

# Agenda of Regular Meeting

## The Board of Trustees Van Buren ISD

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A Regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of Van Buren ISD will be held October 1, 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](mailto: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 **Regular Meeting** of the Van Buren Intermediate School District Board of Education was held in person on **September 10, 2025**, in the Board of Education office and called to order at **4:00 PM** with all board members were present.

Weiss moved to approve the September 10, 2025, draft agenda as presented. Supported by Kent. Roll call vote. Makay – yes, Kent – yes, Weiss - yes, Faul – yes, and Middaugh – yes. Motion carried.

Makay moved to approve the Consent Agenda (*August 6, 2025 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 and Superintendent Travel for September 2025:

***Pre-Approval***

NAME	DATES	LOCATION	ESTIMATED COST
MaryAnn Middaugh	October 23 – 25, 2025	MASB Annual Leadership Conference 2025 Grand Traverse Resort, Acme, MI	<b>\$1,400</b>
Kenny Kent	October 22 – 26, 2025		<b>\$1,200</b>
John Faul	October 22 – 26, 2025		<b>\$1,000</b>
Karen Makay	October 22 – 26, 2025		<b>\$2,000</b>
John Weiss	October 22 – 25, 2025		<b>\$1,800</b>
Dave Manson	October 23 – 25, 2025		<b>\$2,000</b>

***Approved, Not Yet Attended***

NAME	DATES	LOCATION	ESTIMATED COST
Dave Manson	September 17-19, 2025	MASA Annual Fall Conference 2025 Grand Traverse Resort, Acme, MI	<b>\$1128</b>

***Post Approval***

NAME	DATES	LOCATION	ACTUAL COST
John Weiss	August 15 – 16, 2025	MASB 2025 Summer Institute Lansing, Michigan	<b>\$700</b>
Karen Makay	August 15 – 16, 2025	MASB 2025 Summer Institute Lansing, Michigan	<b>\$700</b>

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

**Board Members’ Updates:**

Ms. Makay and Mr. Weiss attended the MASB Summer Institute in Lansing, where they each completed four courses. Mr. Weiss highlighted the value of a mock advocacy debate, which challenged participants to use a range of communication strategies to both support and oppose legislative perspectives. Ms. Middaugh attended a MASB virtual CBA course to discuss updates to current school law, recent court decisions and Attorney General opinions. She enjoyed her experience and the information provided.

All Board members shared gratitude and pride for the successful welcoming back of staff at our Opening Day kick-off on Tuesday, August 19, 2025, held at Paw Paw Performing Arts Center. They enjoyed the smiling faces, content and the Keynote Speaker, Jo Mascorro.

Superintendent Manson gave an update on the following:

**Local District Board meetings:** *Attending the Bangor and Covert school board to provide a valuable opportunity to highlight the full range of programs and services offered by VBISD and to respond to questions from local board members.*

**Safe Resolution of Parking Lot Incident at VB Tech:** *On August 28, a weapon was discovered in the VB Tech parking lot during a routine sweep. Out of an abundance of caution, students were placed on a temporary hold. The situation was resolved without incident by VBISD Emergency Management and local law enforcement, and at no time were students or staff in danger. The district promptly shared an informational letter which reminded the community that weapons of any kind are prohibited on school property and encouraged everyone to help by checking vehicles and personal belongings before coming to school. The letter was acquired by local media outlets who then reported the incident.*

**Local Government Budgeting in Uncertain Times:** *At the request of MSU Extension, Mr. Manson served as a panelist on September 10th for a webinar focused on the challenges of local budget planning amid state budget uncertainty, which featured a short, facilitated panel discussion with a few local government leaders. As part of the discussion, he was asked to share how much VBISD's budget depends on the state budget, what specific challenges the late budget has created related to planning this year, and what strategies have been used to keep the process moving forward. Panelists also touched on how schools and other local governments communicate with elected officials, staff, and the public during uncertainty.*

With great pride, VBISD's Emergency Management Team educated the Board and the learning community about the invaluable services their team provides to all our campus'.

VBISD Emergency Management is committed to protecting our schools by reducing vulnerabilities, strengthening preparedness, and fostering resilience. We work to build, sustain, and improve the capabilities needed to prevent, mitigate, respond to, and recover from natural disasters, acts of terrorism, and other emergencies.

### **2022–2023 Highlights**

- Shared service contracts, Nightlocks, and Naloxone kits for all schools.
- CRG mapping and risk assessments (grants + EM staff).
- Promoted School Safety Committee; staff became BTAM instructors.
- 156 trainings for 3,240 people; assisted 49 BTAMs, 2 events, and 12 drills.
- Consulted on Hartford EOP.

## **2023–2024 Highlights**

- Ordered EpiPens, replaced AED batteries/pads.
- Countywide reunification plan and trailer.
- Introduced Standard Response Protocol training.
- Camera audit, radio inventory, new Knox Boxes, window film project.
- Assisted in 7 events; 25 BTAMs; 34 drills.
- 114 trainings for 2,384 people.
- Updated VBISD EOP, added Stop the Bleed kits, portable radios for CTC.

## **2024–2025 Highlights**

- Launched E3 emergency notification system.
- Created VBISD MERT teams and trainings.
- Updated EOPs for Decatur, Covert, and Wood.
- 127 trainings for 3,196 people; 37 BTAMs; 27 events; 45 drills.
- Became licensed Stop the Bleed facility (US Dept of Defense).
- Rewrote Palisades evacuation plans; updated parent letters.
- Full-scale evacuation drill at Hartford; hazmat tabletop exercises.
- Upgraded radios, provided classroom quick guides.
- Earned AHA Safeheart School Designation.

### **The following departments provided updates to the Board and the community:**

**Special Education Services:** *The Special Education Department opened the year with a Resource Fair on August 19, featuring over 20 displays, interactive activities, and community partnerships. Staff appreciated the engaging format, which included a scavenger hunt, photo backdrop, and opportunities to connect with leaders and agencies. New leadership was also introduced, with Director Monica Mansfield, a 20-year VBISD veteran, and three new supervisors bringing fresh perspective. Staffing changes included 20% new ancillary staff, fully staffed psychology and diagnostic teams with practicum students, and continued virtual speech services through Duncan Lake Speech Therapy. While all ancillary roles are filled, transportation and program assistant positions remain a priority for recruitment.*

**Technology Services:** *VBISD was awarded a \$75,000 Section 11x grant to study a shared services model for cybersecurity (CISO and SOC) in partnership with neighboring ISDs, with Plante Moran Consulting leading the study to assess demand, develop a service model, and provide a roadmap for regional implementation. The Technology Services Department worked hard to manage start-of-year demands, earning praise for their dedication and teamwork.*

**Early Childhood:** *The Early Childhood Department strengthened staffing over the summer, though vacancies remain. Programs reported steady or growing demand: Build Up processed 156 referrals, Early On handled 347 referrals, and Family Links continued providing vital home-based support with strong family engagement outcomes. Equity-focused outreach is expanding, especially in smaller districts.*

*In addition, the 2025–2027 Van Buren County Resource Guide was released, improving access to community services and supports for families.*

**Finance and Operations:** *VBISD welcomed three new staff to the Business Services team, who will support local districts with finance and payroll. Statewide, Michigan schools face budget uncertainty due to the lack of a School Aid Fund deal, with many districts projecting enrollment declines, deficit spending, and cuts to staff or programs. Nearly half could face cash flow issues*

*if state aid is delayed. Meanwhile, the countywide healthcare consortium is preparing for a 9.16% renewal rate increase, with most of the cost falling on employees.*

Weiss made the motion to approve the following resolution:

**RESOLVED**, that the Van Buren Intermediate Board of Education approves **Karen Makay** as delegate and **John Faul** as alternate delegate to represent the Van Buren Intermediate School District at MASB annual or special meetings for the 2025-2026 school year.

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

Weiss made the motion to approve the following resolution:

**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education approve the following policies as presented for approval effective September 10, 2025:

*2504 Public Participation at Board Meetings - Revision  
3310 Data Breach Response - Revision  
3115 Non-Discrimination, Anti-Harassment, and Non-Retaliation- Revision  
3115A Definitions for 3115 Series- Revision  
3118 Title IX Sexual Harassment - Revision  
3201A Financial Management for Federal Awards - Revision  
3211 Post-Issuance Tax Compliance - Revision  
3212 Post-Issuance Disclosure Compliance - Revision  
3301 Purchasing and Procurement - Revision  
3301A Purchasing and Procurement with Federal Funds - Revision  
3307 Construction Administration - Revision  
3402 Drills, Plans, and Reports - Revision  
3407 Asbestos Management - Revision  
3408 Firearms and Weapons - Revision  
4101 Non-Discrimination - Revision  
4103 Whistleblowers Protection - Revision  
4105B Religious Workplace Accommodations for Employees and Applicants - Revision  
4106 Family and Medical Leave Act - Revision  
4221 Employee Speech - Revision  
4403 Performance Evaluation - Revision  
4407 Discipline - Revision  
4408 Termination - Revision  
4409 Non-Renewal - Revision  
5104 Age of Majority - Revision  
5202 Unlawful Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Against Students - Revision  
5401 Parent Involvement in Education - Revision  
5405 Title I Parent and Family Engagement - Revision  
5406 Title I Funds - Revision  
5407 Instructional Materials - Revision  
5411 Student Promotion, Retention, and Placement - Revision  
5420 Sex Education - Revision  
5421 Work-Based Learning Experience - Revision  
5603 Section 504 - Revision  
5707 School Wellness Policy - Revision  
5712 Concussion Awareness – Revision*

Faul made the motion to approve the following resolution:

**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education approves the employment of the staff listed.

<u>New Employee</u>	<u>Salary</u>	<u>Start Date</u>
Colton Janecke, Associate Network Server Analyst	\$53,500.00	08/18/2025
David Arter, Diagnostic Teacher Consultant	\$80,045.00	08/18/2025
Evelyn Ledesma, GSRP Lead Teacher	\$45,469.00	08/18/2025
Terry Anserello, School Psychologist (Part-Time)	\$37,170.05	08/18/2025
Gillian Joseph, BGLC Assistant Principal	\$89,732.00	08/20/2025
Monica Mansfield, Director of Special Education	\$126,327.00	08/06/2025
Abigail Garcia, Certified Orientation & Mobility Specialist	\$57,641.00	08/18/2025
Katy Holverstott, Assistant Superintendent	\$140,000.00	08/11/2025
Kara Corniel, LEA Business Manager (Bangor/Bloomington)	\$120,000.00	09/08/2025
Amber Trowbridge, LEA Payroll & Accounting Specialist	\$65,000.00	09/08/2025
Jennifer Kelly-Preis, LEA Business Manager (Lawrence/Covert)	\$105,000.00	09/08/2025

Supported by Weiss. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Makay made the motion to approve the following resolution:

**RESOLVED**, that the Board of Education accepts the resignations/retirements of the staff listed.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Resignation/Retirement Date</u>
Rhonda Sheehan, GSRP Lead Teacher	08/01/2025 - Resignation
Margaret Wright, Speech & Language	08/08/2025 - Resignation
Robbyn Candelaria, VB Tech Counselor	08/11/2025 - Retirement
Angela Burd, GSRP Lead Teacher	08/19/2025 - Resignation
Tiffany Knockeart, School Nurse	08/17/2025

Supported by Kent. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Kent made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Supported by Faul. Voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 5:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,



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



**VAN BUREN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**SEPTEMBER 2025**

**VOUCHERS**

Imprest Fund	2,537,983.97
Payroll Fund	4,057,361.54
Purchasing Cards	98,693.86
EduStaff ACH	19,609.10

**PAYROLL SUMMARY**

General	1,188,377.91
Special Education	2,240,798.98
Vocational Education	628,184.65
Student Activity Fund	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,057,361.54</b>

**IMPREST VOUCHER SUMMARY**

FUND	CHECKS	TRAVEL	PURCHASING	TRFS/SALES	TOTAL
General	979,229.40	4,311.62	36,142.13	(9,913.90)	1,009,769.25
Special Education	353,480.73	5,031.28	31,261.96	6,568.43	396,342.40
Vocational Education	1,205,273.84	1,626.91	31,289.77	3,345.47	1,241,535.99
Student Activity Fund	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,537,983.97</b>	<b>10,969.81</b>	<b>98,693.86</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>2,647,647.64</b>

**VAN BUREN INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**SEPTEMBER 2025**

**BUDGET TO EXPENDITURE COMPARISON 25-26**

FUND	BUDGET	ACTUAL & ENCUMBERED EXPENSES	UNENCUMERED BALANCE	YEAR TO DATE VARIANCE
General	26,221,227	4,378,429	21,842,798	1,084,327
Special Education	43,256,264	5,057,519	38,198,745	3,954,203
Career Tech Education	17,411,809	2,872,512	14,539,297	754,949

**CASH FLOW SUMMARY**

	ENDING BALANCE 08/01/2025	CASH RECEIPTS	CASH DISBURSEMENTS	ENDING BALANCE 08/31/2025
General	7,327,029	1,828,382	2,905,130	6,250,282
Special Education	19,883,490	1,139,594	2,350,544	18,672,539
Career Tech Education	10,846,335	2,113,757	4,244,726	8,715,366
Student Activity Fund	32,916	135	-	33,051
<b>Total</b>	<b>38,089,770</b>	<b>5,081,868</b>	<b>9,500,400</b>	<b>33,671,239</b>

C. Board/Superintendent Travel (**ROLL CALL VOTE**)

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**CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE**  
Superintendent/Board of Education  
**September 2025**

***Pre-Approval***

NAME	DATES	LOCATION	ESTIMATED COST

***Approved, Not Yet Attended***

NAME	DATES	LOCATION	ESTIMATED COST
MaryAnn Middaugh	October 23 – 25, 2025	MASB Annual Leadership Conference 2025 Grand Traverse Resort, Acme, MI	<b>\$1,400</b>
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Dave Manson	October 23 – 25, 2025		<b>\$2,000</b>

***Post Approval***

NAME	DATES	LOCATION	ACTUAL COST
Dave Manson	September 17-19, 2025	MASA Annual Fall Conference 2025 Grand Traverse Resort, Acme, MI	<b>\$1,056</b>

D. Communications  
1. Key Dates

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## Upcoming Events and Key Dates Fall 2025

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Board Attendance</i>
10/1	4 pm	VBISD School Board Meeting	Conference Center	Requested ▾
10/17	11 am - 1 pm	Assistants Appreciation Luncheon	Conference Center	Voluntary ▾
10/21	9:30 am - 1 pm	VB Tech College Fair	VB Tech	Voluntary ▾
10/22	7:45 am - 11:00 am	VB Tech Records Day	VB Tech	Informational Only ▾
10/23 - 10/26		MASB Annual Leadership Conference	Grand Traverse Resort	Requested ▾
10/28	12:30 - 1:30 pm	Kingsping Drumming	BGLC	Voluntary ▾
10/31	12 - 1 pm	Trunk or Treat (11:45 am arrival)	BGLC	Voluntary ▾
11/5	4 pm	VBISD School Board Meeting	Conference Center	Requested ▾
11/18	10:45 am	Thanksgiving Lunch	BGLC	Voluntary ▾
11/26 - 11/28		VBISD Thanksgiving Break	VBISD	Informational Only ▾
12/3	4 pm	VBISD School Board Meeting	Conference Center	Requested ▾
12/8 - 12/12		VB Tech 10th Grade Visits	VB Tech	Informational Only ▾

12/10	12:30 pm	Winter Program and Bazaar	BGLC	Voluntary ▾
12/12	TBD	VBISD Holiday Breakfast	Conference Center	Requested ▾
12/15	4:30 pm - 6:30 pm	VB Tech 10th Grade Visit Open House	VB Tech	Voluntary ▾
				Please Select ▾
				Please Select ▾

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

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# MEMO

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**DATE:** OCTOBER 1, 2025  
**TO:** BOARD OF EDUCATION  
**FROM:** SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE  
**RE:** MONTHLY UPDATE

**\*\*District Highlights:** (Community Relations, Staff Relations, Business & Finance)  
Positive things are happening across all programs at the VBISD. One highlight includes two successful program moves: Instructional Services has moved into their new space at Cedar Street in Paw Paw and the Multilingual and Migrant Program has moved into their new offices at Lawrence Elementary Schools. Both locations provide needed space for our programs, while also helping our local school districts.

Another highlight was the smooth and expedient handling of the evacuation of VB Tech, the Bert Goens Learning Center, and the Special Services Center as a precautionary measure due to a gas leak. The emergency, while undesirable, provided the opportunity to learn what works and areas for targeted improvement.

**Professional Learning: MASA Fall Conference:** (Governance & Board Relations, Business & Finance, Instructional Leadership)

The Michigan Association of Superintendents and Administrators (MASA) Fall Conference gathered a record number of district leaders in Michigan to provide inspiration, new ideas, networking, and practical tools to help address current challenges in education. Spanning three days of general sessions, keynote speeches, breakout learning sessions, and other activities, this conference focused on strategies to manage the various challenges, with special emphasis on legislative and financial updates and analysis. The conference also featured a presentation from Dr. Glenn Maleyko, the next State Superintendent of Public Instruction.

At the conclusion of the conference, VBISD was named the winner of the Winter 2026 MASA Impact Award. The MASA Impact Award is designed to celebrate and recognize educational leadership. Over the next few months, MASA will partner with VBISD to design a thoughtful gift to our teachers and students.

**Assistant Superintendent Role:** (Governance & Board Relations, Business & Finance, Instructional Leadership)

The first few months of the new assistant superintendent role have been focused on hiring and transitioning the new special education director. Moving forward, this role will be the primary support for the Special Education, Early Childhood, Instructional

Services, and the Migrant/Multilingual departments and lead district improvement efforts, such as strategic planning, district/building improvement, and cross-department initiatives to increase collaboration, effectiveness and efficiency. The position is expected to develop over time in alignment with its intended goals.

**\*\*Financial Update:** (Governance & Board Relations, Staff Relations, Business & Finance, Instructional Leadership)

Although the state budget has yet to be finalized, there are signs that things might be moving: the Michigan Senate held a session on September 22nd, and the House is slated to be back on September 24th. One key concern is that without a budget in place soon, school districts across the state likely won't receive their October State Aid payment, which could force some districts to borrow money to cover payroll and some to be at risk for shut down. VBISD, however, is in a strong enough position to manage the current delay without disruptions to our operations.

The federal government is also facing a potential shutdown if Congress doesn't pass a budget or temporary funding by September 30. If that happens, programs like Head Start will likely be affected immediately. For most districts, including VBISD, a noticeable impact will not occur unless the shutdown is extended. Recently, the U.S. House passed a short-term funding measure to keep things running through November 21.

C. Department Updates

1. Presentation - Instructional Services: Coaching Matters

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# Coaching Matters

- \*Details of Study
- \*Findings
- \*Moving forward

**M** | MARSAL EDUCATION

**EPIC** Education Policy Innovation Collaborative  
RESEARCH WITH CONSEQUENCE

## Results from Coaching Study in Michigan

Tanya S. Wright, University of Michigan  
Lori Bruner, University at Albany

This presentation is based upon work supported by the Institute of Education Sciences (R305H190004) and the W. K. Kellogg Foundation

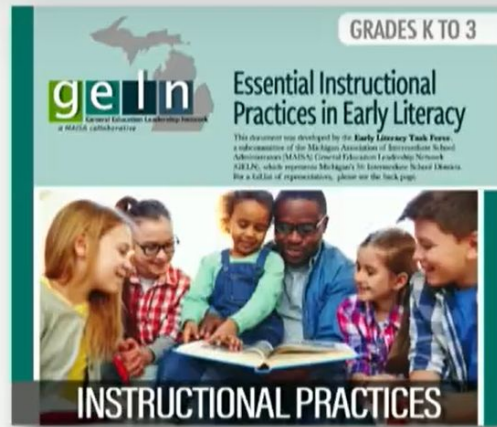
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN | MARSAL FAMILY SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

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# Why Our Study Matters

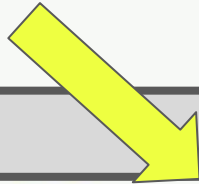
- Results are often mixed for large-scale coaching initiatives
- Michigan's Initiative combines statewide alignment with **local flexibility**
- Provides actionable takeaways for improving large-scale coaching initiatives

## Processes & Content in Michigan



## Recruiting Coaches

- Data were collected across three school years: 2020–2021 (Year 1), 2021–2022 (Year 2), and 2022–2023 (Year 3)
- Coaches must have been providing some one-on-one coaching to teachers (i.e., not only supporting other literacy coaches)
- Coaches had to have received at least partial funding (>50%) from Section 35a(4) of the State School Aid Act



## Recruiting Teachers

- Each coach recruited 2 teachers in matched pairs)
- One of each pair assigned to coaching and the other to wait-list comparison

# The Who

## Who were the coaches in our study? (thank you!!)

- 18 early literacy coaches from 16 ISDs across Michigan
- Average of 9 years' experience as an elementary classroom teacher
- Average of 7.8 years of coaching experience
- Most coaches had advanced degrees, with 83.3% holding a master's degree and 5.6% an Educational Specialist degree; 11.1% held a bachelor's degree.
- One of each pair assigned to coaching and the other to wait-list comparison

# The Who



**Decatur Public Schools**

Home of the Raiders

## Who were the teachers in our study? (thank you!)

- 89 K-3 teachers
- Teachers who received coaching were comparable to waitlist-comparison teachers in average years of experience (12.8 versus 14.4 years, respectively) and highest education level (39.1% versus 41.6% master's degree, respectively)
- Most teachers had two or fewer years (45.5%) or 3-5 years (27.3%) of experience at their grade levels.

## Coaching Logs

- 1,330 weekly coaching logs
- One log per coached teacher per week
- Asked about process, content, structure (time)

# The How of Data Collection

## Coaching Interviews

- End-of-year interviews
- Ranged in length from 29.5 to 68 minutes
- 14 open-ended questions about coaches' work with individual teachers (e.g., processes, content, and structure) as well as their broader responsibilities beyond the scope of this study (e.g., describing a typical week)
- Recorded and transcribed

## Videos of Teachers' Instruction

- Fall and Spring Videos
- Coached and wait-listed teachers
- All literacy instruction and either science or social studies
- Self-recorded with a Swivl
- 316.7 hours of classroom video

# The How of Data Collection

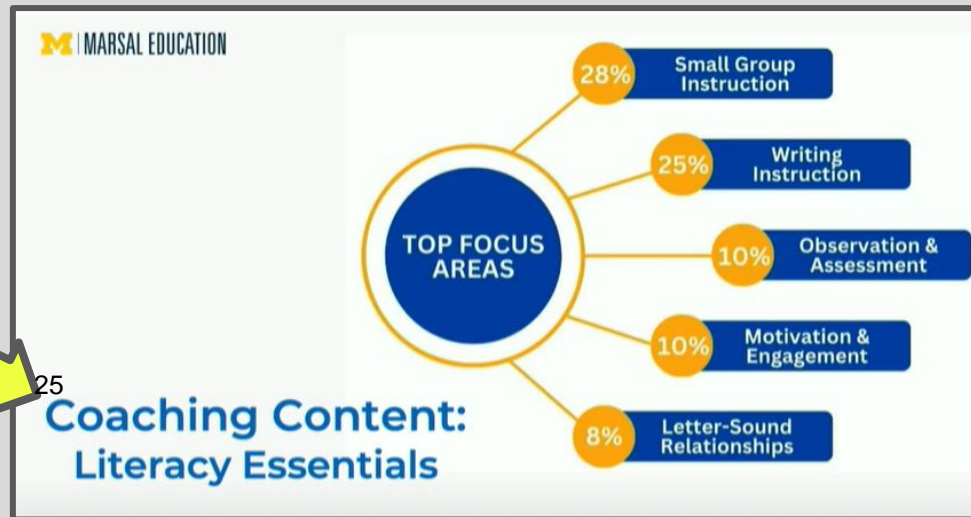
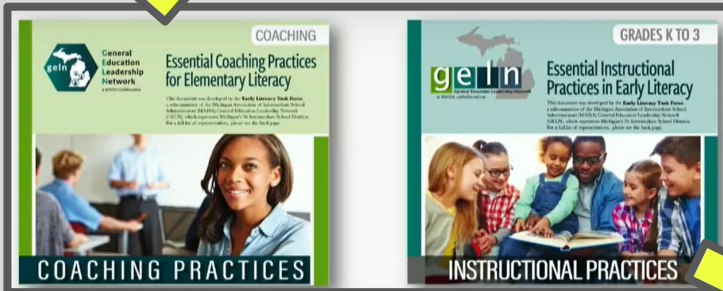
## Coded Videos - Exemplary to Deficient (levels of evidence)

Exemplary - 5	Strong - 4	Basic - 3	Inadequate - 2	Deficient - 1
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# Which coaching essentials did coaches use? (process)

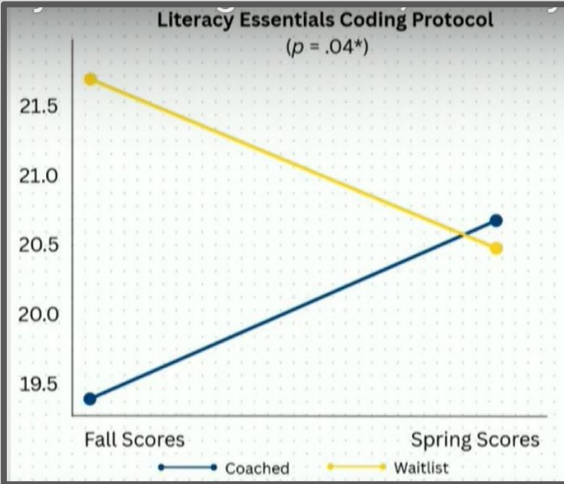
Coaching Process	Total time	% time
Observing, modeling, co-teaching	22,980	38.1
Conferring with teachers	18,170	30.2
Preparing for coaching	6,815	11.3
Other coaching processes (combined)	6,215	10.3
Delivering professional development	2,280	3.8
Other subject area coaching	1,110	1.8
Creating learning environments	860	1.4
Administering student assessments	785	1.3
Study-related time	530	0.9
Serving on school committees	355	0.6
Analyzing data with teachers	175	0.3
Co-planning lessons	105	0.2
Unable to record	15	<0.1
Relationship building	3,165	5.2
Administrative work	2,960	4.9

# Findings

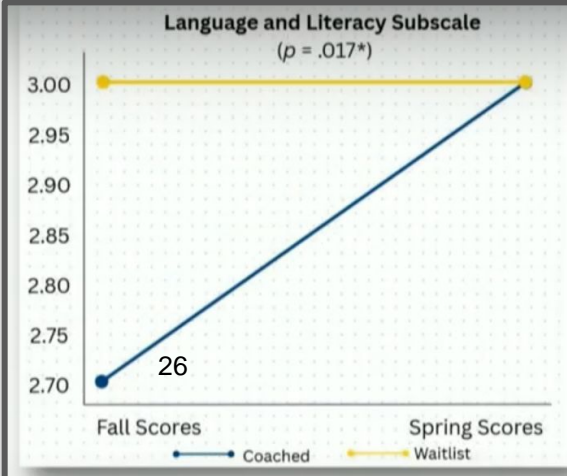


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# Findings



- Focused on teachers' implementation of the *Literacy Essentials*
- Coaching improved teachers' research-aligned practices
- This pattern was consistent across classrooms in Michigan



- Coaching significantly improved teachers' integration of reading and writing activities
- These improvements reflect broad shifts beyond specific *Essentials*

## What Matters Moving Forward

- To improve teachers' instruction, we need continued focus on research-based content (***Literacy Essentials***) and intensive coaching processes (**modeling, co-teaching, observing, one-on-one conference**)!
- Contextual factors can either support or limit coaching work. How can we set up **systems that help coaches to focus on intensive coaching practices and research-based literacy instruction** (*Literacy Essentials*)?



ittie Northrup

# Moving Forward

## What Matters Moving Forward

- Coaching time does not equal coaching quality. And also, it is concerning that some teachers get over **50 hours** of coaching on average in a year and others **get only 8**.
- Although this study examined a statewide initiative, state funding supports a very small number of coaches to serve the nearly over 32,000 K-3 teachers in our state.
- While our findings show that coaching improved literacy instruction **for participating teachers**, unless we have **more coaches** to work directly with more teachers, we won't have the capacity to generate widespread instructional change that is likely to improve children's literacy outcomes.

# Coaching Matters

**"The relationship between the coach and coachee provides a safe space for teachers and leaders to "fail forward" in their implementation."**


- Each ISD tailored hiring, assignments, and coaching responsibilities based on local needs
- However, statewide PD and guidance was anchored in two key **research-based** documents:
  - *Essential Coaching Practices for Elementary Literacy*
  - *Essential Instructional Practices in Early Literacy*

# Why Our Study Matters

- Results are often mixed for large-scale coaching initiatives
- Michigan's Initiative combines statewide alignment with local flexibility
- Provides actionable takeaways for improving large-scale coaching initiatives



## Memorandum

<b>Date:</b>	October 1, 2025	
<b>To:</b>	VBISD Board of Education	
<b>From:</b>	Melissa Corona <i>Director of Instructional Services</i>	
<b>Subject:</b>	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.

## Professional Development

As the school year started, Instructional Services was busy providing professional development opportunities to educators across the county. We provided the following PD sessions:

- New Teacher Academy - 3 day event for teachers in their 1st through 3rd year of teaching. The emphasis on the learning included classroom management, lesson planning, building positive relationships with students and families, as well as self-care for the teacher.
- Para-educator Training - This full-day event was offered to para-educators across the county. It provided opportunities for the attendees to role play as they learned different strategies to support the students they work with in the classroom.
- AI in Action - This event was provided by Jason Strazalkowski. Jason was a Technology Director from Van Buren Public Schools. This full-day event was offered to anyone across the county. Attendees were able to learn new generative AI tools.

Our staff was also busy providing professional development in many of our local schools tailored to the needs of the districts.

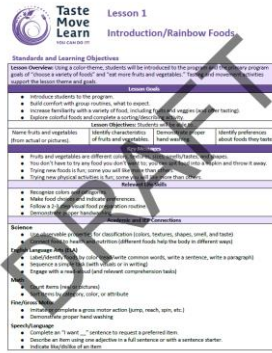


## Project SHINE Highlight

Since FY2011, Van Buren ISD has partnered with the Michigan Fitness Foundation (MFF) to deliver Project SHINE (formerly Project LEAN), providing nutrition and physical activity education across our county. Over the 14-year partnership, this work has been strengthened through collaboration with schools, libraries, local farms, health departments, and other community partners committed to improving student wellness and food access. With the federal SNAP-Ed funding for Project SHINE set to sunset, we are working to ensure this important work transitions in meaningful ways.

Because of the strong relationships and proven success of our programming, MFF has invited VBISD to pilot a new initiative within our Special Education programs:

### Taste. Move. Learn. – You Can Do It!



This pilot is designed to adapt hands-on nutrition and physical activity lessons for students with diverse learning needs. The program emphasizes tasting new foods, engaging in movement, and building confidence in making healthy choices. Our role will be to test the curriculum in center-based classrooms, provide feedback on student engagement, and identify opportunities for integration into daily learning routines.

This opportunity not only allows us to contribute to a statewide effort to make wellness education more inclusive but also positions VBISD as a leader in shaping resources that can benefit special education populations across Michigan.

## Literacy Coaching Highlight

When school kicked off, VBISD Literacy Coaches were present to deliver professional learning in all of our districts. Regardless of the audience of the learning, which varied from individuals to grade levels to entire buildings and spanned grades K-12, this work has launched the coaching of individual teachers. The focus of coaching is determined by district-wide and school-wide goals as well as individual teacher goals.

A multi-year study presented at the MAISA Advanced Coaching Institute in mid-August showed that [Coaching Matters](#) and the work of coaches in service to our local educators DOES have an impact on teacher practice. Evidence of this was also present in the individual coaching cycle data that each literacy coach shared for a statewide collection project last spring. We are looking forward to continuing this very important work as the 2025-2026 School Year progresses!

## Math Coaching Highlight

As we kicked off the new school year, our math consultants worked alongside districts in the county to launch strong instructional practices and build momentum for student success.

- **Program Implementation:** Supported several districts in the initial rollout of a new math program, providing guidance to administrators and teachers to ensure a smooth transition.
- **Professional Development:** Facilitated professional learning sessions to establish county-wide goals for the year, with a particular emphasis on building fact fluency and deprivatizing practice so teachers can grow together as professionals.
- **PLC Support:** Initiated professional learning community (PLC) meetings for each grade level, creating a collaborative space for teachers to share ideas, reflect on practice, and align instruction.
- **Classroom Support:** Provided model teaching opportunities for new teachers, giving them a clear picture of instructional routines and strategies in action.
- **County-Wide Collaboration:** Hosted our second county-wide co-planning event for *Number Corner* and *Bridges* users, bringing teachers together to plan, share resources, and strengthen consistency of instruction across districts.

We are encouraged by the strong start and the enthusiasm of our educators. Looking ahead to October, we are eager to continue this momentum with ongoing PLC support, classroom visits, and targeted professional development to deepen instructional impact across the county.

## Adult Ed ESL

Adult Multilingual Education classes began the day after Labor Day, and we are excited to report strong enrollment with 44 students already registered for this year! Of these, 30 are new learners and 14 are returning from previous years.

We are also pleased to have Gaby, our new Success Coach, begin to create connections in our community. She attended numerous open houses and fall kickoff events, actively promoting our program and establishing meaningful connections with new and returning students. Her efforts are already strengthening our community relationships and raising awareness of the opportunities we provide.

This fall, we have expanded into new spaces:

**Paw Paw:** We now have a dedicated classroom and storage area at the Cedar Street location. The classroom not only provides our learners with a larger space for classes, but it also serves as a central hub for our entire department's materials and resources. Having this additional storage supports smoother operations and better organization across all of our sites.

**Bangor:** Our new classroom is now located in the library of 12 N. Walnut Street. The building offers a bright and welcoming environment with room for growth. We are especially excited about the potential opportunities this location brings for community partnerships and expanding access to learners in the Bangor area.

Looking ahead, our focus for the year is on creating pleasant and comfortable learning spaces at all three of our sites to ensure that students feel welcome and supported.

## **\*\*Mental Health Clinicians**

The mental health clinician (MHC) team welcomed two new clinicians and 3 interns in August/September. Kennedy Mauro, LLMSW, is serving elementary students at Redwood Elementary in Hartford. Jessi Roy, LPC, is serving students at Paw Paw High School. One intern, from Kentucky University, Emily Wallace is serving Pullman Elementary and Bangor's South Walnut Elementary school. Western Michigan University interns, Brianna Martin and Benjamin Harris, both Master of Social Work Candidates, are working with mental health clinician staff, Crystal Hughes, LMSW, Aaron Van Heest, LLMSW and Travis Wilcox, LLMSW, and Deb Faling, LMSW.

The year started with more than 240 referrals within the first month of school. As of the writing of this report the MHC team has completed close to 20 suicide screens with students. These student who have been identified as having suicidal ideation and have been screened created safety plans with the MHC or a suggestion to parents has been made for screening at the hospital for possible hospitalization.

This month the Project AWARE grant comes to a close. Project AWARE has been a 5 year federal grant allowing for expansion of mental health services in schools. Lawton and Gobles districts both benefitted from clinicians being placed in their schools who provide opportunity for SEL programming, groups and individual therapy. The AWARE grant allowed for youth and parent voices to be heard, increased systems to be built within the districts, helped reduce stigma around mental health, and training was offered to administrators and staff. Funding provided through the 31N grant will allow for continued services for these buildings.

The Youth Advisory Panel (YAP) met for their first meeting on 09/10/25 (adults only )and 09/11/25. These meetings were training provided by the Neutral Zone from Ann Arbor. Neutral Zone is a transformative, youth-driven community where youth embrace their power, ignite their creativity, and launch their future to build equity, justice, and collective liberation. The focus of the 2 day training focused on training adults working together with youth on how to best support and activate our Van Buren Youth Advisory Panel. The second day included both youth and adults to learn how to best work together. The group left the two day training feeling energized, connected and excited for what is ahead.

The Youth Collaborative is held their first meeting of the year on 09/18/25. Ideas and direction will be discussed and sought from the group to propel us into this school year for making change around anti-bullying campaigns, increasing mental health wellness in the county as well as addressing vaping/substance use amongst our youth population.

Our seventh Whole Child Summit is scheduled to take place at the Van Buren conference center on October 2nd. This summit will focus on "the Day in the Life of a Student" with a special focus on learning about and supporting the audience in aiding students to build protective factors. Protective factors are conditions or attributes that reduce risks and build resilience in individuals facing challenges. Please consider joining us at the October 2nd summit.

## **\*\*Van Buren Youth Initiative**

The Van Buren Youth Initiative (VBYI) is entering fall with programs fully active across the county. Through strong partnerships with schools, community organizations, and local funders, VBYI continues to expand access to high-quality afterschool and enrichment programming. All programs are offered at no cost to families, including equipment and supplies, ensuring equitable access for every student.

### **Program Highlights**

#### **His Place – Hartford**

- Operating four days per week in a youth center model.
- Beginning in October, new teaching artists will join to expand offerings.
- Mondays will feature *Adventures in Ink*, a creative illustration and design program.

#### **Luc's Light – Paw Paw**

- Operating three days per week, Tuesdays through Thursdays.
- Expanded teaching artist partnerships bring new enrichment opportunities in music, art, and community-based projects.

#### **South Haven Center for the Arts (SHCA) – South Haven**

- Running four days per week, with Monday programming at the Covert Library.
- Students participate in rotating mediums (painting, sculpture, fiber arts) and special clubs such as guitar.
- SHCA continues to support countywide arts access through its partnership with VBYI.

#### **Van Buren Tech – Countywide**

- Classes officially launched on September 16th, with registration extended through September 30th.
- 16 students participated on opening night, representing Lawrence, Mattawan, Gobles, Lawton, Hartford, Decatur, Paw Paw, and the homeschool community.
- Most students are in grades 8–11, bringing together a diverse mix of learners from across the county.
- Students left feeling welcomed, connected to classmates and instructors, and excited to return for the next session.
- Programs are open to all middle and high school youth in Van Buren County, providing pathways for career exploration and personal development.

### **Transportation Progress**

- Transportation continues to be one of the biggest barriers for student participation in countywide programs.
- VBYI is working with district superintendents to try and find a workable solution to transportation.
- **Pilot routes from Decatur to His Place (Hartford) on Mondays and Wednesdays started Sept. 8th.**
  - **Students are taking advantage of this opportunity.**
- Next steps include exploring additional ideas on how we can expand the opportunities to more students and other districts.

### **Technology Expansion**

- With support from the South Haven Community Foundation, VBYI and SHCA are creating an iPad Lending Library of 20 devices.
  - Schools, libraries, and community organizations will be able to borrow iPads to support digital creativity (Procreate, video creation, etc.).
  - Launch is planned for October 2025, increasing access to technology tools across the county.

\*Pictures from Science Explorers and AutoXplore classes (VB Tech & VBYI collaboration)





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## MEMO

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**DATE:** OCTOBER 1, 2025  
**TO:** BOARD OF EDUCATION  
**FROM:** BRITANI OLDS, ADMINISTRATOR FOR HUMAN RESOURCES  
**RE:** HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

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

**\*New Hire Orientation**

We had another awesome orientation day for our new hires on Thursday, August 14. There were approximately 49 new hires that were hired between April - August in attendance. There was a lot of information covered to help them gain a better understanding of all of the different departments that make up the ISD and all of the GREAT work that is being done. We were able to take the new hires on a tour of VB Tech and Bert Goens Learning



Center and I appreciate Terry Lechenet and the transportation team for partnering with us to transport them. A survey was sent out to the new hires to gather their feedback and thoughts on their experience and we continue to leverage that feedback to make adjustments in order to continue to make the new hire orientation as meaningful as possible for all of the new hires.

The feedback was very positive and they appreciated the opportunity to learn more about everything the ISD offers, meeting all of the new people and the tour of the buildings.

## **\*Marketing**


A new VBISD newsletter has been created and will be sent to all staff on a monthly basis! The average reading time for the first newsletter was 9 minutes, which is considered really good as people usually just quickly scroll. This means that employees are taking their time to read the content, which is great!

Like I have mentioned in previous updates, social media continues to be a key component and focus area. Our Facebook followers have increased from 0 to 531 in 7 months. This will continue to increase as Brittany Millan continues to keep our pages active with information people want to know about.

Brittany has been working diligently on the promotion and marketing of our open positions. The great news is we start to have data to show if the efforts are working. It also allows us to use data to aid in decision making for future open position marketing requests. Also, something new is happening, beginning October 10, 2025 and running until February 5, 2026 there will be a one minute video playing about our transportation department before every movie at the Loma in Coloma and Michigan Theatre in South Haven. We are hoping this will generate some awareness of openings in transportation and get people looking at our careers page or let others know about it.



**Memorandum**

<b>Date:</b>	October 1, 2025	
<b>To:</b>	VBISD Board of Education	
<b>From:</b>	Angie Gutiérrez <i>Administrator of Multilingual and Migrant Services</i>	
<b>Subject:</b>	Multilingual/Migrant Services Update	



**Meet Sarah Wagner**

Sarah Wagner is a certified Math (6–12) and English Language Learning teacher (certified K-12) with over a decade of experience supporting multilingual learners from around the world—92 countries and counting (and yes, she’s keeping track—she’s a math teacher, after all!).



Originally from a wonderfully diverse community near Chicago, Sarah is passionate about creating inclusive classrooms where students feel valued, challenged, and empowered to grow. Throughout her career, she has worn many hats, including math paraprofessional, EL teacher, and language tutor. If it involves helping students and staff thrive, she’s all in.

Outside the classroom, Sarah is a certified personal trainer and an experienced CrossFit and F45 fitness coach. She brings the same energy and motivation to fitness that she does to education—believing deeply in the connection between movement, mindset, and growth.

Her love for people and cultures has taken her on service trips to China, Mexico, Honduras, and the Dominican Republic, experiences that have further shaped her belief that language is more than vocabulary—it’s identity, connection, and joy.

Whether she’s coaching, teaching, or simply living life, Sarah’s goal is always the same: to help people move forward—with curiosity, confidence, and joy. She is excited to serve the students, staff, and families of Van Buren County as part of the Multilingual VBISD team. Sarah will be serving Decatur Public Schools this year as their Multilingual Teacher.



### **Meet Lori Frisinger**

Lori Frisinger is excited to join Van Buren ISD as an ESL teacher. Lori will be providing services in Lawton Community Schools. She brings a strong background in English education, holding a bachelor's degree in English Literature and a Cambridge CELTA certification. She is currently working toward her Michigan teaching certification through the Grow Your Own program.

Lori has experience working with multilingual learners of all ages and backgrounds through the CELTA program, various local initiatives, as well as in Portage Public Schools and Mattawan Consolidated Schools.

Outside of work, Lori enjoys gardening, walking her dogs, and discovering new shows on Netflix. She is looking forward to being part of a welcoming and collaborative team and is eager to build strong relationships with students, families, and colleagues.

### **Soccer Goals Bring Joy to Migrant Camps**

During a visit to Shannon Camp on July 1, staff noticed migrant workers playing soccer with makeshift goal posts made of sticks placed on the ground. While the games were lively, the lack of real goals often led to small disputes about whether a shot counted as a score.

Thanks to migrant ministry funds—generously donated by Park United Presbyterian Church in Highland Park, Michigan, and the Nkosu family (Cameroonian Presbyterian)—proper soccer goals were purchased for the camp. With help from Victor Zuniga and Irma Arranda Cruz, VBISD recruiters, the goals were installed, transforming the games and bringing both fairness and joy to the players.

In addition to Shannon Camp, several sets of goals were also provided to migrant camps in Imlay City, allowing farmworkers and their families to enjoy soccer with a stronger sense of fun, fairness, and community spirit.



## Watervliet Migrant Camp Event Supports Families and Prepares Students for School

The VBISD Migrant Education Program recently hosted an outreach event at the Watervliet migrant camp in Berrien County, bringing together families, school staff, and community partners with the shared goal of preparing students for the upcoming school year. Watervliet Public School recently joined the Van Buren ISD Migrant consortium. This was a great opportunity for our staff to connect with the families.

A key focus of the evening was school enrollment. Watervliet staff members, including Watervliet High School Principal Christina Powers and teacher Linda Zuniga, were on hand to answer questions about the school year. Recruiters were on hand to help families register students and distribute school schedules. Students also received backpacks filled with supplies to ensure they are ready to begin classes with confidence.

Families enjoyed a shared dinner and participated in games and fun activities led by the VBISD recruiter, Jorge Zuniga, creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Community partners, including the Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity (LEO) and Telamon, joined the event to connect families with resources and services that support their well-being. Project NOMAD staff members Maria Hernandez and Adrian Cruz organized a clothing drive for families.

The gathering not only helped families complete important school readiness tasks but also strengthened relationships between the school, local agencies, and the migrant community. Thanks to the collaboration of Watervliet staff, agency partners, and the VBISD Migrant Education Program, students are better prepared, and families feel supported as they begin a new school year.





## Recruitment Sweep



On August 9–10, the Region Two Identification and Recruitment (ID&R) team carried out a recruitment “sweep” across two counties with the goal of identifying and enrolling eligible migrant students who had not yet been recruited. We completed 50 certificates of eligibility over the course of two days.

Recruiters worked in teams of three to four, canvassing local communities to connect with families and ensure students received access to educational services and support. A highlight of the effort was the participation of Evelyn Arévalo, an experienced recruiter from Georgia who travels nationwide to assist with sweeps. Evelyn not only supported the recruitment work but also mentored new recruiters, turning the sweep into a valuable hands-on training opportunity.

These collaborative recruitment efforts help ensure that migratory children and youth do not fall through the cracks and are provided with the resources and educational opportunities they deserve.





## Update on Multilingual Learner and Special Education Evaluation Initiative

This past spring, the VBISD Special Education Department and Multilingual Department jointly launched a three-phase initiative to strengthen training and support for evaluating students who are both multilingual learners and suspected of having disabilities.

- **Phase 1 (May 2025):** Key personnel—including two school psychologists, one diagnostic teacher consultant, and the VBISD multilingual learner consultant and coach—completed specialized training and fact-finding with the goal of adapting this training for county-wide use and beginning development of a VBISD-specific evaluation protocol.
- **Phase 2 (October 2025):** The focus will expand to training additional evaluators, including speech-language pathologists, MTSS coordinators, and multilingual learner educators. This work will be supported by Oakland County ISD and its English Learner Suspected Disabilities team. Our local districts will be joining virtually with their district team to complete the training together.
- **Phase 3 (January–June 2026):** A finalized protocol will be presented to school administrators and departments. Technical assistance will be provided to ensure fidelity of implementation and build district-wide capacity.

Throughout all phases, the initiative prioritizes synthesizing best practices, gathering participant feedback, and creating professional development opportunities led by the Phase 1 team. This collaboration will help ensure accurate, equitable evaluation practices for multilingual learners while maintaining the integrity of the referral and diagnostic process.

## Celebrating a Successful Summer of Learning and Fun



The final weeks of the summer program were filled with celebration and recognition for students and staff alike. Students in grades 5–12 enjoyed an ice cream party, while all students from kindergarten through 12th grade gathered for a movie day to mark the end of the season. Younger students in grades K–4 also took part in a special “Water Day,” bringing extra excitement to their summer experience.

To honor their efforts and achievements, students in grades K–12 received awards such as the *Mathematician Award*, *Spectacular Reader Award*, *STAR Student Award*, *Outstanding Progress Award*, and *Attendance Award*. In addition to recognizing academic growth, the program placed a strong emphasis on fostering a love of reading. Each week, students selected two books to take home, building their personal libraries and nurturing a habit of lifelong learning.

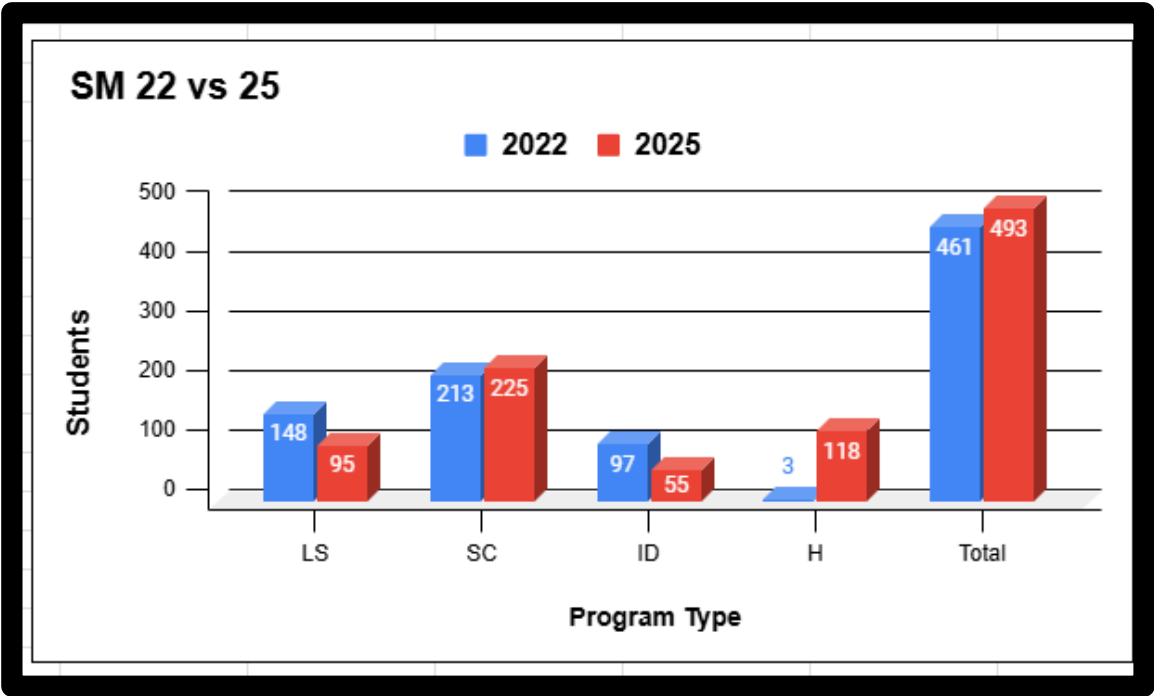
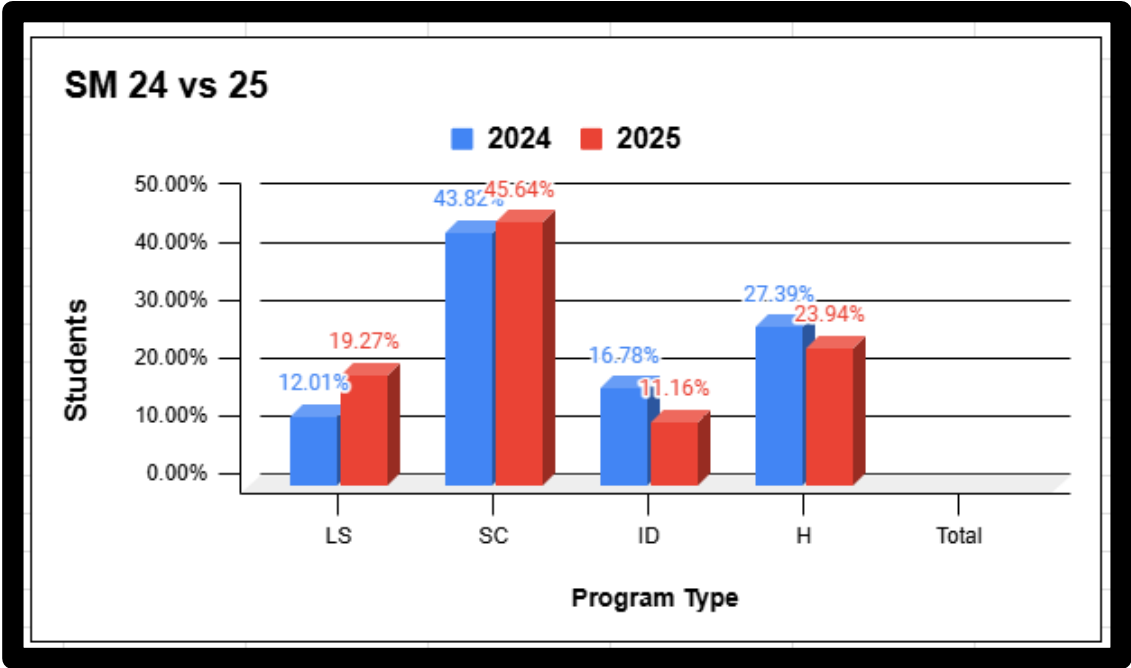
The program also continued its Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) initiatives through a student “economy system.” Students earned school dollars for positive behavior in classrooms, specials, recess, the cafeteria, and on the bus. Every Friday, they had the chance to spend their earnings at the school store, which was stocked with donations from Toys for Tots as well as contributions from generous staff members.

Staff were celebrated too. The office team organized two appreciation events, providing both a staff lunch and a staff breakfast. In addition, staff members were nominated weekly for the “Staff Member of the Week” recognition, honoring their dedication and hard work.

This summer highlighted the perfect balance of learning, fun, and community spirit—ensuring students were supported academically, socially, and emotionally while staff felt valued for their commitment.









# MEMO

**DATE:** OCTOBER 1, 2025  
**TO:** BOARD OF EDUCATION  
**FROM:** ROBERT SMITH, DIRECTOR  
**RE:** CAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION BOARD UPDATE

## **\*2024-25 ANNUAL REPORT (1,4,8,10,15,18,19,20)**

As part of our Career & Technical Education Technical Review, Assistance, and Compliance (TRAC) process, Van Buren County is required to complete an Annual CTE Report and share that report with its stakeholders. Throughout this past year, staff at VB Tech have been gathering valuable information and data to help tell the story of the 2024-25 school year. This “year in review” feature will again become an annual report and the information will be shared with multiple stakeholders to not only help keep everyone abreast of events taking place at VB Tech, but will also be utilized as part of our marketing efforts to help showcase the many outstanding things that are occurring on an annual basis. A special thank you goes to the students and staff for all of their hard work this past year.

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1kMupl-tHGpyUu2OkXpWSFnZo8Ra-gYorN4e2B4NadQU/edit?usp=s\\_haring](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1kMupl-tHGpyUu2OkXpWSFnZo8Ra-gYorN4e2B4NadQU/edit?usp=s_haring)

## **\*CTE ELEVATE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAY (1,2,5,9,10,11,15)**

On Wednesday, August 20th, Van Buren Tech’s school improvement committee utilized the VBISD Mix & Mingle Professional Development template to create a CTE Specific PD day at Van Buren Tech....CTE Elevate! Much like Mix & Mingle, the day was structured to include a welcome session, a keynote presentation, several CTE-specific breakout sessions, and an Advisory Committee Town Hall discussion. Keynote speaker Ted Kroll, Director of Adult and Alternative Education at Livingston ESA, and President of Michigan Adult Community & Alternative Education, emphasized the impact of CTE on our communities, highlighting that 95 percent of CTE students are either employed or continuing their education after graduation. Ted shared strategies around growth mindset, student engagement, building connections, and recognizing excellence. He challenged staff to consider how to elevate the first day, first semester, and first year for students in CTE. Overall, the goals of the event were to a) Enhance Instructional Excellence & Student Engagement, b) Strengthen Integration of Technology & Innovation in CTE, and c) Expand Career Connections & Program Visibility. The event was a great success with Ted Kroll, from Livingston ESA, delivering an outstanding keynote address focusing on structures of student engagement. Feedback from staff was extremely positive and encouraging. The committee has already evaluated feedback data from staff and are identifying changes to make next year’s event even better. Great job to all involved!



## WELCOME BACK STAFF

On Monday, August 18, staff members returned for the first day of the 2025-2026 school year. The morning began with administrative breakout sessions to share updates and set goals for the new year. The day concluded with a picnic to celebrate the end of summer, providing an opportunity for staff to reconnect, share their summer experiences, and prepare for the upcoming year.

On Tuesday, August 19, the entire Van Buren Intermediate School District family came together for Opening Day professional development. This year's keynote speaker, Jo Mascorro, M.Ed., a consultant for education, delivered an inspiring message reminding us that while there may be one lens of life, there are many viewpoints. She encouraged staff to embrace the new year with a fresh outlook based on HERO: Habit, Expectations, Relationships, and Ownership.



## VAN BUREN YOUTH INITIATIVE PARTNERSHIP (4,5,8,10,11,15,16,18,20)

Van Buren Tech is partnering with the Van Buren Youth Initiative (VBVI) to offer a career exploration after-school program at Van Buren Tech. As part of the program, VBVI provides free classes for middle and high school students, where CTE Staff at VB Tech partner to enrich students' educational experiences and provide opportunities to explore skills in fine arts, STEM, and career readiness. Available courses include: AutoXplore; Own Your Strengths, Shape Your Future; Science Explorers; Sketch to Screen; and Wings & Wild Spaces. The first event kicked off on September 16, with 16 students joining the program. Students in attendance represented Lawrence, Mattawan, Gobles, Lawton, Hartford, Decatur and Paw Paw school districts. Students will meet weekly on Tuesdays from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. at VB Tech until Tuesday, November 4th! Welcome students!

<https://site.corsizio.com/portal/68025784d8af7e28a73975c7>



## **\*REGIONAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN (1,2,4,5,8,10,11,15,18,20)**

As part of the Federal Perkins V Legislation, ALL CTE programs around the country are required to meet state established and Federally approved benchmarks on the Core Performance Indicators below. Student performance is assessed at both the State and Region level, meaning that average scores from our Region (Region 19 - Berrien, Cass, Van Buren Counties) must meet these benchmarks. Failing to do so for consecutive years results in the Region being required to submit a Regional Improvement Plan in the areas of deficiency, identifying interventions that will be put in place in an attempt to raise student performance levels. Unfortunately, our region did not meet the benchmarks for Reading or Math these past two years and we were required to submit a Regional Improvement Plan that will be implemented during the current school year. Specifically, we will need to take the steps listed below to try to increase SAT Reading/ELA and Math scores of our CTE students.

### Reading/ELA Improvement Activities

- Identify CTE programs with test scores below state target
- Instructors will work with English instructors to identify reading strategies to incorporate into CTE content
- Each instructor/program identified will receive information on the importance of integrating reading in CTE programs, as well as a list of resources to assist with academic integration
- Instructors will work with English instructors to develop lesson plans to incorporate into the CTE program
  - Goal to increase instructor confidence and participation in teaching reading with technical content as shown in an instructor survey feedback.
  - 100% of identified program instructors will receive reading implementation information and strategies and will incorporate 2 lessons per marking period.

### Math Improvement Activities

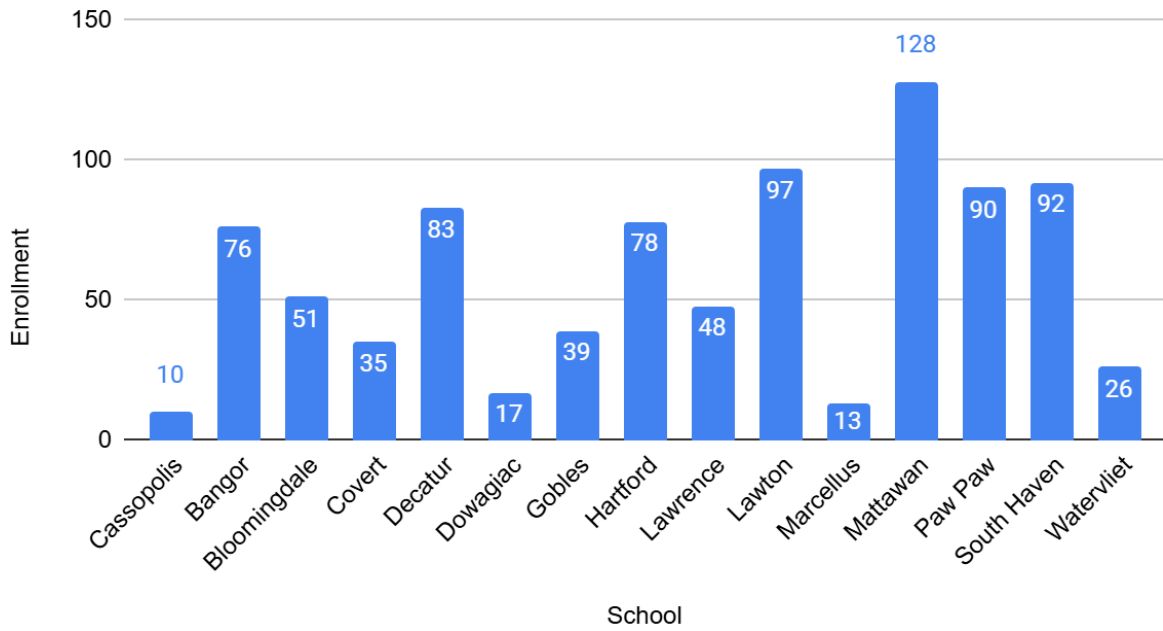
- Identify programs with test scores below state target
- Instructors will work with Math Consultant to identify Math strategies to incorporate into CTE content
- Instructors will work with Math instructors to develop lesson plans to incorporate into CTE programs
  - Goal to increase instructor confidence and participation in teaching math with technical content shown in instructor survey feedback.
  - 100% of identified program instructors will receive math implementation information and strategies and will incorporate at least 2 lessons per marking period.

1S1: Graduation Rate (95% Benchmark) - **VB Tech = 95.32%**  
2S1: SAT Reading Scores (58.8% Proficient Benchmark) - **VB Tech = 41.65%**  
2S2: SAT Math Scores (34.8% Proficient Benchmark) - **VB Tech = 14.46%**  
2S1: SAT Science Scores (1st Year of Implementation; No Benchmark Yet) - **VB Tech = 28.97%**  
3S1: Post-Secondary Placement Rate (95% Benchmark) - **VB Tech = 92.26%**  
4S1: Non-Traditional Participation Rate (19.8% Benchmark) - **VB Tech = 22.2%**  
5S1: Program Quality: Student Credential Attainment Rate (10% Benchmark) - **VB Tech = 14.99%**

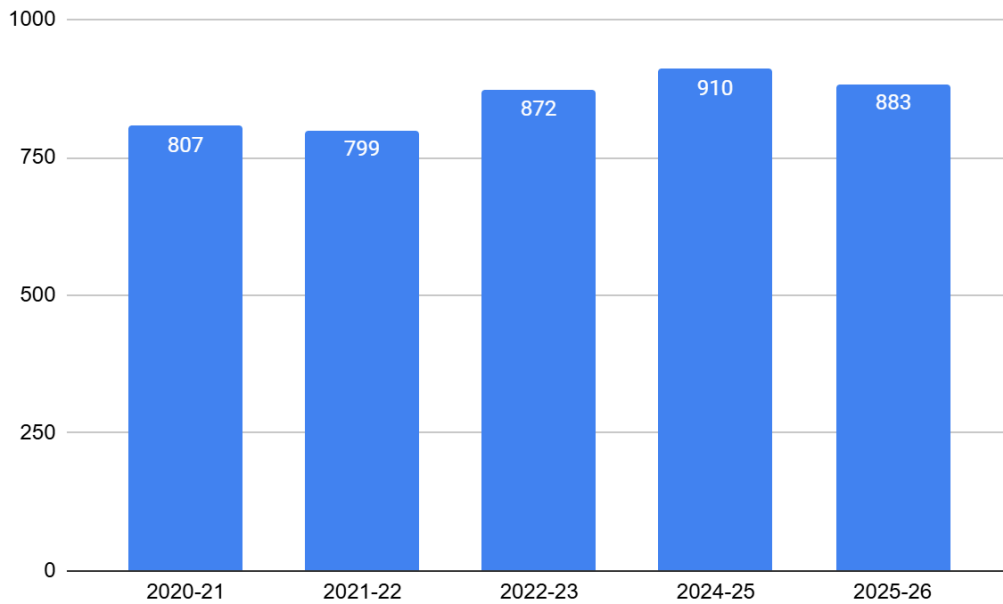
## **25-26 ENROLLMENT OVERVIEW (1,4,8,10,11,17)**

With Drop/Add coming to a close, CTE enrollment at VB Tech is mostly stable at 883 students for the fall semester. Below is a breakdown of the 25-26 Fall CTE enrollment numbers from our partnering school districts, as well as our five year enrollment summary for both in-county and out-of-county districts.

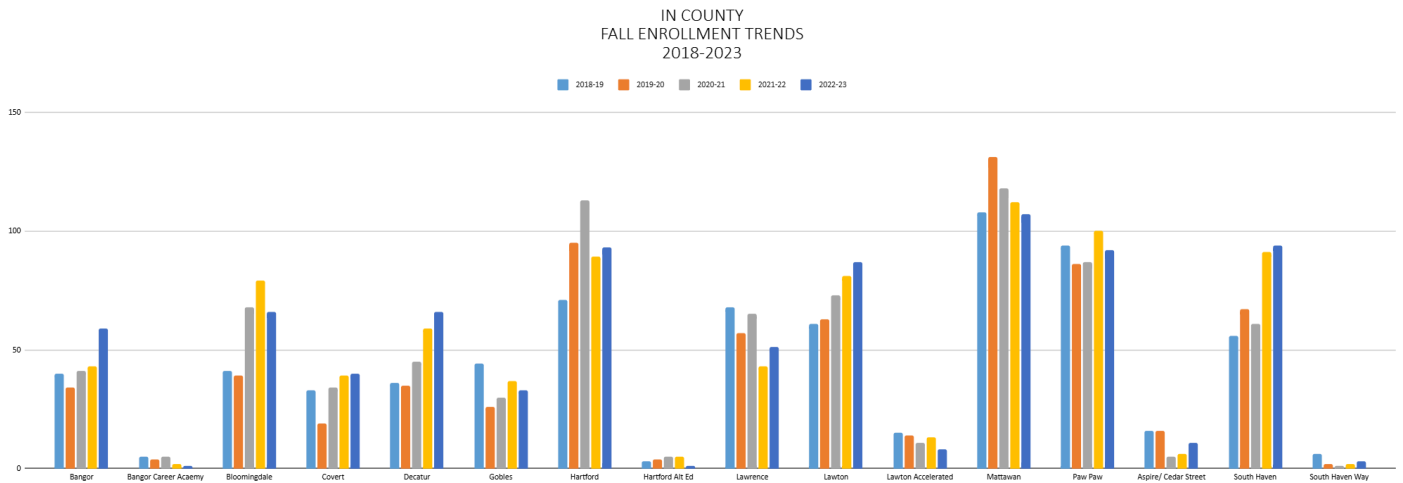
## 25-26 Fall CTE Enrollment



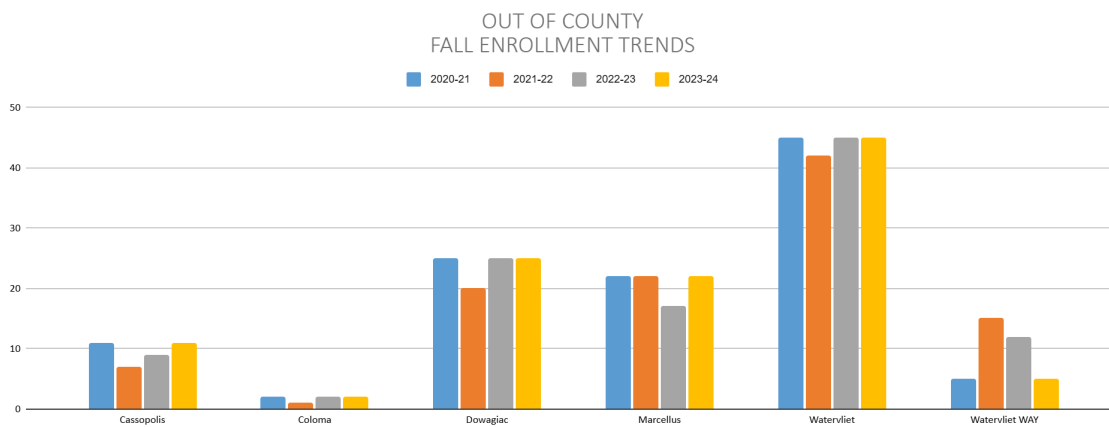
## 5 Year VB Tech Fall Total Enrollment Summary



## 5 Year Enrollment Summary - Van Buren County Districts



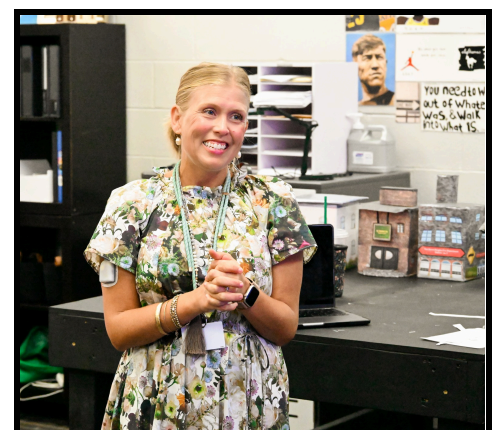
## 5 Year Enrollment Summary - Out of County Districts



## HONOR CREDIT UNIONS ANNUAL TEACHER AWARDS (4,8,11,15,18)

Van Buren Tech congratulates Business, Management & Administration instructor Katherine Ott, a recipient of Honor Credit Union’s Annual Teacher Awards. In her submission essay, Katherine described the challenges some students in the county face, such as limited access to nutritious food and hygiene items, and explained how classroom support can make a difference. She shared that the nutritious snacks she offers in her classroom have become an important way to help meet her students’ daily needs.

Katherine was awarded \$500 to enhance her classroom by providing nutrient-dense food options and creating a hygiene readiness cart stocked with essentials, such as toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, first aid items, hairbrushes, laundry soap, lip balm, and more. This helps students feel prepared, confident, and supported at VBT.



A special thank you to Honor Credit Union for recognizing the important work Katherine does to help her students thrive.

## EMT 1ST DAY OF SCHOOL (1,4,8,11,15,16,20)

The Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) program began the school year with a hands-on scenario on the very first day at Tech. Instructor James Robertson, along with Program Assistant Lisa Flemming, set up a scenario to give students an early look at the training ahead. Lisa placed a mock call into the classroom, reporting an explosion, which required students to think quickly and respond as if it were a real emergency. This scenario set the tone for the fast-paced and practical learning experiences that they'll take part in this year.



## \*MILITARY HEALTHCARE CAREERS (1,4,5,8,10,11,15,17,18)

VBT students in the Allied Health program recently welcomed guest speakers from the Army National Guard. The speakers provided students with a firsthand look at careers and opportunities in health and medical services within the military, as well as options for financial support for college.

The Military healthcare described roles within the Guard, such as medics and allied health positions, and shared stories about community service during emergencies and day-to-day health services.

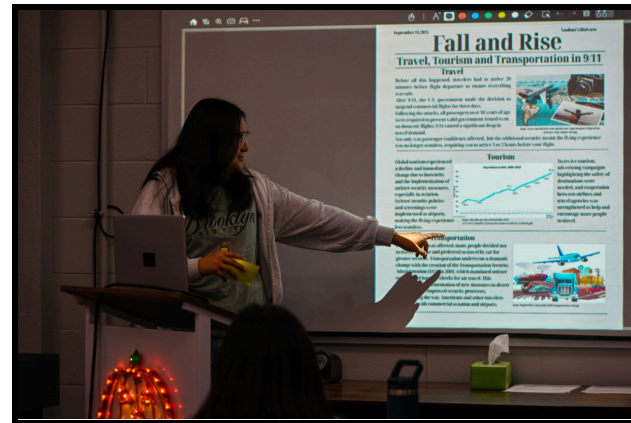
The overview was directly connected to what students have already begun learning in class, with an emphasis on the importance of skills such as teamwork, patient care, employability skills, and emergency response. The presenters did an excellent job of explaining how those skills can be applied in many fields of work, including the military.

Students were engaged throughout the presentation, asking questions and connecting their classroom learning to future career opportunities. Students left with a better understanding of the career paths available in health care and beyond.



## \*BUSINESS, MANAGEMENT & ADMINISTRATION (1,2,3,4,5,8,10,11,15,17,20)

Van Buren Tech students in the Business, Management & Administration program recently completed a project that explored the economic impact of the terrorist attacks that took place on 9/11 in 2001. Students researched industries affected by the tragedy, including financial services, travel, tourism, transportation, retail, small business, manufacturing, wholesale trade, real estate, insurance, information technology, telecommunications, healthcare, media, entertainment, or the stock market. Students summarized their findings by creating a newspaper front page with an original article, chart, and image. This project challenged students to think beyond a local perspective and recognize that business and economics operate on a global scale, where events in one area can have wide-reaching effects. Students strengthened their research, writing, and presentation skills while learning how to connect data, visuals, and storytelling into a cohesive project. Experiences like this help students build valuable skills early in their education, setting them apart as they move into college, careers, and beyond.



**III. ACTION ITEMS**

A. Approval of Bright Futures — Conceptual Budget and Site Plan (**Roll Call Vote**)

58



**Date:** October 1, 2025

**To:** VBISD Board of Education

**From:** Dave Manson, Superintendent

**Subject:** **Approval of Bright Futures - Conceptual Budget & Site Plan**

Background:

Since the renewal of the Special Education millage, the Van Buren Intermediate School District (VBISD) team has been collaborating with Owen-Ames-Kimball (OAK) and Tower Pinkster (TP) on a construction project aimed at remodeling and expanding the Special Services Center. This initiative, named *Bright Futures*, reflects the district's commitment to enhancing Early Childhood services across Van Buren County.

After careful consideration and multiple design iterations, the VBISD team is pleased to present the conceptual budget and site plan for initial review and approval.

**RESOLVED** that the VBISD Board of Education hereby approves the conceptual budget and site plan for the Bright Futures project as presented. A subsequent resolution will be brought before the Board following the competitive bidding process to consider final approval of the construction contract.

B. Approval of Learning Center Pool - Architect Services (**Roll Call Vote**)

60



**Date:** October 1, 2025

**To:** VBISD Board of Education

**From:** Dave Manson, Superintendent

**Subject:** **Approval of Learning Center Pool - Architect Services**

**Background:**

The Bert Goens Learning Center Pool has required repairs and renovations for several years. GMB Architects & Engineers conducted a thorough assessment and have estimated the total project cost to be approximately \$887,914. Based on their findings and proposal (attached), we are requesting the school board's approval to proceed with GMB's professional services.

**RESOLVED**, that the Van Buren Intermediate School District (VBISD) Board of Education hereby approves the engagement of GMB Architects & Engineers for a fee of \$77,000 to provide Architectural, Interior Design, Structural, Mechanical, Electrical, and Plumbing design services related to the renovation of the Bert Goens Learning Center Pool.



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## MEMO

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**DATE:** OCTOBER 1, 2025  
**TO:** BOARD OF EDUCATION  
**FROM:** BRITANI OLDS, HUMAN RESOURCES ADMINISTRATOR  
**RE:** APPROVAL OF EMPLOYMENT OF NEW STAFF

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### **BACKGROUND**

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

<b><u>New Employee</u></b>	<b><u>Salary</u></b>	<b><u>Start Date</u></b>
Kelly Hoffman, Speech & Language Pathologist - Part Time	\$34,846.93	09/16/2025
Suana Dosett, GSRP Lead Teacher	\$43,585.00	10/01/2025
Christopher Bernick, Maple Creek Principal	\$103,285.00	10/06/2025

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

### **RECOMMENDATION**

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

D. Approval of Staff Resignations and Retirements (**Voice Vote**)

64

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## MEMO

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**DATE:** OCTOBER 1, 2025  
**TO:** BOARD OF EDUCATION  
**FROM:** BRITANI OLDS, ADMINISTRATOR FOR HUMAN RESOURCES  
**RE: STAFF RETIREMENTS/RESIGNATIONS**

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### **BACKGROUND**

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

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Resignation/Retirement Date</u></b>
Heidi Diaz, Regional Supervisor	09/12/2025 - Resignation

### **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.