

Tawas Area Schools
Regular Board of Education Meeting
April 8, 2024

The regular meeting of the Tawas Area Board of Education was called to order by President Bruning at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, April 8, 2024 in the boardroom at the administration office.

Mrs. Ulman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call:

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

Administrators Present: Klinger, Danek, Livingston, Tiffany, Clouse

POSITIVE HIGHLIGHTS

Mr. Klinger said tonight's positive highlight will be a presentation from Mr. Scott Jorasz about the M3 Math Challenge. Mr. Jorasz stated that the Math Modeling Challenge (M3) is a program sponsored by SIAM (Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics). He explained that the challenge has 2 parts, a research section and a coding section. Students have 14 hours to solve the challenge. This year, there were 815 schools registered for the challenge. Of those 815 schools, 643 were able to compete. Teams go through 3 rounds of rigorous judging and then advance to the next round based on scoring. Mr. Jorasz then introduced Kierstin Muckenthaler, a member of this year's challenge team, to give an account of her experience. Ms. Muckenthaler said the challenge was a great experience and gives students the opportunity to build new skills and apply those skills to real world events. She said it gave her a new perspective and helped her see how math can be applicable to life outside the school walls. The board thanked Mr. Jorasz and Ms. Muckenthaler.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

Mrs. Bruning asked if there were any public comments on agenda or non-agenda items. There were no comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Klenow, support by Jenkins to approve the consent agenda items which included the approval of the March 11th regular and closed session meeting minutes and the March 14th special meeting minutes as well as the payment of bills as follows: the monthly contractual and prepaid expenses for the general fund in the amount of \$974,305.33 and the lunch fund expenses in the amount of \$68,042.30. It also included payment of presented bills for the general fund in the amount of \$30,017.99 and for the sinking fund in the amount of \$3,030.36. A letter of resignation was received from Ms. Dawn Ziegelmann, middle school secretary, effective April 26, 2024. A letter requesting an unpaid leave of absence was approved for custodian, Robert Stephenson. Motion carried unanimously.

RECOMMENDATIONS & REPORTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Klinger said that one teacher, Tamara Hundley, was hired mid-year and is being recommended to continue her first year of probation due to her mid-year hiring date. Motion by Klenow, support by Lentz that Tamara Hundley continue on 1st year probation under the Michigan Teacher Tenure Act for the 2024-25 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said Mrs. Clouse is recommending Ms. Christina Moran be hired as an educational assistant at Clara Bolen Elementary. Ms. Moran has experience volunteering for cheer coaching and other sports with her own children and has a passion for children which was shared during the interview process. She was chosen as the top candidate for this position. Motion by Klenow,

support by Jenkins to hire Christina Moran as an educational assistant. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Clouse is recommending Ms. Rachelle Blazic be hired to fill the school social worker vacancy. Ms. Blazic currently holds a Michigan Social Work license and has a master's in clinical social work. She is working on her doctorate in social work and is expected to complete this in May 2024. Ms. Blazic was chosen as the top candidate for this position. Motion by Klenow, support by Jenkins to hire Ms. Rachelle Blazic as a school social worker for the 2024-2025 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said athletic director, Mr. Mejeur, is recommending Mr. Kohl Coffin be hired as the junior high track coach. Mr. Coffin has coached junior high basketball for the district and is excited to reach a different group of student athletes. He was chosen as the top candidate for this position. Motion by Klenow, support by Lentz to hire Kohl Coffin as the junior high track coach. Motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Committee Reports – Mr. Klinger said that the committee meetings scheduled prior to the meeting tonight had to be re-scheduled, which will happen in advanced planning. Therefore, there was nothing to report tonight.

Legislative Report – Mr. Klinger said there are no current updates.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Klinger said that Mrs. Val Finn and coach Chad Herrick are in attendance tonight to give a presentation on the youth and high school wrestling programs. Ms. Finn introduced herself and Mr. Andrew Challenger as the coaches of the youth wrestling program. This program serves as a feeder program to the high school program. Ms. Finn talked about the growth of the program, with approximately 50 participants, both male and female, currently. They are competing every weekend. Ms. Finn said that wrestling is exploding as a sport and she wanted to begin to build a relationship with the school board. She went on to highlight a few of the youth wrestlers who have had success this year. Students were then able to share their experience with wrestling, including the reading of letters from students who were unable to attend the meeting. Mr. Herrick, the coach of the high school wrestling program, then spoke about the program and stated that due to the growth of it, they will need help down the road, and that is where the board comes in. He talked about his coaching staff being spread thin and the necessity for additional coaching staff to sustain the growth. He introduced his coaching team and allowed them to briefly speak about their passion for the sport and vision for the future.

Mr. Klinger said Mrs. Shufelt is requesting that the board allow the high school Science Olympics team to compete at the State Science Olympiad tournament at Western Michigan University from May 3, 2024 until May 4, 2024. Students will not miss any school for this event and details of the trip were included in the board packet. Motion by Ulman, support by Klenow to allow the Science Olympics team to compete at the State Science Olympiad Tournament at WMU from May 3, 2024 until May 4, 2024. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said Mr. Jerashen is requesting that the board approve a trip to Cedar Point Amusement Park in Sandusky, Ohio for the Tawas High School Band. This trip would take place on June 25, 2024. Mr. Jerashen has worked with Bennett Travel to plan the details of this trip, which can be found in the board packets. Mr. Jerashen was at the meeting and explained that he had gotten another quote, with him planning the trip. The price was significantly lower and he had decided to go with that option, as opposed to asking kids to come up with more money, and not utilize Bennett Travel. Mr. Jerashen was at the meeting to answer any questions the board had. Mr. Butzin asked about chaperones for the trip and Mr. Jerashen responded saying that there would be 6-8 chaperones depending on the number of kids who are able to go. He said he did not have the chaperones locked in yet because he wanted to have the price set in stone and an

idea of how many kids would be going before securing chaperones. Motion by Lentz, support by Klenow to approve the trip to Cedar Point in Sandusky, Ohio for the high school band on June 25, 2024 as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said the calendar for the 2024-2025 school year was approved at the March 11, 2024 regular meeting. It was discovered that the calendar mistakenly identified Good Friday as March 28, 2025 when it is actually April 18, 2025. Due to this clerical error, the calendar has been amended to reflect this. Students first day of school will still be August 26th and their last scheduled day will now be June 5, 2025. Mrs. Lentz asked if MLK Day and Easter Monday were discussed as being possible days off of school. Mr. Klinger said that it was discussed at the previous board meeting and it has been taken to the union for consideration for the next school year, 2025-2026. Motion by Edmonds, support by Jenkins to approve the amended 2024-2025 school year calendar as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said the board has been provided with a copy of the district's Continuity of Service Plan which prioritizes full, in-person instruction, and provides the greatest benefits to our students. The plan, as described in Public Act 149, Section 98a, is required to ensure a successful and safe return to school and our learning environments. The plan outlines recommended prevention and mitigation strategies during low, medium, and high transmission rates. Mr. Klinger said this plan is generally updated twice a year, although the federal government has announced its intent to end the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency on May 11, 2023, which may affect the necessity to continue to update this plan. Mr. Klinger said this should be the last time the board will have to approve this plan, since the law surrounding its necessity has a sunset or expiration date. Motion by Lentz, support by Klenow to approve the Continuity of Service Plan as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said a bid opening was held on April 1st for the construction of a new 40' X 80' stick built construction cold storage building and a 12' X 40' mezzanine. School officials along with our project manager, Mr. Michael Russo, opened and reviewed five bids ranging from a little over \$145,000 to approximately \$188,000 for the storage building and approximately \$6,280 to \$10,200 for the mezzanine. After a thorough review of all bids, Mr. Lichota is recommending that we approve the bid from KC Industries for a total of \$151,740; \$145,460 for the storage building construction and \$6,280 for the mezzanine. This bid does not include the electrical work, which should not exceed \$10,000. Mr. Klinger stated that Mr. Lichota and Mr. Russo were in attendance to answer any questions about this process. Mrs. Klenow asked why the bid changed after the initial bid was shared with the board. Mr. Russo said there were 2 main reasons for this change. The first reason had to do with feasibility of insulating the building. The second reason was due to Kody Revord contacting Mr. Russo due to a mistake in his bid for the pole barn construction. Due to this mistake, the pole barn construction would go to the next bidder, which would have been Lakeshore. However, due to the increase in price of going with Lakeshore's bid and factoring in the cost of insulating the pole barn, they decided that going with the stick built garage construction was more practical. Mrs. Lentz asked if the price of insulating the steel roof was included in this project. Mr. Russo said it was not because the space is designed to be cold storage. However, he said it could easily be insulated in the future. Motion by Lentz, support by Butzin to accept and approve the construction of a stick built cold storage building and mezzanine bid from KC Industries, LLC for \$151,740. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said that Mr. Huizar is recommending that the board approve the purchase of new devices to sustain the one-to-one Chromebook initiative in the amount of \$109,820. Mr. Klinger said he is recommending that the board accept and approve his purchase request. Mrs. Bruning asked if we were still selling old laptops. Mr. Huizar said that some of the laptops are being purchased by students but he has found that it is more cost effective to pillage parts from the old laptops due to the fact that used laptops are being bought back for such a low price. Motion by Klenow, support by Lentz to approve the Chromebook purchase in the amount of \$109,820. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

INFORMATION & PROPOSALS

Superintendent Report – Mr. Klinger said he had a few updates. Unaudited results from the February pupil count showed 1,141 students, which is an increase of 1 student from the fall count. He said this has not been the normal result the last few years, so he is hopeful that we will start to see growth in student numbers. Mr. Klinger said that there will be another bid opening on Thursday of this week for door replacement and he is hopeful that they will have a recommendation for this project at the May meeting. He said that some of the drainage catch basins on the property need to be updated or replaced. Mr. Lichota has been working with the city of Tawas City to monitor this situation and will be collecting estimates to have this completed. Mr. Klinger also stated that Mr. Lichota has requested information on fixing the issue with the windows in the new gym and is waiting to receive that information.

INFORMATION & PROPOSALS

Student Representatives – Ms. Push said that the Student Senate did a March Madness Tournament between all of the 4th hour classes. The winning class got a pizza party. SLS put together goodie bags for students for testing week this week. On Wednesday, the seniors are going to Alpena for laser tag, and she said she is excited to make another memory with classmates. Ms. Whetstone stated that they are in the process of ordering things for prom. The theme for prom this year is “The Great Gatsby.”

Administration – Mrs. Danek said that testing starts tomorrow with the M-Step. Juniors have a week full of testing and on Thursday after they are done they will be taken to the movie theater for a movie and snacks. The 8th graders will begin testing on Friday, completing the M-Step that day. She also said that they are still seeking applications for the junior seat, since Ms. Whetstone will be taking over the senior seat upon Ms. Push’s graduation. Mr. Livingston said that he met with the student senate to gather feedback on policy recommendations that students would like to see. He said that there was a lot of discussion about updating the dress code and he will come to the policy meeting ready to present some of their ideas. He also met with all of the teachers, but focused on ELA teachers to get input on what policies they would like to see in response to Artificial Intelligence. Staff said they would like to see a policy that protects academic integrity. This will also be presented at the policy meeting. Mr. Livingston said that the high school won a \$500 grant from Meemic, which will be used toward teacher appreciation week. Lastly, Mr. Livingston talked about a new hall pass monitoring system that he learned about at a conference. The district will be getting a free trial of this system in the last quarter. This system helps increase seat time for kids by helping to monitor their movement. Teachers and administration can prevent meets ups between kids by setting it up so that certain kids cannot be in the hallway at the same time. It would also allow administration to control hall traffic, or stop traffic, in the case of any kind of emergency. Mrs. Tiffany highlighted the students of the month. She said that testing in the middle school starts on Friday with the M-Step. 7th graders will be having a walk-a-thon on April 12th to raise money for their trip to Mackinaw. Next week, there is meeting for the DC trip. Middle school teachers are working on finalizing field trips for students. Mrs. Clouse said that their STEAM night will be this Wednesday. She highlighted students of the month. Mrs. Clouse said that kindergarten round up was last Friday. They had 63 students come through so they are hopeful for a good sized kindergarten class. She said elementary students will be taking the M-Step test in a couple weeks.

ADVANCE PLANNING

Mr. Klinger said we need to re-schedule meeting with the policy and curriculum committees due to the cancellation of these meetings prior to the board meeting. The policy committee will meet on April 22 at 4:00 p.m. and the curriculum will meet that same day, April 22, at 5:45 p.m.

Motion by Klenow, support by Edmonds to take a short recess at 8:30 p.m. before going into closed session. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Klenow, support by Jenkins to enter closed session at 8:40 p.m. for attorney/client privilege communication. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion to return to open session by Lentz, support by Edmonds at 9:22 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

The board decided to move the closed session for the superintendent evaluation discussion to the May board meeting.

Motion by Edmonds, support by Jenkins to adjourn at 9:23 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.