

# KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH

## *Assembly/School Board Liaison Committee Meeting*

March 12, 2024

Assembly Chambers

### **Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by Member Bynum at 12:00 p.m. Present at the meeting were:

#### School District

Nicole Anderson, Regular Member  
Katherine Tatsuda, Regular Member  
Stephen Bradford, Alternate Member  
Michael Robbins, Superintendent  
Daniel Schuler, Business Manager  
Crystal Vail, School Board Clerk

#### Ketchikan Gateway Borough

Jeremy Bynum, Regular Member  
Austin Otos, Regular Member  
Ruben Duran, Borough Manager  
Cynna Gubatayao, Assistant Manager  
Charlanne Thomas, Finance Director  
Glenn Brown, Borough Attorney  
Kacie Paxton, Borough Clerk

Members not in attendance: Jaimie Palmer, Borough Alternate Member

### **Citizen Comments**

There were no citizen comments.

### **Appointment of Officers**

M/S OTOS/ANDERSON to appoint Member Bynum to serve as chair for Borough-hosted meetings

MOTION DECLARED CARRIED VIA UNANIMOUS CONSENT

M/S TATSUDA/BYNUM to appoint Member Anderson as chair for District-hosted meetings

MOTION DECLARED CARRIED VIA UNANIMOUS CONSENT

### **Unfinished Business**

There was no unfinished business.

### **New Business**

#### FY 2025 School District Request for Local Funding

Superintendent Robbins reported on FY 2025 School District budget assumptions and responded to member questions:

- Student count estimated at 1,984 students, which included approximately 80 FastTrack students and 113-117 intensive need students;
- District expecting a significant increase in the cost of health care;

- SB140 passed with a \$680 base student allocation (BSA) and was pending Governor action; passage of SB140 would yield \$3.5 Million in State funding; Failure of SB140 would cause the District to look at programmatic restructuring, such as class sizes, to reduce costs;
- District seeking funding for contract extensions, maintenance, health care debt repayment, and fund balance;
- First reading of District budget scheduled for April 10;

A discussion was held regarding the Alaska Reads Act and related State under-funding of the program.

A discussion was held regarding the FY 2024 District budget and a request for an amended budget and increased spending authority. Business Manager Schuler reported a request would be presented to the School Board on March 13.

#### FY 2025 Borough Budget Assumptions for Local Education Fund

Charlanne Thomas, Finance Director, distributed charts entitled *KGBSD Contributions and Claims and KGBD funding sources*, and the *KGBSD Health Insurance Deficit*. She reported FY 2025 Borough budget assumptions for the LEF included a 4.75 mill levy and a \$1 million District health care debt repayment each year for five years, leaving small gap to the cap for FY 2025.

#### School District Health Insurance Fund Debt Repayment

Manager Duran distributed a December 2022 *School District Plan for Health Insurance Program* and noted it contained District goals for an independent audit, communication plan, debt restoration, and plan for preventing new debt. He explained without that input from the District, Borough staff had developed the annual \$1 million debt repayment plan. He said the Borough's assumptions provided for the fund to remain above the \$2 million floor.

Chair Bynum suggested the committee recommend either a recognition of the \$1 million amount, or a \$1 million cash payment. Member Tatsuda agreed, noting it was good to have starting number. Members Otos and Anderson commented it was difficult to identify the level without the State funding determination. Chair Bynum noted the current Borough plan provided full funding under the law, and he looked forward to seeing the District's plan.

There was consensus for a mutual agreement on a debt repayment plan to be adopted by the Assembly and School Board prior to adoption of the FY 2025 Budget.

#### **Staff Reports and Communications**

There were no reports given.

#### **Committee Member Comments**

Member Otos suggested a joint Borough-District BSA resolution if the Governor vetoed the BSA funding.

Member Tatsuda voiced appreciation for the work of the committee.

Member Bradford reported the Board met with the Tongass School of Arts and Sciences (TSAS) Academic Policy Committee about the need for an arctic entry, and that it would be brought forward as a capital project request.

Chair Bynum thanked the committee members and looked forward to future discussions and receiving the District's amended budget.

The next meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, April 16, 2024.

### **Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 1:11 p.m.