

Tawas Area Schools
Regular Board of Education Meeting
May 10, 2021

The regular meeting of the Tawas Area Board of Education was called to order by President Klenow at 7:01 p.m. on Monday, May 10, 2021, in the boardroom at the administration office and through Google Meets or a teleconferencing method.

Mrs. Ulman led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call:

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

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

Mrs. Klenow said there is one addition to the agenda which will fall under New Business and is an item to purchase Chromebooks.

POSITIVE HIGHLIGHTS

Mr. Klinger said Mr. Suttle will present tonight's positive highlight. Mr. Suttle said senior student, Jace Lear, was recently recognized for his act of bravery and heroism for assisting in the rescue of a family in an icy swamp following a vehicle crash in March. The vehicle was upside down submerged in water and Jace and his father ran to the car and waded through waist deep water and ice to reach the family. Jace reached the car and pulled a 3-year old child out first, handing the child off to his father to take to safety. Jace then went back and helped the mother and father out of the vehicle. Jace was recently presented with a quilt of Valor from the district for his act of heroism. Jace and his parents attended tonight's meeting virtually and the board thanked and congratulated him on his heroic act of bravery.

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. Marcus Doan, varsity softball coach, addressed the board. He would like the board to look into adding a baseball and softball complex on the high school campus. He cited safety concerns for the student athletes traveling to off-campus fields along with lenient guidelines at the city-owned fields. He also believes interest may increase in the sports if the fields were on campus. He understands there was a design drawn up some years ago that would accommodate such a complex. Mrs. Klenow thanked him for his comments and said the board will take it into consideration.

Ms. Brianna Griffiths, girls' head track coach, also addressed the board about adding a pole vault pit, mats for the pit and a timing system for the track program. She said we can't host a meet if we don't have a timing system and about 6 athletes are unable to compete without a pole vault pit. Ms. Griffiths will put her request in writing so the board can review it since her virtual connection to the meeting was sporadic making it hard to hear all of her comments. Mrs. Klenow thanked her for sharing her comments with the board as well.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion by Bruning, support by Ulman to approve the minutes of the April 12, 2021 board meeting as presented. There were no additions or corrections. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Lentz, support by Bruning to approve the closed session minutes of April 12, 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 \$774,816.54, the sinking fund expenses in the amount of \$30,453.21 and the lunch fund expenses in the amount of \$74,679.88. He also moved to approve payment of presented bills for the general fund in the amount of \$31,423.60, as funds become available. There was no sinking fund or lunch fund bills to be paid. Motion supported by Ulman. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

RECEIPT OF WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Klinger said he received a letter requesting an unpaid leave of absence from special education secretary Rachael Wiese. Mrs. Wiese is requesting an unpaid leave of absence for the remainder of the school year. Motion by Bruning, support by Butzin to grant Rachael Wiese an unpaid leave of absence for the remainder of the school year as requested. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said he has received two letters of resignation. First is a letter of resignation/retirement from high school art teacher Lori Henderson-Bayn. Mrs. Bayn has worked in the district for the past 29 years and plans to retire at the end of the current school year. Motion by Lentz, support by Butzin to accept Lori Henderson-Bayn's letter of 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 first grade teacher, April DiRusso. Mrs. DiRusso has taught in the district for the past eight years. She and her family will be relocating which has caused her to resign her position effective June 30, 2021. Motion by Edmonds, support by Butzin to accept April DiRusso's letter of resignation as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

RECOMMENDATIONS & REPORTS FROM THE ADMINISTRATION

Mr. Klinger said each year we are required to pass resolutions if we desire to continue to participate in the schools of choice program. One resolution allows us to participate in Section 105 Schools of Choice, and the other resolution permits us to participate in Section 105C Schools of Choice. Section 105 allows nonresident students who reside within the intermediate school district to attend our district while Section 105C allows nonresident students who reside outside of our ISD in a contiguous intermediate school district to attend our district. Motion by Bruning to adopt the Resolution to opt into Section 105 Schools of Choice within ISD Boundaries and the Resolution to opt into Section 105C Schools of Choice across ISD boundaries. Support to the motion by Butzin. Motion carried unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

Committee Reports – Mr. Klinger said the personnel/negotiations committee met on April 22nd, May 3rd and May 6th to continue negotiations discussions. He said language pieces are being completed and finalized and financial packages have been shared by each party. The committee is scheduled to meet again on May 20th.

Mr. Klinger said the policy committee met on April 26th to review new and revised bylaws and policies provided by NEOLA. He indicated almost all of the changes are required to keep us in compliance with law. Tonight's meeting should be considered a first reading. Mrs. Ulman said there was one policy that could have been updated which would authorize the superintendent to suspend or terminate the employment contract of a support staff employee, prior to board approval. The committee decided not to revise the policy to include that wording. Mrs. Ulman said most of the policy additions and revisions had to do with COVID-19, federal funds, non-discrimination and harassment. Mr. VanderVeen said he would be in favor of authorizing the superintendent to terminate a support staff contract prior to full board approval as he sees that as an administrative function.

It was the general consensus of the board to consider this the first reading of new and revised bylaws and policies.

Mr. Klinger said the Ad Hoc hockey committee met on April 27th to discuss the hockey program's request to enter into a co-op with a select school. Several topics were discussed but it was determined that more information was needed regarding input from other local schools and potential interest, pros and cons from schools who currently offer co-op hockey and logistics from an area school who offers a co-op for another sport. Mr. Klinger said he will include a couple other administrators in the next meeting since adding a co-op program would affect them directly. Another committee meeting needs to be scheduled to review any new findings and will be scheduled at the end of tonight's meeting.

Mr. Klinger said the curriculum committee met on May 4th to discuss the curriculum budget presented by Mrs. Mochty. He said at that time Mrs. Mochty was waiting for some final quotes for some of the resources and a total dollar amount hadn't been established. The committee is recommending that the curriculum budget not exceed a capped amount which should allow Mrs. Mochty to make the needed curriculum purchases. That amount will be discussed later on the agenda when the board discusses the curriculum purchases.

Legislative Report – Mr. Klinger said the House and Senate have released their version of the school aid budget and things are looking much more positive this year than last year. We are hoping the May revenue conference will provide more clarity moving forward as we prepare the budget for next year.

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. He said this month's template outlines the brief pause to in-person instruction from April 7th through April 16th. Motion by Lentz, support by Butzin to approve the extended COVID-19 learning plan reconfirmation update as presented. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said the building principals have submitted changes to their student handbooks for next year and they have been shared with the board in their packet. Mrs. Lentz asked about language in the high school handbook that states that several types of electronics, headphones and earbuds are not allowed unless designated by administration. She wondered if that needs to be changed to allow teachers to make that decision in their individual classroom. It was determined that teachers may allow headphones and earbuds to be used in their classroom for instructional purposes and based on the class syllabus; however, those items are not allowed to be used outside

of the classroom. Mrs. Lentz said that she still does not agree with the grade point multiplier that is in place.

It was the general consensus of the board that this be considered the first reading of the 2021-22 student school handbooks.

Mr. Klinger said IRESA Superintendent, Jeff Hutchison, shared with the local districts the IRESA proposed general fund budget for 2021-22. Local districts are asked to approve IRESA's general fund budget only. The budget includes an increase in salary of 2% for certified staff while support staff employees are currently still negotiating. The fund balance is expected to decrease in 2021-22 by \$66,728. Mrs. Bruning made a motion to approve the Resolution to Support the IRESA General Fund Budget for the 2021-22 school year. Motion supported by Edmonds. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said athletic director, Chuck Wren, reached out informally to the commissioner of the Northern Michigan Soccer League, expressing interest in joining the league. We were informed last week that there is a good chance that Tawas will be invited to a league meeting at the beginning of June. Mr. Klinger said he is asking the board for their support to formally apply to this league in an attempt to prepare for this potential future meeting. This could bring scheduling consistency and equal opportunity for both our boys' and girls' programs to earn awards and recognition for their commitment and hard work. Mr. Klinger was asked if it would be detrimental to us to be in this soccer league if we were to be accepted into the North Star League (NSL). He said it would not be a problem because the NSL only offers fall co-ed soccer, which would be considered a boys' sport and would leave the girls' team without games to play in the spring. He said there are two divisions in this soccer league and we already play several of the schools. Motion by Bruning, support by Butzin to approve Tawas Area Schools to formally apply to the Northern Michigan Soccer League. Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said the curriculum committee discussed setting a capped amount to cover the curriculum purchases that Mrs. Mochty needs to make. They believe \$165,000 should cover the cost of those resources. Mr. Klinger said that amount falls within the "normal" range of annual curriculum purchases. He added that when math curriculum is purchased, it covers all grades K-12, which is a much larger expense. Motion by Lentz, support by Bruning to approve Mrs. Mochty to spend up to \$165,000 within the curriculum budget. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Klinger said Mr. Huizar is asking for permission to purchase 350 Chromebook devices in this current year's budget. We normally need to purchase about 350 devices annually to keep up with our rotation of new devices for 5th grade, 9th grade and one grade level at Clara Bolen. However, due to the COVID-19 virtual learning demands, we expect we will need to purchase about 400 more devices so there are enough to send one home with the Clara Bolen students. We plan to purchase those devices in July this year and they will cost about \$101,200. If the devices are not needed to be sent home with Clara Bolen students, we may not need to make our annual purchase next spring. We plan to use ESSER funds to recoup some of the cost. Motion by Edmonds, support by Ulman to approve the purchase of Chromebooks at a cost of \$94,388.75 as discussed. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Mrs. Klenow said the closed session meetings will be moved to the end of the agenda and will follow Advance Planning.

INFORMATION & PROPOSALS

Administration – Mr. Klinger said he and athletic director Mr. Wren will be attending a North Star League meeting tomorrow morning in Mio. They will be presenting information to the athletic directors in the league in hopes of being accepted into the league. If we are accepted it will make scheduling much easier, provide consistency and allow our student athletes the chance to earn league recognition and awards. Mr. Klinger said MDHHS has new guidelines for outdoor events of less than 100 people which allows attendees to not wear masks. He said the quarantine timeline has also been cut back from 14 days to 10 days. Mr. Klinger would like to add a workshop to the end of the next meeting to discuss how our ESSER funds should be prioritized. Mr. Suttle congratulated Mrs. Bayn on her retirement and said teacher appreciation week was a success last week with lots of treats, snacks and gifts shared with the staff. National Honor Society induction will be held May 18th at 7:00 p.m., the senior awards night will be May 24th at 7:00 p.m., project graduation will be held outdoors on June 4th and graduation will be June 6th at 2:00 p.m. Mr. Suttle said 61% of our senior class have earned awards and will be recognized at the awards night. He said the senior banners will be going up around town this week. Mrs. Bolen said some middle school students painted a tree mural on a wall in the hallway to show their appreciation to the teachers. The trees leaves are shaped like flowers and the students wrote notes on the flowers thanking their teachers. The leaves/flowers can be changed with the season and it is a nice addition in the hallway. M-STEP testing continues for the students the rest of the month, and there will be a middle school awards night on May 25th. Mrs. Danek said there were many treats, flowers and snacks for the teachers last week and she thanked Tawas Bay Insurance Agency for the treat bag they provided for each employee in the district. An evening kindergarten roundup was held last week with 58 students attending with their parents, and another 17 that weren't able to attend. M-STEP testing continues for 3rd and 4th grade students, and three half day field days will be held for the students on June 2nd, 3rd and 4th. Mrs. Mochty said teacher appreciation week was a success and all staff were recognized. She thanked and congratulated Mrs. Bayn on her retirement and thanked Amanda Lossing for organizing the great prom. She said it was exciting to be able to have it again this year and although it was held outdoors, the kids had a blast. The junior/senior girls powderpuff football game will be held this Thursday night at 7:00 p.m.

From the Board – Mr. VanderVeen said he is excited about the prospect of being admitted to the North Star League and hopes the presentation goes well. He is encouraged to hear some of the COVID guidelines have been relaxed and hopes that continues. He is impressed that 61% of the senior class have earned recognition and he is looking forward to seeing the senior banners up around town. Mr. Butzin congratulated Jace Lear for his outstanding act of bravery. He thanked Ms. Griffiths and Mr. Doan for sharing their comments with the board and congratulated Mrs. Bayn on her retirement. He also thanked Mr. Huizar for the great work he is doing in the technology department. Mrs. Lentz thanked Mrs. Mochty for her curriculum work and thanked the teachers and administrators for their work. She thanked Mrs. Bayn for her years of service, congratulated her on her retirement and said she will be missed. There will be a band concert Wednesday evening beginning with the 6th grade band at 6:00 p.m. at the football stadium. She was also happy to hear the powderpuff game will be held this week and thanked Mr. Doan and Ms. Griffiths for their comments tonight. Mrs. Bruning thanked the teachers, staff and administrators for their great work this year. She is happy to hear the banners are going up and that many of the spring events are resuming. She is also hopeful that we may be joining the North Star League. Mrs. Ulman thanked the teachers for their work and is also happy to hear that many events are resuming this spring. Mrs. Edmonds thanked the teachers and staff for their great work through COVID and is proud of the kids' determination as well. She said senior yard signs will be going up soon and she is looking forward to seeing the senior banners. She is looking forward to the upcoming events and is glad the seniors can be together as a group for graduation this year. She is also pleased to hear that the middle school awards will be an evening event so families can

attend. Mrs. Klenow thanked and congratulated Mrs. Bayn. She thanked the board members for the time they have spent attending so many committee meetings recently. She thanked administration for going the extra mile to give the kids the best that they can have in light of the restrictions. She feels like they didn't miss out on much because of administration's efforts. She said the tree mural is awesome and she is hopeful about being admitted to the North Star League.

ADVANCE PLANNING

Mr. Klinger said there is a CASBA meeting this Thursday at 5:30 p.m. at the Alternative Education Academy building. The negotiations committee will meet again on May 20th at 5:00 p.m. An Ad Hoc hockey committee meeting was scheduled for May 26th at 5:00 p.m. and a budget committee meeting was scheduled for June 10th at 5:00 p.m.

Motion by Ulman, support by Edmonds to take a short recess at 8:35 p.m. before going into closed session for student discipline hearings. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Ulman, support by Lentz to go into closed session at 8:46 p.m. for student discipline hearings. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion by VanderVeen, support by Edmonds to return to open session at 9:38 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by VanderVeen, support by Edmonds to expel student 2020-2021-#3 for up to 180 school days with the option to petition the board in January, 2022, for possible reinstatement at the beginning of the second semester of the 2021-2022 school year. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion by VanderVeen, support by Butzin to expel student 2020-2021-#4 for up to 180 school days with the option to petition the board in January, 2022, for possible reinstatement at the beginning of the second semester of the 2021-2022 school year. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Edmonds, support by Butzin to go into closed session at 9:43 p.m. for a negotiations update. A roll call vote was taken and the motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Lentz, support by Edmonds to return to open session at 10:15 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.

Motion by VanderVeen, support by Bruning to adjourn at 10:17 p.m. Motion carried unanimously.