

KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
AGENDA STATEMENT

No 9 b

MEETING of: November 11, 2020

Item Title

CONSENT CALENDAR

Approval of the emergency special meeting minutes of November 4, 2020.

SUBMITTED BY: Kerry Watson, Clerk to the Board

CONSENT CALENDAR

b. Motion to approve the emergency special meeting minutes of November 4, 2020.

*** NOTE:**

If amendments or corrections to the minutes are desired, a Board member should request removal of the minutes. The minutes will then be acted upon under Unfinished Business. Appropriate motions to correct or amend the minutes are in order.

**KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
EMERGENCY Special meeting of November 4, 2020
6:00 p.m.
Ketchikan High School Library**

CALL TO ORDER; PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE; ROLL CALL

The Ketchikan Gateway Borough Board of Education met in an **emergency special session** on the 4th day of November, 2020, in the library of Ketchikan High School. Board President Kim Hodne called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

The following members were present to establish a quorum and due notice had been published: Board President Kim Hodne; Clerk-Treasurer Bridget Mattson; and Board Members Diane Gubatayao, Jordan Tabb, Paul Robbins Jr., and Nicole Anderson. Board Vice President Sonya Skan was absent and excused.

Superintendent Beth Lougee was present. Also in attendance were building administrators Jason House, Cole Maxwell; Kurt Lindemann; Sheri Boehlert; and Michael Cron; and clerk to the Board Kerry Watson.

Several media representatives were also present.

Purpose of emergency special meeting and discussion

Before speaking to the purpose of the meeting, Superintendent Beth Lougee first noted she'd specifically invited several key individuals to attend - Dr. Tim Horton, a local pediatrician, and Abner Hoage, the incident commander for the Emergency Operations Center. In addition, Michael Johnson, site manager for First Student, was in attendance, as well as building principals.

Superintendent Lougee stated that earlier that day, it was announced that Ketchikan was moving to a high alert level for COVID. The purpose for the emergency special meeting was for the School Board to discuss and take action on moving to the school district's medium level scenario, said Superintendent Lougee. She explained that this Smart Start Medium Level plan would mean a blended learning model for Schoenbar Middle School and Ketchikan High School students of two days onsite with 50 percent of the students and three days of online asynchronous learning at home for all of those students. Revilla Junior/Senior High School students would attend school half-days at 50 percent. It is being recommended that the elementary schools, Ketchikan Charter School (K- 8th grade), and Tribal Scholars, continue as currently being operated at 5 days a week. The health and safety measures, limiting class size, and other measures taken at those schools since school opened will allow for continued operation in the same manner, said Superintendent Lougee. She noted that although the Smart Start plan which the Board initially approved would have operated the elementary schools at four days a week, it is being proposed to keep the school week at five days.

As part of the emergency action, the administration is also recommending that the next two days of school for the secondary students, November 5 and 6, be online and that the 50/50 schedule would start on Monday, November 9, said the superintendent. This would allow time to make the change work smoothly all around for busing, school meals and teacher preparation, she said.

Superintendent Lougee said the district is recommending this school plan be in place until November 30 for continuity, even if the community risk level drops back down from high alert.

There were questions of administration and discussion regarding: annex sites for the 7-12 grades students and their staffing; activities and after school programs; bus transportation scheduling; providing of school meals; accommodating students with inadequate or no internet; special education services; and how the school change would be communicated to parents and students.

Superintendent Lougee invited comments from Dr. Tim Horton and Abner Hoage. Dr. Horton briefly spoke about coordinating with the school district regarding children and COVID. He noted he is relatively new to town and came from an area which was much more affected by COVID cases than Ketchikan. However, he said he is sad to see the uptick in cases and a hospital admission; and expressed some concern that individuals will soon be spending more time indoors due to colder weather.

Mr. Hoage, who was teleconferencing into the emergency meeting, also commented on the cooperation between the school district and the EOC. The superintendent is on the EOC policy committee and also meets with medical staff, he said. Mr. Hoage said the recommendation to institute the school change for a minimum of two weeks is smart and provides stability and predictability to students. In looking at the local COVID data, he said it will take at least a week to even start changing direction with the COVID situation. Mr. Hoage added that every step the district takes to try to minimize the spread in the community will go a long way to getting Ketchikan back to a more normal status.

Board Member Diane Gubatayao asked how many of the positive cases had been young people. Mr. Hoage said the EOC doesn't track the cases that way, although public health does. Dr. Horton said that less than a handful of children locally have been infected, but pointed out that many youngsters are asymptomatic.

Superintendent Lougee confirmed that the students testing positive that she knew of was less than a handful. However, more staff have been identified as being close contacts of positive-testing individuals and have had to quarantine. This is putting a strain on the district securing substitutes, she said.

Mr. Hoage was asked to provide the latest local COVID statistics. The EOC incident commander said that since October 26 there have been 47 new cases reported. Of those, three were travel-related; 30 were close contacts to a known positive; 12 resulted from community spread or community transmission; and two were still under investigation. Mr. Hoage added that of the close contact cases, so far 24 were attributed to a single cluster within the community.

MOTION

Motion to approve KGBSD schools changing to the Smart Start Medium Level Plans, wherein the elementary schools and Ketchikan Charter School middle school remain with the current schedule of 5 days per week and Schoenbar Middle School, Ketchikan High School and Revilla Jr./Sr. high school move to the 50% model. Schoenbar, Kayhi and Revilla will go all online November 5 and 6, 2020 and start the 50% model on November 9, 2020.

Moved by: MATTSON; Second by: ROBBINS JR.

Discussion

There was discussion about amending the motion to add a timeframe of at least until November 30. Board Member Jordan Tabb commented that the Board had the prerogative to meet again and change the school plan, if needed, and based on what was occurring in the community. He suggested that the motion was sufficient, with the Board's understanding that the Superintendent had requested the schedule last until at least November 30.

Students, staff and families need to take the situation seriously in their daily actions, by wearing masks, practicing social distancing and following health guidelines, stressed Mr. Tabb. The opportunity for things to get better or worse depends on what we do, he said.

Board Member Paul Robbins Jr. expressed appreciation for the preparation enabling the elementary schools to continue its current schedule. He thanked Ms. Lougee for including the two days to make the transition to the 50% plan for the secondary levels. He was also complimentary of the level of communication shown by the letters the schools will send out.

Ms. Gubatayao said she was thankful for the plans to sustain meal programs during the school change.

President Kim Hodne said he was sad with the community's COVID level, and the resulting school change. However, it was the prudent action to take, he added. Staff and students can now prove that the contingency plan works, he said.

Board Member Nicole Anderson stated that the community is going to have to step up to ensure students will be able to continue to remain in school. She also expressed appreciation that the elementary students are able to continue going to school fully at this point. Ms. Anderson expressed appreciation to Superintendent Lougee for the level of communication going out from the schools. She noted the issue of better communication was one she ran on as a candidate.

ROLL CALL

ANDERSON, ROBBINS JR., TABB, GUBATAYAO, MATTSON, HODNE - ALL AYES

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded for adjournment. With no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 p.m.