

REGULAR MEETING

A Regular meeting of the Benzie County Central Board of Education was held Monday, October 13, 2025 in the Board of Education Conference Room.

President Childs called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

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

Members Absent: NONE

25-26-024 It was moved by Mr. Barnard and supported by Mr. Smith to approve the agenda

Ayes: 7

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.

25-26-025 It was moved by Mrs. Campana and supported by Mr. Egeler to approve Consent Grouping items as presented.

A. Minutes: September 8, 2025 Regular

B. Business: General Fund Bills – \$1,285,018.09

C. Support Staff Appointments:

- Zachary Tallman- 6.5 Paraprofessional – Betsie Valley Elementary
- Caryn Hall – 6.5 Paraprofessional – Lake Ann Elementary

D. Staff Assignment Changes:

- NONE

E. Leave of Absence:

- Lori Helms – FMLA – September 3, 2025 – October 20, 2025

F. Recommendation for Tenure:

- NONE

G. Recommendation for Termination following Probationary Period

- NONE

H. Recommendation for Termination:

- NONE

I. Contract Updates:

- NONE

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

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

The District Impact Team began the fall by discussing the district's ongoing Strategic Planning Process. Brian and Lori Pearson joined the group to provide an update on the plan's progress and next steps. The team also finalized its calendar of meetings and focus areas for the 2025–26 school year.

Much of the early work centered around reviewing data connected to the Strategic Plan and identifying additional information needed to strengthen school improvement efforts. The team prioritized expanding the data set to include Advanced Placement (AP) and dual enrollment participation, behavioral data drawn from MI School Data, early childhood enrollment numbers, Teach America data, and SELweb results to better represent the student experience.

Lake Ann presented a tuning protocol that focused on creating a school improvement plan with a focus on updated literacy and math goals. The discussion was about their problem of practice: How do we keep goals aligned with the district, gain buy-in from staff, and improve student success?

The Middle School's tuning protocol focused on academic acceleration, emphasizing strategies to close learning gaps and extend achievement in ELA. Alex shared the updated seventh-hour schedule, which now includes eight teachers grouping students by similar skill levels. Depending on each group's needs, instruction utilizes Sonday Systems, i-Ready, and Accelerated ELA. The discussion centered on how best to group students based on their i-Ready reading scores and what effective, teacher-driven i-Ready instruction should look like in practice.

We wrapped up by looking at our academic data. We started with i-Ready results for K–8 students in both math and reading, comparing this year's scores to last year's growth. That led to a good discussion about how we can better support the students who are still the farthest behind. We also reviewed the latest NWEA data and talked through some of the changes to the test and national norms that went into effect this fall. A key question that came up was whether we'll still be able to compare cohort data over time with these new adjustments. To close, we looked at Fall 2025 achievement scores in math and reading for grades 9–11 and compared them with last year's results to see where we're making progress and where we still have work to do.

Student Council Report: Student Council Board of Education Representative, Piper Barnard – Piper shared a post Homecoming update; both spirit week and the homecoming dance were higher in attendance than past years. The student council will now work on planning the holiday luncheons coming up.

Administration Report:

A. NMSLA – Superintendent Erfourth – Superintendent Erfourth shared the following: The group discussed the recent budget that was passed by our legislature. Conversation centered on the unknowns with boilerplate language as well as areas that our northern delegation would like to lift in a letter to legislators. Core topics were MIPSERS offset, categorical funds vs competitive grants, one-time allocations, and removing funds from state aid to cover higher education.

B. Strategic Plan Update- Superintendent Erfourth and stakeholders met with Brian and Lori Pearson from Alpine Education this past Wednesday. About 40 people participated, including Matt Smith and Greg Kempton. The team worked on providing suggestions for updating the mission, vision, and belief statements based on the perception data. Perception data and compiled data were reviewed. Groups reviewed data sets for people data, academic data, financial data, student experience, and student support data. The next step is to take this compiled data to the DIT team on October 28, at which time a four-hour meeting will take place.

C. Michigan College Access Coordinator (MCAN) Advisor Update- Ariana Heath – Ariana introduced herself as our new MCAN Advisor. MCAN's mission is to increase college readiness, participation, and completion rates in Michigan, with a specific focus on low-income students, first-generation college-going students, and students of color. It aims to ensure all Michigan residents have the opportunity to access and succeed in postsecondary education to build a stronger state economy. Ariana will focus on postsecondary, whether it be Trades, Associates Degrees, or college with emphasis that four years of college is not your only option. Ariana will support Benzie Central students through June 26, 2026.

D. Lake Ann Elementary Update – Principal, Sharyl Corey – Mrs. Corey shared student assessment data, increased attendance rates on Foundation Friday's, the success and support of the Lake Ann Elementary Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO), spirit week attendance, their positive Family Night experiences, and how it is supporting family involvement.

E. Resignations:

- NONE

F. Retirements:

- NONE

Board of Education/Committee Reports –

A. Buildings and Grounds Committee

1. Sinking Fund Projects – President Brian Childs shared the following:

Project 1 – Betsie Valley Remodeling (Kitchen, Canopy, and Restrooms)

Graham Construction Inc. \$983,115

Grand Traverse Construction \$676,360 (Low Bid)

Spence Brothers \$798,000

Triangle Associates Inc. \$716,500

Project 2 – Corridor Locker Replacement

Brainard Enterprises \$413,190 (Low Bid)

Elite Storage Products \$411,500 (Non-compliant bid)

Grand Traverse Construction \$436,200

Spence Brothers \$502,000

Symons Industries \$540,000

Triangle Associates Inc. \$452,700

Project 3 – High School/Middle School Window Replacement

Hallmark Construction Inc. \$ 79,800 (Low Bid)

Triangle Associates Inc. \$ 88,600

Project 4 – High School Soffit Remodeling

Graham Construction \$ 46,600

Triangle Associates Inc. \$ 22,275 (Low Bid)

Post bid interviews were conducted between September 25 and 29, 2025 to verify the low bidders and included all the project scope required and the resources necessary to complete the work in accordance with the desired construction schedule.

Triangle Associates Inc. had a reduction of \$925 to their bid for demolition at the High School that is being provided by the District.

Based on review of the submitted bid proposals, the information verified during post-bid interviews, and the satisfactory past performance of these contractors, Kingscott Associates, Inc. recommends Benzie County Central Schools Board of Education award contracts for the work as follows:

Project 1 – Betsie Valley Remodeling (Kitchen, Canopy, and Restrooms)

Grand Traverse Construction \$676,360

Project 2 – Corridor Locker Replacement

Brainard Enterprises \$413,190

**Project 3 – High School / Middle School Window Replacement
Hallmark Construction Inc. \$ 79,800**

**Project 4 – High School Soffit Remodeling
Triangle Associates Inc. \$ 22,275**

TOTAL \$1,191,625

In addition to the base bid proposals noted above, the following ADD alternate bids were received and are presented here for the District's consideration:

**Alternate 1 – Additional Wall Tile at Betsie Valley Restrooms Grand Traverse
Construction \$ 10,550**

Alternate 2 – New Lay-in Ceiling at Betsie Valley Kitchen Grand Traverse Construction \$ 6,460

Alternate 3 – Additional Windows at HS/MS Hallmark Construction Inc. \$125,000

We are recommending the Board approve all projects and the 3 additional alternates. This will be funded by sinking fund dollars.

On behalf of Athletic Director, Eli Harris, Catina Crossman shared the following: The track is receiving its final coat in which it will need a day or two to set. Plastic will be removed on Thursday, with striping taking place next week.

- B. Policy Committee – Superintendent Erfourth – No Update.**
- C. Finance Committee –Board of Education Treasurer, Matt Smith– No Update.**
- D. Parent Advisory Council – Board of Education Trustee, Sue Campana – Sue shared that they met last August, and the next meeting is October 27.**
- E. Liaison – Board of Education Trustee, Greg Kempton – The committee met on September 16. Superintendent Erfourth created a document for all administrators and union reps to log issues discussed with the administrators prior to it being brought to the superintendent. This ensures the chain of command is being followed; how can someone address an issue, if it isn't brought to their attention? Discussion on how paraprofessional time is allocated based on needs (class sizes, IEP's, etc), discussed communication tools at buildings and the need for weekly communication. Discussion on upcoming Professional Development and a possible committee to meet to plan teacher led PD, prep time and meetings during prep time was discussed. Prep time is valuable, and teachers would like it protected. There was**

discussion including times when meetings like IEP's and student intervention meetings may be held during Prep time since it is planning for students. There was discussion surrounding evaluations, and the superintendent contract was discussed. The committee inquired on the length of the superintendent contract and wanted to know when it would be posted on the transparency page of the website.

F. Negotiations – Superintendent 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 shared that count day was October 1. Her anticipated fall count certification is 1,138 students and 1,132 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE). The full-time equivalent is the per pupil allotment. In Michigan, the pure pupil allotment is the foundation allowance per pupil, which is multiplied by a school district's State Aid Membership, or pupil blend count, to determine the total foundation allowance. The pupil blend count is generally calculated using 90% of the current year's fall FTE and 10% of the preceding year's supplemental February FTE. Full-Time Equivalency (FTE) is a measure of student attendance, with specific rules for calculating it, particularly for special education students. Catina explained the thirty-day count window in regard to excused vs. unexcused attendance, and the possibility of Section 25 within. Section 25 allows school districts to claim pro-rated full-time equivalency for students transferring after the Fall Pupil Membership Count Day. Mrs. Crossman added that this fall remains different than most in the past, as we continue to drop students whether it be to in-state, out-of-state, or homeschool. Homeschool is big this fall. We are down 5 students since count day.

B. Foxbright Website Update – Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, Catina Crossman – Catina shared an update on the new website platform. Catina is pleased to announce that it went live and was officially launched on September 19. She feels it is more user friendly for users, and easier to navigate on the backend for herself. All information is current and compliant. With the switch of webpage platforms, some documents from the transparency page were lost. We continue to work toward uploading those documents as well as approved financial documents.

Action Topics:

25-26-026 It was moved by Mr. Smith and supported by Mr. Egeler to approve Grand Traverse Construction for the Betsie Valley Remodeling; Kitchen, Canopy, and Restrooms, with lay in ceiling and added wall tile for alternates 1 & 2.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

25-26-027 It was moved by Mr. Barnard and supported by Mr. Gillison to approve Brainard Enterprises for the Corridor Locker Replacement.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

25-26-028 It was moved by Mr. Egeler and supported by Mrs. Campana to approve Hallmark Construction for the High School/Middle School Window Replacement, with alternate 3 for additional windows.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

25-26-029 It was moved by Mrs. Campana and supported by Mr. Smith to approve Triangle Associates for the High School Soffit remodeling.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

25-26-030 It was moved by Mr. Barnard and supported by Mr. Smith to approve to go into *Closed Session for purposes of Superintendent Erfourth Goal Review* after Audience Participation (Open Topics).

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

Audience Participation (Open Topics): Alex Byland, Middle School Principal asked to share a brief update. His objective was to review BCMS's progress for behavior data and discuss action steps. The roadmap of activities was as follows: Behavior Data Review, Restorative Practices, M-STEP/PSAT data review, and action steps going forward.

Courtney Gillison, 18433 Butwell Rd., Bear Lake – Courtney shared her concern regarding student discipline and behavior issues. On behalf of the parents of students within the Homestead Hills School, I am writing to express our growing concern about the ongoing discipline and behavior issues occurring within our schools. Over the past several years, we have witnessed or heard numerous reports of disruptive behavior, lack of respect for teachers and staff, and in too many cases, incidents that have created an unsafe and unsettling environment for our children. She urged the Board of Education to review and strengthen the district's discipline procedures, provide additional out of classroom support, communicate with parents and community members, and prioritize student and staff safety. A written document was received and made available to the Board of Education.

Closed Session for purposes of Superintendent Erfourth Goal Review. 8:30 PM

25-26-031 It was moved by Mr. Barnard and supported by Mr. Smith to approve to go back into *Open Session*. 9:16 PM.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

Board Communication:

- President Brian Childs discussed Board of Education attendance for the months of November and December given personal commitments, wanting to ensure that a quorum would be present.

Announcements:

1. October 24 – Early Release
2. October 30 – 12th Grade Career Expo – Crystal Mountain
3. November 7 – End of 1st Marking Period
4. November 10 – Regular Board Meeting – 7:00 PM

25-26-032 It was moved by Mr. Smith and supported by Mr. Egeler to adjourn the regular meeting at 9:20 pm.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

Secretary, Board of Education

Please note that October 13, 2025 Regular Board Minutes are subject for approval on November 10, 2025.

Respectfully Submitted,



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!