WINTER 2026

THE TORNADO CONNECTION

KEEPING THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION OPEN

Butler Adopts New Promotion Prerequisites

BY ARIEL FREE

Starting this school year, the district is implementing new promotion requirements for students in grades 6-12. In order to advance to the next grade level, students must maintain a passing grade in English, mathematics, and either science or social studies. In addition, students must not be considered chronically absent.

One other change this year will be the absence of the summer school option. Previously, students who did not meet the promotion requirements could take credit recovery at the Intermediate High School. According to Mr. Dobransky, “Too many students were failing courses, attending an online cyber school over the summer and not gaining the necessary skills to be successful at the next level.”

In an effort to be sure students have the skills needed to be successful, attendance is an important part of the new promotion requirements. A student is considered chronically absent if they miss 10% or more of the school year. However, just missing 10% of the year does not mean that a student is retained. In certain circumstances, students may still move on to the next grade if they achieve a 90% or higher average in math, science, and English or demonstrate grade-level appropriate achievement on the PSSA and NWEA assessments. Other special circumstances may include the recommendation of a student’s IEP team, chronic medical issues reviewed by the school physician, or a substantial age discrepancy from that of their peers due to a previous retention.

Cont. Pg. 2



Best Buddies Creates Meaningful Connections

BY NATALIE GREGORY AND NORA HEADLEY

Best Buddies is a program that promotes kindness and inclusion. Students in the club spend time with classmates who have special needs and build real friendships.

Mrs. Rekich is the leader of Best Buddies at the IHS. She started the club because her son was once a member and had a great experience making friends. She first led the program at the middle school before bringing it to the IHS. The club is very popular and receives many applications. Because of limited money and materials, only seventh and eighth graders can join. There are about 250 students and 25 adults involved in the club.

Cont. Pg. 2

Promotion

CONT. FROM PG. 1

Parents of all at-risk students were notified in February to allow time for students to improve effort and attendance and avoid retention. Students who still end up needing credit recovery can take it through Seneca Valley School District. Each course will cost $150 for a full year, but it may cost more if fewer students register. Parents of failing students should check Infinite Campus for any missing assignments before the deadline and turn in papers for unexcused absences. “There is plenty of time remaining in the school year, so very few students should end up in this situation,” Mr. Dobransky said.

If you have any questions regarding the new promotion requirements, please reach out to the principal’s office or your child’s guidance counselor.

Buddies

CONT. FROM PG. 1

Mrs. Rekich said her favorite part of running the club is when students tell her they had a great time after an event. She said it makes the long hours of planning worth it. Her favorite event is called Games Games Games, where students spend the period playing different games. She ran Best Buddies at the middle school for three years and has now led it at the IHS for three or four years. In total, she has been running the program for about six or seven years. Best Buddies does not meet during the summer and usually does not go on field trips because buses are expensive, but they recently attended a bowling field trip where students enjoyed time with their buddies outside of the school building.



Vincent Greco has been in the program for one year and has enjoyed his time in the club. His favorite memory was making cards for children in the hospital who are chronically ill. He said those kids might feel sad or upset, and he wanted to help them feel better by writing positive messages. Vincent said his favorite part of the program is doing activities and spending time with everyone. He especially liked the first day, when everyone met and discovered what they had in common.

Lydia Wilbert has been in the program for two years. She said the best part is spending time with everyone in the group. Her favorite memory was making get to know you cards on the first day so members could learn about each other. She also enjoyed making kindness cards for children in the hospital. Lydia recommends that students who are not in the club should consider joining.

Cael Lewis has been a member for two years. He said he joined because he wanted to help others in the community. His favorite memory is interacting with the other Buddies. He said his favorite part about the club is being able to turn his kindness into something meaningful and spread it to others. His favorite event was making crafts together and sharing food. Carly Dorenkamp, a two-year member, loved playing a large Blooket game about food. She said her favorite part of Best Buddies is talking with the Buddies and being part of a worldwide organization.

Through friendship, kindness, and meaningful activities, Best Buddies continues to bring students together and create a more inclusive and compassionate school community.

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New Faces Join Front Office

BY ELLA GOLOB



Many tasks have to be completed to keep our school running smoothly, and a vast majority of those happen right in the front offices. Mrs. Bartley, Mrs. Beck, and Miss Shay are all new secretaries in the principals' and guidance office this year, and they have already proved themselves to be very valuable members of the BIHS community.

Mrs. Casey Bartley joined the staff of the principals' office to handle substitute teacher schedules, club accounts, and other important tasks that assist the principals. For her, the best part of the job is "learning all the behind-the-scenes" and getting to know all of the different people.

However, joining a big school like ours comes with a major responsibility: learning and memorizing all the names. "Learning all the staff's names and faces has been my biggest challenge so far," she said. Before Mrs. Bartley joined Butler she worked in finance at Keelan Dental. She claims the biggest change is that before she handled money and dental patients all day but now she handles paper all day and works with staff and students.

When Mrs. Bartley isn't helping us out at school, she is a self-proclaimed "sports mom." Her hobbies include spending time near water, cheering her son on at basketball games, and watching her daughter at gymnastics. She went to school at Butler, then went to college at Robert Morris University, but she always knew she wanted to work for this district. She has a sixth grade son, Avyn, who is currently in the district.

Mrs. Shannon Beck also attended Butler when she was in school and now works in the principals' office. She graduated from Slippery Rock University. Mrs. Beck spends her day assisting principals with disciplinary records, enforcing policies, and helping with attendance.

She previously worked as an elementary teacher and a paraprofessional. "I worked with students directly, and now I work with staff," she explained. The biggest challenge for her has been learning to master Infinite Campus, the district's data system.

Outside of school, Mrs. Beck enjoys watching her sons play hockey, tennis, and perform in the orchestra. She also spends time paddle boarding and reading. Both of her children are currently at the Senior High.

Unlike Mrs. Bartley and Mrs. Beck, Miss Kirstie Shay, the new guidance office secretary, did not go to Butler as a student. For college, she attended the University of Mississippi. During a typical school day, she assists the guidance counselors by answering phone calls and helping any students that come in by directing them to their grade level counselor.

Miss Shay's favorite part of her job is working with kids and making sure that they don't leave there upset. But on the other hand, the most challenging part of her job is prioritizing student needs. "It can get busy when a bunch of students come in at the same time," she said.

Before Miss Shay got a job here, she worked at Disney, which was similar to this because she also helped kids. But then she decided to work in Butler because she knew that it was a nice school and a good school district. Outside of school, some of her many hobbies include sewing, baking, and cooking.

All of the secretaries agreed that the staff at Butler is amazing. Both secretaries that work in the main office said that Ashley Best was definitely the most helpful and patient during their first few weeks. Miss Shay said that all of the guidance counselors are the most helpful to her. The next time you walk into the main office or the guidance office, make sure to wave at them or tell them hi!

NJHS Encourages Scholarship and Service

BY MASON BOCHEK

For more than 40 years, the National Junior Honor Society at Butler Intermediate High School has shaped students into leaders through scholarship, service, and character. Butler's NJHS Chapter is named after Stanley W. Sawa, former principal of Butler Junior High School. The honorary ignites students' journeys as accountable community members by helping students become more responsible for their actions and empowering them to give back through community service, leadership roles, and projects.

Students who go beyond the required service hours truly demonstrate how NJHS positively transforms both students and the community. The goal of NJHS is to make students the better version of themselves. By engaging in fundraisers and service hours, participants can help the community thrive, and students are rewarded for this. Students have a reason to keep grades up, to maintain a clean discipline record, and to help out people whenever they get the chance. According to Vice President Rylee Watson, “I like to help out people in my community and lead by example for younger students!”

One member of NJHS, Claire Baehr, shared, “NJHS gives me a reason to keep my grades up, stay a persistent member in my classes, and to keep a clean record!” These words remind us of the daily drive that NJHS instills, helping students strive to be the best version of themselves and stay that way. Similarly, the president of NJHS, Jarek Lapsley, noted, “The goal of NJHS is to get students to a point where they excel mentally and physically in and out of their community." Jarek emphasized that NJHS hopes to help members become well-rounded individuals who contribute positively to their communities.



Dr. Schneider serves as the advisor for the Stanley W. Sawa chapter. “I applied to be the advisor of NJHS because I am passionate about supporting students who strive for excellence both academically and personally. Being part of NJHS allows me to guide and inspire students while also learning from their ideas, dedication, and enthusiasm. Most importantly, I want to help create an environment where students feel empowered to lead, serve, and represent our school with pride.” He added, “NJHS helps build strong academic habits, develop leadership skills, encourages a heart for service, and overall grows members into well-rounded, responsible, and motivated citizens who are prepared for success in academics, careers, and community life.”

These past few months at NJHS, students have been working on their community service projects. Students need to earn at least 12.5 hours of community service. Many students have this done already, and some have even gone above and beyond by earning over 20 hours. Dr Schneider shared, “While the minimum number of service hours required is 12.5, many students in NJHS complete additional volunteer work in our community throughout the year. Because of this, we established an additional award recognizing exemplary stewardship and a commitment to service beyond expectations. This truly reflects how deeply our students care about the community in which we live. We want to

continue fostering that spirit of service and encourage all members to seek meaningful opportunities to make a positive impact." Kameron Warheit, Dylan Richards, and Grace Pfender are just three examples of students who have logged more than 20 hours of community service so far this year.

In the end NJHS is more than just an honor, it is a commitment to making a difference. Whether completing service hours or working hard in the classroom, NJHS students continue to show what true leadership and service looks like. Through their dedication, they are helping build a stronger and more caring community.

English, Science Implement New Programs

BY THOMAS HARTLEY

After pilots and several trials last school year, new curriculum programs have been introduced in English and Science classes this year.

Two of the new programs are Amplify for English Language Arts and OpenSciEd for Science. These programs replaced Study Sync and HMH: Science Fusion. Because of these changes, teachers have had to adjust how they teach, and students have had to adjust how they learn.

One of the new programs is Amplify. According to Amplify.com, it "supports teachers in delivering inspiring and impactful lessons" and is used by millions of teachers worldwide. Amplify was introduced around August and currently has a three-year contract with the school. English teacher Mrs. Kryl said the district wanted a program that could be used from kindergarten through eighth grade so students would have a consistent experience. She explained that Amplify lessons are clearly organized and follow step-by-step instructions, which helps teachers stay on track.

Braelyn Sasse, a student at IHS, said she thinks Amplify works better than the previous curriculum, Study Sync. She feels that it helps her improve her writing, even though it requires more effort. According to the English department chair, Mrs. Armahizer, "Amplify is more modern and easier to use with current technology. It also includes more challenging reading passages for students."

Another new program is OpenSciEd, which is used in Science classes. According to OpenSciEd.org, it is designed around how students learn science best and has received a green rating from EdReports. Mrs. Ashe, a science teacher at IHS, said OpenSciEd includes more hands-on activities than ScienceFusion. She explained that the district wanted a program that was more student led and interactive. Mrs. Ashe also said this is her first year using OpenSciEd. At the school where she previously worked, she used the Savvas and FOSS Science programs.

Overall, these new curriculums are changing the way students learn and teachers teach at IHS, and they could have a lasting impact on the future of education in the Butler School District.

Hobby Highlight: 4-H

BY MADALYN DAVIS



For more than 100 years, 4-H has helped young people learn important life skills and grow into responsible leaders. Local members of 4-H clubs have turned their motto, "Make the best better," into a way of life.

4-H was founded in 1902 in Clark County, Ohio. Since then, the organization has grown and made an impact around the world. Early members created the pledge that is still said at meetings and events today. It begins, "I pledge my head to clearer thinking, my heart to greater loyalty, my hands to larger service,

and my health to better living, for my club, my community, my country and my world." This pledge is now known by members everywhere.

There are hundreds of different 4-H programs that students can join. Many members say 4-H has changed their lives. Nolan Thurber, a seventh grader, said, "I feel like 4-H has taught me that you can always be getting better. You can always continue learning." Over the years, 4-H has shared knowledge and life skills that have shaped generations. Chloe McNany, a member of the Bunnie Bunch and Lucky 7 clubs, said, "It has taught me responsibility because I have to take care of my horses and bunnies for show."



Members often talk about their favorite memories from meetings and events. Stevie Lesney from Butler's Junior Agriculture Club said, "One of my favorite things to do in 4-H would definitely be our 4-H dance, or just showing in general." The dance brings together friends and families for a fun night. Showing animals has also brought pride and excitement to many families over the years. Even though there can be challenges, the feeling in the show ring makes the hard work worth it. No matter what place someone earns, the joy fills the room.

Family members say that 4-H has created many chances to grow closer. Daniel Lesney shared that "4-H has provided many opportunities for bonding with my family." With programs for different ages and interests, 4-H brings people together. There are clubs focused on agriculture, but there are also many other types of projects that interest a wide range of students.

Members of all ages recommend joining 4-H. Eighth grader Emmalyn Shaffner said, "I would recommend 4-H. It is a great opportunity, and you can get scholarships and many opportunities." 4-H gives students the chance to do something they enjoy with others who share the same interest. For many generations, 4-H has helped young people grow and improve. Members truly live by the motto, "Make the best better," and continue to carry that message into their daily lives.



Yearbook, Forensics, and Fashion Courses Enrich Students

BY TESSA CHASTAIN AND AVERY JOSEPH

At BIHS, students have the chance to explore their interests through unique ESP classes. These classes give students opportunities to learn skills they might not get in a regular classroom. Three popular ESP classes include Yearbook, Forensics, and Intro to Fashion.

Yearbook is an ESP class taught by Mrs. Reinhold. She took over the class from a previous teacher, and this is her second year teaching it. Students are graded on the quality of their work, meeting deadlines, and their effort.



At the beginning of the trimester, Mrs. Reinhold walks students through the process of creating the yearbook. Later in the quarter, when students are working on their spreads, she does a five minute check in and then allows them to work independently. According to Mrs. Reinhold, she is most proud of "the quality and effort they put into the book." Her favorite part of teaching this class is letting students be creative and make big decisions on their own. Students also participate in fun and creative activities, such as photography and interviews.

Mrs. Reinhold recommends this class because "it is exciting seeing your work in a published book that people will have for the rest of their lives." The hardest part of teaching this class is dealing with unexpected cancellations and activities. She would not change anything about the class, except that she wishes it could sometimes be a double period.

Mallie Clement and Isabella Cancilla are both part of the yearbook staff. Isabella said, "This is a unique opportunity to use your creative skills." Mallie's favorite part of the class is that "you can be creative in your own ways." Both Isabella and Mallie agreed that they took the class because they thought it would be fun and interesting, and it has not disappointed them.

Mrs. Ashe is the teacher for the Forensics ESP class. She studied forensics during her undergraduate years and wanted to give students the opportunity to learn about it. At the beginning of the week, students read and review notes about the topic. Throughout the week, they complete hands-on activities related to what they are learning. Mrs. Ashe feels proud when she sees students connect the evidence and develop their own ideas. Her favorite parts of teaching this class are watching students come up with theories and teaching about blood spatter.

Students participate in activities such as interviews, blood typing, fingerprinting, blood spatter analysis, and mock crime scenes. The hardest part of teaching this class is "not giving away things in the mock crime scene." If she could change anything, she would make the class periods longer.

Students enjoy this class because they get to do activities they normally would not have the opportunity to try. Hope McWilliams said, "Make sure you do all of your work, and do not fall behind." Students have fun completing labs and investigating crime scenes. Julianna Turner thinks it is "fun and engaging." Both Julianna and Hope chose the class because it looked interesting. Hope's proudest moment was "getting A's on all of my exit tickets," and Julianna's proudest project was her blood spatter work. They both recommend this class to anyone who has the chance to take it.

Intro to Fashion is another ESP class taught by Mrs. Walker. Students explore fun and creative ideas while learning about fashion. Mrs. Walker wanted to create a course that gives students hands-on, creative, and high fashion opportunities that they have never had before. She said, "A day in my class includes organized chaos and creative thinking."

Students complete different fashion challenges, including designing recycled dresses, hand embroidery, design sketching, and learning dress construction techniques. Mrs. Walker enjoys watching students express themselves through their designs.

Many students love this class because of the freedom, creativity, and challenges. Sophia Blystone said, "You meet other people, learn new skills, and learn more about yourself in the process." Shaney Kamerer added, "It is a fun and creative class. If you want to get into fashion, it is a good introduction." Students advise others to work hard, pay attention, and use their creativity. There are clear rubrics and expectations for each assignment, and details are very important. If you work hard and stay creative, you can do very well in this class. It is a fun and unique opportunity for students.



Marching Band Honors Legacy, Looks to New Era

BY BRISTOL PETERS AND COLETTE TREPANIER

Butler's marching band has a long-standing tradition of excellence, and they hope to continue this tradition as they move into a new era of leadership. The band performs in halftime shows, assemblies, and parades each year.

After 28 years of teaching and mentoring students, Mr. Kroner, the band director, is retiring this year. He shared some of his favorite memories. He said that after so many years of teaching, it is hard to choose just one favorite. One memory that stands out to him is performing in the Rose Bowl Parade in Pasadena on January 1, 2000.

The marching band is most well known at the senior high school, but students at the Intermediate School also get to experience it. Mr. Karenbauer, the band teacher, compared the marching band to participating on a sports team. He explained that there is a lot of movement involved in both band and Sequinettes. Luke Daubenspeck, a second year band student at IHS, shared his favorite memory with Mr. Karenbauer. He said it was "him giving me hot sticks, like Slim Jims." Nora Trepanier said her favorite memory with Mr. Kroner is during band camp when everyone huddles together at the beginning of the day.

At the Intermediate School, students recently had tryouts for the Sequinette organization. Many students tried out, including Kyla Kern. She explained that the tryouts were intense, but the girls were very kind. They auditioned in groups of five, so no one felt alone. About 30 students auditioned, and around 22 were selected. Two of the students who made it were from the Intermediate School. When asked what inspired her to audition for Sequinettes, Kyla said, "My mom was a Sequinette, and I knew a lot of seniors who were doing it, so I wanted to follow in their footsteps."

The marching band's Golden Girl, Claudia Wolf, has held her title for two years. She started baton twirling when she was eight years old and became more serious about it when she was ten. She said she became passionate about baton because her mom twirled when she was younger, and she has made lifelong friendships through it. Claudia's advice to students who want to become Golden Girl is to focus on drops and showmanship. Being the Golden Girl takes a lot of time and practice. She practices outside of marching band to prevent drops as much as possible. She also said, "It is good to push yourself, but not too far. It's okay to take a break."

Next year, the marching band is already planning a packed schedule of performances. Whether they play an instrument, dance, or twirl a flag, the students involved will proudly represent Butler Band as it marches on into the future.



Athletes SPRING Into Action

BY KENLEY GRAHAM AND LILY ORTON, EDITOR

Butler Intermediate spring sports are always popular with students. With choices like volleyball, track and field, softball, and baseball, there is something for everyone!

Coach McKinley, the volleyball coach, looks forward to the new season with this batch of seventh graders. He began coaching this sport because he grew up playing volleyball and jumped at the opportunity to coach it. When he was younger, his dad built a volleyball court and he and his brother played volleyball, so he had a strong connection to the sport. He loves coaching volleyball because it forces kids to think, move, and anticipate what is going to happen before it happens. "It forces kids to get out of their comfort zone," he said.

He has been coaching the boys for three seasons and girls for one season. His tip for nervous beginners is: "Don't be afraid of the ball." Mr McKinley thinks their biggest challenge this season will be "getting everyone to realize they are on a cohesive team" and "increasing the level of play." And it's very easy to meet the standards to join. Potential players only have to be able to pass, be open minded, be able to work with others, and be somewhat athletic.

Volleyball player, Vincent Greco, thinks Isaac McCance is a great leader as a player. For Vincent, an outside hitter, this is his third year playing the sport. His sister got him involved in playing, and he is looking forward to winning records. His

most memorable moment while playing volleyball was when they won the championship! His biggest tip for beginners is: “If you mess up, know that the team has your back.” Lian Kovach, a middle/outside hitter, agrees with Vincent when saying that Isaac McCance is a great leader as a player. Lian looks forward to the bus rides to away games and remembers when the Butler Volleyball team beat Seneca Valley in our home gym. This is Lian’s second year playing, and he got interested in playing because most of his friends from elementary played volleyball. His biggest tip for beginners is: “Don’t get in your head!”

Coach Wilkinson, the softball coach, is looking forward to working with the players who are eager to put in the work. She loves watching hard working players progress throughout the season. She has been playing softball since she was six years old and played through college at IUP. She has been coaching for over 15 years.

According to Coach Wilkinson, “If you participate in softball, you gain the ability to work as a team and learn how to pick each other up when a mistake is made.” She said that the weather will be their biggest challenge this year because in the spring it is always wet and rainy and hard to squeeze in games. Her biggest tip for beginners is: “Be coachable and keep practicing the basic skills of throwing, catching, and hitting.”

Softball player Isabella Vivirito is looking forward to having fun. She is a catcher and a shortstop who has been playing for 7 ½ years, and this is her second year playing for the school. Her biggest tip for nervous beginners is: “Don’t be scared of the ball.” The biggest rival she thinks that they will have is Seneca Valley and North Hills. Aubrey Wilkinson is looking forward to winning games. Aubrey’s mom got her interested in softball because she played in college. Her biggest tip for nervous beginners is: “Don’t think about striking out and do your best.” She plays first base and pitcher. Her favorite memory in this sport is “hitting all of my inside-the-park home runs.”

Track and Field coach, Coach Sells, is looking forward to winning meets, getting faster and stronger, and having fun doing it. Sells said that his biggest tip for nervous beginners is: “Come out and see what track is about. You will be surprised how much fun it is! You don't need to be good at anything yet because we will train you to get better. Come in with a positive mindset and give your best effort!”

There are no requirements to be on the team, but athletes have to be willing to give their best effort and be willing to learn. He said that practices are normally around one to two hours. He said by joining the sport, athletes can gain new friendships, long lasting memories, get in the best shape of their life, become stronger, faster, and more confident. If the weather is bad, he said that they run inside.

Tyson Netzel, a track and field athlete, said that he is looking forward to running and having a good workout. The thing he likes most about track and field is “being able to try different things.” He got interested in track and field because he tried a mini meet. Tyson’s biggest tip for beginners is: “Try your hardest and do your best.” Tyson does the 800 meter, 400 meter, and a relay. He said that the biggest challenge they face this year is running against bigger schools. He also said that their biggest rival this year will be North Allegheny. Sophia Slaugenhoup, another track and field athlete, said that she is looking forward to surpassing the long jump record. She said North Hills will be their biggest rival. She became interested in track because her friends did it, and her brother does track and field too. Her biggest tip for nervous beginners is: “It is really important to stay calm and focus.”

Coach Manning, the baseball coach, grew up playing baseball, and like father like son, his father was a coach. Shawn has been coaching for 20 years and is loving it! His tip for beginners is: “Baseball is a game of failure, but you just have to keep trying!” He believes that baseball helps players gain confidence and lets them experience what it is like to be a part of a team. He loves coaching and working with kids. He believes that their biggest rivals will be North Allegheny and Pine Richland.

Grady Bohin, a pitcher and infielder, has been playing for eight years and started playing because his mom played softball. He loves to play baseball with his friends. and his favorite memory is winning sections for little league. He thinks that Luke Macko has the most leadership on the team. He thinks that their biggest rival will be North Allegheny. Liam Hohn, our short stop, has 10 years of experience in baseball and loves to play with his teammates. His favorite memory of baseball is going to states, and he thinks their biggest challenge is that they are missing a few of their pitchers. His tip for nervous beginners is: “Have a good attitude, and don’t give up.”

Best of luck to all of the spring teams this season!

WINTER 2026

THE TORNADO CONNECTION

STUDENT SECTION

Sibling Battle 25-26 Winter Edition

BY MACKENZIE ERDOS, CHIEF EDITOR; AND CALEB GREGORY, EDITOR

Zyon, Kian, and Zeke Frederick

- "His best trait is that he is nice."
- "He can't live without his video games."
- "He would choose to be a professional basketball player as a job."
- "If Zeke could choose a vacation spot, it would probably be Florida or South Carolina."



- "Zyon's best trait is he is good at drawing."
- "He can't live without his video games."
- "He'd be a professional artist."
- "He would want to go to Florida or South Carolina."

Alise and Analyn Sayers

- "My favorite memory is doing her hair for soccer."
- "Her best trait is her energy."
- "Her most used app is CapCut."
- "I wish she would watch the TV shows I watch."



- "My favorite memory is when we went camping."
- "Her best trait is being cranky."
- "She uses Snapchat the most."
- "I wish she would do crafts with me."

Hadley and Case Stevenson

- “The biggest difference is Case is annoying, and I am not.”
- “He should be a doctor when he is grown up.”
- “I like playing soccer with him.”
- “He couldn’t live without his game.”



- “The biggest difference between us is our ages. Period.”
- “She should be a doctor some day.”
- “I like when we play outside most.”
- “She couldn’t live without her makeup.”

Willow and Lily Anderson

- “The biggest difference between us is she's taller.”
- “Lily would love to go to Miami.”
- “She should work at a gas station.”
- “She can’t live without her bed.”



- “The biggest difference between us is she does more sports than me.”
- “Willow would choose Paris.”
- “My sister should be a doctor some day.”
- “She can’t live without her phone.”

Who Am I?

Sixth Grade Mystery Teacher

BY HADYN KILDOO AND BAYLOR ZINKHANN

This mystery teacher grew up in Hampton, PA, and as a kid, loved to skateboard. His dream job was to own a skateboard shop. He chose to work at the BHIS because he loved working with middle school kids. He has been teaching in Butler for 28 years now. He also loves to relate to kids, interact with them, and make connections.



The advice he would give to students is: "Get involved with school activities and sports." His favorite meal is chicken tacos, and his favorite type of music is 90s alt-rock. Something that inspires him is famous athletes who go above and beyond to help others. A hobby he would like to do for the rest of his life would be pickleball because he likes racket sports.

He has no siblings or kids, but he has two dogs, a pitbull and a shepherd bulldog mix. One fun fact about this teacher is that he's been to five Caribbean islands.

Seventh Grade Mystery Teacher



The seventh grade mystery teacher grew up at West Sunbury and has been teaching for two years. When he was a kid, he wanted to be a sports data analyst, and he liked to play wiffle ball and video games. He has three siblings, three dogs, and one cat. The mystery teacher's favorite music is country, and his favorite food is sausage and pepperoni pizza.

A fun fact about him is he is a good juggler, and if he could only do one hobby for the rest of his life, he would choose golf. It inspires him when he sees people helping others. His advice to students is: "Have a positive attitude because then everything will be better than you thought it would be."

He became a teacher because he had good teachers growing up, and he likes watching his students learn. He specifically chose to teach the Intermediate because the students enjoy learning and being at school, so it makes it fun to teach here.



Eighth Grade Mystery Teacher

The eighth grade mystery teacher grew up in West Brooklyn by Kennywood Park, and she has been teaching at Butler for 10 years. When she was a kid, she always wanted to be a teacher, and she liked to dance, make art, and play soccer. This mystery teacher has a sister, a husband, two daughters, and no pets. Her favorite food is chicken Milanese, and her favorite music includes pop and classic rock.

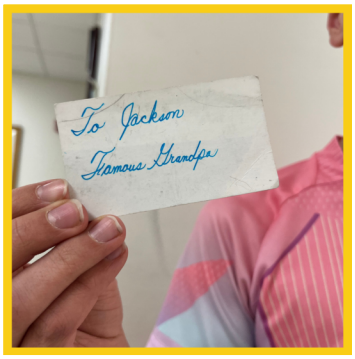
A fun fact about her is that she got married in Disney World, and if she could only enjoy one hobby for the rest of her life, it would be reading because she would never get bored. It inspires her when her daughters learn new things, and her advice to students is to always do your best and to remember that "mistakes are how you learn and grow."

She became an educator because she had a teacher who pushed her to become one, and she enjoys helping people learn. Although this teacher always thought she would teach high school, she loves her job at the IHS and she is so happy she has the opportunity to work with middle school students every day.

What's In Your Backpack?

BY AARON BENJAMIN

We asked students from all over the school what are the weirdest things that they keep in their backpacks. Some items you might expect, but others are a bit surprising!



Alex Pfab–a tiny plastic baby
Carly Cygan–two pairs of socks
Patrick Gordon–a mini duck
Mason Watson–a drum stick
Grady Bohin–a birthday sign
Isabella Cancilla–a bag of 20 lip glosses
George Reffert–paper balls

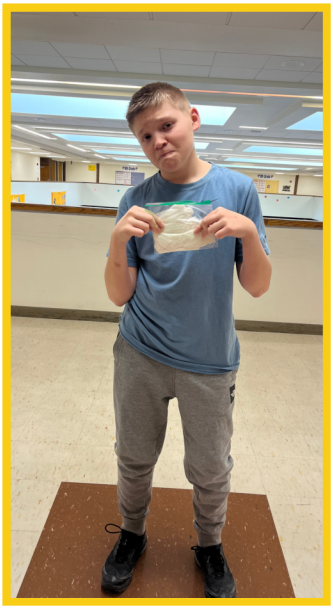


Kam Warheit–moldy chapstick
Lian Kovach–a photo of an old dead statue person
Lukas Epps–a raw potato
Isaac Dreher–half of a math book
Lukas Renwick–another mini plastic baby?





Ethan Holmes–a Navy recruiter paper
Jackson Giocondo–Ken Cherry's signatures
Blake Hankey–a two-year-old jolly rancher
Andrew Rock–a moldy ice pack
Luke Fazzino–Donut Connection's phone number
Abigail Trautman–a dried up orange
Roman Ruth–tiny toy poops



Catching Fire, Summer I Turned Pretty Among Top IHS Reads



BY SAMANTHA REEGER, EDITOR

Of all of the books available in the library, there are certainly some that lead in terms of popularity. Since the beginning of the school year, certain books and series have peaked in popularity with students, according to Ms. Eckert, the school librarian.

Ms. Eckert estimated that one of the most frequently checked out books in the library would be either something from The Hunger Games series in general or the book The Summer I Turned Pretty, as both were known to be popular with students. Because of this, she said, "Overall, just for students wanting to read, I would think that The Summer I Turned Pretty is top of the list for that one." Surprisingly, in contrast to those estimates, the most popular genre with students in the BIHS would be horror or thriller novels.

Word Scramble Answers: 1. daylight saving time, 2. spring training, 3. baseball, 4. March madness, 5. basketball, 6. flowers, 7. sunshine, 8. warmer, 9. tulips, 10. robins, 11. gardening, 12. rainbow



It is possible to determine the books that have been checked out of the library and how popular they are because of the online catalogs used by the school, Follett Destiny and Sora. In these systems, there are reports and the top title statistics, which shows what books have been checked out and which ones are the most popular. Additionally, the books shown can be filtered to which were checked out within a certain time frame, so that was what made it possible to determine which were most popular with students this school year. This same program is what was used to determine the most popular genres as well.

Within the past six months of the school year, Catching Fire from the series The Hunger Games has been checked out most frequently. This is the second book within The Hunger Games series, and it follows the protagonists, Katniss and Peeta. The two are sent back into the games, and they begin to work with other winners while simultaneously moving the "love triangle" plot between Gale, Katniss, and Peeta along.

A seventh-grade student who has read Catching Fire, Leilani Stagnaro, commented, "I would definitely encourage other students to read this book as it finishes a book that is, in a way, left unfinished," referring to the first book in the series, The Hunger Games. She says this because Catching Fire provides more context to the storyline within the first book with quite a moving storyline. Additionally, Stagnaro also enjoyed the fact that Peeta still chose to be friends with Katniss even after he learned that her love for him may not have been entirely genuine or romantic. She believes that this demonstrates that he was capable of being a kind and patient person despite the conflict that he faced.

Ultimately, whether students are drawn to dystopian adventures like Catching Fire or chilling horror novels, the library's most popular books reveal what captures their interest and keeps them coming back to read more throughout the school year.

Would You Rather?

BY ADELYNN MILLER AND NADIA TURNER



Would you rather enter a room full of puzzles or a room full of books?
Arietta Foran–"Books... I really enjoy reading more than puzzles because sometimes puzzles can get difficult. I would rather sit down and read because it helps me calm down."



Would you rather have an extra eye or an extra ear?
Lenora Robinson–"Probably an extra eye, so I can scare my friends."

Would you rather see 100 years into the past or 100 years into the future?
Hudson Behrens–"Future, to see what comes out and how the world changes."

Would you rather wear a chicken costume to school or sleep in a swim suit and flippers?
Arturo DiDomenico–"Flippers because I won't be embarrassed at school."

Would you rather sing everything you say or dance every time you walk into a room?
Ella Anderson–"Sing everything I say because I am better at singing than dancing."

Would you rather never watch social media again or never watch TV again?
Tala Azarcon–"Social media because I don't have social media in the first place."



Would you rather be as tiny as a fly or as big as a whale?
Kendelyn Reibel–"As tiny as a fly because I could sneak around without being noticed."

Would you rather have a head the size of a tennis ball or a watermelon?
Adley Rudolph–"Tennis ball. I don't like fat heads."

Would you rather lose your phone or lose your wallet?
Riley Dickey–"Wallet. Technically, I can pay off your phone."

Would you rather lose your vision or lose your voice?
Madison Norris–"Voice because I can do sign language."



Would you rather say yes to everything or only speak when someone talks to you?
Sophia Slaugenhoup–"Only speak when someone talks to me because if I had to say yes to everything, people would take advantage of it."

Would you rather have your every move narrated by Siri or your thoughts voiced out loud by Alexa?
Brinley Baird–"Every move narrated by Siri because sometimes my thoughts should not be voiced out loud, and if they were, that would be bad!"

Would you rather spend a week with your favorite celebrity or trade lives with them for a day?
Braelyn Sasse–"Spend a week with them so I can see what they do and get fancy dinners and possibly go on a shopping spree."



Would you rather have a world without cars or the internet?
Riley Neubauer– "Without cars so I get more exercise."

Would you rather have no homework ever or never have to take a test?
Mackenzie Erdos–"Never have to take a test because then I would never have to study, and I spend more time studying than on my homework."

Would you rather be the smartest kid in school or the most popular?
Caleb Gregory–"I would rather be the smartest kid because popularity won't mean anything outside of high school, which also means I could get into good colleges."

Clubs Offer New Experiences

BY MAKS COUSINS AND CRUZE PAULE

Joining a club is a great way for students to try something new and spend time with friends. At our school, two popular choices are the soccer club and the chess club. Both clubs give students a chance to build skills, have fun, and connect with others who share their interests.

The soccer club is run by Mr. Leyland along with sixth graders Julia Noronha and Eleanor Mago. It is open to all students, whether they already play soccer or just want to learn. The club was started this year after Julia and Eleanor asked Mr. Leyland to sponsor it. Julia said, "I wanted something fun to do that involves my favorite sport during advisory."



The club has more than 30 members and meets every other week. Right now, students are learning how to play paper football on their desks. Once everyone understands the game, they plan to hold a tournament that follows the real World Cup schedule. When the weather gets warmer, they will go outside and play real soccer.

Seventh grader Lukas Epps said, "I would recommend it to everyone because you don't have to know soccer to join." The club is still growing, and students have ideas for improvement. Eighth grader Atticus English said it would be even better if they played more real soccer. Students who want to learn more can email Mr. Leyland.

The chess club is another exciting option. It started a few weeks before winter break and is run by Mr. Fraser. The club meets once or twice a month and welcomes students of all skill levels.

Mr. Fraser said he brought the club back because eighth graders asked for it, and he enjoyed playing chess when he was younger. During meetings, he shares an agenda, reviews the rules, and then students spend the rest of the time playing.

Eighth grader Aiden Dinger said, “The club is really fun, and I wanted to play with my friend Evan Gettinger.” He also said the club could improve if more students joined and there was stronger competition. Mr. Fraser hopes to organize tournaments and matches based on skill level in the future. Students who are interested can email Mr. Fraser for more information.

The 2026 Tornado Connection Winter Staff



Spring Word Scramble

1. GHLITAYD SAVIGN METI

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2. PSRIGN RTAIINNG

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3. SBLALEA

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4. HCMAR DSNAMES

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5. KSBTELBAAL

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6. LORFESW

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7. NISNUHES

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8. RWAEMR

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9. UTPLSI

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10. OBRINS

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11. GNIDENRGA

_____

12. NRWBIOA

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Answers on Pg. 13

Mystery Teachers: Mr. Zihmer, Mr. Jewart, Mrs. Pollock