



Left: BHM Superintendent Scott Thielman welcomed the legislators and facilitated the forum. Center: Legislators acknowledged the funding issues and answered questions from the audience (See the photo id at the end of the article below). Right: BHM School Board member Bob Sansevere said the legislature isn't doing enough to support schools.

## Legislative Forum Focuses on Inequitable Funding

Legislators representing 14 school districts were in attendance at the annual Legislative Forum. They were invited to hear information about the inequities in school funding, comparing metro-area districts to those communities outside of the metro. The audience was filled with city and school representatives from the districts represented and parents who are concerned about school funding.

BHM Superintendent Scott Thielman was the moderator for the evening and shared with everyone that BHM Schools pays two to three times more in taxes than a metro district that is "rich" with commercial/industrial property. He shared the fact that communities with larger tax bases pay relatively less. It was the theme that ran throughout the evening as Big Lake City Administrator Clay

Wilfahrt talked about the funding gap and specifically pointed out, "City success is tied directly to the success of schools." He shared a presentation full of comparisons and how people and businesses tend to gravitate to those communities that have perceived better school districts. Of the five districts that cover Corcoran, Minnesota (BHM, Delano, Osseo, Rockford and Wayzata) 94 percent of the growth is happening in the Wayzata district.

BHM School Board Director Bob Sansevere took to the stage to share his story and how his five kids would have been greatly impacted if the BHM operating levy would have failed in November and the district would have made millions of dollars in reductions. He directly told the legislators, "We appreciate what you are doing, but we would appreciate it more, if you would do more."

Legislators took time to address the concerns and answer audience questions. They encouraged more people to talk to the legislators who represent the "downtowners" and the metro area districts. They also said people need to reach out to Education Minnesota to encourage them to get on board with equalizing the funding formula.

To end the evening, two students from the St. Michael-Albertville School District took time to share their frustrations. One finally stated, "It's not a good feeling to know that we are worth less than a student in the metro area."

Those legislators in attendance were (in photo order above): Rep. Marion O'Neill, Rep. Jim Nash, Rep. Shane Mekeland, Rep. Kristin Robbins, Rep. Eric Lucero, Sen. Bruce Anderson and Rep. Joe McDonald.

## Residents will Pay Less than Expected on Approved November Levy

In December, BHM Director of Finance and Operations Gary Kawlewski gave his Truth in Taxation presentation to the BHM School Board and the public. At the meeting, the board approved the 2019 Payable 2020 tax levy of \$19,636,353.18. The levy total is \$4,386,253 more or an increase of 28.76 percent (in total school property taxes) than the Pay 2019 levy. Kawlewski said that taxpayers likely saw an increase in residential home-stead valuations due to county assessments. The taxable market value for the district as a whole is up an estimated 7.58 percent while the net tax capacity value is up an estimated 6.37 percent. As a result, most individual taxpayers will see some form of an increase in the school portion of their property taxes.

Kawlewski shared that the increase this year is mostly due to the passing of the operating referendum on November 5, 2019. However, the district's levy is also increasing due to the changes in the state aid equalization for many levy categories. Many of the district's levy categories have a levy and state aid component. The levy portion typically goes up as the valuation of the district goes up. The aid portion will go down in a corresponding fashion. Kawlewski continued by saying the district is under levying in the debt excess reduction category by \$300,000 to minimize the tax impact and reduce the fund balance in the debt service fund. There have also been some changes in expenditure estimates for some current levy components. The district

also has some prior year levy adjustments for some levy components that are based on actual expenditures.

To close, Kawlewski shared two big "take-aways" from his report. First, he revealed that the final tax impact for the operating levy referendum that passed in November 2019 will be slightly less than the published tax impact due to higher overall property value increases than what was originally projected. Also, even though the levy passed in November, the district will pay less in taxes than some of our neighboring districts including St. Michael-Albertville, Delano, Watertown-Mayer and Rockford, making BHM Schools a good value for its residents.

## Opportunities Begin in Preschool & Kindergarten

I am very pleased to write this article because I am extremely proud of the opportunities that we offer to our students and parents. We have heard from parents that they want choices for their children. BHM Schools offers opportunities to parents and children beginning at age three. Our preschool programs offer parents opportunities to have their child enroll in classes for as few as two days or as many as five days per week. More often, choices in school have happened at a secondary level as high school students have been afforded more class options. Although it should be noted, the BHM School District has been offering elementary parents an option dating back to 1996 when Discovery Elementary opened as a multi-age program.



Scott Thielman

Discovery Elementary was the first school that offered parents a choice of programming but since then, BHM Schools now offers two more magnet school choices for elementary parents. Tatanka Elementary STEM School is a magnet school focusing on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics with extra emphasis in engineering. Montrose Elementary School of Innovation is now a STEAM magnet school, offering all of the benefits of a STEM education with the Arts included. Kindergarten parents now have two to three options in addition to their neighborhood elementary school. All of our elementary schools provide outstanding opportunities

and we are very proud of the staff and what they are able to offer our students.

The efforts that begin at the elementary level are sustained and enhanced at the middle school level. Buffalo Community Middle School (BCMS) offers unmatched learning opportunities for their students through the school-wide AVID (advancement via individual determination) program which helps students find their passion and prepare for college and careers. The QUEST accelerated learning program which begins at second grade and serves the top 3-5% of the student body who need more challenge continues at BCMS. Students take accelerated English, social studies, math and science classes and mix in with their grade level for music, art, physical education, electives and lunch. Additionally, BCMS offers 6th grade elective courses with enhancements of a STEAM curriculum.

At the secondary level, Buffalo High School (BHS) has led the way in offering students choices and opportunities. BHS has been offering students an Arts Magnet experience for more than a decade. Those students are offered arts infused curriculum in the four core instructional disciplines of science, social studies, mathematics and English. In addition to the myriad of course offerings, the high school has aligned the College In the School (CIS) courses with the Minnesota Transfer Curriculum (MnTC). These courses offer high school students an opportunity to earn college credits for free while remaining at BHS with their peers. BHS offers 37 college courses of which 21 college classes are offered in collaboration from the following four-

year institutions: The University of Minnesota, St. Cloud State University, and Southwest Minnesota State University. In addition to the aforementioned courses, BHS offers classes that are available in collaboration with two-year colleges: seven North Hennepin Community College classes and nine classes from Hennepin Technical College. Additionally, BHS also offers students Advanced Placement (AP) course options.

If you look at our website, we emphasize that the **sky's the limit** at BHM schools where a small district can provide big opportunities in academics, arts and athletics—our **Bison Pride** is generated by a supportive community—our **Educational Choices** are highlighted by our personalization and innovation drives our learning—and our **Strong Relationships** promote positive student/staff connections that enhance learning.

By providing choices and opportunities from preschool and kindergarten through high school, we remain steadfast in our mission of *Preparing all students for a successful future in a changing world.* BHM Schools is the place for students to *dream, believe and achieve!*



### Kindergarten Registration has started!

See the back page of this *Insider* to see the registration night schedule.



## Proud Of....

Those listed below were submitted by district staff and recognized by the BHM School Board for their special contributions and accomplishments.



BHS "Guys and Dolls" Cast and Crew - the Hennepin Theatre Trust Spotlight Education awarded the following: Outstanding for Overall Production, Acting Performance, Run Crew, Overall Technical Team and Light & Sound Crew; Honorable Mention for Achievement in Musical Theatre, Ensemble Performance and Vocal Performance; Individual Honors were given for - Outstanding Performance to

Patrick Stonecipher and Victoria Herda; Outstanding in Technical Leadership to Jackson Upham and Alayna West; Honorable Mention in a Leading Role to Alex Machuda and Amanda Krinke; Honorable Mention in a Supporting Role to Owen Klaphake; Honorable Mention in Technical Leadership to Emily Mart and Frank Emerick; and an Evaluator Shout Out to Sophia Collova and Charlie Elo.

Photo by Paul Herda.





## Alumni: **Wade Demmer** **Buffalo High School Class of 1996**

**Lives In:** Coon Rapids, Minnesota

**Family:** Wife: Stacey and three children: Lachlan (12), Ruby (11) and Felix (3 1/2)

**Education:** Iowa State University—Ames, IA | MBA—University of Minnesota

**Employed:** Medtronic

## Getting the Most Out of the Smallest Things in Life

Remember when the year 2000 seemed like it was so far away? Some older BHM residents likely dreamed of all of the technological advancements that would be made like flying cars, automated houses and jet packs. When you are a 6th grader in the late 80s and early 90s, even though the year 2000 is only about 10 years away, it still seemed out of reach. That's how it felt for a young Wade Demmer.

In 6th grade, Demmer remembers receiving an assignment from Mrs. Stevens (Jean) asking him to write about what he would be in the year 2000. Demmer had no idea. In his search to discover what his future might hold, someone told him he should be an engineer like his older cousin Matt. Demmer knew Matt was smart and he really looked up to him, but he had no idea what engineering was. He did know that he was interested in computers. So, he settled with "computer engineering" as his predicted career for the year 2000.

Fast-forward to 1996. Demmer graduates from Buffalo High School (BHS) as a National Merit Scholar and heads off to Iowa State University in Ames on a full-academic scholarship to pursue a degree in computer engineering. Before graduating college, he would complete two internships with the coveted California-based Intel Corporation. He worked on the team that was designing the next generation of computer processors. He described the experience as, "I got to work with really smart people designing computers for the future." In December 2000, Demmer graduated from Iowa State with his degree in computer engineering and his future in the palm of his hand.

When Demmer was in college, his grandma had to have a pacemaker placed in her heart. Demmer didn't know much about pacemakers and while he loves science, biology wasn't his favorite. A pacemaker company came to Iowa State needing someone to make the computer part to run the pacemaker. This was Demmer's introduction to the medical device industry. It piqued his interest to think he could develop the computer that could run a device that could help someone like his grandma and so many others.

In March of 2001, Demmer was hired by the Minnesota-based company Medtronic. His job for the first 10 years of his career was to write the computer code for pacemakers. "I got to make the scientists' ideas a reality," he explained. Medtronic is a multi-billion-dollar company and operates in 350 locations in more than 150 countries. They have over 90,000 employees with over 10,000 engineers and scientists.

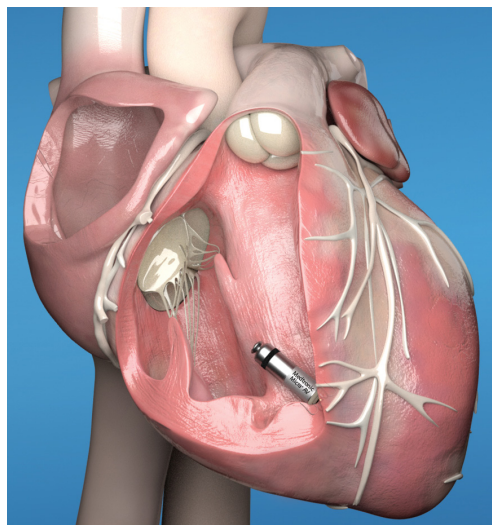
For most of the last decade, Demmer has been more involved in project management and is now serving as the Director of Innovation, leading a team of scientists. He shared, "Part of my job is to invent things. My team transforms things from 'crazy idea' to where you can actually build it. We actually work with my old team to get it built."

In his time at Medtronic, Demmer has developed 62 medical device related patents. The patents include everything from multiple devices working together to making pacemaker batteries last longer. That was his contribu-



Demmer helped to create the world's smallest pacemaker, Micra. This is the actual size—about the size of a pill capsule. It is commonly placed in the right ventricle of the heart through the femoral vein as shown below. Demmer also worked on the new and improved second generation of this model which comes out in February 2020.

*Photos courtesy of Medtronic.*



tion on the team that developed the world's smallest pacemaker called the Micra. Demmer worked on low powered circuits to make the battery last as long as possible. He shared that it will last 10-15 years. Since 2013, when they launched the first generation clinical trial, 50,000 patients have received the pacemaker. Now a second generation of Micra is launching this February 2020. He explained that the first generation was like "walking" and the new one is like "running."

"Disruptive improvement," is how Demmer describes what he does each day. "I never expected to get to do this kind of work. We are continuously improving the products. We get to do things that no one has ever done before. It's an emotional investment. My grandma ended up needing a second pacemaker and she happened to get one that I had written code for. It was amazing!"

### How did BHM Schools prepare you for where you are today?

"I am amazed by how I am doing things in my life now that I was doing in elementary, middle and high school. I was in the district's gifted program called "Eagle." Bev Anderson was my teacher and she let us do enrichment activities. This is where I got to write computer code for the very first time. She also introduced us to Inventors' Fair. She brought in local inventor Jack McAllister, who had patented some outdoor games. He was the first person I had ever met with a patent. Listening to him inspired me! It made the idea of inventing something much more attainable."

In middle school, Demmer had to do a speech in 8th grade for student council. His dad (Mike) made him practice over and over and videotape it until it was good. He credits that experience, and numerous high school English classes, for making him a good presenter. This was a benefit to him later in life, because, on a regular basis, he needs to learn and understand all the science and translate it in a way that senior management can see how it will be valuable to the company.

**Brilliant Bison, p. 4**

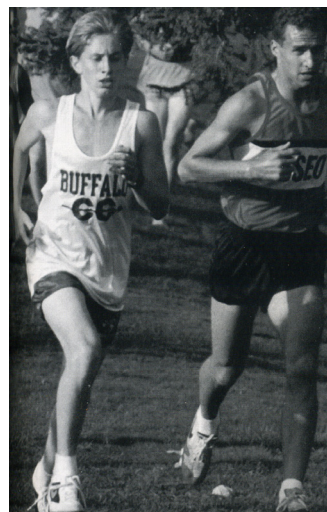
## Brilliant Bison, p. 3

In high school he was in yearbook, cross country, student council, knowledge bowl, track and field, and Odyssey of the Mind. When he went to college, he continued in cross country and student government. As an adult, Demmer has served on the Coon Rapids City Council for the last five years and has even found time to run the Boston Marathon three times. The third time he ran the marathon was the year of the bombing attack. He recalled that terrible day and while he had finished an hour before the bombing, a friend finished right before the bomb went off and was in the medical tent.

"You don't see it when you are in school, but I was very well supported. My mom (Barb) taught in BHM Schools and all her teacher friends were some of my teachers and friends who helped guide me. We had a lot of educationally enriching experiences (at home), and the house was always full of books for kids. I was able to take math classes from the University of Minnesota while I was in high school and took almost every English class at BHS to fill electives. I felt I received a well-rounded education and was well prepared for college."

Demmer is married to his architect wife Stacey who's projects include the US Bank (Vikings) Stadium. In the home where his dad grew up in Coon Rapids, they are raising three kids who are all STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) minded. Demmer gives back by visiting their schools to talk with students about biology, engineering, computers or government.

Demmer's advice to the BHM community is to give as many opportunities to kids as possible because they could follow them through their whole lives. And his advice for BHM students is to take advantage of those opportunities and think broadly about those around you. "Any field you think you want to pursue, there is someone who knows someone who you can talk to. Now, I encourage kids to go into biomedical engineering. You never know when the grandma you help might be your own."



Demmer has been running almost his whole life. Here he is in 1996 as a senior. He placed 5th at the Cross Country Conference meet and qualified for state. *Photo courtesy of the 1996 Tatanka Yearbook.*

## Around the District



### Night Out for Music

The Buffalo High School (BHS) Music Department invites you to attend their annual Night Out For Music Jazz Concert and Silent Auction on Saturday, March 21. Doors open at 6 p.m. with the silent auction items on display. Entertainment will begin at 7 p.m. in the Performing Arts Center and will be provided by Jazz Ensemble I, BHS Singers, Chamber Strings I and Treble Singers. During intermission, guests will enjoy a variety of decadent, gourmet desserts while finalizing bids at the silent auction.

This year's theme is "Lullaby of Broadway" and is a fundraiser that directly

benefits BHS music students. Last year, the BHS Music Department was able to purchase a new electronic keyboard, sound equipment, music for all ensembles, visiting clinicians and more. Funds this year will also help offset student cost of the spring music trip to New York City.

You can purchase tickets and bid on silent auction items online through Bid Partner, <https://bidpartner.net/nofm/>. Ticket prices are \$15/adult, \$12/senior and \$10/student and may be purchased through Bid Partner or by contacting Jill Starr at [jstarr@bhmschools.org](mailto:jstarr@bhmschools.org) or 763.682.8129.

### Calendar Corrections

The BHM School District calendar is published with the most accurate information as possible at the time of printing. Occasionally there are corrections that need to be brought to your attention.

March 3 is the Presidential Primary. No events can take place on that day after 6 p.m. Therefore, the two events on that day have been rescheduled:

#### March 2, 2020

Discovery Elementary Kindergarten  
Registration from 6:30-7:30 p.m.

#### March 2, 2020

Parkside Elementary Conferences  
3:30-7:30 p.m.

**Buffalo High School (BHS) Spring Sports Meeting** was published on the calendar for Thursday, March 19. That is NOT correct. Coaches will schedule their own individual meetings with parents. A list of the meetings will be posted on [lakeconference.org](http://lakeconference.org) when they become available.

### Wilson Leads the Board for 2020

Each January the board conducts an election of officers. There were no change in positions from the previous year:

Chair—Dave Wilson  
Vice Chair—Sue Lee  
Clerk—Melissa Brings  
Treasurer—Laurie Raymond  
Acting Clerk/Treasurer—Ken Ogden

Directors are Bob Sansevere and Amanda Reineck.



Dave Wilson

# Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose School District Calendar 2020-21

Please note that this calendar is for **NEXT** school year.

S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S
<b>August/September</b> 30 (31) (1) (2) (3) 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	<b>October</b> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 (14) 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	<b>November</b> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 (13) 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30
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<b>March</b> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	<b>April</b> 1 (2) 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	<b>May</b> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31
<b>June</b> 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 (11) 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	( ) = Teacher Workshop/No School = No School/Holiday 174 Student Days Terms 45-43-43-43 Semesters 88-86 Calendar A.2	

## Important Dates

Aug. 31 - Sept. 3	Teacher Workshop Days	February 15	President's Day
September 7	Labor Day - No School K-12		No School K-12
September 8	1 <sup>st</sup> Day of School	April 2	Teacher Workshop
October 14	Teacher Workshop		No School K-12
	No School K-12		End of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Term
October 15-16	Fall Break - No School K-12	April 5-9	Spring Break
November 13	Teacher Workshop		No School K-12
	No School K-12	May 31	Memorial Day
	End of 1 <sup>st</sup> Term		No School K-12
November 25-27	Thanksgiving Break - No School K-12	June 10	Last Day of School
Dec. 24-Jan. 1	Winter Break - No School K-12	June 11	Commencement
January 18	Martin L. King Jr. Day		Teacher Workshop
	No School K-12		End of 4 <sup>th</sup> Term
January 29	Teacher Workshop		
	No School K-12		
	End of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Term		





**Buffalo  
Hanover  
Montrose**  
BHM SCHOOLS

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RESIDENT DISTRICT 877

## Announcing the Class of 2033

# Welcome BHM Kindergartners!

**Let's get ready for kindergarten!** If your child will be 5 by September 1, 2020 you can enroll your child for the 2020-21 school year in BHM Schools. All incoming kindergarten students need to complete ECFE screening— call 763.682.8408 for more information. Don't miss the following registration nights for your neighborhood school:

February 18 | 6:30 p.m. .... Montrose Elementary  
School of Innovation  
(Accepting open enrollment.)  
February 24 | 6:30 p.m. .... Tatanka Elementary  
STEM School  
(Accepting open enrollment.)  
February 27 | 6 p.m. .... Northwinds Elementary  
March 2 | 6 p.m. .... Hanover Elementary  
March 3 | 6:30 p.m. .... \*Discovery Elementary  
March 5 | 6:30 p.m. .... Parkside Elementary

(\*DE entrance is based on a lottery—Applications were due early February.)

If you miss a registration night, please contact  
your child's neighborhood school to register.



**BHM SCHOOLS**  
Buffalo Hanover Montrose



The place to dream,  
believe and achieve.

bhmschools.org

# INSIDER

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Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose

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## National Merit Finalists



Photo courtesy of the 1996 Tatanka Yearbook.

Wade Demmer (left) was selected out of 1,300 students in the nation to become a National Merit Scholarship Finalist in 1996. Robert Roos (right) and Henry Adams also qualified. See where Demmer is now, p. 3.

### School Board

Dave Wilson ..... Chairperson  
Sue Lee ..... Vice Chairperson  
Melissa Brings ..... Clerk  
Laurie Raymond ..... Treasurer  
Ken Ogden ..... Acting Clerk/Treasurer  
Amanda Reineck ..... Director  
Bob Sansevere ..... Director  
Elle Kaiser ..... Student Representative  
Scott Thielman ..... Superintendent

### INSider Editor:

Laura (Barta) Lindquist, Communications Coordinator  
763-682-8783 | lbarta@bhmschools.org

Reader comments or questions welcome!

## Early Childhood Screening

Calling all parents of a future kindergartner! Screening is a requirement for entry into all Minnesota public schools. Children ages three to five years old will have their overall development checked in a one-hour appointment. The district provides this FREE service to all district residents. To make an appointment, please call 763.682.8408 or 763.682.8780.

## 2020-21 Preschool Registration

Register NOW for Early Childhood Family Education's (ECFE) Ready Set Grow preschool program for children ages 3 to 5 years old. This 9-month, 30-week preschool experience is offered two to five days per week. The teachers will help nurture your child's social emotional development and use research-based curriculum to focus on language, literacy, math, scientific thinking, and building academic skills to prepare your child for kindergarten.

### Ready Set Grow Preschool Features:

- Licensed preschool teachers
- Maximum class size of 15 to 19
- Academic learning that prepares children for kindergarten
- 4-Star Parent Aware Quality Rating
- Integrated classes serving children of all abilities
- Financial assistance and scholarships available for those who qualify

Questions? Call ECFE at 763-682-8780 or go to [www.bhmschools.org](http://www.bhmschools.org) and click on the Community Ed tab to find the ECFE page.