

MASTER AGREEMENT

Between

THE BENZIE COUNTY CENTRAL BOARD OF
EDUCATION

And

BENZIE COUNTY CENTRAL
PARAPROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION
MEA/NEA

2025-2028

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SECTION 1 - BASIC CONTRACTUAL PROVISIONS

1.1 AGREEMENT

A. THE PARTIES

This Agreement is entered into effective **June 30, 2025** by and between the Board of Education of Benzie County Central Schools, counties of Benzie, Manistee, Grand Traverse, and Wexford, Michigan, hereinafter called the "Employer," and the Benzie County Central Paraprofessional Association, an affiliate of the Michigan Education Association and the National Education Association, hereinafter called the "**Union.**"

B. RESOLUTION OF DISPUTES

The employer and the Union recognize the importance of orderly and peaceful labor relations for the mutual interest and benefit of the Employer, Employees, and the Union. The Employer and the Union further recognize the mutual benefits of just and expeditious resolution of disputes which may arise as to proper interpretation and implementation of this Agreement, and accordingly, have included herein a grievance procedure for the effective processing and resolution of such disputes.

C. NO STRIKE

The Union agrees that during the term of this Agreement there will be no strike or work stoppage.

1.2 RECOGNITION - EMPLOYEES COVERED

The Employer does hereby recognize the Union as the exclusive representative for the purpose of collective bargaining in respect to rates of pay, wages, hours of employment and other conditions of employment, for the term of this Agreement. The bargaining unit includes, all paraprofessionals employed by the Employer and specifically excludes central office secretaries, mechanics, supervisory employees, and all other persons.

1.3 DEFINITIONS

A. EMPLOYER

The term "Employer," as used in this Agreement, shall mean the Board of Education of the Benzie County Central Schools, a quorum of the elected members of the Board, or the Board's authorized designees, such as the Superintendent or Supervisor.

B. UNION

The term "Union," as used in this Agreement, shall mean the Benzie County Central Paraprofessional Association, MEA/NEA.

C. EMPLOYEE

The term "employee," as used in this Agreement, shall mean a person employed in a position within the bargaining unit as defined in Section 1.2.

D. DAYS

The term "days," as used in this Agreement, shall mean calendar days exclusive of Saturdays, Sundays, legal holidays, and days when the Central Administrative Offices are closed to the public.

E. POSITION

A position is an assignment within a classification.

F. YEARS

The term "years," as used in the "years" of service context in this Agreement, shall mean calendar years for twelve-month employees and school years for school year employees.

1.4 TERM OF AGREEMENT

This Agreement shall be effective on July 1, 2025 and shall remain in effect until June 30, 2028. The parties agree future contracts will run July 1-June 30 for those respective years. In witness whereof, the parties have caused this Agreement to be executed on their behalf by their duly authorized representatives.

FOR THE UNION:

BY: Kathleen McManus
Its President

DATE: 8-28-2025

BY: Boeth Miller
Its Negotiator

BY: Amiee Eifoult
Its Negotiator

BY: _____

FOR THE BOARD OF EDUCATION:

BY: [Signature]
Its President

DATE: 9/28/25

BY: [Signature]
Its Secretary

BY: Nicole Bernadette Birkett
Its Negotiator

By: _____

Digitally signed by Nicole Bernadette Birkett
Date: 2025.08.28 13:53:43 -04'00'

1.5 GRIEVANCES

A. DEFINITION

A Grievance is a claim by one or more employees or the Union that there has been an alleged improper application, violation, or misinterpretation of this Agreement.

B. GRIEVANCE FORM

Any grievance presented in writing must include the following:

1. Specific statement of facts giving rise to the alleged violation
2. Section or subsection of this contract alleged to have been violated
3. Date of the alleged violation
4. Relief requested
5. Signature of the grievant

Any grievance not in accordance with the above requirements may be rejected as improper. Such rejection shall not extend the limitations hereinafter set forth.

C. GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Step 1 - Supervisor-Verbal: An employee with a problem or a complaint shall first discuss the matter with his/her immediate Supervisor with the objective of resolving it quickly and informally.

Supervisor-Written: In the event the problem or complaint has not been satisfactorily resolved, the matter shall be reduced to writing and submitted to the immediate Supervisor no later than seven (7) days from date of occurrence.

Within ten (10) days after meeting, the Supervisor shall state a decision in writing and furnish a copy to the employee and the Union.

Step 2 - Superintendent: Within five (5) days after receiving the decision in Step 1 Supervisor-Written, the Union may appeal in writing to the Superintendent of Schools.

1. Within five (5) days of receipt of the written grievance, the Superintendent or designee shall meet with the Union at a mutually satisfactory time and place. The affected employee(s) may be present at such a meeting.
2. Within five (5) days after the meeting, the Superintendent shall state a decision in writing, and furnish a copy to the Union.

Step 3 - Board of Education: Within five (5) days after receiving the decision of Step 2, the Union may appeal the decision in writing through the Superintendent to the Board of Education.

1. The Board President shall appoint someone to hear the grievance, who shall within ten (10) days of the Board's receipt of the grievance confer with the Union Grievance Committee chairman to set a mutually satisfactory time and place for the hearing. The affected employee(s) may be present at such meeting.

2. Within ten (10) days after the hearing the Board shall state a decision in writing and furnish a copy thereof to the Union.

Step 4 - Arbitration: If the Union is not satisfied with the disposition of the grievance at Step 3 by the Board or if no disposition has been made within the period above provided, the Union may submit the grievance, within thirty (30) days of the expiration of Step 3, to arbitration before an impartial arbitrator.

If the arbitrator cannot be selected by mutual agreement of the parties, the arbitrator shall be selected by the American Arbitration Association in accordance with its rules. Neither the Employer nor the Union shall be permitted to assert in such arbitration proceeding any ground or to rely on any evidence not previously disclosed to the other party. The arbitrator shall have no power to alter, add to, or subtract from the terms of this Agreement.

Both parties agree to be bound by the award of the arbitrator, and that judgment thereon may be entered in any court of competent jurisdiction. The fees and expenses of the arbitrator shall be shared equally by the Union and the Employer.

D. REPRESENTATION

Both employees and the Employer have the right to be represented at any step in the grievance procedure by attorneys or other representatives of their own choice. The Union/Employee and Employer shall each bear their own cost of any such representation.

E. TIME LIMITS

Any appeal at any step that is not issued within the time limits specified shall result in a forfeiture of the grievance unless mutually agreed to, in writing, by both parties to extend the timelines.

F. GRIEVANCE HANDLING

All preparation, filing, presentation or consideration of grievances, shall be held at times other than when an employee or a participating Union representative are to be at their assigned duty stations unless mutually agreed to by the parties.

G. REINSTATEMENT

If any employee for whom a grievance is sustained shall be found to have been unjustly discharged or penalized, the employee shall be reinstated with full reimbursement of all compensation lost.

SECTION 2 - EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS

2.1 EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

A. NONDISCRIMINATION

The Employer agrees that it will not directly, or indirectly, discourage or deprive or coerce any employee in the enjoyment of any rights conferred by the Michigan Employment Relations Act or other laws of Michigan, or the Constitutions of Michigan and the United States of America; nor will it discriminate against any employee because of membership or lack of membership in the Union, participation or lack of participation in the lawful activities of the Union, participation or lack of participation in collective negotiations with the Employer, institution of a grievance as defined in this Agreement, or otherwise with respect to any terms or conditions of employment.

The Board and the Association agree to comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) on an individual case-by-case basis.

B. FACILITY AND EQUIPMENT USAGE

The Union shall have the right to use school building facilities and equipment after school hours for Union business following the district's building use policy. The Union agrees to reimburse the district for the cost of any materials used or damage to school property that is other than normal wear. **No** charge shall be made to the Union for such use, except in cases where maintenance personnel must be called to open and close buildings.

C. UNION ACTIVITY

The employees agree they will not engage in Union activities during working hours unless permitted within this Agreement or by permission from the immediate Supervisor. The Union shall be permitted to use E- mail to communicate with its members or representatives. Any employee who is absent from his/her assigned duties for the purpose of Union business shall have a deduction of the hourly wage for each hour or part of an hour of absence. However, if the Employer requires an employee to be engaged in activities on behalf of the Union with the Employer, the employee shall be released from scheduled duties without loss of wages.

D. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

In response to reasonable written requests, the Employer will provide to the Union all information, which is available under the Freedom of Information Act, subject to any exemptions allowable or required by law. The Union may be required to pay costs incurred by the Employer in providing this information as provided in district policy.

E. PERSONNEL FILE

Employees will have the right to review the contents of their personnel file and, if they request, receive a copy of documents therein. At the request of the employee, a representative may be present. Employees may submit a written notation regarding any material in the personnel file,

and the same shall be attached to the file copy of the material in question. The written notation cannot exceed five pages of 8-1/2 inch X 11 inch paper.

When an employee is requested to sign/initial material to be placed in the personnel file, such signature/initials shall be understood to indicate awareness of the material, but shall not be interpreted to mean agreement with the content of the material. The Employer agrees to notify the employee any time there is a request to review or release materials in his/her personnel file, as required by law.

Written complaints or charges shall not be placed or retained in an employee's personnel file unless the administration substantiates the complaint(s) or charge(s).

F. BULLETIN BOARDS

Bulletin board whose locations are specifically designated by the Employer shall be made available for use by the Union and its members.

2.2 THE EMPLOYER'S RIGHTS

The Employer, on its own behalf and on behalf of the district, hereby retains and reserves unto itself, without limitation all powers, rights, authority, duties, and responsibilities conferred upon and vested in it by the laws and the Constitution of the State of Michigan and of the United States, including, but without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the right:

- A. To the executive management and administrative control of the school system and its properties and facilities, and the direction of the activities of its employees within the scope of their employment;
- B. To hire all employees and subject to the provisions of law, to determine their qualifications and the conditions for their continued employment, of their dismissal or demotions; and to promote, and transfer all such employees as allowed by law.
- C. To establish written personnel and other policies; and
- D. To establish policies, bus schedules, the hours of work, and other duties, responsibilities and assignments of employees, terms and conditions of employment not in conflict with this Agreement.

The exercise of the foregoing powers, rights, authority, duties and responsibilities by the Employer, the adoption of policies, rules and regulations and practices in furtherance thereof, and the use of judgment and discretion in connection therewith shall be limited only by the specific and expressed terms of this Agreement, and shall not direct or require any employee to violate any Federal or State law or regulation.

2.3 SENIORITY

A. DEFINITION

Seniority shall be defined as the length of service in the district in a classification within the bargaining unit. The classifications shall consist of paraprofessionals. Those paraprofessionals who were hired prior to this contract will be considered as being members of the bargaining unit as to their date of hire.

B. SENIORITY LIST

Employees shall accrue one (1) day of seniority for each day (or portion thereof) paid. One hundred eighty (180) days, unless the number of days in the school year is increased, shall be the maximum seniority accrual in any school year (July 1 through June 30) for school year employees.

Days or portions of days worked prior to the first day of school shall count as days paid for seniority purposes.

Employees shall be ranked on the seniority list, with the employee who has accrued the greatest number of days seniority being the most senior, and the employee who has accrued the least number of days seniority being the least senior. In the event two (2) or more employees have the same number of seniority days the employee possessing the Social Security Number with the highest last four digits shall be the most senior employee of this group.

The seniority list shall be prepared by the Employer, updated every year, and provided to the Union for review. The Union shall inform the Employer of any known errors on the seniority list. Seniority shall accrue within classification.

Should an employee switch classification, their seniority level in the former classification shall be frozen. Saturdays and Sundays will not be counted for seniority accrual unless they are a part of the employee's regular schedule and not counted as overtime.

C. SENIORITY LOST

Seniority shall be lost by an employee upon termination, resignation, or retirement.

D. SENIORITY CONTINUED

Seniority shall continue to accumulate and shall not be lost when an employee is on leave due to an injury or accident which is compensable under the Employer's workers' compensation insurance for a period of up to twelve (12) months; when an employee is on leave to serve in the armed forces of the United States; when an employee is on any paid leave of absence; or for any other reason required by law.

E. SENIORITY FROZEN

Seniority shall not be lost, but shall not continue to accumulate, when an employee is on unpaid leave of absence; when an employee is on layoff status; or when an employee transfers to a position under the Employer not in the bargaining unit or in a different classification.

F. PROBATIONARY EMPLOYEES

There shall be no seniority among probationary employees. When an employee finishes the probationary period, the employee shall be placed on the seniority list with credit for all days worked, in accordance with Section 2.4.

2.4 PROBATION

All new employees shall be on probation until they have worked ninety (90) days. Employees shall only be required to serve one (1) probationary period with the district should they be re-hired to the same classification. For the purpose of this section only, any part of a day worked shall count as a workday including being paid to attend required training. During the probationary period the employee may be laid off or terminated at the sole discretion of the Employer. All probationary employees will be evaluated twice, using the current evaluation form, no later than 45 days and no sooner than 80 days of their probationary period. A performance conference between the probationary employee and his/her immediate supervisor will be held within the probationary period.

Probationary employees shall not be entitled to insurance benefits, paid leave days, holidays, or snow days, however, upon completion of their probationary period the employees will be credited the paid leave days (excluding holidays) from the date of initial employment. The crediting of paid leave days shall be prorated for employees starting mid-year.

Employees, at the beginning of their probationary period, will be furnished with a packet of materials from central office that will help facilitate a successful probationary period for them. These materials could include: classification handbooks, a copy of the contract, information and opportunities regarding the Hepatitis B vaccination process, appropriate job-related Board policies and a copy of any work rules that apply to their employment with the district. At the conclusion of the probationary period, the Employer will furnish the employee with a copy of the Master Agreement and applications for insurance benefits.

2.5 REDUCTION IN WORK FORCE

A. DEFINITION

The word layoff shall mean a reduction in the number of bargaining unit employees, with recall rights.

B. REDUCTION PROCEDURE

In the event a position within the bargaining unit is eliminated, the following procedure will be used:

1. The Employer will identify the position being eliminated.
2. All remaining positions will be posted for bidding by the employees in the job classification.
3. An employee who, as a result of the elimination of a position finds no position remaining on the list for bidding, has the right to displace the least senior employee in another job classification covered by this agreement providing the employee is qualified and has more seniority in that classification than the displaced employee.
4. An employee who is on layoff shall have the right to apply for any vacancies outside the bargaining unit member's classification.

C. RECALL PROCEDURE

1. Employees shall be recalled in inverse order of layoff according to classification.
2. Notices of recall shall be sent by certified or registered mail to the last known address as shown on the Employer's records. The recall notice shall state the time and date on which the employee is to report back to work. It shall be the employee's responsibility to keep the Employer notified as to his/her current mailing address. A recalled employee shall be given at least five (5) calendar days from receipt of notice, excluding Saturdays and Sundays, to report to work. The Employer may fill the position on a temporary basis until the recalled employee can report for work providing the employee reports or make arrangements to report within the five (5) day period. Employees recalled to work for which they are qualified are obligated to take said work. An employee who declines recall to perform work for which he/she is qualified shall be considered terminated.

SECTION 3 - WORKING CONDITIONS

3.1 ASSIGNMENTS

A. JOB ASSIGNMENTS

Paraprofessional assignments shall be made on the basis of seniority and qualifications relevant to the assignment. Vacant and newly created positions within the bargaining unit the Employer has determined to fill will be posted in conspicuous places for the applicable periods stated in subsections B, C, and D below. A position within the bargaining unit will be considered vacant if the employee holding that position resigns, retires or otherwise terminates their employment, is terminated for just cause in accordance with this Agreement, or is granted an assignment on which he/she bids. Any newly created positions within the bargaining unit shall be considered vacant until permanently filled.

B. PARAPROFESSIONAL VACANCIES

Any paraprofessional vacancies shall be posted for seven (7) days. Said posting shall contain the current location and number of hours of the position. Vacancies shall be filled in accordance with the criteria in 3.1.A.

C. SUMMER VACANCIES

The District shall post vacancies that occur in this bargaining unit during the summer months for ten (10) days. Furthermore, the District will mail postings of vacancies that include bargaining

unit positions to bargaining unit members who leave stamped self-addressed envelopes with the Central Office. A copy will be emailed to the President of the Association.

D. TEMPORARY ASSIGNMENT

Temporary assignment of substitutes within the bargaining unit shall not exceed four (4) weeks unless mutually agreed to be extended between the Employer and the Association's Executive Board. Persons serving as substitutes to fill temporary assignments and later hired by the Employer for the exact position shall have those days worked in the previous 12 months credited for purposes of fulfilling the probationary period requirements outlined in Section 2.4.

3.2 WORKING CONDITIONS

A. SAFETY

The Employer shall assign work in compliance with applicable statutes and governmental regulations relating to the safety of the person or the equipment. All work orders and safety-related repairs shall be processed through the District's operational website.

B. WORKER COMPENSATION

Employees shall be covered by workers' compensation insurance under Michigan's Workers' Compensation law. Any employee who is absent because of an injury or disease compensable under the Michigan Workers' Compensation law, shall not have his/her accumulated sick leave days reduced or health insurance cancelled while receiving pay through Michigan Workers' Compensation. It is understood that the employee is responsible for their portion of their health insurance.

C. PHYSICAL PROTECTION

Employees may protect themselves, other employees, teachers, administrators, or students, from attacks, physical abuse or injury, or may prevent damage to school district property.

D. LEGAL PROTECTION

The Board of Education supports its employees acting within the Policies, By-Laws and Regulations of the Board of Education and Administrative Practices and Procedures. It is agreed that in any joint defense of any litigation, the employee may receive benefit of the Board of Education's legal counsel when the paraprofessional is not in violation of the above-mentioned Policies, By-Laws, Regulations, Practices and Procedures and no ethical conflict of interest exists. If the employee so chooses, the employee has the right to retain his or her own legal counsel at the employee's expense.

Time lost by an employee for appearance as a subpoenaed witness in any judicial or administrative proceeding arising out of the employee's employment shall not be charged against the employee if his/her appearance as a witness shall serve the interests of the Board.

E. MEDICALLY FRAGILE STUDENTS

Employees who are required to serve medically fragile students shall be provided appropriate training to deal with the special needs of the assigned student, as determined by the Employer. Such training shall be at the district's expense and at the employee's regular hourly rate. The parent or the legal guardian of the child will sign a statement acknowledging that a District employee is performing specific services and that this is permissible with the parent or legal guardian.

F. JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Changes in job descriptions will not be implemented without prior discussion with the Association. The parties agree to meet to discuss job description changes within a classification at least thirty (30) days prior to implementation of new ones. New job descriptions shall be distributed to all affected bargaining unit members.

The Board will provide reasonable notification to the Association prior to changing minimum requirements for job descriptions within a classification and provide reasonable training opportunities for those employees within the Association who wish to participate in upgrading their skills.

G. SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The parties do hereby mutually agree that the school improvement process currently in effect will continue. Any plan developed by the committees shall not be in conflict with the master agreement or board policy.

H. DISPENSING MEDICATION

If employees are required to administer medication to students the following conditions will be met:

1. The parents or legal guardians have given prior written approval for the administration of medication through school personnel.
2. The aforementioned permission is accompanied by written instruction from the attending physician or pharmacist.
3. The medication will be in a current prescription bottle.
4. Prior training is provided by the parents or legal guardians with regard to medication protocol, equipment and procedures when deemed necessary.
5. The medication and necessary equipment is delivered to the school site by the parents, legal guardians or an adult designated by parent or legal guardian. A form shall be signed by the parent or legal guardian approving the adult delivering the medication or necessary equipment.
6. A dispensation log is maintained.
7. The medication will be dispensed by an employee designated by the employer. If the designated person is a member of the bargaining unit another adult witness shall be present if available and an alternate will also be assigned. Both (2) adults and the student will sign the dispensation log.

The employer shall indemnify and save harmless from any liability, employees who administer medication to pupils when directed to do so by school supervisory personnel, provided the employees have acted in a reasonable manner and followed the above conditions.

It is expressly understood that members of the bargaining unit will not deviate from this policy.

3.3 DISCIPLINE

A. JUST CAUSE

Employees shall be disciplined (including warnings, reprimands, suspensions, reductions in rank or occupational advantage, discharges, or other actions of a disciplinary nature) only for just cause. Discipline shall be subject to the grievance procedure.

- B. In the case of dismissal, demotion, discharge or suspension of an Employee, the Association President shall be advised of the reasons for such action as soon as reasonably possible. Written notification of dismissal, suspension or other disciplinary action shall be sent to the Employee and the Association representative. Causes which shall be deemed sufficient for suspension, demotion, dismissal or other disciplinary action include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Unauthorized excessive absence from work;
2. Conviction of any criminal act that would damage the employee's effectiveness in the position they currently hold;
3. Incompetence;
4. Insubordination;
5. Bringing intoxicants into or consuming intoxicants on any school property or reporting for work under the influence of intoxicants of any kind in any degree whatsoever;
6. Willful damage to school property, waste, or misappropriation of school supplies or equipment;
7. Deliberate falsification of records and reports.

C. REPRESENTATION

An employee shall be entitled to have a representative of their choice for any disciplinary matter or when a discussion could result in disciplinary action being taken. The employee shall be advised by the Employer of the right to representation under this provision of the Agreement.

No suspension shall be effective for a period of more than ten (10) working days without the approval of the Superintendent or designee.

A "demotion" shall be defined as a reduction in pay and shall not include involuntary transfers not subjecting the Employee to any reduction in pay. Involuntary transfers may occur with mutual agreement between the Board of Education and the Association. A layoff or partial layoff is not a demotion.

The Board agrees that Employees shall not be disciplined, dismissed, demoted, or reduced in compensation without "due process" - Provided that the first ninety (90) workdays of employment all new employees shall be deemed "probationary employees", and dismissal of

any such employee prior to completion of his/her probationary period shall be made at the sole discretion of the Board or its designee and shall not be subject to appeal under this Agreement. The following progressive discipline system shall be the normal practice of the Employer, except as the seriousness of the offense in the opinion of the Board shall otherwise require:

1. Discussion of the problem with the employee
2. Verbal written by supervisor
3. Written reprimand by supervisor and placed in the employee's personnel file. The employee will receive a copy of the written reprimand.
4. Suspension at half pay (employee does not report to work)
5. Suspension without pay
6. Discharge/ dismissal

Employees may submit a written statement of objection to the imposition of any of the above disciplinary sanctions, specifically stating any reasons why the disciplinary sanction should not be imposed, and such statement shall be included in the Employee's personnel file.

When the Board or its designee is investigating a complaint of such a serious nature that in Board's or its designees' opinion, the Employee should be removed from the workplace, such Employee shall be given a paid leave until the investigation is complete.

D. COMPLAINTS

Written complaints regarding an employee shall include names of the complainants and any administrative action taken, and if appropriate, remedy clearly stated. Complaints shall be reviewed with the employee before placement in the personnel file. Written complaints or charges shall not be placed or retained in an employee's personnel file unless the complaint(s) or charge(s) lead(s) to discipline by the employer.

E. PERSONNEL FILE

Each employee shall have a right to review his/her personnel file. At the employee's request, an Association representative may accompany the employee in reviewing the personnel file. The employee may attach a written notation to material in the personnel file. If materials in the personnel file are inappropriate or in error, the material will be corrected or expunged from the file. When an employee is requested to sign material placed in the personnel file, such signature shall be understood to indicate awareness of the material, but shall not be interpreted to mean agreement with the content of the material. All recommendations, written or oral, shall be based solely on the contents of the employee's personnel file.

3.4 PHYSICAL ABILITY

A. EXAMINATIONS

The Employer reserves the right to require that an employee submit to a physical and/or psychological examination by qualified persons(s), in which case the Employer is entitled to all information relevant to job performance. If such person declares an employee is unable to fulfill his/her assigned obligations, the employee may request another examination to be performed

by some other qualified person designated by the Employer. The Employer shall bear the full cost of these examinations, other than annual physicals.

B. LUNCH AND BREAK TIMES

All paraprofessionals who work at least five (5) hours per day will have a continuous uninterrupted unpaid lunch period of at least thirty (30) minutes and no longer than 45 minutes per day. They shall also receive two fifteen (15) minute relief periods occurring during the day.

An employee must be scheduled for a minimum of five (5) hours of work within a given work day before they can be required to take an unpaid lunch period. Additionally, it is understood that all lunch periods shall be duty free. If the lunch period is not duty free, then they shall be paid lunch periods.

SECTION 4 - LEAVES

4.1 PAID LEAVES

A. SICK/FUNERAL LEAVE

At the beginning of each classification's work year employees shall be credited with six (6) days of sick leave. The remaining six (6) days for school year employees shall be accrued at a rate of one (1) day per each month worked, until all eligible days have been earned (e.g. if an employee starts the work year in September, then October 1st they will receive an additional sick day. If they work in October, then they will receive their second additional sick day on November 1st, etc.) This accounting shall continue until all additional days have been earned. If an employee is hired after the start of a classification's year, their days will be prorated based on the percentage of time remaining in that work year. New hires will be credited upon completion of their probationary period with the paid leave days (excluding holidays) from the date of initial employment. The crediting of paid leave days shall be prorated for employees starting mid-year. The unused portion of such allowance shall be accumulative to one hundred eighty (180) days. An employee who is paid less than one hundred eighty (180) days in a year shall be credited a prorated share of the twelve (12) days. Leave days may be used for the following:

1. Personal Illness or Disability - The employee may use all or any portion of leave days accumulated to recover from illness or disability, which shall include childbirth and complications of pregnancy.
2. Illness of an Immediate Family Member - The employee may take a maximum of five (5) days per illness of an immediate family member. In the event of serious or critical illness of a spouse, son or daughter, or other dependents that require the employee's presence beyond the five (5) days, an attending physician's note will be required.
3. Death in the Family - The employee may use days reasonably necessary in case of death in the immediate family. Immediate family includes: spouse, children, mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, brother, sister, sons-in-law, daughters-in-law, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law and grandchildren.

4. Death of Close Friends or Relatives Outside the Immediate Family - No more than three (3) days including travel to attend the funeral of a close friend or relative outside the immediate family. Upon application employee may be granted additional travel time.
5. In accordance with the Michigan Paid Medical Leave Act ("PMLA"), MCL 408.961 et seq., an eligible non-exempt (hourly) employee may use up to 40 hours of paid medical leave, provided above, for the following absences per fiscal year:
 - a. Mental or physical illness, injury or health condition, including related medical diagnosis, care, treatment, or preventative medical care of the employee or family member.
 - b. For a victim of domestic violence or sexual assault, any related medical care or counseling; victim services or legal services; judicial proceedings, or relocation.
 - c. For closure of the employee's primary workplace by order of a public official; for an employee's need to care for a child whose school or place of care has been closed by order of a public official; or a determination by health authorities that the presence of the employee or family member in the community would jeopardize the health of others due to exposure to a communicable disease.

A family member includes a child, parent, spouse, grandparent, grandchild, or sibling as defined by the PMLA. This provision shall be interpreted and applied consistent with the PMLA, and shall not provide greater benefits than that allowed by the statute. PMLA leave time runs currently with other leave available to the employee. To be eligible, the non-exempt (hourly) employee must be employed for more than 25 weeks in a calendar year, worked an average at least 25 hours per week during the immediately preceding calendar year. Leave time must be taken in increments of half-day increments.

B. PERSONAL BUSINESS LEAVE

An employee may take two (2) days to be used for personal business reasons. An employee must request use of a personal day at least one (1) day in advance, in writing, except in emergency situations. Personal business days may be used to attend functions of immediate family members such as, but not limited to, field trips, college graduation ceremonies, or other school activities. Personal business days shall not be used in situations for which leave is provided under this Agreement, nor to extend vacations, holidays, or travel related thereto, nor for purposes related to a second income or seeking other employment or recreation. If necessary, the Employer may limit the number of employees taking personal business leave on any day. If, for any reason, an employee is unable to use the aforementioned personal days within the applicable contract year, then all unused days shall be converted to sick leave days and will be added to the employee's sick leave accruals.

C. COURT APPEARANCE/COMMUNITY SERVICE

Leave with pay not deductible from sick leave or personal leave shall be granted for court appearances in any case connected with the employee's work when the Union is not a party to the litigation. Paid leave of absence will be granted for jury duty, volunteer firefighting or EMS services, but any compensation received by the employee in the form of witness fees or jury pay, excluding expense reimbursement, will be given to the Employer to offset wages paid.

D. UNUSED SICK DAYS

When an employee who has ten (10) years' service in the district retires or resigns from the district, the employee shall receive a final payment of twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) for each accumulated unused sick leave day up to a maximum of one hundred eighty (180) days. A death benefit of \$500.00 or \$25.00 for each accumulated unused sick day, whichever is greater, shall be paid to the estate of an employee within thirty (30) days of death.

E. RETURN FROM EXTENDED PERSONAL ILLNESS OR DISABILITY

An extended personal illness or disability leave shall be defined as twenty (20) or more consecutive workdays. Employees returning from such leave may be required to certify their ability to return to work at least five (5) working days prior to the requested date of return.

F. ASSOCIATION LEAVE

At the beginning of every school year, the Association shall be credited with fifty (50) Association hours to be used by officers or agents of the Association to conduct Association business. The Association President must notify the Superintendent at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance of a member taking such leave. The Association will pay the cost of substitutes and retirement costs.

4.2 UNPAID LEAVES

A. LEAVES OF ABSENCE

Leaves of absence for reasonable periods not to exceed one (1) year may be granted upon request for:

1. Serving in any public position.
2. Maternity and child care leaves. Such leave may be extended for a reasonable period of time at the discretion of the supervisor.
3. Extended illness (physical or mental) beyond accumulated sick leave.
4. Prolonged illness in the immediate family.
5. Educational leave without pay for a period up to an academic year for each employee who wishes to attend school as a full-time student.
6. Short-term personal leave.
7. Military leave.
8. Other leaves approved by the Superintendent. Benefits shall not accrue during an unpaid leave.

B. APPLICATION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE

An application requesting a leave of absence pursuant to this Article must be submitted to the Superintendent no later than three (3) weeks prior to the time the leave is to commence. Exceptions shall be made under extenuating circumstances. The Board reserves the right to approve or deny a request on a case by case basis and may limit to a reasonable number the employees on leave at one time. The request for the leave of absence must be in writing setting forth the reasons for the leave of absence and the anticipated length of time; and if requested,

verification shall be submitted. Any extensions for leaves of absence shall be handled the same as the request for the regular leave.

In instances of unpaid absence caused by non-health related conditions (e.g., vacation trip and/or for personal reasons not covered in Section A of this article), the employee may take a total of five (5) unpaid days off before becoming responsible for the employer's share of the per diem cost of health insurance.

On the sixth and succeeding such days the employee shall be responsible for the Board of Education's portion of the per diem cost of the health insurance premium while on unpaid leave of absence.

C. RETURNING FROM LEAVE

Employees returning from a medical leave of absence may be required to certify their ability to return to work at least five (5) working days prior to the requested date of the return.

Employees returning from leave will generally fit into one (1) of three (3) categories. They are:

1. Returning Early: Employees returning early from leave of absence must submit a request to return to work in writing. Employees returning early from leave other than medical leave must wait for the next available position opening within their classification.
2. Returning on the Planned Date: Employees returning on the planned date will be placed in the position they left, if that position still exists. If the position does not exist they will be placed in a position which their relevant job-related qualifications and seniority allow them to occupy. Should this cause another senior employee to be displaced, the provisions of Section 2.5 B.2 and B.3 shall be followed.
3. Returning after the Planned Date: Employees returning after the planned date must apply for an extension as described in Paragraph B. of this Article.

D. FAILURE TO RETURN

Failure to return from an approved leave on the agreed upon date shall mean the employee has voluntarily terminated his/her employment with the Employer.

E. MAINTENANCE OF BENEFITS

Employees who desire to maintain their health care benefits during the period of the leave may do so by arranging to pay monthly in advance the cost of the premium to the Employer. The parties expressly recognize that it is the employee's responsibility to have the money in the business office in advance of the scheduled date of premium payment. Failure of the employee to do so shall result in the loss of health care coverage except in emergency situations approved by the Superintendent or his/her designee. It is understood by the parties that the employee may qualify under the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 for paid health care benefits for up to twelve (12) weeks while on unpaid leave.

F. FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE

Pursuant to the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993, an employee who has been employed at least twelve months and worked at least 1,250 hours during the prior twelve-month period is entitled to twelve work weeks of leave during any twelve-month period without pay but with group health insurance coverage maintained for a reason provided by law including:

1. Due to the birth of the employee's child in order to care for the child;
2. Due to the placement of a child with the employee for adoption or foster care;
3. To care for the employee's spouse, child, or parent who has a serious health condition; or
4. Due to a serious health condition that renders the employee incapable of performing the functions of his or her job.

4.3 HOLIDAYS

Employees shall receive full day pay for Thanksgiving Day, the day after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day but shall not be required to work on these days, provided that the employee was at work on the scheduled work days before and after Thanksgiving and Christmas/Christmas Eve unless their absence is excused with a doctor's note which indicates that the employee was unable to work on the scheduled day in question. Should Christmas Eve or Christmas Day fall on Saturday or Sunday, the prior Friday and/or the Monday following will be used. In addition to the above holidays, Employees shall receive full pay for New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.

SECTION 5 - WAGES AND BENEFITS

5.1 WAGES AND REIMBURSEMENT

A. REGULAR WAGES

The Employer may alter the work schedule to the extent the Employer determines necessary to comply with applicable local, state or federal laws or regulations; the availability of utilities; or for other circumstances beyond the control of the Employer. Paraprofessionals will not report for work on snow days. Paraprofessionals will be paid for any "Act of God Days" not required by the state to be made up, including delayed starts and early releases resulting from "Acts of God."

B. EMPLOYEE TRAINING

Employees will be paid their regular hourly rate while in attendance at classes required by the Employer or the State of Michigan. The employer may make available mandatory training by classification. All bargaining unit members shall attend training when notified at least fifteen (15) days prior to the training.

Employees will be paid their hourly rate while attending such training. In the event of an emergency the employee may be excused with prior consent of the superintendent or his/her designee.

C. MILEAGE

Employees will be reimbursed at the IRS rate per mile when they are required to drive their own vehicles on official school business at the request of their supervisor.

D. SALARY ADVANCEMENT

The parties agree that all employees shall have their pay rate adjusted to the next step on July 1 of each year.

E. WORK ASSIGNMENT

Any Employee asked by a Supervisor to temporarily (minimum one (1) day) assume the duties of another Employee will be paid on the employee's step in the new classification. An Employee's pay rate shall not be reduced by any temporary change in duties or because of any involuntary transfer.

5.2 EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

The Board of Education will pay up to the following contribution levels toward employee health care premiums for employees who are scheduled to work 6.5 hours (or more) per day.

	Annual	Monthly
Full Family	\$13,500.00	\$1,125.00
2 Person	\$13,500.00	\$1,125.00
Single	\$7,620.00	\$635.00

The balance of remaining premium will be paid by the employee deducted from their pay each pay period.

Bargaining unit members may select from the following options:

Program A - Health Insurance, Dental Insurance, Vision Insurance, Long Term Disability and Life Insurance

Program B - Dental, Vision, Life, Long Term Disability and Cash-in-Lieu of Insurance Payment from the Board based on the number of hours worked per day as follows:

Hours Worked Per Day	Monthly Payment
6.5 or more	\$415

- Employees selecting Program B must present documentation that he/she has other health insurance for the covered year that meets the coverage and affordability requirements of the Affordable Care Act. The Employer will pay 100% of the Program B benefits for all employees.

The Association has the right to instruct the employer to make plan changes in coverage one time per contract year. This notification must be in writing and signed by the BCC ESP Executive Board.

5.3 COMPENSATION

YEARS	2025-2026	2026-2027	2027-2028
Probation	\$16.00	\$16.30	\$16.60
1-2	\$16.10	\$16.40	\$16.70
3-4	\$16.34	\$16.64	\$16.94
5-6	\$16.65	\$16.95	\$17.25
7-8	\$16.98	\$17.28	\$17.58
9-11	\$17.14	\$17.44	\$17.74
12-14	\$17.64	\$17.94	\$18.24
15-17	\$18.15	\$18.45	\$18.75
18-20	\$18.68	\$18.98	\$19.28
21+	\$19.23	\$19.53	\$19.83

***Compensation increases to take effect the next available full pay period following ratification by the association and subsequent approval by the Board of Education.

Longevity Payments

Employees, who have worked consecutively for Benzie County Central Schools for at least ten (10) years, shall be paid longevity payments annually as follows:

11-14 years	\$775.00
15-17 years	\$1025.00
18-20 years	\$1300.00
21+ years	\$1550.00

5.4 ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION

It is understood that pre-approval in writing by the building principal is required for additional hours of pay or compensation time.

Any employee who is approved by the administrator to work beyond their normal workday for things such as, but not limited to, field trips, day trips, and camp, shall be compensated to a maximum of 12 hours with any hours over 8 being paid at a rate of time and a half. The administrator reserves the right to limit the number of paraprofessionals attending trips.

Any employee who is approved by the administrator to work beyond their normal work day for things such as, but not limited to book fairs, bus duty, field day, and special events, shall receive compensation time.

It is understood that if an employee **volunteers as a parent** to attend a trip or event there will not be compensation provided and paid time off should be submitted.

Special Duty

Any employee who is trained, maintains certification, and is assigned as primary designee to the following duties will receive the additional compensation assigned to that task annually on the second pay of June. Should a position become required mid-year, the annual compensation will be prorated to the percentage of the year the position was assigned.

Payment will be made based on a list provided by the administrator to the Central Business Office based on the successful completion of duties and evaluation. District reserves the right to split the annual payment amount if primary designee duties are shared among multiple employees.

- Crisis Response Team (maintain current certification): \$100
- Special Toileting (catheterization, diapering, bedpan): \$350
- Special Feeding: \$350
- Special Communication Device (ex. Dynavox): \$350