

Tawas Area Schools
Regular Board of Education Meeting
January 12, 2026

I. Call to Order

The reorganizational and regular meeting of the Tawas Area Board of Education was called to order by Superintendent Danek at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, January 12, 2026 in the boardroom at the administration office.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Mrs. Danek.

B. Roll Call

Present: Miller, Jenkins, Malewska, Bruning, Butzin

Absent: Edmonds, Ulman

Tardy: None

C. Positive Highlight

Mrs. Danek reported that, in recognition of her acceptance into the State Honors Choir, Ms. Teresa Dalman—who will be performing at the Michigan Music Conference—will perform a musical selection for the Board alongside three other students.

D. Public Comments – Information and Proposals

Mrs. Danek said that anyone wanting to speak during public comment would have 3 minutes to share.

Mrs. Anna Dalman said that she wanted to give a shout out to Mrs. Grover for her role in the accomplishments of her daughter, Teresa Dalman. She expressed her gratefulness for the time and dedication Mrs. Grover has put into the music program. Mrs. Dalman also thanked the Board for reconsidering the GPA multiplier and encouraged the Board to continue to look for ways to support the arts.

II. Action Items

A. Election of Officers

Mrs. Danek indicated that board officers need to be selected for the calendar year. She called for nominations for President. Mrs. Bruning made a motion to nominate Amy Jenkins for President, supported by Malewska. Mr. Miller made a motion to nominate Julie Ulman for President, supported by Malewska. There were no other nominations or discussion and nominations were closed. A roll call vote was taken and the Board unanimously elected Mrs. Amy Jenkins as President of the Board. Mrs. Jenkins took over the meeting.

President Jenkins called for nominations for Vice President. Motion by Jenkins, supported by Malewska to nominate Jennifer Bruning for Vice-President. There were no other nominations or discussion and nominations were closed. Motion carried unanimously.

President Jenkins called for nominations for Secretary. Motion by Bruning, supported by Malewska to nominate Julie Ulman for Secretary. There were no other nominations or discussion and nominations were closed. Motion carried unanimously.

President Jenkins called for nominations for Treasurer. Motion by Bruning, supported by Malewska to nominate Ami Edmonds for Treasurer. There were no other nominations or discussion and nominations were closed. Motion carried unanimously.

B. Consent Agenda

Motion by Bruning, supported by Malewska, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented:

1. **Approval of Minutes** –December 8, 2025 regular meeting minutes and December 16, 2025 special meeting minutes.
2. **Approval of Payment of Bills** –
 - Monthly contractual and prepaid expenses:
 - General Fund: \$947,798.65
 - Sinking Fund: \$0.00
 - Lunch Fund: \$63,697.65
 - Presented monthly bills:
 - General Fund: \$19,812,41
 - Sinking Fund: \$0.00
 - Lunch Fund: \$0.00
3. **Receipt of Written Communications** – None

Motion carried unanimously.

C. Routine Matters

1. Recommendations & Reports from Administration

a. January is School Board Recognition Month

Mrs. Danek said that January is School Board Recognition Month. She said on behalf of the Tawas Area Schools community she would like to thank them for their support and dedication to Tawas Area Schools, its students, staff(s) and the programs that we provide. Through their leadership, Tawas Area continues to experience high academic achievements among schools in this region. She thanked them for the role that they have played in making Tawas Area Schools one of the top achieving districts in the region. She noted their years of service as follows: Julie Ulman, 9 years; Jennifer Bruning, 7 years; Ami Edmonds, 5.5 years; Michael Butzin, 5 years; Amy Jenkins, 3 years; Allan Miller, 1 year; Sheila Malewska, 1 year. She presented each of them with a certificate of appreciation.

b. Hire Coaches

Motion by Bruning, supported by Malewska, to hire the coaches as recommended:

- Varsity Baseball – Shane Plank
- JV Baseball – Justin Ulman
- Varsity Softball – Marcus Doan
- JV Softball – Kaelene Horn
- Boys' Head Track – Erin Challenger
- Boys' Assistant Track – Chris Lerczak
- Girls' Head Track - **OPEN**
- Girls' Assistant Track – Nicholas Frees
- Boys' Golf – Paul Vainer
- Girls' Soccer – Adrianna Dittenbir
- Girls' Assistant Soccer – Elliott Buchanan
- 7th grade track – Jennifer Caldwell

- 8th grade track – Kohl Coffin
- Boys' Varsity Soccer – Robert Shrout

A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

D. Old Business

1. Committee Reports - None

2. Legislative Report

Superintendent Danek shared that since the beginning of the year, there have been important developments at the state level that affect our district planning and school board governance. She said the Legislature has now approved the FY 2026 School Aid Fund Budget, including a meaningful per-pupil funding increase and continued free meals, which gives us greater clarity for next year's budget. Implementation of Michigan's new dyslexia and early literacy law continues to move forward, and the Department of Education is advocating of higher literacy funding in the current budget discussions.

She said in alignment with the statutory timelines, the state has also released the approved K-3 Valid and Reliable Screening and Progress-Monitoring Reading Assessments List. At this time, the approved options include Amira ISIP Assess and M class with DIBELS 8TH Edition. Districts are required to select from this list to meet compliance with the literacy and dyslexia law. Districts have until August 1, 2027 to update their selection of a valid and reliable screening and progress-monitoring reading assessment. This timeline provides us with the opportunity to engage in thoughtful planning and internal conversation. As part of this process, we will need to evaluate whether we continue using our traditional STAR assessments in conjunction or fully transition to one of the state-approved tools.

E. New Business - None

F. Student 2025-2026-#7 Discipline Hearing

Mrs. Tiffany read a description of the incident:

Student 2025-2026-#7 entered Mr. Shrout's classroom 7 minutes into the class period. Mr. Shrout was absent that day, and Mrs. Grusecki was subbing for him. Student 2025-2026-#7 arrived noisily into the classroom and poked Student A and Student B as he walked by them. He sat in the wrong seat and refused to move upon request by the guest teacher, Mrs. Grusecki. She told him that he needed to go to the office, and he replied, "Make me." Mrs. Grusecki called the middle school office and Mrs. Tiffany and both calls went to voicemail. Mrs. Tiffany received the call, but could not answer it before it went to voicemail, so she went directly to Mr. Shrout's classroom. While Mrs. Grusecki was calling on the phone, she reported that Student 2025-2026-#7 and Student A were arguing. Student 2025-2026-#7 called Student A a hoe and other names, and Student 2025-2026-#7 reported that Student A said rude things back to him. Student A threw a small plastic toy (about a quarter of an inch in size) at Student 2025-2026-#7. Student 2025-2026-#7 responded by punching Student A in the back by her right shoulder. Student A kicked Student 2025-2026-#7 in the privates, and then Student 2025-2026-#7 threw a classroom chair at her. Mrs. Tiffany walked into the classroom at this point and asked Student 2025-2026-#7 to go to the office. Student 2025-2026-#7 refused loudly several times before complying with the request. As they left, Mrs. Grusecki asked that Student A be taken to the office as well. While walking to the office, Student 2025-2026-#7 called Student A a hoe and other names. In the

office, Student 2025-2026-#7, Mrs. Tiffany and Ms. Lizotte discussed the situation with Student 2025-2026-#7. Student 2025-2026-#7 admitted that he should not have thrown the chair at Student A, but he did not regret doing it and did not want to offer an apology or work through it with Student A. Student 2025-2026-#7 told Ms. Lizotte that he does not like our school and that he wants to get expelled. Mrs. Tiffany called Trudy, Student 2025-2026-#7's therapist at Wellvance, and she said that Student 2025-2026-#7 needed to go home because he was not safe at school.

Based on witness statements and evidence, this incident was not impulsive but a deliberate act of aggression that Student 2025-2026-#7 justified as retaliation. He has been disciplined this school year for involvement in two separate fights and a previous assault, and the current incident reflects a continued escalation in physical aggression. Given his repeated involvement in physical altercations, the targeted nature of prior incidents, his stated justification for using violence, and the cumulative pattern of disruptive and aggressive behavior, this incident represents a serious breach of conduct and an ongoing threat to school safety. Despite strict adherence to his behavior contract, full IEP implementation, and multiple targeted interventions, his conduct has continued to escalate across settings, endangering other students and creating a hostile, disruptive learning environment that undermines the rights and safety of the school community. Per the student handbook, this matter must be immediately reported to the Tawas Area School Board for a disciplinary hearing. As a result, Student 2025-2026-#7 will be suspended until the next board meeting due to his violation of the TAMS Handbook rules 10. Assault and 18. Disobedience, punishable by OSS/Expulsion.

Motion by Bruning, supported by Malewska, to expel Student 2025-2026-#7 for 180 days. Mrs. Malewska stated that it seems like it took a long time for this to come before the Board and questioned why. Mrs. Danek stated that due to the student having an IEP, each time a discipline incident occurred a Manifestation hearing had to be held to determine if the incident was a manifestation of the student's disability. She said typically, the MDR has come back as a manifestation and the student was able to return to school immediately.

Mrs. Jenkins made a comment about the lengthy nature of this student's discipline history.

A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

G. Closed Session – Student 2024-2025-#8 Request to Return to School

Motion by Bruning, supported by Butzin to go into closed session at 8:10 p.m. for a student request to return to school.

Motion by Bruning, supported by Miller to return to open session at 8:35 p.m.

Motion by Malewska, supported by Bruning, to allow Student 2024-2025-#8 to be reinstated to Tawas Area Schools beginning at the start of the second semester, January 19, 2026, with eligibility for team sports in the Spring of 2026. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

H. Board Work Session – Superintendent Goals

The Board discussed the Superintendent goals presented by Mrs. Danek in the closed session for the student request to return to school. The Board had no questions or comments.

Motion by Jenkins, supported by Malewska to approve the Superintendent goals as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

III. Information and Proposals

A. Superintendent Report – Mrs. Danek gave a brief facilities update. She said both the roofing and the glass block project are projected to take place in March, or as soon as the weather conditions allow us to move forward safely and effectively. She said we will also be seeking bids for the next phase of the roofing project sooner rather than later, with the goal of beginning Phase 2 as quickly as possible after July 1st, utilizing sinking fund resources. Mrs. Danek also shared that Michigan’s new State Superintendent, Dr. Glenn Maleyko, is scheduled to visit and tour the campus on February 19th from 2-3:30 p.m. She also wanted to recognize and congratulate Doug Livingston as he was accepted into the 2026 cohort of the Michigan Leadership Fellows for Equity and Transformation through MASSP. This is an 18-month project-based fellowship grounded in the four dimensions of leadership and Mr. Livingston was selected as one of only six participants statewide. Finally, Mrs. Danek stated that she wanted to extend her sincere thanks to each of the Board members for their dedication, time commitment and willingness to navigate challenges.

Mr. Butzin asked for further information on the glass block project, wanting to know what exactly is being done to fix it. Mrs. Danek said that they are addressing where the problem is stemming from and doing a complete overhaul of the project. Mr. Butzin asked if getting rid of the glass block entirely was ever considered. Mrs. Danek said that the district wanted to keep the look of the block, if possible without compromising the structure. She said she will share the report with the Board so that they can see exactly what is being done.

B. Student Representatives –

- Senior Representative: Miss Abby Kloska – Ms. Kloska stated that the All-Star band will be performing in Alpena coming up. She shared that plans are underway for Snowcoming, which will take place on January 31st and that the student council is planning to do another couch potato fundraiser.

C. Administration – Mr. Livingston thanked the staff for rolling with the snow days at the end of the semester and adjusting their schedules to prepare for exams. He said that the high school said goodbye to an exchange student who is headed back to Brazil. Mr. Livingston shared that the leadership fellowship will focus on instructional leadership and will offer mentoring and coaching. He wished luck to the choir and stated that the leadership class, with Mrs. Sigulinsky, will compete at the regional competition in Bay City coming up.

Mr. Hazen shared that on February 9th, staff would participate in professional development focused on restorative practices, presented by Bay Arenac ISD. He said he would be attending the AP & Dean Leadership Conference in Mount Pleasant in February. Hazen also shared that the U.S. Army Recruiter’s Office reached out and on April 2nd will be sending their Woodwind Ensemble to work with students in band.

Mrs. Tiffany highlighted her students of the month. She said the other part of the professional development pm February 9th would consist of training on Oppositional Defiance Disorder. She shared that she will be attending a Testing Conference in Ann Arbor soon and the Thoughtful Leaders Conference on February 6 and 7. Middle School students will be going ice skating in February. Lastly, she shared that they will be launching a training called FAME (Formative Assessment for Michigan Educators) on January 28th which aims to help teachers teach better.

Mr. Mejeur asked the Board for permission to start looking for a different conference for football only. The Board said that they would support him looking at some options and considering the stats of the teams in the conference before coming back with a recommendation. Mejeur said that Coach Paul Vainer reached out to him about getting an assistant coach for golf. He said there are currently 25 kids signed up for spring golf. The Board discussed the possibility of adding a girls' wrestling coach and an assistant boys' golf coach for next year and voting on these positions at the next board meeting. Board members were encouraged to reach out to Mrs. Jenkins if they wanted this to be added to the agenda. Lastly, Mejeur shared that the district would be hosting several district and regional competitions this year.

Mrs. Clouse highlighted the students of the month. She shared that the new school success liaison, Amy Sias, has started in the building and is getting acclimated. She would soon have a caseload and dive in. She also said that on the half days at the end of the week, the elementary school will be using this time to plan ahead.

D. From the Board – Mr. Butzin welcomed the new school board officers. Mrs. Malewska shared that she is excited for Teresa to go to the State Honors Choir and for the All-Star Band Concert coming up. Mrs. Bruning wished luck to Teresa and the band and congratulated Mr. Livingston on his fellowship.

Mrs. Jenkins wished luck to the band and Teresa as well, congratulated Mr. Livingston, expressed gratitude to Mr. Mejeur for securing the district and regional competitions being hosted by the district this year, and thanked the Board for electing her President.

IV. Advance Planning

Mrs. Danek informed the Board that the budget committee would meet prior to the next regular board meeting, February 9th, at 6:00 p.m. She also stated that a student achievement committee meeting would need to be established once Mrs. Jenkins has finalized the committees.

VI. Adjournment

Motion by Butzin, supported by Miller, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.