New Salem-Almont Drama team places in first at regional competition

By Richard Mendoza

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New Salem-Almont's High School Drama Team's one-act performance of "The Blind Spot" by Steven Stack received first place at the regional competition in Hazen last Wednesday, Nov. 12. With a first-place finish, the team has advanced to the state competition which will begin on Nov. 24 in Jamestown.

Though their performance earned them the top spot at the regional competition, there are still plenty of elements of the play that can reportedly be improved.

Senior performer Shelby Kalvoda, who plays "Katie", says that the drama team as a collective have plenty to improve upon before the state competition in Jamestown. "We obviously have a lot of work to do, and we could still make a lot of changes to make [our performance] better, but I feel confident in making it to semifinals and keeping our state rank," Kalvoda said.

With the first performance of the play occurring only a few days prior to regionals on Nov. 7, NSAHS director of Drama/Speech Laura Muth said that her cast of performers put on a stronger performance on Wednesday in Hazen compared to the first showing in New Salem. Due to a late switch in the play being performed, Muth stated that she was understanding if her team struggled with memorizing their lines, which they did.

photo | submitted photo

THE NSAHS CAST AND CREW of "The Blind Spot". Front (left to right): Bailey Maier, Shelby Kalvoda, Maksim Nelson, Sofia Young, Cheyanne Quissell. Middle (left to right): Bentley Quisell, Matthew Franciere, Payton Hagemeister, Kiera Simonson, Cloe Gniffke. Back (left to right): Gavin Ballensky-Selle, Landon Van Iwaarden, Branson Gilbert, Deacon Blackburn, Elias Smith, Justin Sanders, Connar Van Iwaarden.

"Friday night I felt like we played a six out of ten, performance wise. It was a good show; I don't feel like they put on a bad show, it just wasn't at the same level as Wednesday," Muth said. "After the performance [on Friday], I looked at the kids and said, 'we got work to do,' and they [said], 'yeah, we can see it," so then Monday and Tuesday, we really did work hard on it."

Adding that her students were strongly engaged and threw themselves into their roles despite the change in the play they would perform, Muth said the judges' ballets the team received after their performance on Wednesday were not as full of advice and ideas. "They did a really good job…I would say [they performed] nine out of ten on Wednesday."

Like Kalvoda, Muth is also confident in the team's ability to perform well enough to receive honors at the state level but knows there's work to be done.

Some of that practice and work to improve upon their performances will include stronger stage-building/design, music selection and monologues/soliloquies. "We've got the headstone on the stage that represents Luke after he's passed. Each character comes out and talks to that headstone at some point and explains to him how they're feeling and what they're going through since his passing," Muth said. "We're going to take one day to just really drill down on those monologues, and then we're going to kind of weave that back into the rest of it."

Another element of the performance Muth shared that can and will be improved upon is stage presence/awareness. Referring to an honest mistake made on the Friday evening show in New Salem by one of the performers where they bumped and knocked down a set design piece, Muth noted that mistakes of any kind could potentially impact scoring. "Those little [mistakes] are fine when you're on the stage because things happen, but when you're in a performance and the judges are looking for any little thing to mark you down…You never know what the judges are going to say, and you never know what's going to happen on stage."

New Salem-Almont School Board Minutes

NEW SALEM-ALMONT SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES
OCTOBER 20, 2025
HIGH SCHOOL CONFERENCE ROOM

President John called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Feland, Gilstad, Hoovestol, Miller, John, Lausch, and Reiner-Pletan were present. Richard Mendoza of the Morton County New Journal was also in attendance. Superintendent Christopherson, Principal Olson, and Principal Bennett also attended. Business Manager Dukart was not able to attend this meeting.

All present stood and recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

It was moved by Reiner-Pletan and seconded by Lausch to approve the consent agenda, which included the minutes of the Annual Public Meeting on September 15, 2025, September 23, 2025, regular board meeting minutes, September bills, and the September Financial Report. All members voted "Aye". The motion carried.

There were no additions or deletions to the October 20, 2025, meeting.

In unfinished business, The Pledge of Securities was discussed. Miller made a motion to approve The Pledge of Securities, and Hoovestol seconded. All members voted, "Aye". The motion carried.

Principal Bennett presented and discussed ND A+ results for 3rd and 5th grade reading and math. Take aways and next steps were discussed. No additional discussion was had by the board.

Principal Olson presented and discussed for ND A+ results for 8th and 10th grade reading and math. Principal Olson presented science results as well for the 8th grade. Take aways and next steps were discussed. Lausch presented a question regarding the assessment and Principals Olson and Bennett responded. No other discussion was had by the board.

No committee reports were given.

Superintendent Christopherson presented options for an activity bus. Three options were presented and Superintendent Christopherson discussed the differences in each of the three models. Discussion ensued. Superintendent Christopherson will continue to search for more options and fiscal opportunities to purchase. Superintendent Christopherson discussed updates in the PVE kitchen.

Principal Olson highlighted the district meeting with Infinite Campus as well as an update on the HS cell phone policy and current violations. A new advisory approach was presented as well as an example of what students will engage in during this time.

Principal Bennett discussed the Fall Annual Family Engagement Night presented by Theo Art School. PLCs and teacher meetings moving forward with highlighted agenda items were presented. Virtual Learning plans were discussed and sent home to PVE parents on or before conferences.

The next board meeting is scheduled for November 12, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. in the high school conference room.

Reiner-Pletan made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Miller. All members voted, "Aye". The meeting was adjourned at 6:48 p.m.

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New Salem-Almont Public Schools

Monday, November 17

Breakfast: Waffles, Cereal, Fruit, Juice, Milk

Lunch: Farmer's Casserole, Peanut Butter & Jelly, Fruit, Veggies, Milk

Grades 9 – 12 Girls Basketball Practice Starts – High School Gym

5/6 – Boys Basketball vs. Glen Ullin/Hebron at 6:00 p.m.

Concessions: Dollars for Scholars

Tuesday, November 18

Breakfast: Omelets, Toast, Cereal, Fruit, Juice, Milk

Lunch: Pizza, Fruit, Veggies, Milk

FFA District Leadership at Bismarck – Bus Leaves at 7:30 a.m.

Jr. High - Girls Basketball vs. Standing Rock at 5:00 p.m.

Ticket Taker: Miss Ashlyn Thompson

Concessions: Holstein Booster Club

5/6 – Boys Basketball vs. Standing Rock at 5:00 p.m. (City Auditorium)

Wednesday, November 19

Breakfast: Donut, Cereal, Fruit, Juice, Milk

Lunch: Pulled Pork, Fries, Baked Beans, Fruit, Veggies, Milk

Picture Retakes, PVE Class Group Pictures and Head Start Individual Pictures

Family Paint Night at PVE – 5:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. - Preregistration is required

Thursday, November 20

Breakfast: Summer Sausage, Toast, Cereal, Fruit, Juice, Milk

Lunch: Chili, Breadsticks, Fruit, Veggies, Milk

State Volleyball at Bismarck Event Center – Starts at 9:00 a.m.

Friday, November 21

Breakfast: Pop Tarts, Yogurt, Cereal, Fruit, Juice, Milk

Lunch: Subs, Fries, Fruit, Veggies, Milk

5/6 – Boys Basketball at Flasher at 6:00 p.m. – Bus Leaves at 4:45 p.m.

State Volleyball at Bismarck Event Center – Starts at 9:00 a.m.

Saturday, November 15

Girls Basketball Scrimmage at Kidder County at 10 :00 a.m. – Bus Leaves at 8:15 a.m.

State Volleyball at Bismarck Event Center – Starts at 8:00 a.m.

MEALS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

Mandan Public Schools

Monday, November 17

Elementary Breakfast- chocolate chip muffin top, cereal, cinnamon toast, fruit, juice, milk

Elementary Lunch- hot dog on a bun, mac n' cheese, cucumber slices, cherry tomatoes, fruit, rice Krispie treat, Uncrustable, string cheese

Middle/ High School Breakfast- banana split boat, Dutch waffle, oatmeal, cereal, toast, benefit bar, juice, fruit, milk

Middle/ High School Lunch- chicken ranch wrap, totchos, spicy doritos, baked beans, cookie, pizza, salad, sub sandwich, breadstick

Band Concert in Auditorium 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, November 18

Elementary Breakfast-bagel bites, cereal, oatmeal, cinnamon toast, fruit, juice, milk

Elementary Lunch- grilled cheese and tomato soup, candied carrots, fruit, deli roll-ups, cubed cheese, Cheez-its, baby carrots, cherry tomatoes

Middle/ High School Breakfast- frittata wrap, long john, oatmeal, cereal, toast, benefit bar, juice, fruit, milk

Middle/ High School Lunch- turkey tidbits, chicken fried steak, mashed potatoes and gravy, dinner roll, fruit cup, hamburger, salad, sub sandwhich

Band Concert in Auditorium 6:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, November 19

Elementary Breakfast- McBrave biscuit, cereal, cinnamon toast, fruit, juice, milk

Elementary Lunch- chicken patty on a bun, baked beans, green pepper strips, fruit, cookie, ham and cheese bun

Middle/ High School Breakfast- McBrave biscuit, pancakes, oatmeal, cereal, toast, benefit bar, juice, fruit, milk

Middle/ High School Lunch- sweet and sour chicken, general Tso' chicken, fried rice, Asian stir fry vegetables, fortune cookie, pizza, salad, sandwich, bread item

Thursday, November 20

Elementary Breakfast- long john, cereal, oatmeal, cinnamon toast, fruit, juice, milk

Elementary Lunch- pancakes, egg patty, chicken sausage patty, hashbrown, broccoli, fruit, pizza

Middle/ High School Breakfast- bagel bites, long john, oatmeal, cereal, toast, benefit bar, juice, fruit, milk

Middle/ High School Lunch- super nachos, spicy chicken patty on a bun and fries, candied carrots, hamburger and fries, salad, sandwich, bread item

State Varsity Volleyball TBD

Friday, November 21

Elementary Breakfast- French toast, cereal, cinnamon toast, fruit, juice, milk

Elementary Lunch- pizza, tator tots, cauliflower, fruit, flavored bread, sun seeds, yogurt

Middle/ High School Breakfast- breakfast pizza, yogurt and bagel, oatmeal, cereal, toast, benefit bar, juice, fruit, milk

Middle/ High School Lunch- chicken strips, Nashville hot wings, mac n' cheese, cinnamon roll, pizza, salad, sub sandwich

State Varsity Volleyball TBD

Debate at Mandan High School 9:00 a.m.

Varsity Girls Ice Hockey at Starion Sports Complex 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, November 15

State Varsity Volleyball TBD

Debate at Mandan High School 9:00 a.m.