

ANNUAL NOTIFICATIONS 2025/2026

❖ **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

Per 34 C.F.R. § 99.37(d), a school or school district may adopt a limited directory information policy. If a school or school district does so, the directory information notice to parents and eligible students must specify the parties who may receive directory information and/or the purposes for which directory information may be disclosed.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that Benzie Central Schools, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent prior to the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, Benzie Central may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised to the contrary in accordance with Benzie Central's procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow Benzie Central to include information from your child's education records in certain school publications. Examples include:

- A playbill, showing your student's role in a drama production;
- The annual yearbook;
- Honor roll or other recognition lists;
- Graduation programs; and
- Sports activity sheets.

Directory information, which is information that is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that manufacture class rings or publish yearbooks or organizations that provide driver's training education. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information – names, addresses and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent [These laws are Section 9528 of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. § 7908) and 10 U.S.C. § 503(c)].

Disclosure of "Directory Information"

Except as otherwise stated in Board Policy 8330 (student records), school officials may disclose "directory information" without the prior written consent of a parent or eligible student unless the parent or eligible student specifically notifies the District that the parent or eligible student does not consent to the disclosure of directory information.

If you do not want Benzie Central to disclose any or all of the types of information designated below as directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent, you must notify Benzie Central in writing. The Board designates the following as directory information:

- Student name and address
- Telephone numbers
- Student's date and place of birth
- Student's major field of study
- Student's participation in official recognized activities and sports
- Student athletes' height and weight
- Dates of attendance
- Date of graduation
- Student honors, awards, degrees and scholarships earned
- Student honor roll designations
- Photographs and videos of students participating in school activities, events or programs
- Other information generally found in yearbooks

❖ Concussion Awareness

To provide for the safety of student athletes, all athletic programs of the district shall comply either with the concussion protocols of the Michigan High School Athletic Association, or the protocols set forth in AG 5340.01, which shall meet all the requirements of state law and Department of Community Health guidelines regarding concussion awareness training and protection for youth athletes. The district shall comply with whichever standards are more protective.

The Michigan High School Athletic Association is providing athletic participants at each MHSAA member junior high/middle school and high school with insurance that is intended to pay accident medical expense benefits resulting from concussion. The suspected concussion must be sustained while the athlete is participating in an MHSAA in-season covered activity (practice or competition). This program intends to assure that all eligible student-athletes in MHSAA member schools in grades 7 through 12, male and female, in all levels of all sports under the jurisdiction of the MHSAA, receive prompt and professional attention for head injury events even if the child is uninsured or under-insured. Accident medical deductibles and co-pays left unpaid by other policies may be reimbursed under this program. For additional information, please contact our Benzie Central Athletic Director, Eli Harris, at 231-882-4497.

❖ Pesticide Application

State of Michigan law requires that schools and daycare centers that may apply pesticides on school or daycare property must provide an annual notification to parents or guardians of students attending the facility.

Please be advised that the Benzie County Central Schools utilizes an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) approach to control pests. IPM is a pest management system that utilizes all suitable techniques in a total pest management system with the intent of preventing pests from reaching unacceptable levels or to reduce an existing population to an acceptable level. Pest management techniques emphasize sanitation, pest exclusion, and biological controls. One of the objectives of using an IPM approach is to reduce or eliminate the need for chemical applications of pesticides. However, certain situations may require the need for pesticides to be utilized.

As required by State of Michigan law, the school or daycare will provide advance notice regarding the non-emergency application of a pesticide such as an insecticide, fungicide or herbicide, other than a bait or gel formulation, that is made to the school or daycare buildings or grounds. Advance notice will be provided, even during periods when not in session. Advance notice is not given for the use of sanitizers, germicides, disinfectants or anti-microbial cleaners. In certain emergencies, such as an infestation of stinging insects, pesticides may be applied without advance notice to prevent injury to students, but the school or daycare will provide notice following any such application.

Advance notice of pesticide applications, other than a bait or gel formulation, will be given by at least 2 methods by which advance notice of the applications of a pesticide will be given at least 48 hours before the application. The first method will be by posting at the main entrance to the school / early childhood center, which is located at 9300 Homestead Rd. Benzonia, MI., 49616. The second method will be by the method(s) checked below:

- ☐ Posting information on the school website and emailed monthly in the district E-Newsletter, The Husky Hub

Please be advised that parents or guardians of children attending the school or day care center are entitled to receive the advance notice of a pesticide application, other than a bait or gel formulation, by first class United States mail postmarked at least 3 days before the pesticide application, if they so request. If you prefer to receive the notification by first class mail, please contact Catina Crossman in the Central Business Office by calling 231-882-9653

Please be advised that parents or guardians of children attending the school may review the school's Integrated Pest Management program and records of any pesticide application upon request. Contact Director of Operations, Mike Zielinski at 231-882-9653 or zielinskim@benzieschools.net

❖ Asbestos

In compliance with the parent/guardian and staff notification requirements specified in the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Asbestos Containing Materials in Schools: Final Rule and Notice, as directed by the Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA) of 1986, the following information regarding asbestos can be found in the AHERA Management Plan Book located in your building principal's office:

- Building Inspection
- The Management Plan
- The Response Actions
- Periodic Surveillance Schedule
- Re-inspection Schedule

Asbestos activities in the last year include: Regular six-month surveillance and scheduled re-inspection were performed for all sites. Normal operations and maintenance were performed at each site. Projects include removal of old floor tile at Benzie Central High School. Activities are determined from regular six-month periodic surveillance, inspections and scheduled projects. For more information, you may contact our Director of Operations, Mike Zielinski at 231-882-9653.

❖ **McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act**

Children who meet the Federal definition of "homeless" will be provided a free appropriate public education in the same manner as all other students of the District. To that end, homeless students will not be stigmatized or segregated on the basis of their status as homeless and will be assigned to the school serving those non-homeless students residing in the area in which the homeless child is actually living. The District shall establish safeguards that protect homeless students from discrimination on the basis of their homelessness as set forth in district policy 5111.01. For more information, please contact our McKinney Vento Liaison, Sharyl Corey at 231-275-7730.

❖ **Nondiscrimination**

The government has made legal provisions to ensure that no person is discriminated against on the basis of the protected classes of race, color, national origin, gender, sex (including sexual orientation or transgender identity), age (except as authorized by law), religion, height, weight, marital or family status, military status, ancestry, genetic information, or any other legally protected category, (collectively, "Protected Classes") in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities. In order to protect these rights and assure compliance, Traverse City Area Public Schools has appointed Cindy Berck as Coordinator of Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, the Age Discrimination Act, and Title II.

Inquiries concerning the application of, or grievances for, any of these regulations or concerns that the rights of an individual may have been violated should be directed to:

Mrs. Amiee Erfourth Superintendent Benzie County Central Schools 9300 Homestead Rd. Benzonia, MI 49616 (231) 882-9653 erfourtha@benzieschools.net

Any person who feels that the rights of an individual may have been violated in relationship to the provision of equal opportunity in any education programs, activities, or services may contact the same individual noted above. All board policies, administrative guidelines and forms regarding harassment can be found at <https://meetings.boardbook.org/Public/Organization/2367>.

❖ **Immunizations**

Pursuant to the provisions of the Michigan Department of Community Health and Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA), the board requires that all students be compliant in regard to immunizations. The only exception to be non-compliant would be a parent/guardian submitting a signed waiver of immunization. All waivers are to be administered by a local health care provider and made available to the school to remain on file. Waivers need to be submitted yearly.

❖ ***Child Find Special Education / Section 504 Notice***

Benzie County Central Schools offers evaluations, programs and services to individuals who are identified as having, or who are suspected of having, a disability as defined in either the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. These services are available to eligible person's ages 0-26 who reside within, or attend a K-12 school program within Benzie County Central Schools' district attendance boundaries. Referrals are accepted from parents, staff members, community agencies and other interested parties. For more information about available services, parent/student rights or referral procedures, contact our BCCS 504 Coordinator, Alexander Byland at (231) 882-4497, or bylanda@benzieschools.net

❖ ***District Policies & Administrative Guidelines***

Benzie County Central Schools' Board of Education has developed specific district policies and administrative guidelines regarding student and staff behavior. Policies and guidelines cover virtually all areas of behavior including smoking, drugs, dress, weapons, sexual harassment and use of the internet. In addition, each building has a student code of conduct that specifies the behavior expected of its students. The district's student/parent handbook also provides a compilation of information that every student and parent should know. Copies of the Student/Parent Handbooks and all district policies and administrative guidelines are available online at www.benzieschools.net, or by requesting a copy at the building level.

❖ ***Free and Reduced School Meals***

Benzie County Central Schools is proud to offer healthy meals to our students every day in school. Whether or not your child plans to participate in the free and/or reduced meals program, gathering information on the number of students who qualify is still vital for the district. It is used not only to determine meal prices for qualifying families, but it is also used as part of the application process for a number of grants and other opportunities BCCS participates in. We are pleased to be able to offer qualifying families with free or discounted meal rates, so if you think your family might qualify, please apply today. To apply online, visit <https://benzie.familyportal.cloud/> and follow instructions for Benzie County Central Schools. Families who were approved for free and reduced meals last year, will need to complete a new application for the 2024-2025 school year. Individual questions may be directed to Lisa Purchase, Chartwells Food Service, 231-882-4497.

❖ ***Notice of Video Surveillance/Electronic Monitoring***

All BCCS facilities utilize video surveillance/electronic monitoring equipment to observe, monitor and/or record the behavior and activity of all persons on school property or grounds, or participating in school functions. For more information, please contact our Central Business Office at 231-882-9653.

❖ ***Notice Regarding Staff Qualifications***

Under the No Child Left Behind Act, parents have the right to request information on the professional qualifications of their children's classroom teachers and the qualifications of the paraprofessionals who provide services to their children. Parents may request and receive information about: (a) whether the teacher is State-certified, (b) whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status, and (c) the baccalaureate major of the teacher and any other graduate degree or certification. Parents may request information on the level of achievement of their child in each of the State academic assessments. If a student attending a school that receives any Title I, Part A funds is assigned to, or taught, for four or more consecutive weeks by a teacher who is not highly qualified, the school must provide timely notice to the student's parents. Send inquiries to: Central Business Office 9300 Homestead Rd., Benzonia, MI. 49616

❖ **Requirements for Student Immunizations**

The Board requires that all students be properly immunized pursuant to the provisions of the Michigan Department of Community Health and the Michigan Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA). Accordingly, the State of Michigan requires that all students be properly immunized at the time of registration or not later than the first day of school pursuant to those provisions. Before a child can be permitted to enter or attend school, parents/guardians must present documentation that a child has had the required doses of vaccine. Immunization requirements are to be in accordance with Board Policy and Administrative Guideline 5320. The only exception is if the parents/guardians submit a signed waiver of immunization. A licensed health care provider will certify that a medical contraindication exists and that a specific immunization is or may be detrimental to the student's health. The County Health Department will issue a waiver for non-medical reasons.

❖ **Gun Safety**

State Law Compliance Michigan law (Section 380.1313b) requires all schools to distribute firearm safety storage information to families annually beginning October 1, 2025, and every October thereafter. This ensures that all families receive current information about safe storage practices and legal requirements.

<https://www.michigan.gov/mdhhs/safety-injury-prev/firearm-injury-prevention/secure-storage-law>

❖ **Students with Disabilities**

Students identified with a disability are entitled to a Free and Appropriate Public Education. Modifications, accommodations or interventions will be put into place, regardless of mitigating factors. In some cases, a 504 Plan, which is an accommodation plan for a student with a disability, may be indicated. Any service provided for a child with a disability must be aligned with the impairment.

❖ **Translation Services**

BCCS will provide interpreter/translator services to parents/caregivers of students for a variety of school functions such as enrollment, IEPs, parent-teacher conferences, disciplinary actions, follow-up written communication, etc. To request an interpreter or translation, contact the administrative assistant for the school where your child attends. The school may use a tele-interpreter service to fulfill an immediate need or situation where an in-person interpreter is not available.

❖ **Title VI, IX, Section 504, Age Discrimination Act, and Title II Americans With Disabilities Act**

The government has made legal provisions to ensure that no person is discriminated against on the basis of the protected classes of race, color, national origin, gender, sex (including sexual orientation or transgender identity), age (except as authorized by law), religion, height, weight, marital or family status, military status, ancestry, genetic information, or any other legally protected category, (collectively, "Protected Classes") in its programs and activities, including employment opportunities. In order to protect these rights and assure compliance, Benzie County Central Schools has appointed the following employees as the Coordinators of Title VI, Title IX, Section 504, the Age Discrimination Act, and Title II.

Inquiries concerning the application of, or grievances for, any of these regulations or concerns that the rights of an individual may have been violated should be directed to: Superintendent, Amiee Erfourth: 231-882-9653. 9300 Homestead Rd. Benzonia, MI. 49616. erfourtha@benzieschools.net.