

Tawas Area Schools
Regular Board of Education Meeting
March 8, 2021

The regular meeting of the Tawas Area Board of Education was called to order by President Klenow at 6:32 p.m. on Monday, March 8, 2021, through a hybrid model including in-person, Google Meets or a teleconferencing method.

Mrs. Klenow led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call:

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

Administrators Present: Klinger, Mochty, Suttle, Danek and Bolen

Mrs. Lentz said she is attending remotely from Florida this evening.

Motion by Ulman, support by Bruning to go into closed session at 6:34 p.m. for a student discipline hearing. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Butzin arrived at 6:41 p.m. and joined the closed session meeting.

Motion by VanderVeen, support by Ulman to return to open session at 7:10 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Ulman, support by VanderVeen to expel student 2020-2021-#2 for 180 school days. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

POSITIVE HIGHLIGHTS

Mr. Suttle introduced Mr. Scott Izzo, Community Health Director/Epidemiologist with District Health Department No. 2 (DHD2). Mr. Izzo said he joined DHD2 last July. He has been our key contact regarding COVID-19 issues since that time. Mr. Izzo said a great relationship has been built between the health department and the school district administrators. Weekly meetings have been held since October allowing him to keep the district leaders updated on the most recent information and statistics. He thanked administration for promptly contacting him when we had situations where contact tracing and/or quarantining might be necessary for students and staff. They have worked closely and effectively to keep everyone safe. Mr. Klinger thanked Mr. Izzo for the great working relationship that has been developed and said Scott has provided timely advice and direction when situations arose. He said there were many late nights and weekends when they worked together on specific situations and he thanked Scott for collaborating with him to keep everyone safe. Mrs. Klenow thanked Mr. Izzo for working with the district administration and said it is greatly appreciated.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – INFORMATION AND PROPOSALS

Mrs. Klenow asked if there were any public comments regarding the extended learning plan. There were no comments. Mrs. Klenow asked if there were any public comments on agenda or non-agenda items. Mr. Brent Hemker told the board that when school was closed last March due to

COVID-19, the Early Middle College classes continued online. The students received grades for those classes in comparison to the other high school students who received credit or no credit for the balance of the year. Mr. John Bolen spoke on behalf of the Red Line Club and Huron Hockey and Skating Association and asked that the board consider making the hockey program a co-op which would allow students from other districts to join the Tawas hockey team. Mrs. Klenow said she would like to form a committee to look into that and asked Mrs. Ulman, Mr. VanderVeen and Mr. Butzin to represent the board on that committee. Mr. Klinger and Mr. Wren would also work with the committee to collect information on the topic.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Ulman, support by Bruning to approve the minutes of February 8, 2021 as presented. There were no additions or corrections. Motion carried unanimously.

PAYMENT OF BILLS

Motion by VanderVeen to approve the monthly contractual and prepaid expenses for the general fund in the amount of \$763,333.80 and the lunch fund expenses in the amount of \$48,697.82. There were no sinking fund expenses to be paid. He also moved to approve payment of presented bills for the general fund in the amount of \$11,117.77, as funds become available. There was no sinking fund or lunch fund bills to be paid. Motion supported by Bruning. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

RECEIPT OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Klinger said he has received two letters of resignation. First is a letter of resignation/retirement from cook's helper Kim Smith. Mrs. Smith has worked for the district since 2010 and was a substitute prior to that. Her retirement will be effective June 30, 2021. Motion by Ulman, support by Butzin to accept Kim Smith's resignation, thank her for her years of service and wish her well in her retirement. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger also received a letter of resignation from custodian Christofer Martin. Mr. Klinger is recommending the board accept his resignation effective tomorrow, March 9th, 2021. Motion by Ulman, support by Bruning to accept Christofer Martin's letter of resignation. Motion carried unanimously.

RECOMMENDATIONS & REPORTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Klinger told the board that this is the time of year that recommendations are made regarding probation and tenure for our teachers. He indicated that the building principals have been active working on evaluating their staffs. The process is designed to be a continual improvement process. This involves multiple classroom visits, communications and a minimum of two formal observations before a final evaluation can be administered. Since it is a more thorough and involved process, evaluations won't be complete until late spring. However, administration has completed the required observations and visitations giving them the information needed to make recommendations for the 2021-22 school year.

Mr. Klinger said that two teachers were hired in January this year and are being recommended to continue their first year of probation due to their mid-year hiring dates. Motion by Bruning, support by Ulman that Tricia Briggs and Sarah Stein continue on 1st year probation under the Michigan Teacher Tenure Act. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Bruning, support by Ulman that six teachers, Stephanie Graves, Meaghan Martinez, Wendi Paulson, Kelli Rau, Veronica Schlosser and Pete Scott, be granted a 2nd year of probation under the Michigan Teacher Tenure Act for the 2021-22 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Bruning, support by Ulman that four teachers, Brittney Davidson, Brianna Griffiths, Anneke Hoogenstryd and Jordan Lahr be granted a 3rd year of probation under the Michigan Teacher Tenure Act for the 2021-22 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Bruning, support by Butzin that three teachers, Aaron Hazen, Breanna Roest and Michael Keith del Rio, be granted a 4th year of probation under the Michigan Teacher Tenure Act for the 2021-22 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Bruning, support by Butzin that three teachers, Alexis Grover, Brandon Jerashen and Scott Jorasz be granted a 5th year of probation under the Michigan Teacher Tenure Act for the 2021-22 school year. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Bruning, support by Butzin that three teachers, Chris Jagelewski, Mark Dodridge and Shannon Livingston be recognized for tenure under the Michigan Teacher Tenure Act effective June 30, 2021. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said athletic director, Chuck Wren, is recommending the following coaches to EduStaff for hire: Aaron Hazen – girls’ assistant track and Kelli King – competitive cheer. Motion by Ulman, support by Butzin to recommend the named coaches for hire with EduStaff. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said a 3-hour cook’s helper position became vacant when the person in that position moved to Clara Bolen Elementary to fill an educational assistant vacancy. Mrs. Sancrant is recommending Christina Jordan be hired for this 3-hour position. Motion by Bruning, support by Lentz to hire Christina Jordan as a cook’s helper for Tawas Area Schools. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said that Mr. Suttle is recommending Thomas Gilbert be hired as an educational assistant at the middle school. Mr. Gilbert has experience in a similar position since he worked for the district as an educational assistant last year. Motion by Edmonds, support by Butzin to hire Thomas Gilbert as an educational assistant for Tawas Area Schools. Motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Committee Reports – Mr. Klinger said the curriculum committee met on February 22nd to discuss the grade point multiplier. Mrs. Studley, Mrs. Mochty and Mr. Suttle presented information they collected when speaking with other districts on how the multiplier is applied in these districts. The committee members discussed their perspectives on the multiplier and shared information from community members they had spoken with over the last few weeks. At the end of the meeting, the committee stated they support having the multiplier in place, and that no further changes to the process are recommended. Mr. Klinger said with the committee’s support he is recommending that the current multiplier process remain intact, and that no further changes be made to the process for this year. He is also recommending that the one-credit, First Year Experience course not be applied to the multiplier moving forward as this class doesn’t meet the criteria originally established when the multiplier was implemented.

Mr. VanderVeen spoke for the committee and said it was the committee's unanimous feeling that the goal of the multiplier was to encourage and provide a course of rigorous study. They felt that the college courses, including the EMC college courses, should have the multiplier applied to them, along with the AP courses offered by the district. They don't recommend any changes to the way the multiplier is currently being used to calculate a student's grade point average. Mrs. Lentz said she agrees that the multiplier shouldn't be changed this year, but she is concerned that the EMC and dual enrollment courses can't prove rigor compared to the AP courses we offer that are nationally recognized.

Motion by Bruning, support by Butzin to accept the recommendation of the curriculum committee regarding the grade point multiplier, including the removal of the one-credit First Year Experience course as discussed. Yes: Edmonds, VanderVeen, Ulman, Butzin, Bruning and Klenow. No: Lentz. Motion carried.

Legislative Report – Mr. Klinger said Governor Whitmer loosened COVID restrictions that will allow in-person board meetings to resume and allow us to increase attendance for special events, and those limits will be expanded when applicable. Discussion continues on the state budget and how it will impact public school education. When more information is available he will inform the board.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Klinger said we are required to revisit and reconfirm our Extended Learning plan each month. The plan discusses how instruction is being delivered for our K-12 students, that we are providing a free and appropriate education for our special needs students, and provides the weekly two-way communication rates. Mr. Klinger said that information has been included in the board packet. Motion by Butzin, support by Bruning to approve the extended COVID-19 learning plan reconfirmation update as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said the sinking fund committee met last October to discuss future projects within the district. At the November 9, 2020 meeting, the board approved Mr. Klinger to collect information on two projects, one being a secured front entrance for the Central Office. He has included information for the board from Ace American Alarms. They are the low bidder and they have done projects in the past for us and are familiar with our district needs in supporting secured entrances and safety throughout the district. Mr. Klinger said the bid includes 4 remote devices, and an app can also be installed on a cell phone to function as a remote opener. The bid came in at \$4,080, which was less than the committee anticipated. Motion by VanderVeen support by Bruning to accept the Central Office secure entrance project bid as presented. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said a 4-hour custodial position was absorbed at the beginning of the school year when there were many budget uncertainties. Our custodial staff is currently short-handed and is also working to manage the increased expectations from the implemented COVID protocols. Mr. Klinger is asking the board to consider reinstating the part-time custodial position. The board agreed that keeping the district clean and safe in these times is very important and gave kudos to the custodial staff. Motion by Klenow, support by Bruning to approve reinstating the part-time 4-hour custodial position. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Klenow said the closed session for negotiations discussion will be moved to the end of the meeting.

INFORMATION & PROPOSALS

Administration – Mr. Klinger said the technology department has been working to livestream events through the NFHS network using a pixellot camera system. The system is installed for free and a pay subscription service will be available for families that may want to watch athletic events remotely. He believes the fee would be \$9.99 per month or \$69.99 per year. Mr. Klinger said we are beginning the second week of voluntary rapid COVID testing for staff. The rapid testing process is being used for our wrestling team prior to their competitions. He said we will be using a new vendor for our district website. We expect there will be training for district users after spring break and it will be in place for next school year. The food service department is still providing free food pick-up on Thursday afternoons from 1:15-2:00. Mr. Klinger said a CASBA meeting has been tentatively scheduled for May 13th at 5:30 p.m. and all board members are welcome to attend. Mrs. Mochty said staff professional development was held last Friday which focused on staff wellness. NWEA scores were reviewed along with MICIP parent survey results. Mr. Suttle said the high school student of the month program has begun. Winter sports are preparing for district competition and spring sports are about to get started. The school play cancelled last year is now scheduled to be held March 18th-21st. Tickets go on sale next Monday. Mrs. Bolen said the middle school is celebrating Decades Days on Wednesdays and the students and staff are enjoying dressing the part. NWEA testing begins next week. Mrs. Danek said After School is Cool has begun with 30 students participating. March is reading month and they have been celebrating with bedtime stories. She thanked Mrs. Garrison, the school success worker, for her hard work this year, which has been very beneficial. The shoebox parade will be held on March 19th and will be recorded for families to view. The book fair will be held in the library for students to attend during the day and M-STEP testing will begin the week of April 26th.

From the Board – Mrs. Lentz thanked Mr. Izzo for his comments tonight and thanked Mr. Klinger for making the Central Office secure entrance project a reality. She was pleased to hear about the staff professional development day, the students of the month and is happy to hear the school play will be held this year. Mrs. Bruning thanked Mr. Huizar for the livestreaming work, thanked the custodial staff for their great job and looks forward to the website updates. Mr. Butzin thanked Mr. Klinger and administration for their hard work and was pleased to hear Mr. Izzo's comments. He thanked Mr. Hemker for sharing his comments on the multiplier. Mrs. Edmonds said it is great to see some things coming back after a year of events being cancelled. She thanked Mr. Bolen for bringing the hockey co-op topic to the board and will be anxious to hear what the committee learns. She thanked the curriculum committee for their work on the grade point multiplier issue. She knows it has been tough on families waiting, but felt it was good to be researched and looked into before a final decision was made. Mr. VanderVeen said he thinks the right decision was made with the multiplier and believes it is the right thing to do to encourage rigor for our students. He welcomed the new hires, congratulated the retiree, and thanked Mrs. Garrison for her work as the school success worker. Mrs. Ulman congratulated the teachers on their probation and tenure achievements and is pleased to hear of the great collaboration we have with the health department. She was also happy to hear the food service giveaway is still ongoing. Mrs. Klenow thanked the curriculum committee for their work on the multiplier and said it was a unanimous decision from that committee to leave the multiplier in place. She is excited to hear about the livestreaming option. She thanked administration for their continued hard work and thanked them for providing leadership opportunities for our students.

Motion by Ulman, support by Bruning to take a short recess at 8:32 p.m. before going into a closed session for negotiations discussion. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Ulman, support by Edmonds to go into closed session at 8:44 p.m. for negotiations discussion. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion by VanderVeen, support by Ulman to return to open session at 9:30 p.m.

ADVANCE PLANNING

Mr. Klinger reminded the board of the special meeting to be held March 22nd at 7:00 p.m. with Dr. Rod Green from MASB. He scheduled a personnel/negotiations committee meeting for Thursday, March 11th, at 5:30 p.m. and a meeting with TAFT and the personnel/negotiations committee for March 23rd at 5:00 p.m.

Motion by Lentz, support by Edmonds to adjourn at 9:42 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.