



Notice of Public Meeting

AGENDA

Committee:	Ag and Extension Education Sub Committee
Date:	Monday, April 6, 2026
Time:	10:30 a.m.
Location:	3 rd Floor County Board Room, 407 S. 2 nd Street, Alma, WI 54610
Remote Access:	https://teams.microsoft.com/meet/25636483987263?p=byp7z0RMXZ6qwY1sl8

This meeting is open to the public, but portions of the meeting may be closed if this notice indicates that the committee may convene in closed session.

The following matters may be reviewed, discussed and acted upon at this meeting, but deviations from the order shown may occur:

1.	Review/Discussion/Action	Call to Order
2.	Review/Discussion/Action	Roll Call of Members
3.	Review/Discussion/Action	Public Comments Regarding Posted Agenda Items
4.	Review/Discussion/Action	Previous Meeting Minutes
5.	Review/Discussion/Action	Regional Crop Educator Hiring Update
6.	Review/Discussion/Action	Personnel Updates
7.	Review/Discussion/Action	Educator Reports
8.	Review/Discussion/Action	AED Report
9.	Review/Discussion/Action	Committee Chair Report
10.	Review/Discussion/Action	Public Comments Unrelated to Agenda Items
11.	Review/Discussion/Action	Next Meeting Date and Time
12.	Review/Discussion/Action	Adjournment

Date: 3/30/26

Brian Michaels, Chair

By: Roxane Weisenbeck, Administrative Assistant

Board Members: If unable to attend, please contact the Chair. If the Chair is unavailable, please contact the County Clerk's Office at 608-685-6209. If the Chair and the County Clerk are not available, please call the Administrative Coordinator at 608-685-6234.

Persons with Disabilities: Buffalo County shall attempt to provide reasonable accommodations to the public for access to its public meetings, provided reasonable notice of special need is given. If you require special accommodations to attend this meeting, please contact the County Clerk's Office at 608-685-6209.

Public Access to the Courthouse: The South Entrance will be the only access to the building after 4:30 p.m.

Persons who are members of another governmental body, but who are not members of this committee, may attend this meeting. Their attendance could result in a quorum of another governmental body being present. Such a quorum is unintended, and they are not meeting to exercise the authority, duties, or responsibilities of any other governmental body.

Buffalo County Minutes

Committee/Board: Agriculture and Extension Education Subcommittee

Date of Meeting: Monday, February 2, 2026

The meeting was called to order by Chair, Brian Michaels at 8:35 a.m.

Board Members Present: Mr. Brian Michaels and Mr. Robert Sendelbach
Absent: Mr. Gary Stanton

Others Present: Ms. Mary Campbell Wood, Ms. Sarah Torbert, Ms. Bianca Mullen and Dr. Kari Weiss. Mr. Lee Engfer joined later.

Public comments Regarding Posted Agenda Items: None

Review/Discussion/Action ~ Minutes of the previous meeting: Motion by Mr. Sendelbach, seconded by Mr. Michaels to approve the minutes from the previous two meetings. Motion carried.

Review/Discussion/Action ~ Area Extension Director Introduction: Ms. Sarah Torbert, Area 9 Extension Director, introduced Dr. Kari Weiss, the Area 5 Extension Director. UW-Extension has implemented a new staffing model which resulted in a realignment of Areas. Buffalo County Extension has joined Area 5, where Dr. Weiss serves as Area Extension Director. Dr. Weiss shared a little about herself and expressed enthusiasm to be working in Buffalo County.

Review/Discussion/Action ~ Regional Crop Educator Update: Ms. Torbert informed the committee that a candidate had accepted the offer to fill the Regional Crop Educator position. She was recently notified that the candidate contacted HR and stated they are no longer interested in filling the Regional Crops Educator position. Ms. Torbert noted that there was a strong candidate pool and hoping that some of the candidates are still interested in the position.

Review/Discussion/Action ~ 4-H Youth Development Educator Hiring Update: Ms. Weiss updated the committee on the hiring process for a 4-H Youth Development educator. She explained that there is an individual who gave their verbal acceptance for the 4-H Educator position. She also explained that due to no official offer letter being signed yet, she cannot name the candidate at this time.

Educator Reports:

Human Development and Family Relations: Ms. Mary Wood, HDR Educator, discussed the following:

- Reported progress on upcoming programs.

- Working in collaboration with Trempealeau County Jail for classes serving both men and women.
- Noted some delays related to coordination with Trempealeau County partners.
- Scheduled 10 classes in February with 24 participants.
- 10 participants registered for the Companions Through the Wilderness, Healing from Loss and Greif program.
- Discussed A Better Beginning classes for Separating and Divorcing families.
- Provided updates on statewide classes and learning opportunities.

4-H Youth Development: Ms. Bianca Mullen, 4-H Program Assistant reported on recent 4-H Youth Development programming:

- Provided updates from the most recent 4-H Leaders' Association meeting and reported a total of 30 participants.
- Highlighted the award recipients who were recognized at the meeting.
- Shared a summary of the graduating senior 4-H scholarship interviews and the travel experience interviews.
- Walked the committee through the Buffalo County Extension website, demonstrating where to find recent updates and showcasing the improvements that have been made.
- Discussed the 4-H STEM Discovery Toolkits, including the new projects and materials being added. Explained how the Toolkits are being promoted on social media and featured at 4-H Leaders' Association meetings to increase awareness among the public and 4-H Leaders about the resources available to them.

Soils and Crops: No Report. Vacant position.

Area Extension Director Report:

Committee Chair Report:

Next Meeting Date and Time ~ The next scheduled committee meeting is Monday, April 6, 2026, at 8:30 a.m.

Public comment not related to agenda items: None

Adjournment ~ The meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Bianca Mullen, 4-H Program Assistant



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Buffalo County Human Development and Relationships Educational Program Report February/March 2026

Mary Campbell Wood, M.A.

Professor of Human Development and Relationships

Buffalo and Pepin counties (100%) <https://parenting.extension.wisc.edu/>

Educational Programs

Moving Forward Jail Reentry Program

As you see on the grid below, a total of **18** classes were offered in the first quarter of 2026, for a total of **47** participants. There are 8 classes offered for April: Companions Through the Wilderness – Healing from Loss and Grief (women), Change Company (men), Criminal and Addictive Thinking (men), Preparing for Release (women), and The Gift of Forgiveness (men and women). The Trempealeau County Jail is supporting Criminal and Addictive Thinking for men and Preparing for Release for women. 15 men and 9 women are registered for the classes, for a total of **25** participants.

A summary of 2025 *MOVING FORWARD* educational programs:

- Coordinated and supported **sixty-one** teleconference programs with the Dunn County Jail Program Director, for **191** learners in Buffalo, Pepin, Jackson and Trempealeau county jails and Buffalo-Pepin CJS or DOC probation clients.
- Directly taught four 11-session classes for **49** participants and **9** caregivers.

Trempealeau County Jail (Trempealeau and Buffalo County residents incarcerated in Trempealeau Jail)

- Programming is limited to one class for men and women each month. The Trempealeau County Jail Administration is working toward filling a program director position and plans to increase participation in the full offerings of the *MOVING FORWARD* Program at that time. Class interest and participation has been very good, and we are working through any glitches.
- Even though they agreed to support the recovery coach back in August, they have not yet allowed him to begin. I hope that this gets going very soon because I provided the \$8,700 cash match to support continuation of the AmeriCorps recovery coach position for the third year. Michael Turner began under contract September 2025-August 2026.

“This might sound kind of crazy, but I’m glad I’m in jail right now and can be in this class. I didn’t know any of this stuff before. Four months out of my life is worth it, because it will matter to my son for the rest of his life.”

-Father of a very young son in the Parenting Inside Out class.

Buffalo County Human Development and Relationships Educational Program Report February/March 2026

January-March MOVING FORWARD Reentry Program classes

Class Name	Pepin	Buffalo-Trempealeau	CJS	TOTAL
Change Company for Women	0	0	0	0
Companions Through the Wilderness – Healing from Loss and Grief for Men	2	0	0	2
Companions Through the Wilderness – Healing from Loss and Grief for Women	0	6	1	7
Criminal and Addictive Thinking for Women	0	8	1	9
Effective Communication for Men	2	0	0	2
Guest Speaker for Men	3	0	?	3
Guest Speaker for Women	0	0	0	0
Journaling for Men	2	0	0	2
Journaling for Women	0	0	1	1
Music Therapy for Men	3	0	0	3
Parenting with Love and Logic for Men	2	0	1	3
Parenting with Love and Logic for Women	0	0	1	0
Relapse Prevention for Men	0	13	0	13
Salvation Army Resources Presentation for Men	5	0	?	5
Socialization for Men	5	0	0	5
Staying Quit for Men	0	14	0	14
Staying Quit for Women	0	0	0	0
Stop the Chaos for Women	0	0	1	1
Total classes=18	24	41	6	71



Companions Through the Wilderness – Healing from Trauma, Loss and Grief

“We must mourn well to live well and love well”

Two of the 11-session classes wrapped up in March: a special class for farmers and Agriculture-related individuals (supported by the Buffalo County Farm Bureau and regional office), [evaluation here](#), and a class for women in the Trempealeau County Jail [evaluation here](#). A third class is mid-way for men in the Pepin and Dunn county jails. Participants in the class for farmers/ag-related individuals requested a monthly class for at least the next 6 months. I have received numerous requests to offer again for this audience and am currently planning when that will be.

Buffalo County Human Development and Relationships Educational Program Report February/March 2026

Parenting and Relationships

- For the 4th year, I continue to serve as the lead for the statewide **Wisconsin Strong Couples Program**, an online 6-session self-study course with five coach meetings. I am the Wisconsin lead and trained coach for this North Central Extension 11-state program, centered with Illinois University Extension. Grant funding makes it possible to offer this at no charge to couples. <https://parenting.extension.wisc.edu/strong-couples/>
- I taught a 90-minute virtual class for the monthly **Focus on Fathers** statewide series [“Fathers Teach Values”](#)
- **A Better Beginning for Separating and Divorcing Families** 2-part court-ordered classes were held in February and March, for 9 participants. I teach this regular class, offered monthly or every other month, depending on # of registrations. Intended outcomes for parents and children include:
 - Increased family resilience and stability
 - Improved co-parenting relationships that support children and protect them from harmful effects of family conflict, divorce and family transition
 - Strengthened, more positive and effective communication between co-parents, and between children and their parents
 - Decreased trauma and toxic stress
- I promoted the [Raising Wisconsin's Children](#) statewide all-day conference

Looking Ahead, April-May

- Continue the **MOVING FORWARD Reentry Program** classes, and further development with the Trempealeau County Jail
- Planning with Buffalo County school districts to teach **Child Care Clinics**
- **A Better Beginning for Separating and Divorcing Families** monthly classes will continue
- Finish writing a statewide publication – **Supporting Children's Healing from Loss and Grief**
- Offer another **Companions Through the Wilderness – Healing From Loss and Grief** class
- **Early Childhood Workshop**, May 16, [Emotion Regulation in Action](#)

Buffalo County Human Development and Relationships Educational Program Report February/March 2026





Buffalo County Positive Youth Development February - March 2026 Program Report

Recent Happenings

Countywide Service-Learning Project: Bianca Mullen, developed a comprehensive countywide service-learning project titled *Connections Across Generations*. This initiative was created to provide 4-H youth with a meaningful opportunity to learn about and respond to the needs of older adults living in nursing homes, assisted living facilities, and memory-care communities. Mullen designed a detailed project guide that includes activity options, planning tools, reflection resources, safety guidelines, and Wisconsin-specific aging data to ensure the project is both educational and impactful. She also collaborated with the Buffalo/Pepin Aging & Disability Resource Center (ADRC), who granted permission to incorporate their aging and dementia-friendly educational materials, strengthening the project's alignment with authentic community needs. A service-learning webpage and fillable planning forms are being developed to support accessibility and long-term use. Overall, this project is intended to enhance youth leadership, empathy, and civic engagement while fostering meaningful intergenerational connections within the community.

Early Childhood Screening Event at Alma Area Schools: On March 6th Bianca Mullen collaborated with Alma Area Schools to support their Early Childhood Screening event by offering a hands-on "make and take" sensory bottle activity for youth and families. This interactive station encouraged creativity, fine-motor skill development, and early learning exploration. Throughout the morning, children designed and created their own personalized sensory bottles to take home. The activity space was lively and engaging, with youth showing excitement and curiosity as they explored the materials. 4-H member Nessa Noll, volunteered her time to help lead and set up the activity. Nessa brought wonderful energy to the event and demonstrated strong youth leadership in action.



4-H STEM Discovery Toolkit Spotlights: Buffalo County 4-H offers a variety of STEM Discovery Toolkits filled with hands-on activities that any youth-serving agency can borrow to engage young people in creative, exploratory learning. At our March 22, 2026, Leaders Association meeting, we highlighted two newly revamped and expanded kits that youth had the chance to explore during the event.

Architecture Toolkit: This kit invites young people to dive into the world of design and engineering. Youth can explore blueprints, major landmarks, and experiment with building concepts, providing an exciting introduction to the field of architecture. **Quilling Toolkit:** The quilling kit encourages creativity and artistic expression by teaching youth how to transform narrow strips of paper into intricate, beautiful designs. This refreshed kit now includes new project ideas



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Buffalo County Positive Youth Development February - March 2026 Program Report

and expanded materials to inspire imaginative artwork. Both toolkits received significant updates, adding new, engaging projects and refreshed resources to enhance hands-on learning experiences for youth across Buffalo County.

Buffalo County 4-H Leaders' Association Meeting – March 22nd, 2026: The Buffalo County 4-H Leaders' Association met on Sunday, March 22nd, 2026, in Alma, with 27 in attendance. The meeting focused on program updates and continued support. Julia Jardine, 4-H member, was also presented with the Buffalo County 4-H Key Award, one of the highest honors a 4-H member can earn in the state.

2026 Thriving Survey Results: Each year, the Positive Youth Development (PYD) Institute conducts the 4-H Thriving Survey for members ages 13 and older. The survey helps us understand how effectively our programs support youth development. This year's survey placed a special emphasis on Belonging, highlighting how welcomed, included, and supported youth feel within their 4-H experiences. Based on the feedback received, youth reported strong experiences across the core components of the thriving model, Belonging, Caring Adults, Youth-Adult Partnerships, Challenging Growth, and Sparks. Their responses show that our programs continue to provide safe, encouraging spaces where young people can explore interests, build skills, and form meaningful connections. Youth shared that through 4-H they are learning leadership, responsibility, independence, communication skills, and how to create positive environments for others. Many noted that 4-H helps them find their voice, take pride in their projects, and serve as role models for younger members. These findings reflect a positive and supportive developmental environment that promotes confidence, growth, and a strong sense of belonging among participants.

Buffalo County Enrollment Update: Enrollment data for the 2025–26 year shows continued stability in Buffalo County's 4-H community club membership. Current enrollment includes **281 youth**, continuing a consistent trend over the last several years. Volunteer enrollment remains strong as well, with **57 approved volunteers** participating this year. An additional six adults are in the process of completing final youth-protection requirements to become fully approved volunteers. Enrollment remains open year-round, and youth may join at any time and still participate in most activities and events.



Upcoming Buffalo County Programs!

4-H Dog Project Fun Day – April 18th, 2026: The event will feature live dog-obedience demonstrations led by 4-H Dog Project leaders Kim Bates and Samantha Callahan, along with hands-on stations where youth can make soft chew toys and metal-stamped dog tags. The program is free for youth in grades 5K–12, with registration due by April 6.

4-H Nature Quest Day at Merrick State Park – June 10th: 4-H Nature Quest will offer youth a hands-on outdoor learning experience at Merrick State Park. This event will include shoreline fishing, pollinator education with butterfly house building, a trail scavenger hunt, and a live raptor program with River Valley Raptors. Buffalo County 4-H is



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Buffalo County Positive Youth Development February - March 2026 Program Report

collaborating with Merrick State Park, River Valley Raptors, and Buffalo County Land Conservation to provide high-quality environmental education and outdoor learning stations. The event will also include a free meal, sponsored by the Buffalo County 4-H Leaders' Association.

Looking Forward

- Support the Pepin County Educator with Teen Court
- Math and Science Night at CFC
- STEAM Discovery Days – Mondovi
- Cloverbud Day Camps
- 4-H Day Camp at Nugget Lake in collaboration with Peirce County 4-H



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BUFFALO COUNTY



2025-26 Buffalo County 4-H Thriving Survey & Enrollment Data



Demographics

County: Buffalo

of Eligible Youth: 127
(Members age 13 and older)

of Youth Surveyed: 29



Sex	# OF YOUTH	% of YOUTH
Male	15	44%
Female	19	56%
I prefer not to say	0	0%



Grade	# OF YOUTH
7th	11
8th	4
9th	4
10th	6
11th	1
12th	4



Developmental Context (Program Quality) Evaluation Results

Context matters! Research shows that youth programs that emphasize Sparks, Belonging, Caring Adults, Challenging Growth, and Youth-Adult Partnerships will have better outcomes for the youth who participate.

5.47
Overall Score

Challenging Growth

5.36

The extent to which adults in the program help youth to see new possibilities, push them to reach higher and hold them accountable.

Caring Adults

5.36

This outcome measures how youth feel the adults in their 4-H programs care about them and investing time in youth.

Youth-Adult Partnerships

5.61

How youth feel about adult volunteers working with them and if they feel respected, listened to and have their ideas taken seriously.

Belonging

6.00

This outcome measures how safe, welcome and supported youth feel in 4-H programs

Youth Sparks

5.06

How 4-H programs give youth opportunities to explore topics they are interested in, passionate about, and engaged with.

SCORING GUIDE

1.0 to 2.2	Very low quality
2.3 to 3.5	Low quality
3.6 to 4.8	Moderate quality
4.9 to 6.1	High quality
6.2 to 7.0	Very high quality

Each component of the model was assessed on a scale of 1-7, 5 or more indicates a positive thriving score. 6 or more indicates an outstanding program quality.



UW-MADISON EXTENSION

Tell us about something important that you learned in 4-H...

“
I learned how to **voice my opinion** and **how to be responsible**.
”

“
I have learned to **take my time in creating projects** for the fair.
”

“
I have learned how to be more **independent and respect** my adults in my group and in my community.
”

“
I have learned how to be a **positive leader** for the younger youth.
”

“
I have learned the importance of **creating a positive environment**.
”

“
I have learned how to become a **better public speaker**.
”



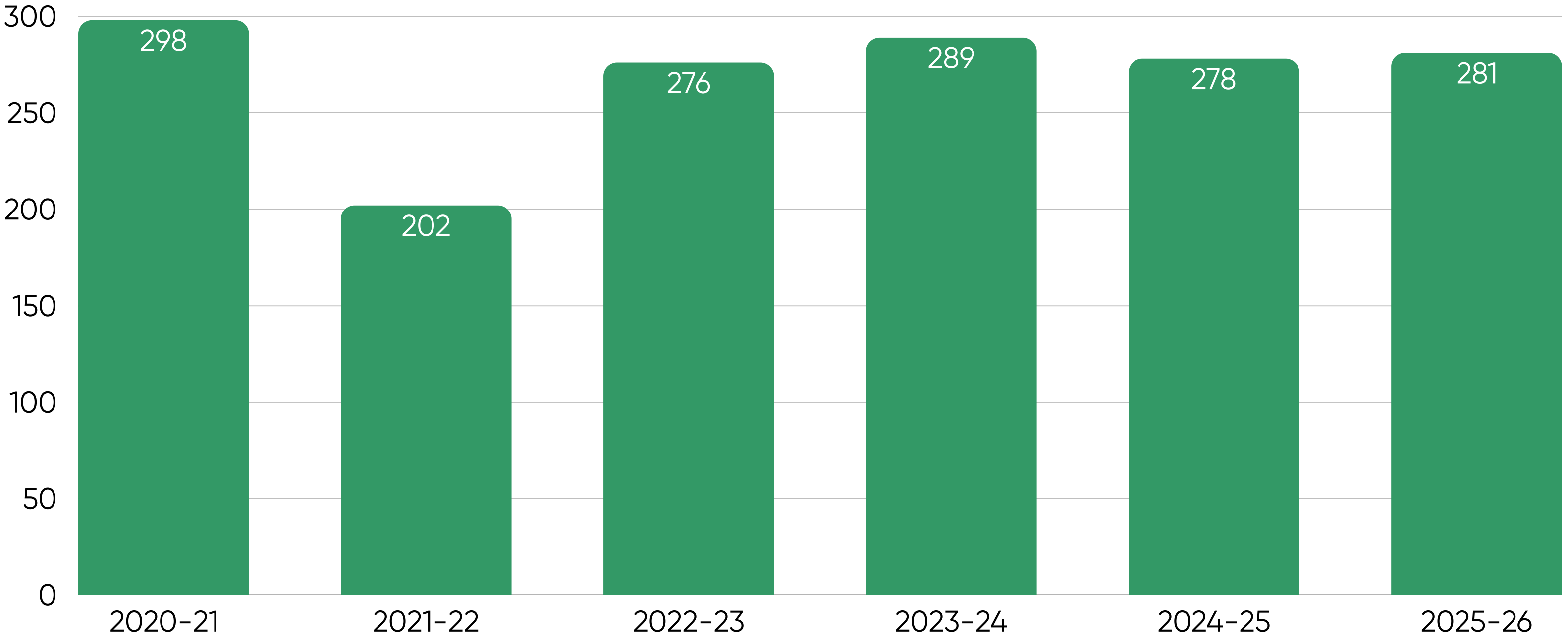
4-H Enrollment Update



UW-MADISON EXTENSION

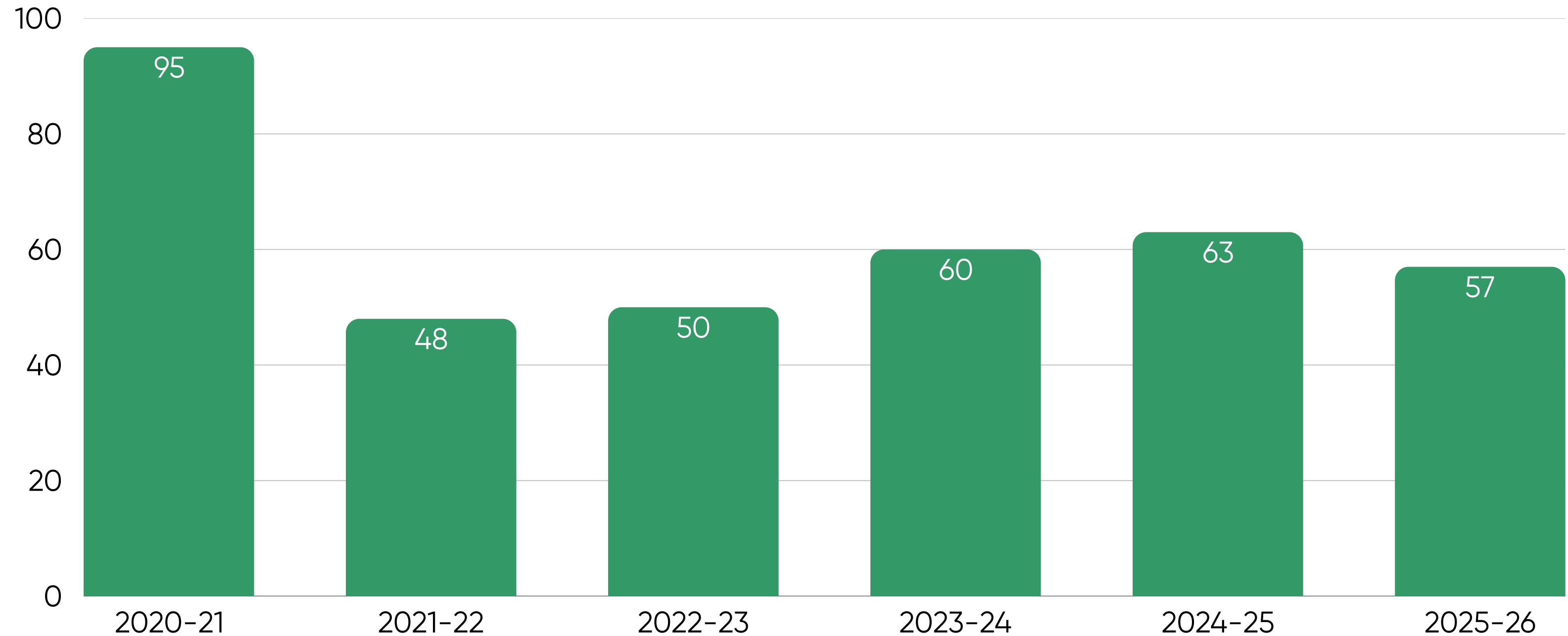


4-H Community Club Member Enrollment in the Last 6 Years



Note: Please remember that youth can continue to join 4-H at anytime and still be eligible to participate in many of our 4-H activities and opportunities.

4-H Volunteer Enrollment in the Last 6 Years



Note: We currently have 6 adults enrolled, but not approved, as one or more youth protection steps must be completed (i.e. background check or Title IX training).