

REGULAR MEETING

A Regular meeting of the Benzie County Central Board of Education was held Monday, January 13, 2025, in the Board of Education Conference Room.

President Childs called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Members Present: Mr. Childs, Mrs. Gillison, Mr. Barnard, Mr. Noffsinger, Mr. Smith, Mrs. Campana, Mr. Kempton, Sophie McLaren (non-voting member)

Members Absent: NONE

24-25-067 It was moved by Mrs. Campana and supported by Mrs. Gillison to approve the agenda with one amendment; *Consent Grouping H. Recommendation for Termination moves to Administration Report H. Resignation.*
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.

***- Welcome and Introduction – New Board of Education Members-
Sue Campana
Gregory Kempton***

***January is School Board Recognition Month
Thank You!***

24-25-068 It was moved by Mr. Barnard and supported by Mrs. Gillison to approve Consent Grouping items as presented.

- A.** Minutes: December 9, 2024
- B.** Business: General Fund Bills – 1,482,361.37
- C.** Support Staff Appointments:
 - Cody Hanson – Assistant Wrestling Coach
 - Jennifer Harris – Junior Varsity Softball Coach
 - Karen Zickert – 7th Grade Girls Basketball Coach
 - Natasha Schropp – Assistant GSRP Lead Teacher – Lake Ann Elementary – WillSub
 - Tammera Roeske - .5 Special Education Teacher – Lake Ann Elementary
- D.** Staff Assignment Changes:
 - NONE
- E.** Leave of Absence:
 - NONE

- F. Recommendation for Tenure:
 - Dana Shepherd – High School Math Teacher
- G. Recommendation for Termination following Probationary Period
 - NONE
- H. Recommendation for Termination:
 - MOVED TO ADMINISTRATION REPORT H. RESIGNATION
- I. Contract Updates:
 - NONE

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

Abstained: 1 Smith – due to family connection.

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

The Betsie Valley Tuning Protocol discussion centered on how to effectively utilize the iReady platform and set goals to prepare for the upcoming winter assessment. They emphasized the importance of evaluating and teaching the data while reviewing recommendations for improvements. A focus is placed on differentiating instruction and making necessary adjustments for individual students after the winter assessment window.

A proposal for adding AP Human Geography to the curriculum was presented and discussed. Danielle is presenting to us tonight.

In Early Childhood discussions, Melinda presented objectives for development and learning alongside fall data. She shared data from the three elementary schools and what areas kids are meeting standards and where they are below standards.

The Homestead Hills Tuning Protocol sought feedback on the Post-Behavior Intervention and Supports (PBIS) process. The discussion revolved around potential improvements for implementing PBIS at Tiers 1, 2, and 3 to better support student behavior and learning outcomes.

We had an update from District TCR about the New Teacher Mentor/Mentee Trainings. They've been successful in meeting regularly helping new teachers learn our district curriculum and help them with classroom management strategies. Growth plans include working with building admins to help teachers make changes discussed in coaching and to stay on pacing calendars.

The math team is preparing for the expiration of Math Expressions in December 2025. They are planning to review Five math programs, with Math Expressions being one. A rubric-driven evaluation process is in place, with a recommendation expected after Spring Break.

For literacy, a CKLA representative will present updates at the next Literacy Committee meeting, allowing the committee to review and make informed decisions about the curriculum.

The ISSN update noted the need to follow up with the St. Clair Butterfly Foundation regarding trauma-informed instruction.

Student Council Report: Student Council Board of Education Representative, Sophie McLaren – Sophie shared that student council held successful holiday festivities prior to break and were currently planning Glowcoming for February 2025.

Administration Report:

A. NMSLA – Superintendent Erfourth – Superintendent Erfourth shared there was no NMSLA meeting today as new legislators’ transition to Lansing. The next meeting will be in person in Lansing on February 12.

B. Recognition of All-State Athletes – The following athletes and programs were recognized:

All State Athletes

Nora Grossnickle

Avery Kelly

Individual Academic All State

Nora Grossnickle

McKai Henry

Jayden Ewiing

Owen Hester

Aidan Erfourth

Grayson Converse

Academic All State Teams

Boys Cross Country

Volleyball

Football

C. Homestead Hills Elementary Update – Principal, Steve Graetz – Mr. Graetz shared a presentation on the Giving Tree. The Giving Tree was an opportunity for our Homestead Hills Elementary staff to be vessels to connect those in need with our community. This past holiday season, twenty-nine (29) families and fifty-six (56) children were gifted a total of 109 gifts.

D. Middle School Update – Principal, Alex Byland – Mr. Byland reflected on the growth that BCMS has made over the first semester. The splitting of the high school and middle school has allowed the middle school to develop a sense of

identity and pride, aligned staff training and building wide approaches and has increased student participation in co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Initiatives

Academic Rigor

- New math and ELA curriculum focused on group work, collaboration, and critical thinking
- Staff training focus on engagement strategies, formative assessments, and student groupings
- iReady curriculum to close gaps in math and reading in Literacy classes - Weekly coaching of staff for instructional best practices
- New teacher mentorship program

Behavior (persevere, responsibility, integrity, dependability, empathy)

- Responsibility-Centered Discipline (RCD)
- Restorative Practices
- Social Emotional Learning Curriculum: Be Good People
- Tiered Behavioral Interventions
- Partnership with therapists (Health Department and Centra Wellness)

Attendance/School Pride

- Focus on strategically developing relationships
- Staff post cards home to students
- Spirit Days
- Pep Rallies
- Attendance incentive during December 2024
- Student Council to develop student voice
- Middle School Events:
 - Pep Rallies-Assemblies
 - Can Drive Competition – Duct Tape Principal Byland to the wall December 2024
 - Middle School Play January 2025
 - Winter Dance January 2025

All areas have shown growth

- E. Advanced Placement Human Geography – High School Teacher, Danielle Schafer – Mrs. Schafer is proposing for an Advanced Placement Human Geography Course to be offered in the Fall of 2025.

“Immerse yourself in AP Human Geography by investigating population trends, exploring diverse cultural landscapes, and identifying spatial patterns across various scales. From bustling cities to rural areas, you’ll embark on a journey of discovery as you examine the diverse interactions that people have with the environment.”

- Thinking Geographically
- Population & Migration Patterns and Processes
- Cultural Patterns and Processes
- Political Patterns and Processes

- **Agricultural & Rural Land Use Patterns and Processes**
- **Cities & Urban Land Use Patterns and Processes**
- **Industrial and Economic Development Patterns and Processes**

F. 2023/24 Audit Review- Julie Burks -Dennis, Gartland, Niergarth – Julie Burks presented to the Board of Education. Julie presented a high-level review of Benzie's Financial Net Position, much of which can be swayed heavily by the state pension liabilities. A small change can impact the District's net position by millions of dollars, which is why there is a total net position change of \$3,940,312 in 2024. Long-term debt totals \$37,292,439, interest expense for the year ending June 30, 2024 was \$964,319, and interest paid was \$1,254,930. For the District's General Fund, Revenues were \$19,000,955, while expenditures were \$18,661,356 with an annual net of \$339,599. This made the ending fund balance after the correction of error, \$5,977,018 by June 30, 2024. Ms. Burks showed several graphs. The general trend showed that the increase in revenues was tapering off dramatically in the 2023-24 year, while expenditures continued the upward trend. The areas of Instruction showed the highest expenditure increase, as the district's expenditures are mostly payroll. Finally, Ms. Burks reviewed the material weaknesses found in the District, 3 of which are year over year repeats due to the District's size. She stated that it is important that the Bank Reconciliations be prepared and reviewed monthly, this directly impacts the District's ability to file the audit on time. Last, it was mentioned that the District's Food Service Fund has an excess fund balance, this is an immaterial instance of noncompliance. The District continues to work with MDE to spend down this balance. Overall the District is doing well and has a healthy fund balance.

G. Budget Amendment #1 – Director of Finance, Danielle Banasiak – Danielle shared the following:

-Revenues- The 2024 Taxable Values are tracking as predicted in the 2024 original budget. State revenues are less than predicted as there was not the per pupil increase as expected, maintaining the \$9,608 per pupil as set in FY2023. The budget was set based on 1100 students, this was maintained through the amendment as it is close to the actual Fall Student Count. The opening fund balance was adopted at \$6,669,373 but due to the error discovered during the FY24 audit, was amended to \$6,316,617. The amended expected Revenues total \$17,832,583. This includes categorical funding sources such as 22L for transportation.

-Expenditures- The adopted expected expenditures were \$18,823,926, but with the settling of contracts and adjustments for cost, are increased to \$19,361,757. This will result in an estimated end of year fund balance of 27.13% from 33.25% at the beginning of the year. While the fund balance is still healthy, careful monitoring and planning is necessary to ensure the District's financial health going forward.

-The Early Childhood budget continues to need close monitoring to ensure salary expenditures related to rapid growth do not outpace revenue.

H. Resignations:

- **Lewis Herman – PM Custodian – Homestead Hills Elementary and High School**

I. Retirements:

- **NONE**

Board of Education/Committee Reports –

A. Buildings and Grounds Committee –

- 1. Bond Project Update – President Childs shared the Kingscott Update on behalf of Dan Tryles, Director of Architecture:**

Homestead Hills Elementary

- **Media Center desk permanent countertop to be installed on 1/8/25 by Interphase (Amy Vander Meer)**
- **Dan T. working to contact Brian Byelich at State to seek relief from operable windows ruling at Homestead Hills and Lake Ann PK Classrooms**

High School

- **Replacement door indicators replaced over Winter Break**
- **New doors at Gymnasium installed over Winter Break**

Transportation Building

- **Overhead doors will be changed to “High Lift” by Spence Brothers**
- **Interphase will visually inspect the workstation furniture in the Director’s Office and the Dispatch Office on 1/8/25 (workstation countertop and file drawer punch list items)**

B. Policy Committee – Superintendent Erfourth shared that the Policy Committee met regarding a proposed reciprocity agreement. "Any student in good standing and on track to graduate with the required 18 credit hour Michigan Merit Curriculum Graduation diploma from Suttons Bay Virtual Academy and who is registered as a Sophomore, Junior, or Senior during the 2024-2025 school year shall have their 18-credit hour Michigan Merit Curriculum Graduation diploma honored by Benzie Academy. This reciprocity agreement applies only to Suttons Bay Virtual students transferring to Benzie Academy and listed as Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors as of the 2024-2025 school year. An approved credit audit will be required."

C. Finance Committee –Board of Education Treasurer, Matt Smith– NONE

D. Liaison Committee–Board of Education Presiden, Brian Childs– NONE – Next meeting is January 21.

E. Negotiations – Superintendent Erfourth – NONE

Audience Participation (Agenda Items Only) – NONE

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 January 13, 2025. The district currently rests at 1218. This number includes our Early Childhood Population of 81, 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.**

Action Topics:

24-25-069 It was moved by Mr. Noffsinger and supported by Mr. Barnard to approve the Advanced Placement Human Geography course offering beginning the Fall of 2025.
Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

24-25-070 It was moved by Mrs. Campana and supported by Mr. Smith to approve the 2023/24 Audit Review.
Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

24-25-071 It was moved by Mr. Smith and supported by Mrs. Gillison to approve Budget Amendment #1.
Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

24-25-072 It was moved by Mrs. Campana and supported by Mr. Smith to approve the Suttons Bay Virtual Reciprocity Agreement – 18-Credit Option per the Michigan Merit Curriculum Graduation Requirements. *"Any student in good standing and on track to graduate with the required 18 credit hour Michigan Merit Curriculum Graduation diploma from Suttons Bay Virtual Academy and who is registered as a Sophomore, Junior, or Senior during the 2024-2025 school year shall have their 18-credit hour Michigan Merit Curriculum Graduation diploma honored by Benzie Academy. This reciprocity agreement applies only to Suttons Bay Virtual students transferring to Benzie Academy and listed as Sophomores, Juniors, and Seniors as of the 2024-2025 school year. An approved credit audit will be required."*
Ayes: 7 Nays: 0 Motion Carried

Audience Participation (Open Topics): NONE

Board Communication:

- **Welcome Mikayla Scholts – Athletic Trainer - Mikayla earned her undergraduate degree in Athletic Training from Saginaw Valley State University. Her passion for helping athletes stay healthy and active led her to pursue a career in athletic training. She furthered her education with a master’s degree in Sports Psychology and Applied Sports Science from Pennsylvania Western University.**

Announcements:

- **January 17, 2025 – Early Release – End of 1st Marking Period**
- **January 20, 2025 – NO SCHOOL**
- **January 26, 2025 – Board of Education Meeting 9:00 AM -12:00 PM – Board Retreat**
- **January 31, 2025 – Early Release**
- **February 10, 2025 – Board of Education Meeting 7:00 PM**

24-25-073 It was moved by Mr. Noffsinger and supported by Mrs. Campana to adjourn the regular meeting 9:11 pm.

Ayes: 6

Nays: 0

Motion Carried

Secretary, Board of Education

Please note that January 13, 2025 Regular Board Minutes are subject for approval on February 10, 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!