NEW BUFFALO AREA SCHOOLS
RETURN TO SCHOOL ROADMAP UPDATE

*Update for August 6, 2020*

**FAMILY OPTIONS FOR THE 2020-21 SCHOOL YEAR**

New Buffalo families will have two options to consider for their students when the 2020-21 school year resumes. The learning options are explained below.

- **IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION** (Provided that public health conditions allow it.)
- Beginning with the 2020-21 school year, New Buffalo Area Schools will offer the **BISON VIRTUAL ACADEMY (BVA)**, a 100% online educational program. Students in kindergarten through grade 12 will have the opportunity to participate.

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<td>New Buffalo Area Schools plan to resume in-person instruction to start the school year, if possible.</td>
<td>The Bison Virtual Academy will be offered as a full-time option for K-12 families.</td>
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<td>NBAS is developing a plan that meets the requirements set forth in the <strong>MI Safe Schools Roadmap</strong>. We will use this guidance to make safe, informed decisions, with the intent to safely return students and staff to our school buildings.</td>
<td>NBAS will work in partnership with established virtual education providers to develop and offer a rigorous program led by Michigan-certified teachers who are highly qualified in their subject areas.</td>
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<td>Specific safety measures can be found on the following page.</td>
<td>Enrollment in the BVA option will be a trimester long commitment to this at-home learning experience, which relies on parent assistance. Students can expect the same rigorous instruction, high standards and academic credit that our traditional, in-person schools provide.</td>
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<td>Note: A shift to remote learning may be required if there is a resurgence of COVID-19. With proactive teacher training and planning, the remote learning platform could be activated quickly, in case we need to pause in-person instruction. Remote learning in the 2020-21 school year will have more rigorous requirements and more robust academic instruction than the stopgap measures put in place during the crisis in March 2020.</td>
<td>The BVA program may be accessed from the safety of a student’s home or anywhere there is an internet connection.</td>
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<td>Students enrolled in the BVA continue to be NEW BUFFALO BISON!</td>
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*IN-PERSON LEARNING UPDATES, as of August 6, 2020*

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT IN-PERSON INSTRUCTION IN 2020-2021

New Buffalo Area Schools will offer families two learning options for the 2020-21 school year: in-person instruction (if our region remains in Phase 4 or above as defined in the MI Safe Schools Roadmap) or enrollment in the Bison Virtual Academy (BVA). It is our intention to return students to classroom routines that are as close to normal as possible, with added safety protocols. The following information is provided to help families make informed decisions about what is best for their student.

State Requirements: NBAS will follow the requirements in the MI Safe Schools Roadmap. As we mitigate risk of COVID-19 spread, our efforts will focus on 1) personal protective equipment, 2) hygiene, and 3) spacing and movement.

Personal Protective Equipment: In Phase 4, facial coverings are required for all staff, PK/K-12 students in hallways and common areas, students in grades 6-12 in classrooms, PK/K-5 students in classrooms unless they remain with their cohort throughout the day with no close contact with other classes, and all people on buses. In Phase 5, facial coverings are recommended, but not required, for all staff and PK/K-12 students in hallways and common areas. Exceptions are made for anyone who cannot medically tolerate a facial covering, is incapacitated, or is unable to remove the covering without assistance. Students may use their own homemade facial coverings (which must be washed daily) or disposable level one, basic surgical masks which must be disposed of at the end of each day. NBAS will supply each student with a disposable face covering on a daily basis as needed.

Hygiene: In Phase 4, schools are required to: provide supplies including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, paper towels, tissues, informational signs, teach/reinforce handwashing with soap/water for at least 20 seconds and/or the use of hand sanitizer, and use hand sanitizer before entering buses. In Phase 5, it is strongly recommended that students wash hands or use hand sanitizer after changing classrooms and before entering buses. We will provide flexibility in scheduling to allow for handwashing. Education and training will be important to ensuring healthy hygiene habits for our students.

Spacing and Movement: Work stations, students and teachers will be spaced as far apart as possible, and work stations will face the same direction. Modifications may be made to areas with shared table space or soft furniture that cannot be thoroughly sanitized. Depending on the number of families who opt for the Bison Virtual Academy, there may be a reduced number of students in our school buildings.

Guests/Visitors: Will be limited in school buildings. Signage will encourage distancing/proper hygiene.
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*IN-PERSON LEARNING UPDATES, as of August 6, 2020*

**Full Week Schedule:** We expect to follow a regular, full-day, Monday-Friday schedule. After extensive conversation with the Berrien County Health Department, we believe that a hybrid or part-time schedule is not the best option for providing a safe environment. Instead, cohorting our students during the day better limits possible exposure that comes with increased interactions outside of school necessitated by the need for childcare.

**Transportation:** We are developing our transportation plan utilizing the required and highly suggested protocols spelled out in the Return to School Roadmap for Phase 4. These safety protocols will continue to be utilized even if the region moves into Phase 5.

**Education:** Students, staff, and families will receive ongoing training/reminders with guidance from the Berrien County Health Dept about proper handwashing, physical distancing, virus spread, and risk mitigation protocols.

**Large Gatherings:** State requirements will limit large scale interactions and groupings for cafeterias, assemblies and extracurricular activities. In Phase 4, indoor assemblies may not bring together more than 50 people or students from more than one classroom. Outdoor stadium events are limited to 100 people with physical distancing. In Phase 5, it is recommended that indoor events are limited to 50 people and outdoor stadium events are limited to 250 people, with physical distancing.

**Recess:** May be conducted outside whenever possible with appropriate distancing and cohorting of students to limit interactions.

**Cleaning:** NBAS has reliable cleaning protocols that support safety and wellness and mitigate environmental health risks. All cleaning protocols and products meet industry standards and recommendations set by governmental health organizations. These rigorous standards apply to classrooms, offices, athletic facilities, food preparation areas, common areas and hard surfaces (including desks, light switches and doors) in every building.

**Potential temporary shift to remote learning:** A resurgence of COVID-19 may require schools to pause in-person instruction and shift temporarily to remote learning. Remote learning in the 2020-21 school year would have far more rigorous requirements and more robust academic instruction than the stopgap measures during the crisis in March 2020. Pacing, grading, daily attendance, and curriculum progress would remain consistent with in-person learning expectations.

**Updates:** We will continue to keep the NBAS community updated as more information becomes available.