

Tawas Area Schools
Special Board of Education Meeting
February 24, 2025

A special meeting of the Tawas Area Board of Education was called to order by President Ulman at 5:00 p.m. on Monday, February 24, 2025, in the boardroom at the administration office.

Mrs. Ulman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call:

Present: Ulman, Bruning, Jenkins, Butzin, Edmonds, Miller

Absent: None

Tardy: Malewska

Administrators Present: Danek

PUBLIC COMMENTS – INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

Mrs. Ulman asked if anyone had comments on agenda or non-agenda items. Mrs. Cady Mounts Rabbage spoke briefly sharing her opinion on the GPA multiplier. She talked about what is in the best interest of students, and that is rigorous courses. Mrs. Mounts Rabbage suggested that the multiplier system be applied to AP courses only. She also stated that the current application of the GPA multiplier system leads to burnout and high levels of stress, as well as changing students' college enrollment plans. In order to be valedictorian or salutatorian, students are having to take 21 credits a semester, compared to a college freshman who typically takes a minimum of 12 credits.

NEW BUSINESS

At 5:06 p.m., the board began their work session with a discussion of the GPA multiplier. Some of the challenges discussed by Mrs. Ulman included whether these college courses are adequately preparing students for the next level of education, how GPA is calculated when students take classes like academic seminar, as well as stakeholder concerns. Mrs. Ulman also talked about AP classes being rigorous and that same feedback has not been received concerning EMC/Dual Enrollment classes.

Mr. Butzin talked about how academic seminar is essentially a study hall. He stated that more emphasis needs to be placed on SAT prep and referenced the class of 2012, which had 6 valedictorians (before the multiplier was used). He said that his daughter did not do the EMC program or take EMC classes, but got a scholarship based on her SAT score. Mr. Butzin also said that he does not agree with an AP course being equal to a college course that the district has no control over.

Mrs. Ulman spoke about multiple valedictorians and salutatorians being a valid drawback to not having the GPA multiplier.

Mrs. Edmonds stated that many schools are doing away with the multiplier.

Mrs. Ulman stated that the term “rigor” needs to be defined. She said she can see flaws with the application of that term, specifically concerning band classes.

Mrs. Jenkins stated that AP courses prepare students better than dual enrollment classes. She also said that no colleges recognize the weighted GPA.

Mr. Butzin asked if there would still be a Top Ten without having a valedictorian/salutatorian.

Mrs. Bruning shared her concern that getting rid of valedictorian/salutatorian would affect students' enthusiasm. She said she is not in favor of dual enrollment/EMC being weighted.

Mrs. Edmonds talked about college courses lacking that one on one interaction and oversight.

Mrs. Ulman stated that virtual teaching is not a thing of the past. She asked how to level the playing field for all students. She also questioned how many AP courses were offered and if they are offered every year.

Mr. Miller had nothing to add.

Mrs. Ulman said that she would like to continue having a valedictorian/salutatorian and the Top Ten. She feels that the weighted GPA should be restricted to AP courses only with a maximum of 3 total classes per year and should be implemented with the class of 2029.

Mr. Butzin made a motion, with support from Jenkins, to weight only AP Courses with a maximum of 3 weighted classes per year impacting the class of 2029. Mrs. Bruning stated that she would like to add the SAT as a tie breaker. A roll call vote was taken. Yes: Butzin, Miller, Jenkins. No: Edmonds, Ulman, Bruning. Motion failed.

Mrs. Bruning made a motion, with support from Jenkins, to weight only AP courses with a maximum of 3 total classes per year impacting the class of 2029 with SAT scores being part of the tie breaker for valedictorian/salutatorian. A roll call vote was taken. Yes: Butzin, Miller, Bruning, Jenkins. No: Edmonds, Ulman. Motion passed.

The board stated that although the motion was passed, before the policy is updated in the handbook they would like to get some feedback from stakeholders prior to the first reading of the updated policy.

At 5:39 a 5-minute recess was taken.

The board reconvened at 5:45 p.m. to discuss the board operations manual. The board first talked about whether or not the majority wanted to keep moving forward with the manual. Jenkins, Edmonds, Bruning and Miller all wanted to keep moving forward, but Mr. Butzin did not want to. However, since majority wanted to, they would proceed.

Mrs. Malewska arrived to the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

The board first discussed the vision of the board. They also talked about helping acclimate new board members and guiding them as far as what their responsibilities are.

Mr. Butzin shared his concerns about the manual conflicting with other bylaws and policies. He said he is in favor of having a procedure to acclimate new board members.

Mrs. Jenkins said that the manual was not intended to be so lengthy.

Mrs. Edmonds stated that the committee was formed by those who attended a seminar. They looked at samples provided by other, larger schools and used those examples to create the manual.

Mr. Butzin questioned how much it would cost to create something that he feels does not benefit the district.

The board then went through the proposed manual page by page and marked up any corrections or edits that they would like to see made.

Motion by Butzin, support by Jenkins to adjourn the meeting at 7:00 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.