

**KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
EMERGENCY Special Meeting  
of Wednesday, May 5, 2020  
Noon  
*Remotely held via WebEx video conferencing platform***

**CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL**

The Ketchikan Gateway Borough Board of Education met in an **emergency special session** on the 5th day of May, 2021, with members and staff participating remotely via the videoconferencing platform WebEx. Board President Kim Hodne called the meeting to order at noon.

The following members were present on the videoconference to establish a quorum and due notice had been published: Board President Kim Hodne; Clerk-Treasurer Bridget Mattson; and Board Members Jordan Tabb, Paul Robbins Jr., and Nicole Anderson. Board Member Diane Gubatayao was absent and excused.

Administrative staff included: Acting Superintendent Katie Parrott; and Board Clerk Kerry Watson.

**CITIZEN REMARKS**

There were none.

**PURPOSE OF EMERGENCY MEETING**

The emergency special meeting had been called for the School Board to hear updated information regarding the school district and community's quickly evolving COVID situation.

State and local public health officials were present on the videoconference to provide input and expertise. These officials included: Dr. Coleman Cutchins and Dr. Liz Ohlsen from the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services; Ketchikan Public Health nurse Arizona Jacobs; Ketchikan School District nurse Kimm Schwartz; and Abner Hoage, Ketchikan Emergency Operations Center Incident Commander.

Acting Superintendent Katie Parrott briefly reviewed how the district's current Smart Start "medium" risk level operation corresponded to the community's "high" risk level, which had just been announced the previous day. In a medium risk level, the secondary schools move to a 50% model, with students split into two groups; and instruction being provided with two days onsite and two days off-site and one day with all students at home doing asynchronous work. However, Ms. Parrott noted the issue had been raised as to whether a secondary school not currently being impacted by COVID cases, such as Schoenbar Middle School, could continue to operate at 100 percent.

Input from the EOC's Hoage and the public health officials could inform the Board on retaining as much onsite instruction as possible through the end of the year while calculating the risks of varying levels of school operation, said Acting Superintendent Parrott.

For more than an hour, the Board discussed and considered the school district's COVID situation and options, with input from the participating officials and several school principals who were also in attendance.

The discussion and presented information included:

- Data on the Kayhi spike that apparently resulted from infectious individuals at a wrestling tournament held at the school. (Thirteen Kayhi staff or students at Kayhi were currently infected as of that day; and all but one of those individuals had been infectious and present in school for 1 to 6 days before beginning quarantine. Five residents of other Southeast communities had also been infected in Ketchikan at the wrestling tournament and those communities were also now potentially impacted.)
- Recommendations in response to the spikes in both the community and school: vaccinations, continued masking, and broad and frequent COVID testing. Drs. Cutchins and Ohlsen, and Ms. Jacobs spoke about the importance of testing to help address a school outbreak and how to conduct this effectively.

- The estimation from EOC that it would be several weeks before the community-wide risk level would go down, and that depended on how well the spread could be contained.
- Kayhi Principal Jason House shared his concern with the number of cases at the school, and stated he supported going to the 50% model to attempt to get the cluster under control, and try to protect the last few weeks of school and graduation.
- Mr. House also asked the Board to support the acting superintendent to work in concert with the EOC regarding school risk levels.
- Schoenbar Middle School Principal Sheri Boehlert brought up the issue of how activities and events between schools at different risk levels could be addressed (i.e. an evening Schoenbar concert scheduled to occur at Kayhi).

Acting Superintendent Parrott asked for Board direction as to whether the Board wanted to deviate from a district-wide risk level to a school by school risk level. There was further discussion from the Board on its possible direction to Ms. Parrott.

**Motion to assign the acting superintendent to individually assess and assign risk levels to schools, and to develop and assign activity levels for our district in coordination with the EOC community risk level of COVID.**

Moved by: MATTSON; Second by: TABB

**ROLL CALL**

**ANDERSON, TABB, ROBBINS JR., MATTSON, HODNE - ALL AYES**

**MOTION PASSED**

**Adjournment**

A motion was made and seconded for adjournment. With no objection, the emergency meeting was adjourned at 1:28 p.m.

*Approved as distributed at the May 26, 2021 regular meeting of the Board of Education.*

---

BOARD PRESIDENT  
Kim Hodne