

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 April 9, 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 held an open session in person on **March 12, 2025, at 3:15 pm**, in the Boardroom at Van Buren Tech to conduct interviews for the Covert Public School Board of Education vacancy. The open session adjourned at 3:45 pm. The regular Board of Education meeting was **called to order at 4:00 p.m.** The following board members were physically present: Kent, Makay, Faul, Weiss and Middaugh.

Weiss moved to approve the March 12, 2025; draft agenda as presented. Supported by Makay. Roll call vote. Makay – yes, Faul – yes, Kent – yes, Weiss – yes and Middaugh - yes. Motion carried.

Makay moved to approve the Consent Agenda (**February 5, 2025, Minutes; Composite and Summaries**). Supported by Faul. Roll call vote: Faul – yes, Kent – yes, Makay – yes, Weiss – yes, and Middaugh – yes. Motion carried.

Makay moved to approve the Board/Superintendent Travel for March 2025 as shown below:

Pre-Approval

NAME	DATES	LOCATION	ESTIMATED COST
John Faul	May 2-4, 2025	MASA Spring Institute 2025 Mission Point, Mackinaw Island	\$1957
Kenneth Kent	May 2-4, 2025	MASA Spring Institute 2025 Mission Point, Mackinaw Island	\$1985

Post Approval

NAME	DATES	LOCATION	COST
Dave Manson	January 15-17, 2025	MASA Mid-Winter Conference 2025 Amway Grand Plaza, Grand Rapids, MI	\$1228

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

Valerie Bury, a Covert Public Schools board member, addressed the Board. Board members Weiss, Faul, and Makay attended the Annual Educational Hero Awards Dinner on February 27, 2025. The Board gave a special thank you to Dawn Blum for coordinating this event. Department updates from Early Childhood, Finance, Special Education, and Technology Services were given to the Board, along with an update from Superintendent Manson. A presentation on early childhood services by Susan Reynolds was shown to the Board.

Faul made the motion to approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED, the VBISD Board of Education approves the appointment of Dawn Green-Everett to the Covert Public Schools Board of Education through November of 2026.

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

Weiss made the motion to approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept the base bid from IDN in the amount of \$42,543.

COMPANY	BASE BID
IDN	\$42,543
Hall Builders, LLC	\$58,000
Mugen Construction, Inc	\$56,963
Miller-Davis	\$59,000

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

Kent made the motion to approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the network cabling project from Division 27 at a total price not to exceed \$43,829.95. (*Actual cost to VBISD would be \$8,765.99 after 80% discount*).

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

Faul made the motion to approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education accept the base bid from Inspired Floors in the amount of \$72,264.65.

COMPANY	BASE BID
Inspired Floors (Locker Companies)	\$72,264.65
Migala Inc	\$85,025.00
Lumberjack Flooring Co.	\$109,638.00
Central Tile and Terrazzo Co. Inc	\$154,919.44

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

Makay made the motion to approve the following resolution:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren Intermediate School District Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Van Buren Tech Administration, approve the purchase of a wheelchair accessible van from Hoekstra Transportation for a price of \$88,500.

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

Weiss made the motion to approve the following resolution:

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Van Buren Intermediate School District Board of Education, upon the recommendation of the Van Buren ISD administration, approve the compliance plan and assign a signature (ATTACHMENT 1).

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

Faul made the motion to approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approve five additional days beyond the allowable extension for Meghan Buffenbarger, School Psychologist; Galiya Elias, School Psychologist; and Katie Potts, Diagnostic Teacher Consultant & School Social Worker.

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

Makay made the motion to **rescind** the previous resolution approving the additional contract days for ancillary staff. Supported by Faul. Roll call vote. Makay – yes, Faul – yes, Kent – yes, Weiss- yes, and Middaugh – yes. The motion to rescind the previous resolution was carried.

Weiss made the motion to amend the previous resolution for additional contract days for ancillary staff with an effective date of August 18, 2025. Roll call vote. Faul – yes, Kent – yes, Makay – yes, Weiss – yes, Middaugh – yes. Motion carried.

Weiss made the motion to approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approves the ancillary staff increases to be posted immediately and begin on August 25, 2025 for:

- Speech and Language Pathologist: 15 days
- School Psychologist/Diagnostic Teacher Consultant: 14 days
- School Social Worker: 2 days
- Occupational Therapist: 2.5 days
- Physical Therapist: 0.5 days
- Teacher Consultant: 8 days
- Early Childhood Communication Consultant: 5 days

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

Faul made the motion to approve the following resolution:

RESOLVED, the VBISD Board of Education approves the 2025 Migrant Summer School Pay scale as shown below.

**2025 Summer Migrant Education Hourly Pay Rates
Migrant 2025 Instructional Staff Pay Rates**

Position	Hourly Rate
Lead Teacher	\$38-\$40
Teacher/Counselor	\$35-\$38
HQ Parapro w/ETS,60 credit hours, or grandfathered in with work keys	\$16-\$18
HQ Parapro with a Bachelor's degree, HQ Parapro with CDA, Certified Lifeguard, and	\$18-\$20
Home Outreach Staff	\$18-\$24
HOME Teachers	\$35-\$40

Migrant 2025 Misc. Staff Pay Rates

- Certified Medical Assistants, Nurse Assistants, or Nurses (LPN/RN), and Social Workers will receive \$18-\$35 based on certifications, licenses, and years of experience.
- Lead Recruiter, Recruiters, and Parent Involvement lead \$16-38.00 per hour.

Tiers	Clerical Summer Staff
I	\$16.00
II	\$16.75
III	\$17.50
IV	\$18.25
V	\$19.00
VI	\$19.75
VII	\$20.50

Tiers are every three years of experience at the Migrant Director's discretion

- Bus Driver & Bus Attendant hourly pay rates for 2025 will be the same as the VBISD pay scale for bus driver and bus attendant rates. **However, we will start all transportation on the pay scale that is effective July 1st, 2025, when the Summer Migrant begins on June 16th.** Bus Drivers from other districts who work for the Summer Migrant Program will be rewarded for their years of experience on the VBISD transportation pay scale for the 2025 Summer Migrant Program. Bus drivers/Bus Aides are guaranteed 2.5 hours per run.

- Bus Drivers or aides cannot miss more than two days to be eligible for the stipend, including the last week of the program. Bus Drivers will receive anywhere from a \$750-\$1000 stipend, and Bus Aides will receive a \$375-\$500 Stipend. Part-time staff are not eligible for the stipend.
- \$2,000 stipend for Sunny Hudson to take the lead on routing bus stops for the summer migrant program, monitoring am radio and communicating with bus drivers.
- \$1200 Stipend for a bilingual staff member(s) who answers the transportation radio in the PM (*Stipend may be divided amongst more than one staff*).
- \$500 Stipend for first week transportation set up (*Stipend may be divided amongst more than one staff*).

**Stipends are contingent on the grant allocation*

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

Kent made the motion to approve the following resolution.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the following policies as presented for approval effective February 21, 2025:

Policy 4113 Michigan Earned Sick Time Act (ESTA) - Amended

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

Makay made the motion to approve the following resolution.

RESOLVED, that the Board of Education approve the employment of Alec Williams, Grant Accountant, annual salary \$53,000.00, effective 02/17/2025 and Amber Johnson, Mental Health Clinician, annual salary \$52,098.00, effective 02/19/2025.

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

Supported by Weiss. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Makay made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Supported by Weiss. Voice Vote. The meeting adjourned at 5:23 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



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

VAN BUREN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
MARCH 2025

VOUCHERS

Imprest Fund	2,356,232.12
Payroll Fund	4,257,337.87
Purchasing Cards	136,518.73
EduStaff ACH	22,298.34

PAYROLL SUMMARY

General	1,141,410.22
Special Education	2,404,457.13
Vocational Education	711,470.52
Student Activity Fund	-
Food Service Fund	-
Total	4,257,337.87

IMPREST VOUCHER SUMMARY

FUND	CHECKS	TRAVEL	PURCHASING	TRFS/SALES	TOTAL
General	1,615,871.70	9,048.61	61,162.04	(23,896.96)	1,662,185.39
Special Education	474,248.40	15,913.73	24,611.91	10,129.96	524,904.00
Vocational Education	266,112.02	6,099.11	50,739.80	13,767.00	336,717.93
Capital Projects	-	-	-	-	-
Food Service	-	-	-	-	-
Student Activity Fund	-	-	4.98	-	4.98
Total	2,356,232.12	31,061.45	136,518.73	-	2,523,812.30

VAN BUREN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT
MARCH 2025

BUDGET TO EXPENDITURE COMPARISON 24-25

FUND	BUDGET	ACTUAL & ENCUMBERED EXPENSES	UNENCUMBERED BALANCE	YEAR TO DATE VARIANCE
General	26,221,227	15,566,256	10,654,971	3,007,113
Special Education	43,256,264	24,042,391	19,213,873	6,597,463
Career Tech Education	17,411,809	9,019,532	8,392,277	3,313,832
Food Service	10,972	-	10,972	7,772
Capital Projects	-	-	-	-

CASH FLOW SUMMARY

	ENDING BALANCE 02/01/2025	CASH RECEIPTS	CASH DISBURSEMENTS	ENDING BALANCE 02/28/2025
General	3,644,702	5,693,847	4,032,000	5,306,550
Special Education	12,609,949	16,374,239	9,994,626	18,989,561
Career Tech Education	8,065,529	8,193,884	5,486,988	10,772,425
Student Activity Fund	34,299	26	1,043	33,282
Food Service	10,740	-	-	10,740
Capital Projects	-	-	-	-
Total	24,365,219	30,261,996	19,514,657	35,112,558



Upcoming Events/Key Dates April, May & June 2025

- **4/9** VBISD School Board Meeting, 4p @ Conference Center
- *4/18 BGLC Prom, 5:30-7:30p @ Conference Center
- 4/18 VB Tech Industry Visits Professional Development (PM Session)
- 4/23 Administrative Professionals Day
- 4/25 Special Education Department Professional Learning Day
- *4/29 CTE Showcase @ Capitol - Heritage Hall
- 5/5-5/9 VB Tech - Staff Appreciation Week
- *5/6 Early Middle College completion ceremony, 5:30-6:30p @ Conference Center
- **5/7** VBISD School Board Meeting, 4p @ Conference Center
- *5/9 VBISD Greenhouse - **Pre-sale** 7:30a-4:30p
- 5/12-5/16 VBISD Greenhouse - Regular sale 7:30a-4p
- *5/13 VB Tech Mock Disaster
- **5/14** Board Work Session - 9a-2:30p @ Lucky Wolf
- *5/15 Retirement Celebration - 3:30p-5:00p
- **5/21** BGLC Graduation, 12:30p @ Conference Center
(Note: This is the only VBISD program graduation as there are no 12th grade students at Maple Creek this year.)
- *5/29 BGLC Picnic @10:30 to 12:30p @ BGLC
- 6/3 Special Education Department Last Student Day (tentative)

KEY:

Informational only

*Board attendance voluntary

****Board attendance requested**

D. Public Comments
II. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

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Administrator Evaluation Guide Reference

- 1 - Leadership
- 2 - Level of Professional Awareness
- 3 - Professional Standards and Ethics
- 4 - Communication Skills
- 5 - Resourcefulness, Creativity, and Innovativeness
- 6 - Personality
- 7 - Demeanor, Appearance, and Style
- 8 - Professional Preparation
- 9 - Decision Maker
- 10-Planner and Organizer
- 11-Supervisor
- 12-Evaluator
- 13-Policy Implementer
- 14-Crisis Manager
- 15-Faculty and Staff Personnel
- 16-School Plant and Facilities
- 17-Student Personnel
- 18-Community Relations
- 19-Fiscal Management
- 20-Student Achievement

A. Board Updates
B. Superintendent Update

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Date: April 9, 2025
To: Board of Education
From: David D. Manson, Superintendent
Subject: Superintendent Update

Literacy Month - Mystery Reader: (Staff Relations, Community Relations, Instructional Leadership)

On March 17th, I had the privilege of serving as a mystery reader in the VBISD-operated GSRP classroom in Gobles, led by Ursula Armourillo. This experience was deeply rewarding, allowing me to connect with both students and staff in a meaningful way. It reinforced the vital role of public education in fostering student growth and underscored the importance of our continued legislative advocacy, particularly during these challenging times.





****MDE-ISD Superintendent Advisory Council:** (Governance & Board Relations, Community Relations, Staff Relations, Business & Finance, Instructional Leadership)

On March 19th, I had the opportunity to meet with State Superintendent Dr. Michael Rice and several other ISD superintendents. These meetings, held about four times a year, are designed to improve communication on issues affecting public education.

This particular meeting was especially important given the current executive orders impacting the U.S. Department of Education. In short, the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) is anticipating significant federal funding cuts, which could affect areas such as Medicaid, Title grants, food assistance, and special education funding.

Currently, federal funding accounts for approximately 11% of Michigan's public school revenue and covers more than 15% of special education costs. While no one expects federal funding to be completely eliminated, the uncertainty surrounding potential cuts has created concern among school district employees.

Below is the correspondence I sent to VBISD regarding this issue:

Dear VBISD Staff,

Earlier this year, I promised to keep you updated on what's happening at the federal and state level regarding public education and how it might affect our district, our staff, and the students and families we serve. As you may have heard, an executive order was signed yesterday, aimed at dismantling the U.S.

Department of Education. It appears that the goal behind this decision is to shift more control over education to state and local governments.

While this doesn't mean the department is shutting down immediately (since that would require approval from Congress), it likely signals some big changes ahead. The order directs the Education Secretary to start reducing the department's responsibilities, keeping only key functions like managing student loans, Pell Grants, and services for children with disabilities.

Understandably, this raises a lot of questions about what this could mean for us. Some key areas we're keeping an eye on include:

- **School Funding:** Many federal grants that support special education, career and technical programs, and early childhood services come through the Department of Education. We're watching closely to see how funding might be impacted.
- **Financial Aid for Students:** The federal government currently oversees around \$1.6 trillion in student loans, and any changes could affect how financial aid is handled.
- **Civil Rights Protections:** The department's Office for Civil Rights helps ensure fairness and access for all students. If its role is reduced, it could impact protections against discrimination in schools.
- **Uncertainty Ahead:** Since this order is likely to face legal and political challenges, we don't know exactly how things will unfold, but we do know that change is coming.

No matter what happens at the federal level, we will continue to advocate for the resources, support, and stability that our schools need. It is my intention as superintendent, and the intention of our school board, to keep staff jobs safe and ensure that our students continue learning at the highest levels. Thankfully, our district's current fiscal health should allow us to weather some of the storms that may be coming.

I know this news may bring uncertainty, and you may have concerns. Please know that we are here to support you and will keep you informed as we learn more. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out.

Thank you for everything you do each day to make a difference in the lives of our students and families.

Take care, Dave

****Emergency Management - Refining Our Response: (Governance & Board Relations, Community Relations, Staff Relations)**

On Friday, March 21st, VBISD's main campus received a "secure" alert from our emergency management department due to a police pursuit in a nearby neighborhood. However, some areas of our campus mistakenly interpreted this alert as a "lockdown," causing some confusion. Ultimately, there was never a direct threat to our campus, and all staff and students remained safe. This real-life situation highlighted areas where we can improve our response procedures. Given the nuances of different emergency alerts, I decided to provide the school board with this summary of the current protocols in place across the county.

IN AN EMERGENCY TAKE ACTION



HOLD! In your room or area. Clear the halls.

STUDENTS

Clear the hallways and remain in room or area until the "All Clear" is announced
Do business as usual

ADULTS

Close and lock the door
Account for students and adults
Do business as usual



SECURE! Get inside. Lock outside doors.

STUDENTS

Return to inside of building
Do business as usual

ADULTS

Bring everyone indoors
Lock outside doors
Increase situational awareness
Account for students and adults
Do business as usual



LOCKDOWN! Locks, lights, out of sight.

STUDENTS

Move away from sight
Maintain silence
Do not open the door

ADULTS

Recover students from hallway if possible
Lock the classroom door
Turn out the lights
Move away from sight
Maintain silence
Do not open the door
Prepare to evade or defend



EVACUATE! (A location may be specified)

STUDENTS

Leave stuff behind if required to
If possible, bring your phone
Follow instructions

ADULTS

Lead students to Evacuation location
Account for students and adults
Notify if missing, extra or injured students or adults



SHELTER! Hazard and safety strategy.

STUDENTS

Use appropriate safety strategy for the hazard

Hazard

Tornado
Hazmat
Earthquake
Tsunami

Safety Strategy

Evacuate to shelter area
Seal the room
Drop, cover and hold
Get to high ground

ADULTS

Lead safety strategy
Account for students and adults
Notify if missing, extra or injured students or adults

C. Department Updates
1. Presentation - Adult Education ESL

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Adult Ed ESL

Van Buren Intermediate School District

2024-25

Goals for 2024-25 School Year

1. Open 3 sites for Adult Ed ESL services.
2. Ensure all sites are fully staffed and trained.
3. Ensure each site has the materials needed to provide high-quality ESL instruction.



How is our program funded?



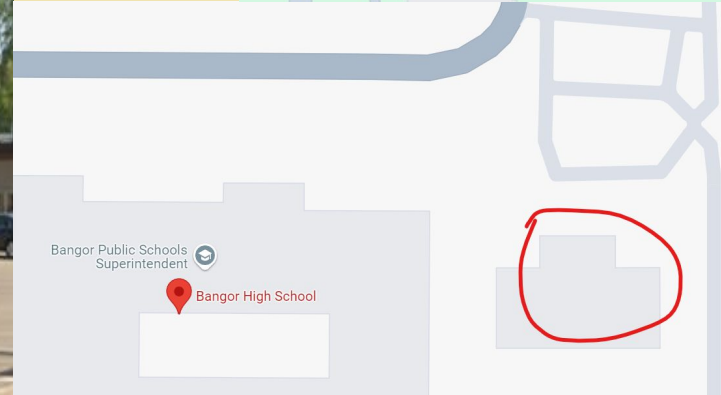
Federal Grant	State Grant
<p data-bbox="81 441 649 525">WIOA -Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act</p> <p data-bbox="81 576 813 699">Provides funding for workforce development programs, including those targeting individuals with barriers to employment.</p>	<p data-bbox="882 441 1615 659">Section 107 of the State School Aid Act provides funding for adult education programs, aiming to help adults who didn't complete high school become career and college-ready.</p>

We have 3 sites.

Bangor High School - Annex Building next to the high school

Covert Public Schools

Paw Paw - Cedar Street Campus



Staff

All of our teachers have attended the TESOL conferences.

All of our staff have participated in collaborative and personal trainings on the instructional platforms and tools used in the program.

Bangor	Covert	Paw Paw
Teacher: Aaron Crider	Teacher: Dianne Kirby	Teacher: Jalen VanHoeven
TA: Maggie Wojciechowski	TA: Gabriela Olivas Diaz	Data Entry: Elizabeth Bunghart
TA: Hugo Aparicio Corona		
Amy Engbers - Adult ESL Coordinator		

Materials

Available for ALL Learners:

English Proficiency Level Assessments and Reports through CASAS

Burlington English

Spanish/English Oxford Picture Dictionaries

Mice

Headphones

Chromebooks

Backpacks

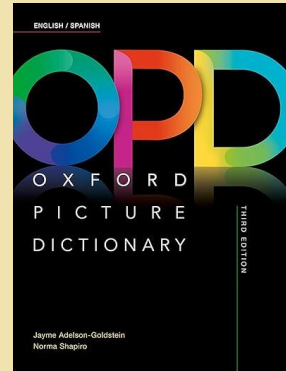


Materials at each site:

Projectors

Whiteboards

Office Supplies

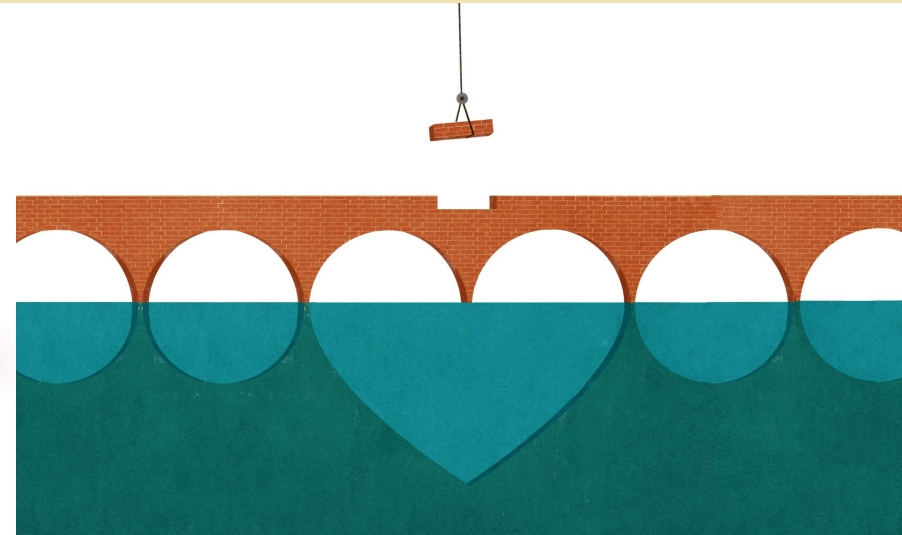
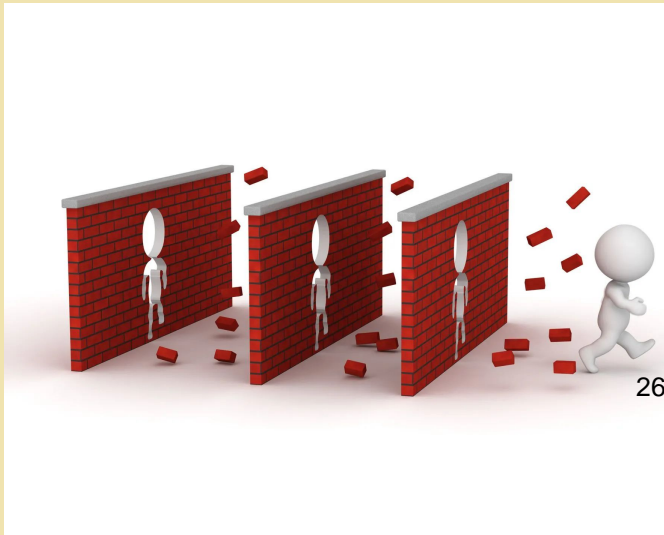


Breaking Down Barriers and Building Bridges!

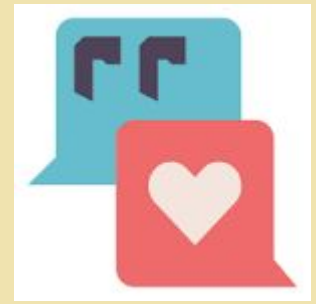
Gas Cards to help with transportation cost

5 Learners are 100% Virtual

3 Learners are actively working to earn their GEDs



Testimonials



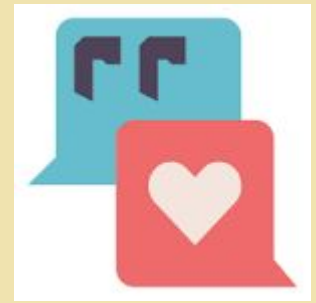
“ I like learning with my classmates and I enjoy having activities such as games, speaking, reading, etc.

My English skills are growing because I feel more confident when I'm reading out loud.

It is easier for me to talk with strangers.”

-This learner joined our program in December. The conversation skills are very helpful at their place of work.

Testimonials



“I like to work on the computer. I enjoy studying with my classmates. I feel more confident understanding more words. It is easier to I still don't know how to write or speak English on my own (but) I (have) improved in having more confidence in asking the meaning of words.”

-This learner has logged over 120 hours in the program so far.

Testimonials



“This program has helped me learn. I feel like a turtle because I learn slowly. I had never used a computer before December when I came to class. As a girl, I watched teachers type at their machines and wanted to be like them and now here I am. I know how to capitalize, erase and punctuate sentences on a computer. I am practicing English in Burlington on my break, in my car...whenever I have time. I write down the sentence in my notebook. Thank you for your help.”

-This learner joined our program in December, logged over 40 hours in the month of February and increased their NRS level in listening.

Memorandum

Date:	April 9, 2025
To:	VBISD Board of Education
From:	Melissa Corona <i>Director of Instructional Services</i>
Subject:	Instructional Services Update



Mission Statement:
Intentionally collaborate to use best practices to support the whole child and build capacity in students and staff in Van Buren County.

Instructional Services Department

The Instructional Services Department is a dynamic and multifaceted team dedicated to supporting students, educators, and school communities. Our department provides a wide range of services, including professional development, school improvement support, and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) to enhance teaching and learning. We also include Project SHINE, Adult Education ESL, Section 504 support, Coordinated School Health, and mental health services, ensuring that districts receive comprehensive academic and wellness support. Additionally, we focus on future teacher preparation and after-school programming, fostering both educator growth and expanded learning opportunities for students. By integrating these diverse initiatives, the Instructional Services Department plays a critical role in strengthening schools and supporting student success.

We are currently working on our Professional Development and Leadership meeting plans for the 2025-26 school year. Our goal is to ensure that we provide high-quality relevant learning opportunities for the educators across Van Buren County.

Project SHINE Highlight

Congratulations!

The Eat Your Veggies, Kids Award. “Aligned with the medium-term outcome of MT1 vegetable consumption, this award recognizes the organization with statewide evaluation results showing the greatest increase in youth vegetable consumption frequency. The partner who earned this award showed that, based on completed surveys, more than 59% of the youth who could increase vegetable consumption, did. The Eat Your Veggies, Kids Award goes to Van Buren Intermediate School District.”

Michigan Fitness Foundation, our SNAP-Ed funder, honored Project SHINE with a “SNAPPY AWARD” at the annual CHOICES Conference on March 19, 2025. This recognition highlights the impact of Project SHINE’s efforts to promote nutrition education and enhance healthy food access within our communities.



More Kudos to the Project SHINE team as MFF featured the broccoli challenge from last year in their annual report to the USDA. The report is [HERE](#) 🥦

Growing Greens in Lawrence! When the students in Lawrence’s 3rd-grade classrooms expressed a desire for more greens, teacher Dawn Mergener and Project SHINE Nutrition Educator Mindy Owsiany took action. Through their collaboration, the team successfully secured funding for a hydroponic growing system to be used right in the classroom. Mrs. Mergener’s dedication to expanding hands-on nutrition education, building upon the lessons introduced through Project SHINE, makes her a shining example of how innovative teaching can inspire healthier food choices for students.



Literacy Coaching Highlight

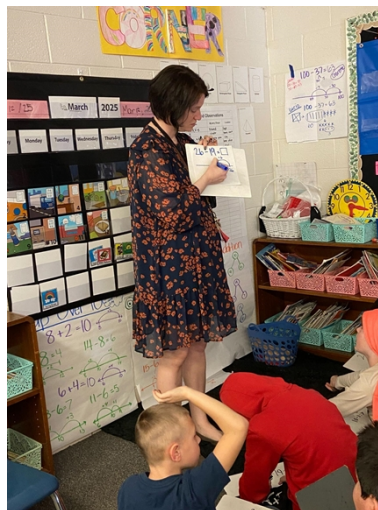
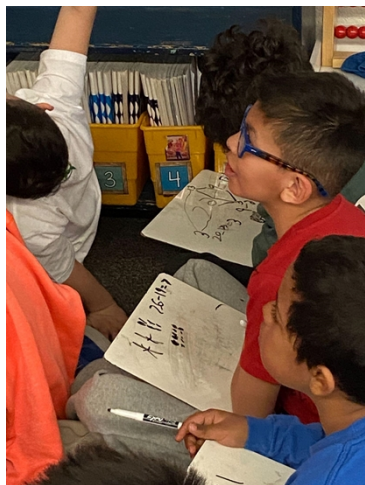
As we head into the final months of the school year, we will continue to coach and support administrators and staff as well as look ahead to creating calendars for next school year that include maintaining current supports and adjusting to future anticipated needs in local districts and buildings. Being cognizant that each district and building has unique needs allows us to continue to follow the mantra of “meet them where they are.”

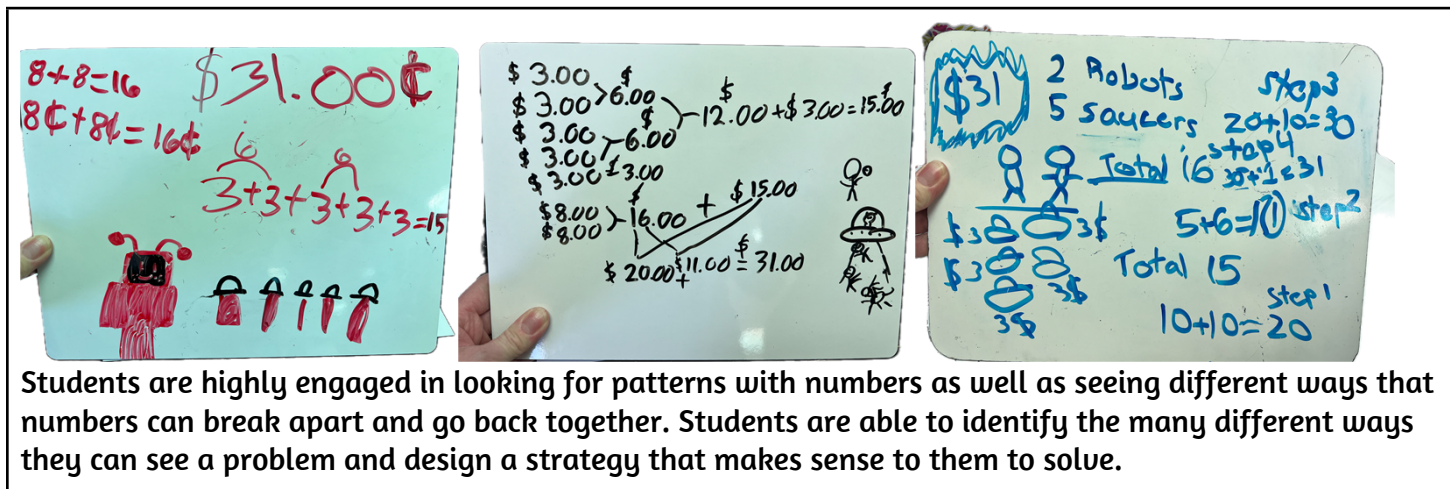
Much conversation is starting to happen across the state with the passage of [PA 146](#), often referred to as the Literacy and Dyslexia Law. In April, VBISD’s Instructional Services Department will be virtually hosting MDE’s “Literacy for All Roadshow” during our Elementary Principals, Secondary Principals, and Early Literacy Network Meetings. At the end of the presentation from MDE, there will be an opportunity for attendees to ask questions of the MDE hosts. The IS Department will administer a survey after each of these stakeholder meetings in order to gather data that will be used to plan future learning and work. Future board reports will highlight our plan.

****Math Coaching Highlight**

Van Buren county has three districts participating in the 23h grant which is intended to improve mathematics teaching and learning. As part of this grant, the ISD is able to employ an Early Math Specialist, Julie Combs, who works closely with these three districts to support the implementation of a number sense curriculum and provide professional learning in number sense routines.

This month Julie has the pleasure of participating in formal site visits with Danielle Seabold from the state math team. So far Danielle has accompanied Julie to Bloomingdale Elementary, Covert Elementary, and Pullman Elementary for a full day at each school. During these visits, Julie and Danielle had the opportunity to meet with principals, talk with teachers and students, and watch a few math lessons. The purpose of the site visit is to see how number sense routines and learning are happening in the classroom. During teacher and principal conversations, the team was able to discuss successes in teacher and student learning as well as identify barriers that still need to be addressed. We will visit Lawrence Elementary in April. It has been fun to show off the wonderful work and learning happening here in Van Buren county!





Students are highly engaged in looking for patterns with numbers as well as seeing different ways that numbers can break apart and go back together. Students are able to identify the many different ways they can see a problem and design a strategy that makes sense to them to solve.

Grow Your Own

We continue to enroll candidates in the Grow Your Own program daily. Candidates are reaching out daily to inquire on the GYO program and to determine if they are a good fit. Due to the timeline of the grant, candidates can still enroll in #TEACH, Michigan Teachers of Tomorrow, and the Masters level programs at WMU. There are several Master’s programs that will begin this summer and fall.

We work with principals and superintendents to help them to fill the vacancies they have in their districts.

Below is a list of

WMU candidates: 182

GVSU candidates: 18

The University of Olivet candidates: 34

#T.E.A.C.H candidates: 37

MI Teachers of Tomorrow candidates: 48

Total # of graduates: 27

Grant funds used: \$13,793,684.81

Adult Ed ESL - Presentation

VBISD’s Adult Ed Program has expanded within Van Buren County significantly over this year. We have shifted from 1 site to 3 sites, and we have increased the learners at our sites from approximately 10 learners last year to about 56 learners this year. We have continued to add learners to our program throughout the year.

**Mental Health Clinicians

The mental health clinician team is working towards wrapping up another successful school year working with staff and students. As of the writing of this report **590** students have been served since August 26, 2024, the first day of the 24/25 school year. The total number of direct service minutes provided to students is **166,859**. **118** students have been discharged from services thus far this school year.

We are eagerly awaiting the responses from all districts regarding the number of clinicians they desire for the 25/26 school year. With the ending of the Project AWARE grant in September, we are pleased to announce that all districts with Project AWARE supported clinicians have had increases in 31n funding (the state provided funding source for Mental Health Clinicians). For one such district, Gobles, this allows them to continue with mental health services at no cost. We celebrate the continuation of services with Gobles!

The Whole Child Summits remain a highlight of the school year. In October the summit featured the Youth Advisory Panel (YAP), supported by mental health clinicians, as well as YAP member, Alex Peck who presented on the importance of teacher/student relationships. Data was observed and guidance around creating successful child study teams was presented by our very own Melissa Corona. In March the summit focused on digital wellness presented by the ISD's Brittany Millan. The YAP team members were seated at tables throughout the event offering keen insight to adult attendees on what challenges teens face when it comes to the topic of digital wellness.

The Youth Advisory Panel, born out of the Whole Child Summit, continues to grow and work on their chosen goals of supporting mental health for children and teens as well as reducing bullying and vaping in Van Buren County. A grant was applied for to support an anti-bullying campaign for the 25/26 school year. The results are not yet in but we remain hopeful with the YAP members.

As we are working on the content for the next Whole Child Summit, which is scheduled for October 2, 2025, a small committee of students from YAP are working with the WCS Planning Committee on the topic and the content. We are very excited to have their voice at the table driving this work.

The mental health team is committed to completing this 24/25 school strong.

Van Buren Youth Initiative

The Van Buren Youth Initiative continues to expand opportunities for youth across Van Buren County through enriching after-school programming. Our efforts focus on creativity, confidence-building, and community connection, with a key priority for the remainder of the year being transportation access to ensure broader participation. Our goal is to have transportation operational by Fall 2025 to remove barriers for students who currently face challenges attending programs.

Current Programming Highlights

South Haven Center for the Arts (SHCA)

Providing three days of creative programming:

- Tuesdays (3:30-5:00 PM): Rotating Medium Art Class
- Wednesdays (4:00-5:30 PM): Open Studio (Ages 8-16)- Highest attended program- with over 30 students consistently
- Thursdays (4:00-5:30 PM): Guitar Classes (Collaboration with Foundry Hall)

Luc's Light Music/ Arts Program (Wednesdays, 4:00-7:15 PM & Thursdays 4:30-6:00 PM)

- Beginner Guitar
- Intermediate Guitar
- Advanced Guitar
- Anything Goes Art Class
- Intermediate Painting Experimentation
- Percussion

His Place Outreach Center

Offering four days of programming:

- Monday – Thursday: Open Gym, Learning Lounge, Game Room
- Wednesdays (3:00-5:00 PM): Rotating Medium Art Class

South Haven – "Let's Cook Together" (Completed March 12)

- 8-week program in partnership with Bronson Healthcare Group
- Students gained hands-on cooking experience, with all participants receiving a cooking kit sponsored by Bronson so they can continue cooking at home.
- Student feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with participants expressing excitement about applying their skills beyond the classroom.

Bangor – 6-Week Cooking Class (Completed March 27)

- Partnership with Project SHINE and Simpson United Methodist Church
- The program has maintained strong, consistent attendance, with students enthusiastically sharing their experiences and new skills with their families.
- The focus is on building confidence in the kitchen while fostering a sense of community around healthy food preparation.

Parent Feedback & Impact

Families continue to express appreciation for the program's impact:

"Thank you all for all you do for the youth and creating an encouraging and safe environment. My student has really gained confidence, and her overall outlook has changed. I love that she is embracing her creativity again and participating in the groups. She looks forward to every Tuesday and Wednesday!"

"My daughter was very apprehensive about attending. Upon picking her up, she was happy and animated and is looking forward to attending next week. Thank you for this wonderful opportunity!"

Upcoming Opportunities

- April: Comic & Manga Creation Workshop
- May: Creating Media with Purpose
- June: Student Showcase at SHCA & Luc's Light

Transportation Focus & Next Steps

A key initiative for the remainder of the year is developing a sustainable transportation plan to increase youth participation. Our goal is to establish operational transportation by Fall 2025, ensuring accessibility for students countywide. We are currently exploring partnerships, and logistics to bring this vision to reality.

The Van Buren Youth Initiative remains committed to breaking down barriers and expanding opportunities for all youth in our community.

MEMO

DATE: APRIL 9, 2025
TO: BOARD OF EDUCATION
FROM: BRITANI OLDS, ADMINISTRATOR FOR HUMAN RESOURCES
RE: HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE - (Leadership, Communication Skills, Resourcefulness, Creativity, and Innovativeness, Professional Preparation, Decision Maker, Planner and Organizer.)

***March Into Spring Event & Wellness Program**



On Saturday, March 15th, we hosted our first annual March Into Spring Celebration! A fun event where employees and their families came together to enjoy games, face painting, crafts, dancing, and snacks! We are incredibly grateful to everyone who attended and especially our dedicated volunteers who made the event possible. Your hard work and enthusiasm are truly appreciated. A big shout out to Katie Boyer, who was the lead in making this event happen!

In addition, I had the privilege of speaking at the Southwest Michigan HR Roundtable, where I shared insights into our wellness program and had the opportunity to hear what others are doing with regards to wellness initiatives. I was thrilled to discover that we are further along in our wellness program; however, we have ambitious plans to continue to enhance the program, ensuring even greater impact in the future.



***Marketing**

Brittany Millan has hit the ground running in her new role, laying the groundwork for a strong marketing foundation! As this is a newly created position, the initial focus has been on branding and social media initiatives.

Here are just a few key accomplishments so far:

- **Department Collaboration:** She has met with all departments to assess and establish marketing needs.
- **New Social Media Presence:** A new VBISD Facebook page ([facebook.com/VanBurenISD](https://www.facebook.com/VanBurenISD)) and Instagram account (@VanBurenISD) have been launched - be sure to follow!
- **Streamlined Social Media Management:** A VBISD Business Portfolio has been created on Facebook linking all department pages to ensure continuity and alignment.

Additionally, we're thrilled about the progress on the Special Education and Transportation videos. These videos will help to increase awareness and enhance recruitment efforts. The Transportation video is still a draft, but it is ready to share and we can't wait for you to see it and provide feedback.

Continue to stay tuned for more exciting updates as Brittany continues building a strong and dynamic marketing presence for Van Buren ISD!

2025 SWMSBO Mid-Winter Conference

Kara Duffy, Jodi Sower and I had the opportunity to attend the SWMSBO Mid-Winter Conference at Kalamazoo Valley Community College on Wednesday, March 5. This was a great opportunity for each of us to attend different sessions related to our work. It was another great opportunity to stay up to date with what is happening in our field!

Business Office Fun and Engagement



What better way to celebrate March Madness than with a March Madness - Cookie Edition competition!? The competition is heating up, and we're down to the Final Four cookies. Soon, we'll crown the Business Office's favorite cookie!

Memorandum	
Date:	April 9, 2025
To:	VBISD Board of Education
From:	Angie Gutiérrez <i>Administrator of Multilingual and Migrant Services</i>
Subject:	Multilingual/Migrant Services Update



Saúl Romero: Champion for Multilingual and Migrant Students

Saúl Romero is advancing his education through the *Grow Your Own (GYO)* Program, pursuing a Bachelor’s degree in upper elementary education and an ESL K-12 endorsement. His journey has not been without challenges, but his determination has brought him back to fulfill his dream of making a lasting impact in education.

Saúl began his career as a Teacher’s Assistant in Hollywood, California, dedicating over 22 years to supporting multilingual learners. He earned certifications as a Special Education Paraprofessional and a bilingual educator, expanding his role to better serve students. Currently, Saúl works as an ESL teacher at Lawrence Public Schools, where he moves between classrooms to support K-12 Multilingual Learners. His work includes administering the WIDA assessment, designing

targeted lessons for newcomers, and helping students stay on track with their assignments.

Saúl tailors his instruction using visuals, hands-on materials, and cultural connections to create meaningful learning experiences. He is deeply committed to fostering resilience and growth in his students, recognizing that success is built through both educator support and student perseverance. His passion extends beyond the classroom, advocating for safe and supportive environments where multilingual and migrant students can thrive despite external challenges.

Saúl's immediate goal is to complete his degree, but his aspirations go further—he envisions providing greater support to migrant families and championing positive change in multilingual education.

Outside of work, Saúl enjoys photography, music, and spending time with his wife, four-year-old daughter, and five-month-old son. For Saúl, education is more than a profession—it's a mission. His dedication, experience, and heart for teaching make a lasting impact, one student at a time.



*Empowering Multilingual Learners: Teaching Academic English in Every Classroom K-12



Forty educators from Van Buren, Cass, and Berrien counties recently participated in “*Empowering Multilingual Learners: Teaching Academic English in Every Classroom K-12.*” Led by Laura Kronk, VBISD Multilingual Learner Consultant, and Zenia Gutierrez, VBISD Migrant & Multilingual Teacher, the two-day training equipped participants with strategies to better support multilingual learners (MLs).



Day 1: Building Foundations

Laura Kronk led participants through an exploration of how to best support multilingual learners (MLs) in their classrooms. Educators discussed strategies for creating inclusive learning environments and providing meaningful support, even when teachers do not speak the same native language as their students.

Key topics included:

- Best practices and research-based strategies for implementing linguistic support.
- Techniques for engaging students in learning both English and academic content simultaneously.
- Methods to provide strategic opportunities for students to use academic English vocabulary in authentic contexts.

Day 2: Collaboration and Application



On the second day, Zenia Gutierrez joined Laura Kronk to offer deeper insights into multilingual education. Educators explored how to gamify language learning, making lessons both interactive and effective. Technology integration was also a focus, with practical applications shared for enhancing student engagement and learning outcomes.

Participants left the training equipped with actionable strategies to:

- Foster meaningful communication with multilingual learners.
- Encourage active participation through gamified learning experiences.
- Provide intentional and ample opportunities for students to practice academic English.

A Collaborative and Fun Experience

The two-day event wasn't all work and no play! Educators enjoyed collaborative activities, shared experiences, and embraced the opportunity to connect with peers dedicated to supporting multilingual learners.

Empowering Multilingual Learners: Teaching Academic English in Every Classroom K-12 served as a reminder of the vital role educators play in fostering academic growth and language development for all students. With new tools, insights, and renewed enthusiasm, participants are now ready to bring these impactful strategies to their own classrooms.



***Title I, Part C Florida Migrant Education Program (FMEP)
Florida Migrant Interstate Program (FMIP)
Florida-Michigan Interstate Collaboration Visit
February 4 – 6, 2025
Hillsborough and Polk Counties, Florida**

Strengthening Connections: Michigan MEP Visits Florida to Enhance Migrant Education Collaboration



I had the privilege of joining a team of Michigan Migrant Education Program (MEP) staff from February 3-6, 2025, on a visit to Florida aimed at strengthening connections and enhancing collaboration between Michigan and Florida's MEPs.

Our team included Michele Headley (MDE Migrant Consultant), Linda Stofko (ESL teacher and Migrant Coordinator from Watervliet), and Jamie Dawson (Counselor from Watervliet). This visit provided a valuable opportunity to explore best practices, exchange insights, and deepen our understanding of how to better serve migrant students who move between our two states.

Day 1: Community Overview and MEP Introductions

On Tuesday, February 4, our visit began with a farm and community drive-through led by Lucia Valdivia-Sanchez from the Florida Migrant Interstate Program (FMIP). This drive-through gave us a firsthand look at the communities where many of the migrant families live and work. We also toured one of the Pre-School facilities in Polk County and had the opportunity to visit a farm where H2A workers were actively picking strawberries. Many of the workers had lived and worked in Michigan, including a contractor who worked 9 years in Grand Junction at a local blueberry farm. In the afternoon, we were warmly welcomed by Dee Dee



Wright (Polk MEP) and Lucia Valdivia-Sanchez (FMIP), who provided an overview

of Florida’s MEP. This session highlighted Florida’s strategies for supporting migrant students and ensuring

academic continuity. Michele Headley followed with an overview of Michigan’s



MEP, allowing us to compare approaches and identify areas for potential alignment. I also presented an overview of the Region 2 ID & R Center and our school year/summer program at Van Buren Intermediate School District. The day concluded with a discussion on Florida’s promotion and graduation requirements, led by Lucia and representatives from Polk and Hillsborough counties. I appreciated the reflective session that followed,



where we had the chance to share our initial insights and observations.

Day 2: School Visits and Observations

Wednesday, February 5, was dedicated to school visits across Polk and Hillsborough counties, giving us a chance to observe migrant education services firsthand. We visited multiple schools and gained valuable insights into instructional approaches, student engagement strategies, and the support systems in place for migrant students. It was inspiring to engage with local educators who are deeply committed to meeting the needs of their migrant populations. These visits reinforced the importance of culturally responsive practices and consistent support across state lines. We also had the opportunity to listen to a student panel from the



secondary level that travel to Michigan each year. We were able to get valuable feedback from the students regarding their experiences that included positive

experiences, but also challenges. Hearing from the students allowed us (Florida and Michigan) time to discuss how we can make these experiences better for the students.



Day 3: MSIX and Data Sharing



Thursday, February 6, began with a session focused on MSIX (Migrant Student Information Exchange) and its critical role in

ensuring continuity for migrant students. Lucia Valdivia-Sanchez, Dee Dee Wright, Carol Mayo (Hillsborough MEP), and Michele Headley led a robust discussion on using MSIX to manage student records, move notices, and data requests. The session also addressed strategies for aligning services such as ESE, IEP, and ELL plans between states to ensure seamless transitions for mobile students.

Michigan Experience and Reflections

In the afternoon, we had the opportunity to share insights from Michigan's MEP during the Michigan Experience session. This allowed us to highlight successful strategies while also acknowledging the ongoing challenges we face. It was encouraging to engage in conversations that emphasized the shared commitment of both states to improving educational outcomes for migrant students. The visit



concluded with a reflection session that gave all participants a chance to discuss lessons learned, identify opportunities for continued collaboration, and reaffirm our commitment to supporting migrant students across state lines.

Looking Ahead: Strengthening Partnerships



This visit reaffirmed for me the importance of strong interstate partnerships in ensuring that migrant students receive consistent and effective support as they move between states. Strengthening the collaboration between Michigan and Florida's MEPs will undoubtedly lead to improved

educational outcomes and a more cohesive approach to meeting the unique needs of migrant students. I'm excited about the possibilities that lie ahead and remain committed to fostering these partnerships to better serve our students and families.



Events coming up to support our Migrant Students:

- **April 12th-16th 2025:** National Migrant Conference and Angie Gutierrez will travel with two recruiters and three teachers to the conference. Our team will present on *“Breaking Barriers: Innovative Strategies for Engaging Migratory Families”*
- **May 8, 2025:** State-wide Migrant Parent Meeting
Migrant Summer School Professional Development
- **June 17th-19th 2025:** *Migrant Staff PD*
- **June 23rd-August 5th 2025:** *Migrant Summer School*
- **July 27th-30th 2025:** *Activity days for students/families with Detroit Presbyterian Church and partners*



Multilingual Learner Updates

We have events coming up in the next few months to support our Multilingual Learners:

- Interpreter Training led by Sarita Collins (4 sessions during the months of March/April. This training will provide best practices for those interpreting in the education settings, including Individual Education Plan (IEPs) meetings.
- May: MABE (Michigan Association of Bililingual Education) Conference in Detroit. We have ESL Teachers from across the county attending this year.
- Countywide ESL Network and planning for next year
- Planning Professional Development for next year.

MEMO

DATE: APRIL 9, 2025
TO: BOARD OF EDUCATION
FROM: ROBERT SMITH, DIRECTOR
RE: CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION BOARD UPDATE

JOB FAIR

Van Buren Tech recently hosted its 2nd annual Job Fair on February 4th, providing students with the opportunity to connect with local employers and explore a wide variety of career pathways. The Job Fair event is a great way for students to network, gain insights into the workforce, and take the next step toward their professional futures. Overall, 48 businesses and 99 total industry representatives attended the event and over 900 students participated. Great job to all involved in making this event happen. Feedback from participants was extremely positive.



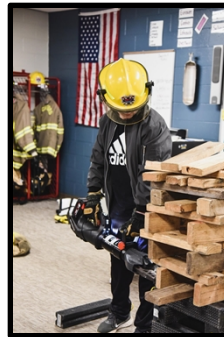
FFA CONVENTION

Congratulations to the seven outstanding Van Buren Tech FFA members- Landon Anderson, Autumn Conine, Aidan Davis, Trinity Davis, Marissa Kemp, Mackenzie Robards, and Zoie Wood- on earning their FFA Degrees! This achievement reflects their dedication to agricultural education, leadership, and community service. The FFA degree program recognizes members' progress through various levels, culminating in the prestigious American FFA Degree, the organization's highest honor. Great job!



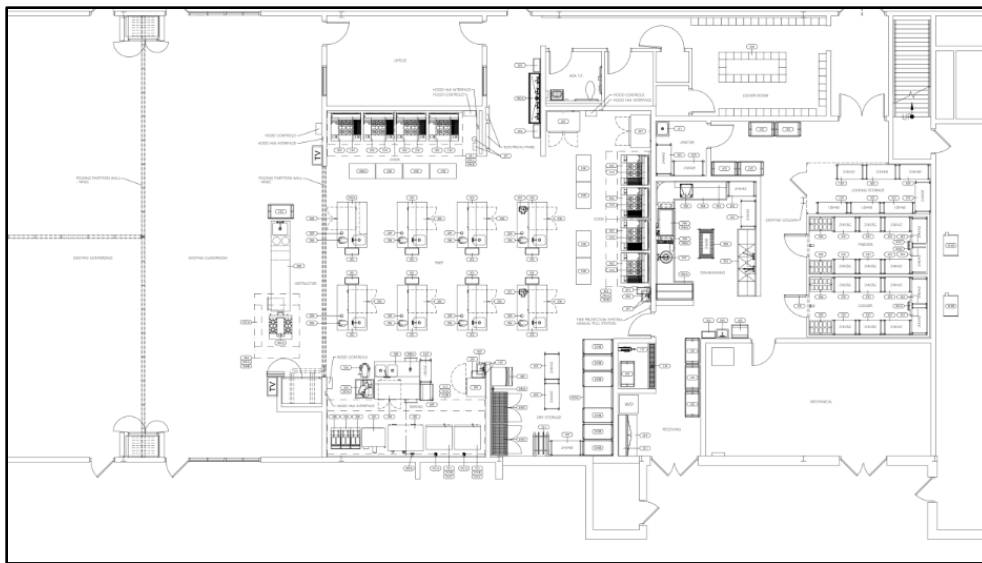
8TH GRADE INVASION

On Tuesday, March 11th through Thursday, March 13th, Van Buren Tech hosted over 1,500 8th grade students from schools in Van Buren, Cassopolis, and Berrien Counties for their Annual Grade Invasion program. During their visit, students were exposed to a variety of hands-on activities and got to experience what life is like as a VB Tech Student. Structured like an exploratory vacation, students were given mock passports and could earn stamps by visiting and learning about each of VB Tech's CTE programs. Students who obtained 5 or more stamps during their 1 hour visit were entered into a drawing for some college "swag" donated by our college partners, along with a Grand Prize at the end of the event. Overall, the event was extremely successful and productive. Feedback from students and parents was very positive, as well as feedback from staff participating from local school districts.



CULINARY FAREWELL OPEN HOUSE

In light of the upcoming Culinary Arts & Catering Management program remodel, Van Buren Tech hosted a “Culinary Farewell Celebration & Open House” event on Wednesday, March 19th to say goodbye to the Culinary training space that we have known since the building opened in 1976. The event provided an opportunity to say “Thank You” to the current and past Culinary program staff and students, and to prepare for the next chapter of Culinary education at Van Buren Tech. Per Diana Stump, this remodel, which will take place from April, 2025 through March, 2026, will “give the program the industry updates needed for students to have the best culinary training experience and best prepare them for post-secondary training, the workforce, and beyond.” We are excited about this project and the future of Culinary Arts education and Van Buren Tech.



FUTURE HEALTH PROFESSIONALS 2025 CONFERENCE

On January 25, 2025, Van Buren Tech participated in the Regional HOSA conference for the first time in over 20 years. "HOSA exists to enhance the delivery of compassionate, quality health care by providing opportunities for knowledge, skill and leadership development of high school, post-secondary and middle school students interested in healthcare."

Michigan's HOSA, Future Health Professionals 2025 Region 2 Conference was held at East Kentwood High School. Van Buren Tech was represented by students and staff from the Dental Occupations, Allied Health Technologies, Patient Care and Sports Medicine programs. 14 students competed in a variety of events, with 6 qualifying for the State Conference in April. Congratulations to all! michianhosa.org



DISTRICT 3 DECA COMPETITION AT WMU

On January 24, 2025, thirty students from Van Buren Tech's Business, Management & Administration and Marketing, Sales & Business classes attended the District 3 DECA competition at Western Michigan University's Haworth College of Business, with over 650 students from 20 Southwest Michigan schools competing in 29 individual or team events. VBT students demonstrated exceptional skills and professionalism during their events and medaled in an impressive 11 events. These outstanding achievements reflect top test scores and exceptional judging scores within their respective categories. A momentous highlight: 8 of our talented students- 6 in individual events and 2 as a team- have directly qualified for the State Competition in Detroit in mid-March! This is a remarkable achievement that speaks volumes about their hard work and dedication. Several students are diligently preparing comprehensive written projects for the State Competition, often spanning 10 to 20 pages. DECA is a student-run organization that prepares emerging leaders and entrepreneurs for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality, and management. DECA enhances the preparation for college and careers by providing co-curricular programs that integrate into classroom instruction, apply learning, connect to business, and promote competition.



INTERNATIONAL AUTO SHOW IN GRAND RAPIDS

On January 31, 2025, students and staff from the Polymer Technologies and Marketing, Sales & Business programs visited the Michigan International Auto Show in Grand Rapids. During the visit, Polymer students analyzed the extensive use of plastic in automotive manufacturing, while Marketing students examined the promotional and advertising strategies employed by leading car brands. Students learned how many components of modern vehicles rely on plastic materials. Plastic has proven to be an essential element in automotive innovation. Marketing students also learned about the various promotional and advertising strategies used by automotive companies to captivate audiences and drive sales. Specifically, students were exposed to information related to digital campaigns, interactive experiences, banners, video screens, brochures, branded merchandise, QR codes, contests, and giveaways. The event provided students with a unique opportunity to assess the effectiveness of these strategies in shaping consumer perceptions and purchase decisions.



2025 NTHS INDUCTION CEREMONY

On February 12, 2025, approximately 150 outstanding students were inducted into the Van Buren Tech Chapter of the National Technical Honor Society (NTHS)!

Established in 1984, NTHS is the premier honor society for recognizing student achievement in Career & Technical Education.. With over 100,000 active members annually, NTHS celebrates personal growth and leadership development, providing members with exclusive access to scholarships, career readiness resources, and a network of industry professionals. <https://nth.org>

Their induction into NTHS celebrates their academic and technical skills and acknowledges their embodiment of the society's core values: Skill, Scholarship, Leadership, Honesty, Responsibility, Service, and Citizenship. Congratulations students!



SPORTS MEDICINE NOTRE DAME VISIT

On February 17, 2025, Van Buren Tech's Sports Medicine students traveled to the University of Notre Dame for an unforgettable experience diving into the world of collegiate athletic training. From exploring state-of-the-art training and conditioning spaces, to getting hands-on in a lab session with ND's top athletic trainers, VB Tech students were put to the test on anatomy, special testing, and injury prevention.

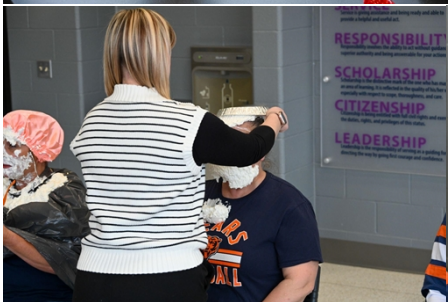
They wrapped up the day with a Q&A session, a full campus tour, and attended an exciting Notre Dame vs. Duke Women's Basketball game!

We'd like to extend a huge thanks to Max Bertman, Anne Marquez, Cloe Klus, and Kevin Ricks for sharing their expertise and inspiring the next generation of sports medicine professionals!



FUN CLUB PI DAY FUNDRAISER

In honor of 2025 “National Pi Day,” members of the Van Buren Tech Culture & Climate Committee, also known as the “Fun Club,” recently held its 2nd annual Pi Day Fundraiser. In its inaugural year in 2024, members of the committee designed a contest where staff were given the opportunity to donate funds to see which administrator would get a whipped cream pie in the face as the culminating activity. To accomplish this feat, Mason jars were set up in the office for each administrator and staff were given the opportunity to donate money throughout the week. At the end of the week, the administrator with the most money in their jar was the “lucky one” who received the pie in the face. Because Craig Jeffers earned that right in 2024, he was given the opportunity by the committee this year to select who should be included in this year’s contest. As a die hard Detroit Lions fan, Mr. Jeffers selected fan bases from the Chicago Bears, Green Bay Packers, and Minnesota Vikings as this year’s participants. After quite a few changes in who was leading throughout the week, the Bears’ fans were ultimately the winners in the end. Thank you to Sabrina Streit, Chrissy VanTilburg, Mike Mamouzellos, and Melissa Polomcak for being “great sports” in support of their team. All funds raised will be used to support future staff team building events. Great job!



III. ACTION ITEMS

A. Approval of District Provided Professional Development as Instructional Time 2025-26 **ROLL CALL VOTE**

60

MEMO

DATE: APRIL 9, 2025

TO: BOARD OF EDUCATION

FROM: DAVE MANSON, SUPERINTENDENT

**RE: APPROVAL OF DISTRICT-PROVIDED PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT REPORTED AS INSTRUCTIONAL TIME 2025-2026**

BACKGROUND:

Per Section 101(10) of the State School Aid Act, MCL 388.1701(10), a district may count up to 38 hours of qualifying professional development time for teachers as hours of pupil instruction if all requirements are satisfied.

The VBISD is seeking Board approval for the [VBISD Plan for District Provided Professional Development \(DPDD\) Reported as Instructional Time](#), which includes advisory committee members, assurances and agreement to count up to 29 hours of qualifying professional development time for teachers as hours of pupil instruction for the 2025-2026 school year.

RECOMMENDATION:

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approve up to 29 hours of professional development to count as hours of pupil instruction for the 2025-2026 school year.

VBISD Plan for District Provided Professional Development (DPDD) Reported as Instructional Time

The VBISD will use up to 29 hours during the 2025-2026 school year. Below are assurances detailing how the VBISD will meet all requirements per Section 101(1) of the State School Aid Act, MCL 388.1701(10).

Assurances

- I. The district-wide professional development advisory committee is composed of representatives from all departments, across all grades, subject matter, specializations, non-teaching staff, parents and administrators, as well as input from the Professional Staff Union.
- II. The professional development hours will be used to offset instructional time for pupils whose teachers participate in the professional development.
- III. The professional development is aligned with the district improvement plan and goal which targets improvements for culture and climate.
- IV. The professional development is linked to the criteria for staff evaluation, including the 5D+ framework for teachers, the Charlotte Danielson models for non-teaching professional staff, and the evaluation rubric for support staff.
- V. The professional development will be approved by MDE to be counted for state continuing education clock hours (SCECH).
- VI. Less than combined 10 hours of professional development will take place before the first scheduled day of school for the school year and after the last scheduled day of school for that school year.
- VII. No more than 10 hours of professional development will take place in a single month.
- VIII. At least 75% of teachers scheduled to participate in the professional development will be in attendance.
- IX. Each day counted as a professional development day used in this manner will exceed 5 hours.
- X. All online professional development used in this manner has been approved by the VBISD.

Professional Development for Instructional Hours/Days Documentation Tool

Please provide the below information as well as maintain the noted documents.
This information does not need to be submitted to the Michigan Department of Education but should be maintained in a file for audit purposes for 3 years.

Local Education Agency Name: **Van Buren Intermediate School District**

School Year Start Date: August 18, 2025

School Year End Date: June 8, 2026

	Special Education Department	Early Childhood Department	Instructional Services Department	VB Tech	Multilingual & Migrant Program
Dates of PD	8/19/25, 10/24/25, 1/19/26, 4/24/26	8/19/25, 10/24/25, 1/19/26, 4/17/26	8/21/25 5/15/25 IS DPPD per subdepartment	8/21/25 1-20-25	
Title/Description	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
Date of District Approval (Online PD only)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Attending Teacher Population (All district, building specific)	All Department	All Department	All Department	All Department	All Department
District or Building to which hours are being applied	Special Education Department	Early Childhood Department	IS Department	CTE Staff	EL/Migrant Department
Alignment to School or District Improvement Plan	Improve student outcomes	Improve student outcomes	Improve student outcomes	Improve student outcomes	Improve student outcomes
Alignment to Criteria in Evaluation Tool	Aligned with 5D+ and other VBISD evaluation rubrics	Aligned with 5D+ and other VBISD evaluation rubrics	Aligned with VBISD evaluation rubrics	Aligned with 5D+ and other VBISD evaluation rubrics	Aligned with 5D+
SCECH Program # Amount	Pending approval	Pending approval	Pending approval	Pending Approval	Pending Approval
Length in Hours	7.25 hrs. each	7.25 hrs. each	Coaches 2hrs/mo MHC 5 hrs/mo Adult Ed 4 hrs/mo Project SHINE 4 hrs/month	7.25 hrs. each	
Hours to be Used	Total of 29	Total of 29	See Attached	Total of 15	

	hours	hours		hours	
Days to be Used	4 days	4 days		2 days	
% Attendance from Expected Participants:	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%

In addition to the above information, maintain the following documents:

Board of Education meeting minutes during which the advisory committee was appointed.

List of committee members, with title, representing the required composition.

Advisory committee meeting minutes noting the recommendation of at least 8 hours of professional development to be used for instructional hours.

District calendar noting first and last days of school and professional development dates.

Attendance list (original or copy) and expected participation roster.

Agendas for individual activities (optional)

Signatures: As chief administrator of the district, I verify that all of the above and maintained information is true regarding the professional development to be used toward instructional hours.

Superintendent Name: Dave Manson

Superintendent Signature: _____ Date: _____

**B. Approval of Contractor for Construction Trades House (Decatur) ROLL
CALL VOTE**

66

MEMO

DATE: APRIL 9, 2025
TO: BOARD OF EDUCATION
FROM: ROBERT SMITH, DIRECTOR OF CAREER & EDUCATION
RE: **APPROVAL OF CONTRACTOR FOR ONSITE CONSTRUCTION HOUSE**

BACKGROUND

As part of the Construction Trades program, students in the onsite course build a home indoors that is later moved to a location within the county. This year's house is being moved to 465 Memory Lane in Decatur. Once the house is moved, additional work on the house is needed to finish the house to the standards required to obtain the final inspection approval and certificate of occupancy, both of which are required for VBISD to sell the home. To simplify this process, VB Tech has requested bids from licensed contractors to complete this work. The bid information was posted per standard protocol on February 24th and the following bid was received:

Becht Construction - \$103,261.74

RESOLVED, the Board of Education approves the hire of Becht Construction for the completion of the onsite Construction Trades home, located at 465 Memory Lane in Decatur, for a total of \$103,261.74.

C. Approval of Early Childhood Additional Contract Days for Ancillary Staff **ROLL CALL VOTE**

68

MEMO

DATE: APRIL 9, 2025
TO: BOARD OF EDUCATION
FROM: SUSAN REYNOLDS, DIRECTOR OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
RE: **APPROVAL FOR ADDITIONAL DAYS**

BACKGROUND:

Several professional staff members have been willing to work extra to provide coverage for a vacancy and a maternity leave throughout the school year. This coverage ensured that students received the recommended special education services as outlined on their IEPs. While several staff are close to reaching the allowable ten day extension, the following staff will need additional days to continue this support.

- Kate Keller, Speech & Language Pathologist

Approval for three additional days beyond the allowable extension as described in the contact is requested

RECOMMENDATION:

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approve the additional three days beyond the allowable extension for the above named staff member effective for the 2024-2025 PSM Contract.

D. Approval of Replacement of Electrical Switchgear at VB Tech **ROLL
CALL VOTE**

70

MEMO

DATE: APRIL 9, 2025
TO: BOARD OF EDUCATION
FROM: DAVID JOHNSON, FACILITIES & OPERATIONS ADMINISTRATOR
RE: APPROVAL OF REPLACEMENT OF ELECTRICAL SWITCHGEAR AT VB TECH

The Van Buren Intermediate School District recently solicited competitive bids for the replacement of the electrical switchgear at VB Tech. Bids were opened on March 25, 2025. We received multiple bids in all categories for the replacement of and are recommending the apparent low bidder without adjustment for all three bid categories.



Van Buren Intermediate School District
Switchgear Replacement
Award Summary Sheet
Construction Manager: Owen-Ames-Kimball Co.



	Bid Category	Contractor	Total
1	Earthwork	Compton, Inc. (South Haven, MI)	62,125
2	Mechanical/Plumbing	DHE Plumbing and Mechanical (Grandville, MI)	25,000
3	Electrical	Allied Electric, LLC (Grand Rapids, MI)	1,045,700
	General Conditions	Owen-Ames-Kimball Co.	71,449
	Preconstruction Fee	Owen-Ames-Kimball Co.	3,291
	CM Fee	Owen-Ames-Kimball Co.	67,866
		Subtotal	1,275,431
	Building Contingency		153,052
		Billing Subtotal	1,428,483
	Furnishings, Fixtures and Equipment		NIC
	Asbestos Abatement		NIC
	Technology		NIC
	AE Fee		NIC
	Total		1,428,483

The overall result of this is a construction total of \$1,428,483 exclusive of Owner costs such as AE fees, Technology, and FF&E. This includes a 12% construction contingency, as discussed on March 31, 2025. This is approximately \$180,000 less than our final estimate, which was prepared in December.

Owen Ames Kimball plans on doing exterior prep work in the summer of 2025 and the actual switchover in the summer of 2026.

RECOMMEND

RESOLVED, that the Van Buren Intermediate School District Board of Education approve and authorizes Owen Ames Kimball Co.to issue a Notice of Pending Awards in the amounts indicated to contractors and suppliers listed below, pending confirmation that all requirements of the Contract Documents have been met.

FURTHERMORE, upon receipt by Owen Ames Kimball Co. of the appropriate documentation, contracts be awarded to the following contractors and suppliers by Van Buren Intermediate School District.

1	EARTHWORK	COMPTON, INC (SOUTH HAVEN, MI)	\$62,125
2	MECHANICAL/PLUMBING	DHE PLUMBING AND MECHANICAL (GRANDVILLE, MI)	\$25,000
3	ELECTRICAL	ALLIED ELECTRICAL LLC (GRAND RAPIDS, MI)	\$1,045,700



Van Buren Intermediate School District
 Switchgear Replacement
 Award Summary Sheet
 Construction Manager: Owen-Ames-Kimball Co.



	Bid cCategory	Contractor	Total
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	Furnishings, Fixtures and Equipment		NIC
	Asbestos Abatement		NIC
	Technology		NIC
	AE Fee		NIC
	Total		1,428,483



**Van Buren Intermediate School District
Switchgear Replacement
Motion Recommendation
Construction Manager: Owen-Ames-Kimball Co.**

RECOMMENDED MOTION

I move that Owen-Ames-Kimball Co. be authorized to issue Notice of Pending Awards, in the amounts indicated, to contractors and suppliers listed below, pending confirmation that all requirements of the Contract Documents have been met. Furthermore, that upon receipt by Owen-Ames-Kimball Co. of the appropriate documentation, contracts be awarded to these contractors and suppliers by Van Buren Intermediate School District.

1	Earthwork	Compton, Inc. (South Haven, MI)	62,125
2	Mechanical/Plumbing	DHE Plumbing and Mechanical (Grandville, MI)	25,000
3	Electrical	Allied Electric, LLC (Grand Rapids, MI)	1,045,700

E. Approval of Employment of Summer Build-Up Staff Postings **ROLL
CALL VOTE**

75

MEMO

DATE: APRIL 9, 2025
TO: BOARD OF EDUCATION
FROM: SUSAN REYNOLDS, DIRECTOR OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
RE: APPROVAL FOR BUILD-UP SUMMER POSTINGS

Build Up Michigan is a statewide initiative designed to identify and support young children with developmental delays and disabilities by connecting families to early intervention services. In Van Buren County, our Build Up Michigan evaluation team plays a critical role in conducting comprehensive evaluations for preschool-aged children, ensuring they receive the services and support they need to thrive. For the 2024-2025 school year, the evaluation team has already received over 100 referrals, reflecting a notable increase from previous years. This upward trend highlights the growing demand for early childhood special education evaluations and the need for strategic planning to effectively meet the needs of children and families, including the need to provide screening and evaluation services over the summer months. In order to fulfill VBISD's obligation to complete comprehensive and timely evaluations, the following diagnostic professional staff are needed:

- Speech & Language Pathologist - 7 Days
- School Social Work - 7 Days
- School Psychologist - 7 Days
- Diagnostic Teacher Consultant - 7 Days
- Occupational Therapist - 4 Days

Approval for posting these positions for summer 2025, as described above, is requested.

RECOMMENDATION:

RESOLVED that the Board of Education approve the employment of the Build UP diagnostic staff for the above-named positions for the summer of 2025.

F. Approval of Vacancy Appointment to Covert School Board **ROLL
CALL VOTE**

77

MEMO

Date: April 9, 2025
To: VBISD Board of Education
From: David D. Manson, Superintendent
Subject: **Approval of Covert Public Schools Board Vacancy**

During the March 12, 2025, VBISD School Board meeting, an appointment to the Covert Public Schools Board was finalized. Since that time, it has been discovered that despite living in Covert, the appointee was a registered voter in the Bangor School District. As a result, the following resolution is recommended for adoption.

RESOLVED, the VBISD Board of Education rescinds the March 12, 2025 appointment and approves the appointment of _____ to the Covert Public Schools Board of Education through November of 2026.

MEMO

DATE: APRIL 9, 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>VB Tech</u>	<u>Salary</u>	<u>Start Date</u>
Mikenzie Chambers, Communications/Marketing Specialist	\$55,000.00	03/18/2025
<u>Special Education</u>	<u>Salary</u>	<u>Start Date</u>
Alyvia Anaple, Diagnostic Teacher Consultant	\$55,692.00	04/04/2025

***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: APRIL 9, 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>
Lorna Teske, BGLC Resource Room Teacher	07/31/2025
Matthew Kaemming, CTC Resource Room Teacher	07/31/2025
Dr. Carlos Cortes, ESL Teacher	06/05/2025

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.