

BUTLER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT



welcome

BACK TO SCHOOL

2026-2027



Welcome Back

Dear BASD Families,

As we begin another school year, I've been thinking about two messages that seem to conflict. Students often hear that artificial intelligence will replace jobs, yet nearly every employer I speak with tells me they cannot find enough qualified people.

The reality is that while AI will change the way we work, it cannot replace what makes us uniquely human. The future belongs to people who are curious, adaptable, creative, collaborative, and committed to lifelong learning.

Every child enters the world with a natural desire to learn. Our responsibility as parents, educators, and community members is not to create curiosity, but to protect it, nurture it, and help it grow. When students continue asking questions, embracing challenges, and learning from mistakes, they develop the resilience, critical thinking, communication, and empathy that will serve them throughout their lives.

At Butler Area School District, this belief is reflected in our Portrait of the Graduate. We are committed to helping every student develop the knowledge, skills, and character needed to thrive in college, careers, and life.

As we welcome students back, let us remember that education is about more than preparing students for their first job. It is about preparing them for a lifetime of learning. If our graduates leave Butler with curiosity, confidence, compassion, and a love of learning, they will be ready for whatever the future holds.

Thank you to our families for entrusting us with your children, to our educators and staff for their dedication, and to our community for its continued partnership.

Welcome back! Here's to a school year filled with curiosity, discovery, and endless possibilities.

Sincerely,



Brian J. White, Jr., Ed.D.
Superintendent
Butler Area School District

OUR MISSION AND BELIEFS

The mission of the Butler Area School District, a community committed to fostering a culture of forward-thinking, innovative and lifelong learning, is to prepare students to succeed in an ever-changing global society through academically rigorous and individualized learning experiences within a nurturing and safe environment.

Our Beliefs

We believe in lifelong learning.
We believe in empowering individuals.
We believe that diversity must be respected.
We believe that creativity powers innovation.
We believe that all individuals are able to learn.

We believe in dignity and respect for all.
We believe in the power of community pride.
We believe that everyone has a right to learn.
We believe in collaborative communication.

Our Objectives

All students will have an individualized rigorous academic plan.
All students will meet or exceed individualized rigorous growth targets.
All students will respect themselves and others.
All students will create an ongoing interest-based portfolio that provides a foundation for career planning.
All students will read with accuracy, fluency and comprehension by the end of 3rd grade.
All students will demonstrate the social, emotional and problem solving skills required to be successful in their lifelong learning.

OUR LEADERSHIP

Dr. Brian J. White, Jr., Superintendent
Dr. Brian Slamecka, Assistant Superintendent
Dr. Laura Miller, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development
Dr. Carrie Morgan-Davis, Assistant Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development
Mr. Aaron Royhab, Director of Special Education
Mrs. Cari Boozel, Assistant Director of Special Education
Dr. John Wyllie, Assistant to the Superintendents
Mr. Curt Springer, Assistant Director of Behavioral Supports
Ms. Heather Bonzo, Director of Finance & Operations
Mrs. Kristen Clouse, Director of Human Resources
Mrs. Kara Droney, Director of Communications
Mr. Jason Huffman, Principal, SHS
Mr. Doug Ford, Assistant Principal, SHS
Mrs. Hope Hull, Principal of Personalized Learning

Mr. Daniel Buzzard, Dean of Students, SHS
Mr. Justin Tanaka, Dean of Students, SHS
Mr. Stephen Dobransky, Principal, IHS
Mrs. Gretchen Crissman, Assistant Principal, IHS
Mr. Harold Dunn, Assistant Principal, IHS
Mrs. Vanessa Boyd, Principal, Broad Street
Mrs. Tanya Lewis, Principal, Center Township
Mrs. Nicole Munko, Dean of Students, Center Township
Ms. Alicia Beighley, Principal, Connoquenessing
Mr. Joshua Hundertmark, Principal, Emily Brittain
Mrs. Theresa Cherry, Principal, McQuiston
Ms. Elizabeth Santillo, Dean of Students, McQuiston
Mr. Matt Martinez, Principal, Northwest
Mr. Chad Broman, Principal, Summit
Mr. Keenan McGaughey, Principal, Center Avenue Community School

OUR BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS

Mr. Al Vavro, *President*
Mr. Gary Shingleton, *Vice President*
Mr. John Conrad
Mrs. Jennifer Cummings
Mrs. Jennifer Daniels-Wells
Mr. Phil Heasley
Mr. Terry Stivason
Mrs. Nina Teff
Mrs. Cecilia Tomko

The Butler Area Board of School Directors meets on the second and third Monday of the month. One meeting per month will be a traditional board meeting and one meeting will be a community engagement session. Both meeting styles are open to the public.

[Click here for more information](#), including a list of meeting dates, times and locations.



BACK TO SCHOOL

SAVE THE DATE



FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

- **The First Day of School** for all students is on Thursday, August 27.

ORIENTATION

- **6th Grade Orientation:** August 19 from 9:00–11:00 am at the IHS
- **7th Grade Orientation:** August 20 from 9:00–11:00 am at the IHS
- **8th Grade Orientation:** August 20 from 12:00–2:00 pm at the IHS
- **9th Grade & New Student Orientation:** August 17 from 1:00 – 3:00 pm at the SHS
- **SHS Cyber School Orientation (grades 9-12):** August 17 from 12:00–1:00 pm at the SHS

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT

- **Kindergarten Only:** August 25 at your child's elementary school.
 - Broad Street: 4:15 – 5:15 pm
 - Center Township: 4:00 – 5:00 pm
 - Connoquenessing: 4:00 – 5:00 pm
 - Emily Brittain: 4:00 – 5:00 pm
 - McQuiston: 4:00 – 5:00 pm
 - Northwest: 4:00 – 5:00 pm
 - Summit: 4:00 – 5:00 pm
- **Elementary (Grades 1-5):** August 25 at your child's elementary school.
 - Broad Street: 5:30 – 6:30 pm
 - Center Township: 5:45 – 6:45 pm
 - Connoquenessing: 5:30 – 6:30 pm
 - Emily Brittain: 5:30 – 6:30 pm
 - McQuiston: 5:30 – 6:30 pm
 - Northwest: 5:45 – 6:45 pm
 - Summit: 5:15 – 6:15 pm
- **Senior High School (Grades 9-12):** September 15 from 6:00 – 8:00 pm at the SHS.
- **Center Avenue Community School:** Family Fun Night on September 17 from 5:00 – 7:00 pm at Center Avenue Community School.

SUPPLIES

Elementary School
Supply List

Intermediate High School
Suggested Supply List

You're invited!

SHAPING OUR PATH FORWARD



HELP GUIDE THE FUTURE OF OUR SCHOOLS

What is the true purpose of a modern education? How do we balance rigorous academics with student well-being? And how should our schools navigate the rise of Artificial Intelligence, screen time, and a fast-changing economic landscape?

**These aren't just questions for school administrators—
they are fundamental questions for our entire community.**

Event Details

*Participants should expect to spend around 90 minutes total
exploring and sharing insights across the stations.*



DATE

Thursday,
Sept. 24, 2026



TIME

6:00 PM



LOCATION

Intermediate
High School

A STRONG FOUNDATION OF COMMUNITY VOICES

Butler Area School District has a proud history of listening and partnering with our community. Your ideas have shaped major decisions – from school reconfiguration to our Portrait of the Graduate.

This **Strategic Visioning Event** is the next step in that commitment. Together, we'll explore bold ideas, share diverse perspectives and build the roadmap for our school district's future.

YOUR VOICE IS THE MISSING PIECE

Whether you are a parent with a child just starting kindergarten, a local business owner looking at the future workforce, an educator dedicated to student success, or a resident invested in the long-term strength of our neighborhoods, we want to hear from you. No pre-registration or expert background in education is required. All you need is a willingness to share your perspective and hope for the future of our students.

Big ideas. Real impact.

11 INTERACTIVE STATIONS



THE PURPOSE OF EDUCATION

Share your perspective on what success looks like for a modern graduate and what a school's core mission should be in today's world.



THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE (Play, Engagement, Technology & Screen Time)

Give us your thoughts on how to best structure the school day to support student well-being. This includes balancing active engagement and play with your views on technology use and screen time.



ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS & GRADING

Weigh in on how we assess student progress and growth, and how grading frameworks can best reflect true understanding and mastery.



PERSONALIZED LEARNING & INSTRUCTIONS

Share your ideas on how instruction can adapt to meet the unique learning paces, styles, and strengths of individual students so no child is left behind.



THE AI ETHICS CHALLENGE

Give us your input on how our schools should navigate, manage, and constructively approach the rise of Artificial Intelligence tools in the classroom.



CAREER PATHWAYS & REAL- WORLD LEARNING

Help us think about how to best connect classroom experiences with future careers, technical pathways, internships, and local business partnerships.



STUDENT EXPECTATIONS (Attendance & Responsibility)

Share your thoughts on cultivating a positive, accountable, and supportive school culture regarding student attendance and behavior.



FAMILY PARTNERSHIP & SUPPORT

Give us your ideas on how schools and families can build stronger communication channels and work together more effectively to support children.



FACILITIES & INVESTMENT STRATEGY

Share your priorities regarding district resources, financial investments, and building upgrades to support modern safety, sustainability, and learning.



RECREATION & AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMMING

Let us know what you value most when it comes to extracurriculars, athletic programs, and summer programming for our students.



MOVING FORWARD TOGETHER

The final stop! A collaborative space to review the big ideas gathered throughout the evening and share any final, overarching feedback to help anchor the district's long-term strategy.

New

THIS SCHOOL YEAR

Updated Personal Device Policy for the School Day

Beginning this school year, Butler Area School District is updating its Personal Technology Resources Policy to provide students with more time to focus on learning, engage with their teachers and classmates, and minimize distractions during the school day.

For students in grades K-8, there is no change. Our elementary and Intermediate High School students already learn in phone-free environments, and current expectations will remain in place. In addition to cell phones, this includes all personal technology devices such as smart watches and earphones, etc.

The significant change is for students in grades 9-12. Senior High School students will now be required to keep all personal electronic devices—including cell phones, smartwatches, earbuds, AirPods, wireless headphones, Meta glasses, and other personal technology—powered off and stored away in a locker or backpack for the entire school day, including during class transitions and lunch. Personal devices may only be used after the school day ends, unless otherwise directed during extracurricular activities by a coach, advisor, or sponsor.

This updated policy is intended to create more opportunities for students to remain engaged in instruction, strengthen interpersonal connections, and maximize learning throughout the school day while continuing to teach responsible digital citizenship. Students may still bring personal devices to school, but they must remain off and out of sight during the instructional day.

As with any Board policy, violations will result in disciplinary consequences, and inappropriate use involving images, videos, or messages may also result in law enforcement involvement when required by law.

We appreciate the partnership of our students, families, and staff as we work together to create a focused, engaging, and distraction-free learning environment.

INFRASTRUCTURE UPGRADES

The Butler Area School Board has officially greenlit a comprehensive list of capital improvement projects aimed at modernizing facilities and addressing critical maintenance needs across the district. Following a strategic bond restructuring that generated new capital revenue, the board is moving forward with an infrastructure package totaling \$12 million. While most of these projects are currently in the pre-bid or assessment stages, taxpayers and students can expect to see rolling construction and facility upgrades completed over the next few years.

Elementary & Center Avenue Updates

District elementary schools and community facilities are receiving crucial infrastructure protection, heavily prioritizing weatherproofing, structural preservation, and climate control across multiple campuses:

- **Roof Replacements:** Major roofing overhauls have been approved to eliminate leaks, address water pooling, and protect the foundational integrity of Connoquenessing Elementary and Center Township Elementary. In addition, grants have been submitted to help cover the cost of roof replacement at Connoquenessing Elementary, Center Township Elementary, Northwest Elementary and Center Avenue Community School.
- **HVAC & Roofing Combos:** Broad Street Elementary will benefit from a dual-scope project addressing both its roofing needs and vital HVAC system upgrades to improve indoor air quality and modern climate control.

Secondary Updates

The Senior High School and Intermediate High School campuses are slated for a diverse array of upgrades, focusing on structural integrity, student safety, and extracurricular facilities:

- **Stadium Annex Building:** A major focus next to Art Bernardi Stadium, this facility is undergoing a comprehensive architectural assessment. The project will address significant legacy issues, including severe groundwater penetration, an outdated HVAC system, and failing plumbing, with the district evaluating whether a deep structural renovation or a total replacement is the most fiscally responsible path forward.
- **Structural & Facility Upgrades:** The Intermediate High School will undergo a necessary remediation and replacement of its exterior cement asbestos panels. In addition, necessary updates to the Senior High's restroom plumbing will be made.
- **Interior & Auxiliary Upgrades:** Student spaces will see a refresh, including cafeteria bathroom upgrades, brand-new gym bleachers, updated auditorium seating at the Intermediate High School, and new auditorium lighting at the Senior High.
- **Roofing:** Final-phase roof replacements will be executed to cover the remaining older sections of the Senior High School roof.



Present *Today.* Prepared *Tomorrow.*



A NEW LAYER OF ATTENDANCE SUPPORT: *The Countywide Attendance Court*

This year, student attendance is being made a major countywide priority under the direction of Butler County President Judge Yeager.

Judge Yeager is establishing a dedicated Attendance Court for the county. This specialized court is being introduced to provide families with a stronger, more focused layer of support than traditional magisterial district courts. The primary goal of the Attendance Court is to offer additional targeted interventions and supportive resources to families struggling with truancy. However, because attendance is vital to a child's future, the court will also carry potential consequences if truancy issues remain unresolved.



UNDERSTANDING THE THRESHOLDS:

Chronic Absence vs. Truancy

It is important for families to understand how school absences are tracked under Pennsylvania guidelines.



Chronic Absenteeism (10% or More):

This looks at a student's total missed days—both excused and unexcused.

As a reminder of the guidelines established last school year, students in grades K-8 who are chronically absent will be required to demonstrate content proficiency in order to be promoted to the next grade level (unless a qualifying mitigating circumstance is documented).



Habitual Truancy (6 Unexcused Days):

Truancy focuses strictly on *unexcused* absences.

By state definition, a student is considered "habitually truant" once they accumulate six (6) or more unexcused absences at any point during the current school year. This is the threshold that triggers formal attendance improvement plans and potential referral to the new county Attendance Court.



The Importance of Turning in Documentation

Because the distinction between an excused and unexcused absence is so critical to preventing truancy, communication is key.

Please make sure to submit written excuse notes and medical/doctor notes whenever they are available. Promptly turning in this documentation ensures your child's records are accurate, helps avoid unnecessary truancy status, and ensures the school is aware of any health-related needs.



We Are Here to Help Break Down the Barriers

We recognize that unique life circumstances and hidden barriers—whether related to transportation, health, or personal hardships—can sometimes make getting to school a challenge.

Our goal is to support your family before truancy becomes an academic or legal issue. If there are barriers preventing your child from attending school, please contact your child's school principal immediately. By reaching out early, our school teams can work directly with you to identify the root causes of the absences, coordinate community resources, and build a collaborative plan to help you resolve those barriers. Let's work together to ensure every student is present, supported, and positioned to succeed.



COLLABORATIVE EXCELLENCE

Join Our Curriculum Advisory Committee

As we launch into a new school year, the Butler Area School District remains committed to providing educational programs that are rigorous, relevant, and aligned with the highest standards of excellence. To ensure our coursework continuously meets the needs of our students, we rely heavily on the diverse perspectives of our community.

We are currently seeking dedicated parents, guardians, staff members, and community representatives to serve on our Curriculum Advisory Committee. While we have core members who help guide this process, we are always in need of additional volunteers to bring fresh insights and voices to the table. If you are passionate about supporting student achievement and shaping the future of our schools, we want to hear from you.

The Vital Role of the Committee

The Curriculum Advisory Committee serves an essential function in evaluating and recommending updates to our district's educational framework. Members engage in a collaborative review process, working directly alongside educators and administrators to:

Analyze instructional materials and current resources.

Assess the overall effectiveness of our existing curricula.

Consider educational best practices, state standards, and real-world student learning outcomes.

Provide data-driven recommendations for continuous improvement.

Through open dialogue, the committee's work ensures a well-rounded curriculum that prepares BASD students for lifelong learning and future success.

GET INVOLVED!

To maintain consistency and momentum in our reviews, interested individuals must be willing to attend all four committee sessions throughout the school year.

If you are ready to collaborate and make a lasting impact on our students' academic journey, please click the link or scan the QR code below to submit your information using our volunteer portal.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership in ensuring a high-quality education for all BASD students.



**BASD Curriculum
Advisory Committee
Interest Form**



SHARED FOUNDATION

Unique Identities

OUR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL THEMES

At Butler Area School District, we believe that education is not one-size-fits-all. While all seven of our elementary schools share the same foundational curriculum and educational resources, each individual building has developed its own unique identity and vision, or "school theme."

These specialized focus plans were developed using collaborative, human-centered design sessions with staff, students, and families, ensuring that our schools directly reflect and empower the diverse communities they serve. By grounding standard classroom concepts in real-world context and hands-on experiences, these themes act as an "educational engine"—creating vibrant hubs where our youngest scholars are genuinely excited to learn and grow every day.

Elementary Themes

- **Broad Street Elementary School** – A Community-Centered School
- **Center Township Elementary School** – Center for Creative Thinking & Arts
- **Connoquenessing Elementary School** – An Outdoor Appreciation Campus
- **Emily Brittain Elementary School** – Community Partnership & Demonstration School | BOOST
- **McQuiston Elementary School** – Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math
- **Northwest Elementary School** – Wonders of Work
- **Summit Elementary School** – Community Agricultural Partnership at Summit

Get Involved!

Our specialized elementary themes thrive on a full circle of support from our incredible community. Whether you are a parent with a unique skill set, a local business owner looking to collaborate, or a neighbor eager to volunteer, we want your voice at the table.



If you are interested in supporting these initiatives, please reach out directly to your school's principal to explore current volunteer openings, advisory opportunities, or community partnership projects.

Scan the QR code or [click here to learn more about our district elementary initiatives.](#)

BRINGING LEARNING TO LIFE

Broad Street Elementary:

A Community- Centered School

Broad Street has a vibrant, community-centered theme. By weaving vital local resources directly into daily instruction, Broad Street fosters a 21st-century, joyful learning environment dedicated to cultivating the whole child. Broad Street thrives on five core pillars; Urban Gardens, local Career promotion, Active Parent Engagement, Learner Leadership and Staff Change Agent Mindset.



Center Township Elementary:

Center for Creative Thinking & Arts

Center Township focuses on active learning that stretches beyond traditional textbooks. Its program encourages students to explore their personal strengths, collaborate on interactive projects, and take ownership of their educational journey from an early age.



Connoquenessing Elementary:

An Outdoor Appreciation Campus

Connoquenessing stands out for its specialized focus on nature-centered education. By regularly transitioning lessons in science, math, and reading into the environment, the school uses its natural surroundings as a powerful tool for active discovery and environmental stewardship.



Emily Brittain Elementary:

Community Partnership & Demonstration School | BOOST

Located in the heart of Butler's cultural district, Emily Brittain operates as a Community Partnership and Demonstration School focused on the whole child. Its unique BOOST (Building On Our Strengths Together) theme utilizes flexible, vibrant spaces—like an interactive STEAM hub with brainstorming whiteboard tables—and prioritizes deep, family-driven engagement.



McQuiston Elementary:

Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Math

Students at McQuiston Elementary experience an inclusive, cross-curricular environment where STEAM builds curiosity and creativity while having fun. Learning is most meaningful when students have freedom to make choices, ask questions, and engage in productive struggle — thinking, communicating, building, failing, and succeeding.



Northwest Elementary:

Wonders of Work

Northwest features a unique career-readiness lens designed specifically for primary learners. Through age-appropriate exploration, students are exposed to various professions, industries, and fields of study, helping them connect what they learn in the classroom to the broader workforce.



Summit Elementary:

Community Agricultural Partnership at Summit

Taking full advantage of its expansive surrounding acreage, Summit connects core curriculum directly to hands-on agricultural and environmental education. Students discover the fundamentals of plant science, soil health, animal husbandry and sustainability through active projects on the school grounds.



INTERMEDIATE HIGH SCHOOL *Greenhouse*

At Butler Intermediate High School, learning is growing beyond the classroom.

The new greenhouse at IHS is giving students an opportunity to explore agriculture through hands-on, real-world experiences. As part of the District's expanding agricultural education program, the greenhouse complements the school's new Agriculture Lab, creating a space where students can learn about plants, growing systems, sustainability, and the science behind agriculture.

**The greenhouse is more than a place to grow plants—
it's a place to grow curiosity, skills, and new possibilities.**

Students can apply concepts from science and other subjects in a practical setting while developing an understanding of where food comes from, how plants grow, and the many careers connected to agriculture and environmental science. The greenhouse also builds on Butler Area School District's commitment to providing students with meaningful experiences that connect learning to the world around them.

The IHS Ag Lab and greenhouse represent an exciting investment in agricultural education and give students the chance to learn by doing. From growing plants to exploring hydroponics and other agricultural systems, students are discovering that agriculture is about much more than farming—it's science, technology, innovation, business, and sustainability.





EXTENDED MATH AT THE IHS

Beginning in the 2026-2027 school year, 8th-grade students will benefit from a new approach to mathematics instruction. Eighth grade math will now be scheduled in an 80-minute instructional block rather than a traditional single-period class. This change puts 8th grade in line with our current 6th and 7th grade configurations.

The extended block will provide teachers and students with more time to engage deeply with mathematical concepts, ask questions, practice new skills, and apply learning through problem-solving and collaborative activities.

Block scheduling reduces transitions and creates opportunities for a wider variety of instructional strategies, including hands-on learning, small-group instruction, targeted intervention, and meaningful mathematical discourse. Most importantly, the additional instructional time will allow students to slow down, think critically, and develop a deeper understanding of mathematics.

This change reflects our continued commitment to providing learning experiences that are responsive to student needs and designed to support strong academic growth.

LEARN. CONNECT. EXPERIENCE.

Tornado XP

Earn Credit Beyond the Classroom with Tornado XP

This school year brings an exciting new way for our students to learn, grow, and connect with our community. Launching this fall, *Tornado XP* is an innovative learning course that allows students in grades 10–12 to earn high school credit through real-world experiences that take place entirely outside the traditional classroom walls.

Directly aligned with our Portrait of the Graduate framework, Tornado XP recognizes that some of the most meaningful learning occurs through hands-on exploration, service, leadership, and applied practice.



REAL COMMUNITY EXPERIENCES

Students step beyond the classroom to engage in authentic learning through local organizations.



MEANINGFUL PARTNERSHIPS

Your time and expertise make a lasting impact on students and strengthen our community.



PREPARING THE NEXT GENERATION

Students build real-world skills that prepare them for college, careers, and life beyond high school.

How Tornado XP Works

Unlike standard classes, Tornado XP is entirely optional and does not require traditional course scheduling. All eligible students will receive a comprehensive overview of the program early in the fall semester, after which they can choose whether or not to participate.

Once enrolled, students navigate the program by earning "Experience Points" (XP) through flexible, bite-sized opportunities:

- **Microcredentials:** Students complete short, approved learning experiences hosted by our community partners, including local businesses, nonprofits, government agencies, arts organizations, healthcare providers, and higher education institutions.
- **Active Learning:** Every experience requires active, hands-on participation. Students gather evidence of their learning and document a thoughtful reflection in a personalized digital portfolio.
- **Self-Paced Exploration:** Students work at their own pace throughout the school year, choosing the pathways and partnerships that match their personal interests and future aspirations. Students may choose to complete the experiences all in one year or during their Sophomore, Junior and Senior years.

The Capstone & Honors Credit

Throughout the year, students will demonstrate growth across core graduate competencies. At the conclusion of the program, participants will present a Capstone Portfolio that highlights their experiences, reflects on their growth, and maps out connections to their broader academic, career, and life goals.

Upon successful completion of the program requirements, students will earn 1.0 honors-weighted elective credit. Tornado XP is an incredible opportunity for our high schoolers to step out into the community, build professional networks, and receive academic recognition for their real-world achievements.

INTRODUCING the **MEDED** PATHWAY

*Launching
this fall!*

We are pleased to officially announce the launch of our new Healthcare Pathways Career Readiness Program (MedEd) this fall!

Developed through a strategic partnership between the Butler Area School District, Butler County Community College (BC3), and the Independence Health System, this initiative establishes a direct school-to-work pipeline into the healthcare sector.

The MedEd program is specifically designed to provide students with immersive, real-world exposure to high-demand clinical, administrative, and support careers while proactively addressing regional workforce shortages.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE AND HIGHLIGHTS

The MedEd pathway is structured as a comprehensive two-year experience that redefines the traditional learning environment:



GRADE 11 (YEAR 1)

In addition to their traditional high school coursework, students begin a series of state-approved pre-apprenticeship courses in conjunction with BC3. Students will also complete the courses Medical Terminology and Introduction to Healthcare through BC3 during their program coursework. Operating on an alternating A-day/B-day schedule, half of the student cohort will attend classes at the Senior High School, while the other half report to the hospital. Students will rotate through five distinct hospital departments, combining professional job shadowing with practical, hands-on experiences.



GRADE 12 (YEAR 2)

After completing 120 foundational hours during their junior year, seniors will transition into advanced work-based learning. Utilizing morning or afternoon scheduling blocks, students will function as active staff members at the hospital, dedicating their time to direct employment or advanced technical training hours.

PREPARING TODAY. PRACTICING TOMORROW.

MEDED PATHWAY



ACADEMIC & PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS

Through this employer-aligned partnership, participating students will secure tangible professional advantages, including:



COLLEGE CREDITS

Earned directly through Butler County Community College (BC3).



INDUSTRY CERTIFICATIONS

Opportunity to secure recognized credentials.



CAREER ADVANCEMENT

Direct pathways into immediate, family-sustaining employment of registered healthcare apprenticeship programs upon graduation.

COHORT & COMMUNITY IMPACT

Our inaugural cohort of 20 students will begin their coursework this upcoming semester. The district anticipates welcoming 20 additional students into this highly connected, industry-aligned pathway each year, allowing local youth to secure an exceptional education and launch a meaningful career right here in our community.

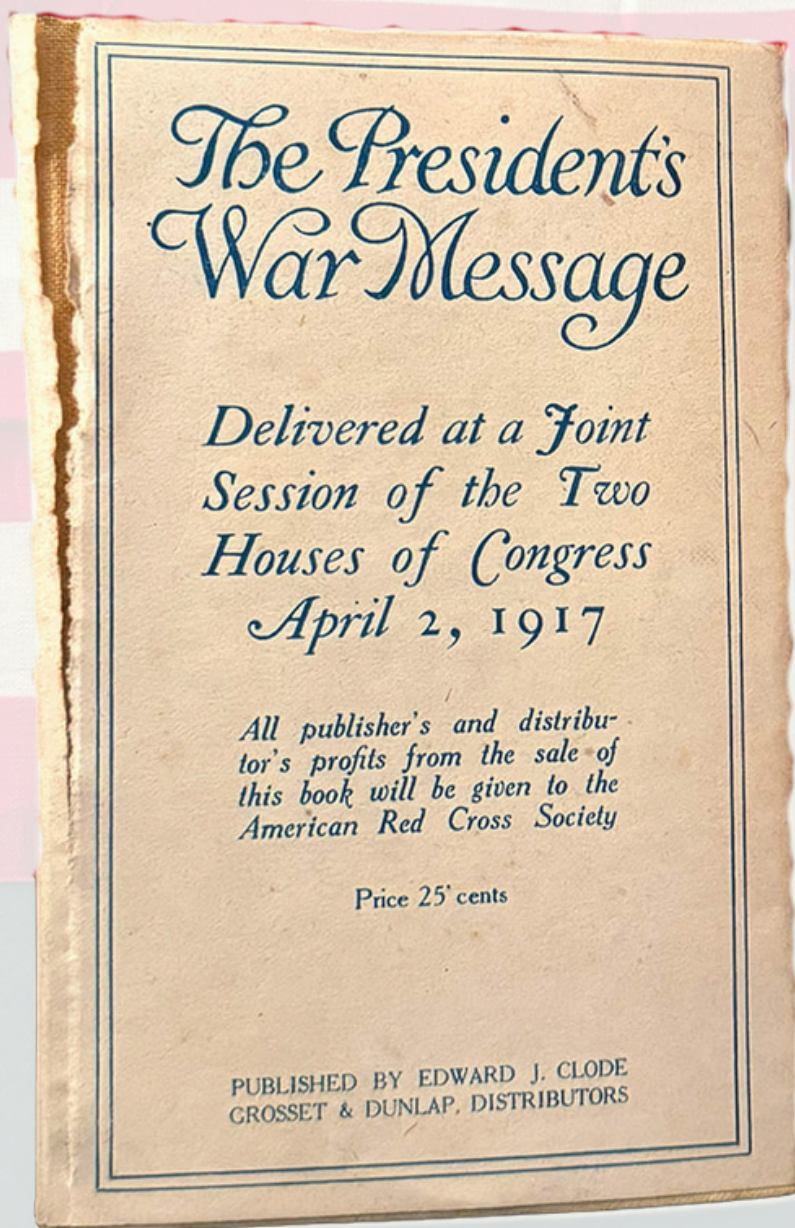


KEEPING HISTORY ALIVE: EXPLORE THE DIGITIZED 1917 TIME CAPSULE

As we begin a new school year, we also invite you to take a look back at an incredible piece of Butler Area School District history. Last year, the district recovered a 1917 time capsule from the cornerstone of the former Butler Middle School, capturing the attention of our entire community.

Discovered during preparations for the building's sale, the copper time capsule was carefully removed after local historian Bill May alerted the district to its existence. Students, staff, and community members gathered to witness its opening and discover artifacts sealed inside more than a century ago.

The capsule contained newspapers, coins, photographs, a Bible, school handbooks, and other documents that offered a fascinating glimpse into life in Butler in 1917. It also included a dedication from the district's superintendent, highlighting the community's enduring commitment to education.



Scan the QR code
or click to view the
contents of the 1917
Time capsule on
our website.

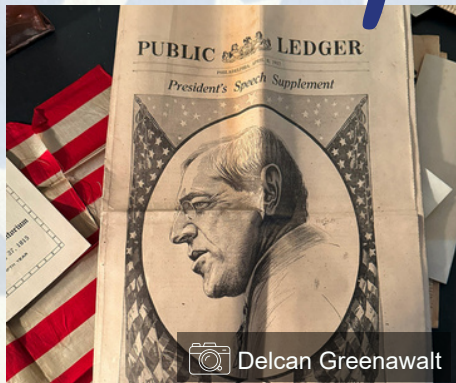


 Ryan Maire



 Ryan Maire

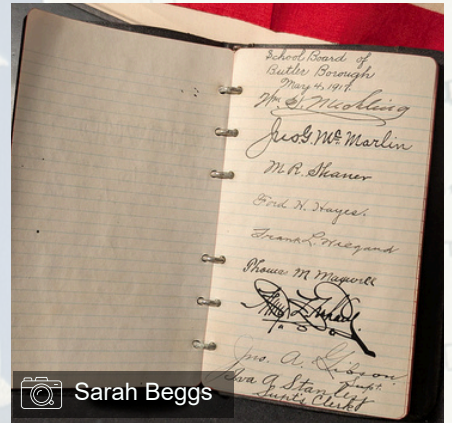
1917 Time Capsule



Delcan Greenawalt



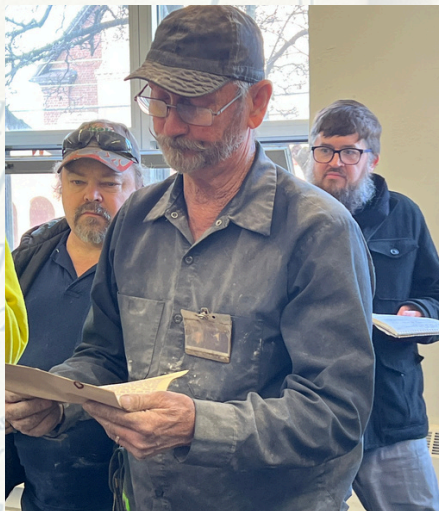
Gracyln Gump



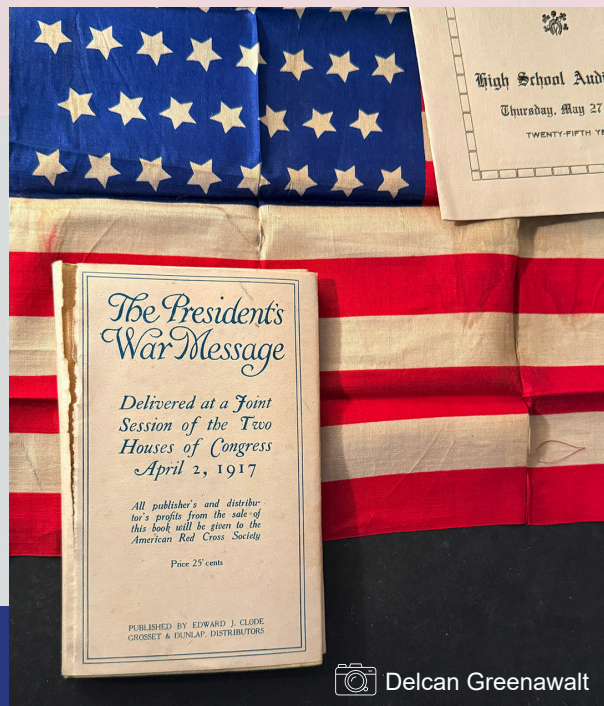
Sarah Beggs



Sophia Kingsley



Sophia Kingsley



Delcan Greenawalt

NAVIGATING THE AI LANDSCAPE

with Your Child



We have more questions than answers regarding AI. However, we would like to share some thoughts and strategies that resonate with us as we navigate this new frontier together.

As parents, we are witnessing a massive shift in how our children learn, interact, and think. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is no longer a futuristic concept—it is actively shaping our children's daily lives.

While AI offers incredible opportunities, it also introduces unique challenges to their privacy, cognitive growth, and self-identity.

Here is what the latest research says, along with some practical ideas to help your child navigate this digital world safely and thoughtfully.



OUR GOAL

Empower our children to use AI as a helpful tool—while protecting their privacy, strengthening their minds, and preserving their unique voices and creativity.



PROTECT
PRIVACY



THINK
CRITICALLY



USE AI
WISELY



STAY TRUE
TO THEMSELVES

1 WHERE IS YOUR CHILD'S INFORMATION GOING?

Every time our kids chat with an AI bot, use a smart speaker, or interact with an educational app, they leave behind digital footprints. This process is known as data harvesting.

The Risk: Tech companies frequently use this information to train future models or target children with hyper-personalized advertisements. While the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) provides guardrails for kids under 13, teens ages 13–17 lack federal consent requirements regarding data tracking.



PARENT STRATEGY:

Sit down with your child and explore the privacy settings of the AI tools they use. Turn off features that allow their data to be used for “training models,” and restrict location access. Remind them that nothing typed into an AI chatbot is truly private.

2 WHEN AI HELPS LEARNING—AND WHEN IT GETS IN THE WAY

When it helps: High-quality, purpose-built educational AI tools act like a patient tutor. They don't just hand over answers. Instead, they provide hints, ask probing questions, and force the brain to do the heavy lifting.

When it gets in the way: General-purpose chatbots trained on the open internet frequently present inaccurate information or simply give kids the answer outright. Relying on AI to do the work bypasses the actual process of learning, leading to a dangerous dependence that can weaken student-teacher dynamics.



PARENT STRATEGY:

Institute a “Think First” rule at home. Before looking up an answer using technology, challenge your child to spend a few moments trying to solve it or brainstorm independently. Remind them that the brain grows from effort, not speed.

3 BUILDING CRITICAL REASONING SKILLS

Reasoning is the process of using information to form independent ideas and conclusions. Because AI tools are optimized to deliver polished answers in seconds, they frequently hide the messy, essential steps of problem-solving.

When kids get into the habit of saying “because the AI said so,” they skip the vital mental exercises of gathering evidence, weighing alternatives, and detecting bias.



PARENT STRATEGY:

Teach your child how to “prompt” AI to be a partner rather than a ghostwriter. Instead of asking an AI to “Write a summary of Romeo and Juliet,” guide them to prompt it with: “Act as a debate coach. Ask me questions about Romeo and Juliet to help me form my own thesis statement.”

4 HELPING KIDS FIND (AND TRUST) THEIR OWN VOICE

A child's unique “voice”—their distinct word choices, style, and perspective—is central to building their identity.

When AI handles their writing or tells them what to think about a topic, the line between the child's own thoughts and a machine's output becomes blurred. Research shows that relying too heavily on AI tools for creative processes can actually shrink student agency and stifle natural creativity.



PARENT STRATEGY:

Praise originality over perfection. Celebrate your child's raw, unpolished ideas. Furthermore, don't rush to fill their quiet time with screens; those moments of boredom are precisely when kids explore their own feelings and figure out what they care about. Ask for their opinions on real-world topics before they have a chance to look up what an AI chatbot thinks.



SOURCES & FURTHER READING

- The Brookings Institution (2026):
 - What to notice: When AI helps learning, and when it gets in the way
 - Building reasoning skills in an AI world
 - Where kids' information goes in an AI world
- ConnectSafely: Raising Thoughtful Kids in an AI World
- Federal Trade Commission (FTC): Complying with COPPA and Protecting Consumer Privacy
- Center for Humane Technology: The AI Dilemma: Youth Development and Digital Well-being



BUTLER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT

FOOD SERVICE WELLNESS & ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Join the BASD Food Service Wellness & Advisory Committee

BASD parents, students, staff members and community members are invited to be a part of our Food Service Wellness & Advisory Committee.

There will be two meetings each school year focused on meal planning and initiating the school wellness policy. The tentative dates for the 2026-2027 school year are below:

- October 12, 2026
- March 8, 2027

The Butler Area School District recognizes that student wellness and proper nutrition are related to students' physical well-being, growth, development, and readiness to learn. The School Board is committed to providing a school environment that promotes student wellness, proper nutrition, nutrition education, and regular physical activity as part of the total learning experience. In a healthy school environment, students will learn about and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices that can improve student achievement.

The district plans to engage students, parents/guardians, teachers, food service professionals, health professionals, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity practices which impact students, families, and staff.

If you would like to get involved, please reach out to Mackenzie Heranic, BASD Assistant Business Manager, at mackenzie.heranic@basdk12.org.

THE TUFF TORNADO

PRESENTED BY THE GOLDEN TORNADO SCHOLASTIC FOUNDATION, INC. **RUN**

Slime Run

Balance Beams

Foam Machine

Hay Bale Climb

Color Run

Rope Bridge

Pipe Crawl

AND MORE!



**A 2-MILE FUN RUN
WITH 22 OBSTACLES
FOR ALL AGES!**

**SATURDAY, SEPT 26, 2026
10AM - 1PM ALAMEDA PARK**

REGISTER NOW AT

GOLDENTORNADOSCHOLASTICFOUNDATION.ORG

PRE-REGISTER BY SEPTEMBER 6 AND GET A FREE T-SHIRT!

PRE-REGISTRATION PRICING:

AGES 5-12 \$15

13 AND UP \$20

FAMILY (UP TO SIX) \$50

RACE DAY PRICING:

AGES 5-12 \$20

13 AND UP \$25

FAMILY (UP TO SIX) \$55

FOOD TRUCKS AND A 50-50 RAFFLE!

The Golden Tornado Scholastic Foundation, Inc. is a non-profit that provides support to the students of the Butler Area School District. Proceeds from The Tuff Tornado Run benefit Creative Teaching Grants, The Kids' Weekend Backpack Program, scholarships for graduating seniors, and much-needed technology.



The Golden Tornado
Scholastic Foundation, Inc.

To register, click the flyer or visit
<https://runsignup.com/Race/PA/Butler/TuffTornadoRun>.
Register by Sept. 6 to guarantee a free race t-shirt.

The Golden Tornado Scholastic Foundation, Inc.

WHAT BEGAN in the fall of 1990 as a small group of concerned alumni interested in replacing the condemned bleachers at the Butler Senior High School stadium, in time became The Golden Tornado Scholastic Foundation, Inc. The Scholastic Foundation is a non-profit, public supported organization administered by a volunteer Board of Directors whose mission is to support excellence in the Butler Area School District. Financial support is generated through grants, fundraisers, and contributions from businesses and individuals.

SCHOLARSHIPS

The Golden Tornado Scholastic Foundation, Inc., awarded \$36,000 in direct scholarships and facilitated \$156,469 in private scholarships to the Butler Class of 2026.

CREATIVE TEACHING GRANTS

In the last five years, The Golden Tornado Scholastic Foundation, Inc. has awarded \$91,016 in Creative Teaching Grants. These grants support the innovative work of BASD faculty and have impacted more than 7,800 students over the past five years!

FINE ARTS & BEYOND (FAB) SHOWCASE

Each spring The Golden Tornado Scholastic Foundation, Inc. hosts The Fine Arts & Beyond (FAB) Showcase. This community-wide event showcases the artistic work and musical talent of Butler Area School District students and professional community artists. Proceeds from FAB help The Golden Tornado Scholastic Foundation, Inc. provide funding to a number of programs, including Creative Teaching Grants, Kids' Weekend Backpack Program, scholarships for graduating seniors with financial need and classroom technology.

KIDS' WEEKEND BACKPACK PROGRAM

The Golden Tornado Scholastic Foundation, Inc. and our school community have come together to help fight hunger by supplying weekend food for students in need. These students receive child-friendly snacks and easily prepared meals each week. Monetary and food donations are accepted to help support the program.

TUFF TORNADO RUN

Save the date for the Tuff Tornado Run on Saturday, September 26, 2026 from 10am-1pm at Alameda Park. This fun run with 22 obstacles is great for all ages. Register online at GoldenTornadoScholasticFoundation.org. Register by September 6 to receive a free t-shirt!

GoldenTornadoScholasticFoundation.org



Wishing everyone
a wonderful
school year!

