

Arcanum-Butler Local School District
REGULAR
BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING UPDATE
September 10, 2026

Present: Mr. Norris, Mr. Fearon, Mr. Moore, Mr. Trask, Mrs. Zimmer

Absent:

APPROVED:

- Financial Report, as presented by the Treasurer. (vote – all yea)
- Amended FY27 appropriations and estimated resources as presented by the Treasurer. (vote – all yea)
- General Fund transfer to Preschool (020-0603) in the amount of \$40,000. (vote – all yea)
- In-state tuition rate of \$8214.93 for the 2026-2027 school year, as set by the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce. (vote – all yea)
- 20 foot permanent utility easement to the Village of Arcanum for the purpose of underground utilities along the West edge of Arcanum Booster Stadium. (vote – all yea)
- Easement agreement with Big Ridge LTD for the purpose of ingress and egress to Arcanum Booster Stadium. (vote – all yea)
- Donation(s): \$5000 from the Arcanum Athletic Boosters for athletic uniforms; \$5000 from the Arcanum Athletic Boosters for annual Hudl subscription; \$2000 from the Arcanum Athletic Boosters for HS Cheerleading; \$4,500 from Cory and Mara Farmer for football program; \$2500 from the Doug Millikin fund for football meals; \$2500 from the Doug Millikin fund for the track program; \$1000 from the Darke County Foundation for Drone Club. (vote – all yea)
- Expenditure not to exceed, \$12,189 for purchase of a Kawasaki Mule from Rehmert Cycle Sales & Service, Inc. (vote – all yea)
- Participate and authorize the Southwestern Ohio Educational Purchasing council to advertise and receive bids on behalf of the district for the purchase of 1 or more busses. (vote – all yea)
- Usage agreement with Arcanum Youth Basketball for the 2026-2027 school year. (vote – all yea)
- 8th grade trip to Washington D.C. May 25-28, 2027. (vote – all yea)
- Brian Pohlman taking the FFA members to the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis IN, October 21-October 24, 2026. (vote – all yea)
- Resignation of Michael Morris effective September 9, 2026, from the café. (vote – all yea)
- Hire Sara Baker as Special Education teacher for the MD unit classroom. (vote – all yea)
- Hire the following as classified subs: Linda Baker, Sandra Baker, Kristie Stump, Sara Waldo and Brooklyn Tomlin. (vote – all yea)
- Hire the following as classified staff, effective upon board approval: Rachel Brown – Café. (vote – all yea)
- Caleb Means as substitute school crossing guard for the 2026-2027 school year at a rate of \$35 per day. (vote – all yea)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

None

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

- Accolades and Announcements
 - ◆ I want to thank the entire staff for efforts to prepare for the start of the year. It is great to have our students back in the building with us!
 - ◆ It's been a great start for the Trojans this fall in the WOAC. As a reminder, you can view team standings and statistics for the Trojans and other WOAC teams at the WOAC website. <http://www.woacsports.com>
 - ◆ Total K-12 Enrollment – 1083. The decrease in enrollment is primarily due to the small incoming kindergarten class and losing a larger graduating class. The smallest class in the EL is this year's KDG class at 63 and the largest class is the 4th grade class

at 88 students. All of the middle school class sizes are 80+ with the 6th grade size at 91 students. Two of the four HS classes are in the 90's with the senior class being the largest with 93. Enrollment Trend: 2025-2026 – 1105; 2024-2025 – 1099; 2023-2024 – 1092; 2022-2023 – 1096; 2021-2022 – 1068.

- **School Operations and Updates**

Booster Stadium Update – Following our regular progress meeting, we walked the project to identify punch list items. Additionally, I had Kevin Flory meet us out on the SW side of the stadium grounds to further discuss a drainage problem near the new band area. I think we have some solutions that include tying some drainage into the existing main tile. And it looks fairly easy and inexpensive. The other idea that was suggested would be to add some red twig dogwood hedges. This would help with drainage (absorb and slow down the flow of water), provide a nice aesthetic piece to the project, and also serve as a barrier to Phil's property which will be used for storage of trailers, RV's, etc.... Shira from Garmann Miller highly suggests mulch, while Flory and Ryan (LevelMB) would do rocks. The rocks would be more permanent and less to maintain. Thoughts on the hedges and use of rocks or mulch?

- ♦ Policy Review – upcoming in October
 - Initial thoughts on e-bikes policy.
- ♦ I attended the county Business Advisory Council meeting led by our county ESC Supt., Jim Atchley. We discussed this year's objectives which included a continued collaboration with the following events: Manufacturing Day, Darke County Job Shadow Week, Impact STEM2D Conference for Women, 20 Under 20 Awards, and a Career Expo.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORTS:

- **Elementary**

- Continuous Goal #1: The district will maintain academic excellence with instruction that will support the unique educational needs of every student.
 - ♦ We are off to a great start! Thank you to the DLT members: Cassie Bixler, Sarah Loxley, and Amanda Herzog who spent a day in August helping plan goals and action plans for the upcoming year.
 - ♦ Staff participated in a meaningful professional development experience focused on collaboration, understanding, and appreciation of the many roles that contribute to the success of our school. Staff members had the opportunity to learn more about the responsibilities of colleagues across the building and spend time "walking in their shoes" to gain a deeper understanding of their day to day experience.
 - ♦ Our new staff members have made positive connections with both colleagues and students and have demonstrated a strong commitment to creating positive learning environments. They are off to a fantastic start in their classrooms. Sara Baker and Cheryl Pressly have established a routine and getting to know their students and making positive relationships with parents. Clint Neal has done a variety of activities to get to know his students and colleagues.
 - ♦ Students have begun taking the iReady online diagnostic, which provides valuable data to help teachers identify individual learning needs and personalize instruction in both reading and mathematics.
 - ♦ The Kindergarten Readiness Camp was a tremendous success, with 50 students participating. Students had the opportunity to tour the building, complete required state assessments, learn about bus safety, and become familiar with basic classroom routines and expectations. A special thank-you goes to our kindergarten teachers, Amanda Herzog, Jill Etherington, and Beth Piel, for their assistance in making the event a successful experience for our incoming kindergarten students.
 - ♦ Elementary teachers reviewed the Elementary Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP) and have begun planning lessons and learning activities aligned with the identified goals. This year's primary areas of focus include resource alignment and implementation and strengthening parent and community engagement through career exploration opportunities.

- ◆ Thank you to Erin Fout and the AELC staff for a successful start to the school year. The AELC continues to provide a welcoming and supportive environment for our youngest learners. There are still a few openings available for families interested in enrolling.
- ◆ Current enrollment: MD – 11; Kdg – 60; 1st – 75; 2nd – 82; 3rd – 77; 4th – 88. Total - 393
- Continuous Goal #2: The district will promote pride and the traditions of Arcanum-Butler Local Schools – “The Trojan Way”.
 - ◆ All students reviewed Trojan Way expectations and procedures during grade level Trojan Talks given by me. Students reviewed key characteristics of following the Trojan Way and expectations for the hallway, ELA space, restroom, bus, playground, and café.
 - ◆ Bus drivers and students completed bus evacuation drills. Students helped each other evacuate out the back and the front of the bus while the staff supervised.
 - ◆ Lifewise begins September 21, 2026.
- Continuous Goal #3: The district will provide learning opportunities that prepare students to excel in a modern society.
 - ◆ Over 100 students completed the summer learning packets to review reading and math concepts throughout the summer. Students had breakfast and extra recess for their hard work.
 - ◆ Many new families to the district attended the new student orientation on August 31. Families learned about the daily routines and procedures at Arcanum Elementary.
 - ◆ Many families attended our annual Open House on August 31. Students were able to meet their teachers and classmates.
 - ◆ Thank you to all the parent volunteers who have helped in kindergarten as the students learn the daily routines and expectations.
 - ◆ Our Kindergarten Club and PTO welcome new parents to our meetings this month to plan events and activities for the school year.

• Middle School

- Continuous Improvement Goal #1 – The district will maintain academic excellence with instruction that will support the unique educational needs of every student.
 - ◆ 5th and 6th grade staff are off and running with their intervention and enrichment groups. 5th grade students rotate to a different room each day for intervention while 6th graders will spend one week in each enrichment class before rotating to the next.
 - ◆ Students have begun the process of taking the 2026-2027 iReady diagnostic test which will allow our staff to better understand the individual needs of each student in our building. Over the next several weeks staff will begin analyzing the data and examining reports which will allow us to better understand students strengths and weaknesses and how to provide support to each Arcanum-Butler MS student.
 - ◆ Each staff spent the first several days focusing on 3 building wide goals 1) The Whole Child - getting to know each of our students and making sure we provide a safe and comfortable learning environment for our students, 2) The Trojan Way- promoting our building, district, and community culture while teaching expectations, and 3) Developing a plan to improve assessment scores across the building.
 - ◆ Each grade level will continue to work hard to communicate with our parents in hopes of keeping them informed. Every Monday each grade level will share their Parent Communication Plan via Parent Square which includes reminders to parents about assignments, assessments, and other important information. By viewing the PCP, parents can be more informed about assignments, assessments, and other important classroom needs.
- Continuous Improvement Goal #2: The district will promote pride and the traditions of Arcanum-Butler Local Schools – “The Trojan Way”.
 - ◆ Middle school students had a great start to the school year! Throughout the first week, students were respectful, attentive to staff, and did an excellent job following directions and expectations. We are proud of the positive tone they have set for the year ahead.
 - ◆ Staff spent much of the first few days promoting key components of The Trojan way. The focus of this matrix centers around student behavior, school/community expectations, and expectations in the non-instructional areas (cafe, halls, bus, etc.).

This information is the very backbone of the mission of Arcanum-Butler MS. Staff also designed classroom activities centered on teamwork, communication, and cooperation.

- ◆ Lifewise will continue to be part of Arcanum-Butler MS during the 2026-2027 school year. The 5th and 6th grade students will attend on Mondays while the 7th and 8th graders will attend on Thursdays. Lifewise will officially begin the week of September 21.
- Continuous Improvement Goal #3: The district will provide learning opportunities that prepare students to excel in a modern society.
 - ◆ Mrs. Byers has taken over for Mrs. Bowser to lead the MS Student Council. Students will be registering and creating campaign posters this week and official elections will take place on Friday, September 11
 - ◆ As a reminder, we have adjusted our 1:1 policy and procedure for the 2026-2027 school year. This year grades 5 and 6 will keep their Chromebooks at school grades 7 and 8 will continue to take them home. While we understand that today's world emphasizes technology, we are hoping that keeping computers at school will cut down on the technology issues that we have seen over the last several years.
 - ◆ Social Studies teachers, Mr. Kramer (5th), Mr. Lecklider (6th), Mrs. Miller (7th), and Mr. Troutwine (7th and 8th) are working to recognize our military and nation's history by developing lessons centered on 9/11, Constitution Day (September 17), and the Vietnam Wall experience which will take place on Thursday and Friday, September 17-18.
- Additional Notes.
 - ◆ A special thank you to all of the parents who volunteered to help with lockers during the first week of school. Lockers can be a major stressor to our younger students and having the extra hands on deck allows us to be more efficient in the mornings.
 - *Jennifer Waymire, Sarah Kuskie, Sandi Baker, Elizabeth Oliver, Allyson Binkley*
 - ◆ Thank you to Matt Macy and our transportation staff for their work during our annual bus evacuation drill which took place on Friday, September 4. Our students did a great job of paying attention and simulating emergency situations that would require a front, back, and split bus evacuation.
 - ◆ Middle School picture day was held on Wednesday, September 9. Thanks to Mrs. Parker and Handshoe Photography for organizing the event. In addition I'd like to thank our new PE teacher, Mr. Neal for giving up his space for us.
 - ◆ Mrs. Greve completed scoliosis testing for all 5th grade females and both males and females in grades 6-8.
 - ◆ Middle school enrollment: 5th – 83; 6th – 89; 7th – 80; 8th – 77; AVA – 10. Total enrollment - 339
 - ◆ This district will be conducting the first fire drill of the year on Wednesday, September 9 in accordance with Ohio law which requires schools to conduct the first drill within the first 10 days of school. In addition, Ohio Revised Code § 3737.73 states the following about school fire and safety drills:
 - *6 Fire/Evacuation Drills*
 - *3 School Safety Drills*
 - *Monthly Tornado Drills March–July while school is in session*
 - *At least 1 Fire/Evacuation OR Safety Drill every month of the school year.*
 - ◆ During our August and September staff meeting we reviewed MS protocols and procedures, evaluated new student information, and spent time with grade levels and our special education department working to ensure that the school year started smoothly.
 - ◆ Thanks to all the parents, students, and staff who attended 5th-grade and new student orientation during Open House night. Parents and students were informed of some of the new features students will experience as they enter Arcanum-Butler MS and the major differences between elementary and middle school. It was a packed house and staff stayed very busy welcoming the students back into the building.

- **High School**

- Goal #1 – The district will maintain academic excellence with instruction that will support the unique educational needs of every student.

- ◆ Mrs. Kessler, along with seniors Kamryn Martin, Brycelin Troutwine, and I helped lead freshman orientation. Together, we set expectations for the freshmen and worked to calm some of the nerves for both students and parents. The seniors did a fantastic job representing Arcanum High School.
- ◆ New Staff Orientation took place on August 26. Special thanks to John Stephens for organizing the event and to David Baker for providing additional training. We were excited to welcome Jessica Berry to the high school as she transitioned from the middle school, as well as our new Intervention Specialist, Madelyn Haney.
- ◆ During our first staff meeting of the year, I shared the vision and goals for our high school staff for the 2026–2027 school year. Our theme this year is On Purpose, With Purpose, building on last year's focus of breaking down silos, getting to know our students better, and being more creative in our teaching approaches. This year, we will continue to emphasize being creative in our approach and intentional in how we support and engage our students. We will also continue offering LifeWise at the high school on Thursdays, alongside the middle school.
- ◆ During the first week of school, I met with our student body and staff to reiterate the expectation, core values, and goals for our high school.
- Goal #2 – The district will promote pride and the traditions of Arcanum-Butler Local Schools - “The Trojan Way”.
 - ◆ During our monthly 90-minute meeting time, some sessions will be held with the entire staff, while others will take place in small groups created by teachers to better serve our students. Topics will include PBIS, College and Career Readiness, Real Life Wednesday, Serve Arcanum, Students of the Month, RTI for struggling students, content area for grade level meetings.
- Goal #3 – The district will provide learning opportunities that prepare students to excel in a modern society.
 - ◆ Thanks to David Baker for his help with the Chromebook distribution.
 - ◆ Our annual Bus Evacuation Drill took place on Friday, September 4. Thanks to Mr. Macy and Mr. Vince for organizing the event and to all the bus drivers for their continued support of school safety within the Transportation Department. Our teachers have received their emergency plan manuals. Teachers will be provided with information regarding updates throughout the year.
 - ◆ Our teachers have received their emergency plan manuals. Teachers will be provided with information regarding updates throughout the year.
 - ◆ Thanks to Mr. Vince for organizing the safety drills for the school year.
- Additional Notes:
 - ◆ Students will continue to compete in the “Clash of Classes” to promote academics, student involvement, behavior, and school spirit. At the end of the year, the winning class will receive a special lunch.
 - ◆ During the first staff meeting, we focused on making sure students with Individualized Education Plan (IEP) are receiving the accommodations and modifications they need to succeed.
 - ◆ Our Renaissance Club spoke to our freshmen, sharing advice to help them succeed in high school. Thanks to Mr. Grote, Mr. McElowney, and the Senior Renaissance speakers for a job well done.
 - ◆ Our DLT met on August 13 to review our Continuous Improvement Plan and set building goals for the 2026-2027 school year. The High School will continue to focus on elevating math scores with daily tutoring offered during Flex. We will also continue our Industrial Recognized Credentialing for freshmen, led by Mr. Grote and Mr. McElowney, and have planned opportunities for juniors to earn the Yellow Belt credential.
 - ◆ Arcanum High School utilizes Facebook, Instagram, and X.
 - ◆ Special congratulations to all our students who participated at the Great Darke County Fair! They did an outstanding job representing Arcanum High School!
 - Our cheer placed 2nd in the Gameday performance.
 - ◆ Current enrollment numbers: 9th – 85; 10th – 89; 11th – 81; 12th – 101

Adjourned at 8:14 p.m.