

REGULAR MEETING

A Regular meeting of the Benzie County Central Board of Education was held Monday, September 14, 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. Kempton, Mrs. Campana, Mr. Egeler, Mr. Barnard, Keelin Rineer (Non-voting member)

Members Absent: Mr. Smith

26-27-016 It was moved by Mr. Barnard and supported by Mr. Egeler to approve the agenda as presented.

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.

26-27-017 It was moved by Mrs. Campana and supported by Mr. Smith to approve Consent Grouping items as presented.

A. Minutes: August 10, 2026 Regular

B. Business: General Fund Bills – \$806,580.97

C. Support Staff Appointments:

- Josephine Johnston – Head Middle School Volleyball Coach
- Abigail Smith – Permanent Building Substitute – High School
- Zachary Jajo – Permanent Building Substitute – Middle School
- Paige Sauer – Permanent Building Substitute -Homestead Hills Elementary
- Emily Pangborn – Permanent Building Substitute – Lake Ann Elementary
- Josephine Johnston – High School Student Council Advisor
- Tracy Hammar – Elementary Teacher – 3rd Grade– Lake Ann Elementary
- Jamilya Goree – Elementary Teacher – 4th Grade – Lake Ann Elementary
- Michaila-Ann Zachman – Long-Term Substitute Teacher – Choral Director – Middle School – High School
- Danielle Northrup – Early Childhood PRK Assistant Teacher – Lake Ann Elementary
- Julie Sullivan – Bus Driver – Transportation Department

- Isabella Marranca – Strong Beginnings Assistant Teacher – Homestead Hills Elementary
 - Patricia Hunsinger – 6.5 Paraprofessional – Betsie Valley Elementary
- D. Staff Assignment Changes:
- Mikyla Bates – Willsub to Benzie Employee – Early Childhood Lead Teacher Infant/Toddler
 - Elle Robinson – Willsub to Benzie Employee – Early Childhood Assistant Teacher
 - Renee Brayton – Lake Ann Elementary – 3rd Grade to 4th Grade
 - Cassondra Bentley – adding Homestead Hills Elementary – Special Education
 - Jeannie Brooks – Early Childhood Summer Camp – Homestead Hills Elementary to Early Childhood Aide – Lake Ann Elementary
- E. Leave of Absence:
- NONE
- F. Recommendation for Tenure:
- Hannah Harden
 - Kathryn Hohfeldt
 - Olivia Barnes
- 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, Greg Kempton shared the following: No Update. The first meeting will take place tomorrow, September 15.

Student Council Report: Student Council Board of Education Representative, Keelin Rineer – Keelin shared that student council has not yet started, as Kirsten Cline resigned from student council advisor, and Josephine Johnston is taking over that role. The Interact Club has met once, and the Athletic Leadership Council has not met yet. Keelin shared that there was not too much enthusiasm amongst the student body regarding the new cellphone policy and having to leave them in lockers during instructional time. However, the new locks arrived today, and that may improve the overall feeling.

Administration Report:

- A. NMSLA – Superintendent Erfourth shared the following:** Guest speaker, John Sellek, a top political analyst in Michigan and one half of “Baldly Bipartisain”, shared his thoughts on the latest happenings in Michigan politics. House Bill 5803 would make changes to the definition of a childcare center in a public school and would allow our school regulations to cover the childcare center instead of duplicating regulations. Proposed Senate Bill 1136 Public Employee Health Care would change language about all public employee’s health care and would create a floor and not a ceiling by removing the 80/20 hard cap language. NMSLA will work on alternative language. NMSLA is also watching a bill about seclusion and restraint language changes.
- B. Homestead Hills Elementary Update – Principal, Steve Graetz – Steve shared the [Homestead Hills Elementary Strategic Plan Update](#).**
- C. High School Update – Principal, Cheryl Smith – Cheryl shared the [High School Strategic Plan Update](#).**
- D. High School Hiking Club – Overnight Trip – Principal, Cheryl Smith and Bo Stewart.** Bo shared that he started the hiking club last spring. They planned a monthly hiking trip. This year, they would like to continue the one monthly, perhaps partnering with the National Parks during the winter months to incorporate snowshoeing. This fall, students asked if they could plan an overnight Pictured Rocks hike in the Upper Peninsula. The trip would be September 26 and 27. Currently, Mr. Stewart has three chaperones locked in, with a possible fourth. He would require parent permission for transportation. The cost of the trip is \$70.00 per student to cover the lodging fee. Meals would be on their own. There are 16 students interested, with the possibility of 5 more.
- E. Strategic Plan Update – Superintendent Erfourth – Amiee shared the [District Strategic Plan Update](#).**
- F. Resignations:**
- Kirsten Cline – High School Student Council Advisor
 - Bonita Eickenroth – 6.5 Paraprofessional – Betsie Valley Elementary-Never started
 - Tonia Puga – Softball Coach – Middle School
 - Susan Payne – Secondary Paraprofessional – Middle School – Never started
 - Alexander Byland – Principal – Middle School – Effective November 24, 2026
 - Steven Lowry – Transportation Department – Bus Driver – Effective September 10, 2026

G. Retirements:

- NONE

Board of Education/Committee Reports –

A. Buildings and Grounds Committee – Smith/Kempton

Sinking Fund Projects/ Construction Update: Superintendent Erfourth shared that the windows, canopy, kitchen and bathrooms have been completed. The lockers are just missing even numbers in the 100's. There are some punch list items left to complete.

Lockers at the MS and HS just need wooden bases installed as well as rubber molding and then they will be complete.

We are still working on ongoing issues with concrete.

1. Building and Grounds Modifications – NONE

B. Policy Committee – Superintendent Erfourth – No Update.

C. Finance Committee –Board of Education Treasurer, Shannon Gillison–
Shannon shared that the audit is wrapping up, and that Julia plans to present at the November meeting. Director of Finance, Danielle Banasiak is attending the Inland Township meeting this evening to answer any questions around the sinking fund and operational millage proposals.

D. Parent Advisory Council – Board of Education Trustee, Sue Campana –
Superintendent Erfourth shared that the parent/community survey went out, but not many have taken it yet.

E. Liaison – Board of Education Trustee, Dave Egeler – Dave shared that the next meeting is September 21.

F. Ad Hoc – Campana/Egeler – Dave shared that there is a continued push to get information out about the sinking fund and operational millage proposals.

G. Negotiations – Erfourth – 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 the enrollment summary and entry/exit report as of September 10. Currently, there are 1214 in our student information system. She explained the subtracting of related services, Infant/Toddler, PK3, and PK4. That adjustment lands at 1,076 K-12 pupils. Today marks our 11th day of school, and 10 consecutive unexcused absent students will be dropped tomorrow, 9/15. Mrs. Crossman believes we will have around 1,065 students reported in the fall count on October 7. She plans to take a closer look at Early Childhood data and track numbers for PK4 transitioning to Kindergarten.**

Action Topics:

26-27-018 It was moved by Mrs. Campana and supported by Mrs. Gillison to approve the High School Hiking Club Overnight Trip – Upper Peninsula

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

26-27-019 It was moved by Mr. Barnard and supported by Mr. Egeler to table the approval of the 2026-2028 Transportation contract until October.

Ayes:6

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

Audience Participation (Open Topics): - Marc Alderman shared that VEX and Robotics Education & Competition Foundation RECF have separated. Husky Robotics is proud to announce that they will be partnering with the Robotics Education & Competition Foundation for the 2026-2027 season. This means our MS teams will compete in Engage: Tier Takeover and our HS teams will compete in Achieve: Pinnacle.

Elijah Raab, Cleon St. Copemish – Elijah inquired as to the timeline of the senior hallway lockers being completed, making note of the wooden bases.

He shared that this was his first time at a Board of Education meeting and that listening to all of the members talk was very insightful. He feels other students should attend and he feels it would be pretty cool if we incentivize it.

Board Communication: Mr. Egeler asked about school safety and wondered if we had a BTAM team in place as this is a State requirement as of October 1. Superintendent Erfourth shared that they have Behavior Threat Assessment and Management (BTAM) teams in place at all of the school buildings and have been following the BTAM guidance/practices for over 3 years.

Announcements:

- **Early Release – September 25**
- **Parent-Teacher Conferences – October 8 & 9**
- **Homecoming Game – October 9**
- **Homecoming Dance – October 10 - 7:00 PM – 10:00 PM**
- **Regular Board of Education Meeting – October 12 – 7:00 PM**

26-27-020 It was moved by Mr. Barnard and supported by Mr. Egeler to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 9:11 PM.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

Secretary, Board of Education

Please note that September 14, 2026 Regular Board Minutes are subject for approval on October 12, 2026.

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!