

REGULAR MEETING

A Regular meeting of the Benzie County Central Board of Education was held Monday, August 10, 2020, at Benzie Central Middle School, 9300 Homestead Rd., Benzonia, MI 49616.

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

Members Present: Mr. Childs, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Johnston, Ms. Cota Hill,
Mr. Noffsinger, Mrs. Pomper, Mr. Gray

Members Absent: NONE

20-21-017 It was moved by Mrs. Brown and supported by Mr. Noffsinger to approve the agenda as written.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

20-21-018 It was moved by Ms. Cota Hill and supported by Mrs. Johnston to approve Consent Grouping items as presented.

A. Minutes: July 31, 2020 – Special

B. Business: General Fund Bills – 400,385,78

C. Support Staff Appointments: NONE

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

Board Blueprint Communication: Mrs. Johnston reported that the District Impact Team continues to meet with the Building Impact Teams, focusing on the COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan.

Student Council Report: NONE

Administration Report:

- A. August 4, 2020 Bond Proposal *Yes For BC Kids* Debrief – Megan Barnard reported that the *Yes For BC Kids* committee has debriefed since the defeat of the August 4, 2020 Bond Proposal, and that they are fired up, and ready to get to work. They will begin by convening with a small group to discuss the plan going forward, and from there will be reaching out to form a larger group of support. They plan to start fundraising immediately for campaign purposes. They are in full support of the district moving forward to get on the November 3, 2020 ballot.
- B. BCCS November 3, 2020 Bond Proposal – Joe Powers – Wolgast Corporation - On Friday, August 7, a conference call was held with Interim Superintendent, David Clasen, Jeff Soules, Thrun bond counsel for the district, Kari Blanchett, PFM district financial advisor for the district, and Joe Powers, Wolgast Construction Manager for the district. PFM produced a financial schedule for the district for the same bond dollar amount (\$38.685M) with a millage rate of 1.99

mills for a non-qualified bond election for November, 2020. According to schedules prepared for the district by the financial advisor, the decreased millage rate was due to two major aspects- extremely low interest rates in the current market conditions and actual, higher taxable values for the district as compared to the previous bond election. These two factors result in a scheduled lowered millage rate from 2.1 mills to 1.99 mills for the same dollar amount. This year's millage rate was 1.60 mills for a net increase of 0.39 mills for a total of 1.99 mills.

- C. **Early Childhood Handbook – Early Childhood Coordinator- Amber Wilson – Mrs. Wilson highlighted page 2 of the handbook, the vision and philosophy, tuition rates, the change from family style meals to individual servings, and well as eliminating teeth brushing, as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic.**
- D. **Elementary Handbook – Principal, Larry Haughn – Mr. Haughn reported that there were not many changes to the handbook, other than the COVID-19 policies put into place on pages 18-20. The COVID-19 Expectations were modeled from the Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department, and modified to be easily understood. Expectations detailed within the handbook, include the *Screening* process, the *Return to Learn Plan*, and the *MI SAFE START* for each individual phase. The handbook includes an informative graph in the form of a flow chart, adopted directly from the Health Department.**
- E. **Benzie Central Northern Michigan Virtual K-5 software program – Principal, Larry Haughn – Mr. Haughn presented to the board the recommendation for a K-5 Software program. With 13.7% of Benzie County Central School students (78 elementary students) indicating they would not be attending school for “face to face” instruction in the fall, we looked into providing online/virtual school programming to meet their educational needs. Seventy-eight students represent over \$632,000 FTE for the district. Three virtual platforms and four programs were researched in order to identify which would be the best fit for Benzie Central schools. Elementary administrators and teachers had an opportunity to review the online/virtual programs. The program offered through GenNet (Genesee County ISD) rose to the top of their list as it not only provides a solid online educational program for our online students, it also involves pricing which allows for all of our K-5 elementary students to access this program. This provides teachers with an additional educational tool for all of our students as well as provides a smooth transition for students who have to miss school for an extended period of time. This includes extended illness, quarantine, or if the school/district went 100% online. The GenNet program was the most cost effective, as well as comprehensive program among all of the programs that were researched. Also, in order to better meet the needs of our “all online/virtual” students an additional math/reading intervention was identified as being needed. The elementary team is recommending using the GenNet program called “Accelerated Education” as the learning platform for our Northern Michigan Virtual (K-5) students, and to provide educational access of this online program for all of Benzie K-5 students for the 2020-2021 school year. In addition, purchasing Path Blazer from Edgenuity to provide the additional needed educational support for our Northern Michigan Virtual students.**

- F. MS/HS/Benzie Academy Handbooks– Interim Principal, Steve Graetz – Mr. Graetz presented to the Board of Education the MS/HS/Benzie Academy Handbooks. Since the initial March Pandemic, the handbook has been in draft revision mode. For the first time, the Middle School and High School have a combined handbook. Although the Middle School and High School do have some differences, the combining of the two provides for more consistency. Notable changes such as COVID-19 specific language will appear in the form of an addendum. Specific language will include the COVID-19 School Health Screening Agreement. Other notable changes include educational delivery method choices, as well as the bell schedule altered from eight periods to seven periods, eliminating advisory and seminar periods. As a result, the time of each period has been extended for additional learning opportunities.**
- G. Pixellot Services and Software Agreement –Interim Principal, Steve Graetz – Benzie Central High School has partnered with Benzie Central Athletic Boosters to bring Pixellot live sports streaming to our community. All games from the following sports will be streamed live on the NFHS Network: JV and Varsity Volleyball, JV and Varsity Boys and Girls Basketball, and Middle School, JV, and Varsity Football. Spectators can subscribe to the NFHS Network for \$11/mo or \$69.99/yr. IN addition to Benzie Central home games, subscribers will have access to all levels of all games that take place at any other school that has a pixellot system. The subscription will work for away games that take place at schools where there is a Pixellot system set up as well. The NFHS Network is the only MHSAA-approved live streaming service available. With likely spectator limitations in place for the 20-21 school sports seasons, this high-quality streaming service could be just the answer to the avid Husky sports fan. Information about how to subscribe will not be on nfhsnetwork.com until we have completed the installation process (est. 2 weeks from now).**
- H. Continuity of Learning Plan –Preparedness Plan – Interim Superintendent, David Clasen – Mr. Clasen presented to the Board of Education, the Benzie County Central Schools COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Plan. This plan is designed to be simple, feasible, and flexible for families, stakeholders, and Benzie Central Schools employees to understand and implement. There is no one-size-fits-all solution. BCCS has worked hard with an expert team of teachers and administrators, the Benzie/Leelanau District Health Department, Traverse Bay Area Intermediate School District Support Staff, and surrounding district leaders to develop our Preparedness Plan. This plan contains assurances and general protocols that will be followed as long as the plan is necessary and/or required. Each assurance and protocol may look different depending on circumstances and may be more complex than can be clearly detailed in this document. The development of this plan is guided by the belief the Benzie Central Schools community wants to be informed on what is happening and also wants a plan that is manageable. If questions arise about specifics, please do not hesitate to reach out to your classroom teachers or school administrative staff members for clarification. Community feedback is welcome and greatly appreciated. As you**

read through this plan, please keep in mind that we are all in this together and there are many potential situations and contingencies that lie outside of our control. Administrative team members have participated in multiple meetings with Governor Whitmer and with State Legislators including Senator Schmidt, Senator Vanderwall, and State Representative Jack O'Malley. Interim Superintendent, David Clasen also served on the TBAISD planning committee for the 2020-2021 school year. The district has received meaningful collaborations and feedback from the Benzie/Leelanau Health Department, Lisa Peacock and Michelle Klein. With input from our Building Impact Teams, staff and administrator support staff and students and the community, our team worked collaboratively to develop the plan from July 1 to August 10. On June 30, 2020, Governor Whitmer released the State of Michigan's MI Safe Schools Plan, commonly referred to as the Return to School Plan or Roadmap. The Continuity of Learning Plan – Preparedness Plan outlines the 6 individual phases and the safety procedures and protocols within each phase. Within the plan, face coverings, hygiene, cleaning, athletics, screening, testing, and busing and student transportation are detailed. Finally, this is a living document. As the virus and our understanding of it changes, this plan will change. Please prepare for that possibility in the months ahead.

I. Resignations –

- **Jennifer Mitchell – Accounts Payable and Employee Benefits Clerk**
The Board of Education expressed their appreciation of Jennifer and her 25 years of service to the Benzie County Central School District.

Board of Education/Committee Reports – NONE

Audience Participation (Agenda Items Only) – Shelley Heinz inquired as to whether or not students having to quarantine for 14 days could transfer over into a virtual learning platform. Candice Swander inquired as to whether or not the MS/HS students would continue to transition from classrooms between periods, if masks were required, if students will be six feet apart in classrooms, if limited seating will be a requirement for bussing, and what the setting will be for 6th grade orientation. Valerie Gerhart inquired as to how field trips will look for the 2020/21 school year, given the mandates of the Pandemic. Amanda McLaren inquired as to whether or not Honors and Advanced Placement Courses would be an option within a virtual platform. Karen Zickert inquired as to whether or not 6-12 grade students would be required to wear face masks all the time when in phase 4. She also questioned what teachers will be associated with the Northern Michigan Virtual platform. Danielle Gray inquired about daily cleaning operations and circulation systems. Val Gerhart expressed the importance of listening to Science, not the political side, and urged others to support for a November 2020 Bond Proposal going forward.

Discussion Topics:

- A. Face Masks/Neck Buffs District students –** Interim Superintendent, David Clasen, presented to the Board of Education quotes for both stock and customized face

masks and neck buffs. The Board of Education held discussion as to whether or not to provide one per student district wide.

B. Thrun Policy Service – Policies and Guidelines – Interim Superintendent, Clasen presented the Thrun Policy Service Agreement. The Thrun Policy Service is now available for order. Thrun Policies are designed to be legally compliant and provide school officials with guidance and flexibility in a well-organized and user-friendly format. The Board of Education has researched the plan and has been comparing it to that of NEOLA since February 2020. No further discussion was needed.

C. BCCS Timber Sale Contract #1085 (Weldon Rd.) – Paul Gerhart has expressed that now is a good time for timber prices. The Board of Education discussed several break down scenarios for allocated funding:

- 2/5 General Account, 2/5 Agricultural Science, 1/5 FFA
- 1/3 General Account, 1/3 Agricultural Science, 1/3 FFA
- 1/5 General Account, 2/5 Agricultural Science, 2/5 FFA

The Board of Education emphasized the important of funding being allocated to Agricultural Science and FFA, therefore recommending 1/5 General Account, 2/5 Agricultural Science, 2/5 FFA

D. BCCS Bond Proposal | November 2020 Election – The Board of Education discussed going forward with a Bond Proposal for the November 3, 2020 election. Recognizing that BCCS is one of the lowest funded districts in Northern Michigan, the needs of this district are not going away.

Action Topics:

20-21-019 It was moved by Mrs. Pomper and supported by Ms. Cota Hill to approve the appointment of Katie Johnston – Early Childhood Teacher – Special Education - 1755 Provider.

Ayes: 7

Motion Carried

20-21-020 It was moved by Mrs. Pomper supported by Mrs. Johnston to approve the 2020/21 Benzie Central Early Childhood Handbook, contingent upon the changes discussed.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

20-21-021 It was moved by Mrs. Brown and supported by Mr. Noffsinger to approve the 2020/21 Benzie Central Elementary Handbook, contingent upon the changes discussed.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

Announcements:

- 1. August 11 & 12, 2020 – First Round of Interviews – Superintendent Search. 6:00 PM.**

20-21-030 It was moved by Mr. Gray and supported by Mr. Noffsinger adjourn the regular meeting 11:40 PM.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried


Secretary, Board of Education