

REGULAR MEETING

A Regular meeting of the Benzie County Central Board of Education was held Monday, March 13, 2023, in the Board of Education Conference Room.

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

Members Present: Mr. Childs, Mr. Barnard, Mr. Gray, Mrs. Gillison, Mr. Smith, Ms. Cota Hill

Members Absent: Mr. Noffsinger, Gloria Stepanovich (non-voting member)

22-23-100 It was moved by Mr. Smith and supported by Mr. Gray 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.

22-23-101 It was moved by Mr. Gray and supported by Mr. Smith to approve Consent Grouping items as presented.

A. Minutes: February 13, 2023 Regular

B. Business: General Fund Bills – \$3,560,260.55

C. Support Staff Appointments:

- Josh Pringle – Bus Driver – Transportation Department
- Katherine Ames – Extra Trips Bus Driver – Transportation Department
- Jamie VanPoortfliet – Extra Trips Bus Driver – Transportation Department
- Diane Alford- Full-time Sub Bus Driver – Transportation Department
- Jenny Harris – Softball Coach -6th/7th – Middle School
- Candice Swander – Softball Coach – 7th/8th – Middle School
- Andy Rosa – Varsity Golf Coach
- LeeAnn Stephan – Administrative Consultant – Effective March 16, 2023 to June 30, 2023

D. Staff Assignment Changes:

- Contract Update

- E. Leave of Absence:**
- Michaela MacGirr – Extended Leave of Absence through March 15, 2023.
 - Amber Pomper Extended Leave of Absence through March 14, 2023 Half Days. Full-time return April 10, 2023
- F. Approval to go into closed session for purposes of superintendent evaluation**
- Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried**

District Impact Team Update: Board of Education Trustee, Matt Smith reported the following:

- The biggest talking point over the last month was reviewing NWEA Winter Data.
 - We revisited action plans that were set in the fall to see if steps were made and if they need to continue.
 - New plans going forward with a timeline for implementation.
- Lake Ann
 - kindergarten behavior data
- Betsie Valley
 - How to show growth in reading
 - Make changes to Reading Intervention Blocks (RIBs)
- Crystal Lake
 - New ideas on how to get BIT Team more involved in creating meaningful action steps in improving Tier 1 instruction
- HS/MS
 - Seen decent growth with winter NWEA Testing
 - How to continue to build on these?

Student Council Report: Student Council Board of Education Representative, Gloria Stepanovich was not in attendance. No update.

Administration Report:

- A. NMSLA – Superintendent Erfourth shared that there is a lot happening in the world of education and collective bargaining in Lansing. House Representative Regina Weiss shared the governor's priorities: summer school, support transportation costs for schools in rural areas allowing for the full pupil foundation allotment to go right toward education.**
- B. National Honor Society – Recycling Committee Presentation – Benzie Central Junior, Miley Kelly spoke on behalf on the National Honor Society Committee; F. Zickert, C. Pallin, A. Bechler, A. Childs, G. Reed and E. Burrus). The BCNS Chapter of the NHS is on a mission to launch a recycling program at BCMS/HS. So far, the group has had correspondence with TerraCycle and Jesse Zylstra, Solid Waste and Recycling Director for Benzie County. Both TerraCycle and American Waste (Benzie Co.) have costs associated with them. With that, NHS is proposing a can fundraiser which will promote recycling and raise money toward whichever recycling program works best for our MS/HS Campus. Mylie shared that the can fundraising drive would be by seminar class and the seminar with the highest recyclable can yield will be treated to an ice cream sundae party.**

The NHS Recycling Committee will handle the process product distribution, process of collection, distribution of profit and losses, and receipt of all records. Mylie is asking the Board of Education for their approval to move forward this evening.

- C. **ESS Midwest, Inc. - Addendum to Extend Agreement – July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024 – Superintendent Erfourth** shared that this is our annual contract with WillSub. ESS Midwest uses WillSub to assist districts with their staffing programs, providing an automated substitute placement and absence tracking system to schools. By combining this with the benefits of contract employment and payroll processing, ESS Midwest offers districts a single source that meets the needs of education professionals everywhere. Benzie Central uses this for substitutes for all positions and it is also how we hire our coaches. There is a slight cost increase for all positions, but this is a crucial service that our district relies on to fill openings.
- D. **SUV Purchase not to exceed \$60,000.00 – Superintendent Erfourth – Mrs. Erfourth** is requesting the purchase of an 8- Passenger SUV for sports and smaller groups to utilize for transportation rather than a school bus. Given her research, they are not only difficult to find but also selling fast. She is seeking an upfront approval for up to \$60,000.00 in the hopes of securing one before it is sold.
- E. **JUUL Litigation Settlement – Superintendent Erfourth – Superintendent Erfourth** shared that the lawsuit with JUUL has concluded and our settlement is \$30,004 (less 25% for lawyer fees). We are required to either accept this settlement or proceed with our own case. The concern with doing that is that JUUL will likely be bankrupt and there will not be a larger financial gain. The current settlement is bankruptcy protected. Superintendent Erfourth is recommending that the Board of Education approve the JUUL Resolution this evening. Should the Board of Education accept the settlement amount the resolution state that:

The Board authorizes and directs the District Superintendent or designee to sign Lawsuit settlement documents pertaining to the JUUL Defendants on behalf of the District and to take such other action as necessary to obtain the Settlement Amount and to settle the Lawsuit against the JUUL Defendants, subject to review and approval by the District's legal counsel.

The Board of Education discussed investing this settlement amount into tobacco use/vaping prevention and education.

- F. **Food Service Spend Down Plan Update – Superintendent Erfourth – Superintendent Erfourth** shared that we are currently working to spend our additional funds from food service equaling \$213,310.74. We are required to plan and spend down any excessive savings with the exception of being allowed to carry three (3) months' worth of expenses that equates to approximately \$88,000 (food costs, employee costs). The spend-down plan will include purchasing new equipment for all buildings, new cafeteria tables, and kitchen upgrades.

G. Crystal Lake Elementary Update – Principal, Steve Graetz – Mr. Graetz shared on the Nordic Rocks ski program, an extension of the Crystal Community Ski Club (CCSC). The CCSC is a non-profit organization whose mission is to help kids develop a love of outdoor activities, build leadership skills and create transformational relationships through an affordable downhill, Nordic, and outreach ski programs. Nordic Rocks began at Betsie Valley Elementary in 218 and has since extended to Crystal Lake Elementary and Lake Ann Elementary. The program offers excellent instructors and equipment free of charge to all three Benzie Central Elementary schools.

3rd grade – four one-hour session. Instructor comes to the school and conducts lessons on the playground.

4th-5th grade – Four ninety-minute sessions at Crystal Mountain on groomed trails.

Benzie Central provides one lead teacher, a volunteer to assist, and bus transportation to and from Crystal Mountain.

In addition, Mr. Graetz touched on the well-attended spring fling dance that happened this past Friday for dads and daughters, with a mother and son dance scheduled for the near future.

H. Betsie Valley Elementary Update – Principal, Sharyl Corey – Mrs. Corey paid tribute to Dena Whiting: Mom, wife, comedian, PTS secretary, friend, popcorn lady, and school supporter. She is loved and missed. Principal Corey touched on the following:

- **Fire Prevention Week with Cleon Fire Department**
- **Betsie Valley Student Council Elections**
- **Santa and Mrs. Claus visit**
- **Classroom leaders, scholars, and healthy heroes**
- **Random Acts of Kindness Board**
- **Read-a-thon – March is National Reading Month**
- **Continuous Improvement Process**
- **Problems of practice**
 - **RIBs**
 - **BIT**
- **Attendance Incentives**
 - **Traveling Attendance Trophy**
 - **Friday Raffle**
 - **Pizza with Police**
 - **End of the year Surprises**

I. Benzie Academy Update – Lead Teacher, Elaine Taghon, and 6-12 Counselor, Rebecca Kik – Both Mrs. Taghon and Mrs. Kik shared the focus for the Benzie Academy: *Our hope is to give our students multiple options after they graduate from high school, possible career opportunities and skilled trade apprenticeships. To build awareness of manufacturing businesses and careers in northwestern Michigan for students who may be interested in these lifestyles.*

What's going on at Benzie Academy?

Student Videos:

How has the Benzie Academy helped you? Developing student videos for the end of the year, we can add to our website for the Academy

Academy Events

Skilled Trades Panel: March 22, 2023 10:00-12:00

Clint Steele-President United Association of Plumbers, Steamfitters, and Service

Techs:

Dylan O'Dwyer-Local 498 IBEW (International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers)

Tim Firoz-Moore Mechanical Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning

Tyler Waldecker-Moore Mechanical Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning

Brian Childs-Homestead Construction

September 2023-Implementing XELLO, with Academy students to explore career ideas and focus on their skills and strengths for their futures

Academy Highlights

- **Addition of 25+ new students at semester (February), growing**
 - **Majority of our seniors are “walking” in the graduation ceremony**
 - **3 dual enrollment students, NMC**
 - **9 Career Tech Center students, includes 1 Engineering Academy student**
 - **Changing the perception of the Academy to “alternative setting”, it is a work in progress as we have to change our peers, the community and other students’ perception**
 - **Newspaper article-met with Colin from Benzie Patriot, featured in the community because of all the good things going on**
- J. Crystal Lake Elementary Building Update – Market Analysis – 3West - Three West Commercial Real Estate | Consulting -Superintendent Erfourth shared that based on research, and experience within the Commercial Real Estate market in Northern Michigan, the value of the subject property based on the buildings value would fall in the range of \$565,000 - \$640,000 (\$15/SF - \$17/SF). The value of the property on the land is estimated to be in the range of \$100,000 - \$150,000 (\$28,000/AC - \$42,000/AC).**
- K. High School Phase 2 Asbestos Bids – Superintendent Erfourth shared that our bond attorney has shared that Rightway Remediation is not a qualified bidder due to not including a bid bond. Our recommendation is to go with the next low bidder, Quality Environmental with a bid of \$117,000. They have completed all of our other asbestos abatement projects.**
- L. Resignations:**
- **Amy Potes – 6.5 Crystal Lake Elementary Paraprofessional**

M. Retirements:

- **NONE**

Board of Education/Committee Reports –

A. Buildings and Grounds Committee –

1. **Bond Project Updates –**Board of Education President, Brian Childs shared that our students are back in the gym on the new floor both for physical education, and even got a few basketball games in. So far, there has been nothing but positive feedback. There is a plan in place for an out of bounds line and white edging around the BC in the center. Abatement under bleachers is scheduled to take place over spring break. The new locker room is being utilized with the floor scheduled to be re-done this summer. The weight room is in use, with minor issues being addressed: roof leaks from flashing/trim. The Husky lettering has been installed on the West side.

Floors should be poured on Wednesday of this week at Homestead Hills Elementary. The building is on track with the exception of two electrical panels estimated to arrive on July 20, 2023. Summer projects are scheduled, and anticipated to go smoother than last summer: Science wing, student and staff parking lot, HS boiler room, and acoustic panels for the MS/HS cafeteria.

2. **Construction Update –** Board of Education Treasurer, Scott Gray thanked Wolgast Project Manager, Chris Kuhl, once again for stepping up on these bond projects. He feels Kingscott should be held accountable to pay for their mistakes.

B. Policy Committee – Superintendent Erfourth shared that the Policy Committee met to discuss *Policy 5420 Sex Education (Sex Education Board)* and *Policy 3116 District Technology and Acceptable Use*.

- ***Policy 5420 Sex Education*** - The Policy Committee is recommending Carmen Briggs and Danielle Gray (parent rep.) as the co-chairs, as well as approval of the Advisory Board Process Administrative Guidelines for Advisory Board Selection Process. The Thrun recommendation on how to proceed selecting committee members was provided to the Board of Education.
- ***Policy 3116 District Technology and Acceptable Use*** – The Policy Committee is recommending **D. 1. a. – optional language** *Students shall power off all electronic devices and surrender them to the test administrator for collection prior to beginning the testing session, and D. 2. a. iii. Option 2* *Test administrators may wear a wearable electronic device (e.g., smart watch or Fitbit), but must ensure that the device is in airplane mode during test administration.*
- ***MS/HS Handbook Update – Consequences – Tobacco Use Vaping –*** **The Policy Committee is recommending:**

First Offense

A. 5 days out of school and a meeting with the school resource officer and may be referred to law enforcement for citation or

B. 3 days out, 2 days in school with the requirement to attend the substance abuse class and a meeting with the school resource officer and may be referred to law enforcement for citation.

Second Offense

A. 10-day suspension (any combination of in-school or out-of-school suspension per administrator discretion), referral to a counselor, a meeting with the school resource officer and may be referred to law enforcement for citation

Third Offense

A. 15 Day suspension (any combination of in-school or out-of-school suspension per administrator discretion), referral to a counselor, a meeting with the school resource officer and SHALL be referred to law enforcement for citation.

- C. Finance Committee –Board of Education Vice-President, Jason Barnard, shared that he and Board of Education Treasurer, Scott Gray plan to meet with Director of Finance.**
- D. Educational Foundation – Board of Education Trustee Lori-Cota Hill shared that the committee will meet March 26 regarding community scholarships. [Scholarship Application](#)**
- E. Liaison/Curriculum –Board of Education Trustee Lori Cota Hill shared that the committee met and discusses student growth, how teachers can better communicate using the right tools, concerns regarding administration and whether or not their needs were being met, and Envision and CPM Curriculum.**
- F. Negotiations – Superintendent Erfourth shared that there is no update.**

Audience Participation (Agenda Items Only) –

Kay Bond, 12792 Alysworth Rd. Beulah – Kay shared her concerns regarding the consequences for tobacco use and vaping. She feels suspensions are a reward for students not a punishment.

Discussion Topics:

- 1. Platte River Property Split – Matt Skeels, Manager for the Benzie County Road Commission shared the Road Commissions intention for the property. The Sleeping Bear Gateway Council presented their proposal for splitting the Platte River Property to create seasonal rentals/housing. The Board of Education was provided the deed (showing the deed restrictions) and a map of the property.**
- 2. Chartwells Rebid Update – Superintendent Erfourth shared that every 5 years we are required to rebid our food service contract. Director of Finance, Justin Weston is working to put the packet together in order to send out the request for proposals. We are looking to hold a pre-bid meeting during the first or second week of April and hold the bid opening on April 24. After the bids are reviewed and analyzed, we are required to submit our choice to the state for approval. Once the state approves, we will present it to the Board of Education for formal adoption of the new contract. We hope to do this at the May 8th meeting.**

Action Topics:

22-23-102 It was moved by Mr. Barnard and supported by Mr. Smith to approve the National Honor Society Recycling Fundraiser

Ayes: 6

Motion Carried

22-23-103 It was moved by Mr. Smith and supported by Mr. Gray to approve the ESS Midwest, Inc. Addendum to Extend Agreement – July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

22-23-104 It was moved by Mrs. Gillison and supported by Mr. Smith to approve the purchase of an 8-passenger SUV/Vehicle not to exceed \$60,000.00.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

22-23-105 It was moved by Mr. Smith and supported by Mr. Gray to approve the JUUL Litigation Resolution.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

22-23-106 It was moved by Mr. Gray and supported by Mr. Barnard to approve High School Phase 2 Asbestos Bids, Quality Environmental Services, Inc. \$117,000.00.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

22-23-107 It was moved by Mr. Smith and supported by Mr. Barnard to approve the Administrative Guidelines for Policy 5420 Sex Education Policy Selection Process.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

22-23-108 It was moved by Mr. Smith and supported by Mr. Gray to approve the Sex Education Board (Group of 13) – 2 chairs – Advisory Board, Carmen Briggs (teacher) and Danielle Gray (parent rep.)

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

22-23-109 It was moved by Mr. Smith and supported by Mr. Barnard to approve the MS|HS Handbook Update – Consequences – Tobacco Use/Vaping as recommended by the Policy Committee; suspensions being a combination of both out-of-school and in-school. More in-school suspensions as the goal is to keep students in school.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

22-23-110 It was moved by Mr. Smith and supported by Mr. Barnard to approve updated **Policy 3116 District Technology and Acceptable Use as recommended by the Policy Committee: D. 1. a. – optional language** *Students shall power off all electronic devices and surrender them to the test administrator for collection prior to beginning the testing session, and D. 2. a. iii. Option 2 Test administrators may wear a wearable electronic device (e.g., smart watch or Fitbit), but must ensure that the device is in airplane mode during test administration.*

Ayes:6

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

Audience Participation (Open Topics): – Katherine Ross, 809 Moss Rd., Beulah spoke on the Platte River Elementary property split regarding low income housing for families. She thinks it is best to take a look at the entities who are willing to pay for additional research. She is encouraged that the Board of Education is interested in the best interest and well-being of the community.

Board Communication: NONE

CLOSED SESSION FOR SUPERINTENDENT EVALUATION

22-23-111 It was moved by Mr. Smith and supported by Mr. Barnard to approve to return to Open Session.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

Announcements:

1. Singin’ in the Rain Musical – March 17, 18 & 19
2. Versiti Blood Drive – March 21 – 9 AM – 2 PM
3. Early Release – March 24
4. Spring Break – March 27 – April 2
5. Board of Education Meeting – April 10

22-23-112 It was moved by Mr. Smith and supported by Mr. Gray to adjourn the regular meeting 10:57 pm.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

Secretary, Board of Education

Please note that March 13, 2023 Regular Board Minutes are subject for approval on April 10, 2023.

Respectfully Submitted,

Catina M. Crossman

Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

Board of Education Administrative Assistant

Pupil Accounting Specialist

Benzie County Central Schools