

KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION

AGENDA STATEMENT

No 11b

MEETING of: June 25, 2025

Item Title

CONSENT CALENDAR

Approval of the special meeting minutes of April 12, 2025

SUBMITTED BY: Chloe Hall, School Board Clerk

*** NOTE:**

If amendments or corrections to the minutes are desired, a Board member should request removal of the minutes from the Consent Calendar.

The minutes would then be acted upon under Unfinished Business. Appropriate motions to correct or amend the minutes would be in order.

KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
Special Meeting
April 12, 2025
Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly Chambers

CALL TO ORDER; PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE; ROLL CALL

The Ketchikan Gateway Borough Board of Education met in a regular session on the 12th day of April 2025, in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly Chambers. Board Vice President Jordan Tabb 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:

Vice President Jordan Tabb, Members Judy Leask Guthrie and Ali Ginter.

President Katherine Tatsuda and Clerk-Treasurer Tom Heutte appeared via Zoom.

Administrative staff present included Business Manager Daniel Schuler and School Board Clerk Chloe Hall.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

M/S: Guthrie/Ginter

ROLL CALL:

YES - Guthrie, Tabb, Ginter, Heutte, Tatsuda

The agenda was approved as presented.

CITIZEN REMARKS

Frankie Urqhart, teacher at Kayhi, spoke in support of the multi-age classroom plan as a cost-effective and educational solution. Urqhart proposed implementing the multi-age plan through existing professional development opportunities, avoiding costly school restructuring.

Cameo McRoberts, a parent, advocates for the importance of career and technical education (CTE) and arts programs in schools. McRoberts shares her thoughts that these programs are not extras but essential for student engagement, graduation rates, and future success, especially in industries like tourism and healthcare. McRoberts highlights the need for a balanced approach, emphasizing the value of electives alongside advanced academic offerings.

Lindsay Tucker, a speech language pathologist in the district, emphasizes the need to prioritize paraprofessionals and support staff to ensure effective service delivery and maintain neighborhood schools.

Matthew Boyd, a fourth-grade teacher and parent, spoke in opposition of the specialization model for its potential negative impact on students' social-emotional needs and the lack of support for paraprofessionals. Boyd advocates for the multi-age model.

Addie Roth, principal at Fawn Mountain, spoke on behalf of 15 certified elementary educators with over 200 years of combined experience expressed concerns about the implementation of the multiage model. They highlighted challenges such as meeting state reading requirements, addressing developmental differences, managing complex curricula, and potential behavioral issues. The educators urge the school board to consider these concerns and engage in further consultation before continuing the multi-age model.

Shari Montgomery, parent, urged the school board to revoke the restructuring plan, as it would prevent her two sons from attending the same school. She emphasizes the importance of keeping families together and highlighted the negative impact of the plan on students and families.

Todd Henke, an educator with experience as a principal, administrator, and teacher, supports the restructuring model voted on in January. Henke believes this model aligns best with the school board's strategic plan, prioritizing academic, CTE, and social-emotional learning goals.

Misty Hancock, a special education teacher, urged the board to make a decision and stick with it. Hancock highlights the impact of losing support staff, including paraprofessionals and a vice principal, on her ability to effectively teach and support students with special needs.

Becca Doyle, spoke on behalf of a group of 21 staff members with 392 years of combined experience, who oppose the proposed multi-age plan, sharing it will result in split-grade classes rather than multi-age classes. The group believes the plan will negatively impact students and staff. The group feels the specialization plan is a more equitable and cost-effective solution.

Jared Garlic, vice principal at Kayhi, emphasized the challenges of creating schedules for next year due to uncertainty. Garlic highlighted the impact of cutting teachers, particularly specialists, as it often leads to program cuts and difficulty in recruiting replacements.

Andrea Marthinsen, a parent and physical therapist, emphasized the need for significant changes in the district to prioritize student education. Marthinsen highlights the challenges of implementing multi-age classrooms, citing concerns from teachers and administrators about lack of time, budget, and leadership. Mathinsen urged the board to consider the impact on students, academics, and staff, and to prioritize a plan that minimizes disruption to the community structure.

Spring Barry, emphasized the need for unity and transparency during a volatile time of change in the school district. Barry expressed concern about the emotional impact of student relocation and advocated for a K-7, 8-12 model, utilizing the high school for eighth graders.

Arbor Barry, a ten year old student, expressed gratitude for the opportunity to speak and acknowledged the bravery of other children sharing their love and care for their school.

Debi Olsen, parent of three Schenbar students, and district employee, urges the board not to weaken the school's structure by reducing staff and programs. Olsen emphasized the importance of specialization in meeting the needs of students with educational disabilities, highlighting the increasing number of students requiring individualized plans. Eliminating staff and programs would strain the general education setting and result in more referrals in the future.

Wendy McLaren, teacher at Point Higgins, shared her experience teaching split-grade, multi-age classes for four years. Despite the challenges, the approach allowed teachers to differentiate instruction and avoid busing students, creating a better learning environment.

Dave Timmerman, citizen, believes the Superintendent's absence from the meeting hinders the board's ability to make informed decisions.

Caitlyn Jacobson, teacher at Kayhi, expressed concern about the state of CTE classes and the dilution of library

services due to staffing shortages, emphasizing the need to provide a high-quality education for all students.

Mary Miller, teacher at Kayhi, highlighted the significant loss of CTE teachers over the past years, and emphasized the importance of considering CTE funding,

Dollee Robinson, parent, spoke in support of school specialization. Robinson believes consolidating K-3 schools would improve RTI services and prevent further cuts to secondary education. Robinson acknowledges the challenges of busing and school closures but emphasized the adaptability of the community and the importance of maintaining CTE programs for workforce development.

Joy Fowler, mother of a Houghtaling student, urged the school board to reconsider the school restructure plan. Fowler expressed concern about the impact of the specialization on her daughter and other students, particularly those who have experienced bullying.

Eugenia Smith, teacher at Point Higgins, opposes school specialization, emphasizing the need for unity and healing.

Jillian Polluck, music teacher at Houghtaling Elementary, expressed concerns about the proposed decrease in music teacher positions. She shared her experiences teaching at multiple schools, highlighting the challenges of maintaining relationships with students and the impact on the quality of education. Pollock emphasized the importance of considering these factors when making decisions.

Darby Mainardi, parent, expressed appreciation for the community's engagement and emphasized the importance of considering the impact of the restructuring plan on students. Mainardi urged the board to carefully consider the plan and prioritize the well-being of students.

Kelly Smith, staff member from Kayhi, speaks on the need for a plan to address preventing future budget crises, providing education quality, and maximizing opportunities for students. Smith emphasized the need for the community to come together and prioritize the well-being of its children.

Patricia Krantz, a concerned grandparent, spoke about the safety of kindergarteners and first graders on long bus rides, especially in adverse weather conditions.

Nicole Linn, parent, acknowledges the community's concerns about the restructuring plan and shared appreciation for the board's time. Linn questions the plan's impact on student experience, particularly regarding student attendance and family engagement.

Jace Barry, student at Point Higgins Elementary, shared that he wants to stay at his current elementary school, and wants to keep his sister at school with him.

Jermey Barry, parent, emphasized the importance of school choice, and highlighted the positive impact of having consistent staffing for students.

The Board entered into a recess from 7:35-7:45 P.M.

NEW BUSINESS

Motion to approve the revocation of the elementary school specialization structure and implement the multi-age instruction cost savings model for the 2025-2026 school year.

M/S: Ginter/Tatsuda

DISCUSSION:

The Board discussed the two plans for addressing budget cuts, with a focus on the impact on students and staff. While some board members expressed excitement about opportunities in the specialization plan, concerns were also raised about the potential loss of programming and administrative support.

ROLL CALL:

YES: Ginter

NO: Heutte, Tabb, Guthrie, Tatsuda

(MOTION FAILS 1-4)

BOARD COMMENTS

President Tatsuda shared her gratitude for everyone who has been involved in the process.

Member Ginter shared her condolences with President Tatsuda, following the loss of her father.

ADVANCE PLANNING

School Board regular meeting Wednesday, April 23, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. in the Borough Assembly Chambers

School Board special meeting Wednesday, April 30, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. in the Borough Assembly Chambers

ADJOURNMENT at 8:25 p.m.

BOARD PRESIDENT
Katherine Tatsuda

Board Vice President
Jordan Tabb

Clerk Treasurer
Ali Ginter