

**KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
Regular meeting of
August 26, 2020
Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly Chambers**

CALL TO ORDER; PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE; ROLL CALL

The Ketchikan Gateway Borough Board of Education met in regular session on the 26th day of August in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly Chambers. Board President Bridget Mattson 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 Bridget Mattson; Clerk-Treasurer Diane Gubatayao; Board Members Leslie Becker; Jordan Tabb, Paul Robbins Jr. and Thomas Heutte. Student Board Member Henry Clark was also present.

Vice President Sonya Skan was absent and excused.

Administrative staff present included: Beth Lougee, Superintendent; Business Manager Katie Parrott; Board Clerk Kerry Watson; and school district department directors.

Vision and Mission Statement

The district vision and mission statements were read by School Board Member Thomas Heutte.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion to approve the agenda of August 26, 2020

Moved by: GUBATAYAO; Second by: ROBBINS JR.

ROLL CALL

Student Member Henry Clark (preferential vote) - AYE

BECKER, TABB, GUBATAYAO, HEUTTE, ROBBINS JR., MATTSON - ALL AYES

MOTION PASSED

PUBLIC RECOGNITION

Board Clerk Treasurer Diane Gubatayao spoke briefly about the importance of the 2020 U.S. Census count to the Borough and school district. She is on the local census committee.

CITIZEN REMARKS

There were no citizen remarks.

Claims of August 21, 2020

Business Manager Katie Parrott provided clarification on a check for elevator services in the district. The check is for this year's annual contract. As this is the last year of a five-year contract, the services will be put out to bid later this fiscal year.

She also explained that an \$18,309 check to Blackboard Inc. was for the websites in the district.

Board Member Paul Robbins Jr. said it would be helpful to have quantity information for items on the claims reports. Business Manager Parrott will check on tailoring the pre-generated reports to provide that information.

Superintendent Report

Superintendent Beth Lougee opened her report by reading her Superintendent's Report letter which was included in the packet. In it, she expressed appreciation for the work of the School Board, staff, and the community and parents in readying for the school year. She noted the accomplishments which have occurred since March, including providing thousands of meals to students, and distributing hundreds of computer devices for instruction. The letter also described preparations for returning to school. Superintendent Lougee also reported on the following:

- The Ketchikan-Kanayama-Gero exchange program, which the district helps fund, will not occur this school year due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.
- Current to date district enrollment is 2,200, compared to 2,269 of a year ago. Child Find is anticipated to bring more students, and more kindergartners are expected to enroll still as well.
- An updated district organizational chart, which is an exhibit to Board policy, will be provided at the next Board meeting.
- Administrative advisory committees are starting up in September, and Board members will be notified of their involvement.
- Principals and staff are now back to work in the schools.
- The preschool which was housed at the Ketchikan Pioneers' Home has been moved to the district office area. Houghtaling's other two preschools will be moved to that location as well.
- Paraprofessional positions and additional custodial positions are being advertised for the annexes, funded under the CARES Act.

Superintendent Lougee then asked the various department directors to report on current activities.

Maintenance

Director of Maintenance Al Jacobson gave an update on the boiler project and then reported on the district's air filtration adequacy. Mr. Jacobson provided a comprehensive explanation of commercial grade air filters and the district's HVAC (heating, ventilation, air conditioning) system. Switching to higher-rated filters than currently used would increase annual costs from about \$7200 to \$40,000, he said. In addition, it would create pressure drop issues and require a retrofit of the air handlers. It is his opinion that the district's air filtration is adequate, he said.

Curriculum/Professional Development

Alonso Escalante, Director of Curriculum, reported that 39 students to date were enrolled in the district's online school. Meanwhile, 148 students are now enrolled for the Fast Track homeschool program; with twenty-seven of those receiving special education services, he said. Mr. Escalante also noted the professional development which has been occurring or will occur before school. Topics include: safety, Collaborative Classrooms; McGraw-Hill science; IXL; MAP; and Alaska Virtual School training.

Alaska Digital Academy

Bill Whicker, district technology coordinator, said he has received 18 requests so far for full-time instruction through the district's Digital Academy. This program covers grades 6-12, while the state's Virtual Academy covers grades K-12. Traditionally, students have been able to dual enroll in the program; such as being enrolled at Kayhi or Revilla and taking some Digital Academy courses. He also noted he's been involved in providing training regarding online instruction to teachers.

Business Department

Business Manager Katie Parrott reported on arrangements for leasing of facilities to serve as annex school sites, noting a template lease agreement was before the Board for its approval that evening. She spoke about the type of factors that would be negotiated for the annex leases, such as the square footage to be used at a particular site and the district's responsibilities as a tenant. Ms. Parrott said that the administration has consulted with legal representatives and with its insurance company regarding the leases. The Board's approval of the lease template will allow the district to move forward with finalizing lease negotiations within that framework, she said; and to negotiate fair and consistent rates for the leases.

Ms. Parrott then spoke about the National School Lunch program which will commence with the start of school, emphasizing that it is much different than the meal program provided this summer. The National School Lunch Program requirements are more restrictive, she noted. For example, full-time homeschool students are not eligible for the federal program. However, students enrolled in "brick and mortar schools" who are taking some online courses are still eligible, said Ms. Parrott. There will be some options for pick-up of school lunches, and limited home delivery for special circumstances.

Special Education

Terri Crofcheck, Director of Special Services, reported that many meetings have been occurring with parents concerned about their children's education. The Special Services Department staff is creating individual plans for families, and providing information on the different programs available. Ms. Crofcheck expressed her pleasure that an onsite occupational therapist has been hired for the first time in six years. She noted the upcoming schedule for the department's Child Find and preschool screening. She noted the difficulty in screening the anticipated 70 to 80 children for preschool, with just two speech pathologists available. Ms. Crofcheck also reported that the contracted speech pathologists who travel to Ketchikan will have to provide their services via tele-therapy due to the pandemic travel restrictions. The local speech pathologists will also be utilizing this to some extent as they will not be able to travel to all the sites where children need to be served.

Human Resources

Catherine Alilin, Human Resource Manager, outlined the guidelines and protocols for employees requesting telework and COVID-19 related leaves. With school re-opening at 100% capacity, telework is limited to employees with disabilities requiring accommodation, she said. A medical provider would need to sign off on a form attesting to an ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) condition. Requests for leave related to COVID-19 will also be evaluated. Employees have been provided a memo explaining the specific type of leaves, as well as a COVID-related response matrix, said Ms. Alilin. The matrix indicates what actions an employee should take in different circumstances such as being exposed to someone with COVID-19, and what kind of leave might apply.

Information Technology

Jurgen Johannsen, Technology Supervisor for the district, reported on how computers and devices will be rolled out for school. Many students currently have a device as they were issued at spring break for home use due to the pandemic. The department is currently providing for the estimated 800 to 900 students who do not have a district issued machine. Machines, assigned for specific students, have been delivered to the 7-12 grade schools. Now, the IT staff is working on assigning machines for the elementary students, starting at grade 6 and working down until they run out of machines. More devices have been ordered and should arrive in late October to provide for down to grade 2. Preschool, kindergarten and first grade students will use tablets if possible, said Mr. Johannsen. He pointed out that the department does not know yet how many students will return to school with their machines which were assigned last year, or at what grade levels. Once school starts, more accurate counts will be available and the department can plan for future deployments of devices.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Motion to approve the Consent Calendar of August 26, 2020.

- a. *Motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of August 12, 2020.*
- b. *Motion to approve a contract with Hilary Sauder as an occupational therapist for the 2020-2021 school year.*

Moved by: ROBBINS JR.; Second by: BECKER

ROLL CALL

Student Member Henry Clark (preferential vote) - AYE
TABB, GUBATAYAO, HEUTTE, BECKER, ROBBINS JR., MATTSON – ALL AYES

MOTION PASSED

NEW BUSINESS

Motion to approve a three-year contract with Alaskan & Proud Market to provide milk.

Moved by: HEUTTE; Second by: GUBATAYAO

Discussion

There was no discussion.

ROLL CALL

Student Member Henry Clark (preferential vote) - AYE
HEUTTE, GUBATAYAO, BECKER, ROBBINS JR., TABB, MATTSON – ALL AYES

MOTION PASSED

Motion to approve 9-month lease agreements with Holy Name Catholic Church, South Tongass Alliance Church, First Assembly of God, and Ketchikan Church of the Nazarene and authorize the corresponding expenditure of funds not to exceed \$130,000.

Moved by: HEUTTE; Second by: BECKER

Discussion

Business Manager Parrott briefly addressed how CARES Act funds are being used for these lease agreements. She also noted that discussions have begun with the City of Ketchikan regarding some use of its CARES Act funds.

Board Member Gubatayao pointed out a part of the lease agreement template regarding property tax that wasn't pertinent. Business Manager Parrott said that there are areas in the template that will be removed or adjusted if they don't apply, including the property tax reference.

Ms. Gubatayao also asked how inadequate bandwidth or connectivity at the annexes would be handled. Ms. Parrott responded that each facility has been evaluated in light of those factors and the grades or activities using the facility would be tailored accordingly.

Board Member Leslie Becker asked why the Board was not being presented with individual leases for each facility.

Business Manager Parrott explained that this was due to the negotiation that needed to take place with specific leases, and a concern with giving one organization an unfair advantage over another. She commented that while the Board's business is public; there are some legal exceptions such as for negotiations for the leasing of a facility. Ms. Parrott said that with this action, the Board is being asked to provide approval for the district to negotiate leases for the annexes and to authorize expenditure of funds within the total noted in the motion (\$130,000). The district will work within the approved framework and negotiate fair and consistent agreements with the various lessors, she said.

Ms. Becker stated she was not comfortable with this, as there will be different expectations and uses for each lease.

Ms. Parrott said that if the Board wants to ask about specific individual leases with specific entities that would be an appropriate subject of an executive session.

Board Member Tom Heutte asked for reassurance for the public regarding compliance with separation of church and state, as a citizen had brought up that concern, he said. For example, with an annex at a church, could the public be assured that the church would not provide any religious instruction to the public school students or display or distribute religious literature to them, he asked. Ms. Parrott stated that the district was very much aware of the church and state prohibitions and had taken them seriously; and would not enter into agreements with an entity that couldn't comply.

In light of the report on air filtration given earlier, Mr. Heutte also asked about the condition of the annex facilities, i.e. making sure students weren't going into substandard areas. Ms. Parrott again gave assurance that the safety considerations expected in any educational facility would be addressed in the leased areas. These included such issues as emergency evacuation plans, appropriate exits, and fire extinguishers.

She also briefly reiterated that the district has its own liability insurance and has discussed these leases with its insurance company.

ROLL CALL

**Student Member Henry Clark (preferential vote) - AYE
ROBBINS JR., HEUTTE, TABB, GUBATAYAO, BECKER, MATTSON – ALL AYES**

MOTION PASSED

Motion to approve the school lunch program price increases as presented.

Moved by: ROBBINS JR.; Second by: HEUTTE

Discussion

Business Manager Parrott explained the district’s school lunch program is evaluated annually on whether it is fiscally sustainable. The “paid lunch equity” federal evaluation resulted in a recommendation for a price increase. The lunch price increase is capped at ten cents, she said. Ms. Parrott noted the school lunch program had a deficit last year and will again this year. Mechanisms are being put in place to lower costs and try to build up the program’s fund balance, she said.

ROLL CALL

**Student Member Henry Clark (preferential vote) - AYE
BECKER, ROBBINS JR., TAABB, HEUTTE, GUBATAYAO, MATTSON – ALL AYES**

MOTION PASSED

DISCUSSION

Strategic Plan review and update -Discussion centered on strategic plan objectives regarding being a trauma-informed district; a safety objective regarding reporting; and on district communications; as well as noting that some areas of “weaknesses” in the plan may have been strengthened due to the pandemic.

Board evaluation - A future worksession on the Board evaluation will be set before the election.

Board Member Attendance - AASB Fall Boardsmanship Academy – September 19-20 - Board members who can attend will be registered for this virtual training.

Government to Government Consultations – Tuesday, Sept.1 with Ketchikan Indian Community-.Meeting confirmed.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS:

Ms. Gubatayao expressed thanks to all district staff for all the extra work readying the district for school. She said there is a palpable excitement in the community.

Mr. Heutte thanked Superintendent Lougee for quickly responding when he alerted her to the Ketchikan Pioneers Home’s concern about its continued housing of a district preschool program. He also commented he appreciated hearing about a district organizational chart.

Board Member Tabb encouraged those listening to apply for the free and reduced school lunch program. He also thanked district staff for its work this summer in providing meals.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made and seconded for adjournment. With no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

Minutes approved as distributed at the September 9, 2020 regular meeting of the Board of Education.

BOARD PRESIDENT
Bridget Mattson