

REGULAR MEETING

A Regular meeting of the Benzie County Central Board of Education was held Monday, May 13, 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. Barnard, Mr. Noffsinger, Ms. Cota Hill, Jessica Whaley (non-voting member) tardy

Members Absent: NONE

23-24-115 It was moved by Mr. Gray and supported by Mr. Smith to approve the agenda as presented.

Ayes: 7

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.

23-24-116 It was moved by Mr. Smith and supported by Mr. Noffsinger to approve Consent Grouping items as presented.

A. Minutes: April 8, 2024 Regular

B. Business: General Fund Bills – 2,869,765.97

C. Support Staff Appointments:

- Claudia Banega – 6.5 Paraprofessional-Betsie Valley Elementary

- Stephanie Campbell – Teacher – Lake Ann Elementary

D. Staff Assignment Changes:

- NONE

E. Leave of Absence:

- Katie Johnston – 1755 Early Childhood – Effective April 12, 2024 through remainder of the 2023/24 school year

- Kathy McManus – 6.5 Paraprofessional – Homestead Hills Elementary – Time to be determined

F. Recommendation for Tenure:

- NONE

G. Recommendation for Termination following Probationary Period

- Crystal Griffis – 5.5 Paraprofessional – Betsie Valley Elementary -Effective May 8, 2024

H. Recommendation for Termination:

- NONE

I. Contract Updates:

- NONE

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

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

During the past month of DIT Meetings, several topics were discussed including Building Tuning Protocols, Curriculum Updates, ISSN Updates, Elementary Handbook, Dual Enrollment, and SELweb Data discussions

The Homestead Hills Tuning Protocol focus was on how to utilize i-ready diagnostic data to support students in Math and Reading. We reviewed data from i-ready which compared the most recent data with that of January and found that there was improvement in all areas after 8 weeks.

Lake Ann's Tuning Protocol was a discussion revolving around finding high-impact ways to use Paraprofessionals to their highest potential. They asked for input on finding new and innovative ways to use Paraprofessionals beyond their normal roles.

The HS/MS Tuning Protocol focused around how to support struggling students with Tier 2 & 3 Interventions and planning for future courses based on the information from Q3 grades. They've identified the number of students in danger of failing and broke them into two categories - those below 40 and those between 41 and 59. They discussed a plan of action that included working on the completion of assignments in seminar, creating attendance plans, assigning tutorials for students, creating needed teacher interventions plans, and discussing summer school options.

Betsie Valley's Tuning Protocol was based around SELweb data regarding kids' responses to rules being fair and do kids care about me. Their planned remedies include use of counselor/SafeNet workers, restorative circles, and project-based learning.

Under the Curriculum Update, the discussion revolved around the need for alignment and consistency in Math and Electives, especially in Secondary PE, Art, and Music. The meeting also highlighted the need for curriculum aligned to standards in Elementary Specials. There were also conversations around the I-Ready pilot. It's had pretty good feedback, but has concerns about its functionality for progress monitoring.

ISSN Update discussion revolved around the Student Support Process and the Elementary Discipline Plan. Most of the discussion revolved around the new Discipline

Tables that are included in the proposed new Elementary Handbook. They also did a thorough review of the handbook.

High School Counselor Jeanett Prichett presented last week about Dual Enrollment. They see a need to update language and how dual enrollment and AP classes are weighted.

Student Council Report: Student Council Board of Education Representative, Jessica Whaley – Jessica reported that last week was Teacher Appreciation Week. Student Council treated staff to a taco bar lunch, and thank you notes. Next week, Student Council will start the process to vote for offices for the 2024/25 school year. Jessica shared that this will be her last meeting as representative. Sophie McLaren will be our Student Council Board of Education Representative for the 2024/25 school year. Thank you to Jessica for her representation this past year.

Administration Report:

- A. NMSLA – Superintendent Erfourth – Superintendent Erfourth shared the following: Special Guest. Katie Witkowski, Michigan Community College Association shared a presentation on the future of dual enrollment. Incentivizing Dual Enrollment and early college exposure to help increase access, especially for marginalized students. Her group is working to make policy recommendations to the Governor. The consensus revenue estimating conference will take place on Friday. Transportation funding is set to continue next year but there is uncertainty about 2026. Several groups are in support of paying down the retirement debt to 13.96. This will allow general fund dollars to go back to classrooms. The Dyslexia bill is still up in the air. The NMSLA Summer Conference will be held at the Haggerty Center in Traverse City on Aug 1.**
- B. Twisted Trails Off Road Park Update/Renewal - Superintendent Erfourth shared that this is the request for yearly renewal at \$10,000.00.**
- C. Middle/High School Update – MS/HS Assistant Principal, Nicole Torrey – Mrs. Torrey shared that several 5th grade students have already been able to visit the middle school and meet Mr. Cruz and Mrs. Bentley. All 5th graders will visit the month of May 30 at 9:30 AM and the parent meeting will be held on the evening of May 30. In addition, Mrs. Torrey shared that the MS and HS will be separating into two separate offices for the 2024/25 school year; thus, having a High School Principal and a Middle School Principal.**
- D. Northwest Education General Ed. Budget Presentation – The Board of Education was provided the Northwest Education Services 2024 Budget Overview (General, Special, and Vocational). A Regional Summary was provided that offers information from 2023/24 and illustrates the value of regional programs, collaboration and economics of scale in support of local public-school districts served by the ISD. The Benzie Central Report Summary offers information from**

2023 and 2024 and illustrates the value of regional programs, collaboration, and economies of scale in support of Benzie County Central Schools.

E. Auditorium Theatrical Lighting Upgrade Bids – Superintendent Erfourth – Superintendent Erfourth shared that we received two (2) bids for the fixtures/lights and two (2 bids) for electrical work.

The bids for lights are:

Fantasee Integration \$242,476.21 (-\$12,000 discount for the plans created for the bid process

Sound Environments \$224,664.74 (missing house light upgrades)

The bids for electrical:

Shoreline \$56,740 (This includes the emergency lighting upgrade. Without the emergency lighting upgrade. Without emergency lighting upgrade, the cost is \$38,000.

Topline \$45,000 (This quote did not include the emergency lighting upgrade.) The recommendation to the Board of Education is to approve Fantasee's for lighting and Shoreline for electrical.

F. CIS Auction Consigner Information – Transportation Department – Superintendent Erfourth shared the Auction Consigner Information results. We received \$22,276 for the sale less the commission of \$2,227.60 for a final total of \$20,048.40.

G. Copier/Printer Lease/Purchase Agreement – Kevin Kobylski, Technology, reported that we reviewed three (3) vendors, two (2) that work with leases and one (1) for an outright purchase. The recommended vendor that we would like to approve is Applied Innovation \$3,317 per month. Our current monthly rate is \$5,772.85.

H. Middle School Chromebook Purchase – Sehi Computer Products, Inc.- Kevin Kobylski, Technology reported that we are looking to order 259 chromebooks for next year. Middle School tends to be the group that has the most chromebooks damaged. We would like to order new chromebooks with 3-year warranties for this group.

I. Inter-District Open Enrollment Policy – 2024/25 School of Choice Application - Superintendent Erfourth explained that we are required to approve the inter-district open enrollment policy every 3 years. The law on schools of choice and inter-district enrollment has not changed since 2020. Accordingly, there are no statutory changes that require policy revisions. All but 3 schools participate in

our ISD (Glen Lake, Northport, and Bellaire do not opt in). *The Board of Education, in conjunction and cooperating with the Board of Education which are constituent to Northwest Education Services and which have adopted an identical and reciprocal policy, shall permit the enrollment of students from any participating District in accordance with this policy and the Administrative Guidelines established to implement this policy.* Executive Assistant to the Superintendent, Catina Crossman shared the two yearly open-enrollment periods and criteria in which need to be met to be considered.

J. 2024/25 Elementary Handbook – Principal, Sharyl Corey – Principal Corey shared the minor changes made to the handbook; punctuation, redundant information. Minor changes to pages 6,9,14-16, and 26-27. The handbook will be up for approval on June 10,2024.

K. Chartwells K12 Food Service Update –

- **October 2023 -Apple Crunch Day -Celebrating local farmers**
- **December 2023 – Animal Shelter Food Drive – Collected over 500 lbs. of food, toys, and treats**
- **January-April 2024 – Global Eats; India, Caribbean, China, Korea, Japan, Asia, and Italy**
- **March 2024 – Elementary Beach Party – Leis, beach balls, music, and hula hoops**
- **May 2024 - Feed Your Mood (Coming Soon)**

Senior Breakfast will take place May 24.

5th graders will be joining middle school lunch on May 30.

Behind the scenes, Lake Ann Elementary is getting new lunch tables, all kitchens are getting ice machines, Lake Ann Elementary is getting new kitchen flooring, we are working on the food service spend down plan, and SFSP starts June 24.

L. Chartwells K-12 Food Service Renewal – 1 year – Director of Finance, Danielle Banasiak – Danielle Banasiak shared that this is a one-year renewal of last year's approved RFP. The Equivalent Meal Factor, set by the USDA is decreasing from \$4.71 to \$4.625. This an adjustment in an attempt to restore rates to pre-covid amounts. The Management Fee is increasing to 4.2%, based on the Consumer Price Index. In dollar amounts, this is increasing from \$0.0933 to \$0.0972 per meal, an increase of approximately \$745 for the year, based on the number of meals served last year. The Administrative fee is also increasing 4.2%, based on the CPI. The monthly increase is from \$5700 to \$5933.40, a \$2394 annual increase.

M. Finance Update – Director of Finance, Danielle Banasiak – Mrs. Banasiak shared with the Board of Education that by now they would have been presented with Budget Amendment #2. At this time, she is not comfortable, secure, or confident

doing so. She is requesting to move the amendment #2 to June 10, 2024 and then move forward with the Budget Review on June 24, 2024. Danielle added that she spent three hours on the phone with Shawn Biddle at Northwest Education Services for guidance, going line for line to make sure that all of our finances are both accurate and current. She wants to be thorough.

N. Resignations:

- Michael Hammar – Middle School Cross Country Coach
- Michael Jones – Secondary Science/Industrial Arts/Agricultural Arts teacher
- Michael Jones – FFA Advisor
- Jenny Weisman- Custodial Department – Effective April 26, 2024
- Nicole Torrey – Middle/High School Assistant Principal – Effective June 30, 2024
- Chaz Grundy – 9th Grade Basketball Coach

O. Retirements:

- NONE

Board of Education/Committee Reports –

A. Buildings and Grounds Committee –

1. **Bond Project Update –** President Childs shared summer projects. Lake Ann Elementary will have a new kitchen floor and cafeteria floor installed along with new flooring in the offices and library. The gym floor will be repainted and small roof peaks will be replaced. Irrigation is also being installed. We are also replacing cabinets at Betsie Valley.
 2. **Construction Update –** President Childs shared that ground has broken for the bus garage and footings have been poured. The steel was also delivered this past week. We were waiting on the plan from Consumer's \$ #39's Energy. This arrived on Friday. Furniture meetings have taken place and should be ordered next week. We have continued to work through some challenges from previous projects- Homestead Hills Elementary dishwasher, Homestead Hills Elementary gas line, Homestead Hills Elementary well, Homestead Hills Elementary water pump concerns that the pressure is too high and causing hot water to mix in the cold-water valve, High School cafeteria ceiling (we are waiting on a lift so they can inspect for dimpling or ridges. They are trying to determine if this was completed as a level 4 finish.)
 3. **Building and Grounds Modifications Request – NONE**
- B. Policy Committee –** Superintendent Erfourth shared School Wellness Policies (Updated from 2022.) These are the policies that the Board of Education approved in 2022. We would like to put these policies on the website under 5707a.

- Release of Protected Health Information
- Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting

- Confidentiality, Clinical Records, and Release of Information
 - Consent for Services
- C. Finance Committee –Board of Education Treasurer, Scott Gray – Board of Education Trustee, Matt Smith – NONE, awaiting Budget Amendment #2.
- D. Educational Foundation – Board of Education Trustee Lori-Cota –Ms. Cota Hill shared that they are down to the last two (2) scholarships and that it is anticipated that the Benzie Education Foundation will likely dissolve this summer.
- E. Liaison/Curriculum –Board of Education Trustee Lori Cota Hill – Ms. Cota Hill shared that the next meeting is next week.
- F. Negotiations – Superintendent Erfourth – Transportation has met three times and we are getting close on settling. Board of Education Treasurer, Scott Gray added that they are discussing language, updating old language, and wages, which is the sticky point.

Audience Participation (Agenda Items Only) – NONE

Discussion Topics:

- A. 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 May 10, 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 1,239 up from 1,235 from the last Board of Education Meeting. This includes our Early Childhood population of 87 students. This summary and report will be shared with the Board of Education each month.

Action Topics:

23-24-117 It was moved by Ms. Cota Hill and supported by Mr. Barnard to approve the Twisted Trails Off Road Park Land Use Permit Renewal

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

23-24-118 It was moved by Mr. Barnard and supported by Ms. Cota Hill to approve the 2024/ 25 Northwest Education General Ed. Budget – Model Resolution

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

23-24-119 It was moved by Mr. Gray and supported by Mr. Noffsinger to approve the Auditorium Theatrical Lighting Upgrade Bid; Fantasee Integration \$242,476.21 (-\$12,000 discount for the plans created for the bid process) for lighting and Shoreline \$56,740 (This includes the emergency lighting upgrade) for electrical.

Ayes:7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

23-24-120 It was moved by Mr. Gray and supported by Mr. Smith to approve Copier/Printer Lease Agreement, Applied Innovation \$3,317 per month.

Ayes: 7

Motion Carried

23-24-121 It was moved by Mr. Gray and supported by Mrs. Gillison to approve the Middle School Chromebook Purchase – Sehi Computer Products, Inc.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

23-24-122 It was moved by Mr. Barnard and supported by Mr. Gray to approve the Inter-District Open Enrollment Policy – 2024/25 School of Choice Application.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

23-24-123 It was moved by Ms. Cota Hill and supported by Mrs. Gillison to approve the Infant Toddler and Early Childhood Handbook.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

23-24-124 It was moved by Mr. Gray and supported by Mr. Barnard to approve the Chartwells K12 Food Service Renewal – 1 year.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

Audience Participation (Open Topics):

Kim O'Connor, 4283 Meadow Lane, Thompsonville took the podium. Mrs. O'Connor began with sharing that she was retiring after 22 years. Kim shared the following:

Kim thanked the Board of Education and Benzie County Central Schools for the opportunity to work and raise her children in this school district. As she moves into retirement, she wants to encourage the Board to increase their visibility and presence within buildings in order to get to know the staff better and have a stronger awareness of what is happening in the building. She is concerned about clear communication and the Board knowing the daily operations of the building. She is encouraging members to visit the building, attend staff meetings or BIT meetings, or wander the building.

Jeff Oblinsky, 18781 Lake Wood Circle, Lake Ann took the podium. Mr. Oblinsky shared a concern about an incident that took place with his granddaughter and employee at Lake Ann Elementary this past fall. Jeff is requesting Board of Education follow up asking for the name of the employee and whether or not the employee has been terminated or still is employed by Benzie County Central Schools.

Nicole Neihardt, 20215 Hatty Lane, Interlochen took the podium. Nicole shared her ongoing concerns from this past October, upset that there was still no communication and follow up from Principal, Rachel Anderson. As a result, her children will not be attending Benzie Central next year. She feels parents are too scared to go to the Board of Education because they fear repercussions. She is asking the Board of Education to be available and wants to know what they are going to do to protect the children at Lake Ann Elementary school.

Dibiangie Craig, 4955 Betsie River Rd., Interlochen took the podium. Dibi shared that her resident district was TCAPS, but she wanted her children to go to Benzie Central, as she was a graduate of Benzie Central. She shared that there have been challenges at Lake Ann Elementary involving very violent behaviors; her son being hit, kicked, and choked more than 7 times. Dibi shared that at no time did Principal, Rachel Anderson reach out to her or at any time give answers as to how she was going to keep her son safe. Dibi shared that Mrs. Anderson would say that teachers need to do a better job on staying on top of that, and feels that she throws her own staff under the bus. Parent and principal interactions are not positive and there is a lack of communication. As vice president of the PTO, she finds it very challenging and frustrating as they have missed fundraising opportunities as there seems to be no interest from the principal to build a community with staff and parents. We need a leader.

Onika Witzke, 10261 Honor Hwy., Honor took the podium. Onika shared that she was the former president of the Lake Ann Elementary PTO. Her daughter started preschool at Lake Ann Elementary and left in 4th grade due to Principal Anderson and her lack of respect; both inappropriate and embarrassing. She is frustrated that she had to pull her daughter from her friends and the best teachers and stated she tried warning Superintendent Erfourth. Onika shared that she is here for those students and teachers and is listening. Something needs to change.

Keturah Guzinski, 16340 Almira Rd., Lake Ann took the podium. Keturah shared that her daughter has been at Lake Ann Elementary for four years, two of them being in preschool. She currently is the Treasurer for the Lake Ann Elementary PTO. Keturah shared that although there has been no violence against her child, she is concerned about the moral of the staff. She feels the heaviness in the building walking in, with facial expressions and body language. She is frustrated with the lack of communication with the PTO for approvals and responses, and feels they often have to scramble. Keturah says there are spoken and unspoken frustrations for teachers, custodians, and paraprofessionals. Keturah stated she herself was a Benzie Central graduate, and is begging for some help from the Board of Education. She stated that they are not doing fine out there, and the school is going to drown. She is concerned that parents will school of choice to TCAPS.

Kelly Carpenter, 130 Quail Valley Drive, Buckley took the podium.

Kelly shared that she is a teacher of English and Social Studies at Benzie Central Middle School. She has been in the district since 2008 when she was subbing and then later for student teaching. She brings 4 students with her every day because she believes Benzie Central has all of the ingredients here to be an amazing school including a great staff, great students, and an invested and supportive school board and superintendent. However, she is concerned that we are getting the recipe wrong especially because she has seen two dedicated, hard-working assistant administrators burn out. She is concerned about student behaviors and the chaos that is caused by a new administrator. She feels that these changes create turmoil as students need predictability and safety. She is wondering what we need to do differently whether it be to reevaluate or clarify jobs or look to a dean of students.

Kendra Kohn, 14716 Beagle Blvd., Beulah took the podium. Kendra shared her continued frustration with a kindergarten classroom at Lake Ann Elementary. She feels there is lack of substantial or proper communication from Principal, Rachel Anderson. She has concerns, as her son was a victim of numerous assaults going back to November 2023. She requested an in-person meeting with Superintendent Erfourth and was surprised that Principal Anderson was in attendance. She feels that the blame is placed on the teachers, and says that Mrs. Norvell does communicate with her. She is tired of generalized answers and lack of urgency and communication. Kendra feels that she should not have to threaten going to the Board of Education to get answers. She feels valued concerns should equal valued and appropriate responses.

Ashley Collier, 4411 Betsie River Rd., Interlochen took the podium. She shared that she is a resident of the TCAPS district. She currently is the president of the Lake Ann Elementary PTO. She feels that Lake Ann Elementary has 9 amazing teachers and an amazing support staff. She feels they provide an exemplary education and care for her child.

23-24-125 It was moved by Mr. Barnard and supported by Mr. Smith to enter into closed session at 9:02 PM for purposes of *Personnel Reasons*.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

23-24-126 It was moved by Mr. Gray and supported by Mr. Smith to enter into open session at 10:33 PM.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

**Board Communication:
NONE**

Announcements:

- **May 16 –Spring Pops Concert**
- **May 23 -Senior Night**
- **May 24 -Early Release**
- **May 24 Seniors Last Day**
- **May 27 -No School – Memorial Day**
- **May 28 – CTC Senior Awards Night**
- **May 30 – 5th Grade Visit**
- **June 2 - Commencement – 3:00 PM**
- **June 10 – Regular Board Meeting – 7:00 PM**
- **June 24 – Regular Board Meeting – Board Retreat –Budget Review - Budget Hearing -6:30 PM**

23-24-127 It was moved by Mr. Gray and supported by Mr. Smith to adjourn the regular meeting 10:34 pm.

Ayes: 7

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

Secretary, Board of Education

Please note that May 13, 2024 Regular Board Minutes are subject for approval on June 10, 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!