01/2024	CASH RECEIPTS	CASH DISBURSEMENTS	ENDING BALANCE 11/30/2024
General	1,663,448	2,409,931	1,992,676	2,080,703
Special Education	9,902,828	2,718,619	3,809,296	8,812,151
Career Tech Education	7,222,715	984,370	1,877,328	6,329,758
Student Activity Fund	33,470	86	216	33,341
Food Service	10,740	-	-	10,740
Capital Projects	-	-	-	-
Total	18,833,201	6,113,007	7,679,515	17,266,693



Upcoming Events/Key Dates January/February 2024

- **1/2** VBISD School Board Meeting, 4:00p @ Conference Center
- 1/7 Facilities Planning Meeting, 1p @ Conference Center
- *1/25 VBISD hosted CBA Day, 9a-3:30p @ Conference Center
- **1/20** VBISD Virtual PD Event - Great Job Awards TBD
- **2/5** VBISD Public Hearing - Anti Bullying Policy, 3:45p @ Conference Center
VBISD School Board Meeting, 4:00p @ Conference Center
- **2/27** Educational Hero Awards Banquet, 5-7p @ Conference Center

KEY:

Informational only

*Board attendance voluntary

****Board attendance requested**

D. Public Comments
II. **INFORMATIONAL ITEMS**
A. Board Updates
B. Superintendent Update

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Date: January 2, 2025
To: Board of Education
From: David D. Manson, Superintendent
Subject: **Superintendent Update**

****Changes in PA 152 - House Bill 6058:** (Governance & Board Relations, Staff Relations, Business & Finance)

At the time of this writing, House Bill 6058 has been passed and is now awaiting Governor Whitmer's signature. When signed, this legislation will alter PA 152 by increasing the hard cap by the greater of 3% or the rate of inflation in future years. For 2025, this would be an immediate hard cap increase of approximately 7%. School lobbyists unsuccessfully advocated for a supplemental funding stream to cover these unexpected costs for districts. The overall impact on VBISD would be an increase in cost of \$31,364 per month (\$376,379 per year).

****Facilities Assessment & Adjacency Planning:** (Governance & Board Relations, Staff Relations, Community Relations, Business & Finance, Instructional Leadership)

At the December 17th board work session, several potential building projects were reviewed. In an effort to ensure that the projects are well structured and carefully arranged, a facilities planning meeting is being held on January 7th with the VBISD Directors, Owens Ames & Kimball Construction and Tower Pinkster Architects.

Paw Paw Middle School hosts MASA 7: (Governance & Board Relations, Staff Relations, Business & Finance, Instructional Leadership)

On December 19th, Paw Paw Middle School had the opportunity to host region 7 of the Michigan Association of Superintendents & Administrators. During this meeting, Dr. Michael Rice (State Superintendent) presented the progress Michigan has made toward the strategic education plan. Here are the goals associated with with the plan:

- 1) Expand early childhood learning opportunities
- 2) Improve early literacy achievement
- 3) Improve the health, safety and wellness of all learners
- 4) Expand secondary learning opportunities for all students
- 5) Increase the percentage of all students who graduate from high school

- 6) Increase the percentage of adults with a post-secondary credential
- 7) Increase the number of certified teachers in areas of shortage
- 8) Provide adequate and equitable school funding

****Transportation Marketing:** (Staff Relations, Community Relations, Business & Finance)



WE'RE HIRING

DRIVERS NEEDED

- ✓ **BUS DRIVER- \$19.50-\$23/HR*, PAID TRAINING OFFERED**
- ✓ **BUS ATTENDANT- \$16-\$21.50/HR***
- ✓ **VAN DRIVER- \$16.75-\$20.25/HR***

***STARTING RATE BASED ON EXPERIENCE**

- 5 HOURS GUARANTEED PER DAY, MORE HOURS AVAILABLE
- BENEFITS- MEDICAL, DENTAL, VISION
- SMALL BUS LOADS- AVG. 8-10 STUDENTS PER BUS
- BUS ATTENDANT ON MOST BUSES

APPLY NOW

GO TO:

- VBISD.ORG
- EMPLOYMENT
- ONLINE APPLICATION

VBISD
Respect • Integrity • Compassion • Excellence

MLK Professional Learning Day: (Governance & Board Relations, Staff Relations, Community Relations, Business & Finance, Instructional Leadership)

On January 20th, VBISD will be hosting our annual MLK professional learning day. This event will take place virtually and will consist of the following items:

- VBISD updates and events
- Artificial Intelligence
- VBISD Great Job Awards
- Individual Department Professional Learning

C. Department Updates
1. Presentation - Human Resources

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EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAM

Employee Wellness Program



Katie Boyer- Event Coordinator

- Team of 8 representing various departments
- Monthly meetings
- Wellness Committee Members:
 - Britani Olds- HR Administrator - Business Office
 - Melissa Nelson- Administrative Assistant- Business Office
 - Erinn Hess- Diagnostic Teacher Consultant- Special Education
 - Brenda Jarka- Specialized Program Asst. at BGLC
 - Regina Herber- Instructional Services
 - Dana Shepard- CTC Instructor- Special Education
 - Robbyn Candelaria- Career Guidance Coordinator- VB Tech

Employee Wellness Program Overview



Purpose:

Foster holistic well-being among employees

Key Components:

- Fitness and Physical Health
- Mental and Emotional Well-being
- Financial Wellness
- Social Engagement
- Environmental



Target Outcome:

Improve employee health, engagement, and retention.

Employee Wellness Program Information



Point system:

- Earn points by completing monthly challenges, volunteering or attending an education session (aka- Lunch & Learn)
- Points Equal Dollars
 - Turning in Points for Reward Payment

Activities:

- Focus on Wellness Pillars- Environmental, Social, Physical, Mental Health and Financial
- Gratitude Challenge- Mental Health; Wellness Bingo- Social, Physical, Financial; Lunch & Learn- Financial

Newsletter:

- Sent out monthly
 - Updates on Program
 - Section Focusing on Mental Health
 - Upcoming Events



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Employee Wellness Program Metrics



The measurable benefits of employee wellbeing



Increases retention and engagement



Reduces employee burnout



Makes your company an attractive place to work



Reduces healthcare costs



Reduces absenteeism

Questions?



MEMO

DATE: JANUARY 2, 2025
TO: BOARD OF EDUCATION
FROM: KARA WAGNER, FINANCE SUPERVISOR
RE: **FINANCE UPDATE**

Medical Plan Update (4,13,19)

MESSA INSURANCE CHANGES EFFECTIVE 01/01/2025 FOR ALL VBISD EMPLOYEE GROUPS

1. Choices Plan
 - a. Increase in deductible from \$500/\$1000 to \$1000/\$2000
 2. ABC 1 0% co-insurance; 3 Tier Rx Plan
 - a. Move to ABC 2 0% co-insurance; 3 Tier Rx Plan
 - b. Increase in deductible from \$1650/\$3300 to \$2000/\$4000
 3. ABC 1 10% co-insurance; 3 Tier Rx Plan
 - a. Move to ABC 2 10%; 3 Tier Rx Plan
 - b. Increase in deductible from \$1650/\$3300 to \$2000/\$4000
 4. Essentials Plan (No Changes)
 5. NEW PLAN - ABC 2 0% co-insurance
 - a. 5 Tier Rx Plan with a \$2000/\$4000 deductible
 6. Vision Coverage (No Changes)
 7. Dental Coverage
 - a. Increase in annual maximum from \$1500 to \$2000
 - b. Increase in lifetime maximum from \$1200 to \$2000
- Prior to above changes – premium rate increase average of 13%
 - After changes – premium rate increase average of 7.2%
 - Hard Cap Rates increased .2% from 2024

Single	\$643.19
Two Person	\$1,345.11
Full Family	\$1,754.15
 - House Bill 6058 – potential to change hard cap maximum rates

Key Learnings from Covering for the Finance Director

Strategic Financial Planning and Decision-Making: I have developed a strong ability to align the company's financial resources with its short-term goals, including budgeting, financial decision making, and assisting with grants.

Cross-Functional Collaboration: I have learned the key points of contacts within the departments to help build relationships, which has enabled me to facilitate more informed decision-making and effectively support strategic initiatives

Expanded Leadership: I have gained significant experience in directly supervising and leading a larger team while covering for Rebecca Depas. This has helped me refine my skills in team management, mentorship, and ensuring alignment with organizational goals.

Overall, the past three months have been an invaluable experience, and I now feel confident in my ability to take on larger roles and responsibilities as needed in the future.

MEMO

DATE: JANUARY 2, 2025
TO: BOARD OF EDUCATION
FROM: KATY HOLVERSTOTT,
DIRECTOR
RE: SPECIAL EDUCATION UPDATE



***January Professional Learning Day Leadership, Level of Professional Awareness, Professional Standards & Ethics, Communication Skills, Resourcefulness, Planner & Organizer, Supervisor, Faculty & Staff Personnel, Student Achievement**

On January 20, 2024, following the morning presentations led by Dave Manson, the Special Education Department will view “This Is Not About Me,” an award winning documentary that tells the story of Jordyn Zimmerman, who as a child dreamed of becoming a teacher but was separated from the other children because she was unable to communicate. Her teachers thought she was also unable to understand or learn. Without an effective communication system, she developed significant behavior problems, was restrained and placed in seclusion. Finally, at the age of 18, with educators who saw her differently, she was able to flourish.

Following the film, participants will engage in guided reflection, discussion and application activities. Finally, the day will conclude with individual region and program staff meetings.



***Staff Shortage Leadership, Level of Professional Awareness, Planner & Organizer, Supervisor, Faculty & Staff Personnel**

The Special Education Department has three primary goals: (a) promoting equity and kindness, (b) supporting and restoring our staff and (c) improving student outcomes.

This school year, our focus has been on improving student outcomes. However, this goal cannot be achieved without adequate staffing. Although the school year began with minimal vacancies, unforeseen staff changes, medical leaves and a significant increase in requests for special education evaluations have created considerable challenges.

While the VBISD programs have been well-staffed and flexible enough to maintain high-quality services, the issues lie with our regionally assigned staff, particularly in the areas of School Social Work, Speech and Language Pathology and School Psychology. To ensure that mandated services are provided, volunteer staff have been working additional hours. Additionally, VBISD has hired a virtual Speech and Language Pathologist for the first time and added Diagnostic Teacher Consultants to take on duties previously handled by School Psychologists. While these solutions have addressed student needs, they have also introduced unintended stress and, in some cases, resentment. This has negatively affected the Department's culture and climate and may impact staff retention.

In response to these challenges, the Department has implemented various strategies this fall to encourage collaborative problem solving to develop sustainable solutions. While each discipline faces unique needs, it is clear that an overall increase in staff is necessary, along with proactive marketing and recruiting efforts well in advance of the new school year. Next month, the Special Education Department, in partnership with the Early Childhood Department, will present to the Board a request for ancillary staffing increases for the 2025-2026 school year.

***Ukeru Leadership, Level of Professional Awareness, Professional Standards & Ethics, Decision Maker, Evaluator, Crisis Manager, Faculty & Staff Personnel**

Emergency physical restraint and seclusion are used in school settings only as a last-resort measure to ensure safety. To support educators in implementing best practices, key staff members in the VBISD Special Education programs are trained in [Crisis Prevention Institute \(CPI\)](#) techniques and regularly provide CPI training to member districts throughout the school year.

A new system, [Ukeru](#), has recently gained wider adoption. Ukeru, a Japanese word meaning "to receive," is unique because it is the only restraint-free crisis management system, marking a significant departure from traditional programs. Its primary goal is



***Ukeru (Continued)**


to de-escalate behavior without physical intervention, thereby reducing the risk of injury and trauma associated with restraints. Ukeru is also designed to avoid triggering trauma responses, emphasizing the importance of positive rapport and connection in preventing and defusing crises.


A committee of VBISD educators and Emergency Management Team members has been working collaboratively to explore Ukeru and its potential application in VBISD. A select group has already been trained and has begun incorporating elements of the system at the Bert Goens Learning Center and, in one instance, on a bus. Starting in January, Ukeru will be implemented more formally in classrooms, with careful monitoring of its impact. Trainer certification for Ukeru is scheduled for the spring and efforts are underway to make this resource available to member districts in the future.

Sixth Annual Behavior Conference Leadership, Level of Professional Awareness, Supervisor, Faculty & Staff Personnel, Student Achievement

The Sixth Annual Behavior Conference, held on November 2, 2024, was another success. Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive. Over 360 people participated and included educators across Michigan and also from California, Texas, Oklahoma, Minnesota, Missouri and Indiana.



Much appreciation goes to Jennifer Korinek for launching this series six years ago and for being the lead coordinator. Below is a list of sessions and linked recordings and resources. Note that this conference featured two of our own VBISD experts, Paula Kana'an, Mental Health Clinician Supervisor from the Instructional Services Department, and BrieLynn Sturm, Occupational Therapist from the Special Education Department.

Keynote Presentation		
Strategies to Teach Self-Regulation, Organization, Planning and Task Completion <i>Sarah Ward, M.S., CCC/SLP, Cognitive Connections, LLP Co-Director</i>		
What skills do students need to learn to be organized and successful in managing their own time and tasks in the classroom? This multidisciplinary workshop will provide practical, hands-on strategies to develop students' executive function skills for success in school. The term "executive function" is used to describe the skill set required for setting goals, carrying out organized steps, and modifying a plan to complete a task successfully in the classroom. Difficulty with executive function isn't a		Session Recording Password: SwVBISDE F!2024



<p>diagnosis or learning disability on its own, but it's a common area of need for students with learning and attention issues. All students benefit from instructional strategies that foster executive function skills, however they are essential for accelerating learning in students with anxiety, ADHD, specific learning disabilities, language delay, autism and traumatic brain injury.</p> <p>Special education teachers, general education teachers, and ancillary staff will learn specially-designed instructional strategies for "Being a Beat Ahead," "Building an Internal Sweep of the Sense of Time," and "Get Ready-Do-Done." Beginners and advanced participants will learn and practice these strategies to improve students' awareness, working memory, hindsight and forethought skills, impulse control, cognitive flexibility, organization, and time/task management.</p>		Session Materials
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11:00 AM - 12:00 PM Breakout Sessions

Values Over Procedures: A Movement to Minimize the Usage of Emergency Seclusion and Restraint
Abbey Mix, LMSW, BCBA, Kent Intermediate School District

<p>Prioritizing relationships and student engagement is critical in responding to the significant rise in social, emotional, and behavioral needs and in response to the continued concern for the usage of exclusionary discipline and emergency seclusion and restraint. Additionally, as the science around best practices continues to evolve, a reflective perspective allows administrators and educators to consider the past so that the way forward becomes more evident. This session will focus on growing mindsets and beliefs in supporting students in crisis and preventative interventions and solutions.</p>		Session Recording
<p>Prioritizing relationships and student engagement is critical in responding to the significant rise in social, emotional, and behavioral needs and in response to the continued concern for the usage of exclusionary discipline and emergency seclusion and restraint. Additionally, as the science around best practices continues to evolve, a reflective perspective allows administrators and educators to consider the past so that the way forward becomes more evident. This session will focus on growing mindsets and beliefs in supporting students in crisis and preventative interventions and solutions.</p>		Session Materials

From Trauma to Calm: Navigating Stress Recovery with CIDP
Paula Kana'an, LMSW, Van Buren Intermediate School District

<p>In this breakout session, participants will explore the Critical Incidence Desensitization Protocol (CIDP), a therapeutic approach designed to help individuals effectively manage and recover from acute stress reactions following traumatic events. CIDP combines elements of trauma-informed care with targeted interventions aimed at reducing the emotional intensity tied to critical incidents. It is designed for use by lay people; one does not need to be a therapist or counselor to learn and implement it as a practice. By the end of the session, participants will leave equipped with actionable strategies to implement CIDP and enhance emotional well-being in their professional practice.</p>		Session Recording
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Unlocking the Mystery of Selective Mutism
Aimee Kotrba, Ph.D., Thriving Minds

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM Breakout Sessions

Children with untreated Selective Mutism are at an increased risk for self-esteem issues, depression, school failure, social skill problems, and school refusal. Early and evidence-based therapeutic intervention is of utmost importance to decreasing anxiety and increasing communication in children with Selective Mutism. Participants will learn how to identify and assess for Selective Mutism and what school and mental health professionals can do to help.



[Session Recording](#)



[Session Materials](#)

1:00 PM to 2:00 PM Breakout Sessions

The ABC's and How They Inform Intervention

Sarah Pierce, BCBA, LBA and Jason Ervin, M.Ed, Kalamazoo Regional Educational Service Area

This session will provide an overview of collecting Antecedent, Behavior, Consequence (ABC) data, including guidance on identifying and recording antecedents, behaviors, and consequences. Participants will learn how to graph this data to visualize behavior patterns, analyze the results to interpret trends in behavior, and use this information to develop actionable interventions.



[Session Recording](#)



[Session Materials](#)

How My Student's Grandma Helped Me, Help Our Teachers

Joe Zima, LMSW, Advanced Trauma Practitioner, St. Clair County Regional Educational Service Area

This session will explore how adverse childhood experiences, Starr Commonwealth's trauma training, my student's Grandmother, and a book about Big Baffling Behaviors are helping us find success in finally understanding coregulation. You'll learn how these resources have shaped our approach and how coregulation can be successfully taught in a school setting to support students in managing their emotions and behaviors.



[Session Recording](#)



[Session Materials](#)

Understanding Sensory + Behavior

BrieLynn Sturm, MS, OTR/L, Van Buren Intermediate School District

This session offers an in-depth exploration of the Pyramid of Learning, breaking down each tier to examine how foundational sensory and motor skills influence student behavior. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of how challenges at different levels of the pyramid can manifest in the classroom, affecting attention, emotional regulation, and overall academic performance. Practical strategies for identifying and addressing these challenges will be discussed, empowering educators to create more supportive and effective learning environments.



[Session Recording](#)




[Session Materials](#)



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2:15 PM to 3:15 PM Breakout Sessions



Triaging Teacher Burnout: Building Effective Systems to Support Challenging Student Behavior
Jill Handley, Ed.D. and Lara Donnelly, Ed.D., Jefferson County Public Schools

Managing challenging student behavior is a significant concern that increases stress and workload. This session delves into the implementation of school wide systems of support using trauma informed practices and data-driven decisions. Participants will learn how to remove things from teachers’ plates to reduce chronic stress related teacher burnout.		Session Recording
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Student Mental Health Matters -- Can You Spot It?
Dr. Melissa Reffitt, DNP, CPNP-PC/AC, PMHS, Kalamazoo Child and Family Counseling

This session will review case examples of common mental health concerns, co-occurring disorders, and trauma responses seen in school-age children. Participants will engage in the review of diagnoses and how to collaboratively plan for care, including referrals and advocacy efforts.		Session Recording
		Session Materials

The Misunderstood Behavioral Manifestations of ADHD
Anna M. Weber, M. Ed, Applied Educational Neuroscience Specialist, Van Buren Intermediate School District

This session offers educators a neuroscientific perspective on supporting students with ADHD and includes practical strategies grounded in brain science to help educators foster more effective learning environments, improve classroom management, and promote academic success for students with ADHD.		Session Recording
		Session Materials

Team Highlight Leadership, Faculty & Staff Personnel

I love the VBISD because of the wonderful people who support our students and districts across the county. Pictured below is the team that serves Lawton Community Schools.

Left to right: Erinn Hess, Courtney Stewart, Aaron Tennant, Brandon Morkut and Kevin Ouzts.



MEMO

DATE: JANUARY 2, 2025
TO: BOARD OF EDUCATION
FROM: DAMIAN KOOB
RE: TECHNOLOGY SERVICES BOARD REPORT

****Michigan Virtual – AI Summit** (Leadership, Professional Awareness, Communication Skills, Professional Preparation, Community Relations)



On December 17th, I was able to attend the 2nd Annual AI Summit presented by Michigan Virtual and MACUL. This conference focused on all things AI and how Districts are utilizing this new tool in their classrooms and departments. The opening keynote was delivered by Matt Mervis, an innovative AI user, former high school Social Studies teacher, technology director, and the strategic director of everything AI at his ESA in Litchfield, CT. His message centered around how artificial intelligence tools are influencing our lives and redefining the education landscape at a rapid pace. He touched on how vital skills such as critical thinking, managing ambiguity, and creativity are becoming increasingly important as we prepare students for a future deeply intertwined with AI.

Aside from the keynote, one session I found very interesting was titled “All gas, no brakes: relaxed ride thru wild AI tools”. This was an interactive session where the presenter guided us through the exciting world of AI through a playful lens. He showcased a variety of AI applications to help spark “creativity and joy”, from art generators and logo creators to music composition and voice synthesizers. Some of these tools included Suno, Google’s NotebookLM, Adobe Firefly, and Perplexity.

The conference was very interesting and had some great content to bring back to our VBISD AI committee for digestion. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to attend these great sessions.+

Cybersecurity in K12 School Districts (Leadership, Professional Awareness, Communication Skills, Professional Preparation, Community Relations)

The state of cyber security in education (K12 school districts in particular) is becoming a major concern for educators, parents, and students alike. As technology continues to advance, schools are becoming more and more reliant on the internet and other digital tools to support teaching and learning. However, this increased reliance on technology also creates new vulnerabilities and risks, such as the potential for cyberattacks, data breaches, and other forms of online misconduct, which we have experienced to some extent

In recent years, there have been numerous reports of cyber security breaches in K12 schools. These incidents have exposed sensitive student and staff data, disrupted educational services, and caused significant financial losses. In some cases, these breaches have even resulted in the temporary closure of schools. In response to these challenges, many school districts are taking steps to improve their cyber security practices, including implementing stronger security protocols, training staff and students on digital

safety, and collaborating with law enforcement and other agencies to address cyber threats.

Overall, the state of cyber security in K12 schools remains a significant concern. While schools are making progress in addressing these challenges, there is still a need for ongoing efforts to improve cyber security practices and protect student and staff data. By continuing to focus on this issue, school districts can help ensure that students and staff can use technology safely and securely to support teaching and learning.

****December 17, 2024 Board Work Session (Leadership , Communication Skills, Professional Preparation, Planner and Organizer)**

Thank you to the Board and Mr. Manson for allowing me to attend the December 17th Board Work session virtually. I appreciate the time to go over my Cybersecurity and AI updates...and all the great things we are doing for VBISD and our local districts. We have a great team and I appreciate the time to show you what we do and the shared services models that we support.



(Technology Services Staff at Halloween.)



DATE: JANUARY 2, 2025

TO: BOARD OF EDUCATION

FROM: SUSAN REYNOLDS, DIRECTOR OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

RE: EARLY CHILDHOOD UPDATE

**** Kids Count Data 2024 Leadership, Level of Professional Awareness, Community Relations, Student Achievement, Decision Maker, Planner & Organizer**

The Kids Count Data is a comprehensive resource that provides annual insights into the well-being of children across Michigan's counties, including Van Buren County. Compiled by the Michigan League for Public Policy, this data encompasses various indicators such as economic security, health, education, and family and community context. These metrics are essential for policymakers, educators and community leaders to assess the status of children in their regions and to make informed decisions that promote the health and development of all children.

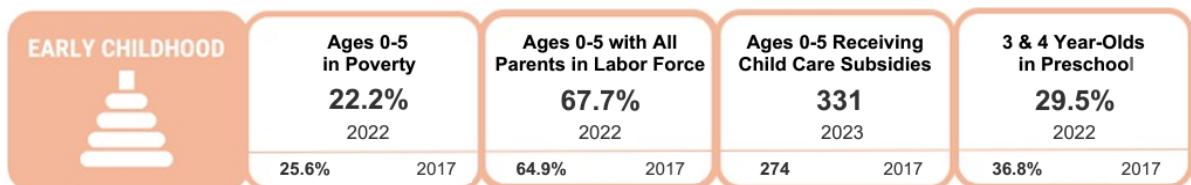
By utilizing the Kids Count Data, stakeholders can identify areas of need, track progress over time and implement strategies to improve outcomes for children and families in Van Buren County and throughout Michigan.

Attached Reports: Van Buren 2024 (2022 data); Van Buren 2023 (2021 data); Michigan 2024 (2022 data)

Early Childhood Impact Summary for Van Buren County with State Comparisons and Year-over-Year Data

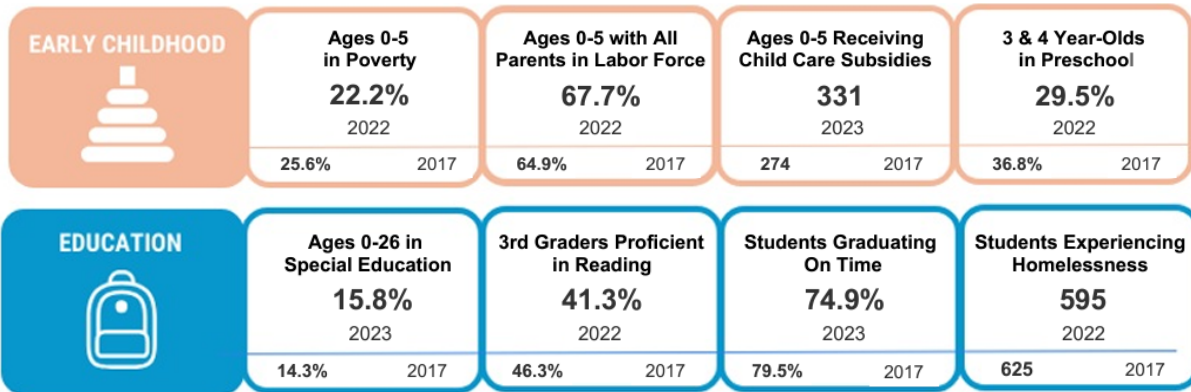
Economic Well-being:

- **22.2% of children aged 0-5 in Van Buren County live in poverty** (2022), a slight improvement from **25.6%** (2017), though still above the state rate of **19.9%** (2022). The decrease indicates progress in local poverty alleviation efforts.
- **67.7% of children aged 0-5 in Van Buren County have all parents in the labor force** (2022), up from **64.9%** (2017) and higher than the state rate of **67.0%**, highlighting growing parental workforce participation.



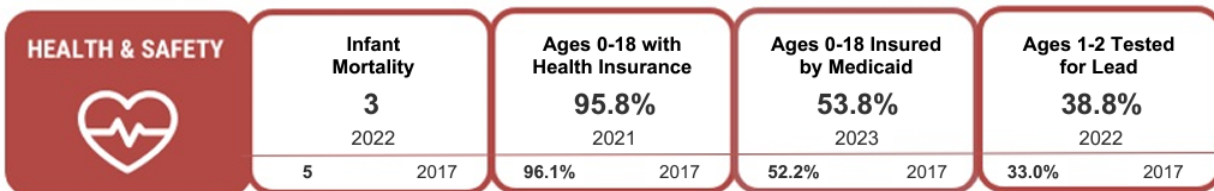
Education and Development:

- **29.5% of Van Buren County's 3- and 4-year-olds are enrolled in preschool (2022)**, an increase from **24.6%** (2021) and significantly lower than the state average of **44.3%**, suggesting a worsening gap in early educational access.
- **Special education services for ages 0-26** continue to address developmental needs, with no significant changes reported year-over-year.



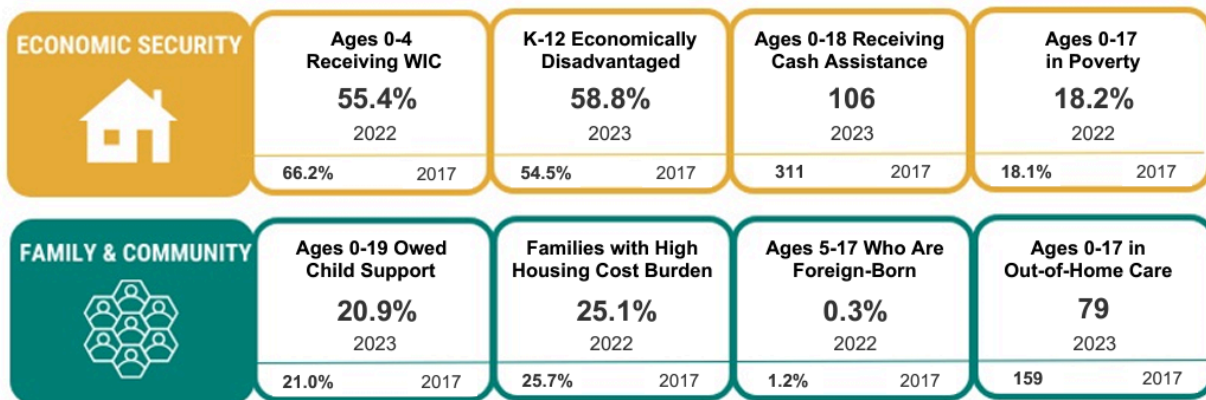
Health:

- **95.8% of children aged 0-18 in Van Buren County have health insurance (2022)**, consistent with the previous year's **96.3%** and close to the state average of **97.0%** (2022), indicating stable and high coverage.
- **38.8% of children aged 1-2 in Van Buren County were tested for lead (2022)**, up from **25.4%** (2021) and surpassing the state average of **34.3%**, reflecting effective local health initiatives.
- **Infant mortality in Van Buren County is 3 per 1,000 births (2022 & 2021)** which is lower than the state rate of **6.7 per 1,000 (2022)**, marking progress in maternal and infant health outcomes.



Family and Community Context:

- **55.4% of children aged 0-4 in Van Buren County receive WIC benefits** (2022), up slightly from **53.2%** (2021) and still above the state rate of **48.7%**, indicating continued reliance on nutrition assistance programs.
- Housing affordability remains critical, with **25.1% of families in Van Buren County experiencing a high housing cost burden** (2022), a slight increase from **24.6%** (2021) and relatively consistent with the state average of **26.1%**, highlighting ongoing housing challenges.



This analysis demonstrates both progress and persistent challenges in Van Buren County. While strides have been made in reducing child poverty and improving health metrics like lead testing and infant mortality, declines in preschool enrollment and persistent housing burdens underscore areas requiring further investment.

**** Early Childhood Community Collaboration... It takes a village! Leadership, Level of Professional Awareness, Communication Skills, Resourcefulness, Creativity & Innovativeness, Personality, Planner & Organizer, School Plant & Facilities, Community Relations, Fiscal Management**

The Early Childhood Department recognizes the profound connection between young children, their families and their communities. To effectively reach our youngest learners, many of whom are not yet involved in formal programs or schools, it is essential to engage with families directly in the community. Below are examples of the impactful work being done by VBISD staff and partners.

Ongoing Initiatives

- Since 2012, the **Great Start Safe Sleep Initiative** has provided safe sleep crib sets and education to families lacking access. In partnership with Early On, the Great Start Collaborative (GSC), VB Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Council, Bronson Health Foundation and Silver Linings MIHP, this initiative distributed 57 cribs in 2024, a 54% increase from the previous year. The rise in distribution was primarily driven by additional referrals from MIHP and Bronson, ensuring more families benefit from safe sleep resources and education.

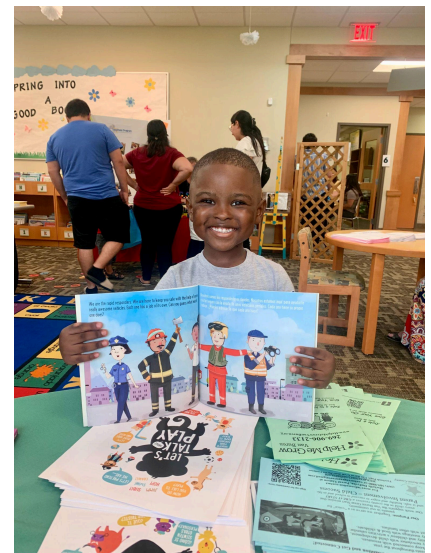
- The **Diaper Bank Education** program, launched in 2023, supports low-income families with children from birth to age three by providing diapers and early childhood education. Partners include the GSC, Hope Parent Resource Center, United Christian Services and Community Action of Allegan County. Until recently, the program served an average of 100 families each month. With recent funding reductions these monthly services have been reduced to quarterly. In response, the GSC has committed to supplying diapers for an additional two months per year and organizing a Community Diaper Drive to assist families.



- The **Great Start Community Baby Shower**, established in 2020, provides bilingual safe sleep, perinatal and infant education to families who are pregnant or parenting a child under one year old. This initiative involves a broad coalition of partners, including GSC, Early On, Family Links/Parents as Teachers (PAT), HOPE Parent Resource Center, DHHS, VB Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Council, Bronson Health Foundation, Bronson Safe Kids South Haven, VB Friend of the Court, Aetna Better Health, Flowers Early Learning (Head Start), Milk Queens and InterCare/WIC. Since its inception, 180 parents have participated in this program, with events offered virtually for the first three years and in person for the last two. Approximately 40% of attendees are Hispanic, supported by strong Spanish-language resources to meet their needs.



- The VBISD Early Childhood Department also prioritizes **Early Literacy** across its programs, which include the Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP), Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE), Build Up and Little Learners classrooms as well as home visiting services like Family Links/Parents as Teachers (PAT) and Early On. The department collaborates with the GSC's Literacy in Action! committee and community partners such as local libraries, Bronson Healthcare, VB Friend of the Court, Flowers Early Learning (Head Start) and SW MI Child Care Resources. These partnerships ensure that literacy development is supported both in the classroom and at home, fostering a strong foundation for lifelong learning.



Through these initiatives, the VBISD Early Childhood Department demonstrates its commitment to connecting with families, strengthening partnerships and providing essential resources to ensure all children have a strong start in life.

**** Staffing Update Leadership, Level of Professional Awareness, Resourcefulness, Decision Maker, Planner & Organizer, Faculty & Staff Personnel, Fiscal Management, Student Achievement**

We're continuing to work on filling current vacancies in the Early Childhood Department to better support both staff and students. These positions are key to helping us meet the diverse needs of children in our ECSE and general education preschool classrooms. Moreover, maintaining adequate staffing levels is vital for fulfilling our Child Find obligations, ensuring timely identification and intervention for children who may require additional services. Addressing these vacancies will strengthen our ability to uphold high-quality educational experiences for all children while supporting our staff in their important work.

Early Childhood Team	Vacancies
Early Childhood Special Education	ECSE Diagnostic TC ECSE School Psychologist ECSE SLP ECSE Floater (2) ECSE Program Assistant - Public Preschool (4)

GSRP Enrollment Update Leadership, Level of Professional Awareness, Community Relations, Student Achievement

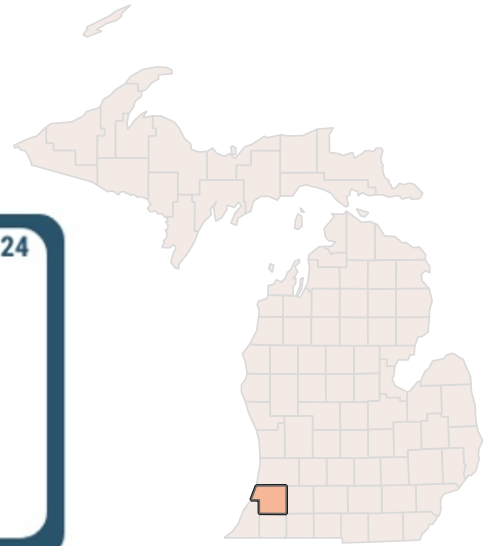
The Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) continues to play a pivotal role in providing high-quality preschool education to four-year-olds in our county, aligning with Michigan's **PreK for All** initiative. This state-led effort emphasizes increasing inclusive opportunities for preschool-aged children, ensuring that all learners, regardless of background or ability, have access to the critical benefits of early education. Currently, county-wide GSRP enrollment continues to rise, demonstrating both the program's reach and the growing demand for equitable and inclusive preschool services. As we advance toward the state's vision of universal preschool, our focus remains on collaboration with local schools, families and community partners to break down barriers and create welcoming, inclusive classrooms where every child can thrive.

December 13, 2024							
VBISD	Capacity	Assigned <400% FPL	Assigned >401% FPL	Assigned 1755	Total Assigned	Waitlist	Current Openings
Bloomingtondale	18	10			10		8
Covert	20	10		2	12		8
Decatur	20	17	1		18		2
Gobles	40	22	1		23		17
Hartford	51	42		4	46		5
Lawrence	20	12		2	14		6
Mattawan	38	20	8	4	32		6
Pullman	20	8		2	10		10
South Haven-Lincoln	20	12		2	14		6
South Haven-Maple Grove	40	26	2	2	30		10
Totals	287	179	12	18	209	0	78
LEAs	Capacity	Assigned <400% FPL	Assigned >401% FPL	Assigned 1755	Total Assigned	Waitlist	Current Openings
Bangor	36	30	3	3	36	1	0
Lawton	32	30		2	32	2	0
Paw Paw	60	47	6	4	57		3
Totals	128	107	9	9	125	3	3
CBOs	Capacity	Assigned <400% FPL	Assigned >401% FPL	Assigned 1755	Total Assigned	Waitlist	Current Openings
Kid Builders East	20	6	13	1	20		0
Learn & Grow Childcare LLC	10	6	1	1	8		2
Trinity Lutheran TLC	20	9	4	1	14		6
Totals	50	21	18	3	42	0	8
Head Start Expanded Blends	Capacity	Assigned <400% FPL	Assigned >401% FPL	Assigned 1755	Total Assigned	Waitlist	Current Openings
Decatur HS Blend	11	11			11		0
Gobles HS Blend	11	11			11		0
Paw Paw HS Blend	11	11			11		0
Mattawan HS Blend	10	10			10		0
S.H.HS Blend/1	10	10			10		0
S.H.HS Blend/2	10	10			10		0
Totals	63	63	0	0	63	0	0
Grand Totals	528	370	39	30	439	3	89



Van Buren County

[View State Profile](#)



POPULATION (2022)	AGES 0-5	AGE 0-17	AGES 18-24
Total	5,144	17,162	5,841
American Indian/Alaska Native	32	113	63
Asian	23	84	35
Black	156	528	225
Hispanic	1,060	3,475	1,193
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0	6	1
Two or More Races	318	927	264
White	3,555	12,029	4,060



EARLY CHILDHOOD

Ages 0-5 in Poverty
22.2%
 2022
 25.6% 2017

Ages 0-5 with All Parents in Labor Force
67.7%
 2022
 64.9% 2017

Ages 0-5 Receiving Child Care Subsidies
331
 2023
 274 2017

3 & 4 Year-Olds in Preschool
29.5%
 2022
 36.8% 2017



HEALTH & SAFETY

Infant Mortality
3
 2022
 5 2017

Ages 0-18 with Health Insurance
95.8%
 2021
 96.1% 2017

Ages 0-18 Insured by Medicaid
53.8%
 2023
 52.2% 2017

Ages 1-2 Tested for Lead
38.8%
 2022
 33.0% 2017



EDUCATION

Ages 0-26 in Special Education
15.8%
 2023
 14.3% 2017

3rd Graders Proficient in Reading
41.3%
 2022
 46.3% 2017

Students Graduating On Time
74.9%
 2023
 79.5% 2017

Students Experiencing Homelessness
595
 2022
 625 2017



ECONOMIC SECURITY

Ages 0-4 Receiving WIC
55.4%
 2022
 66.2% 2017

K-12 Economically Disadvantaged
58.8%
 2023
 54.5% 2017

Ages 0-18 Receiving Cash Assistance
106
 2023
 311 2017

Ages 0-17 in Poverty
18.2%
 2022
 18.1% 2017



FAMILY & COMMUNITY

Ages 0-19 Owed Child Support
20.9%
 2023
 21.0% 2017

Families with High Housing Cost Burden
25.1%
 2022
 25.7% 2017

Ages 5-17 Who Are Foreign-Born
0.3%
 2022
 1.2% 2017

Ages 0-17 in Out-of-Home Care
79
 2023
 159 2017

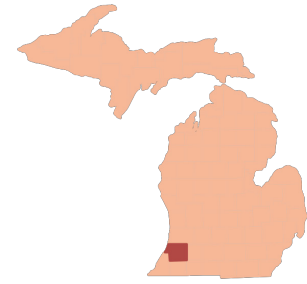


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Van Buren County

From Evidence Into Action



DATA IS FOR 2021 UNLESS NOTED

POPULATION		POPULATION BY RACE AND ETHNICITY		
Total population	75,658	American Indian and Native Alaskan, alone	Ages 0-17	Ages 18-24
Child population	17,534		119	64
• Ages 0-5	5,364	Asian, alone	104	34
• Ages 6-12	6,902	Black, alone	538	226
• Ages 13-17	5,268	Hispanic or Latino	3,564	1,116
Young adult population		Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, alone	4	1
• Ages 18-24	5,659	Two or more races	892	239
		White, alone	12,313	3,979

ECONOMIC SECURITY	KEY TRENDS OVER TIME	BASE YEAR (2016)		MOST RECENT YEAR				Trend
		Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Rate Change	MI Rate	
		Children in poverty, ages 0-17	4,334	24.8%	2,981	17.4%	-29.8%	
Young adults in poverty, ages 18-24	1,453	23.8%	1,077	18.7%	-21.4%	21.5%	●	
Free & reduced price lunch, K-12 (2022)	8,033	51.2%	8,675	56.0%	9.4%	53.3%	●	
ADDITIONAL DATA				Number	Rate		MI Rate	
Households in poverty & ALICE				11,686	41.1%		39.0%	
Children receiving...								
• Cash assistance (FIP), ages 0-18 (2022)				156	0.9%		1.1%	
• Food assistance (FAP), ages 0-18 (2022)				4,423	24.1%		23.0%	
• Women, Infant and Children (WIC), ages 0-4				2,370	53.2%		41.9%	
• Subsidized child care payments, ages 0-12 (2022)				229	1.9%		2.1%	
Average cost of full-time child care/month; (% of full-time minimum wage; 2022)				\$614	36.0%		42.3%	

EDUCATION	KEY TRENDS OVER TIME	BASE YEAR (2016)		MOST RECENT YEAR				Trend
		Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Rate Change	MI Rate	
		3- and 4- year olds in preschool	649	38.2%	420	24.6%	-35.6%	
Students graduating on time (2022)	1,042	78.3%	999	76.4%	-2.4%	81.0%	●	
3rd graders proficient in ELA, M-STEP (2022)	565	49.5%	403	41.3%	-16.6%	42.1%	●	
ADDITIONAL DATA				Number	Rate		MI Rate	
Children receiving Early-On services, ages 0-2 (2022)^				203	6.8%		3.9%	
Students in special education, ages 0-26				2,282	14.8%		14.5%	
Students experiencing homelessness, K-12^				511	3.3%		2.0%	
8th graders proficient in math, PSAT (2022)				334	30.4%		36.9%	
Children with internet at home, ages 0-17				16,615	94.2%		93.9%	

^Multiple counties may be served by a single ISD. In this case, the data cannot be broken down by county, and the same proportion is listed for each county. See the Data Definitions & Notes page for the county to ISD key.

Van Buren County

From Evidence Into Action

DATA IS FOR 2021 UNLESS NOTED

HEALTH & SAFETY	KEY TRENDS OVER TIME	BASE YEAR (2016)		MOST RECENT YEAR				Trend
		Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Rate Change	MI Rate	
		Less than adequate prenatal care	348	40.1%	269	33.6%	-16.2%	
Infant mortality <i>rate per 1,000</i>	5	6.1	3	3.7	-39.3%	6.8	●	
Low birthweight babies	57	6.6%	59	7.4%	12.1%	9.0%	●	
ADDITIONAL DATA			Number	Rate	MI Rate			
Children with health insurance, ages 0-18 (2020)			16,933	96.3%	97.4%			
Insured by Medicaid, ages 0-18 (2022)			10,627	57.8%	49.6%			
Fully immunized toddlers, ages 19-35 months (2022)			955	71.2%	66.1%			
Children tested for lead, ages 1-2			434	25.4%	29.2%			
Children with food insecurity, ages 0-17 (2020)			2,670	15.2%	13.7%			

FAMILY & COMMUNITY		BASE YEAR (2016)		MOST RECENT YEAR				Trend
		Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Rate Change	MI Rate	
		Birth to teens, ages 15-19 <i>rate per 1,000</i>	65	27.1	48	21.1	-22.1%	
Children in poverty by household structure:								
• Family with married parents, ages 0-17	1,543	12.9%	1,288	10.8%	-16.3%	8.1%	●	
• Family with single parents, ages 0-17	2,677	48.4%	1,882	35.5%	-26.7%	37.2%	●	
ADDITIONAL DATA			Number	Rate	MI Rate			
Children owed child support, ages 0-19			4,009	21.2%	19.4%			
Child support owed; none received, ages 0-19			847	21.1%	18.5%			
Children who are foreign born, ages 5-17			40	0.3%	2.8%			
Language other than English spoken at home, ages 5-17			1,595	12.1%	10.5%			
Families with high housing-cost burden			7,171	24.6%	25.9%			

Kids Count in Michigan provides child advocates, agencies, public officials and legislators with the best available data, nonpartisan policy recommendations and tools to advance policies that benefit children. Our data-based profiles help decision-makers understand the educational, social, economic and physical well-being of children across the state.

An equitable, two-generation approach will help Michigan's kids keep moving forward. A child's well-being should not be determined by their race, place or income, but data shows that this is the reality. That's why our racial equity lens considers how policy decisions help or hinder outcomes. We also consider access to opportunity for the adults in kids' lives when working to improve well-being.

KEY

- Improving
- Little Change
- Worsening
- N/A Data not available
- * Data suppressed



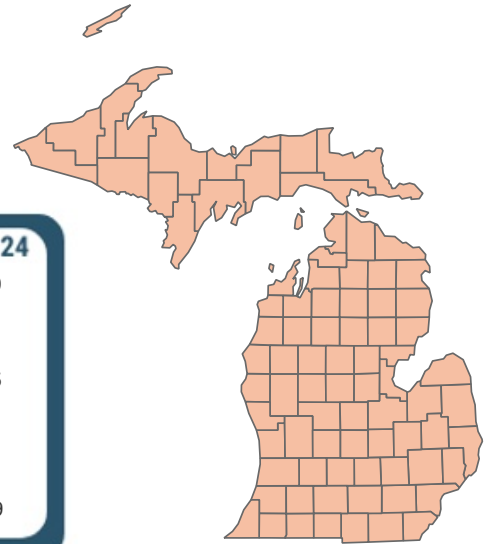
Scan this code to access the Kids Count Online Data Center, which provides additional data, including nearly 150 indicators, trends, graphs, rates and more.





Michigan

[View County Profiles](#)



POPULATION (2022)	AGES 0-5	AGE 0-17	AGES 18-24
Total	650,317	2,109,695	954,220
American Indian/Alaska Native	3,245	11,407	5,983
Asian	24,329	75,022	42,088
Black	113,500	344,539	139,755
Hispanic	56,819	188,107	78,170
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	242	644	345
Two or More Races	35,101	108,534	37,480
White	417,081	1,381,442	650,399



EARLY CHILDHOOD

Ages 0-5 in Poverty
19.9%
 2022
 25.0% 2017

Ages 0-5 with All Parents in Labor Force
67.0%
 2022
 66.2% 2017

Ages 0-5 Receiving Child Care Subsidies
42,704
 2023
 38,994 2017

3 & 4 Year-Olds in Preschool
44.3%
 2022
 47.1% 2017



HEALTH & SAFETY

Infant Mortality
671
 2022
 760 2017

Ages 0-18 with Health Insurance
97.0%
 2021
 97.1% 2017

Ages 0-18 Insured by Medicaid
47.1%
 2023
 43.2% 2017

Ages 1-2 Tested for Lead
34.3%
 2022
 40.5% 2017



EDUCATION

Ages 0-26 in Special Education
15.8%
 2023
 14.0% 2017

3rd Graders Proficient in Reading
42.1%
 2022
 44.1% 2017

Students Graduating On Time
81.8%
 2023
 80.2% 2017

Students Experiencing Homelessness
32,762
 2022
 34,014 2017



ECONOMIC SECURITY

Ages 0-4 Receiving WIC
48.7%
 2022
 47.3% 2017

K-12 Economically Disadvantaged
53.7%
 2023
 50.3% 2017

Ages 0-18 Receiving Cash Assistance
21,730
 2023
 35,448 2017

Ages 0-17 in Poverty
17.8%
 2022
 19.6% 2017



FAMILY & COMMUNITY

Ages 0-19 Owed Child Support
18.4%
 2023
 20.8% 2017

Families with High Housing Cost Burden
26.1%
 2022
 28.3% 2017

Ages 5-17 Who Are Foreign-Born
2.7%
 2022
 2.8% 2017

Ages 0-17 in Out-of-Home Care
8,463
 2023
 11,209 2017



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III. ACTION ITEMS

A. Approval of Non-Union Staff Pay Adjustments (**ROLL CALL VOTE**)

47



DATE: January 2, 2025
TO: Board of Education
FROM: David D. Manson, Superintendent
SUBJECT: **APPROVAL OF NON-UNION PAY ADJUSTMENTS**

In the past, we have made mid-year adjustments to non-union staff members in an effort to reward exceptional performance, keep up with market conditions, and account for increasing workloads due to staff shortages. As a result, I am seeking approval for the following:

- 1) Britani Olds continues to take on additional duties in the organization including the supervision of the conference center coordinator and new marketing coordinator. Britani has become invaluable to the district and I am recommending an increase in salary of \$5,000.
- 2) With the retirement of Tonda Boothby, Angie Gutierrez has officially taken on all of the administrative duties in the multilingual/migrant department. As a result, I am recommending an increase in salary of \$3,000.
- 3) Provide a \$2,000 stipend to Kara Weberg for her leadership and additional duties during Rebecca DePas' recent maternity leave.
- 4) Provide a \$1,000 stipend to Diana Stump for temporarily taking on all lead teacher responsibilities in the Spring of 2024.

RESOLVED, the VBISD Board of Education approves the non-union member pay adjustments with an effective date of January 6, 2025.

B. Approval of Repeal of Current NEOLA Policies and Adoption of Thrun
Policies for District (**ROLL CALL VOTE**)

49

RESOLUTION

A REGULAR meeting of the Van Buren Intermediate School Board of Education (the “Board”) was held in the Van Buren Conference Center, Lawrence, Michigan, within the boundaries of the Van Buren Intermediate School District, on the 2nd day of January 2025, at four o’clock in the p.m.

The meeting was called to order by _____, President.

Present: Members _____

Absent: Members _____

The following preamble and resolution were offered by Member _____ and supported by Member _____

WHEREAS, the Board identified a need to review its current Board policies, bylaws, and administrative guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the District’s/ISD’s administration (“Administration”) has reviewed the Thrun Law Firm Policy Manual (“Policy Manual”) and recommends the Policy Manual for consideration, in the form presented for Board review and approval, to replace the Board’s existing policies, bylaws, and administrative guidelines; and

WHEREAS, the Administration has reviewed any and all legal settlements and resolution agreements between the District/ISD and any state or federal agency, as applicable, that address the modification or agency review of existing Board policy and the Board has considered the impact of those settlements or agreements when recommending adoption of the Policy Manual; and

WHEREAS, the Administration recommends that the Board repeal its existing policies, bylaws, and administrative guidelines, with the exception of existing Board policies: [insert number], concerning student bullying, and adopt the Policy Manual, with the exception of Policy 5207 (Anti-Bullying), concerning student bullying, which requires a public hearing before Board adoption pursuant to Revised School Code Section 1310b, MCL 380.1310b, and [insert number(s)], concerning technology acceptable use and safety, which will be considered amended by the Policy Manual; and

WHEREAS, the Board has carefully reviewed, considered, and evaluated the Policy Manual collectively and as individual Board members and the Administration’s recommendation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The Board accepts the Administration’s recommendation to adopt the Policy Manual.
2. All existing Board policies, bylaws, and administrative guidelines are hereby repealed (including all policies and bylaws that by their terms require a reading(s) or hearing(s) before repeal, modification, or adoption), with the exception of existing Board policies: Policy 5517.01 concerning student bullying, which requires a public hearing before being repealed and replaced, and Policy 7540, concerning technology acceptable use and safety, which will be considered amended by the Policy Manual.

3. The Board hereby adopts the Policy Manual, except Policy 5207 (Anti-Bullying), in the form presented and recommended by the Administration as the Board’s new policies and bylaws, including those forms and administrative guidelines in the Policy Manual, for the purpose of governing the District/ISD.
4. The Administration shall promptly review District/ISD publications and forms that may reference the now-repealed Board policies and revise those publications and forms as necessary to align them with the newly adopted Policy Manual **within 30 calendar days** after this resolution.
5. The Board’s adoption of the Policy Manual, except Policy 5207 (Anti-Bullying), shall take immediate effect.
6. At a Board meeting scheduled for **February 5, 2025, at 3:45 p.m.**, the Board will hold a public hearing concerning proposed Policy 5207 (Anti-Bullying) in the Policy Manual.
7. All resolutions and parts of resolutions insofar as they conflict with the provisions of this resolution be and the same are hereby rescinded.

Ayes: Members _____

Nays: Members _____

Resolution declared adopted.

Secretary, Board of Education

The undersigned duly qualified and acting Secretary of the Board of Education of Van Buren Intermediate School District, Van Buren County, State of Michigan, certifies that the foregoing constitutes a true and complete copy of a resolution adopted by the Board at a regular meeting held on January 2, 2025, the original of which is part of the Board’s minutes. The undersigned further certifies that notice of the meeting was given to the public pursuant to the provisions of the “Open Meetings Act” (Act 267, Public Acts of Michigan, 1976, as amended).

John Faul, Secretary, Board of Education

MEMO

DATE: JANUARY 2, 2025
TO: BOARD OF EDUCATION
FROM: BRITANI OLDS, HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATOR
RE: APPROVAL OF EMPLOYEE HANDBOOKS

BACKGROUND

Having well-structured employee handbooks has become an increasing need for both the employees as well as the Business Office and HR. Employee handbooks serve as vital resources, providing clear guidance and communication regarding policies, procedures, and expectations as well as providing legal compliance.

Employee handbooks have been created for the following classifications:

- Directors
- Admin/Non-Union
- Secretarial
- GSRP Lead Teachers & ECS
- GSRP Associate Teachers & Floaters

Human Resources will be responsible for maintaining and updating these employee handbooks every year to make sure they stay current.

RECOMMENDATION

Resolved that the Board of Education approve the employee handbooks for Directors, Admin/Non-Union, Secretarial, GSRP Lead Teachers & ECS and GSRP Associate Teachers & Floaters.

D. Approval of Additional Maple Creek Education Center Consultant
(ROLL CALL VOTE)

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MEMO

DATE: JANUARY 2, 2025
TO: BOARD OF EDUCATION
FROM: KATY HOLVERSTOTT, DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL EDUCATION
RE: **APPROVAL FOR MCEC CONSULTANT**

BACKGROUND:

Historically, the Maple Creek Education Center (MCEC) has had two consultants to collaborate with administration, teachers, and support staff in delivering specialized programming and student support. However, for the past several years, the school has operated with just one consultant, with the assistant principal and school social worker assuming additional responsibilities to fill the gap.

Following the resignation of the assistant principal this fall, there was an opportunity to assess needs, and it was determined that while an additional administrator is not necessary, the program would greatly benefit from the addition of a second consultant to enable the school social worker to focus on their role and perform it with integrity.

RECOMMENDATION:

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approve an additional consultant position at Maple Creek Education Center (5 days per week), effective immediately.

MEMO

DATE: JANUARY 2, 2025
TO: BOARD OF EDUCATION
FROM: BRITANI OLDS, HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATOR
RE: APPROVAL OF EMPLOYMENT OF NEW STAFF

BACKGROUND

Following is a list of new staff, their position, salary and start date. Copies of resumes are attached.

<u>New Employee</u>	<u>Salary</u>	<u>Start Date</u>
Brittany Millan, Marketing Coordinator *internal transfer	\$80,975.00	1/6/2025
Theresa Wendt, Graphic Design Instructor	\$66,384.00	1/13/2025

***Salary may be prorated based on start date*

RECOMMENDATION

Resolved that the Board of Education approve the employment of the staff listed above.

MEMO

DATE: JANUARY 2, 2025
TO: BOARD OF EDUCATION
FROM: BRITANI OLDS, ADMINISTRATOR FOR HUMAN RESOURCES
RE: **STAFF RETIREMENTS/RESIGNATIONS**

BACKGROUND

Following is a list of retirements and resignations. Copies of letters are attached.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Resignation/Retirement Date</u>
Lacey Clapper, Mental Health Clinician	Resignation - 12/15/24
Ben Wakley, Business Manager	Resignation - 12/31/24
Gloria Pflederer, School Psychologist	Resignation - 1/17/25

RECOMMENDATION

Resolved that the Board of Education accept the resignations/retirements of the staff listed above.

Attachments

IV. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Adjournment

1. Motion to Adjourn Meeting (**VOICE VOTE**)

This meeting is a meeting of the Board of Education in public for the purpose of conducting the School District's business and is not to be considered a public community meeting. There is a time for public participation during the meeting as indicated on the agenda."

It is the policy of the Van Buren Intermediate School District that no discriminatory practices based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, height, weight, marital status, disability, genetic information or any other status covered by federal, state, or local law be allowed during any program, activity, service, or in employment. Inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies should be directed to Barbara Matthews, Director of Finance & Operations or Dave Manson, Director of Special Education, 490 S. Paw Paw Street, Lawrence, MI 49064, 269-674-8091.