

**KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION
REGULAR meeting of
Wednesday, April 13, 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 13th day of April, 2022, in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly Chambers. Board Vice President Keenan Sanderson, as presiding officer, 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 Vice President Keenan Sanderson; Board Clerk-Treasurer Bridget Mattson; and Board Members Paul Robbins Jr.; Jordan Tabb and Nicole Anderson. Student Board Member Braxton Zink was also present for the meeting.

Board President Stephen Bradford and Board Member Diane Gubatayao were absent and excused.

Administrative staff present included Interim Superintendent Melissa Johnson; Business Manager Katie Parrott; Ketchikan High School Principal Jason House and Vice Principal Cole Maxwell; and Board Clerk Kerry Watson.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.

PUBLIC RECOGNITION

No public recognition was given.

CITIZEN REMARKS

MJ Cadle congratulated Melissa Johnson on her position as Interim Superintendent. Ms. Cadle told the Board that April is the “Month of the Military Child.” She described how being a military child had affected her, and suggested military children be recognized. She also shared a concern with a school decision regarding her daughter.

Justin Breese, father of two students in the district, spoke about a poster listing tribal values which he said was posted at both his children’s schools. He objected to the posting of these values in the schools, stating that some were religious in nature and such posting was potentially against the law. He particularly noted one value which was “reverence for our creator.” Mr. Breese said that when he brought his concern to the district administration, he had been provided a district form for filing concerns about instructional materials. He questioned whether the tribal values were used instructionally.

Becky King, teacher at Ketchikan Charter School, and mother of two children in the school district also spoke about the tribal values list. She said the district is using the values as part of its PBIS program (Positive Behavior Intervention System), with rewards available to children who model the values. She explained why this is an issue. Ms. King also said that the values of one culture should not be held up as a model above those of others.

INFORMATION AND REPORTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

There were no reports.

CLAIMS FOR INFORMATION - For Information - Claims of April 1, 2022.

There were no questions.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent's Report:

Interim Superintendent Melissa Johnson gave a "shout out" to the Kayhi Lady Kings basketball team for winning third in state and also earning the sportsmanship award. She also congratulated the cheerleading squad for its ranking. She reported that interviews with the high school principal candidates were occurring that Friday, with a stakeholder event with the candidates that same evening.

Student Member's Report:

Student Member Braxton Zink first followed up on the Superintendent's Report by reporting that students would have an opportunity to meet and ask questions of the principal candidates. For current extracurricular activities, he commented on the recent travel of the baseball team to Florida and the softball team to South Carolina as providing an opportunity for the players to improve on their skills. He also mentioned a music festival occurring in Juneau; a job fair occurring for students that week; and that the Senior Prom would be Saturday, April 23.

Revilla School Report

Stating he feels he has the best job in the district, Revilla Alternative School Principal Kurt Lindemann, principal of Revilla, added he also has the best staff and the best students. He introduced two Revilla students to speak about the school, saying that what the students think about their school is what is crucial in a school report.

Revilla Senior Douglas Commack said the school has made a significant impact on his life. He appreciated the school's flexible schedule and being able to work at his own pace. Douglas said that, because of Revilla, he is ready to step into the adult world. Fellow senior Raven Graff spoke about the strong connections she has with the school's staff and described them as deeply caring. She cited her appreciation for the Revilla teachers working one on one with students. Staff also do activities with students and give advice, she said.

The students and principal Lindemann answered several questions from the Board.

Ketchikan High School

Ketchikan High School's report was next. The school currently has a student population of 510 students, almost evenly split between its four grades, and 76 staff members. Principal Jason House noted the attendance rate of 84.61% has been an issue, just as it has been for other schools in the district. He commented briefly on the new statewide assessment at the school, the school's formative MAP testing, and an IXL program which can generate areas of focus for individual students based on their MAP scores.

Then he turned to the recent accreditation process for the school, noting this process occurs every 5 years. Due to COVID circumstances, this year's process was conducted remotely and digitally with lots of Zoom meetings, he said. He briefly summarized the complex rubric the accreditation team used for the process, looking at the broad areas of leadership, resources, and learning, with each of those broken down into various elements which are scored. The status of the school's accreditation won't be known until the accreditation team meets later this month. However, feedback indicates the school will be fully accredited, said Mr. House.

Principal House spoke further about areas of strengths and areas of potential improvement which were noted as part of the accreditation process. One of the successes was that students reported good connections with staff. Mr. House pointed out this was impressive coming out of the COVID-impacted years.

He then spoke about characteristics of Kayhi, which he listed as: strong partnerships; multiple pathways to learning; competition academics and athletics; student interest groups; and meaningful connections between staff and students. He elaborated on those areas. Mr. House commented on the new outside announcement sign which was funded by Suzi and Joe Williams.

Cole Maxwell, assistant principal spoke about the multiple pathways to learning for students, including tribal scholars, digital learning through Edgenuity and UAS partnerships. He also spoke about student activities, and noted that Kayhi is hosting several regional tournaments this year, with the first being the basketball regions which occurred earlier this year. He also spoke about the variety of course offerings available to Kayhi students. New classes this year included theater; and there is student interest next year in child development and aviation courses.

The class of 2022 is looking forward to closing out its year in a more traditional fashion with a prom, senior scholarship assembly and in-person graduation on May 29, said Mr. Maxwell.

Mr. House stated his appreciation to the Board and to the community for being able to lead Ketchikan High School over the past 3 years. He said he also feels fortunate to continue to work in the community by serving in a new capacity at Schoenbar Middle School.

The Board took a break at the conclusion of the school reports from 6:57 p.m. to 7:03 p.m. before resuming the meeting.

****PUBLIC HEARING - BUDGET**

Motion to approve the draft FY23 Operating Fund Budget, in the amount of \$42,629,026 in first reading

Moved by: ROBBINS JR.; Second by: MATTSON

Staff Report

Business Manager Katie Parrott first gave a presentation on the line items in the proposed FY 23 budget, as well as changes from the current year's budget. The FY '23 proposed operating fund budget is a 2.6% increase over the current year's budget, she said. During her presentation, she explained that the FY '23 proposed budget:

- maintains pre-pandemic positions, and assumes that all FTEs (full-time equivalents) would be filled;
- prioritizes instruction, academic achievement and addresses learning loss (strong push for this in the community budget survey)
- incorporates existing contractual increases;
- incorporates restricted fixed cost increases (such as utilities);
- uses remaining COVID-relief funds based on feedback from the Board's finance committee;
- assumes a supplemental legislative appropriation to education or equivalent BSA (base student allocation increase; and
- increases health insurance program contributions by \$1.1 million

Ms. Parrott said that staff versus stuff would be emphasized, just as it had been in previous years. She spoke about the costs of various personnel groups - certified, classified, & classified support staff. New personnel costs include the assistant superintendent position in the district office. There also are increases in the line item budgets for principal and assistant principal positions, she noted. Some of these positions existed in previous budgets, but may not have been filled. She noted that one of the additions in this area is an assistant principal at Ketchikan Charter School; however, she briefly explained that under the charter school's operation it can choose how to allocate its funds.

Several other budget areas touched on were that: student activities funds are now shown in the school budgets for Kayhi and Schoenbar, due to a change in generally accepted accounting practices; and that COVID relief funds are projected to be about \$500,00 for FY 23. Ms. Parrott said that plans are for the school health aides to be funded with these funds, as well as .5 of the nurse's FTE (full-time equivalent); and a 1 FTE special education certified staff member split between Fast Track and RYC.

Regarding the "stuff" part of the budget, the Business Manager commented that funding for this area has been pretty flat. She recommends that, if available, some additional funds go to this area.

Ms. Parrott stated that the administration is projecting a deficit of about \$400,000 between projected revenue coming in and the proposed operating fund budget. That revenue projection includes the district's proportion of a House-approved \$57 million supplemental appropriation to school districts. If that appropriation isn't realized, the proposed budget will need to be revised. She said that in order to balance the budget the fund balance will likely have to be increased. She further stated that by incorporating the fund balance into the budget that didn't mean it would all be used up or spent necessarily.

The district's proposed budget also requires an increase in discretionary funding from the Borough which is specifically to help the district make an increased contribution to its health insurance program.

She said if the Board believes that the budget presented will meet all the needs of the school system, then it should approach the Borough and request the additional funds. This will require the assembly to vote with a super majority to dip into its reserve in the local education fund.

Board members then asked questions regarding the budget. Mr. Robbins asked about where cuts might come if the legislature did not come through with the supplemental funding. Ms. Parrott responded that during a recent legislative fly-in of school administrators and business managers officials, there were assurances by multiple legislators that either a supplemental appropriation or a BSA increase or some combination would be forthcoming. She also said the finance committee seemed to feel that this budget represented the wants of the public to maintain district programs. If cuts were needed, the budget would come back to the Board, she said.

Mr. Tabb asked to see the "asks" of the administrators in the district. Ms. Parrott said that would be provided in the upcoming budget worksession prior to the budget being approved.

Student member Braxton asked about the possibility of the free lunch program being extended. Ms. Parrott said that Senator Murkowski has introduced legislation regarding an extension of that program.

Public Hearing

An opportunity for the public to speak regarding the public was opened, but no public came forward.

Board Discussion

Board Clerk Treasurer Bridget Mattson commended Ms. Parrott for the way she'd broken down the budget this year. Ms. Mattson suggested that, with the budget needing to be approved at the next meeting, another budget worksession might be needed, if Board members had questions about the budget. Ms. Mattson also noted that there was a borough assembly/school board liaison committee meeting the following day and that the health insurance fund had been discussed previously by the group.

ROLL CALL

Student Member Braxton Zink (preferential vote) – AYE

ROBBINS JR., TABB, ANDERSON, MATTSON, SANDERSON - AYES

MOTION PASSED

CONSENT CALENDAR of April 13, 2022

- a. Motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of March 23, 2022.
- b. Motion to approve the offering of tenured teacher contracts for the 2022-2023 school year.
- c. Motion to approve Tongass School of Arts and Sciences' purchase of partitions from Alaska Glass Supply.

Motion to approve the Consent Calendar of April 13, 2022.

Moved by: TABB; Second by: ANDERSON

MOTION PASSED

NEW BUSINESS

Motion to approve the purchase of playground equipment for Houghtaling Elementary School from Northwest Playground Equipment, Inc. in the amount of \$57,035.

Moved by: MATTSON; Second by: ROBBINS JR.

Discussion

There was no discussion.

ROLL CALL

Student Member Braxton Zink (preferential vote) – AYE

MATTSON, TABB, ROBBINS JR., ANDERSON, SANDERSON - AYES

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

Motion to approve the offering of an administrator contract for the position of Assistant Superintendent Contract with Melissa Johnson for the 2022-2023 school year.

Moved by: MATTSON; Second by: TABB

Discussion

Mr. Robbins asked what would occur with Ms. Johnson's position, if there was a delay in the incoming superintendent being able to start on his first contracted day (July 1).

Business Manager Parrott responded that Ms. Johnson would finish her interim superintendent contract and then move into the assistant superintendent position.

Board Member Mattson briefly commented on the process through which the assistant superintendent position had been approved by the Board, and then Ms. Johnson being recommended for the position.

Presiding officer Sanderson said he was confident in Ms. Johnson's ability in this position.

ROLL CALL

Student Member Braxton Zink (preferential vote) - AYE

TABB, ANDERSON, ROBBINS JR., MATTSON, SANDERSON – ALL AYES

MOTION PASSED

DISCUSSION

Drug abuse/overdose issues - Interim Superintendent Johnson commented that the schools will participate in a Red Ribbon drug prevention event during the first week in May.

BOARD COMMENTS

Mr. Tabb noted in response to a public comment that evening that the district has applied to be designated a military purple star school district through the work of building administrator Dan Olson. One of the purposes of the designation is to support students who are military children.

Ms. Mattson stated she supported the views shared regarding religious statements in the schools. She made a statement about board behavior and ethics she said was directed at any district staff or administration who might be watching the meeting. She emphasized that the Board works as a group and an individual board member has no power over individual staff members. Ms. Mattson also commented on the amount of time Board Members spend, thanking her fellow board members.

Mr. Robbins supported the statements about Board members not having any authority or power over employees of the district. If a Board member does something inappropriate, he asked that it be reported to the Superintendent. He also stated his appreciation for the concerns brought to the Board that evening.

Student Member Zink said he was a Houghtaling alumni and was glad the Board voted for the purchase of new playground equipment.

Mr. Sanderson also commented on remembering the old equipment from when he attended Houghtaling. He thanked the Board for supporting him as he chaired his first meeting. He also addressed the public testimony that evening regarding tribal values, stating his understanding as a tribal citizen was that reverence to the creator wasn't referring to a god or gods. Mr. Sanderson concluded by commented that if religion is to be kept out of the schools, the Pledge of Allegiance, which is recited daily in the schools, refers to a nation "under God."

Student Member Braxton Zink asked that he be excused with no more agenda items pertinent to him. He was excused.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Motion to move into executive session to discuss negotiations with the KEA Special Services Professionals of Ketchikan, a matter of financial discussion.

Moved by: TABB: Second by: MATTSON

ROLL CALL

ANDERSON, TABB, MATTSON, ROBBINS JR., SANDERSON – ALL AYES

MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY

The Board entered the executive session at about 8 p.m. After about 10 minutes, the session ended and the Board re-entered regular session.

ADVANCE PLANNING

It was noted that the April 27, 2022 meeting of the Board would primarily focus on discussion and then action on the FY '23 budget. An upcoming training with First Alaskans Institute on May 4 and 5, 2022, was also noted.

ADJOURNMENT

With no objection to a motion to adjourn, the meeting was adjourned at 8:24 p.m.

Minutes approved as distributed at the June 8, 2022 regular meeting of the Board of Education.

BOARD PRESIDENT
Stephen Bradford