

REGULAR MEETING

A Regular meeting of the Benzie County Central Board of Education was held Monday, February 9, 2026 in the Board of Education Conference Room.

President Childs called the meeting to order at 7:01 pm.

Members Present: Mr. Childs, Mrs. Gillison, Mr. Barnard, Mrs. Campana, Mr. Egeler
Mr. Smith, Piper Barnard (non-voting member)

Members Absent: Mr. Kempton

25-26-068 It was moved by Mr. Smith and supported by Mrs. Campana to approve the agenda

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

Opening Statement:

We are a team. We leave our personal opinions at the door and we are bound by Policy 2302 to faithfully discharge the office of a board member and keep in mind our primary concern is the educational welfare of students focusing on governance and fiduciary obligations of the district including duties of loyalty and care, placing the District's interests above the Board member's personal interests.

25-26-069 It was moved by Mr. Smith and supported by Mrs. Gillison to approve Consent Grouping items as presented.

A. Minutes: January 12, 2026 Organizational | January 12, 2026 Regular | January 25, 2026 Board Retreat

B. Business: General Fund Bills – \$1,134,846.50

C. Support Staff Appointments:

- NONE

D. Staff Assignment Changes:

- Nick Cooper - Long Term Substitute for Carla Gipson MS English/Digital Literacy – January 6, 2026 – April 13, 2026

- Anne Warren – Long Term Substitute for Meghan Carra – Title I Homestead Hills Elementary – January 5, 2026 – April 22, 2026

E. Leave of Absence:

- David Parker - Bus Driver –December 8, 2025 through January 14, 2026

- Carla Gipson – FMLA Extension through April 22, 2026

F. Recommendation for Tenure:

- NONE

G. Recommendation for Termination following Probationary Period

- NONE

H. Recommendation for Termination:

- NONE

I. Contract Updates:

- **NONE**

Ayes: 6**Nays: 0****Motion Carried**

District Impact Team Update: Board of Education Trustee, Matt Smith shared the following:

Since the last Board update, the District Impact Team met twice. A couple scheduled meetings were impacted by snow days. The meetings continued to focus on instructional improvement, student support systems, and longer-term planning topics.

Benzie Academy

The team reviewed overall trends related to student participation, course completion, and credit attainment at Benzie Academy. Discussion focused on understanding those trends and identifying ways to improve student follow-through, particularly through stronger communication with families and clearer expectations to help students stay engaged and complete coursework.

TCR Coaching Update

DIT discussed the district's ongoing work to formalize its instructional coaching approach. The conversation centered on building a clearer structure for coaching, aligning coaching goals with building administrators, and using data and observation tools more consistently. The goal is to strengthen classroom practices, increase student engagement, and provide teachers with more focused support. The team also acknowledged that this is still an evolving process and that consistency and routine remain important areas of focus.

Proposed 2028 Student Travel Experience (Informational)

The team held an early, informational discussion about a potential student travel opportunity in 2028 involving a walking pilgrimage in Spain. This was presented as a preliminary concept only, intended to raise awareness. Discussion focused on high-level considerations such as student eligibility, timing, cost, and whether the trip would be school-sponsored, along with the responsibilities and liabilities that would come with that designation. No decisions were made.

Lake Ann – Tuning Protocol

The team discussed challenges related to student engagement and effort during i-Ready benchmark testing at Lake Ann. Current strategies were reviewed, including student goal-setting, recognition of growth, administrative support around test-taking strategies, and adjustments to testing schedules and accommodations. The discussion focused on continuing to refine these approaches to improve student buy-in and ensure the data collected can be used effectively to support learning.

Middle School MTSS (Behavior Supports)

DIT reviewed the Middle School's multi-tiered system of behavioral supports, including universal expectations, restorative practices, and targeted interventions for students needing additional support. The team noted that many structures are working as intended, while also discussing opportunities to improve efficiency and coordination. Areas for further exploration include better use of grade-level data, clearer identification of students needing Tier 2 or Tier 3 support, and whether additional supports are needed to address attendance and behavior.

Overall, the District Impact Team continues to focus on strengthening systems already in place, improving alignment between instruction and student supports, and identifying areas where additional refinement or future planning may be needed.

Student Council Report: Student Council Board of Education Representative, Piper Barnard – Piper shared the following:

Snowcoming had a great turn out. They plan to go back to parents escorting the representatives, rather than teachers. They are in the planning stages for another dress-up/spirit week. Prom is the first weekend in May.

Administration Report:

A. NMSLA – Superintendent Erfourth – Superintendent Erfourth shared the following:

Governor's budget set to release this Wednesday- property tax relief for elderly, no real information on how this would work or be back filled. Leak that the Governor will put a lot of funding into reading and preschool. \$434m increase in this part of the budget. Teach MI fellows participating in State of the State- Katherine Jock participating. School of Choice bills- mandatory window, all schools at same time. Mandatory participation, mandatory participation with schools outside of ISD. Can't say only 10 openings- it has to be based on current enrollment and "open slots". Merit Examinations- HB 4556/7 Eliminating ACT/SAT/MME on transcripts- likely to pass.

NMSLA meeting March 11, meeting in Lansing with Gov budget committee, speaker- asking what our needs/priorities are in this area.

31aa- Court case was sent to appeals- Feds ready to make decision. Remainder of funds to be issued in Feb. State Aid to all schools that opted in.

B. Honor Bank Certificate of Deposit – (CD) – 7 months -

Opportunity for a 4.15% interest 7-month CD through Honor Bank compared to 3.6-3.7% with MILAF, requesting to invest up to 1M of SF and \$1M of SF and \$1M of GF dollars pending more intensive cash flow analysis

C. Chromebook and Chromebook Carts –

Requesting approval to purchase no more than 250 chromebooks, 50 touchscreens, 8 charging carts for middle school classrooms. Not to exceed \$90,500. To be paid using majority of remaining bond funds.

D. Bids for Maintenance of Betsie Valley Elementary Fiber - Sealed Bids for maintenance of the Fiber line being installed between Betsie Valley and the HS have been submitted to Sigma. Sealed bids will be opened on March 6 and a recommendation for approval will be brought to the March 11 Board meeting.

E. Lake Ann Elementary Update – Principal, Sharyl Corey –

3 Strategic Goals

—Instruction- Improvements in reading scores- students at grade level almost doubled since fall. Math showing improvement

Building problem of practice is Students are not performing benchmark testing to their ability; the testing is not showing what they can actually do.

The staff proposed a plan to fix the concern- get students involved in goal setting, rewards for

reaching goals, talked to students about how to improve test taking, reduced daily time in taking test to one hour.

Teachers felt all produced improvement; the reward was most effective. There will be a survey for students to see what they felt was most helpful in taking the test.

—Attendance- Average attendance did drop slightly since Oct. about 4%. Tracking chronic absenteeism, contacting parents did not

increase attendance, parents are just calling to excuse absences

—Communication- Monthly school newsletter, Sunday WAAG, Class Dojo- shared statistics of communications-most interactions (93%) was positive.

F. High School Update – Principal, Cheryl Smith -

Attendance- Goal is to reduce chronic absenteeism by 5%, increase average daily attendance by 2%- Collective gathering of data so whole High School owns the information and responsibility.

- Goal- Attendance call home by 9 am.
- Still holding collaborative meetings with families to problem solve

- Bi-Weekly attendance data reviewed at BIT Meeting.

Communication

- Each building will have consistent weekly communication-S'more-
- Staff utilization of communication protocol (RR NRN, etc)

Instruction-

- Lesson plan implementation- Reviewed ahead of time- how well is it implemented based on evaluation of format.

- Teacher Clarity- 2-year professional learning track- sets good standards of practice for new teachers, using this to review and confirm that experienced teachers are following standard best practice.

G. Resignations:

- Kyle Taylor – Principal – Betsie Valley Elementary – Effective February 16, 2026

H. Retirements:

- Mary Radtke – Director of Transportation - Effective November 1, 2026.
- Kyle Ross – Elementary Teacher – Homestead Hills Elementary – Effective June 10, 2026

Board of Education/Committee Reports –

A. Buildings and Grounds Committee

1. Sinking Fund Projects –

BVE- Bathroom fixtures, tile reviewed- full wall tile. Potential remodel of bathroom to allow for a shower.
Need to choose locker color at LAE- red or gray

2. Building and Grounds Modifications – No Update

B. Policy Committee – Superintendent Erfourth – FAFSA language looked over by the committee- requires all students to apply, but has exemptions available for different reasons including if there is a strong desire by family NOT to apply for FAFSA.

C. Finance Committee –Board of Education Treasurer, Matt Smith– No Update.

D. Parent Advisory Council – Board of Education Trustee, Sue Campana – The PAC will meet on Tuesday, January 20.

Met in January virtually- Updated on bond and sinking fund- talked about strategic plan- talked about PTO/PTS's coming together to collaborate.

Jeanette Pritchett-Discussion about enhanced diplomas because of what courses students are taking- Communities of study- can get an enhanced diploma if you complete certain groups of classes based on content of study. Incentivize kids to be involved in after school activities-potentially offering a half a credit if they spend a certain number of years in a "community". How would this be fulfilled at the Academy?

HHE- Little Caesars fundraiser- doubled their goal, fundraiser for BACN- Boxes of cereal- collected over 300. Movie night at Garden Theater

LAE- Little Caesars fundraiser just started to fund field trips.

Bronson Lake Rd- People do not follow the speed limit- possibility of a flashing light?

Early Childhood- asst. at HHE, enrolling summer camp, enrolling for fall, 12 IT spots, EC fair 18th of April

Academy 8th graders going to CTC/NMC

HS- DC trip- spaghetti fundraiser well attended. Band Boosters fundraiser at Up River happened on 31st- Band boosters doing Little Caesars as well.

MS- Dance was on the 31st.

E. Liaison – Board of Education Trustee, Greg Kempton – Greg shared the following: The committee discussed:

Talked about Staff safety survey-

Talked about 271 money- was distributed Jan 30th

Conferences in spring as well 26/27 school year

Discussed calendars

F. Ad Hoc – Campana Egeler –

Reached out to Danielle Banasiak for information on Sinking Fund to create a plan to get the word out about details of Sinking Fund millage ask. Has to be phrased as a "new" millage, but is a renewal with the addition of language to purchase buses. Working to dispel disinformation and educate community.

Potential to work with county to communicate information to general public.

G. Negotiations – Erfourth – No Update.

Audience Participation (Agenda Items Only) – NONE

Discussion Topics:

A. Current District Enrollment Summary Review – Exit Out v. Transfer In – Executive Assistant to the Superintendent/Pupil Accounting Specialist, Catina Crossman –

Catina was not in attendance but did supply an enrollment summary and entry/exit report.

Action Topics:

25-26-070 It was moved by Mr. Barnard and supported by Mrs. Campana to approve Certificate of Deposit – 7-Months - Not to exceed \$1M for Sinking Fund, not to Exceed \$1M general fund.

25-26-071 It was moved by Mrs. Gillison and supported by Mr. Barnard to approve the Chromebooks and Chromebook Carts Purchase - Not to exceed \$90,500.

Ayes:6 **Nays: 0** **Motion Carried**

Audience Participation (Open Topics): NONE

Board Communication:

• **NONE**

Announcements:

- February 11 – Supplemental Spring Count Day
- February 13 – Early Release
- February 16 – No School
- March 6, 7, 8 Fiddler on The Roof – High School Musical
- March 9 – Regular Board Meeting – 7:00 PM
- March 27- End of 3rd Marking Period
- April 13, 15, 16 – Kindergarten Round-Up
 - April 13 – Homestead Hills Elementary

- April 15 – Lake Ann Elementary
- April 16 – Betsie Valley Elementary

25-26-072 It was moved by Mrs. Campana and supported by Mr. Smith to adjourn the regular meeting at 8:45 PM.

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

Secretary, Board of Education

Please note that February 9, 2026 Regular Board Minutes are subject for approval on March 9, 2026.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lorraine M. Grossman

Catina M. Crossman

Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

Board of Education Administrative Assistant

Schools of Choice Coordinator

Pupil Accounting Specialist

Director of Communications

Benzie County Central Schools

Go Huskies!

Danielle Banasiak – Minutes 2/9/2026