

KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
AGENDA STATEMENT

No. 9a

MEETING OF July 17, 2024

Item Title: UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Request from the Assembly for Recommendation on whether the Schoenbar Middle School and the Ketchikan High School should be renamed.

SUBMITTED BY Stephen Bradford, Board President

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

At its meeting on June 17, 2024 the Assembly discussed a request to initiate the Borough Facilities Naming Committee to consider renaming the Schoenbar Middle School and to name the Ketchikan High School building. The Assembly voted to refer the matter to the School Board to request the Board's recommendation on whether the schools should be renamed.

ISSUE/BACKGROUND:

At its February 26, 2024 meeting the Assembly considered a request to convene the Borough Facilities Naming Committee for the purpose of considering the re-naming of Schoenbar Middle School and to name the Ketchikan High School building. After discussion at that meeting, the Assembly referred the request to staff to conduct research and report back on the history of the facilities and associated costs, potential issues, and options with renaming.

The matter was again considered by the Assembly at its June 17, 2024 meeting, and after a report from staff and discussion, the Assembly voted to refer the matter to the School Board to request the Board's recommendation on whether the schools should be renamed.

ATTACHMENTS:

Memorandum from the Borough Clerk to the Assembly for the Assembly's June 17, 2024 meeting.

POSSIBLE ACTION:

The Board can consider the following as possible actions in response to the request from the Assembly:

1. The Board could recommend that Schoenbar Middle School be renamed and, if desired, could provide its preference for a name.
2. The Board could recommend that Ketchikan High School be renamed and, if desired, could provide its preference for a name.
3. The Board could recommend that the buildings housing the schools be named and, if desired, could provide its preference for building names.
4. The Board could recommend that the Facilities Naming Committee be initiated and convened without making any recommendation as to a specific name until the community has provided input.
5. The Board could recommend that there be no changes to the current names of one or both schools.



# KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH

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OFFICE OF THE BOROUGH CLERK

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor Dial and Assembly Members

**FROM:** Kacie Paxton, Borough Clerk

**SUBJECT:** Request to convene Borough Facilities Naming Committee to rename Schoenbar Middle School and the Ketchikan High School building

**DATE:** 6/5/2024

### Recommendation

After researching the history of the facilities and associated costs, potential issues, and options with renaming the Schoenbar Middle School and naming the Ketchikan High School building, I recommend that the Assembly refer the matter to the School Board to request its recommendation on whether the Schoenbar Middle School and the Ketchikan High School building should be renamed. Upon receipt of the School Board recommendation, the Assembly could then consider standing up the Borough Facilities Naming Committee.

### Initial Request

At the February 26, 2024, Assembly meeting, the Assembly considered a request to convene the Borough Facilities Naming Committee for the purpose of considering the re-naming of Schoenbar Middle School and to name the Ketchikan High School building. After discussion, the Assembly referred the Request to Initiate the Facilities Naming Committee to staff to conduct research and report back on the history of the facilities and associated costs, potential issues, and options with renaming.

### Staff Research Process

On March 21, 2024, I met with the School District Superintendent to discuss the request. To follow is a summary of that discussion:

- Borough and District staff to research the history of the establishment and naming of all District schools.
- Borough and District staff to look into the costs of changing names of school logos, gym floors, and the cost of signage on a school building or adding a

- District and School staff prefer not to make recommendations on school naming, and instead leave it to the governing bodies and Facilities Naming Committee. • Superintendent to seek input from School Board President on whether the School Board should weigh in on recommendations for naming schools. If so, the Clerk would recommend to the Assembly to refer the request to the School Board for a recommendation prior to the Assembly considering standing up the Naming Committee.

### **History of Current School Facility Names:**

**Ketchikan High School:** Opened in 1913 and was always called Ketchikan High School. Many locals referred to the building as Main School after that building was built in 1926 and the high school moved into it. When the high school moved to the West End, Main School became an elementary school until it was closed and replaced by Valley Park.

**Houghtaling Elementary School:** Opened in 1961 and named after E.B. “Bert” Houghtaling who owned and operated Log Cabin Grocery. He was a 25-year school board member who had advocated for building a new elementary school with the advent of the Pulp Mill.

**Schoenbar Middle School:** Originally built in 1965 and named after John Schoenbar who was a local mine operator and businessman. It was built because the elementary schools which housed the seventh grade, and the high school which housed the eighth grade needed more room. The science wing was added in 1985. The building was remodeled (twice) in the mid-2000’s.

**Valley Park Elementary School:** Opened in 1973 and named for its geographic location. In 2002 the Ketchikan Charter School (KCS) moved in to occupy a portion of the building. In 2003 the Valley Park Elementary School closed as a school, and the Tongass School of Arts and Sciences (TSAS) moved in. KCA and TSAS continue to be housed in the Valley Park School building.

**Point Higgins Elementary School:** Opened in 1986 and named for its geographic location.

**Fawn Mountain Elementary School\*:** Opened in 2006 and named for its

geographic location at the recommendation of the Borough Facilities Naming Committee.

*\*Fawn Mountain Elementary replaced the White Cliff School which was closed in 2004 as a school and now houses Borough, School District, State, and Federal offices.*

**Revilla High School:** Original school space was rented beginning in 1973, and was named for its geographic location. Following a Legislative grant for a capital project, construction for the new school building began in 1983.

### Cost of Signage, Logos, Etc.

To follow is an estimate of the cost of signage related to school naming:

Item	Cost
Bronze Lettering for School Name	\$2,500
Large freestanding school sign	\$10,000-15,000
Bronze Dedication Plaque for Building or Room	\$1,000
Painted logo on gymnasium floor (includes stripping and resurfacing)	\$12,000 - \$16,000
School uniform printing	Incidental, and phased in
Printing of miscellaneous school supplies and materials	Incidental, and phased in

### Costs Related to School Name Changes in Juneau and Sitka

On March 6, 2024, the Sitka School Board changed the name of the Baranof Elementary School to “Xóots Elementary School.” According to Sitka School District staff, there is not yet an estimate for the costs related to the name change.

In 2019, the name of the Juneau-Douglas High School was changed to “Juneau-Douglas Yadaa.at Kale High School.” And in 2022 the Riverbend Elementary School was changed to “Kax<sup>dig</sup>oowu Héen Elementary School.”

According to Juneau School District staff, when the new names were adopted, it was with the understanding that building signage would be updated if maintenance work

was being done that required its replacement or outside funds were identified for the project. Coeur Alaska recently donated funds (\$15,000) to create outdoor signage at Ka<sub>x</sub><sup>dig</sup> <sub>oowu</sub> Héen Elementary School, formerly Riverbend Elementary, to showcase the new Tlingit name.

### **Options for Naming or Renaming Facilities, Buildings, or Rooms in Buildings**

There are many options for naming Borough facilities and the rooms and outbuildings associated with those facilities. To follow is a list of school-related facilities that can be named through the Borough Facilities Naming Committee process:

Page | 4

- Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District (KGBSD) school;
- Borough building housing a KGBSD school;
- Room in a school facility, such as the commons, auditorium, or gymnasium;
- Wing in a school facility, such as the art, music, or science wing;
- Park or greenspace at a school facility;
- Track or field at a school facility;
- Playground at a school facility;
- Borough or District-owned boat;
- Concession building, gear storage shed, scorekeeper shack at a Borough field.

### **Process for Naming Borough Facilities**

KGBC Chapter 12.05 establishes the procedures for naming Borough buildings, facilities, and public places. The procedures also allow for the changing of names of facilities that have been previously named. The procedures outline the process for the Borough Facilities Naming Committee, which include:

1. Initiation of the process for the naming of the facility or facilities by the Mayor or Assembly.
2. A five member citizen committee is appointed by the Mayor and approved by the Assembly.
3. The committee solicits proposed names for the facilities, reviews the proposed names, holds public hearings, and identifies an appropriate name for the facility or facilities.
4. The committee makes recommendation to the Assembly for naming the facility or facilities.
5. The Assembly will hold at least one public hearing on the recommended name,

and will consider the recommended name in the form of a resolution as recommended by the committee.

Additional details regarding the naming of Borough facilities are available via the online Borough Code of Ordinances at [KGBC Ch 12.05](#).