

Tawas Area Schools
Regular Board of Education Meeting
April 13, 2026

I. Call to Order

The regular meeting of the Tawas Area Schools Board of Education was called to order by President Jenkins at 7:00 p.m. in the administration board room.

A. Pledge of Allegiance

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

B. Roll Call

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

Absent: Ulman

Tardy: None

C. Positive Highlight

Mrs. Danek introduced Mr. Brian Colorite, the Career Development Coordinator for the district. Mr. Colorite delivered a presentation to acquaint the Board with the scope of his role, outlining key performance objectives associated with the position. He also addressed the challenges students encounter when making post-high school decisions and shared relevant data illustrating student participation across several events.

D. Public Comments – Information and Proposals

Mrs. Jenkins asked if there was any public comments. There were no comments.

II. Action Items

A. Consent Agenda

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

1. **Approval of Minutes** –March 9, 2026 regular meeting and closed session minutes.
2. **Approval of Payment of Bills** –
 - Monthly contractual and prepaid expenses:
 - General Fund: \$1,021,323.00
 - Sinking Fund: \$0.00
 - Lunch Fund: \$61,693.91
 - Presented monthly bills:
 - General Fund: \$25,933.43
 - Sinking Fund: \$0.00
 - Lunch Fund: \$0.00
3. **Receipt of Written Communication** – Letters of resignation were received from Mrs. Magon Karns, elementary teacher, effective June 30, 2026 and from Ms. Kari Taylor, educational assistant, effective at the end of the current school year.

The motion carried unanimously.

B. Routine Matters

1. Recommendations & Reports from Administration

a. Hire Special Education Teacher

Motion by Edmonds, supported by Butzin, to hire Ms. Kayelynn Carter as a special education teacher at Clara Bolen Elementary. Motion carried unanimously.

b. Hire Coaches

Motion by Malewska, supported by Miller, to hire Mr. Daniel Devine as the Boys' Golf Assistant Coach. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Malewska, supported by Jenkins, to hire Mrs. Christina Moran as the Middle School Cheer Coach. Motion carried unanimously.

c. Hire Winter Coaches

Motion by Malewska, supported by Miller, to hire the winter coaches as presented.

- Varsity Boys' Basketball – Reuben Edwards
- JV Boys' Basketball – Craig Prescott
- Varsity Girls' Basketball – Jason Woelke
- JV Girls' Basketball – Scott Herbolsheimer
- 8th Grade Boys' Basketball – Robert Shroust
- 7th Grade Boys' basketball – Stephanie Lichota
- Varsity Cheer – Melissa Kendall
- Junior High Cheer – Christina Moran
- 7th Grade Girls' Basketball – Katie Stratz
- 8th Grade Girls' Basketball – Gina Murphy
- Varsity Wrestling – Andrew Challenger
- Wrestling Assistant – Anthony Lesko
- Girls' Bowling – Kim Miller
- Boys' Bowling – Allen Miller
- Varsity Hockey – Matt Buresh

Motion carried unanimously.

C. Old Business

1. Committee Reports

a. Personnel/Evaluation Committee

The Personnel/Evaluation Committee met on March 16 to review wage adjustments for non-certified employees and administrative staff, including updates for substitute pay in response to minimum wage increases. The committee also proposed changes to the inclement weather policy, increasing paid snow days to six with limited use of sick days for additional closures. Additionally, they discussed administrative salary adjustments, the creation of formal salary schedules, and the discontinuation of the signing bonus in alignment with neighboring districts. Recommended wage adjustments have been included for board review, with formal action to be presented under New Business.

2. Legislative Report

Mrs. Danek said that she attended a NMSLA meeting earlier in the day. Much of the focus of the meeting was on dyslexia bill that would mandate LETRS training. Legislation requires teachers to complete science of reading training to better identify and support students struggling with reading, spelling and language. Mrs. Danek said that there is a separate bill that would mandate current K-5 teachers to complete a specific

literacy training by the 2031-2032 school year. The bill does not directly name the Lexia LETRS course but it was referenced in testimony.

Mrs. Danek said Bill 5310, which would make School of Choice mandatory for all schools, was also discussed. This bill would not only require all schools to participate in the School of Choice Program, but would make it easier for students to access the public school that is the right fit for them. The bill would prohibit districts from denying any non-resident students based on their characteristics or abilities.

Snow day forgiveness was also discussed. Mrs. Danek indicated that additional forgiven days are unlikely unless a county has declared a state of emergency. As our county has not made such a declaration, the district will likely be required to make up one instructional day at the end of the school year. This discussion resulted in a proposed amendment to the district calendar, which will be presented under New Business.

D. New Business

1. Approval of 271 Fund Disbursement

Mrs. Danek said that Section 271 provides one-time funding to school districts for the purpose of enhancing educator compensation. Through the collective bargaining process, the Tawas Area Federation of Teachers (TAFT) has agreed, as formalized in a Letter of Agreement, to distribute the Section 271 funds equally among eligible employees.

Eligibility is defined as employees who are employed by the District during the payroll period immediately preceding the May 1, 2026 payment date and who have reported for duty during the 2025–2026 school year.

Each qualifying employee will receive a one-time payment of \$848, subject to customary payroll withholdings.

Motion by Malewska, supported by Miller, to approve the disbursement of the 271 funds as presented. A roll call vote was taken. Yes: Malewska, Edmonds, Bruning, Miller, Jenkins. Abstain: Butzin. Motion passed.

2. Approval of the Creation of New Positions

Mrs. Danek stated that as discussed at the March 9 regular board meeting, the Student Achievement Committee recommends that the Board approve the creation of three new positions. The first is a School Social Worker Supervisor/Behavior Intervention Specialist, intended to address the growing need for behavioral support while providing direct supervision, guidance, and accountability for school social work staff. Details can be found in your board packet.

Motion by Malewska, supported by Jenkins, to approve the creation of a School Social Worker Supervisor/Behavior Intervention Specialist Position. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Danek said the second position recommended by the Committee is a Title Teacher with a required ESL endorsement. Establishing this position will ensure compliance with updated ELL support requirements while strengthening instructional support for Title and at-risk students. Details of this position can be found in your board packet.

Motion by Malewska, supported by Bruning, to approve the creation of Title Teacher with an ESL endorsement required. Motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Danek said the third position the Committee is recommending is a new educational assistant position at Clara Bolen Elementary. This position would support the increasing number of students with behavioral break accommodations. Details of this position can be found in your board packet.

Motion by Malewska, supported by Bruning, to approve the creation of a new Educational Assistant Position. Motion carried unanimously.

3. Approve the Administration Contracts

Mrs. Danek said that after meeting with the personnel/evaluation committee, she is recommending that the administrative staff receive the proposed wage increases for the 2026-2027 school year, as detailed in the board packet. See attached document for proposed increases.

Motion by Jenkins, supported by Butzin, to approve the administration contracts as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Approve Non-Certified Wage Increase and Snow Day Policy Revision

Mrs. Danek recommends that all non-certified employees receive the proposed wage increases for the 2026–27 school year, as outlined in the board packet. Additionally, the committee recommends increasing the number of paid snow days to six (6) per year, with the option to use up to three (3) accrued sick days for additional closures. See attached document for proposed increases.

Motion by Edmonds, supported by Jenkins, to approve the recommendation that all non-certified employees receive the proposed wage increases for the 2026–27 school year, as outlined in the board packet. I further move that the Board approve increasing the number of paid snow days to six (6) per year, with the option for employees to use up to three (3) accrued sick days for additional closures. Yes: Malewska, Edmonds, Bruning, Miller Jenkins. Abstain: Ulman. Motion passed.

5. Approve Increase of Substitute Employee Pay Rate

Mrs. Danek is recommending that the pay rate for all substitute employees be increased for the 2026-27 school year, as outlined in your board packet. See attached document for new substitute rates.

Motion by Malewska, supported by Butzin, to approve the increase in pay rate for substitute employees as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Amendment to the 2025-2026 District Calendar

Tawas Area Schools used 10 weather-related closure days in 2025–2026 and has applied for forgiveness of up to nine days, leaving one day to be made up to meet state requirements. To recover instructional time, the district proposes converting June 4 to a full day, keeping June 5 as a half day, and adding a half day on June 8. The Board is asked to approve this calendar adjustment and authorize the Superintendent to modify the plan if additional forgiven days are granted by the state.

Motion by Malewska, supported by Edmonds, to approve the extension of the 2025–2026 school calendar through Monday, June 8, 2026, to accommodate the required make-up of instructional time due to weather-related closures. I further move that the Board authorize the Superintendent to make adjustments to the end-of-year calendar, as necessary, pending any additional instructional time forgiveness granted by the Michigan Department of Education. Motion carried unanimously.

III. Information and Proposals

A. Superintendent Report – Mrs. Danek reported that the district is expected to receive feedback from the State regarding the recently administered Michigan School Voice Survey. Upon receipt, the Student Achievement Committee will convene to review the results and discuss strategies to address any identified concerns.

She also shared that Alcona Health Center has secured funding to support the school health center program for two years, though construction costs are not included. A potential funding opportunity through a USDA Facilities Grant has been identified, and the information has been provided to AHC for further exploration.

Additionally, Mrs. Danek reported that Phase I of the roof replacement project has been successfully completed. She noted that glass block repairs will be completed at no cost to the district, with work scheduled to begin in June.

B. Student Representatives –

- Senior Representative: Miss Abby Kloska – Ms. Kloska said that Spring Break was a good reset for students to then come back and complete testing. She said that after testing was concluded, there were games and activities set up throughout the school to help kids wind down and relax. She shared that Spring sports are starting up. Seniors went to play laser tag in Alpena, which was fun. Ms. Kloska also mentioned that the elementary school has a VIP dance this Friday and Macho Volleyball went well.
- Junior Representative: Miss Eryn Hayes – Absent from meeting.

C. Administration – Mr. Hazen said that discipline has been down in the 3rd quarter, which is pretty typical for this time of year. He said they have seen a large increase in students this year, which will impact the curriculum budget. High school students attended an OK2SAY assembly to better equip them to use this application if needed, which is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Mr. Hazen talked about the Michigan National Guard Band came to the school and spend time with students, playing and teaching, which was a cool opportunity for students.

Mrs. Tiffany said the 8th grade PSAT was postponed until today, due to some technology issues. She said students did an awesome job and only 3 students did not complete the testing. Middle School Family Night will be pushed back due to delayed shipping of some games and has tentatively been scheduled for April 30th. M Step testing will begin in a couple of week for middle school students. She also highlighted students of the month.

Mr. Livingston shared that 11th grade students took 3 different tests in 3 days and things went well. He shared appreciation for all staff who helped with this. He said the seniors went to Alpena to play laser tag. The Robotics Team went to Ferris State for a competition and ESports had their first round of the state competition today.

Mr. Mejeur said he had a Zoom meeting with Neptune Game Time, which provides a platform for clean music to be utilized prior to athletic events. After approaching the Boosters, they agreed to fund the use of this product. The district will be hosting baseball and softball districts this year, as well as a regional golf competition.

Mrs. Clouse highlighted students of the month. She said kindergarten roundup had about 62-63 kids in attendance. She said M Step testing is scheduled to take place the last week of April. STEAM night went well, with about 100 families represented. She also talked about field trips coming up for each grade level.

D. From the Board – Mrs. Malewska said she is excited for softball to start and was happy to see the boys' baseball team helping get the water off the girl's field today at their first home game. She said the Neptune Music update is awesome to hear and mentioned that the Choir is practicing for states, which is exciting. Mrs. Malewska asked about honoring high school students of the month and whether it could be considered. Mr. Livingston said that the high school does weekly "Caught Being Awesome" acknowledgements in place of this.

Mrs. Bruning said she appreciated the update from Brain Colorite.

Mr. Miller thanked everyone for all of the updates. He mentioned that he had a few questions. He asked if 62 students for kindergarten roundup is a good number compared to the past, and Mrs.

Clouse said it is. He also asked about Earth Day and how students are selected to take part in this. Mr. Livingston said that Mrs. Lichota is in charge of that. Lastly, he asked about OK2SAY and if students seem to abuse the application. Mrs. Tiffany said sometimes it does happen but there is a process to discern credibility.

Mrs. Jenkins thanked Mr. Colorite and said she appreciates the new positions that the Board approves.

IV. Advance Planning

Mrs. Danek said the policy committee would need to schedule a meeting prior to the next board meeting to go over handbook revisions and do a final review of policy before the switch to Thrun Policy is official. This meeting was scheduled for Monday, May 11th at 5:00 p.m.

She said the curriculum committee would also need to meet to discuss the curriculum budget for next year. This meeting was scheduled for May 11th at 6:15 p.m.

The Board took a 5-minute recess at 7:53 p.m.

Motion by Edmonds, supported by Jenkins to enter into a closed session for a student discipline hearing at 7:59 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Bruning, supported by Malewska, to return to open session at 8:20 p.m. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Edmonds, supported by Malewska, to expel Student 2025-2026-#8 for up to 180 days, with the ability to petition the Board at the August 2026 regular board meeting for reinstatement at the beginning of the first semester of the 2026-2027 school year on a behavioral contract. A roll call vote was taken. Yes: Edmonds, Bruning, Malewska, Jenkins. No: Ulman. Motion carried.

V. Student Discipline Hearing

Motion by Miller, supported by Butzin, to enter into a closed session for a student discipline hearing at 8:02 p.m. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Jenkins, supported by Malewska, to return to open session at 8:25 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Edmonds, supported by Malewska, that Student 2025-2026-#9 be expelled for up to 180 days with the ability to petition the Board at the January 2027 regular Board meeting to return at the beginning of the second semester of the 2026-2027 school year on a behavioral contract with the exception of being able to attend the Tawas Area High School Commencement Ceremony on May 31, 2026 under parental supervision. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

VI. Adjournment

Motion by Jenkins, supported by Edmonds, to adjourn. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 8:27 p.m.