REGULAR MEETING

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

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

Members Present: Mr. Smith, Mrs. Gillison, Mr. Kempton, Mrs. Campana, Mr. Egeler, Mr. Childs, Keelin Rineer (Non-voting member)

Members Absent: Mr. Barnard

26-27-025 **It was moved by Mr. Barnard and supported by Mr. Egeler to approve the agenda with the following amendments: Adding Mike Zielinski to Consent Grouping E. Leave of Absence – October 23, 2026 through January 18, 2027 and Administration Report G. moving to A. with all others to follow as presented on 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.

26-27-026 **It was moved by Mr. Egeler and supported by Mrs. Campana to approve Consent Grouping items as presented.**

A. Minutes: October 12, 2026 Regular

B. Business: General Fund Bills – $1,010,756.39

C. Support Staff Appointments:

- **Marshall Lambertson – Transportation Department – Substitute Bus Driver**
- **Morgan Bradley – Early PreK Classroom Assistant – Lake Ann Elementary**
- **Jenna Granfors – Infant/Toddler Assistant Teacher – Lake Ann Elementary**

D. Staff Assignment Changes:

1. **Karlee Harris – 5.5 to 6.5 Paraprofessional – Lake Ann Elementary – Effective November 2, 2026**
2. **Erika Frederick – 5.5 Paraprofessional – Lake Ann Elementary – Effective November 2, 2026**

E. Leave of Absence:

- **Mikel McDonald – Custodian – Betsie Valley Elementary – Extended FMLA – Effective October 5, 2026 through TBD**

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, Greg Kempton shared the following:

I am impressed with how the meetings are ran. Everyone in the room participates and offers great feedback. Presentations are done well and the information that is presented probably takes a good amount of time to put together for the meeting. This past month we have had 3 meetings, one was canceled due to outside events.

Oct 13

Middle school and Lake Ann had its turning protocol presentation and presentation about General Supervision.

Middle school has 3 goals with a focus on instruction, attendance, and replicating math labs for reading interventions.

Reading had growth across the board.

Goal for spring 2027 to have 40 percent on grade or above in math.

Since 2024 to present math proficiency has gone done.

Large percentage of students are 3 plus grade levels below in math. Above 30 percent in all three grades.

Lake Ann Elementary problem of practice is how to support continuous learning and build capacity for all staff around teacher clarity.

Some teachers have a lot of experience and already know the information is being shared and want to make sure everyone at whatever level they are at is walking away with something to improve their instruction.

General Supervision:
Benzie scored needs intervention and the primary reason was performance. The performance data, MSTEP scores for students with IEP'S as well as our graduation rates vs. dropout rates.

October 20

ISSN Intensive student support network.

The goal is the same from the previous year with support and enhance the care, support safety and membership of all students and staff at Benzie County Central Schools.

Social Emotional Learning Web Survey results:

This survey shared tons of information that show kids are learning skills to deal with situations. However, one aspect of the survey that was noticed as alarming was the percent of students showing high and moderate stress levels. In grades 9-11 around 50 percent were identified for this and 40 percent were12th graders.

Homestead Hills Turning Protocol

Problem attendance.

Goal is to increase daily attendance from 91 percent to 93 percent. Decrease chronic absenteeism from 34 percent to 25 percent.

As of the end of September, the goal is being met

Things have been added to ensure that the students are feeling welcomed and missed when they are not there.

Nov 3

Elementary SEL data
Two Graphs Early Elementary. Skills show 85 plus % percent average and above average with these skills.

Climate survey shows that 20 percent across the 6 categories are below average.

Classes with listening circles with building the community has data that supports that it impacts the students on the SEL survey if you were to look at it through classroom.

Upper Elementary data on the graph. 80 percent are average and above average on skills and opinion on the climate.

- **Students report meaningful strengths in caring for others, maintaining relationships, and making responsible decisions.**
- **Their greater challenges involve managing stress, regulating emotions, asking for help, and slowing down before reacting.**

Betsie Valley protocol

- **Problem of Practice-How might we strengthen a consistent, proactive, and restorative schoolwide approach to behavior that equips students with the skills to demonstrate REPS, supports staff in responding with confidence and consistency, and empowers every student to contribute to a safe, inclusive, and empathetic school community?**
- **Non-compliance, physical aggression, disruption top three areas to problem solve.**
- **Motivation avoiding tasks and seeking attention.**
- **Trying multiple tactics with rewarding the positive behaviors and finding opportunities for students who are having issues to be successful.**

Student Council Report: Student Council Board of Education Representative, Keelin Rineer – Keelin shared that things are finally starting to pick-up. They held elections for positions and picked positions for all grades but the freshmen, because there aren't enough freshmen. A goal is to have more students join.

Positions are as follows:

<u>Seniors:</u>
Student Council President-Keelin Rineer
Class President-Jasper Henry
Class Vice-President- Lucas Banega
Student Council Secretary-Ava Higgins
Student Council Treasurer- Madison Swander

<u>Juniors:</u>
Class President-Avery Kelly
Class Vice-President- Maddy Gauthier
Student Council Secretary- Ams Mosher
Student Council Treasurer- Maggie McClellan

<u>Sophomores:</u>
Class President- Violet Atkinson
Class Vice-President-Adaline Birdsall
Student Council Secretary- Willow Burns
Student Council Treasurer- Alexia Thetford

For Thanksgiving, they are planning to construct a paper tree on the wall, and allow students to write out what it is they are grateful for.

Holiday activity planning is underway for the day before we dismiss for break.

Administration Report:

A. **NMSLA – Superintendent Erfourth shared the following: this was their first meeting since the elections. The "Blue Wave" was discussed as a historic vote with power transferring to Democrats for House, Senate, and Governor's office. There is a super majority that will impact bills and the movement on legislation. One area to watch is the health care changes to insurance caps. This could have a big impact on classrooms as the cost of insurance would be passed onto Districts and could then impact the number of staff that they could afford. The key priorities to Northern Michigan schools remain on MIPSERs retirement offset, transportation, and weighted formula funding.**

B. **2025/26 Audit Review - Julie Burks – Dennis, Gartland, Niergarth -**

Ms. Burks presented a high-level review of BCCS's Financial Net Position.
The audit was issued the week of October 20th, 2026 with an unmodified opinion, which is the highest level of assurance. On a government-wide basis the district had an increase in net position of $5.1 million. At a fund level, the overall fund balance increased $4,655. General Fund balance increased by $114,243. The Food Service Fund's fund balance is within the limits of the allowable balance, eliminating the need for a spend down plan for FY27. The District continues to spend more dollars per pupil for instruction and supporting service than the state average. In conclusion, the District has a healthy fund balance in its general fund and is in a good financial position.

C. **Superintendent Goals Update – Superintendent Erfourth – Superintendent Erfourth shared an update on the activities and work she has done on her goal areas that include monitoring data, performance evaluations for staff, monitoring time available to adequately implement programs, managing fiscal resources, and perception data from students, staff, families, and community.**

D. **Election Results – Appointed Board of Education Seat Discussion – Given that Dave Egeler was elected for a 6-year term beginning January 1, 2027, that leaves his current appointed seat vacant through 2028. The Board of Education will hold a special meeting on Tuesday, November 17, at 5:15 to hold interviews and take an action on this appointment.**

E. **West Michigan Health Insurance Pool – Director of Finance, Danielle Banasiak – Danielle shared the following: Benzie County Central Schools is transitioning its Non-Union, Early Childhood, and Custodial employee groups from SET SEG to**

the Western Michigan Health Insurance Pool (WMHIP), commonly known as *The Pool*. WMHIP is a Michigan-based health insurance cooperative that provides public-sector employers with collective purchasing power and opportunities for improved cost management. The transition allows the District to offer health insurance options through both Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan (BCBSM) and Priority Health, providing employees with greater flexibility and comparable coverage at reduced premium costs. The change is expected to benefit participating employees through lower payroll deductions without increasing the District's health insurance contributions. This transition reflects the District's continued commitment to providing quality, affordable employee benefits while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

F. Betsie Valley Elementary Update – Principal, Lisa Migazzi – Lisa shared the Betsie Valley Elementary Strategic Plan Update.

G. Benzie Academy Update – Principal, Cheryl Smith – Cheryl shared the Benzie Academy Strategic Plan Update.

H. NWEA Update – Principal, Cheryl Smith – Cheryl shared the following NWEA Update.

I. Resignations:

- **Elle Robinson – Assistant GSRP Teacher – Homestead Hills Elementary – Effective October 14, 2026**
- **Jalen Williams – Science Olympiad Advisor – High School – Effective October 28, 2026**
- **Bryce Ropp – Elementary Music and Physical Education Teacher – Effective January 22, 2027**
- **Rich Gottardo – Football Coach – Middle School**
- **Liam Jones – Head Coach – Middle School Wrestling**

J. Retirements:

- **Sharyl Corey – Principal – Lake Ann Elementary – Effective June 30, 2027**

Board of Education/Committee Reports –

A. Buildings and Grounds Committee – Smith/Kempton – Superintendent Erfourth shared the following: Many of the punch list items at Betsie Valley were completed on November 2. Remaining items at Betsie Valley include lowering the urinals, shelving in the kitchen, and completing the base for lockers. Work for these projects are planned for November 24-25. Base for lockers at the MS and HS are also planned for the upcoming break.

1. **Building and Grounds Modifications – NONE**

B. Policy Committee – Superintendent Erfourth – The committee will plan to meet regarding the possible updating of the attendance policy.

C. Finance Committee –Board of Education Treasurer, Shannon Gillison– Shannon mentioned the 13-month finding, and correcting it going forward. The audit finding related to unprepared financial statements was regarding the use of the "13th month" in the accounting software. The 13th month is an additional accounting period used after the close of the fiscal year to record year-end adjustments without affecting transactions in the new fiscal year. This did not function as expected, resulting in additional audit adjustments and the finding. She also added that a Budget Amendment would be happening soon due to the non-supported millages.

D. Parent Advisory Council – Board of Education Trustee, Sue Campana – Sue shared the following update:

St. Clair Butterfly Foundation

- **Chip and Lisa detailed how the Butterfly Foundation is working within the schools over the next three years. Work has already begun with BAT (Butterfly Action Teams) training/support for students dealing with trauma.**
- **"There is no little "t" or big "T" in trauma; there's trauma." Trauma in our students ranges from food/housing insecurity to violence in the home, and everything in between.**
- **What this looks like: 13-second check-in/reset "vagal break" before the beginning of the school day. This is a 4-second inhale, 2-second hold, 7-second exhale; this action resets the vagus nerve. (Wings up/Wings Down.)**

Strategic Plan Parent Survey

Amiee shared the latest survey results

PTA Meeting/Potential Fundraiser-Queen of Hearts

Discussion of whether or not to hold a combined meeting of all PTO/PTA/PTS to collaborate on fundraisers and events. One fundraiser discussed was the Queen of Hearts

Roundtable

Betsie Valley: Boo Festival Friday, Oct. 23, as well as a blanket fundraiser
Homestead Hills: Fall Party Friday, Oct. 30
Early Childhood: All students received a pumpkin

Next Meeting

Nov. 18th – 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM – Board of Education Conference Room
No Dec. meeting

E. Liaison – Board of Education Trustee, Dave Egeler – Dave shared the following update:

During October, the Liaison Committee received additional information and clarification on several ongoing matters.

First, administration provided clarification concerning student-growth measures used in teacher evaluations. Different potential expectations for the percentage of students meeting their individualized growth goals were discussed, but no formal recommendation was made.

Second, there was follow-up concerning parent-teacher conference scheduling, professional development participation, and opportunities to improve communication and meeting preparation between administration and staff.

Third, the district received additional information regarding the St. Clair Butterfly Foundation's Kaleidoscope AI program. The information addressed its voluntary use, data storage, security procedures, and guidance against entering personally identifiable student information.

Our next Liaison Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, November 16.

F. Ad Hoc – Campana/Egeler – Dave shared that they did their best regarding getting factual information out there. He feels the Ad Hoc committee should probably just disband for now.

G. Negotiations – Erfourth – Superintendent Erfourth – No Update.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION (Agenda Items Only) – Marc Alderman, Teacher and Robotics Advisor shared that the Engage: Tier Takeover Tournament for Husky Robotics that was originally scheduled for November 14, 2026, will now be held on January 9, 2027.

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 Friday, November 6. Currently, there are 1,190 in our student information system. She explained the subtracting of related services, Infant/Toddler, PK3, and PK4. That adjustment lands at 1,056 K-12 pupils. Two students have since dropped, with the potential for two more. Since our October meeting, we are down 14 students. Mrs. Crossman

pointed out that enrollment and withdrawals have been different than in past years, with many of them still happening well into November. Students are moving to or are choosing to school of choice to other in-state districts. Several have moved out of state, and there is an influx of homeschool withdrawals. She explained the Graduation and Drop-Out Audit, and the importance of being diligent in tracking this homeschool documentation. Enrollment continues to decline.

B. Concrete Repairs – Superintendent Erfourth shared an update regarding the meeting on November 3 with Wolgast- Chris Kuhl, Kingscott- DanTryles, Schepers- Chris Scheper, President Brian Childs, Vice President Matt Smith, and Assistant Maintenance Director, Barrie Kreiner. During the meeting, the group reviewed the concerns with concrete at the Transportation Department, spalling concrete at the High School front entrance, crumbling concrete at the student parking lot, and the concrete already replaced by the weight room. Schepers offered to grind and seal the concrete and provide a 5-year warranty. Discussion also led to covering the cost they would have incurred to replace the weight room sidewalk and Lake Ann Preschool sidewalk. Superintendent Erfourth shared her concerns that all of the concrete appears to be at varying stages of disrepair. The concrete work at Homestead Hills Elementary was done around the same time and does not show the same signs of wear and spalling. Schepers stated they would send an email outlining what they would commit to doing. The email failed to address the newly replaced concrete that the District paid for, as well as it did not include sidewalk work at the High School and did not address a long-term plan for the concrete at the Transportation Department. The Transportation Department is still under warranty and Superintendent Erfourth shared they had sent a demand letter to Schepers and asked that Wolgast Construction Management also send a demand before the warranty expires in December. Kingscott had previously issued a letter stating the concrete was not meeting expectations.

Action Topics:

26-27-027 It was moved by D. Egeler and supported by S. Gillison to approve the 2025/2026 Audit Review.
Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

26-27-028 It was moved by S. Campana and supported by M. Smith to join West Michigan Health Insurance Pool – Non-Union, Early Childhood, and Custodians – Effective 1/1/2027.
Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

26-27-029 Approval to approve concrete repairs was rejected. No vote was taken. The Board of Education is seeking a proposal/contract, rather than an email. Terms and conditions will not be approved as presented by Schepers Concrete.
~~Ayes: 0 Nays: 0 Motion Carried~~

Audience Participation (Open Topics): - Judy Bussey, 13-B UniServ Director – Michigan Education Association, spoke on behalf of the transportation bargaining unit. Judy shared that the most important job of a bus driver is to keep the students safe. They would appreciate it if communications and concerns were shared with them by the district, rather than by the parents.

Board Communication: NONE

- **Announcements:**
    - **Arsenic and Old Lace | High School Play – November 13 & 14 – 7:00 PM**
    - **Engage: Tier Takeover Tournament – Husky Robotics – November 14 cancelled, Now January 9, 2027**
    - **National Honor Society & Athletic Letter Club Induction – November 17**
    - **Versiti Blood Drive – November 24 – 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM**
    - **Thanksgiving Break – November 25-27**
    - **Early Release – December 4**
    - **Regular Board of Education Meeting – December 14**

26-27-030 It was moved by Mr. Egeler and supported by Mr. Smith to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 9:11 PM.

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

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Secretary, Board of Education

Please note that November 9, 2026 Regular Board Minutes are subject for approval on December 14, 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!