

## REGULAR MEETING

A Regular meeting of the Benzie County Central Board of Education was held Monday, December 9, 2024, in the Board of Education Conference Room.

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

**Members Present:** Mr. Childs, Mr. Gray, Mrs. Gillison, Mr. Barnard, Chris Noffsinger (Tardy), Lori Cota Hill (Tardy), Sophie McLaren (non-voting member)

**Members Absent:** Mr. Smith

**24-25-051** It was moved by Mr. Barnard and supported by Mr. Gray to approve the agenda as presented.

**Ayes: 4**

**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.

**24-25-052** It was moved by Mr. Gray and supported by Mrs. Gillison to approve Consent Grouping items as presented.

**A. Minutes: November 11, 2024**

**B. Business: General Fund Bills – 1,508,687.25**

**C. Support Staff Appointments:**

- Joshua Barrett – 6.5 Paraprofessional – Homestead Hills Elementary
- Patricia Perkette – 5.5 Paraprofessional – Homestead Hills Elementary
- Corey Bechler – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls Basketball Coach
- Lewis Herman – PM Custodian – Homestead Hills Elementary and High School

**D. Staff Assignment Changes:**

- NONE

**E. Leave of Absence:**

- Stefanie Peterson – Early Childhood Lead Teacher – Maternity Leave – November 25, 2024 through February 17, 2025

**F. Recommendation for Tenure:**

- NONE

**G. Recommendation for Termination following Probationary Period**

- NONE

**H. Recommendation for Termination:**

- NONE

**I. Contract Updates:**

• NONE  
Ayes: 4                      Nays: 0                      Motion Carried

• **District Impact Team Update: Board of Education Trustee, Matt Smith**

**President Childs shared the following on behalf of Mr. Smith:**

The DIT heard an update for GSM. The team evaluated data to identify strengths and weaknesses in our GSM Plan. They also looked at graduation and dropout rates, as well as math and reading performance. Priorities for next steps include developing a compliance monitoring checklist for CKLA, training Benzie Academy staff to provide Specially Designed Instruction, implementing Tier 2 and Tier 3 reading interventions for middle school students, and exploring a Tier 3 intervention matrix for elementary reading. Additional plans involve implementing tiered behavioral interventions at the middle and high school levels, training secondary staff to utilize iReady data reports, organizing TCR meeting for middle school literacy classes, and developing a plan to incentivize student performance on the MSTEP.

DIT reviewed data from SELWEB and SSIS. The SSIS data showed that 69.49% of students demonstrated competence or advanced levels, while 29% of high school students reported high stress and 24% reported moderate stress. Goals are set to add individual SSIS scores and areas of need to the high school struggling students' spreadsheet and to differentiate SEL lessons to better meet the needs of student groups.

Homestead Hills did a tuning protocol that centered on refining practices for WIN (What I Need) times to improve reading proficiency, incorporating feedback to enhance intervention strategies.

Lake Ann's tuning protocol was working to integrate practices from Restorative Practices, RCD, and CPI training into a seamless system to provide consistent staff guidance and support for student growth.

**Student Council Report: Student Council Board of Education Representative, Sophie McLaren – Sophie shared that student council was working on the holiday events that will precede the holiday break. This year the student council will hold a Glowcoming in place of Snowcoming. The tentative date will either be February 14 or February 21.**

**Administration Report:**

- A. **NMSLA – Superintendent Erfourth – Superintendent Erfourth shared the following: The Legislative Lame Duck Session for this year has 5 days left with an indication that a supplemental will likely occur. This package could include changes to the way ISD's receive funding, potential funding for economic**

developments like SOAR, and potential for new funding for roads which may impact the state aid fund for schools if gas tax revenue is diverted from schools to roads. HB6508 Hard Cap limit changes is also being reviewed. This proposal would make the 80% hard cap for insurance the floor and allow unions to bargain on increases to the cap to match inflation. Other potential bills that might be reviewed include workers' compensation, charter school transparency, and millage for Detroit Schools. The next NMSLA meeting will be on February 12th in Lansing to meet with the new appropriation chairs.

- B. Early Childhood Update – Early Childhood Director, Melinda Coger - Melinda shared that the Early Childhood Program was able to provide full Thanksgiving meals to 30 families.**

**Currently we have Early Childhood Programs at all three elementary buildings; Betsie Valley Elementary, Homestead Hills Elementary, and Lake Ann Elementary.**

- **Infant – Toddler**
- **GSRP**
- **GSRP – Early PreK**
- **Strong Beginnings**
- **Extended GSRP**
- **Early Childhood Education High School Class**

**Early Childhood Enrollment (102)**

- **Betsie Valley Elementary (9)**
- **Homestead Hills Elementary (54)**
- **Lake Ann Elementary (39)**

- C. Betsie Valley Elementary Update – Principal, Kyle Taylor – Mr. Taylor shared the various activities and events taking place at Betsie Valley.**

- **Animal and Plant Life Diorama**
- **Halloween Projects**
- **Interlochen Arts Academy – Snow Queen Presentation**
- **Healthy Habits Display with Nurse Rudy**
- **Webber Foundation Winter Gear Donation**
- **November Student Council Elections**
- **Thanksgiving Play – Eat More Veggies**
- **i-Ready Winter Assessment Preparation and Goal Setting**
- **Manistee County Community Foundation \$101,599 New Playground Grant – Thank you to Janene Gee and Amy Herrst**

**D. MS/HS Athletic Update- Athletic Director, Eli Harris – Mr. Harris presented the following fall sports update:**

**Fall Sports Update**

**Participation**

**High School**

<b>SPORT</b>	<b>BOYS</b>	<b>GIRLS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>FOOTBALL</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>32</b>
<b>CROSS COUNTRY</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>SOCCER</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>VOLLEYBALL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>CHEERLEADING</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>90</b>

Currently, there are 292 students enrolled in the high school. Out of the 90 athletes, 2 are Academy students. This indicates that 31% of our high school student body and 3% of the Academy (78) were involved in athletics for the fall sports season.

**Middle School**

<b>SPORT</b>	<b>BOYS</b>	<b>GIRLS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>FOOTBALL</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>POP WARNER (6TH)</b>	<b>12</b>		<b>12</b>
<b>CROSS COUNTRY</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>SOCCER</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>VOLLEYBALL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>CHEERLEADING</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>98</b>

Currently, there are 236 students enrolled in the middle school. Out of the 98 athletes, 1 is an Academy student. This indicates that 41% of our middle school student body and 1% of the Academy (8) were involved in athletics for the fall sports season.

## Fall Awards Recognition

### All-Conference Selections (30)

#### Soccer:

Nolan Bretzke  
Rex Gray  
Conner Wenkel  
JJ Wilkinson

#### Volleyball:

Grace Heiges

#### Cross Country:

##### Boys

Jackson Schaub  
Eli VanPoortfliet  
Wyatt VanPoortfliet  
Ben DeRidder  
Ethin Chandler  
Cage Edingfield  
Mckai Henry  
Logan Hewitt  
Landon Harris  
Kyle Vincent

##### Girls

Nora Grossnickle Conference Champ  
Avery Kelly  
Nevia Chimonas  
Ava Iverson  
Lilly Whaley  
Maggie McClellan  
Althea Gaylord

#### Football:

Grayson Converse DL  
Tyler Brooks WR  
Rowan Zickert QB  
Conner Wenkel Punter  
Parker Pritchett LB  
Aidan Erfourth OL  
Dayne Gillison DB  
Mason Childs Spec. Mention RB

**Grayson Converse won the Burlsworth Character and Sportsmanship Award**

**All-Region Selections (8)****Cross Country:**

Avery Kelly  
 Nora Grossnickle  
 Lilly Whaley  
 Maggie McClellan  
 Jackson Schaub  
 Eli VanPoortfliet  
 Wyatt VanPoortfliet  
 Cage Edingfield

**All-State Selections (2)**

Avery Kelly-30th  
 Nora Grossnickle-25th

**Academic All-State (6)****Cross Country:**

Nora Grossnickle

**Football:**

Grayson Converse  
 Aidan Erfourth  
 Jayden Ewing  
 Owen Hester

**Team Academic All-State****Football****Volleyball****Boys Cross Country**

- E. Operation Close-Up – Washington, D.C. – High School Principal, Cheryl Smith, Danielle Schafer, and Bo Stewart – Ms. Smith, Mrs. Schafer and Mr. Stewart are seeking approval to begin to organize a six-day trip (Sunday through Friday) for interested students in grades 9-12 to Washington D.C. in April or May of 2026.

“The Washington High School Program provides students with hands-on opportunities to interact with government, interest groups and individual citizens. Students will engage with policymakers and experts through seminars, meetings with Congressional offices and observations of Congress in action. Key institutions and historic sites will be used as classrooms to help students explore the links between history and contemporary policy issues. Emphasis will be placed on how the actions of ordinary citizens can directly affect public policy making.”

[Operation Close-Up – Washington D.C.](#)

**F. BusRight – Director of Transportation, Mary Radtke - Mary is recommending that we move from Traversa to BusRight to provide routing, student data management, communication with families, and routing of trips. This system provides real time tracking of buses and provides parents access to their child's route and the ability to let drivers know if a child is riding. Mary and her team piloted this the last few months and found it very helpful for people subbing routes. This is a 3-year contract and provides tablets for each bus at the cost of \$1300/bus. The quote listed was for 9 buses but we have requested 12 so that all of our buses have this technology and to allow for extra trip buses to have a device. The annual fee is \$14,300.00. This annual fee includes full access to the entire BusRight platform, which encompasses:**

- Routing software
- Live GPS tracking
- Unlimited route history
- Tablets with driver navigation
- Push notifications to parents
- Trip management
- Your dedicated BusRight Concierge

**G. Snow Plowing Bids – Betsie Valley Elementary – 3-Year Contract – Superintendent Erfourth shared that we received one bid for Betsie Valley Elementary. AJ's Excavating quoted a price of \$6,250 per season for 3 years.**

**H. Baseball Field Road Expansion – Superintendent Erfourth shared that AJ's Excavating provided a price of \$45,680 to expand the ball field parking lot, create a retention pond, add berms, and add a handicap parking lot behind the ball field. We also received a price of \$43,464.50 from Popp Excavating but they did not include the cost of a road for handicap parking. After careful consideration, the Board of Education felt that the scope of work was not a one-for-one comparison and they were unsure if the handicap parking option would meet the needs of patrons. Discussion continued on the best location to create handicap accessibility. President Childs recommended tabling the vote to allow for the Building and Grounds Committee to reconvene to determine the best plan for the expansion and rebid the scope of work.**

**I. Digital Donation Platform, GoFan – Director of Finance, Danielle Banasiak – Danielle shared that there have been multiple requests for a digital platform to allow for fundraising by all of our student groups without having the limitations provided by only taking cash or checks. GoFan offers the ability to create open ended or goal-oriented fundraisers, generating QR codes that can be used to donate digitally. This could be used for athletics, the music program,**

educational extracurricular activities, as well as the possibility of use by concessions. The fees associated are \$1 for under \$10 or \$1 plus 5% for over \$10, checks would be sent on a weekly basis and a report is able to be generated to allow for the proper accounting of the funds.

**J. Resignations:**

- Butch Adkins – 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Girls Basketball Coach
- RuthAnn Strickland – Junior Varsity Softball Coach

**K. Retirements:**

- NONE

**Board of Education/Committee Reports –**

**A. Buildings and Grounds Committee –**

**1. Bond Project Update – Transportation Building**

- The acritical punch list is about 90% completed along with the civil punch list.
- The Windows are scheduled to ship on the 17th of January, once they are received, we will schedule the installation with Spence Brothers.
- The Kingscott Mechanical/Electrical/Plumbing engineer inspection and punch list creation occurred last Friday. Kingscott will be sending those results asap and then Wolgast will get with the contractors to get started on their list right away they all are aware it is coming.
- Tomorrow we will be working on finishing up some of the open punch list items as well.
- Wolgast and Cadillac Garage Door are working on a solution for the low clearance on the hoist bay door.

In addition, the door punch list will continue throughout the holiday break.

**2. Construction Update – NONE**

**3. Building and Grounds Modifications Request – NONE**

**B. Policy Committee – Superintendent Erfourth shared that she will call for a meeting to discuss an 18-credit option for the Academy for students that may be transferring from Suttons Bay Virtual. This program is closing at the end of the 24-25 school year and we may juniors/seniors that are looking for a reciprocity agreement for their graduation plan from Suttons Bay Virtual.**

**C. Finance Committee –Board of Education Treasurer, Scott Gray – Board of Education Trustee, Matt Smith – NONE**



- D. **Educational Foundation – Board of Education Trustee Lori-Cota – Superintendent Erfourth shared that the foundation is closing our final accounts, with the hope to dissolve completely by the end of the year. Two scholarships, Wolfe and Moss, were given to the choir/band programs and cross country/track programs, respectively.**
- E. **Liaison/Curriculum –Board of Education Trustee Lori Cota Hill – NONE**
- F. **Negotiations – Superintendent Erfourth – NONE**

**Audience Participation (Agenda Items Only) – Bill Kennis, 962 Michigan Ave., Frankfort – Mr. Kennis shared that they are moving forward with the purchase option and hope to close on the Crystal Lake Elementary property by the end of January.**

**Discussion Topics:**

- A. **Current District Enrollment Summary Review – Exit Out v. Transfer In – Executive Assistant to the Superintendent/Pupil Accounting Specialist, Catina Crossman – Mrs. Crossman shared the district wide enrollment summary broken down by school and grade level as of December 6, 2024. The district currently rests at 1205. This number includes our Early Childhood Population of 76, and does not include our 26 Infant-Toddler slots. In addition, Catina shared an exit-out v. transfer-in report, which tracks students both withdrawing and enrolling.**
- B. **Crystal Lake Elementary – Property Sale Update – The Benzie Wellness and Aquatic Center met today, Monday, Dec 9 at 1:00 pm. As Bill shared, they made their decision to proceed with the purchase of Crystal Lake Elementary and close on the property by the end of January.**

**Action Topics:**

**24-25-053 It was moved by Mr. Noffsinger and supported by Mr. Gray to approve the Operation Close-Up Washington, D.C. program.**

**Ayes: 6**

**Nays: 0**

**Motion Carried**

**24-25-054 It was moved by Ms. Cota Hill and supported by Mr. Gray to approve BusRight.**

**Ayes: 6**

**Nays: 0**

**Motion Carried**

**24-25-055 It was moved by Mr. Noffsinger and supported by Mr. Gray to approve to table the Baseball Field Road Expansion rebidding the scope of work.**

**Ayes: 6**

**Nays: 0**

**Motion Carried**

**24-25-056** It was moved by Mrs. Gillison and supported by Mr. Barnard to approve the Digital Donation Platform, GoFan.

**Ayes: 6**

**Nays: 0**

**Motion Carried**

**Audience Participation (Open Topics): NONE**

**Board Communication:**

- **Thank you to Lori Cota Hill and Scott Gray *for their extraordinary service and dedication while serving as members of the Benzie County Central Schools Board of Education.* Both were presented plaques for their years of service.**

**Announcements:**

- **December 16, 2024 – Homestead Hills Holiday Concert**
- **-6:00 PM**
- **December 17, 2024 – Betsie Valley Holiday Concert**
- **December 19, 2024 Lake Ann Holiday Concert**
- **December 18, 2024 – Holiday Band Concert – 5:30 PM**
- **December 18, 2024 – Holiday Choir Concert - 7:30 PM**
- **December 23, 2024 – January 5, 2025 – Holiday Break**
- **January 6, 2025 – School Resumes**
- **January 13, 2025 – Organizational Board Meeting – 6:30 PM**
- **January 13, 2025 – Regular Board Meeting – 7:00 PM**

**24-25-057** It was moved by Ms. Cota Hill and supported by Mr. Gray to adjourn the regular meeting 9:44 pm.

**Ayes: 6**

**Nays: 0**

**Motion Carried**

---

**Secretary, Board of Education**

***Please note that December 9, 2024 Regular Board Minutes are subject for approval on January 13, 2025.***

***Respectfully Submitted,***

***Catina M. Crossman***

***Executive Assistant to the Superintendent***

***Board of Education Administrative Assistant***

***Schools of Choice Coordinator***

***Pupil Accounting Specialist***

***Director of Communications***

***Benzie County Central Schools***

***Go Huskies!***

***Happy Holidays!***