

Audience Participation (Agenda Items Only) –

- **Participant #1-** Encourages the Board of Education to mandate masks for students/staff/visitors, as well as encourages vaccines for those 12 and older. He wants what is best for our students and stated that kids need to be in the classroom and that wearing a mask is just one more protocol that should be followed. It is common sense given this is a deadly virus.
- **Participant #2 –** Stated the Board of Education has a responsibility. Masks protect children's lives, and they are not political.
- **Participant #3 –** Shared with the Board of Education that she had sent an email to all of them. She emphasized that there are rules when you take elected positions and she made reference to our district mission statement. She asked that they follow their job descriptions, and do the right thing by asking for help or stepping aside.
- **Participant #4-** Shared with the Board of Education that masks protect me from you and you from me. He stated that masks do a better job of protecting you from me. He believes that the less masks, the larger the chance for variants. Lisa Peacock has the authority by elected officials, and he feels that the Board of Education is using children as pawns. Feels that if the children take COVID-19 home to the community and spread it, then it is at the boards' feet. He believes that the Board of Education is not qualified, and they need to believe in the experts, and their experience, education and training. He ended by saying the Board of Education was acting like 17 year olds, and that they need to stay in their lane.
- **Participant #5-** Shared her appreciation of the Board of Education and Superintendent Erfourth. She stated that if anything happens, it is not their fault. She feels strongly that masking children should be up to the parents, not the school. Viruses are here to stay. If you adopt this, what will be the protocols on discipline and what is the procedure to get a medical exemption. Fearful that students will get pulled from school as a result of the mandate. Masks should be a choice.
- **Participant #6-** Lots of reading on COVID-19 and the legality of masks. Science is split on masks. Too many types of masks, kids do not wear masks correctly, COVID is not going anywhere, do not mandate masks. Less worried about COVID than effect of long-term mask wearing. Air quality when wearing masks is dangerous. If you are afraid, stay home. Believes the vast majority have the Board of Education's back, and feels the Board of Commissioners is in their corner. Urges the Board of Education to poll the community, and hopes that they continue to stand with them.
- **Participant #7-** Spoke on COVID-19 from a historical perspective; making reference to Diphtheria, Spanish Flu, and Polio. Believes that parents have been protecting their children for years, and feels the Board of Education needs to do the same.
- **Participant #8-** Questions and Concerns regarding consequences if students do not wear masks. Wants to know who will enforce, and if face shields can be a substitute for masks. She gets it no matter what the Board of Education decides; she supports them completely. Urges people to not go on facebook and air these

- issues. Encourages all to support the Board of Education.
- **Participant #9-** Cites the 4th Amendment. Government agency should protect our rights. A mandate is not a law. A law is passed by congress or legal systems such as house and senate. CDC is not a law making agency. County Health does not make laws. Less than 1% death rate. Is concerned about the adverse effects of long-term mask wearing. Children need oxygen to breath. Follow the Science. Follow the facts and do what is right for our kids.
 - **Participant #10-** This is not only about masks, but the game that is being played as a result of COVID-19. Things just do not add up. True pandemics do not need to be advertised. Testing is flawed, and if this was a true pandemic, there would be no bribery. The Board of Education and Health Department do not have constitutional rights and need to stay in their lanes. Each individual should have the right to determine whether or not their child wear a mask, and feels her rights do not end where someone's feelings begin. Feels if the teachers do not feels safe in this setting without masks, then they should find other jobs. She urges the Board of Education to please continue to stand up for our children, and to allow choice.
 - **Participant #11-** Believes that we can all agree that we care about the children. Expressed her gratitude to the Board of Education for standing up for their rights. Gave facts on limited COVID beds v. staffing shortages, and questions Lisa Peacock's uptick data. What is urgent about a few cases, and when will this end? She is not convinced that there is a health risk. She has asked for metrics, and has not gotten and answer and/or response. Has consulted with her pediatrician for data and guidance. Are teachers concerned about health our a power grab? Mandates have to stop against our rights and freedoms. We will lose students. Appreciates the Board of Education support.
 - **Participant #12-** Not concerned about dying from COVID-19. More concerned about chaos, if we have to close again and go virtual. She is worried about the students being at risk, and encourages masking up.
 - **Participant #13-** Kids all summer long have been working, playing, and practicing without masks. She quoted Lisa Peacock, "They didn't do what I wanted, and so I made a mandate to get what I wanted." We have had zero children deaths, yet they continue to target children. The ultimate layer of protection is to stay home, not masks. I respect vaccines and masks, but I will not have my rights taken away. The flu is way more dangerous, and we do not mask for the flu. Why can't we get a religious exemption for masks? Stand up for this tyranny. All eyes are on what happens here today.
 - **Participant #14-** Frustrated. Health concerns and cannot wear masks. Fight for the rights of our children and promote choice. Masks are causing issues. Children need social interactions. She applauded the Board of Education for their vote this past Monday, and hopes it stays the same here today.
 - **Participant #14-** Teachers Union – Association President. No plans to file a lawsuit. We stand in support of the mandate. Best interest for the entire community to mitigate safety for staff and students and for face to face learning. Feels they cannot always accommodate 6 ft. social distancing, and the MS/HS does not have the ability to cohort. She places trust in the medical experts at the BLDHD.
 - **Participant #15-** I am my children's first teacher, it is on me whether they mask or

not. Our children need to be masked, it does not make it difficult to breathe. Follow the advice of experts. I would rather be inconvenienced than lose a child.

Discussion Topics:

- A. Benzie-Leelanau District Health Department Order; regarding Prevention of COVID-19 Transmission in Educational Settings within Benzie County and Leelanau County, State of Michigan: pursuant to the Michigan Public Health Code, MCL 333.2451 and 333.2453, as well as R. 325.175(4), which is an administrative rule promulgated by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services pursuant to MCL 333.2226(d). Members of the Board of Education were given the opportunity to speak on this topic.

Action Topics:

21-22-031 It was moved by Mrs. Johnston and supported by Mr. Barnard to approve the Return to Benzie Plan (including policy 3409 which follows the BLHD universal face mask policy for students and staff K-12) with the understanding that the Policy Committee would be regarding discipline/enforcing procedures

S.J. Yes

J.B. Yes

L.C-H. Yes

A.P. No

C.N. No

N.B. No

B.C. Yes

Ayes: 4

Nays: 3

Motion Carried

Audience Participation (Open Topics):

- Participant #1- Concerned about discipline and turmoil at home. How will this be enforced? How will this effect mental health? Children are being targeted. I do not agree with that. It is unfair that our kids are being used. No masking all summer. You are all out of touch with what it is like to raise a child. Take the discipline policy lightly, our children are in a tug of war.
- Participant #2- Regardless, I support the Board of Education and Superintendent Erfourth. She thanked the Board of Education for voting in Superintendent Erfourth expressing the she is forthcoming and keeps the community informed.
- Participant #3- Where do we go from here? My child will not be coming to school. Can children play sports if they attend Benzie Academy? I am disappointed but I appreciate the Board of Education's work.

- Participant #4- Thank you to the Board of Education. Majority should rule, and the majority want the freedom to mask or not. You do not have the power to tell me. You will not own me.
- Participant #5-Thank you to the Board of Education. I know this decision was difficult. My boys are still coming back, I am just worried about when this is going to stop. Is mandating vaccines next? I will do what is best for my kids.
- Participant #6- Superintendent Erfourth is an amazing woman. Students love her. I am sad about how this went down. I was pro-mask, but I now understand that it is hurting their learning. I 100% believe that student should be here in school, as it is the safest place to be in our community. We need to work to keep our Superintendent here.

Board Communication: NONE

Announcements: NONE

21-22-032 It was moved by Mr. Barnard and supported by Mrs. Pomper to adjourn the regular meeting 12:35 PM

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried


Secretary, Board of Education

Catina Crossman
Executive Assistant to the Superintendent
Board of Education Administrative Assistant
Benzie County Central Schools