

REGULAR MEETING

A Regular meeting of the Benzie County Central Board of Education was held Monday, March 11, 2024, in the Board of Education Conference Room.

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

Members Present: Mr. Childs, Mr. Smith, Mr. Gray, Mrs. Gillison, Mr. Noffsinger, Ms. Cota Hill, Mr. Barnard (Tardy 8:43 pm.), Jessica Whaley (non-voting member)

Members Absent: NONE

23-24-088 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.

23-24-089 It was moved by Mr. Gray and supported by Mr. Smith to approve Consent Grouping items as presented.

A. Minutes: February 12, 2024 Regular

B. Business: General Fund Bills – 1,580,912.54

C. Support Staff Appointments:

- Jim Catts – Bus Driver – Transportation Department
- Jerika Currie – Bus Driver – Transportation Department
- Julie Grant – Substitute Bus Driver – Transportation Department
- Melissa Wallington – Varsity Volleyball Coach

D. Staff Assignment Changes:

- Cynthia Herron – 6.5 to 5.5 Paraprofessional – Homestead Hills Elementary
- Christa Gillison – 5.5 to 6.5 Paraprofessional – Homestead Hills Elementary
- Frederick Haynes – Bus Driver – Transportation Department - Deceased

E. Leave of Absence:

- NONE

F. Recommendation for Tenure:

- NONE

G. Recommendation for Termination:

- NONE

- H. **Contract Updates:**
- **Danielle Banasiak – Interim Contract to Finance Director Contract**
- I. **Approval to enter into closed session after the second round of audience participation for purposes of *Superintendent Evaluation* and *Approval of Early Graduation for Alivia Gray***
- Ayes: 6 Nays: 0 Motion Carried**

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

Tuning Protocols:

- ***Middle School / High School Tuning Protocol:***
 - **Reviewed MICIP Attendance Goal: Currently, 67% of Middle School students and 64% of High School students attend 90% of the time, which is on par with other Michigan schools. Attendance continues to be an issue statewide.**
 - **Identified the need for improvement and brainstormed strategies.**
- ***Betsie Valley Tuning Protocol:***
 - **Reviewed unknown behavioral motives and defined attention-seeking behaviors.**
 - **Discussed Student Learning Objectives (SLOs).**
 - **Teachers enjoy it and it gives them ownership.**
- ***Homestead Hills Tuning Protocol:***
 - **Evaluated alignment of behavior practices with district expectations.**
 - **Discussed encouraging staff participation in CPI training**

NWEA:

- **Conducted a thorough review of NWEA winter testing data from 2024.**
- **Identified areas of concern and reviewed action plans to address low scores.**
- **Discussed strategies to empower students in setting goals and taking responsibility for their data.**

ISSN Update:

- **Reviewed crisis plans for elementary schools and proposed development for middle and high schools.**
- **Discussed the implementation of behavior teams in each building and explored the use of appropriate SEL platforms at the secondary level.**
- **Addressed the need for adequately staffed crisis teams and stipends for training.**

Special Education:

- **Discussed hot topics in Special Education**
 - **Discipline issues have increased throughout the state.**
 - **Chronically truant students.**
- **Analyzed Benzie's general supervision data and reviewed action plans associated with each building.**

Math Updates:

- **Conducted strand analysis and fidelity checks for Math Expressions curriculum.**
- **Identified cohort and trend data to improve Tier 1 instruction. Make sure tier 1 book structure is utilized effectively.**
- **Looking at our strengths and weaknesses using specific data points.**

ELA Updates:

- **Elementary is narrowing down curriculum programs making sure they emphasize a commitment to the Science of Reading.**
- **No set curriculum for secondary. Starting the process by talking to reps about curriculum options.**

Student Council Report: Student Council Board of Education Representative, Jessica Whaley shared the following: Snowcoming went well. Spirit week participation was lower than Homecoming, but that is to be expected. The staff v. student's volleyball game was a success. There is a proposal for a middle school dance in the spring, which the student council may host for National Honor Society hours.

Administration Report:

A. NMSLA – Superintendent Erfourth – Superintendent Erfourth shared the following: Special Guest Representative Regina Weiss, Chair of the House K 12 subcommittee, shared their funding priorities for the next fiscal year. They hope to continue to fund programs like special education, ELL, transportation, declining enrollment, and looking at a small foundation increase to match the inflation rate. Concerns around MPSERs retirement funding changes were shared along with the prescriptive mandates and staff challenges to accommodate the proposed Dyslexia mandate bill. GSRP licensing rules and flexibility with implementing universal Prek were shared as well. The ORS lawsuit hearing was expedited to the Supreme Court and should begin in April.

B. VEX Robotics World Championships – Dallas, Texas - 74484A and 74485B – Coach Marc Alderman – Mr. Alderman shared the following 2023-2024 Season Highlights:

- **6 Middle School VEX IQ Robotics Competition (VIQRC) Teams - 20 team members**
- **3 High School VEX Robotics Competition (VRC) Teams - 7 team members**

- 4 regular-season VIQRC Tournaments
- 4 regular-season VRC Tournaments and Canadian Open Signature Event

- Event Partner for both VIQRC and VRC Tournaments at Benzie Central

- Regular Season VIQRC Awards: 2x Teamwork Champion Award, Design Award
- State Championship VIQRC Awards: Teamwork Champion*, Think Award

- Regular Season VRC Awards: 4x Tournament Champions, 3x Robot Skills Champions, Robot Skills 2nd Place, 2x Excellence Award
- State Championship VRC Awards: Design Award*

- Four VIQC teams qualified for the Michigan State Championship
 - 74484A Four Dimensional, 74484B Windexians, 74484C KFC, 74484F Commando Droids
- One VRC team qualified for the Michigan State Championship
 - 74485B Perpetual
- One VRC team qualified for the *VEX World Championship 4/25-4/27 Dallas, TX
 - 74485B Perpetual [Emmett Jaquish](#) and [Evan Chandler](#)
- One VIQRC team qualified for *VEX World Championship 5/1-5/3 Dallas, TX
 - 74484A Four Dimensional [Wyatt Jaquish](#), [Victor Johnson](#), [Dylan Chard](#)

- Volunteered at Peak2Peak Mountain Bike Race at Crystal Mountain

MDE 99h Grant Partnership with:

- Northwestern Michigan College (educational)
- Rhoades Engineering (business) 20% grant match

Financial Support from:

- Team Elmers
- Endoman Productions
- Private donation to pay the registration fee of 74485B for State Championship

Material Support from:

- Honor Building Supply
- Rains Grains and Sweets
- Team 7567 Grand Traverse Academy, Coach Annie Callahan
- Grand Traverse Area Catholic Schools, Coach Carol Johnson
- Shawl Family and Bellaire Robotics, AV System for VRC Tournament

Fundraising for Worlds

- Ask for private donations from Benzie Sunrise Rotarians
- Husky Robotics family contributions
- Husky Robotics clothing sale through KelGraphics

- Biggby Coffee Fundraiser - TC Locations
- Quilt Raffle
- Ask of local businesses
- Campaign on Social Media
- Unused/Rollover MDE 99h Grant Funds

VEX Worlds Estimated Cost

- Registration \$1800 per team (paid by Husky Robotics)
- Hotel Accommodations \$232 per night at Sheraton Hotels and Resorts, Dallas
- Airline Tickets
- Meals
- Promo Materials \$500 (paid by Husky Robotics)
- Hardcase w/4" casters VRC and IQ \$587.93
Team member, Evan Chandler, accompanied Coach Alderman, and presented their Championship Awards.

C. Homestead Hills Elementary Update – Principal, Steve Graetz – Mr. Graetz presented to the Board of Education the District Impact Team (DIT) model and the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Curriculum, *Move This World*, that Homestead Hills Elementary is working through. Five Casel Competencies.

- Foundational Skills for the classroom and beyond.
- Competencies
 - Self-Awareness
 - Self-Management
 - Social Awareness
 - Relationship Skills
 - Responsible Decision-Making
- 4 Key Settings
 - Communities
 - Families and Caregivers
 - Schools
 - Classrooms

Mr. Graetz also shared the common language emotional building blocks, as well as the common language emogers.

D. Middle/High School Update – Principal, Kyle Taylor – Mr. Taylor touched on many accolades on our middle/high school campus.

- Husky Robotics Accolades
- Wrestling Team Accolades; both Individual and State
- Musical Accolades
- Science Olympiad Accolades
- Climate and Culture; positive reinforcements
- Relationships and Engagement in the classroom
- Goal setting processes
- Setting high expectations
- Reviewing AIMSWEB and NWEA data
- Home Visits and attendance

- Surveys
- April Testing – Less stress and more support

E. Proposed Project for Fiber Networking Construction – Superintendent Erfourth shared that Northwest Education, Technology Director, Doug Olson found federal and state grant funds to provide the district with private fiber runs to connect Betsie Valley Elementary and Lake Ann Elementary to the Middle/High School Campus. The grant dollars will cover all the costs except for \$25,000 for the E-Rate consultant fees. The requested action for this evening is to authorize the Superintendent to enter into a contract with Turnkey Network Solutions for an amount not to exceed \$2,272,714.13 for new district-owned fiber networking runs from the high school to Lake Ann Elementary and Betsie Valley Elementary, contingent on funding for 100% of that amount to be approved by a combination of federal and state funding sources. This vendor and price were selected through a competitive bidding process run through the E-rate program. None of the other bids offered a network type that qualified for the state matching grant, since they proposed leased fiber instead of construction of fiber that will be owned by the district.

F. Resignations:

- **Melissa Wallington – Junior Varsity Volleyball Coach**

G. Retirements:

- **Michelle Herban – Elementary Teacher -Betsie Valley Elementary**
- **Dave Grimes – Elementary Teacher – Homestead Hills Elementary**

Board of Education/Committee Reports –

A. Buildings and Grounds Committee –

- 1. Bond Project Update – President Childs shared that there will be work on doors and electrical projects take place over Spring Break.**
- 2. Construction Update – Superintendent Erfourth shared earthwork has begun for the new bus garage. The drain field and building pad are being completed, and we are waiting on an arc study for the electrical panel. The Steel Pack will tentatively arrive in early May.**
- 3. Building and Grounds Modifications Request – Varsity Baseball Coach, Rich Gottardo, presented the baseball barn/press box concept; roughly 40 feet wide and 24 feet deep. The projected timeline would be to have it completed and heated by winter 2025. Board of Education Trustee, Chris Noffsinger inquired about new bleachers at the baseball field.**

B. Policy Committee – NONE

- C. **Finance Committee –Board of Education Treasurer, Scott Gray – Board of Education Trustee, Matt Smith – Mr. Gray reported that our new Finance Director, Danielle Banasiak has her nose to the grind and is working hard. He is confident that what she does not know, she will learn. Mr. Smith added that we had six candidates for the virtual screener for the Accounts Payable/Payroll position and that they are bringing back three candidates on March 15, feeling confident that they can't go wrong with any of them.**
- D. **Educational Foundation – Board of Education Trustee Lori-Cota – NONE**
- E. **Liaison/Curriculum –Board of Education Trustee Lori Cota Hill – There has been continued discussion around the 2024/25 school calendar.**
- F. **Negotiations – Superintendent Erfourth - NONE**

Audience Participation (Agenda Items Only) – NONE

Discussion Topics:

- A. **Crystal Lake Property Discussion – Superintendent Erfourth shared that she and John Rothhaar have met regarding the proposed language of the deed restriction. The clarified language allows for BWAC to transfer to an affiliate that is planning to complete the proposed plan for a community use space. The language also provides the district the opportunity for a first right of refusal if BWAC decides to sell or does not complete the construction requirements.**
- B. **Current District Enrollment Summary Review – Exit Out v. Transfer In – Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, Catina Crossman – Mrs. Crossman shared the district wide enrollment summary broken down by school and grade level as of March, 6 2024, as well as district student entry/exit report containing information as to where students are coming from, as well as leaving to. Entry and exit codes were also shared. The district currently rests at 1,237 down from 1,250 from the last Board of Education Meeting. This includes our Early Childhood population. This summary and report will be shared with the Board of Education each month. Chris Noffsinger inquired about the exit code of (16), which is *Unknown*, as in unknown as to where students have gone, and also means that another school district has not issued a records request for said students. Once reported to the state, this signifies that these students are currently not enrolled in school.**

Action Topics:

23-24-090 It was moved by Mr. Gray and supported by Mr. Noffsinger to approve Danielle Banasiak as Finance Director.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

23-24-091 It was moved by Mr. Noffsinger and supported by Mr. Gray to approve Vex Robotics Worlds Championships Travel – Dallas, Texas - 74484A and 74485B
Ayes: 7 **Nays: 0** **Motion Carried**

23-24-092 It was moved by Ms. Cota Hill and supported by Mr. Smith to approve the Project for Fiber Networking Construction, pending the E-Rate of Federal 95% and State 5%.
Ayes: 7 **Nays: 0** **Motion Carried**

23-24-093 It was moved by Mr. Noffsinger and supported by Mr. Gray to approve the Baseball Barn.
Ayes: 7 **Nays: 0** **Motion Carried**

23-24-094 It was moved by Mrs. Gillison and supported by Mr. Barnard to approve the purchase agreement between Benzie County Central Schools and the Benzie Aquatic Center, a Michigan nonprofit corporation – Crystal Lake Elementary Property.
Ayes: 5 **Nays: 2** **Motion Carried**
 Cota Hill, Gray

23-24-095 It was moved by Mr. Gray and supported by Mr. Smith to approve the Authorized Signatory -Danielle Banasiak, replacing Justin Weston on all the below accounts at Honor Bank and State Savings Bank.

1. State Savings Bank
 Sr. High School Internal Fund
2. Honor Bank
 General Fund Checking
 General Fund Savings
 Food Service Account
 Sinking Fund 2017-2026
 Early Childhood Savings
 Early Childhood Checking
 Debt Retirement Savings
 Dependent Care Checking
3. Michigan Liquid Asset Fund Plus
 Bond Proceeds 2021
 Bond Proceeds 2023
 General Fund

Ayes: 7 **Nays: 0** **Motion Carried**

Audience Participation (Open Topics):

Wanda Shreiner, 1261 Michigan Ave., Frankfort took the podium. She thanked the Board of Education for all of their hard work for Benzie County Central Schools, and expressed that she was happy to live in Benzie County. She is ready to move forward and knows this community center will benefit the community. “My heart is happy!”

Eric Baatz, 3900 Blueberry Lane, Honor took the podium. Eric shared that he works for Benzie Bus. He stated that he witnessed a cross-over stop on 115 and 31 with no red light or hazard light stop. He said the incident occurred on March 1 at approximately 3:30 PM and that he has cameras on his bus and that his supervisor took a video. He believes it was bus 24-G. He requested follow up with the Board of Education.

Laura Thenikl, 8748 Hannah Rd., Kingsley, took the podium. She shared that she had two children in the infant room, and one in preschool. She has concerns about why the infant room will no longer be at Lake Ann Elementary, and shared it was hard to plan not knowing one minute from the next and it will be difficult to travel from Kingsley all the way to Homestead Hills Elementary. She shared that she was a nurse and her husband was a Benzie Central graduate, and now a State Police Officer. They prefer their children being in the Benzie Central School District.

The Board of Education entered into Closed Session for purposes of *Superintendent Evaluation and Early Graduation Request – Alivia Gray* at 8:54 PM.

23-24-096 It was moved by Mr. Gray and supported by Mr. Noffsinger to enter back into Open Session at 10:47 PM.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

Board Communication:

NONE

Announcements:

- 1. Congratulations to the Cast and Crew of The Addams Family**
- 2. March 22, 2024 – Early Release**
- 3. March 25- April 1 – Spring Break**
- 4. April 8, 2024 – Regular Board of Education Meeting**
- 5. April 8, 9, & 11 – Kindergarten Round-Up**
 - April 8 – Homestead Hills Elementary**
 - April 9 – Betsie Valley Elementary**
 - April 11- Lake Ann Elementary**

23-24-097 It was moved by Mr. Noffsinger and supported by Mr. Gray to adjourn the regular meeting 10:53 pm.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

Secretary, Board of Education

Please note that March 11, 2024 Regular Board Minutes are subject for approval on April 8, 2024.

Respectfully Submitted,

Catina M. Crossman

Executive Assistant to the Superintendent

Board of Education Administrative Assistant

Pupil Accounting Specialist

Director of Communications

Benzie County Central Schools

Go Huskies!