

Tawas Area Schools
Reorganizational and Regular Board of Education Meeting
January 13, 2025

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 13, 2025 in the boardroom at the administration office.

Mrs. Danek led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. Harvey administered the Oath of Office to Mrs. Malewska and Mrs. Edmonds, the two board members who had not yet taken the Oath.

Roll Call:

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

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

Motion by Ulman, with support by Jenkins to make an amendment to the agenda by adding E. (2.) board workshop regarding the board operations manual. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Ulman, with support Jenkins to make another amendment to the agenda by adding B. (3) (a.)(8.) hire a technology support specialist. Motion carried unanimously.

POSITIVE HIGHLIGHTS

Mrs. Danek stated that Mrs. Tiffany would be presenting the positive highlight alongside Ms. Joy Garrison, school success liaison and Ms. Amanda Lizotte, middle school social worker. Mrs. Garrison showed a slideshow and talked about the Christmas giveaways that were done over the holidays. They were able to give gifts and assistance to numerous local families. She also spoke about the different businesses and individuals that helped contribute to make the giveaways possible. Ms. Lizotte then outlined how the process works as far as deciding who to help and how to best help them.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

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

Mr. Keith Asbury spoke about the proposed Child and Adolescent Health Center. He said that the survey that was sent out to the public was biased and one-sided. He also shared that he believes these health centers just further separate the parent from their child's life instead of working with the parents. Mr. Asbury stated that he is a retired CPS worker and he has seen the effects of a health clinic on campus, with there being significantly more visits from CPS. He expressed his displeasure with opening the clinic on campus.

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 Julie Ulman for President, supported by Butzin. There were no other nominations or discussion and nominations were closed. Motion carried unanimously. Mrs. Ulman took over the meeting.

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

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

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

President Ulman said that she will have committee assignments done within the next few days and asked board members to let her know if there were any committees that they would be interested in being a part of.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion by Bruning, support by Butzin to approve the consent agenda items which included the approval of the December 9, 2024 regular and closed session minutes. It also included the payment of bills as follows: the monthly contractual and prepaid expenses for the general fund in the amount of \$914,255.46, the sinking fund expenses in the amount of \$18,700.00 and the lunch fund expenses in the amount of \$36,666.02. It also included payment of presented bills for the general fund in the amount of \$17,811.22. Letters of resignation/retirement from Thomas Gilbert, educational assistant, Sandra Ledin, cook's helper, Erin Challenger, assistant track coach, Mark Dodridge, varsity football assistant coach, and Kohl Coffin, eighth grade boys' basketball coach, were also approved. Motion carried unanimously.

RECOMMENDATIONS & REPORTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION

Mrs. Danek said that January is School Board Recognition Month. She said on behalf of the Tawas Area Schools community I would like to thank you for your support and dedication to Tawas Area Schools, its students, staff(s) and the programs that we provide. Through your leadership, Tawas Area continues to experience high academic achievements among schools in this region. Thanks for the role that you 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, 8 years; Jennifer Bruning, 6 years; Ami Edmonds, 4.5 years; Michael Butzin, 4 years; Amy Jenkins, 2 years; Allan Miller, newly elected; Sheila Malewska, newly elected. She presented each of them with a certificate of appreciation.

Mrs. Danek said Mrs. Clouse is recommending Mrs. Carla Carrigan be hired as a special education teacher in the elementary school. Mrs. Carrigan has a bachelor of arts degree in elementary education with a special education and ASD endorsement from SVSU. She has 4 years of experience as an educational assistant and has been a long term substitute teacher for the district. Mrs. Carrigan was chosen as the top candidate for this position. Motion by Jenkins, support by Bruning to hire Mrs. Carla Carrigan as a special education teacher. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Danek said Mr. Livingston is recommending that Mr. Robert Shrouf be hired as a middle school ELA teacher. Mr. Shrouf is a graduate of Truman State University and has a bachelor of arts degree in History and English, a master's degree in education, and has started working in a doctoral program in educational leadership with Liberty University. He has almost 15 years of experience in education and was chosen as the top candidate for this position. Motion by Bruning, support by Jenkins to hire Mr. Robert Shrouf as a middle school ELA teacher. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Danek said that Mr. Livingston is recommending that Mrs. Kristina Warner be hired as the high school guidance counselor. Mrs. Warner is a graduate of Arizona State University and has a bachelor of science degree in family and human development. She recently earned her master's degree from Grand Valley State University, obtaining her permanent counselor license. Mrs. Warner has worked in our district under a substitute contract for nearly 4 years and came to us

with more than 10 years of supervisor experience. She was selected as the top candidate for this position. Motion by Jenkins, support by Butzin to hire Mrs. Kristina Warner as the high school guidance counselor. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Danek said Mrs. Jan Sancrant is recommending that Ms. Camie Reinbolt be hired to fill the cook's helper vacancy. Ms. Reinbolt has some experience in the food service industry and will be a great asset to the team. She was chosen as the top candidate for this position. Motion by Bruning, support by Jenkins to hire Ms. Camie Reinbolt as a cook's helper. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Danek said that athletic director, Jonathan Mejeur, is recommending that Mr. Elliott Buchanan be hired as the varsity girls' assistant soccer coach. Mr. Buchanan has coached and volunteered his time in the Tawas soccer program over the past couple years as a clock keeper and a coach for both boys and girls. He has many years of experience with different age groups in the sport of soccer and was selected as the top candidate for this position. Motion by Edmonds, support by Butzin to hire Mr. Elliott Buchanan as the girls' assistant soccer coach. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Danek said that Mr. Mejeur is also recommending that Mr. Nicholas Frees be hired as the varsity girls' assistant track coach. Mr. Frees has coached football and has helped coach middle school boys. He has experience with hosting NCAA track and field tournaments at his previous school and was chosen as the top candidate. Motion by Bruning, support by Jenkins to hire Mr. Nicholas Frees as the varsity girls' assistant track coach. Motion carried unanimously.

Athletic director, Jonathan Mejeur is recommending the following spring coaches for hire: Shane Plank for varsity baseball; Justin Ulman for J.V. baseball; Marcus Doan for varsity softball; Kaelene Horn for J.V. softball; Adrienne Dittenbir for girls' soccer; Elliott Buchanan for girls' assistant soccer; Paul Vainer for boys' golf; Erin Challenger for boys' head track; Chris Lerczak for boys' assistant track; Brianna Nelson (Griffiths) for girls' head track; Nicholas Frees for girls' assistant track; Jenifer Caldwell for 7th grade track and Kohl Coffin for 8th grade track. The J.V. softball position is still currently vacant. Motion by Jenkins, support by Bruning to hire the spring coaches, with the exception of Justin Ulman who will be voted on separately, as presented by athletic director Jonathan Mejeur. Motion carried unanimously. Motion by Butzin, support by Jenkins to hire Justin Ulman as the J.V. baseball coach. Yes: Miller, Butzin, Edmonds, Jenkins, Malewska, Bruning. Abstain: Ulman. Motion carried.

Mrs. Danek said that Mr. Livingston and Mrs. Clouse are recommending Mr. Donald Axline be hired to fill the technology support specialist position. Mr. Axline brings over a decade of experience in IT support within a school environment, along with many additional years of experience in various IT roles, including IT director, squad leader and IT specialist. His skills and experience make him an excellent fit for this position. Motion by Bruning, support by Jenkins to hire Mr. Donald Axline as the technology support specialist. Motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Committee Reports - Mrs. Danek said that the personnel committee met prior to tonight's special meeting to discuss the potential creation of a new position and the guidance counselor's contract. She said the committee agreed to post the new position tomorrow internally. Committee members declined to comment further.

Legislative Report – Mrs. Danek said that she recently received correspondence from Thrun Law Firm stating that a federal court recently issued an order vacating the 2024 Title IX rule and regulations in their entirety and declaring them unlawful. She said that Thrun recommended that schools take prompt action to ensure that their board policies comply with the 2020 Title IX rule and regulations and she wanted to make them aware of this development.

NEW BUSINESS

Mrs. Danek said that Ms. Hilton is requesting approval for an overnight trip for the Tawas Area Band to attend the MSBOA District 9 All Star Band performance in Alpena, MI from January 17 until January 18, 2025. Details of the trip were included in the board packets. Ms. Hilton was present to answer any questions the board had, but they did not have any questions. Motion by Bruning, support by Jenkins to approve the band overnight trip as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Danek said that Mr. Huizar is recommending the purchase of a new PA system for the high school. The total cost of this project is \$44,650. Mrs. Danek said she had requested that Mr. Huizar get at least one other quote for the board to review but she did not receive another quote and Mr. Huizar was not present at the meeting to answer any questions. The board expressed some concern regarding this purchase because Mr. Huizar had originally quoted a much lower price for this project. Mrs. Danek recommended that the board table this request until the new technology support specialist has started and can be a part of the decision and process. The board agreed to table this purchase until a later date.

INFORMATION & PROPOSALS

Superintendent Report – Mrs. Danek said that she was able to attend the MASC at the Double Tree in Bay City, MI. The team was able to qualify for the state competition. She also stated that one student, Ellary Warner competed in the Michigan Student Voice competition and did an awesome job and could potentially still qualify to move on. Mrs. Danek also informed the board that she would be out of the district on Wednesday and Thursday of this week, as she will be attending the superintendent conference.

Student Representatives – Ms. Abby Kloska said she was planning to talk about the MASC but Mrs. Danek had already mentioned it but she did want to say that the conference was great and she is excited to go to states.

Administration – Mr. Livingston said that exam season starts tomorrow in the high school. On Thursday afternoon, the administration team would be going to Bay ISD to take part in a restorative practices program. Mr. Hazen said that he recently completed an 8-hour course on teacher evaluations and keeping bias out of the process. He has also been working on the attendance policy and identifying ways to help combat absenteeism. He said right now any kids with over 10 days missed automatically got converted to credit/no credit. He did mention that the high school does have 11 students currently who have perfect attendance. Mr. Mejeur said that the wrestling team got 1st place at the Alpena competition and the next day Jasmine Voss placed 1st in her weight class in Standish. Mrs. Tiffany stated that the next middle school celebration day would be on February 6 and 7. Students would be going ice skating as a reward for positive behavior. Middle school students have NWEA testing this week. Mrs. Tiffany also said that Mrs. Greene is coaching the Math Counts team this year and highlighted the students of the month. Mrs. Clouse highlighted their students of the month as well. She also said that the Secret Santa Shop was a huge success and they raised \$1500. Testing at the elementary school was done before Christmas and was happy to report that all grade levels showed improvement.

From the Board – Mrs. Edmonds said it is great to hear that the teacher vacancies are being filled. She welcomed the new hires. Mrs. Jenkins welcomed the new hires and new board members. She said she loved helping out with the Santa Shop at Clara Bolen. Mrs. Bruning said she loved the positive highlight and hearing about how the school is helping the community. She also expressed gratitude to the community for stepping up to help out and donate. Mrs. Bruning also congratulated the MASC students. Mr. Miller and Mr. Butzin had nothing to add. Mrs. Malewska said she is thankful to be on the board and is honored to serve. Mrs. Ulman asked Ms. Kloska if she felt students are better understanding the dress code, with the document that was given to kids to help clarify. Ms. Kloska said she hasn't really heard much. Mr. Livingston said it is definitely less confusing for students and staff and he has seen less issues come up. Mrs. Ulman asked

Ms. Kloska to do some research and ask what students think would take the district to the next level. She also congratulated the new hires.

The board took a 5-minute recess at 7:56 p.m.

ADVANCE PLANNING

Mrs. Danek reminded the budget committee that they would have a meeting on February 10, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. She also stated that the board would need to have a special meeting on Wednesday, January 15 at 8:00 a.m. Mrs. Ulman said that she needed to schedule an orientation with Sheila. They decided this would take place on January 27, 2025 at 1:00 p.m.

BOARD WORK SESSION

Mrs. Ulman stated that the board needed to have some conversation regarding the Child & Adolescent Health Center (CAHC). She recommended that each board member have the opportunity to share their thoughts and questions and then questions could be asked. Mrs. Edmonds began by stating that she knows there are other programs out there and she questions why we want to go with Alpena Health Center. She said her main concern is continuity of care. Edmonds said that there is a gap in communication when a patient is passed off from one provider to another. She said that MyMichigan offers a health center and she would like to consider them. She talked about the consent form and how it states that the health center will attempt to contact parents, but what happens if they cannot get ahold of them. She fears that parents won't really understand what they are signing. Edmonds said she thinks it is a great idea but thinks the board needs more time to make a decision. She suggested forming a committee and having that committee dive in and research this, even inviting a community member with experience to sit on the committee. Mrs. Ulman talked about Oscoda's consent form and said that it states that no student will be seen without the parent first making an appointment. She also said that the health center can only prescribe a medication for 30 days. Ulman talked about how the consent form is created by the board and can be tailored to what they want. Mrs. Jenkins said that she believes this is a grab for patients and does not agree to the consent form at all. Mrs. Bruning stated that mental/behavioral health prescriptions can be prescribed for more than 30 days. She said she has concerns regarding Alcona Health Center and being them following the Patient-Centered Medical Home (PCMH) model, basically meaning that the provider gets paid more from insurance companies if they meet the mark set for them. Bruning said mental health and gender reassignment issues are a big concern. She said she believes a health center will cause confusion of care. AHS stated that they will send all medical records to the PCP, but this is not being done at Oscoda's health center. She questioned insurance and whether the clinic would be out of network. Bruning also asked if the school would need more liability insurance if a clinic is opened. Bruning believes that more parents will send their kids to school when sick if a health clinic is opened. She said she does not like how AHC is running their program and that MyMichigan needs to be looked into. Bruning also mentioned that AHC does not use EPIC, which is the electronic health record system that MyMichigan uses and this could cause problems with MyMichigan being the local hospital.

Mr. Miller mentioned the possibility of having a professional come in give their opinion and answer questions. He said the CEO of Sterling Health would be more than willing to meet with the Board. Mr. Butzin said he believes that a clinic could help alleviate chronic absenteeism. He said he likes to have options to consider.

Mrs. Malewska stated that healthcare and education go hand in hand. She said a clinic would ensure that students have access to care and it is convenient and eliminated the barrier of transportation. She also said that a clinic could really improve academic outcomes due to attendance improvement and stated that mental health support is huge. Malewska also said this could lead to cost savings for parents. She did state some of her concerns as well, including the cost, privacy concerns, and community buy in. She said the parent consent form would definitely need to be personalized but she feels that a health clinic is an investment well worth it. Mrs. Bruning asked what happens if there is an emergency, but the parent of the child involved did not sign the consent. She questioned what even constitutes an emergency. It was discussed that outside medical care would be sought but that the professional on site MAY step in to assist if it

required immediate attention. Mrs. Ulman said that she spoke with the Superintendent in Alpena. They have a health center through AHC. Staff members there all have access to the clinic which has been wonderful. The Superintendent did say that communicating what the clinic is and, more importantly, what it is not, has been a hurdle. He encouraged having open forums for communicating to the public and reviewing the center after 6 months. Ulman also said that in Oscoda she got a lot of positive feedback regarding their health center through AHC. She said the only problem that she was informed of was that the Superintendent could not be a part of the construction process, so he said it is important to address that upfront. Oscoda Schools also allow teachers and staff to be seen in their clinic and reiterated that students must have an appointment, made by a parent, to be seen. They also have a whole team for behavioral health issues and overall it seems like a fairly easy system. Ulman stated that AHC has been doing these clinics for over 20 years and has a lot of experience with them. They have never opened a clinic and then had it close down. Mr. Miller said that funding will always be there to maintain a clinic if we approve it, but if we don't approve it, funding may not be available. Motion by Ulman, support from Butzin to move forward with Alcona Health Center contingent upon coming up with an interagency agreement between Alcona Health Center and a committee of the Board. A roll call vote was taken. Yes: Ulman, Butzin, Malewska, Miler. No: Bruning, Jenkins, Edmonds. Motion carried. Mrs. Ulman said next they needed to discuss the board operations manual and decide how to proceed with it. Mrs. Ulman stated that they either needed to move forward with the creation of the manual and have a workshop to comb through it or decide that they do not want to move forward with it. Motion by Ulman, support by Butzin to move forward with the board operations manual presented to the Board and schedule a workshop to go through the manual page by page. A roll call vote was taken. Motion carried unanimously. They decided the workshop would take place on February 24, 2025 at 5:00 p.m.

Motion by Edmonds, support by Jenkins to adjourn at 9:17 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.