

**NEW BUFFALO AREA SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR SESSION
Performing Arts Center
1112 E. Clay Street
P.O. Box 280
New Buffalo, MI 49117
October 12, 2026
6:00 PM**

New Buffalo Area Schools will be a beacon of academic excellence and individualized learning, where every student thrives in a supportive and inclusive environment. We will lead in preparing students for future success, driven by strong community partnerships and a commitment to growth and sustainability.

1. Call to Order by President Denise Churchill - Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.
2. Roll Call: Denise Churchill, Stephen Donnelly, John Haskins, Jennifer Summers, Vanessa Thun, Greg Vosberg, Lisa Werner
Also in Attendance: Mr. Adam Bowen, Superintendent of Schools
Jonny Reinhardt, Communications Director
3. Expressions from the Public: None
4. Items too Late for Printed Agenda #11C Base Aide Hire: Sara Inman #11D Resignation: Linda Douglas 7B: Bison Preserve 09/30/26
5. Adoption of the Agenda
Motion: Thun
Second: Werner
All ayes: motion carried
6. Communications - Senior Student Senate Member Harper Bowman talked about upcoming blood drive, and other upcoming events.
7. Committee Report(s)
7A. Foundation Meeting 10/05/2026 - Foundation recently finished 2 great fundraising events: Up On The Hill as well as the Paddle Battle. They are hoping this year will be the first year for 2 scholarships. They are working on their foundation policies.
8. The Superintendent and Food Service Director recommend the Board adopt the resolution for National School Lunch Week, October 12–16, 2026.
Motion: Thun
Second: Summers
All ayes: motion carried

9. Remarks from the Superintendent

31aa:

There are two parts to 31aa funding, the mental health side and the safety side for schools. The board of education will have to determine if the district should receive both sections of 31aa, one section of those funds or none of them. Eligible schools may receive up to \$73.53 per pupil for student mental health which is anticipated to be \$34,000. The student safety portion, through which eligible schools may receive up to \$147.06 per pupil for student safety activities which is anticipated to be \$68,000.

With that, schools seeking student safety funding must still agree that, following a statutory “mass casualty event,” they will:

- participate in a comprehensive investigation;
 - cooperate with that investigation; and
 - waive privileges held by the school that would otherwise protect certain information from disclosure.
- For fiscal year 2026-27, the Legislature narrowed the definition of a “mass casualty event.” The term now includes any of the following occurring on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event:
- an incident resulting in significant *physical* injuries to not fewer than three individuals. The Legislature now defines “significant physical injury” as “an injury involving a risk of death, significant physical pain, protracted and obvious disfigurement, or a protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental or sensory faculty;”
 - an incident resulting in *two or more* fatalities;
 - an incident of such scope that emergency response resources within the jurisdiction are insufficient and assistance from surrounding jurisdictions is required; or
 - an incident resulting in a sudden surge of injured individuals necessitating emergency services.

The investigation and privilege-waiver requirements apply only to the student safety funding, not the mental health funding. Schools may opt in to receive the mental health funding without accepting the statutory conditions. Schools who opt in to receive the student safety funding will, however, be subject to the statutory privilege waiver.

Bison Preserve: Since January we have been working on a development agreement plan with Leeward Ventures, prior to that we worked with Bradford Group on the development of the Bison Preserve. As of now, it doesn't look like that will be able to get a development agreement resolved with Leeward Ventures.

We have spent the past 6 years working on a building trades solution that will allow a developer to partner with us to put in the infrastructure while providing our students with the opportunity to learn about construction trades - which has always been our #1 priority.

At this point, we have exhausted all options with developing the property with a partner but need to move forward with a solution for our building trades program.

I feel that we should put in as many homes as we can to continue the building trades program on Lubke Road. At this point, it is unknown how many lots we could do at the site for the building trades program. It would be my recommendation that we work with our own civil engineer to see what they could do and look into if this would be feasible to continue our building trades program at the Lubke Road site. I would like the permission to explore this and provide some options to the board. If we did this on our own, it would be significantly smaller in size and only focus on to support our building trades program. We could have a civil engineer provide us with an overview of what this could look like.

10. Remarks from the Board President and Members: Members of the board attended the MASB Conference in Lansing. Jennifer Summers talked about sponsoring one of the Spanish Students for the week. They promoted upcoming Take Your Pal to Lunch Days

11. Discussion Item(s)

- A. 31aa
- B. Bison Preserve
- C. Superintendent approved the following hire: Base Aide: Sara Inman
- D. Resignation: Linda Douglas

12. Other Business

13. Adjournment

Motion: Thun

Second: Donnelly

All ayes: motion carried

Adjournment at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Vanessa Thun, Secretary
BOARD OF EDUCATION
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