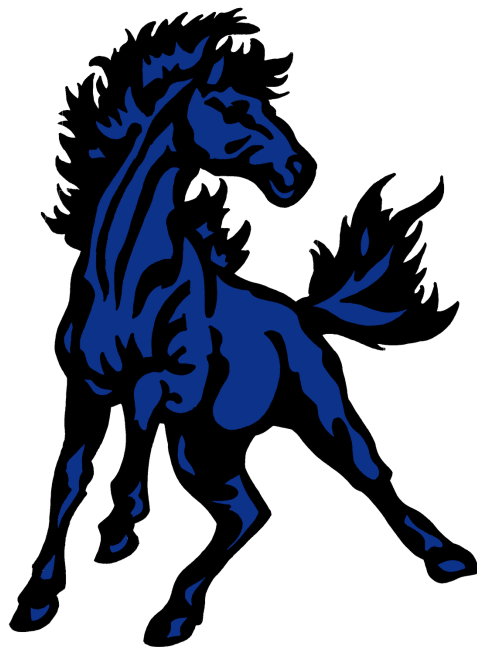


**BUFFALO LAKE-
HECTOR- STEWART
2026-2027**



**PARAPROFESSIONAL
HANDBOOK**

Board Approved August 17, 2026

THANK YOU FOR BEING PART OF BLHS!

- At BLHS and in the classrooms we work as a TEAM.
- Your job as a para is EXTREMELY important! You will be making a huge impact on each and every student.
- Please make sure to always show up on time and leave at the appropriate time.
- At BLHS we strive for open communication. If you have any ideas or suggestions for the students you work with throughout the school year, We would love to hear them but keep in mind we still need to uphold the goals and services within each student's IEP.
- If at any time, you have a concern with a student or staff member please contact your supervisor so we can address the concern promptly so you can have a great work day!
- We are all "teachers" for our students and will work together as a team, all working toward the same goal.
- Discuss the students with their case manager and discuss what their needs are and how to meet their needs best in the classroom.
- Lastly, please respect the classroom teacher's instructional and planning time. If you need to discuss items with them, please email and schedule a time.

Work Hours & Absences

- Your contract hours are either:
7:30AM-3:30PM or 7:15AM-3:15PM.
- If you ever know you will be absent, you must notify the office and your direct supervisor as soon as you are able.
- If you have a pre-planned absence please notify the office and your supervisor as soon as you are able.
- Make sure to follow the school procedure for being absent including entering your leave into TimeClock in a timely manner.

Dress Code

All staff members project an image to the community and to students about professionalism of the district. During student/parent contact days, employees shall adhere to a professional standard of dress and shall be neat and clean in appearance. On non-student or non-parent contact days, casual attire is acceptable. Decisions regarding professional attire will be based on guidelines listed below:

- All staff must exercise good judgment in their choice of professional appearance for work or work related activities by always appearing in a manner:
 - That is appropriate to the situation;
 - That provides appropriate role modeling for students;
 - That promotes a working and learning environment that is free from unnecessary disruption, and
 - That is conducive to high student and staff performance.
- Some educational activities will require exceptions to the above guidelines. Examples include, but are not limited to, field days, field trips, and science labs.
- Items of clothing should be clean and in good condition. Examples of unacceptable attire include, but are not limited to, gym shorts, sheer, tight or low cut clothing, sweatpants.

Friday's are designated as "School Spirit" days. Wear your MUSTANG Gear!

iPad

All staff have iPads. Please ONLY use these iPads when necessary. Do not utilize these when you are sitting in classrooms with students while they are learning or engaged in instructional time. These are for you to use to engage with student learning or for your breaks, clocking in/out etc.

Cell Phone

No cellphones. If you ever need your phone out, please let your supervisor know at the beginning of your day if necessary so they are aware.

(Mrs. Kramer or Mrs. Winkelmann)

Confidentiality

As a para you will be exposed to information that affects the privacy of students and parents. Legally you and all school personnel are required by law to keep this information confidential and protect the rights of our students.

*Please do not at any time discuss other students with staff or students in open spaces (hallways, office space, other classrooms).

Keeping Data

You may be asked at times to collect data. Do this with integrity and validity. If you are unsure how, ask questions, take notes and more is always ok!

Student Reminders

Assume ability!

- Every child is capable! Do not assume that a child will never do something.
- Set high expectations for every student.
- Assume that every child can hear and understand what you are saying.
- Be patient...even when it is hard. We don't always know why a student is not being successful, struggling...
Be the reason they have a great day!

Independence is key

- We want every student to be as independent as possible. That means not doing things for them.
- There might be times where you need to sit back and not do anything because a student is being independent. That is ok!
Be available to others...walk around the room and be a helper!
- Don't ever just "sit" and wait for someone to need help.

Prompting Hierarchy

0	Independent	No assistance provided
1	Gestural	Pointing or nodding
2	Visual	Pictures, positional prompts
3	Verbal	Tell or ask student
4	Modeling	Demonstrating first

5	Partial Physical	Tapping or nudging
6	Full physical	Physically assistant

Accommodations vs. Modifications

Accommodations:

An accommodation is a way to help students learn the same material or take the same test in a different way.

Accommodation Examples:

- Extended time for assignments or tests
- Large print
- Highlighted or underlined notes
- Preferential seating
- Manipulatives
- Allowing verbal responses
- Space for movements or breaks
- Visuals and visual cues

Modifications:

A modification is a change to what the student is expected to learn.

Modification Examples:

- Pass/no pass option
- Fewer questions
- Lower level text
- Adjusted curriculum
- Simplified vocabulary
- Alternate projects

4 Functions of Behavior & Why they occur

“Understanding why a behavior is happening is the first step and most important part of helping a student overcome the challenging behavior.”

Behavior is a way of communication, these 4 functions allow us to determine why behavior occurs:

1. **Attention**- Student is trying to gain someone's attention whether positive or negative (the student could be trying to gain the teachers attention or their peers).
2. **Escape**- Student is trying to escape from a room, class or activity.
3. **Tangible**- Student is trying to gain access to a tangible item (like an ipad or toy).
4. **Sensory Needs**- This can happen anytime, especially when the student is anxious or excited.

Behavior Intervention Plans

- BIPs (SPED) are legal documents that must be followed.
- BIPs are written based on an FBA (functional behavior analysis), which identifies the main cause of the challenging behavior.
- The BIP focuses on teaching alternative behavior that replaces the challenging behavior.

Recess

You will at times be asked to supervise recess, here are the keys to being an active supervisor:

- Move Around- make sure you are actively walking around the entire space seeing what all students are doing
- Engaging- make sure you are enjoying your time with students, make comments on what they are doing, compliment them
- Communicate
Communicate clearly to students your expectations, redirect them when needed, and reinforce good behavior when deserved
- Safety
Know how to respond to a safety situation
- Be proactive
Make sure all equipment is safe, or identify if something isn't properly working or broken and make sure students are aware
*Also notify custodial staff if needed for repairs.

Playground Rules:

The following is detailed in the student handbook.

All elementary students will go outside for recess unless the temperature reaches -6 below (or discretion of administration).

Playground Rules

General Rules

1. Be respectful to all adults and students
2. Use appropriate language
3. No Electronic Games or Music Players
4. No Wrestling
5. A patrol or adult will retrieve balls from the parking lot

Consequences

1. Warning (minor offense)
2. Time-Out
3. Sent to Principal's office

Sport Court

1. Rocks stay on the ground
3. No Running Games
4. Catch may be played on the grass
5. Kickball may be played under Patrol or Adult Supervision
6. All 4-Square or Gaga Ball type games follow the official rules
7. Sit on the Swings
8. Don't pull students or hang on the monkey bars
9. Students may sit/play on the hill but may not go into the parking lot.
10. Slide down the snow hill feet first and on your bottom.

Football/Baseball Playground

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Rocks and wood chips stay on the ground | 5. No balls on equipment |
| 2. Go down the slide on your bottom | 6. Go down slides and up ladders |
| 3. Don't go between street and trees | 7. No running on equipment |
| 4. Don't go in the parking lot to get balls or equipment | 8. Stay out of other grades' area |
| | 9. No tackling at any time |
| | 10. No candy or gum |

Lunchroom

You will at times be asked to supervise the lunchroom. All students will eat in the main cafeteria this year!

- Allow students opportunities to socialize with their friends.
- Keep students in their seats.
- No moving table to table after they have been seated.
- No sharing food
- You have the right to move students to a new seat when necessary.
- MS- no iPads or Cell phone use during lunch.
Can use iPads during recess.

HS- Cell phones and iPads can be used during lunch times.