



BHM Makes \$1.1 Million in Budget Adjustments for 2019-20 District Seeks Feedback on Possible November 2019 Election

by Superintendent Scott Thielman

There are many things throughout the district that cause all of us to be very proud. Our dedicated staff continues to provide quality learning experiences for our students each and every day. As a result, our students are experiencing success, both in and out of the classroom. **Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose (BHM) Schools is and will continue to be the place for students to dream, believe and achieve.**

While our focus will always be to provide exceptional opportunities for our students, we also need to develop a plan to address our growing budget shortfall. As you are probably aware, a referendum that would have reduced class sizes, improved school safety and addressed the special education funding deficit failed last fall. For the 2019-20 school year, 15 teaching positions will be eliminated district-wide, which will increase class sizes and reduce course offerings. Administration will cut supply budgets, and middle and high school activity fees and high school parking fees will increase. **The School Board and administration acknowledge and respect the community's decision and now need to refine a plan that reflects the priorities of our residents.**

The board is asking all district residents to respond to an important community survey that is enclosed in this newsletter on pages 3-6. **To save the district money, we ask that residents that have access to the internet take the survey online. The website and one-time-use survey access number are located on the back page of this newsletter.** If you do not have internet access, please return the paper survey found in this newsletter to any of our school offices or mail to: School Perceptions, 317 East Washington, Slinger, WI 53086.

To collect this feedback, we are working with School Perceptions LLC, an independent firm with expertise in conducting community surveys. All survey data is returned to School Perceptions to ensure respondent anonymity.

Final survey results will be reported on June 24 to the BHM School Board and will also be available on the district website: www.bhmschools.org.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Take the BHM Community Survey Online or on Paper

Online  

1) Simply go to the survey website:
www.Feedback2000.com

2) Enter your Survey Access Number found on the back of this Insider

By Paper 

If you do not have Internet access, please complete and return the survey found on pages 3-6 of this Insider to any of our school offices or mail to: School Perceptions, 317 East Washington, Slinger, WI 53086.

Each Survey Access Number can be used only once. To obtain additional access codes or surveys for other adults in your household, please call the BHM District Office at 763-682-8706.

Please complete and submit the survey by June 17, 2019.



The BHM Retiring Class of 2019

This year, 21 employees, from around the district, have already or will retire from BHM Schools. Combined, they have provided 530 years of service to the district.

Superintendent Scott Thielman and members of the school board took time on Friday, May 3, to recognize each employee for their dedication to BHM students and the years of service they provided. They have all played a valuable role in shaping the lives of students, both directly and indirectly and allowed students to *dream, believe and achieve*.

BHM thanks the retirees for their many years of service and the impressions they have made on students, staff and the community. Best wishes to all in the next phase of their lives.

The following retirees are listed in order, from front to back, left to right, in the photo above. (ESP listed below is Educational Support Professional)

Bette Mattson 44 Years
Buffalo High School
Attendance Secretary/ESP

Julie Mundahl 19 Years
Buffalo High School
FACS (Family and Consumer Science) Teacher

Jill Lubben 21 Years
Northwinds Elementary 1st Grade Teacher

Sue Thomson 23.5 Years
District-Wide Elementary School Nurse

Linda Carlson 32.5 Years
Early Childhood Special Education Teacher

Marci Wills 13 Years
Parkside Elementary
Physical Education Teacher

Joy Downs 13 Years
Northwinds Elementary
Special Education ESP

Tom Gould 30.5 Years
Buffalo Community Middle School
6th Grade Social Studies Teacher

Brian Warzetha 14 Years
Buffalo High School Night Lead Custodian

Jan Rasset 31 Years
Montrose Elementary
School of Innovation ESP

Vicki Ebeling 23.5 Years
Hanover Elementary Health ESP

David Jungers 33 Years
Parkside Elementary 4th Grade Teacher

Kim Goelz 34 Years
Northwinds Elementary
Principal's Secretary

Carol Mullin 32 Years
Hanover Elementary
1st/2nd Grade Looping Teacher

Shelly Geurts 21 Years
PRIDE Transitions Special Education Teacher

Jim West 32 Years
Buffalo High School
Special Education Teacher

Connie Boonstra 29 Years
Early Childhood Family Education Secretary

Not Pictured:
Joan Costanzi 11.5 Years
Buffalo Community Middle School
Attendance Secretary

Gretchen Lieb 21.5 Years
Buffalo Community Middle School
Special Education Teacher

Linda Markuson 28 Years
Tatanka Elementary STEM School
Building Secretary

Nancy Smolensky 23 Years
Special Education
Secretary to the Special Education Director

BHS is Going to the "Lake"



Beginning next school year, Buffalo High School (BHS) will make the shift from the Mississippi 8 (M8) Conference and enter into the Lake Conference.

BHS Activities Director Tom Bauman says, "We are viewing this as an opportunity to be a part of one of the most prestigious conferences in the Midwest, joining the districts of: Eden Prairie, Edina, Hopkins, Minnetonka, St. Michael-Albertville, and Wayzata. Our coaches are excited about the challenge and are preparing accordingly."

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Bauman explains that the move to the new conference will bring minor changes in some of the regular season schedules. "We have been competing against 'larger enrollment' schools in non-conference competitions for years. The change will now have Monticello, Rogers and other areas schools filling the non-conference portions of our regular season schedules. Other sports like cross country, track and golf compete in just one day conference events but those will now be Lake events instead of M8 events. Section competitions are not related to regular season competitions and post season

playoff competitions remain unchanged."

BHS has been with M8 since the 2004-05 school year. There have been many changes in the conference since then and the M8 is no longer the right fit for BHS as a conference home. The Minnesota State High School League appointed BHS to the Lake Conference.

"We are fortunate to have a 'home' and a competitive conference schedule," continues Bauman. "Our coaches will be setting attainable goals, teaching our kids to compete at a high level, and celebrating successes along the way."

Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Community Survey

If you have internet access please complete the survey online by following the instructions on the back of this newsletter.

Respondent Information

Please check your response to each of the following:

What is your age?

☐ 18-25 ☐ 26-35 ☐ 36-45 ☐ 46-55 ☐ 56-64 ☐ 65 and older

Is your primary residence in the Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose School District? ☐ Yes ☐ No

In which municipality/township is your primary residence?

☐ City of Buffalo ☐ City of Hanover ☐ City of Montrose ☐ City of St. Michael
☐ City of Corcoran ☐ City of Greenfield ☐ City of Rogers ☐ Buffalo Township
☐ Chatham Township ☐ Franklin Township ☐ Marysville Township ☐ Rockford Township
☐ Woodland Township ☐ Monticello Township ☐ Other

Are you an employee of Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you have children attending the Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If you have school-aged children, what school(s) do they attend? (Select all that apply)

☐ Discovery Elementary School (K-5) ☐ Hanover Elementary School (K-5)
☐ Montrose Elementary School of Innovation (K-5) ☐ Northwinds Elementary School (K-5)
☐ Parkside Elementary School (K-5) ☐ Tatanka Elementary STEM School (K-5)
☐ Buffalo Community Middle School (6-8) ☐ Buffalo High School (9-12)
☐ Phoenix Learning Center ☐ PRIDE Transitions
☐ ECFE/ECSE (Preschool) ☐ Public school outside of the District
☐ Private school ☐ Homeschool
☐ Online/virtual school ☐ Other:

School Funding Background

There has been some confusion regarding how school districts use referendum funding. There are different types of referenda, including **levies and bonds**.

Unlike most other districts in the state, the Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools has only the state authorized referendum authority and will not have a voter-approved **operating levy** after the current legislative session. The last voter-approved levy increase for BHM was in 2002. This type of funding supports day-to-day operations, such as staffing, educational programming and student services. These funds are used the same year they are received.

A **bond** is used to pay for major building projects. Much like a home mortgage, a bond is typically financed over an extended period of time. This financing method was used in 2014 to improve building security at three elementary schools, expand and improve activity venues, as well as to update intercom systems, replace roof sections and repair parking lots. This project did not contribute to our budget deficit, and the funds from the bond cannot be used for general operating expenses. The project will be finished on time and on budget. It is important to note, even if the construction project had never happened, we would still be dealing with the same budget situation.

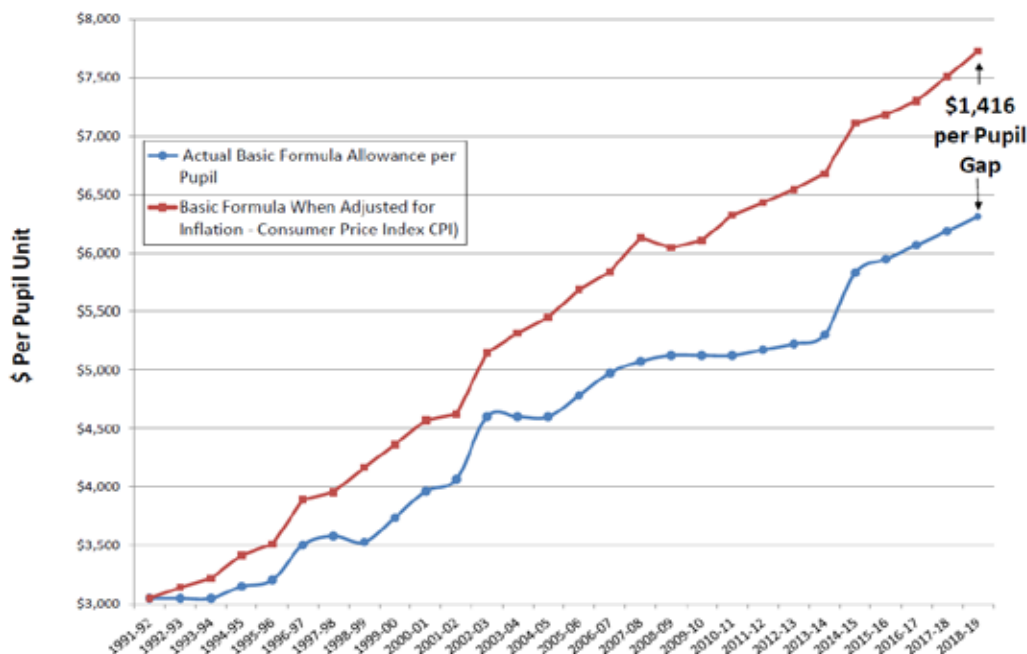
In simple terms, bonds are for building, levies are for learning.

BHM Community Survey

School Funding Challenges

School districts receive the majority of their funding from the state. The largest portion of this funding, which comes from the basic general education formula, has not kept up with inflation. This is a major reason why school districts across the state are facing significant budget challenges.

State Funding Per Student



As a result of this decrease in funding and increasing costs, the District has experienced a budget deficit for several years. Over the past two years, the District has utilized fund balance (cash reserves) to balance the budget. The fund balance will soon be depleted and is no longer an option. To balance the budget next year (2019-20), the District will cut the budget by more than \$1.1 million by:

- Eliminating/reassigning teaching and support staff positions
- Increasing class sizes
- Reducing department and building budgets
- Reducing/eliminating student programs, including class offerings
- Increasing student fees

Even with these cuts, the District is still forecasting a budget shortfall averaging nearly \$3 million for each of the next five years. **Therefore, for the 2020-21 school year, the District will need to seek another operating levy or make additional cuts.**

What advice would you give the District?	<input type="checkbox"/> Explore another operating levy <input type="checkbox"/> Make further cuts to balance the budget <input type="checkbox"/> Not sure
If "not sure," what additional information would you like to receive?	
Other comments/suggestions:	

BHM Community Survey

Budget Cuts

The District is projecting a budget shortfall of nearly \$3 million for the 2020-21 school year. If voters do not support a future operating levy, the District must consider all options to reduce expenses.

Please check your response to each of the following:

<p>Class Size: Typical class sizes range from 22 to 35 students. Occasionally, some classes are larger or smaller depending on enrollment.</p> <p>Would you support a levy instead of increasing class sizes?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No opinion
<p>Curriculum: Our curriculum renewal cycle calls for updating curricular areas every nine years to ensure current content and use of best teaching practices.</p> <p>Would you support a levy instead of reducing and postponing curriculum updates?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No opinion
<p>Advanced Placement (AP)/College in the School (CIS) Courses: Students at the high school have the opportunity to earn college credits while in high school, which saves families approximately \$1.8 million annually in tuition.</p> <p>Would you support a levy instead of reducing high school AP/CIS courses?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No opinion
<p>Athletic/Activities: The District offers academic and athletic activities at the middle and high school. For the 2020-21 school year, the District will cut all middle school activities and cut the following activities at the high school: boys and girls lacrosse, boys swimming, dance, Pegasus magazine and BPA. In addition, all high school activity fees will increase.</p> <p>Would you support a levy instead of cutting student activities and further raising student participation fees?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No Opinion
<p>Support Staff: Administrative assistants, paraprofessionals, maintenance and custodians all play a critical role in helping our school function efficiently.</p> <p>Would you support a levy instead of reducing support staff?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No Opinion
<p>Transportation: The District provides transportation to 81% of its students. The District could eliminate bus routes, increasing ride time and walking distances, to save money.</p> <p>Would you support a levy instead of reducing busing services?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No Opinion
<p>Close a School: Phoenix Learning Center serves students who are at risk of not graduating high school.</p> <p>Would you support a levy instead of closing Phoenix Learning Center?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No Opinion
<p>Close a School: Discovery Elementary serves students in kindergarten through 5th grade. Discovery uses a unique model that allows students to remain with a teacher for multiple years, which personalizes learning and develops positive student-teacher relationships.</p> <p>Would you support a levy instead of closing Discovery Elementary School?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No Opinion
<p>Eliminate Program(s): The Quest Program serves highly gifted students. The wRight Choice Program is an alternative for students facing out-of-school suspension.</p> <p>Would you support a levy instead of eliminating the Quest and wRight Choice programs?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> No Opinion
<p>Comments/suggestions:</p>	

BHM Community Survey

Funding to Support Operations

In order to maintain the level of programs and services after the cuts are made for the 2019-20 school year, the District would need to secure an operational levy averaging \$750 per student for each of the next five years. This would not provide any additional funding for new programs, services or staff.

If voters do not support an operating levy, the District will need to make further cuts to programs and daily expenses. **We are concerned what additional cuts will mean to educating our students, retaining staff and maintaining our facilities.**

The following options have been developed for community feedback.

OPTION 1: Continue to cut programs and services.

OPTION 2: Pursue an operating levy that provides \$650 per student for each of the next 5 years, requiring the District to cut an additional \$1 million every year after the 2019-20 cuts.

OPTION 3: Pursue an operating levy that provides \$750 per student for each of the next 5 years, allowing the District to maintain current programs and services after the 2019-20 cuts.

OPTION 4: Pursue an operating levy that provides \$850 per student for each of the next 5 years, allowing the District to reinstate some of the cuts that will be made for 2019-20 year.

The following table shows the tax impacts for each option.

Estimated Property Value	Operating Levy Estimated Increase Per Year Over the Current Level			
	OPTION 1	OPTION 2 \$650 per student	OPTION 3 \$750 per student	OPTION 4 \$850 per student
\$100,000	No increase	\$113	\$132	\$151
\$150,000	No increase	\$170	\$199	\$227
\$200,000	No increase	\$227	\$265	\$303
\$300,000	No increase	\$340	\$397	\$454
\$400,000	No increase	\$454	\$529	\$605
<div> <div>Which option would you support?</div> <div> <input type="checkbox"/> OPTION 1: Continue to cut programs <input type="checkbox"/> OPTION 2: \$650 per student; requires budget reductions of an additional \$1 million every year after the 2019-20 cuts <input type="checkbox"/> OPTION 3: \$750 per student; maintains programs after the 2019-20 cuts <input type="checkbox"/> OPTION 4: \$850 per student; reinstates some of the 2019-20 cuts <input type="checkbox"/> I'm not sure/need more information </div> </div>				
<div>Comments/suggestions:</div>				

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BHM Graduation Ceremonies

Adult Basic Education
 Tuesday, June 4 | 7 p.m.
 Discovery Center Auditorium

At least 36 adults will be recognized for having earned their GED diploma during the West Adult Basic Education (ABE) graduation ceremony in Buffalo (six of the graduates attended Buffalo ABE). Other individuals will also be recognized during an awards presentation for other achievements earned. The public is invited to attend the ceremony and reception following the event.

PRIDE Transitions
 Wednesday, June 5 | 1 p.m.
 Lakeview Mall in Buffalo

This year, five PRIDE Transition students will go through a Diploma Ceremony signifying they have met and completed the program requirements. PRIDE is a program designed for 18-21 year-old students who are in need of additional services to make the transition from school to work and independent living. Because of limited seating, this ceremony is by invitation only.

Phoenix Learning Center
 Thursday, June 6 | 7 p.m.
 Buffalo High School Performing Arts Center

Phoenix Learning Center (PLC) will graduate 16 students this year. PLC is an alternative to a traditional high school setting. The public is encouraged and invited to attend the event and reception for the graduates.

Buffalo High School
 Friday, June 7 | 7 p.m.
 Buffalo High School Gym

Buffalo High School (BHS) will have close to 480 graduates participating in the ceremony. Each student will have a limited number of tickets for family and friends to watch the ceremony in person. Others are invited to watch a live video broadcast in the air conditioned BHS Performing Arts Center.



Proud Of....

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



Matt Lubben, Buffalo Community Middle School Principal, who was named the Central MN Association of Secondary School Principals, Central Division Principal of the Year. Lubben has been with the district for 24 Years.



Melanie Olson, Parkside Elementary Quest Teacher, who was named the 2019 WEM Outstanding Educator for Teacher Achievement. Olson has taught in the district for 14 years.



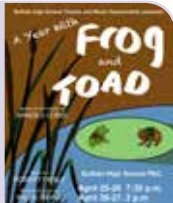
Scott Rabehl, Buffalo High School Instrumental Music Teacher, who was named the 2019 Schmitt Music High School Educator of the Year. Rabehl has been with the district for 16 years.



Lucy Lefebvre (left), 6th grade student at Buffalo Community Middle School (BCMS), who is the BHM Spelling Bee Winner. Runner Up is Alex Tupper (right), 8th grader at BCMS.



Buffalo High School cast and crew of "Frog and Toad" who earned a performance at the Hennepin Theatre Showcase. The production earned "Outstanding" ratings in Overall Production, Acting Performance by an Ensemble, Technical Crew, Overall Technical Team, Light & Sound Board Operators, Leading Role - Emilee Feldman as Toad, and Technical Leadership - Maddie Carlson as Set Designer and Jackson Upham as Lighting Designer.



Buffalo High School students of Excellence - (left to right) Sarah Burke, Kaitlin Galdonik, Gabby Hernandez and Abigail Vogeler, who were recognized at the Students of Excellence banquet sponsored by Resource Training and Solutions.



Jenny Boldt's Hanover Elementary 4th Grade Class, who each had a poem selected to be published in, "A Celebration of Poets" by Creative Communication. Hanover Elementary is listed as a Fall, 2018 Poetic Achievement Honor School for excellence in language arts.



Discovery Elementary and Parkside Elementary students who participated in the Kids Heart Challenge and raised \$12,962 (Discovery) and \$6,133.43 (Parkside) for the American Heart Association.



**Buffalo
Hanover
Montrose**
BHM SCHOOLS

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www.bhmschools.org
763-682-8700

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Please complete and submit the survey by June 17, 2019.



*****ECRWSS**
RESIDENT DISTRICT 877

INSIDER

Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose

May/June 2019

Vol. 45 No. 6

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Bob Sansevere..... Director
Scott Thielman..... Superintendent

Sue Lee Vice Chairperson
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Amanda Reineck Director
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Insider Editor:

Laura (Barta) Lindquist, Communications Coordinator | 763-682-8783 | lbarta@bhmschools.org | Reader comments or questions welcome!

Twenty-Two Year BHM Veteran Named Nutrition Services Director

At the Tuesday, May 28 BHM School Board meeting, the board is set to approve the appointment of Kim Hinrichs as the next BHM Nutrition Services Director. Since November 2018, Hinrichs has been serving as the interim director.



Kim Hinrichs

Prior to the Nutrition Services Interim Director position, Hinrichs could be found preparing and serving students breakfast and lunch at Discovery Elementary. She began there in 1997 and in 1998 became the Discovery Food

Service Manager. In addition, she was a caterer for Russels on the Lake in Big Lake. for eight years and was an executive chef at Riverwood Conference Center in Otsego. for two years. Hinrichs attended the University of Minnesota—Duluth and finished her Associate of Arts Degree at Anoka Ramsey Community College in May 2019.

Director of Finance and Operations Gary Kawlewski is looking forward to having Hinrichs serve in the Nutrition Services Director position. "She knows the district and is experienced in nearly all areas of school nutrition services in BHM Schools," states Kawlewski. "Kim excels at building positive relationships with students and staff and knows how to lead the department in a positive direction. She is fearless and willing to tackle difficult

problems, and I believe she has a great vision for the future of our program."

Hinrichs is excited to continue leading the department and having a wider impact on student nutrition. "Serving as interim director has been a rewarding experience so far," explains Hinrichs. "I am excited to get the chance to face new challenges and set new goals with my staff. We have already implemented some new changes such as new 'grab and go' lines and menu items at the middle and high school, more vegetarian options, and events such as 'Golden Guest Day' at the elementary schools. It's exciting to think of what can come next."

Hinrichs will begin her contract as Nutrition Services Director July 1, 2019.

FREE Summer Meal Program Continues

FREE breakfast and lunch will once again be served for all children ages 1-18 beginning in June. For safety purposes, a responsible adult or older child should accompany younger children. No paperwork to fill out and no names are taken. There will be three locations this year (note the dates/times):

Discovery Elementary
301 2nd Avenue NE, Buffalo, MN

Montrose Elementary School of Innovation
100 2nd Street S, Montrose, MN

Northwinds Elementary
1111 7th Ave NW, Buffalo, MN

Monday-Friday, June 12-August 23
Closed July 4 and 5

Breakfast 8-8:45 a.m.
Lunch 11:45 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Download the "Summer Eats Minnesota" app on your phone or text "Summer Meals" to 97779 (have your address/location ready) for FREE meals in other communities. You can also visit www.summereatsmn.org for more information and to find a map with all the serving locations.

Watch the district website at www.bhmschools.org and the district's Facebook page for other announcements regarding the summer meal program.

