



## From the Superintendent's Desk

It is with sincere thanks and appreciation that I write this article. I want to thank the residents of the communities in our district, the parents and family members and our staff for the support you have shown for the school district special election. Your involvement and actions have truly made a difference in the lives and education of our children.



Scott Thielman

The special school district operating levy election participation rate was the highest ever in an odd-year election. There were 7,263 residents who cast their ballot in the election, which is over thirteen hundred more than the next highest odd-year election voter turnout. The final tally for the election was: 4,233 votes in favor (58.3%) and 3,030 op-

posed (41.7%). We are very appreciative of the participation and involvement of our residents.

Another observation of this election is the number of voters who chose the early voting option. We had 1,620 residents who chose to vote early through in-person voting at the district office or by requesting an absentee ballot through the mail. The outcome of the early voting resulted in 1,230 residents voting in favor and 390 voting against the operating levy.

Voter turnout at all three polling places was very high. Hanover and Montrose polling sites had more residents vote on Election Day this year than the last odd-year operating levy election and that is not counting the absentee ballots for those polling sites. The Buffalo polling site had fewer people on Election Day but had almost fourteen hundred residents use the early voting option.

While this is cause for celebration, we also know that this support does not add back any of the reductions that were made for this school year. We are thankful that we will be able to maintain the high quality programs and services that are currently in place for our students. We know this was a difficult decision for many of you and want to acknowledge that it could be a financial hardship for some, but we also want to assure you that the district will continue to work with our local and state legislators to reduce and/or eliminate the reliance on local efforts. Again, thank you for making a difference so that *Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools is the place for students to dream, believe and achieve!*

**Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools**

**The place to  
dream, believe  
and achieve.**



## Proud Of....

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



Congratulations to the Outstanding Educational Support Staff Award recipients. These individuals were recognized and honored for the outstanding work they do in our schools at a Resource Training and Solutions program in St. Cloud on Wednesday, November 20. Award recipients are pictured left to right with Superintendent Scott Thielman (far right): Julie Hemze--Discovery Elementary Educational Support Professional; Eric Ogren--Hanover Elementary Custodian; Sue Bartz--Parkside Elementary Principal's Secretary; and Marsha Wolff--Hanover Elementary Educational Support Professional.

## Thanks for Giving

All year long, generous community members are donating thousands of dollars in support of our students and schools. Whether it's buying a Bison Card to support our activities, attending a "Fun Night" to support our schools or donating funds towards a BHS scholarship to support our students, the giving adds up.

Our students also learn how to contribute and give back to their community through a variety of ways. Especially over the holidays, students collect food for the Buffalo Food Shelf's Thanksgiving and Christmas meals. Students collect toys for Toys for Tots and The Giving Tree. Coin wars ensue to raise money for hats, gloves and mittens for kids in need. Students visit, read, sing and play games with residents at The Glenn in Buffalo. Students work with Christmas Angels organization to "adopt" seniors in local retirement homes and give gifts of blankets, books and other necessities. Care packages are made and sent to the troops via Blue Star Mothers. Even blood drives are organized to give the gift of life. We are thankful for such a giving community!



Toys collected at Hanover Elementary for The Giving Tree.



Students at Tatanka Elementary STEM School collected food items for the Buffalo Food Shelf Christmas meal.



Parkside Elementary students play games with residents at The Glenn.



Students at Discovery and Northwinds bag food for the Buffalo Food Shelf's Thanksgiving meal.



## Angel Account

Did you know that NO CHILD GOES DUNFED in our district? No child is turned away from receiving a meal. Sometimes families fall on hard times and meal account balances go unpaid. You can help in those situations. The BHM Angel Account is funded by community donors and helps those families who have a hardship, but might not qualify for free or reduced-price meals.

If you would like to give to the BHM Angel Account, you may send donations to the BHM Nutrition Services Department, 214 1st Ave NE, Buffalo, MN 55313 or drop it off in any meal payment box at any school. Checks can be made out to BHM Nutrition Services. Please note on the check or with cash that the funds are for the Angel Account. If you have any questions, call 763-682-8477. Sorry, online donations are not available.

## Give the Gift of Community Ed

As you make out your holiday shopping list for your family and close friends, consider giving the gift of a Community Education gift certificate. Maybe you have a grandchild who wants to take swimming lessons or you have a mom who enjoys arts and crafts. Give one to a friend to use on an upcoming trip to the Chanhassen Dinner Theater to see the production of the *Music Man* in March. Stop in at 301 2nd Ave NE, Buffalo to buy your Community Education gift certificate today!



Decisions to close, delay or dismiss school early are never an easy task. Anytime weather threatens the school day, district administration make informed decisions by monitoring weather reports, talking with the bus company and surrounding districts, driving the roads and referring to local and county officials for road conditions.

Because the district has students who walk to school, whenever the wind chill reaches a level when a person can get frostbite within 10 minutes or less, school may be delayed or cancelled. Often times weather forecasts will change over night, especially when temperatures are concerned, therefore, the district will often wait until the morning to determine the risk factors.

## Magnet School Registration Now Open Early Enrollment is Open for STEM, STEAM and Arts Magnet Schools

Buffalo-Hanover-Montrose Schools has been a member of the Northwest Suburban Integration School District (NWSISD) since 2001. The NWSISD was created in response to the State of Minnesota's Desegregation Rule. It was created due to the fact that Brooklyn Center and Osseo school districts were identified as "racially isolated" as defined by the Desegregation Rule. The districts that border the two racially isolated districts create NWSISD and includes the school districts of: Anoka-Hennepin, Brooklyn Center, BHM Schools (we border the Osseo district), Elk River, Fridley, Osseo and Rockford.

One of the ways the district has worked to break up the racial isolation is by creating magnet schools in the seven-member districts. BHM Schools has three magnet schools to offer families.

### Montrose Elementary School of Innovation (MESI) STEAM Magnet

MESI is currently in their first year of offering students **Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics**.

### Tatanka Elementary STEM School (TESS)

TESS Offers **Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics** as a part of their curriculum, with the primary

The parent/staff notification system is used to alert parents (and district staff) when school is cancelled, delayed or dismissed early due to poor weather conditions. School and activity delays or cancellations can also be found on local TV stations, KRWC Radio, the district website at [www.bhmschools.org](http://www.bhmschools.org) and on Facebook.

Generally, school will remain in session if buses can drive their routes safely. As a rule, if there is no school, there are no evening school district and Community Education activities/classes.

Especially in winter, weather conditions may be severe in one area and not in another (since the district spans over 150 square miles). **Remember, as a parent,**

focus on engineering.

### Buffalo High School (BHS) Arts Magnet

The BHS Arts Magnet is a school within the school focusing on visual, performing, literary, media and applied arts.

Any student who lives in the seven-member NWSISD can apply for enrollment into any magnet school. Students who live in BHM Schools, but not the attendance boundary of the two elementary schools, must open enroll through NWSISD. All students who would like to attend the BHS Arts Magnet program must also open enroll through NWSISD.

All three schools are now accepting open enrollment from within the BHM School District (along with the six other member districts in NWSISD). Enrollment also includes FREE transportation to and from school.

Early application into all NWSISD magnet schools for the 2020-21 school year is open through December 31 and can be submitted at [www.nws.k12.mn.us](http://www.nws.k12.mn.us). The application is also available on the home page of the BHM website at [www.bhmschools.org](http://www.bhmschools.org).

**YOU ultimately have the final decision about whether or not it's safe at any time for your child to go to school.**



## Apply To Quest

The Quest program provides specialized classroom instruction for highly gifted students (top two to three percent in their class) in grades 2-9. The program combines enrichment and acceleration of district curriculum. Students can expect to learn at a faster pace, apply what is being learned to the world and make connections to the community.

The Quest program for students in grades 2-5 is located in Parkside Elementary in Buffalo. Transportation to Parkside Elementary is available for in-district students. Middle school and high school students attend their regular building.

Siblings of Quest students may also choose to make Parkside Elementary their family school by open enrolling to Parkside. Information about the Quest program, including Request to Assess forms and bright student vs. gifted child comparisons, can be found at [bhmschools.org/quest-program](http://bhmschools.org/quest-program). You may also contact Rob Nosbush, High Potential Services Coordinator, at [rnosbush@bhmschools.org](mailto:rnosbush@bhmschools.org) or 763-682-8766 with additional questions.

Families of students currently in grades 1-8 who feel their child may benefit from this type of environment are invited to apply for next school year. An information night is scheduled for Monday, January 13 at 6:30 p.m. in the Parkside Elementary Media Center. All materials are due by Thursday, January 23, 2020.



## Brilliant Bison—Alumni Shining in the World

**Alumni:** Jim Brings  
**Buffalo High School Class of 1989**

**Lives In:** Buffalo, Minnesota

**Family:** Wife: Melissa (Dupont) ('90) and two children: Mariah ('13) and Hunter ('17)

**Education:** Alexandria Technical and Community College

**Employed:** Minnesota State Patrol

### From Breaking the Rules to Enforcing the Law, Jim Brings Finds His Path

Most people would say opposites attract. When Jim Brings was growing up as a boy in Buffalo, it's uncertain if people would have guessed he would end up in law enforcement. He was known for breaking a rule or two and even Brings himself says he wasn't the best student. But somehow, he found a life with the Minnesota State Patrol.

Born as a twin with his brother Mike, Jim was raised by his parents Gordon "Buck" and Anne with his sister Cindi ('82) and two other brothers Steve ('86) and Chris ('87) in Buffalo. With close family ties, the kids were raised to work hard and give back to their community.

Many things happened for Jim while he was in high school, but you might say that "school" wasn't his favorite "subject." He played football, baseball and was on the wrestling team. He had many friends and was well liked. He met his future wife Melissa when she was a sophomore and he was a junior.

But it was a fight with another kid, when he was in high school, that changed his life. Jim explains, "My grandma had just died and I don't remember exactly what the incident was about, but I got into a fight in the parking lot of the old Hardee's (currently where Arby's is located). Evidently, my high school counselor Mr. (Nick) Bakken saw me and called me into his office the next day. He asked me where I learned how to fight and I told him I had three brothers. Then before I knew it, he was asking me what I



With the caption, "Freshmen Just Goofin' Around" the entry in the 1986 yearbook went on to read, "Jim Brings got away from it all by going to extra curricular activities after school. 'Activies keep me busy and out of trouble,' said Brings."

wanted to do in life and encouraged me to meet Wright County Sheriff's Deputy Dave Nystuen who was going to come in to talk with some students about his job. It was just me and about three to five other kids in the high school cafeteria. It was then I knew I was interested in law enforcement."

After graduation in 1989, Jim enrolled at Alexandria Tech for law enforcement. Potential students had to take a variety of tests. He spoke with a psychiatrist after testing, and he basically told Jim, "You are too immature and stubborn to be a cop." Disappointed, Jim headed to Anoka-Ramsey Community College to pursue a career in accounting, but it only took him a semester to figure out that wasn't what he wanted to do. He headed back to Alexandria Tech, passed his tests and enrolled in the fall of 1990. He graduated from the program in 1992. Jim was a Buffalo Police Reserve as he took the Minnesota Post Board Exam that tests on the fundamentals of being an officer and is required to obtain a badge in the state of Minnesota. He passed and was hired to work part-time for the Buffalo Police Department before being hired full-time in April 1993.

Jim was a sergeant from 2004-07 and was an instructor in firearms, taser, shoot house, use of force and radar lidar. In 2007, Jim had started the process to become a State Trooper, but was put on the alternate list. He left the Buffalo Police Department once he was selected for the Minnesota State Patrol Academy in January 2009 and completed the academy in May at Camp Ripley, graduating first in his class. Jim is a Station Sergeant for the State Troopers assigned to the Wright County area. There are eight employees assigned to the station and he is the liaison between the office and the district lieutenant. He ensures someone is always on duty.



He enjoys the day to day variety and the ability to promote public safety. His focus each and every day on the highways are the four areas that the State Patrol has identified as the leading causes of fatal crashes in Minnesota: distracted and impaired driving, lack of seatbelt use and speeding. Jim added that the job is rewarding, but like anything, it takes its toll.

If patrolling highways wasn't enough, in 1999, just five years into his marriage and building his first house, Jim wanted a sprinkler system in his yard. They couldn't afford to hire it done. He learned all he needed to install the irrigation system himself. Later, he would install one for a friend and then another. It wasn't long and he started his own business, Water Boy, installing, maintaining and servicing commercial and residential irrigation systems in the Buffalo area. His wife Melissa maintains the books and helps on-site. Their kids have both helped with the business over the years, but now they only help in the fall, during peak season.

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

"I know my teachers were so patient with me. I remember Mr. (Dave) Robinson was a nice teacher. Down to earth. Cool and very patient. Buffalo is a great community with good schools. We (Melissa and I) have never regretted our decision to live here. We couldn't take college courses when I was in school, but my son graduated with about a year of college under his belt. That's great. The schools provided me with what I needed to further my education and are a big part of who I turned out to be. None of this came to me without working hard. You have to earn it. But once you have it, they can never take it away."

## Honoring Our Heros

Veterans Day, November 11, 2019 was a day to celebrate in BHM Schools. Local veterans from around the district were honored for their service, dedication and sacrifice to our country.

Buffalo Community Middle School students were treated to visits from community members, who are veterans (many of them parents of middle school students). They spoke to them about their experience in the service. Colleen Douglas (4) is an Army veteran and is also a Title I Teacher at Tatanka Elementary STEM School. Part of her presentation included what all of the patches and pins mean on a service member's uniform. Navy veteran Thomas Leimer (5) shared about his experience out at sea and all of the service members who his life depended on each day while serving.

The program at Buffalo High School (BHS) was full of pomp and circumstance. Students (1) braved the cold to welcome visitors with signs and messages of appreciation. Senator Tina Smith was on hand along with Minnesota State Representative Marion O'Neill and Minnesota State Senator Bruce Anderson to honor our veterans. The Guida family (2—Nick, Dean, Jeannie and Greg) were the keynote speakers all having served in the army and Jeannie the spouse and mother of three servicemen. Ninty-three-year-old Jack McAllister (3), a WWII veteran, was also in attendance and received a standing ovation for his service. During the ceremony, the BHS Band played The Armed Forces Salute while each branch of the military stood to be recognized. Students also presented a check for over \$800 that they collected for the Blue Star Mother's chapter. A video of the program can be found on the district's website: [www.bhmschools.org/veterans-day-program-video](http://www.bhmschools.org/veterans-day-program-video).



## World's Best Work Force Annual Report

The "Striving for the World's Best Workforce" bill was passed in 2013 to ensure every school district in the state is making strides to increase student performance. The World's Best Workforce (WBWF) Plan is intended to serve as a foundational document aligning educational initiatives serving students from pre-kindergarten through high school.

The WBWF legislation is based on five goals:

1. All students ready for kindergarten.
2. All third-grade students can read at grade-level.
3. All students attain career and college readiness before graduating from high school.
4. Close the achievement gap.
5. All students graduate from high school.

The district's WBWF Plan, coupled with the district's strategic plan, provide a solid foundation to accelerate student achievement. The full WBWF document will be published after December 15, 2019, on the district's website: [bhmschools.org](http://bhmschools.org). If you do not have access to a computer and would like a copy of the report, you may call the BHM Teaching and Learning Department at 763.682.8778 to request one.

## School Delays and Closures



What goes into calling off school or delaying the start of school? Find out more about the winter weather alert process on p. 3.

### School Board

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### INSider Editor:

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

Reader comments or questions welcome!

## Announcing the Class of 2033

# Welcome BHM Kindergarteners!

**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
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—Application deadline is Feb 3, 2020. See the article to the right for more information.)

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



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## Get Ready for the Discovery Kindergarten Lottery

Discovery Elementary is a small school of choice based on the philosophy of multi-age, looping education. The mission at Discovery is to provide community connections and a focus on social, emotional and intellectual development that gives students authentic learning opportunities.

Discovery Elementary does not have an attendance area and therefore uses a lottery process for student enrollment. On **Tuesday, January 28, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.**, Discovery Principal Dr. Mathew Nelson will host an informational night in Commons A at Discovery. The presentation will include information about Discovery's curriculum, philosophy, instructional techniques, an overview of the school and an opportunity to ask questions.

Letters and application forms for Discovery enrollment will be mailed in January to all families who are registered with the district as having a child eligible for kindergarten next fall. If you do not receive this information, want more information about Discovery or would like a tour, you may contact the Discovery Elementary office at 763-682-8400.

**All applications are due by 2 p.m. on Monday, February 3, 2020.** The lottery drawing will take place Tuesday, February 4, 2020 at 2:30 p.m. in Commons B at Discovery. Parents are welcome to attend, but it is not required. All applicants will receive the results in the mail.