

KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
AGENDA STATEMENT

No. 5 b

MEETING OF February 12, 2020

Reviewed By

Item Title:

**APPOINTMENT TO THE VACANT SCHOOL BOARD SEAT**  
Interviews of applicants

SUBMITTED Kerry Watson, Board Clerk

Contact Person/Telephone

APPROVED FOR SUBMITTAL

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

Board Bylaw 9323 calls for interviewing candidates for a vacated seat.

BACKGROUND:

The applicants are (in alphabetical order by last name):

Patrick Von Danskin; Thomas M. Heutte; Dustin Larna; and Anna M. Sherman

EXHIBITS ATTACHED

- Applications from candidates

**APPLICATION FOR SCHOOL BOARD VACANCY**

<b>NAME:</b> Von Danskin	<b>DATE:</b> 2/1/2020
<b>MAILING ADDRESS:</b> 14142 Riddle RD Ketchikan, AK 99901	<b>PHONE and/or EMAIL:</b> 907-617-4752

**1. What is your reason for seeking an interim Board appointment?**

My reason for seeking the interim Board appointment is to provide myself with some firsthand training and experience because I will be running in the next school board election.

**2. What do you hope to accomplish as an interim Board member?**

As an interim Board member, I realize my time will be short but nevertheless I feel that I can provide some valuable insight and stability and a fresh outlook to the issues facing the school board today.

**3. What previous experience have you had serving on Boards?**

My previous experience on Boards consists of a couple years as committee chair for a local cub scout pack. I have served several other functions for scouts consisting of treasurer, assistant cub master, and advancements. I have been a part of hiring panels and have done many one on one interviews with potential job candidates.

**4. What do you consider to be the greatest personal asset you would bring to the Board as an interim member?**

My greatest asset I would bring to the Board would be my willingness to listen to what people have to say and make informed decisions based on their input.

**5. What are the biggest issues you see facing the district?**

The biggest issues I see facing the district are:  
Poor state economy and budget cuts which lead to underfunded classrooms, and higher student to teacher ratios. I see teacher recruitment being more of an issue in the future.  
Child safety in the classroom is an ever-increasing issue. Also bullying is an ongoing issue both physically and mentally.

**6. What suggestion(s) do you have to improve our School District?**

Suggestions I have to improve our school district are we need to find ways to get parents and the community more involved in the lives of the children especially as we see budgets dwindle. Active parent involvement does so much towards a child's ability to excel in the classroom. We will need to find ways to keep teachers happy to keep retention high, but more importantly happy and content employees will always do a better job and be more creative to work with less of a budget.

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SIGNATURE

## Application for School Board Vacancy

Adapted from form E 9223(a)

**Name:** Thomas M Heutte

**Date:** February 4 2020

**Mailing Address:** PO Box 6372 Ketchikan AK 99901

**Phone:** (907) 821-1347

**Email:** [theutte@msn.com](mailto:theutte@msn.com)

1. What is your reason for seeking an interim Board appointment?

I am looking for an opportunity to serve the community that would make good use of my time and talents, as well as a way for me to become more connected with the community. I believe that public schools are the most important institution keeping our increasingly fragmented society working functionally. I believe that a solid broad-based education leads to adults who take their civic duty seriously and act as good citizens. I am not interested in a board membership as a stepping-off point for a political career, my interest comes out of my passion for education and wanting to serve the community in some way.

2. What do you hope to accomplish as an interim Board member?

I hope to help foster a positive atmosphere where the community, parents, the board, administrators, faculty and staff are working as a team to move our schools forward and provide a strong education for our children.

3. What previous experience have you had serving on Boards?

- 2008- 2009 At-large board member of Ketchikan Charter School
- 2008, 2015 At-large board member, Alaska Committee on Noxious and Invasive Pest Management
- 2012-2013 Secretary (note taker), Harborview Elementary School Site Council, Juneau AK
- 2013-2014 At-large board member, Juneau Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
- 2014 At-large member, Dzantik'i Heeni Middle School Site Council, Juneau AK
- 2015-2016 Chair, Dzantik'i Heeni Middle School Site Council, Juneau AK
- 2015 Treasurer, Juneau Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
- 2016 Vice President, Juneau Unitarian Universalist Fellowship
- 2019 Interim member, Ketchikan Gateway District Board of Education

4. What do you consider to be the greatest personal asset you would bring to the Board as an interim member?

Problem-solving skills that overcome bureaucratic obstacles. This is based on an ability to quickly learn about new problems and issues, size-up the situation, then developing solutions as information about an issue comes in.


5. What are the biggest issues you see the District facing?

- Dealing with the fallout from cases of child sexual abuse by a faculty member
- Ongoing deliberations with KEA contract
- Leadership changes in the school district
- Turnover on the school board itself
- Children from homes where good parents are struggling with economic and social hardships to keep their children learning and in school
- Children from homes where they do not get their basic needs met and are neglected or abused.
- Thin state budgets leading to more and more deferred maintenance

6. What suggestion do you have to improve our School District?

Ensure that all persons involved in the public educational system- including the Superintendent, school board members, administrators, faculty, paraprofessionals and staff are accountable to taxpayers. A key part of this accountability is to work together as a team district-wide and across boundaries, so the groups named above are not pointing fingers at each other but working together as a team to solve problems.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

 2/4/2020



