

Tawas Area Schools
Regular Board of Education Meeting
November 11, 2024

President Bruning called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, November 11, 2024.

Mrs. Edmonds led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call:

Present: Miller, Edmonds, Butzin, Jenkins, Bruning
Absent: Ulman, Lentz
Tardy: None

Administrators Present: Danek, Livingston, Hazen, Tiffany

POSITIVE HIGHLIGHTS

Mrs. Danek said that the positive highlight tonight would be a look into the regional comparison of M-step data and a presentation about Munetrix by Mrs. Tiffany. Mrs. Danek stated that the district, in direct comparison with the state average, had 12 wins, 7 losses and 1 tie. Mrs. Tiffany then took over and gave a brief presentation on Munetrix and the uses of this program. She highlighted the different data sets available to administrators to gauge the district's strengths and weaknesses in academic achievement.

Motion by Edmonds, with support from Jenkins, to amend the agenda by adding section 2(a)(2) Hire media center educational assistant. Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

Mrs. Bruning asked if there was anyone with public comment and explained that individuals would have 3 minutes to speak about agenda or non-agenda items. There was no public comment.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Edmonds, support by Jenkins to approve the consent agenda items which included the approval of the October 14, 2024 regular meeting minutes, the October 28, 2024 special meeting minutes and the payment of bills as follows: the monthly contractual and prepaid expenses for the general fund in the amount of \$1,102,528.15, the sinking fund expenses in the amount of \$63,437.44 and the lunch fund expenses in the amount of \$86,005.67. It also included payment of presented bills for the general fund in the amount of \$42,933.10. Three letters of resignation were received. Cook's helper Cynthia Zube-Piorkowski has resigned from her position, effective October 24, 2024. Antonio Huizar, technology director, has also submitted his letter of resignation after almost 7 years with the district, effective as early as February 2025 but possibly as late as May 2025. A letter of resignation was also received from Taylor Marine, an educational assistant at Clara Bolen, effective November 29, 2024. Motion carried unanimously.

RECOMMENDATIONS & REPORTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION

Mrs. Danek said that Mr. Mejeur is recommending that Ms. Kendra McClaine be hired as the junior high cheerleading coach. Motion by Jenkins, support by Butzin to hire Ms. Kendra McClaine as the junior high cheerleading coach. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Danek said that Mr. Mejeur is also recommending that Mr. Travis Tibbetts be hired as the varsity wrestling coach. Mr. Tibbetts has volunteered in numerous wrestling programs and is a Tawas alumnus who wrestled during his time in school. He was chosen as the top candidate for this position. Motion by Edmonds, with support from Jenkins to NOT hire Mr. Travis Tibbetts as the varsity wrestling coach. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Danek said that Mr. Livingston is recommending that the board of education hire Mrs. Joanna Frye to fill the media center educational assistant vacancy. Based on her qualifications, she would be an excellent addition to the team. Mrs. Frye holds a PhD in Higher Education and a master's in student affairs and has demonstrated her commitment through her successful work as a substitute within our district. Throughout her career, she has developed a strong IT competency and gained extensive knowledge of educational systems, which will serve her well in this role. Motion by Edmonds, support by Butzin to hire Mrs. Joanna Frye as an educational assistant. Motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Committee Reports – Mrs. Danek said the policy committee met on October 28, 2024 to review new and revised bylaws and policies after meeting with the school's NEOLA representative. Tonight's meeting is to be considered a first reading. The bylaws and policies that were reviewed included conflict of interest (1130), conflict of interest (3110), conflict of interest (4110), grant funds (6110), internal controls (6111), cash management of grants (6112), cost principles – spending federal funds (6114), procurement – federal grants/funds (6325), travel payment and reimbursement (6550), disposition of surplus property (7310), property inventory (7450), employment of personnel for co-curricular/extra-curricular activities (3120.08), opioid antagonists (5330.02), student accidents (5340), student conduct (5500), artificial intelligence (7540.09), criminal justice information security (8321), class rank (5430), field and other district-sponsored trips (2340), employment of professional staff (3120), and use of social media (7544). Mrs. Edmonds stated that the majority of these policies were mandated by law and necessary to remain compliant.

Mrs. Danek said that the technology committee met on October 28th to review the current list of technology projects and discuss the priority level of these projects. The committee gave Mr. Huizar permission to move forward with getting RFP's for the Wi-Fi refresh and fiber projects, which will fully exhaust the use it or lose it eRate funds. The committee also talked about Mr. Huizar's transition plans with his resignation accepted earlier in the meeting. Mrs. Edmonds stated that the technology updates necessary were not included on the list for the sinking fund projects. Mr. Miller asked if Mr. Huizar's position had been posted yet and Mrs. Danek told him that it has been posted and also wanted to inform the board that a program that can be used to vet the applicants had also been purchased, since this is a specialized position.

Mrs. Danek said that the board governance committee met prior to tonight's meeting to discuss the plans for the creation of a board operating manual. Mrs. Edmonds stated that the committee has started reviewing the revisions to the manual and will bring the finished product to the board for approval in the next few weeks. Mr. Butzin asked about the price of creating this manual. Mrs. Danek said she would be creating the manual and then we would send it on to Scott Morrell for a final review. The whole things would likely be under \$1,000 and the board can use the funds that MASB is offering in honor of their Diamond Anniversary.

Legislative Report – Mrs. Danek said she is keeping an eye on Senate Bill 1059, which pushes to allow an increase to the capacity from 10 to 15 passengers in vans with the appropriate manufacturer rating. This update would coincide with the law requiring a CDL w/ passenger endorsement.

NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Danek said since her transition she has been updating the Emergency Operations Plan for the district. This plan provides procedures on how to handle many different potential emergency situations that may occur on campus and/or within the community. The plan is updated annually and involves approval from many different stakeholders including law enforcement, fire service, the county emergency manager and the district. Motion by Edmonds, support by Jenkins to approve the Emergency Operations Plan as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Danek said after seeking student feedback, we are moving forward with the second reading of an amendment to the Tawas Area High School and Middle School Handbook Policy regarding dress code. Motion by Butzin, support by Jenkins to adopt the amended dress code policy for Tawas Area High School and Middle School. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Danek said Mr. Mejeur is asking the board to approve 2 overnight trip requests for the varsity hockey team. The first request is a trip to Petoskey Ice Arena on December 6th and 7th. The team would have back-to-back games on the proposed days. Motion by Jenkins, support by Butzin to approve the requested overnight stay for the varsity hockey team to travel to Petoskey Ice Arena on December 6th and 7th for back-to-back games. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Mejeur is also requesting approval for the varsity hockey team to attend the Grosse Pointe South High School Hockey Tournament at East Side Hockey in Grosse Pointe, Michigan from January 3, 2025 until January 5, 2025. Motion by Jenkins, support by Butzin to approve the requested overnight trip for the varsity hockey team to attend the Grosse Pointe South High School Hockey Tournament from January 3rd until January 5th. Motion carried unanimously.

INFORMATION & PROPOSALS

Superintendent Report – Mrs. Danek said the Veteran’s Day assembly was today and she wanted to thank all of the veteran’s for their service. She also stated that McMath would be on campus next week to look at the block window project. She said they will secure the block until the full repair is able to take place. Mr. Butzin asked about the lighting project and Mrs. Danek said it will be completed this Friday while students are off campus. Mr. Butzin asked about a warranty for the lights and Mrs. Danek said there is a 5-year factory warranty.

Student Representatives – Ms. Gabrielle Whetstone said the veteran’s day assembly went well today. The band and choir did awesome. She also said the student senate met a couple weeks ago and discussed the dress code policy change and they were able to clarify the policy and what was meant by the term “appropriate.” Ms. Abby Kloska said she attended a rotary dinner in Frankenmuth with some other students and they were able to see what some other schools are doing and get ideas from them and meet new people.

Administration – Mrs. Tiffany said they have been able to bring in teacher peer observations through the Hill Project, which is funded by the state of Michigan, which she feels will help teachers learn more about engaging students. The Brave Council has their first fundraiser in December, a Dance-A-Thon. She also talked about an online assembly about Ok2Say, which was great for students because it allowed them a more private, smaller atmosphere to ask questions and interact with their peers. Mr. Livingston said that the staff had professional development on November 1st on Kagan Training and the focus was on student engagement. On October 21st, he and other administrators attended a professional development webinar on investigational questioning techniques. He said that the veteran’s day assembly was today and talked about some of the awards given to students and the teacher of the year award, presented to Mrs. Kerri Buysens. Mr. Livingston thanked everyone who made the assembly happen. Mr. Hazen said that on October 25th 158 students were able to experience distracted/impaired driving with the Arrive Alive Program. He also talked about working with Mrs. Murphy on attendance issues and decreasing truancy issues in the district. Mr. Hazen also mentioned the “Caught Being Awesome” award that teachers can nominate students for. He said area businesses have donated gift cards to give students who are caught doing something awesome.

From the Board – Mr. Miller thanked the student representatives for sharing. He also thanked the administration and staff for showing students the importance of Veteran’s Day. Mr. Miller thanked Mrs. Tiffany for her presentation on Munetrix as well. Mrs. Jenkins wished everyone a happy Veteran’s Day. She welcomed the new hires and praised the staff at Clara Bolen, saying they did an amazing job with the book fair. Mrs. Jenkins also said that she attended the annual leadership conference and was a voting delegate for the district. She said the conference had 2 outstanding keynote speakers, Mr. Sam Glen and Dr. Adolf Brown. She learned a lot of new things and new laws and said it was a great conference overall. Mrs. Edmonds thanked Mrs. Tiffany for her presentation. She also said the OK2SAY program is great and she loves to see the community stepping up and donating prizes for the “Caught Being Awesome” award. Mrs. Bruning said she also loves the OK2SAY program and really liked the Munetrix presentation. She also said that all of the staff is doing a great job.

ADVANCE PLANNING

Mrs. Danek said the board would go into a closed session to discuss the superintendent evaluation.

Motion by Edmonds, support by Jenkins to have a 10-minute recess at 7:45 p.m. before the closed session for the superintendent evaluation discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

At 7:57 p.m., there was a motion by Edmonds, support by Jenkins to go into a closed session. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Edmonds, support by Jenkins to return to open session at 10:00 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Edmonds, support by Jenkins to adjourn at 10:00 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.