

**KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
REGULAR meeting of  
Wednesday, January 26, 2022  
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 January, 2022, in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly Chambers. Board President Stephen Bradford 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 Stephen Bradford; Board Vice President Keenan Sanderson; Board Clerk-Treasurer Bridget Mattson; and Board Members Diane Gubatayao; Jordan Tabb; and Paul Robbins Jr. Board Member Nicole Anderson was present via teleconference. Student Board Member Braxton Zink was also present.

Administrative staff present included Interim Superintendent Melissa Johnson; Business Manager Katie Parrott; and Board Clerk Kerry Watson.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.**

**PUBLIC RECOGNITION**

Board Member Diane Gubatayao commented on an article in the Ketchikan Daily News highlighting Kayhi graduates who came back and were teaching in the district. She noted that Interim Superintendent Melissa Johnson is also a Kayhi graduate.

**CITIZEN REMARKS**

No citizens spoke at the meeting. A written statement from Ketchikan Education Association was read into the record, as requested by the association. The statement was in support of policies and mitigation that keep students and staff in school.

**INFORMATION AND REPORTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

*Committee reports:* Board Member Diane Gubatayao reported on behalf of the Policy Committee to briefly explain the resolution on that evening's Consent Calendar. She said that Borough Attorney Glenn Brown assisted in drafting the resolution, regarding district support of staff members who are survivors of domestic abuse, sexual violence, or stalking.

**CLAIMS FOR INFORMATION** - *For Information - January 21, 2022.* There were no questions or comments.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

*Student Member's Report :* Student Board Member Braxton Zink reported on upcoming extracurricular activities for Ketchikan High School, including boys' and girls' basketball; debate, which was participating in the Southeast Regional Tournament in Sitka that weekend; and the Ocean Sciences bowl team, which was headed to Seward for state competition the following week. Braxton announced that the senior class was holding an auction on January 29, both in person and online, with the proceeds going toward the senior prom. The student board member also commented on the current MAPS testing occurring in the school district, and the importance of the data for comparison of Ketchikan students to others in Alaska and across the country.

**Tongass School of Arts and Sciences Annual School Report**

Principal Scott Huff highlighted the programs and qualities which make Tongass School of Arts and Sciences unique in opening his report, first commenting on how the school addresses Trauma Informed Care. He noted the outside school activities and incentives for students such as going to Ward Lake or Carlanna Lake.

Some of those experiences, such as going to the Discovery Center, were virtual via Zoom this year, instead of an actual onsite visit.

Among TSAS' unique characteristics and programs listed by Principal Huff were: its open concept with students grouped in multi-grades with no real walls separating those grade groupings; the Highly Effective Teaching (HET) model; and a strong focus on cultural awareness. A traditional land acknowledgement is stated with every school announcement; Native song and dance are taught; Native languages have been incorporated in aspects of the school; and a Native welcoming song is sung on Mondays and Fridays. Other unique programs at the charter school mentioned by Mr. Huff were: advanced math and ELA programs for grades 3 to 6; special enrichment programs on Fridays; and STEAM offerings for all students. Lastly, Principal Huff reported on student academic achievement. Last year's TSAS' fourth-grade taught by Ms. Rauwolf scored the highest in math on PEAKS in the district, he announced. However, data from this fall's MAPS math and language arts assessment shows that kindergarten, first and second grades are lacking in their academic growth due to loss of schooling, said Mr. Huff. He commented on how the school is addressing that loss, including some special professional development. Being culturally responsive will also help address this, he said.

There were some questions and comments from the Board.

#### Superintendent's Report

Interim Superintendent Melissa Johnson shared her concern that the district's COVID testing program is becoming overburdened in dealing with the large number of COVID cases in the schools. In consultation with the school nurse, it is being recommended the contact tracing be streamlined, and the test to stay program be modified, said Ms. Johnson. As an example of the situation, Ms. Johnson reported there were 70 kids testing at just one school that morning. It was then hard to get them into the class on time. She said she would be meeting again with the school nurse the following day to figure out how to fine tune these programs. meeting with health aides and the nurse.

School nurse Kimm Schwartz was asked by Ms. Johnson to speak regarding the COVID testing manpower issue, and school staff struggling to keep up. Ms. Schwarz did so, and commented on the dedication of the school staff who have been in contact tracing, saying the desire was to keep kids in school and keep everyone safe.

Several Board members asked questions and commented, including how to share the burden of contact tracing with the community. Mr. Robbins Jr. also commented on the risk levels for schools which were included in the Superintendent's written report.

#### Business Manager's Report - FY 23 revenue projections and budget/fiscal assumptions.

Business Manager Katie Parrott described the components of the district's funding, commented on the outlook for the FY 23 revenue and listed administrative recommendations for the upcoming fiscal year. She reminded the Board that state funding accounts for about 75 % of the district's total operating revenue, with the district's enrollment as the primary determinant. It is projected that enrollment will continue to be down from pre-pandemic, said Ms. Parrott. A hold harmless clause in the state's foundation formula will lessen the impact of that decrease in enrollment-based funding; but FY 23 will be the last year of that buffer for the district and it will be at a stepped down amount, she said. It is also being assumed that there will be no increase in the base student allocation (a component of the state foundation formula); although Ms. Parrott cited some legislation that has been filed regarding an increase to the BSA. Business Manager Parrott also spoke about local funding. She stated that it is likely that in FY '24 a super majority vote of the Assembly will be needed to meet the district's funding request.

Aggressively addressing the health insurance reserve's deficit is a primary fiscal focus that Ms. Parrott spoke to. The deficit is projected to be \$2 million for the end of FY 22. Administration's other budget recommendations are: to start up the Finance Committee of the Board; to continue to scrutinize district programs for any streamlining possibilities; to begin phasing out COVID-relief funded items (the funds will be completely expended by FY 23); to start pursuing new funding streams; and to implement Legislative advocacy regarding education funding, said Ms. Parrott.

There were some questions and comments from the Board. Ms. Gubatayao suggested having a joint session with the borough assembly regarding funding. President Bradford said it was appropriate for that request to be made through the Liaison committee.

**CONSENT CALENDAR of January 26, 2022.**

*a. Motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of January 12, 2022.*

*b. Motion to approve Resolution 22-01 regarding support for staff who are survivors of domestic violence, sexual violence or stalking.*

**Motion to approve the Consent Calendar of January 26, 2022.**

Moved by: SANDERSON; Second by: TABB

**MOTION APPROVED WITHOUT OBJECTION**

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Motion to approve the MOA with Ketchikan Gateway Borough regarding the Funding and Management of various projects at Schoenbar Middle School, Valley Park complex, and the Ketchikan High School for FY 2022, as presented.**

Moved by: GUBATAYAO; Second by: SANDERSON

Discussion

Interim Superintendent Johnson elaborated a bit on several of the projects listed in the MOA, in response to Mr. Robbins' concerns that some seemed to have inflated cost estimates. Those projects included: a security access door at Tongass School of Arts and Sciences; painting of a side of the Schoenbar Middle school building; and addressing drainage issues at Schoenbar in an attempt to resolve warping problems with the gym floor.

Board Member Gubatayao expressed appreciation to the Borough for its support of these projects.

Ms. Johnson stated compliments to the Borough's Amy Briggs for her work on the projects and agreement.

**ROLL CALL**

***Student Member Braxton Zink (preferential vote) - AYE***

**ROBBINS JR., TABB, SANDERSON, ANDERSON, GUBATAYAO, MATTSON, BRADFORD - ALL AYES**

**MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Motion to approve a supplemental contribution to the district's Health Insurance Reserve Fund in the amount of \$150,147.**

Moved by: ROBBINS JR.; Second by: TABB

Discussion

President Bradford noted that Business Manager Parrott had spoken to the need for this action earlier in the meeting in her report.

**ROLL CALL**

***Student Member Braxton Zink (preferential vote) - AYE***

**ANDERSON, GUBATAYAO TABB, MATTSON, SANDERSON, ROBBINS, BRADFORD - ALL AYES**

**MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**EXECUTIVE SESSION - Negotiations with TSLO**

**Motion to move into executive session to discuss labor negotiations with the Technology Staff Labor Organization, a matter the immediate knowledge of which would clearly have an adverse effect upon the finances of the school district, as provided for by Board Bylaw 9321 and AS 44.62.310.**

Moved by: MATTSON; Second by: TABB

**ROLL CALL**

**ROBBINS, ANDERSON, GUBATAYAO, SANDERSON, TABB, MATTSON, BRADFORD - ALL AYES**

***MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY***

The Executive Session began at 7:29 p.m. The session ended at 7:46 p.m. and the Board re-entered its regular session.

**DISCUSSION**

*School Funding* - Ms. Gubatayao explained why she'd asked for this discussion item. Discussion included a need to lobby regarding state education funding; submitting a resolution to the Legislature regarding state funding, inviting a legislator to speak to the board. As a result of the discussion, Mr. Bradford asked for board member volunteers to work on a resolution and plan for advocacy. Board Members Mattson, Gubatayao and Sanderson volunteered, as did student member Zink.

*Drug abuse/overdose issues* - Ms. Gubatayao mentioned an article in the local newspaper regarding a fentanyl death of a young student in the lower '48. She suggested Narcan kits be placed in schools. Ms. Mattson made a statement about the dangers of illicit drugs, exacerbated by not knowing what they may contain, such as fentanyl. Other Board members commented on various aspects of the issue.

**BOARD COMMENTS**

Mr. Robbins Jr. asked for a future discussion on school COVID risk level thresholds.

Student Member Zink again announced the details of the senior auction, and wished good luck to the Ocean Science bowl team and its coach Mr. Sanderson.

Mr. Sanderson said he is thankful to be part of the Board. He also said people could watch the Ocean Science team compete on Facebook live the following Friday.

Ms. Mattson stated her thanks to staff, teachers and parents who are working hard to keep students in school. She also said she was excited for the Ocean Sciences bowl, basketball and other activities which are keeping students active, and are supported by the community.

President Bradford commented on the superintendent search process and the request from Ketchikan Daily News for information on the applicants for the superintendent position. He said that once the finalists are determined, he intends to release their names and as much details about them as possible.

Ms. Gubatayao read an essay written by a teacher that was published in Education Week.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no objection to a motion to adjourn, the meeting was adjourned at 8:26 p.m.

*Minutes approved as presented at the February 9, 2022 regular meeting of the Board of Education.*

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BOARD PRESIDENT  
Stephen Bradford