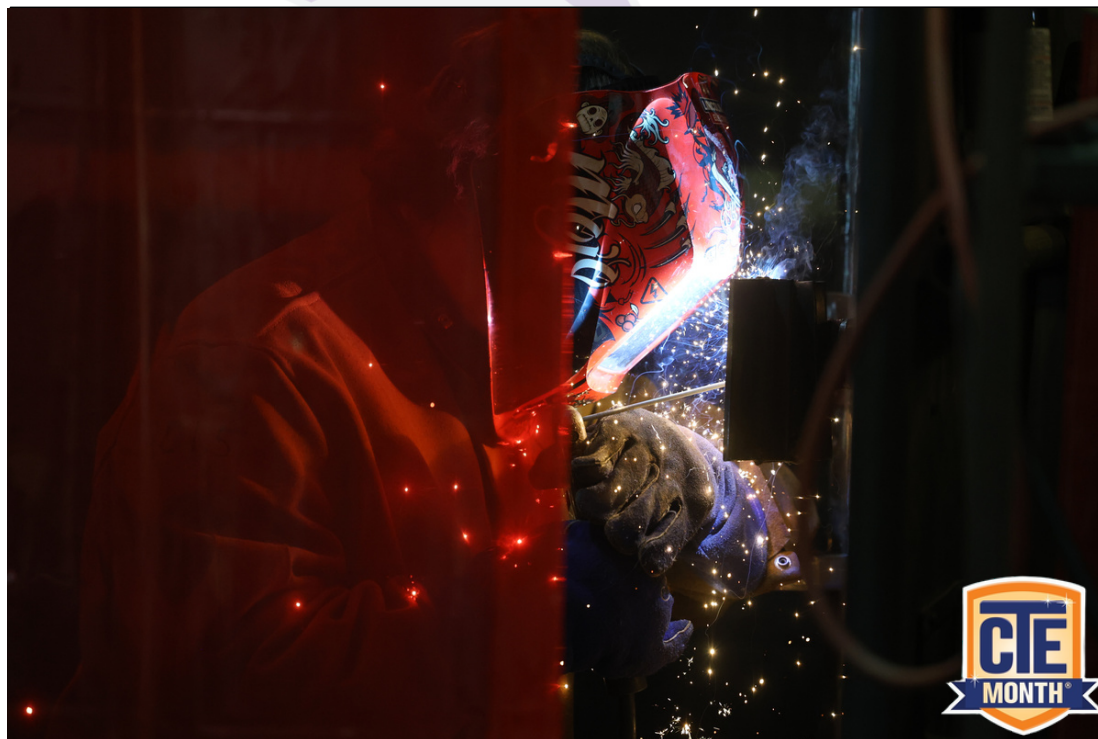


THE BURLINGTON BARK

Burlington, Iowa | Feb. 1, 2024



A student does a stick welding assignment Tuesday, Jan. 30, at Burlington High School. Welding is among 12 Career and Technical Education pathways available to BHS students.

CTE BRIDGES SKILLS GAP

Sara Parris is in her sixth year of teaching at Burlington High School, and she still has the gavel she made in Metals 1, a class she took in 2007 when she was a BHS freshman.

“I still have my gavel, I still have my class coin, I still have my table, I still have my jewelry box, my bookshelf that I put together,” she said. “One thing I always talk to people about CTE classes ... you can leave with a real box. You can 3-D print your keychain. You can use the laser and laser something out. You get tangible items that you’ll end up having forever.”

Ms. Parris first discovered her passion for career and technical education in Joe Spillane’s class in the basement of Oak Street Middle School. She remembers well stamping her name into a wooden heart, making CO2 race cars, and moving her desk to accommodate for her left-handedness when using a t-square to hand draft letters.

“I just loved it. It was so much fun,” she said. “And that was 2006, and I heard you could take the classes at BHS and I signed up for all of them. ... I didn’t take engineering classes. Joke’s on me because now I’m teaching engineering.”

Instead she took Metals 1 and 2 with Tom Buckman and Woodworking 1 and 2 with Pat Pickford.

“At that time, that’s all you could take,” Ms. Parris said.

QUICK SIX

- 1. Feb. 5**
School Board meets at 6 p.m.
- 2. Feb. 8**
100th day of school
- 2. Feb. 9**
Two hour early out
- 3. Feb. 23**
No school - professional development
- 4. Feb. 26**
School board meets at 6 p.m.
- 5. Feb. 28**
Aldo Leopold Intermediate School’s 3rd annual Black History Month Museum

INSIDE THE ISSUE

[BHS senior becomes firefighter](#)

[GEAR UP Iowa comes to Class of 2027](#)

[Webb named head football coach](#)

[BHS Drama department announces spring play](#)

GET INVOLVED

BHS Athletic Booster Club will meet at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 21, at The Drake. All parents/guardians of athletes are welcome. Come for one meeting or become a board member. Everyone’s help and ideas are needed.

THIS IS BURLINGTON



“There weren’t the same options now as there were when we were here,” added James Flaherty, who also graduated from BHS in 2010 and now teaches music there.

Vocational education had held a prominent place in high schools throughout the U.S. until the late 1990s and early 2000s. Beginning in the 1980s, states had begun to increase the number of courses required for high school graduation and began mandating students take additional courses in core academic areas.

That, combined with declining funding and a growing trend in pushing young people toward four-year degrees, along with the No Child Left Behind Act’s emphasis on learning to test, resulted in a sharp decline in CTE interest. According to the Brookings Institution, a nonprofit public policy organization based in Washington, D.C., the number of CTE credits earned by students in U.S. high schools dropped 14% from 1990 to 2009.

The consequences of that shift in focus quickly became apparent in the workforce.

“We don’t have the people who can do things with their hands,” Director of District Services Brian Johnson said. “That doesn’t necessarily mean pounding a nail or welding or baking a cake. It’s people who can do those skills plus design and those kinds of things, and the business people who can do some of those things well, plus practical skills.

“At the university level, you have a lot more theory and not so much practical stuff is taught, so you have that skill gap.”

And thus the pendulum began to swing back toward CTE.

“Now more businesses and industries are saying you don’t have to go to college to be successful and have a good-paying career,” Mr. Johnson said. “They would rather you probably get further education, whether that’s with them through their training program or whether it’s a combination of on-the-job with additional training through community college or technical school.”

Burlington further bolstered its industrial tech offerings and began adding more CTE pathways. BHS students now have 12 CTE pathways with robust course offerings they can pursue, with the possibility of more in the future.

Students are able to further dive into CTE by joining a number of clubs like National Technical Honor Society, DECA, Technology Student Association and HOSA — Future Health Professionals — that allow them to put their CTE skills to the test in competitions.

“The size of our school allows us to be a little bit more robust in our pathways because of our size and having the students and the teaching staff to allow us to do those things,” Mr. Johnson said. “Part of it is the ongoing support that our district has for those programs.”

Pathways are:

- Engineering/CAD
- Manufacturing Machining
- Health Science
- Family

SEIBA BUILD MY FUTURE EVENT RECOGNIZED FOR COMMUNITY IMPACT

Burlington Community School District Director of District Services Brian Johnson and the Southeast Iowa Builders Association were recognized Jan. 26 during the Greater Burlington Partnership’s Annual Dinner with a Community Impact Award for putting on an event aimed at exposing middle schoolers to construction careers.

The SEIBA Build My Future event that took place this past May at the Des Moines County Fairgrounds on Southeastern Community College’s West Burlington campus drew between five and six hundred seventh-graders from multiple districts.

“A big part of SEIBA is getting people interested in going into fields related to construction, whether that’s builders to suppliers to bankers,” said Mr. Johnson, who serves on the SEIBA board as well as its education subcommittee.

Build My Future events are held throughout the U.S. and traditionally are set up more like hands-on career fairs for high school students. Mr. Johnson believed it would be beneficial to target a younger demographic.

“A lot of times, kids, by the time they reach high school, they already have the stereotypes of what construction is or what they think it is, so I said you’ve kind of got to catch them early, especially with construction,” Mr. Johnson said.

About 30 local companies who volunteered to be exhibitors were asked to develop and create a hands-on activity for the students. The resulting exhibits were split up into four categories:

1. Tool showcase, which allowed students to use tools ranging from wrenches to welding simulators;
2. Equipment showcase, which featured everything from simple man lifts to large earth-moving equipment, including a full-size crane and concrete pump truck;
3. Exterior construction, which allowed students to try their hands at wall framing, doing vinyl siding, and troweling concrete; and
4. Interior construction, which included electrical and plumbing activities, along with painting and home layout and smoke detectors tips from firefighters.

“Educators were delighted to see students from all backgrounds actively participating and discovering career opportunities through hands-on learning,” the GBP said of Build My Future. “From hammering nails to cracking open geodes, these experiences made a lasting impact.

“Build My Future isn’t just an event; it’s an innovative and inspiring initiative, paving the way for our youth to explore promising careers essential for our community’s future success.”

Mr. Johnson expects this year’s event to be even bigger.



Students in Kyle Krieger’s Construction Trades class work on a three-car garage for an area resident. They started the project this past spring and completed it Nov. 1.

- Education
- Culinary
- Computer Science
- Business/Marketing
- Communication Technology
- Welding
- Public Safety
- Automotive technology (available at Southeastern Community College via concurrent enrollment)

BHS’s most recently added pathways are Public Safety and Health Science.

“One of the reasons our Health Occupations program was added is because there’s such a need for healthcare workers in our area. Same thing with Public Safety,” Mr. Johnson said. “There’s such a demand for workers in those areas.”

Mr. Johnson also is looking at the possibility of incorporating industry-recognized certification and credentialing into existing programs.

“I think we’ve kind of just scratched the surface on the work we’re doing,” he said.

UNLEASHING PASSION & PURPOSE WITH CTE

CTE does more than prepare students to enter the workforce. It gives them the hands-on training they need to apply academics to practical situations and shows them there are different learning

styles.

“You can teach kids very book-smarty things and they’re really great at learning them, but then we’ll say, ‘OK, you’re going to go put this drywall together, you are going to plumb this toilet, you are going to fix this sink,’ and then on the engineering side, it’s important because kids learn how things are made,” she said. “In manufacturing, we talk about supply and demand, and we do that in woods (classes), too, like why is some wood more expensive than other wood? CTE does a good job of applying all of those core thoughts into it.”

There’s also plenty of math and science, like what happens if you mix polyurethane with sawdust and what happens if you mix and melt different metals.

Ms. Parris ticked off a long list of names of former CTE students who have gone on to study architecture at Iowa State University and engineering at the University of Iowa. Another is doing medical research at John Hopkins, and another is at Boeing Aerospace.

“We do have a good amount of kids who take our classes and find their passion,” she said.

One such student is Aiden Woodsmall, a BHS senior, who estimates he has taken eight Health Science classes in preparation for pursuing a nursing degree at SCC.

“That’s the main thing (CTE in high school) probably helps with,” Woodsmall said just before the start of his Medical Terminology class, explaining that BHS’s Health Science pathways has helped him decide on his career path.

‘JUST WAIT AND SEE’

BHS senior Amari Bailey is rescue ready, and she’s just getting started.

Amari Bailey was in sixth grade when she decided she wanted to grow up to be a firefighter.

The Burlington High School senior accomplished that goal this past December, when she was hired on at the West Burlington Fire Department.

“Ever since I was in sixth grade, I just stuck with it the entire time,” Bailey said.

She recalls first telling her parents of her aspirations while watching an episode of “Chicago Fire.” She was further inspired by her neighbors, who were firefighters, and her desire to help people.

“I like helping people,” Bailey said. “I have always had a servant’s heart.”

In elementary school, rather than asking for Christmas gifts for herself, she asked for toys to give to a fellow student in need. She’s made Hope Totes to donate to the Burlington Area Homeless Shelter, and held a dog food drive for the Des Moines County Humane Society. Rather than spending birthday money on herself, she purchased more than 100 stuffed animals for a hospital pediatric unit.

“That way, when kids come in they have something to comfort them,” Bailey said.

Bailey has always been good at finding ways to help, but firefighting holds a unique appeal.

“The adrenaline gets me pumping,” she said with a grin.

Bailey has wasted no time pursuing her career path. In 2020, at the age of 14, she joined the WBFD’s Junior Firefighter program, which prohibits youths from going into any dangerous situations but allows them to shadow firefighters and go with them on fire calls after completing several hours of training.

“Since I was a junior, I wasn’t necessarily allowed to go into anything, but I was allowed to watch,” Bailey said. “A lot of the trainings I have done, the stories that they tell, you really think about it and think, ‘That could be me.’ ”

Bailey was hooked, and soon after, she joined the Burlington Fire Department’s Explorer program as well. The Explorer program is



Burlington High School senior Amari Bailey poses for a picture while holding her junior firefighter helmet. She traded it in for a yellow helmet this past December after being hired on as a probationary firefighter at the West Burlington Fire Department.

similar to WBFD’s Junior Firefighter program, but with more stringent scheduling requirements.

She was a natural.

“At a training drill, firefighters were conducting live-fire training in our burn tower,” former WBFD Chief Shaun Ryan wrote in a letter of recommendation for Bailey’s application to the Iowa Hero Academy, a camp that gives young women aged 16-18 the opportunity to explore careers in firefighting, policing and the military that Bailey hopes to attend this summer.

Ryan, who was incident command for the drill, asked Bailey if she would like to try. She didn’t hesitate.

“I transferred command to Amari and she operated it flawlessly,” Ryan wrote. “That moment, she was in charge of two interior attack teams and three additional safety teams awaiting outside the structure. When I say ‘flawlessly,’ I mean she was able to explain where and what each team



Burlington High School senior Amari Bailey collects donations Friday, Nov. 24, as members of the West Burlington Fire Department fill Christmas stockings while raising money for Toys for Tots near the intersection of Agency and Broadway. Amari officially joined the West Burlington Fire Department in December. (John Lovretta/The Burlington Beacon)

was doing, plus the member of each team throughout the drill.”

Ryan also noted Bailey’s ability to stay calm and level-headed in tense situations, her participation in swimming and track, and her good grades.

At BHS, she took classes that would help prepare her for a future as a paramedic, such as Introduction to Patient Care, Common Procedures in Health Care, and Health Care Occupations. She’s also a member of Health Occupations Students of America, and last year placed fifth in the state in HOSA’s CPR and First Aid categories.

Amidst all that long-term preparation, she got CPR- and lifeguard-certified and, at about the age of 15, began working as a lifeguard at the West Burlington pool.

“I’ve always been rescue-ready,” she said, estimating she’s saved more than 10 lives thus far.

She’s been back there every summer, becoming head lifeguard and organizing its swim lesson program and helping to manage pool operations.

This past November, she attained lifeguard instructor and CPR instructor certifications through the American Red Cross, which now allow her to teach certification classes.

She will take Intro to Public Safety at BHS next trimester and currently is enrolled in several classes at Southeastern Community College, where she plans to continue her education after graduating high school to complete her paramedic training.

Given that Bailey passes these classes, she will not have to pay for them as part of the concurrent enrollment between SCC and the Burlington School District.

“By the time I graduate high school, I’ll have half of my first year of college done,” she said.

Bailey said she is grateful to her parents, Antonio and Stephanie Bailey, for always believing in and supporting her. She recalled fondly how her mom and dad told her they were proud of her when she showed them that she had traded in her green Junior Firefighter helmet for a yellow probationary firefighter helmet.

“When I told them this is what I wanted to do, they didn’t shoot me down like other people. They told me, ‘If this is what you want to do, we’ll support you,’” Bailey said.

But not everyone has been as receptive to the idea of Bailey taking on a historically male profession.

“I’ve had a lot of people tell me, ‘You’re a girl; you can’t do it,’” Bailey said. “I tell them, ‘Just wait and see.’”



Students participate in a kick-off assembly for GEAR UP Iowa Thursday, Jan. 11, at Edward Stone Middle School. The program provides additional supports to the entire Burlington High School class of 2029 over the next seven years.

CLASS OF 2029 GEARS UP FOR THE FUTURE

The auditorium at Edward Stone Middle School hummed with excitement Jan. 11 as the Burlington High School Class of 2029 gathered there to learn about what's in store for them over the next seven years.

"No other class but you are part of this, just your class," Supervisor of Grants and Outreach Cassie Gerst told the crowd of about 250 seventh-graders. "You are the class of 2029!"

Mrs. Gerst was referring to the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) initiative, one of the largest and most effective programs focused on increasing college and career readiness of students nationwide.

Burlington is among 13 districts in the state to have been selected for the GEAR UP Iowa 3.0 program via Iowa College Aid. During the course of the seven-year grant, students will receive a variety of services aimed at preparing students and their families academically, financially and inspirationally to enroll and succeed

in postsecondary education pathways. To be a part of this cohort, students who will graduate in 2029 must be enrolled at BHS by the beginning of their freshman year.

"You're going to get academic support, you're going to get career days, you're going to get college visits, and you're going to get money," Mrs. Gerst explained to the seventh-graders.

That money comes in the form of \$750 postsecondary education scholarships that GEAR UP Iowa students are eligible for so long as they meet the GEAR UP Iowa Scholarship criteria.

As Mrs. Gerst razzed up the crowd, Ivy Tranter stood near the stage, her eyes taking in the faces of the students she will be helping over the next seven years as they plot their course for life after high school.

Mrs. Tranter is the GEAR UP Iowa coach, and she's excited to see the impact this program will have on the class.



Ivy Tranter is BCSD's GEAR UP Iowa coach. She has a well-rounded background in human services and looks forward to helping students navigate the path to success in post-secondary education.

"What I'm most looking forward to is just seeing how (the students) progress and where they decide they want to go in life and seeing how I can support that, whether that's going to college or getting into an apprenticeship program or something like that," Ms. Tranter said after the assembly. "I think it'll be really great to see them mature and become who they will be after graduation."

Ms. Tranter has a passion for helping people.

She graduated magna cum laude from Kennesaw State University in Georgia in December 2019 with a bachelor's degree in human services concentrated in non-profit management and has worked in a variety of services.

"In between sorting out where I wanted to be and what I wanted to do while getting my degree, I also worked in foster care," Ms. Tranter said. "After I graduated, I worked with homeless during the COVID crisis, and then I also did an internship volunteering with a pregnancy crisis center, so I have kind of a varied experience with human services."

She also has experience in schools, having also studied secondary education, during which time she worked in the multicultural services office of The Lovett School and student taught at The Westminster Schools. Both Lovett and Westminster are private schools in Atlanta.

"I really liked education, but I learned during student teaching that I didn't really want to be a teacher," Ms. Tranter said. "My goal is more to help people personally get where they want to go, which is

what I really like about the GEAR UP program. I get to help them shape their lives."

Ms. Tranter has been spending her first weeks on the job working with Mrs. Gerst to get the program off the ground, laying the groundwork for academic after-school tutoring, and planning for career visits that will allow students to see up close different career pathways they may want to consider.

"I want to cater it to their interests," Ms. Tranter said of the program, explaining she plans to get feedback from students on what kinds of careers they want to explore.

TUTORING AVAILABLE TO SEVENTH- AND EIGHTH-GRADERS

Free GEAR UP Tutoring is available to students from 3:30 to 5:30 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays at Ed Stone in rooms 3107 and 3109.

During those times, certified teachers will be available to provide homework help, assist students in getting caught up on missing assignments, and offer general tutoring.

Those wanting to utilize the tutoring can [sign up here](#) or scan the QR code.





Jordan Webb has been named the new head football coach of Burlington High School.

WEBB NAMED HEAD FOOTBALL COACH

Burlington High School has a new head football coach.

Jordan Webb is taking over the school's program following the retirement of coach James Krekel at the close of the football season.

"I hope to keep the same tradition and success that we've had, that sense of family that I believe is important to not just a sports program, but the community," Mr. Webb said. "And I think Krekel's done a really great job of building that system that we have right now, so I just hope to continue the success that we've been seeing."

"Coach Webb brings a wealth of knowledge from both his playing days at the University of Northern Iowa and his experience coaching at the high school level, where he was most recently the defensive coordinator for the Grayhounds," Activities Director Jay Huff said. "We are excited about the future of Grayhound Football with Coach Webb leading the way."

Mr. Webb has served as the BHS football program's defensive back coach and defensive coordinator since 2020 and as head track coach since 2017. He also was defensive coordinator for West Burlington High School from 2017 to 2019.

He also teaches physical education and special education at BHS and lives in Burlington with his wife and three children. His favorite color is purple.

"I bleed purple. You look in my closet, it's purple, purple, purple, black, gray, purple," Mr. Webb said with a laugh.

He and the color purple go way back.

He wore purple as a high school student, having graduated in 2011 from BHS, where he played football and basketball and ran track. As a BHS student, he was a two-time Iowa State Track champion, a two-time Drake Relay champion, and was twice honored in the Mississippi Athletic Conference for his skills on the football field. He was also named to the Elite All State Team in track.

After high school, he studied education at the University of Northern Iowa, where he traded in gray for yellow, but kept the purple.

At UNI, he ran track and played football as a defensive back. During his time at UNI, he received the State Farm Good Neighbor Award, and his football team received the All Conference Academic Reward.

He's excited to lead another purple program.

"I'm super excited about the opportunity to come back and lead at the helm of the program that I was a part of," Mr. Webb said. "I've always looked at and admired the coaches who have been here and I want to live up to the expectations that they've set. It's a great opportunity, I'm excited to get started and I hope to hit the ground running."

BHS DRAMA DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCES SPRING PLAY

Burlington High School's Drama Department has announced its spring play.

A cast of between nine and 22 students will perform "Radium Girls" April 5 and 6 in the auditorium of Aldo Leopold Intermediate School.

"This play has been popping up more and more around the country and I have been interested in pushing our students a bit on their comfort level on stage," BHS Drama Director Emma Goble said. "This play will be a great way to do that. It is a very captivating story and I know our students will be able to pull it off effortlessly!"

"Radium Girls" is inspired by the true story of female factory workers who suffered radiation poisoning from painting watch dials with self-luminous paint and their ensuing fight to hold their employer accountable in court.

BHS Drama invites you to audition for our production of

RADIUM GIRLS

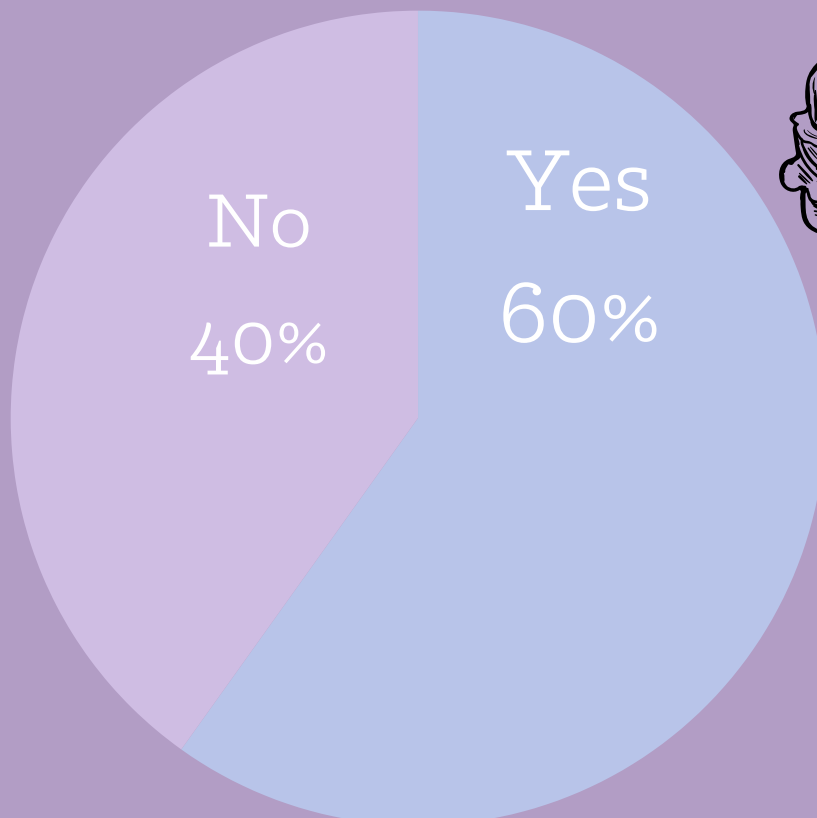
FEB 6 & 8 FROM 3:45-5:15
IN BHS CHOIR ROOM

This is a cast of 4-7 males and 5-15 females

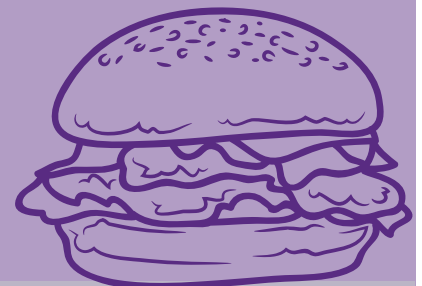
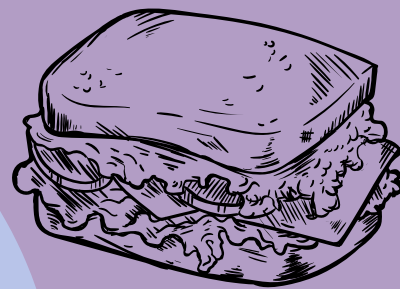
FOR AUDITION PACKETS, GO TO BHS CHOIR ROOM OR
EMAIL EMMA.GOBLE@BCSDS.ORG

INSTAGRAM POLL RESULTS

IS A CHEESEBURGER A SANDWICH?



TOTAL VOTES: 157



CONNECT WITH US ONLINE

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- @BurlingtonCommunitySchoolDistrict
- @BCSDGrayhounds
- @BCSDGrayhounds

BURLINGTON ACTIVITIES DEPT.

To view the Activities schedule [click here!](#)

THE RECAP



UPCOMING EVENTS

BURLINGTON COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Feb. 5 - School Board meets at 6 p.m.
- Feb. 8 - 100th day of school
- Feb. 9 - Two-hour early out
- Feb. 10 - BHS Music Booster Club fundraiser "Pretty in Pink Adult Prom" at 7 p.m. at Heritage Garden Event Center
- Feb. 23 - No School - professional development
- Feb. 26 - School Board meets at 6 p.m.

BURLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

- Feb. 6 & 8 - Auditions for spring play, "Radium Girls" at 3:45 p.m. in choir room
- Feb. 20 - BHS Vocal Pops Concert at 7 p.m. at Edward Stone Middle School
- Feb. 29 - BHS Spring Orchestra Concert at 7 p.m. at Ed Stone

ALDO LEOPOLD INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

Fb. 28 - Aldo Leopold Intermediate School's Black History Museum from 1-6 p.m. Living exhibits presented by community members, live musical performances, and the Scholastic Book Fair, will be from 4 to 6 p.m.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS & CORSE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

- Feb. 5 - Grimes PTO meeting at 6 p.m.
- Feb. 6 - Black Hawk PTO meeting at 5 p.m.
- Feb. 13 - Sunnyside PTO meeting at 4:15 p.m.
- Feb. 29 - Sunnyside Spring Picture Day

BHS BOOSTER CLUB TRIVIA NIGHT!

THEME: HEROES, HEROINES, & VILLAINS
WHEN: SATURDAY, MARCH 2, 2024
LOCATION: IOWA ARMORY, 17879 IOWA 79 MIDDLETOWN, IOWA

Costumes Encouraged!

DOORS OPEN: 6:00PM
GAME STARTS: 7:00PM

- \$300 PER TABLE OF 8
- AWARDS
- 50/50
- \$25 KOOZIES

Must be 21 years old to attend.

To register contact:
Kim Taeger - (319) 759-5444 or kimtaeger79@gmail.com

The BHS Booster Club is an organization whose goal is to promote and foster interest and good will towards all athletes and athletic teams in the Burlington Community School District.

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

[Click here to view the PiECES Calendar and activities!](#)

Saturdays with PiECES

- Starr's Cave with PiECES: Feb. 3 from noon to 3 p.m.
- Saturday Movie: Feb. 10 at 1 p.m. at the Capitol Theater
- Brick Masters: Feb. 3 & 17 from 10 to 11 a.m. at the Burlington Public Library

NO PiECES

Feb. 23



AT BCSD, WE ARE RAISING GRAYHOUNDS!



BURLINGTON COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT NONDISCRIMINATION NOTICE

It is the policy of the Burlington Community School District not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion, creed, age (for employment), marital status (for programs), sexual orientation, gender identity and socioeconomic status (for programs) in its educational programs and its employment practices. There is a grievance procedure for processing complaints of discrimination. If you have questions or a grievance related to this policy please contact the district's Equity Coordinators at the District Administrative Office, 1429 West Avenue, Burlington, IA 52601; (319) 753-6791.

For Educational Programs: Cory Johnson, Director of Curriculum, cory.johnson@bcstds.org

For Employment: Laci Johnson, Director of Human Resources, laci.johnson@bcstds.org