

**KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**REGULAR meeting of  
Wednesday, September 22, 2021  
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 22nd day of September 2021, in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly Chambers. 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; Board Vice President Diane Gubatayao; Board Clerk-Treasurer Bridget Mattson; and Board Members Jordan Tabb; Nicole Anderson; and Douglas Gregg. Board Member Paul Robbins Jr. was absent and excused. Student Board Member Braxton Zink was also present.

Administrative staff present included Interim Superintendent Melissa Johnson; Curriculum Director Alonso Escalante; and Board Clerk Kerry Watson.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion to approve the agenda for the regular meeting of September 22, 2021.**

Moved by: MATTSON; Second by: GUBATAYAO

**ROLL CALL**

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

**ANDERSON, TABB, GUBATAYAO, MATTSON, GREGG, HODNE - ALL AYES**

***MOTION PASSED***

**PUBLIC RECOGNITION**

Board Member Douglas Gregg commented on Matt Hamilton's painting commemorating the 1929 court case brought by Nettie Jones, noting Matt was a former Kayhi student. Mr. Gregg also commented that the Paul Building in Ketchikan is named after the attorney in that case, William Paul. Board President Kim Hodne followed up by briefly commenting on the documentary regarding the Jones' desegregation effort, produced by students at Schoenbar Middle School.

Board Member Diane Gubatayao said she knew one of the individuals who had been a student represented in the case.

**CITIZEN REMARKS**

Kristina Townsend relayed her concern with the chemicals being used for disinfecting in the schools, citing possible issues with people's lungs, skin, and with long-term exposure. She requested the district look at its safety protocols for the disinfecting of schools. Ms. Townsend also offered to assist in educating people on this topic.

Angela Putrino, parent of two children in the district, voiced her concern with requiring masks in physical education classes. She described how the Borough Parks and Recreation had conducted programs at the Gateway Recreation Center with different measures, and asked that those policies be followed instead.

Kevin Johnson commented in appreciation of several district programs and departments, noting he is a high school parent, a Kayhi physical education teacher and the volleyball coach. He recognized the district maintenance department for its work on new standards for volleyball; and stated appreciation for being able to have spectators at the recent volleyball matches; and for students being able to attend school in person.

Kayla Livingston, principal of Ketchikan Charter School, spoke about a staffing deficit at her school and described the daily shuffling which was necessary to cover positions. She spoke about the importance of substitutes and paraprofessionals and said creative incentives were needed to attract people to those jobs.

Parent Angela Blandov said she'd been told about an Alaska Native elementary student being assaulted recently at school. She asked the Board to look into the situation. She asked for more cultural awareness in the district and for employment of more Alaska Native educators.

### **INFORMATION AND REPORTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

Board Clerk Treasurer Bridget Mattson reported on the Fall Boardsmanship Academy she'd recently attended provided by the Association of Alaska School Boards. Some of the topics and issues covered included: superintendent/board relationships; superintendent evaluations; family engagement; and mental health supports.

Board Member Nicole Anderson reported that the Start Strong Committee meeting the previous day had focused on several concerns, including the district risk level being dictated by community versus the schools; and masks in physical education. School nurse Kimm Schwartz and public health nurse Arizona Jacobs provided data on actual COVID positive cases within the school district, she said.

Board Member Jordan Tabb briefly reported on the policy committee's review of several policies, including one on that evening's agenda. Ms. Gubatayao said a policy to address stalking at the workplace was still being worked on.

### **CLAIMS FOR INFORMATION** - *Claims of September 17, 2021.*

Board Member Douglas Gregg noted that several scholarship disbursements to universities were listed in the claims, and stated his congratulations to the student recipients.

### **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

*Student Member's Report:* Student Board Member Braxton Zink said the Student Body Association had met with Kayhi Principal Jason House regarding events the group could hold with COVID mitigation plans in place. He reported that the volleyball team traveled to Anchorage; the debate team to Metlakatla; and the swim team to Petersburg. Each group followed the hosting town's mitigation protocols, such as the requirement to be vaccinated, in the case of Metlakatla. Braxton also responded to a few questions.

#### *Superintendent's Report*

Interim Superintendent Melissa Johnson first reported on the September 10 celebration, mentioned during "Public Recognition." The date marked the 92nd anniversary of the suit brought by Irene Jones against the Ketchikan school district, fighting for the right of her daughter Nettie to attend public school, said Ms. Johnson. District cultural coordinator Teresa Varnell and the Ketchikan Native Education Parent Committee organized a showing of the documentary about the Jones' case created last year by Schoenbar teacher Chad Frey and students.

She reported that allowing limited spectators at the high level had been tested out at the most recent volleyball match; then commented on the Start Strong committee meeting the previous day. The group's consensus regarding mask wearing in physical education was to retain the requirement until another mitigation measure - vaccination or testing- could be strengthened. Ms. Johnson also added that interviews for a COVID testing coordinator were occurring that week.

Ms. Johnson reported that cumulatively 62 positive COVID cases of either staff or students had occurred since school started. She also noted that some parts of the Start Strong mitigation plan have been updated, such as addressing mitigation measures for use of the Kayhi auditorium by outside groups.

### Curriculum Director

Curriculum Director Alonso Escalante was asked to report on student assessments. Mr. Escalante first reported that the calendar committee is inviting feedback on the 2022-2023 proposed school year calendar. The feedback and proposed calendar will be presented to the Board for review at its October 13 Board meeting.

In reporting on standardized assessments, Mr. Escalante noted that the PEAKS state assessment was conducted last spring, after being cancelled in the previous year due to COVID school closures. With overall participation down, the state has cautioned against districts using the scores to make any major educational decisions, he said. Mr. Escalante said that historically KGBSD has outscored the state average on assessments, and it has done so again. Ketchikan students who scored proficient or above numbered 43.8 % versus the state average of 39.6 percent, he stated. This year, the state is moving to MAP Growth for the summative assessment, and that program is already used as the district's benchmark assessment, said Mr. Escalante.

Lastly, he briefly reported that the world language curriculum committee has determined it will use curriculum funds to supplement its program and integrate with other subject areas. An example might be the French class collaborating with the culinary arts class on French cooking and French cooking terms, he said.

There were some questions and comments from the Board on MAPS assessment and also regarding the school calendar.

**\*\*PUBLIC HEARING - POLICY\*\*** - Procedure (1) Citizens may give public comment regarding the subject of the hearing; (2) the public hearing is closed; (3) opportunity for Board discussion and decision.

### **Motion to revise Board Policy 6155- Challenging Courses by Examination in second reading.**

Moved by: TABB; Second by: GUBATAYAO

#### Public Hearing

No members of the public commented.

#### Board Discussion

Mr. Tabb noted the proposed change is from a "may" to "shall" in regards to establishing procedures for challenging courses; although those procedures were already in place.

### **ROLL CALL**

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

**MATTSON, TABB, GREGG, ANDERSON, GUBATAYAO, HODNE – ALL AYES**

### ***MOTION PASSED***

### **Proposed policy regarding relations between tribal governments and the school district**

After discussion regarding some of its wording, the Board agreed to send the newly proposed policy titled "Relations between Sovereign Nations and the Schools" back to the Policy Committee.

### **CONSENT CALENDAR**

**Motion to approve the Consent Calendar of September 22, 2021** (consisting of the following):

a. Motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of September 8, 2021.

b. ~~Motion to approve the offer of a teaching contract to Martha Bullock as a school counselor for the 2021-2022 school year (HTE).~~ (Pulled off Consent for consideration under Unfinished Business.)

Moved by: MATTSON; Second by: GUBATAYAO

### **ROLL CALL**

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

**GUBATAYAO, ANDERSON, TABB, GREGG, MATTSON, HODNE - AYES**

### ***MOTION PASSED***

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

### **Motion to approve a contract with Martha Bullock as a school counselor for the 2021-2022 school year at KGBSD in the amount of \$71,776.82**

Moved by: GUBATAYAO; Second by: ANDERSON

#### **Discussion**

Ms. Gubatayao said she'd asked to pull this item from the Consent Calendar so she could comment on Ms. Bullock being a former local student.

Superintendent Johnson provided some information on emergency certification in response to a question from Board member Tabb. This type of certification was referenced on the background information.

#### **ROLL CALL**

***Student Member Braxton Zink (preferential vote) - AYE***  
**GUBATAYAO, ANDERSON, TABB, GREGG, MATTSON, HODNE - AYES**

***MOTION PASSED***

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Motion to approve a lease to purchase and financing agreement with TechPower Solutions, Inc. in the amount of \$48,089.35 annually, as presented.**

Moved by: GUBATAYAO; Second by: ANDERSON

#### **Discussion**

Mr. Gregg commented that additional information on this agreement provided by the Business Manager was helpful, since she was unable to be present at the Board meeting.

Superintendent Johnson stated the purchase was being supplied out of COVID relief funds as increased needs for WiFi had put additional stress on servers. She also responded to why the servers were being leased instead of purchased outright.

#### **ROLL CALL**

***Student Member Braxton Zink (preferential vote) - AYE***  
**ANDERSON, MATTSON, TABB, GUBATAYAO, GREGG, HODNE - AYES**

***MOTION PASSED***

## **DISCUSSION**

***AASB attendance -November annual conference:*** Ms. Gubatayao sought Board concurrence to use Board travel funds for her attendance at the Association of Alaska School Boards annual conference, as she is a candidate for its board of directors.

## **BOARD COMMENTS**

Board Member Nicole Anderson commented on her daughter's experience as part of the group making the documentary regarding Irene and Nettie Jones. She also remarked on the Kings for Peace event, on the maintenance staff; and having an audience for the volleyball match.

Ms. Gubatayao also commented on Kings for Peace. She then said she will study what other districts are doing to keep students in school, and remarked that the Strong Start plan could be tweaked. She thanked students who wrote personal letters to the Board.

Mr. Gregg said the community has a part in helping to keep students in school. Anyone who thinks they've been exposed to COVID should get tested, he said. If community COVID numbers come down, school operation will reflect that, he said.

Mr. Tabb described how his family had been impacted by being quarantined, due to his kids being infected with COVID, probably at school. He stressed that the schools are operating at a high risk level due to the high COVID level in the community; and stated that the current mitigation measures, such as wearing masks in physical education, were appropriate.

Ms. Mattson stated individual Board members should not request information from staff, rather a request should come from the full Board. She also commented that AASB can come in person to Ketchikan to provide Board member training. Board Member Mattson also remarked on the mitigation measure of wearing masks, the current situation with COVID and hospitals being overloaded. She asked the community to rally together to keep kids in schools.

Mr. Hodne said everyone needs to work together and that people should stay home if they are sick. He also commented on the necessity of paraprofessionals to the district; and stated his appreciation for his fellow Boardmembers.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

A motion was made and seconded for adjournment. Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at 7:42 p.m.