

THE BURLINGTON BARK

Burlington, Iowa | Dec. 1, 2023



Burlington High School sophomore Sarina Cline, top, and senior Kyra Nash, bottom, win matches Monday, Nov. 27, during Fort Madison High School's wrestling invitational. They are among 21 members of BHS's first-ever girls wrestling team.

'STRONGER THAN I THOUGHT I WAS'

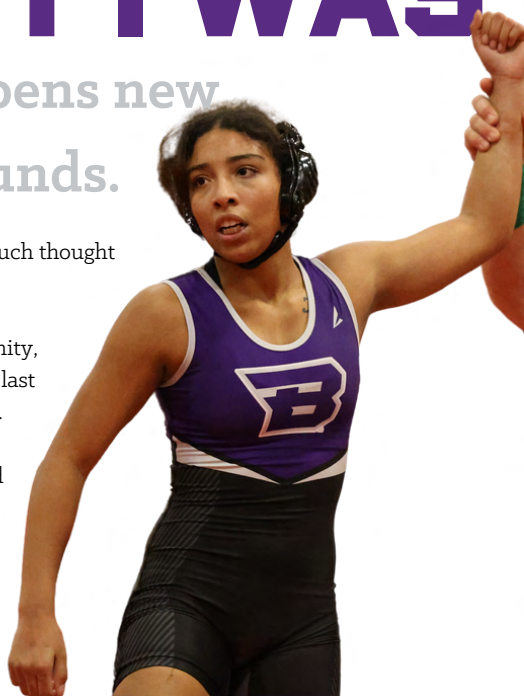
Girls wrestling team opens new doors for BHS Grayhounds.

Like many female athletes, Sarina Cline had never given much thought to wrestling.

To her, the sport was one rooted in aggression and masculinity, one better suited to boys, but that perception began to shift last year and, in recent weeks, it's been thrown out the window.

After the Iowa High School Athletic Association sanctioned girls wrestling last year, Burlington Community School District Activities Director Jay Huff put out a survey to gauge whether there was any interest in starting a girls team at Burlington High School. There was, and talk of that possibility spread quickly through the student body.

"I heard about it last year and I was like, 'Oh, I don't know



QUICK SIX

- 1. Dec. 7**
Girls Varsity Wrestling Dual at 6 p.m. at BHS
- 2. Dec. 8**
Two-hour early out
- 3. Dec. 10**
Holiday Concert at 3 p.m. at BHS
- 4. Dec. 11**
School board meets at 6 p.m.
- 5. Dec. 21**
Two-hour early out
- 6. Dec. 22-Jan. 2**
Winter break

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DAYS TILL GRADUATION:

176

THIS IS BURLINGTON



Burlington High School junior Aabell Albert and other members of the girls wrestling team watch their teammate wrestle Monday, Nov. 27, during an invitational at Fort Madison High School.

if I should; I don't think I'd be strong enough," Cline recalled on Nov. 28 after beating the first of three opponents she would go up against that night in Fort Madison High School's invitational. "Everyone thinks it's just for guys, so when they think of a girl doing it, they're just like, 'Do you think you really can do it?'"

The sophomore track and field runner had pushed aside thoughts of wrestling until this fall. As open mats drew nearer, she gave it more consideration. Her doubt lingered, but she found encouragement from another girl who would become her teammate.

"It was coming up this year and everyone was like, 'I don't know, maybe you shouldn't,' and I was like, 'Yeah, I don't think I will,'" Cline said. "But then I had a class with Annabel Albert and she said she was doing it and then I was like, 'You know what? I want to do it, too.'"

And so she did. She was far from alone.

The wrestling team has 21 members: six seniors, seven juniors, six sophomores, and two freshmen.

Some, like Cline, decided to give the sport a try alongside their friends. Others relished the idea of being a part of something from the ground up.

"It's a first-ever thing, and I wanted to feel the experience of being a wrestler," sophomore Makayleah Dunson said, adding



Chad Witte, assistant girls wrestling coach, and head coach Ryan Patton offer up tips to one of their wrestlers Monday, Nov. 27, during an invitational at Fort Madison High School.

that she wished she would have tried wrestling before this year, even if it meant being on the boys team.

It's a sentiment shared by some of her teammates, especially seniors who are discovering their love of the sport in their last year of high school.

Two of those seniors are Kyra Nash and Shariah Hart.

"I never thought about going out for wrestling," Hart said. "Me and Kyra were at her house and she was doing Aliya (Snyder's) hair, and

it was the day before wrestling even started, and she started telling us, 'You guys should do wrestling.'"

"I was like, 'I'll do it if you do it,' and then we did it," Nash said as she caught her breath following her first match of the night.

Both said they're glad to have the opportunity to wrestle on a girls team before they leave high school, though they can't help but envy their underclasswomen.

"Girls could join boys, but I wish it was actually just like a girls sport like what it's doing now," Nash said. "I feel like if it was my freshman year and I did it, by the time of my senior year, I would be really good. I feel like I wish I did wrestling before now."

The girls are making up for lost time with an eagerness to learn. That includes recognizing their strengths and opportunities for improvement.

"Coach wants me to practice on being fast and one-leg movement and stuff, so I've been practicing that and seeing if I can be really fast at it," Nash said. "My favorite move actually is neck hold and slam, which I did on (my opponent) to get that win. That's my favorite. It takes more strength than speed, so it's really fun."

STARTING FROM SQUARE ONE

Ryan Patton has coached athletes in new-to-them sports before, but never a full team.

"We're just staying very basic," the head coach said. "They're picking it up fairly quick, so we're able to progress faster, but it's going to be a challenge until we get some mat time under us."

With just three meets under their belt, the girls already are showing improvement.

"It's been exciting," assistant coach Chad Witte said. "They're hard workers and they're willing to learn. They're getting better every day."

At their first meet at Iowa City High, BHS came in 11th out of 18 schools. In Fort Madison, they placed fourth overall out of 15 schools.

This isn't Patton's first time coaching for Burlington. He was the assistant varsity wrestling coach from 2003-2010 and the head middle school wrestling coach from 2015-2023. When the position to coach the high school's first-ever girls wrestling team, he stepped right up.

"I've been part of the boys program since 2002, so rather than see it kind of flounder or be a split program between boys and girls, it's good to be able to start something new and be able to take it over," Patton said.

Witte also brings a considerable amount of experience.

"My wife and I ran the youth club for like 13, 14, years, so I've been out of it for a few years and decided to come out of retirement to help out," said Witte, whose son wrestled from kindergarten

2023 BHS GIRLS WRESTLING TEAM

Anabell Albert, junior
 Natalie Albright, junior
 Lauren Briggs, senior
 Sarina Cline, sophomore
 Sarah Cruz, sophomore
 Makayleah Dunson, sophomore
 Danica Goble, sophomore
 Shariah Hart, senior
 Jaelyn Hines, sophomore
 Aashiqua Janmanchi, senior
 Carlecia Lefler, junior
 Kyra Nash, senior
 Gracie Navarre, freshman
 Mia Oddo, freshman
 Macklyn Palmer, senior
 Alannah Peterson, junior
 Kiara Rodriguez, junior
 Emma Rohrer, senior
 Julie Short-Neff, junior
 Aliya Snyder, junior
 Adrian Thorton, sophomore



Coaches

Ryan Patton
 Chad Witte

Managers

Kenyon Jones
 Saydee Plummer



Burlington High School sophomore Adrian Thorton goes up against an opponent from Ottumwa Monday, Nov. 27, during an invitational at Fort Madison High School.

through 12th grade.

They hope that participation will remain high in the years to come. So does the team.

“Our team is already pretty big,” Cline said. “It feels good, and I’m really excited to see how it goes. I’m hoping to expand it more and maybe come back if I can and coach. We’ll see. Who knows? I think I would love to coach something like this.”

LIFE LESSONS FROM THE MAT

Wrestling has taught the girls how to do everything from head locks to single-leg takedowns, but it’s also taught them to go beyond their comfort zone to achieve their goals.

“When you step on the mat for the first time ever, it feels like you’re like stone,” Dunson said. “You don’t know what to do, but then when you get used to it, your first match you know will come and you know how to stop it and stuff.”

Sophomore Danica Goble, who wanted to follow in the footsteps of her father, who was a state qualifier in high school, said overcoming that initial anxiety can be the hardest part.

“We have a lot of girls who are really good and can do really good things on the mat,” Goble said. “They just have a lot of anxiety before they get out there, but it feels really good to be a couple of the first girls to be on the girls wrestling team and for us to have



Burlington High School senior Macklyn Palmer wrestles Monday, Nov. 27, during Fort Madison High School’s girls wrestling invitational.

the most girls out of a lot of schools.”

And the sport has helped Cline get past her self doubt and discover new things about herself.

“I’ve learned that you’ve just got to believe in yourself,” Cline said. “My first match, after I lost my second one, I just stopped trying, stopped believing in myself, but then I realized if you just keep going and keep trying, you have more of a chance to win ... I definitely learned I’m stronger than I thought I was.”



Longtime volunteer Fred Chandler and a student follow along in a textbook Thursday, Nov. 16, in Lori Johnson's fourth grade classroom at Black Hawk Elementary School.

VOLUNTEER MAKES IMPACT, FINDS FAMILY AT BLACK HAWK

Three afternoons each week without fail, Fred Chandler can be found at Black Hawk Elementary School.

The 82-year-old volunteer might be sitting at a table, quietly redirecting the attention of a student seated beside him back to the words on the page in front of them, or he might be in the hallway outside Janet Brisse's classroom, taking turns reading a book with a kindergartner. Occasionally, he'll help with science or social studies. Other times, students just want to talk.

"He is willing to work with any child, any time, any way, any place," Lori Johnson said on a recent November afternoon, just after lunch and recess, ahead of Mr. Chandler's arrival to her fourth grade classroom.

Like clockwork, Mr. Chandler was at the door at 1 p.m., his volunteer badge hanging from a lanyard around his neck.

"Where do you want me today?" he asked, his voice quiet and his tone unassuming.

Ms. Johnson directed him to a table to join a group of students whose hands had shot up in the air moments before when asked who wanted to sit with Mr. Chandler that day.

As Mr. Chandler joined the students, Ms. Johnson began to read. Mr. Chandler and the students around him followed along, with Mr. Chandler periodically pointing to the lines of text in the textbook.

"He has a quiet, soft, gentle demeanor, which encourages every student to do their very best," Ms. Johnson had said prior to Mr. Chandler's arrival.

That effect seemed to stretch beyond his table to the rest of the classroom.

"He's never harsh, he's never judgemental," Ms. Johnson said. "He's just a wonderful person to supplement our students' education."

Mr. Chandler has been a stalwart volunteer in Burlington schools since 2005, and at first glance, one might think him to be a retired



Fred Chandler reads to a kindergartner Tuesday, Nov. 7, outside Janet Brissey's classroom at Black Hawk Elementary School.

teacher. Mr. Chandler, however, discovered his passion for education and helping children while navigating a less traditional path.

Mr. Chandler grew up in Indianapolis. He graduated high school in 1959 and attended Marian University for about a year before leaving to work at a bank.

"And then I decided I wanted to try the religious life and see how that was," Mr. Chandler recalled on a recent afternoon ahead of his volunteer shift at Black Hawk.

In 1962, he took the name Brother Peter and joined the Franciscan community at a monastery in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he began organizing his religious life and working in a print shop. At the time, it had not occurred to him to work with youth, but the Franciscans had other plans.

"I guess they decided I should try my hand at working with kids," Mr. Chandler said. "That was 1964. I've been working with kids off and on since that time."

Mr. Chandler and another brother served about 40 residential, at-risk youth, and he began attending Mt. St. Joseph University off and on as his schedule allowed, eventually earning an associate's degree in childcare.

In 1970, after taking his final vows, he was reassigned to a Chicago orphanage that housed between 400 and 500 children. Between working with the 13- and 14-year-olds in his care, he continued his



Fred Chandler reads to a kindergartner Thursday, Nov. 16, outside Janet Brissey's classroom at Black Hawk Elementary School.

education, this time pursuing a bachelor's degree in education.

Meanwhile, about 250 miles away, a member of the Brothers of the Poor of St. Francis, at the direction of the Bishop of the Diocese of Davenport, was in the process of founding a group home that ultimately would be called Young House, named for the previous owner of the home on Burlington's North Fourth Street that would house the new organization.

Mr. Chandler joined that effort in 1972, first as an assistant, then as a coordinator, working primarily with teenage youth while getting to know the community.



Longtime volunteer Fred Chandler sits with students Thursday, Nov. 16, in Lori Johnson's fourth grade classroom at Black Hawk Elementary School.

"When I came and I first started at Young House, Brother Bob had a policy that we have a program and we want to dedicate ourselves to that, but to become better known in the community, find something else that you would like to do and volunteer for it when you have the time," Mr. Chandler said. "I didn't know what the heck I wanted to do, and then somebody mentioned Head Start."

He had never worked with children that young but decided to give it a try. He was a natural, and continued volunteering at Head Start off and on for the next four decades.

He also continued to work toward his bachelor's degree, this time attending Iowa Wesleyan University in Mount Pleasant.

"I almost got it, but I decided the Lord loved me in different ways and He decided I shouldn't be a brother anymore, so I left the community," he said. "It's hard to explain. It's just kind of a religious thing and you pray about it. Things had changed and I guess I had changed, too ... Overall, I just felt it was time for me to leave."

So in 1975, Mr. Chandler took a job as a city bus driver. His departure from the brotherhood meant he no longer could afford to pursue his education degree, but he never stopped helping children learn.

He retired from his city job in 2005 and, with more time on his hands, turned to the Retired & Seniors Volunteer Program of Des Moines County, which in turn connected him with the Burlington Community School District.

In addition to being a frequent presence at Head Start, Mr. Chandler began to spend time at North Hill, then at Grimes and Black Hawk, volunteering four days a week.

He continued his rotation right up until the pandemic forced

schools to close and brought about visitor restrictions put in place to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

After mitigation measures eased and schools re-opened their doors, Mr. Chandler got the call he had been hoping for for more than a year. It was Denise Michelson asking if he wanted to come volunteer with her students at Black Hawk.

He had missed working with the students and teachers he had come to know so well and didn't hesitate to return to those he had come to consider his family.

"I went to the brothers and I was planning to do that for the rest of my life," he explained. "I would've liked to have had a family, but I guess I've got a big family."

And those at Black Hawk are happy to have him back.

"Mr. Chandler is amazing," Black Hawk Principal Stacy Hatten said. "He has been faithfully coming to Black Hawk for the last 15-plus years. Fred loves to listen to kids read and helps them with writing letters as well. Fred comes at least 2-3 times a week and we love him."

GET INVOLVED

Hatten said volunteers are needed to read with students, as well as help them with math facts and writing.

At Burlington High School, volunteers are needed for the after-school tutoring club, which meets from 3 to 3:40 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays in classroom 220.

Those wanting to volunteer first must complete and submit the Volunteer Self Disclosure Form, which can be found in Board Policy 903.3 under Exhibit A.



Burlington High School senior Selena Jannsens will meet with Iowa's U.S. representatives in Washington, D.C., this month to advocate for increased foster care funding.

BHS SENIOR READIES FOR D.C.

In two short weeks, Burlington High School senior Selena Jannsens will board a plane and head to Washington, D.C., for a congressional briefing.

There, she'll meet with Iowa's U.S. representatives and senators to advocate for increased funding to the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program, which provides current and former foster care youth with support and resources to achieve self-sufficiency.

"If they're over the age of 14 and they spend at least one day in the foster system, then they get ability to access Chafee funds, which can go for food, clothes, education, a full ride to college, everything like that," Jannsens explained Nov. 20 outside her sixth period classroom at BHS.

Jannsens will depart for the nation's capital on Dec. 12 and will return Dec. 15. She's spent the weeks ahead of her first-ever plane trip doing research not just on the Chafee program and its needs, but also on U.S. Reps. Zach Nunn and Mariannette Miller-Meeks, as well as U.S. Sens. Chuck Grassley and Joni Ernst.

The trip is both a mission of advocacy and an exercise in politics for a young woman who aspires to one day hold public office.



Selena Jannsens speaks Friday, April 28, 2023, at the Port of Burlington during the second annual Burlington Community Walk to Fight Suicide.

And it all started with a survey.

"In the foster system, you have to do this survey that basically asks how has your experience with foster care been," said Jannsens, who entered the foster care system about two years ago. "The website



wasn't working, so I actually talked to a lady named Brianna Deason. She asked me the questions and afterward we just got to chit-chatting and she asked what I want to do after high school."

Jannsens told the Iowa Department of Health and Human Services youth development specialist that she plans to study communication at Southeastern Community College for two years before transferring to the University of Iowa to study political science, a field she first became interested in thanks to her foster mother, Kyla Land. Classes and assignments at BHS further nurtured her growing passion.

Deason had taken a similar post-secondary education path. The two continued to talk, and Jannsens told her about a rally she put on to raise money for a memorial bench and her work alongside other members of BHS's Bring Change to Mind Club's Walk to Fight Suicide.

Jannsens' activism, experience in the foster system, and inquisitive nature made her an ideal candidate to be a National Youth in Transition Database Program ambassador.

"It's basically where I collect data from the foster system on how to improve transitioning in and out of the foster system, and I actually get paid for it, which is great," Jannsens said. "Then I just got a random email one day asking if I would like to go to Washington, D.C., to advocate for them."

Jannsens was quick to accept the invitation. She plans to talk to the legislators about how damaging sibling separation can be, something she said she is fortunate not to have had to endure herself, as well as the stress that placing children in foster care long distances from their hometown can bring.

"There's so many things that can help kids transition in and out better," she said.

NEW MEMBERS SWORN IN TO BURLINGTON SCHOOL BOARD

Newly elected and re-elected members of the Burlington School Board were sworn into office Monday, Nov. 28, during the first meeting of their four-year term.

Newcomers Tammy Anderson and William Vance join incumbents Anika McVay and Deborah Hatteberg as they start the term for which they were elected.

Anderson and Vance take the seats that until Nov. 28 were held by board members Joel Sieren and Nancy Hoelzen, both of whom opted not to seek re-election.

The newly seated board elected Darven Kendell as board president, a position previously held by Hatteberg, and Anika McVay as vice president, a role previously held by Kendell.

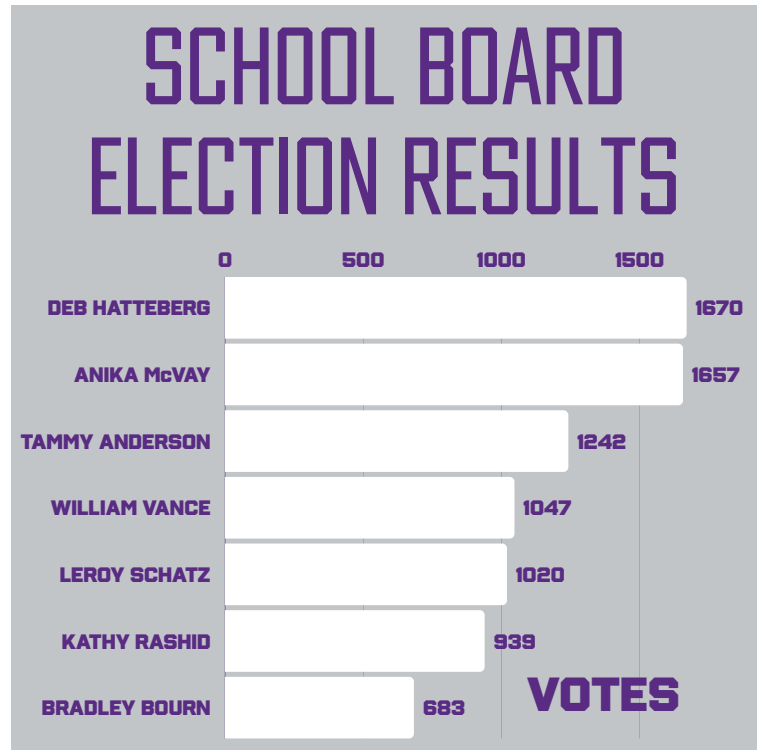
The seats held by Kendell, Christi Burghoffer and Bryan Bross will be up for election in 2025.

Committee assignments are as follows:

- Curriculum Committee: Anderson, Bross and Burghoffer
- Policy Committee: Kendell, McVay and Vance
- Finance Committee: Bross, Hatteberg and Vance
- Facilities Committee: Hatteberg, Bross and Kendell
- School Improvement Advisory Committee: Anderson, Burghoffer and McVay

Upcoming board meeting dates are as follows:

- Dec. 11
- Jan. 8 & 22
- Feb. 5 & 26
- March 25
- April 8 & 22
- May 6 & 20
- June 24
- July 22
- Aug. 12 & 26
- Sept. 9 & 23
- Oct. 14 & 28
- Nov. 11 & 25



Dates are subject to change. Board meetings are held at 6 p.m. in the boardroom at the Administration Building, 1429 WEST AVE.

Meetings are open to the public.

To tune into meetings online, visit the Burlington Community School District's YouTube channel.

For meeting agendas and minutes, visit bclds.org.

GEAR UP IOWA GRANT TO BENEFIT 7TH GRADE COHORT

It's a great time to be a Burlington seventh-grader.

The Burlington Community School District is one of 13 districts in the state to be awarded a Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) Iowa 3.0 grant.

The grant, awarded through Iowa College Aid, will provide BCSD with federal funding in the amount of \$53,000 per year over a seven-year period to provide this year's seventh-graders with support and resources from now through their high school graduation in 2029 and into their first year of post-secondary education.

"This is a seven-year project, so it starts with this year's seventh grade students and lasts for seven years, so we follow them until a year after they graduate from high school," BCSD Supervisor of Grants and Outreach Cassie Gerst said.

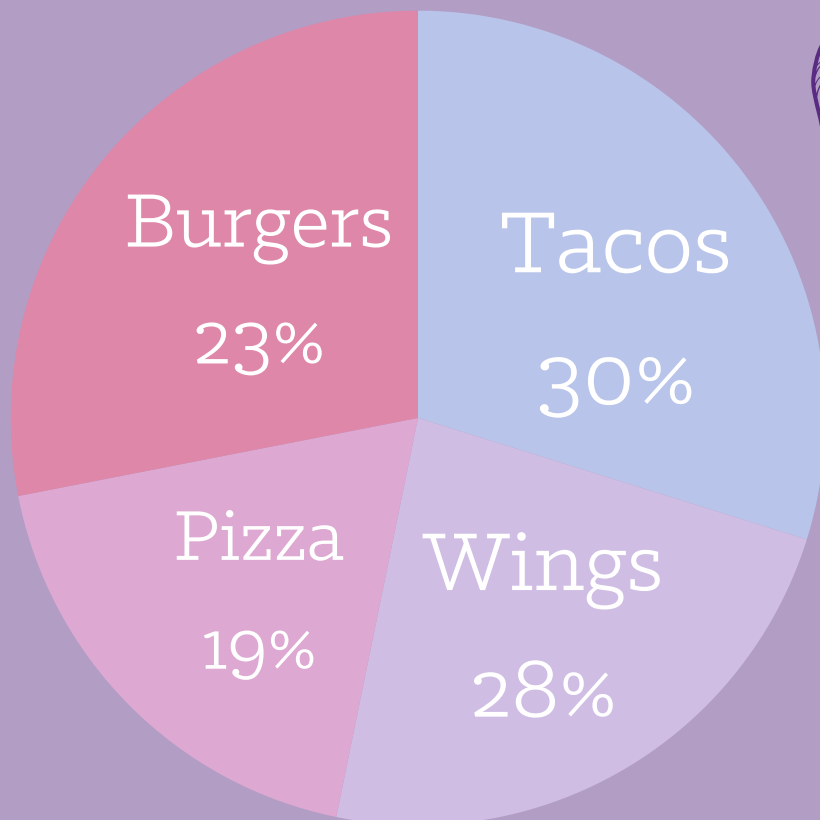


During the course of the grant, students in this cohort will receive wide-ranging services aimed at preparing them and their families academically, financially and inspirationally to enroll and succeed in college and other postsecondary education pathways.

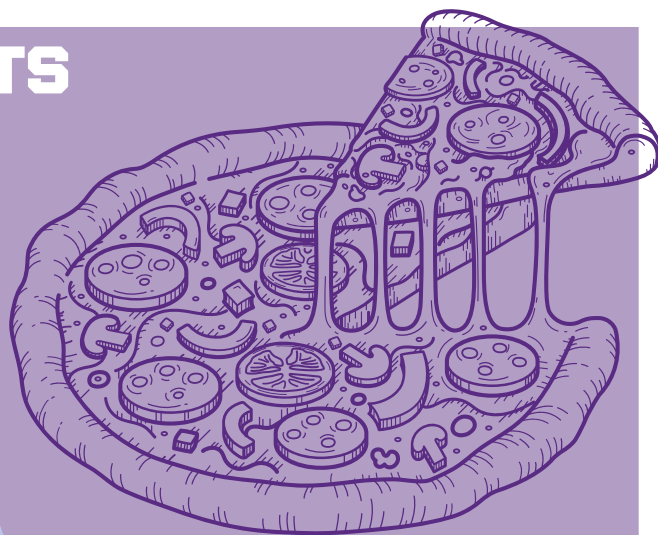
Informational meetings about this project will be held for staff on Dec. 8 and for students and families Jan. 9.

INSTAGRAM POLL RESULTS

ONE MUST GO...



TOTAL VOTES: 171



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BURLINGTON ACTIVITIES DEPT.

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

THE RECAP



UPCOMING EVENTS

BURLINGTON COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

- Dec. 8 - Two-hour early out
- Dec. 11 - School board meeting at 6 p.m.
- Dec. 21 - Two-hour early out
- Dec. 22-Jan. 2 - Winter Break

BURLINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

- Dec. 10 - Holiday Concert at 3 p.m. at BHS
- Dec. 15 - Beach Night Dance after basketball game
- Dec. 18 - Holiday Jazz Concert at 7 p.m. at Ed Stone

EDWARD STONE MIDDLE SCHOOL

- Dec. 5 - Winter vocal concert at 7 p.m. in the auditorium
- Dec. 11 - Orchestra Concert at 7 p.m. in the auditorium
- Dec. 19 - Eighth grade career fair at Southeastern Community College

ALDO LEOPOLD INTERMEDIATE SCHOOL

- Dec. 7 - Winter band/choir concert at 7 p.m.
- Dec. 11 - Orchestra concert at 7 p.m. at Ed Stone
- Dec. 12 - Winter band/choir concert at 7 p.m.
- Dec. 18 - Fifth grade career fair at Southeastern Community College

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS & CORSE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

- Dec. 4 - Grimes PTO meets at 6 p.m.
- Dec. 5 - Black Hawk PTO meets at 5 p.m.
- Dec. 8 - PTO Family Fun Night from 6 to 8 p.m.
- Dec. 12 - Sunnyside PTO meets at 4:15 p.m.
- Dec. 15 - Sunnyside K-2nd grade music concert at 2:30 p.m.

VIBE VIRTUAL LEARNING PROGRAM

Dec. 14 - Recital at 7 p.m. at Ed Stone

AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAMS

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

Saturdays with PiECES

- Starr's Cave with PiECES: Dec. 2 from noon to 3 p.m.
- Saturday Movie: Dec. 9 at 1 p.m. at the Capitol Theater
- Brick Masters: Dec. 2 & 16 from 10 to 11 a.m. at the Burlington Public Library

NO PiECES

Dec. 8, Dec. 21-Jan. 2

Free event for students in PiECES



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