

**KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
REGULAR MEETING  
Meeting of January 29, 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 29<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2025, in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly Chambers. Board President Michelle O'Brien 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:

President Michelle O'Brien, Vice President Jordan Tabb, Clerk-Treasurer Katherine Tatsuda, Members Judy Leask Guthrie, Tom Heutte, Keenan Sanderson, Ali Ginter and Student Member Lily Pader.

Administrative staff present included Superintendent Michael Robbins, Business Manager Daniel Schuler and School Board Clerk Chloe Hall.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The agenda was amended to change the order of New Business. 10b regarding the Annual Financial Audit will now be presented ahead of 10a regarding the restructuring of schools.

The agenda was approved as amended.

**PUBLIC RECOGNITION**

None

**CITIZEN REMARKS**

Misty Hancock, an Intensive Special Education Teacher at Point Higgins Elementary School, emphasized the crucial role of Special Education paraprofessionals in supporting students and maintaining effective teaching.

Melissa Edenfield, community member, urged the board to save programs such as Music and Physical Education. Edenfield encouraged the board to keep the community involved, working together to overcome the difficult situation the district is in.

Tracy Benner, community member, urged the board to listen to the community and reconsider other options for budget saving ideas.

Kristiana Kershaw, community member, urged the school board to focus on the mission of providing quality education, and asked the board to increase transparency.

Sheri Boehlert, Principal at Schoenbar Middle School, thanked the board for their service. Boehlert highlighted the urgency of decision-making to ensure that the needs of students, staff, and families are met in a timely manner.

Kurt Lindemann, Principal at Revilla, provided insight to the board on the demanding responsibilities of being a

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district administrator, and urged the board to keep vice principal positions in the district.

Rebecca Leach, community member, urged the board to keep the community involved as they move forward with the budget process.

Neila Urqhart, student at Ketchikan High School, addressed the challenges facing vulnerable students and emphasizes the need for adequate support staff.

Jasmine Pattison, community member, urged the board to listen to the community regarding the proposed school specialization, emphasizing that the need for accountability and transparency is crucial.

Frankie Urqhart, teacher at Ketchikan High School, asked clarifying questions regarding the proposed budget saving plans.

Maria Miller, community member, spoke to the board regarding a personnel issue.

### **INFORMATION AND REPORTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

#### **Native Education Committee**

Keenan Sanderson gave a follow up report after the Native Education Committee on January 22, 2025. Sanderson shared that there have been no significant updates to the name change for Schoenbar Middle School or the Land Acknowledgement. Sanderson shared that he looks forward to a government to government meeting between the two bodies in the future to discuss the topics.

#### **Joint Meeting / Work Session with Borough Assembly**

Board members spoke about highlights from the recent meeting with the borough assembly, sharing they felt it was a productive opportunity to engage as a full assembly, and continue building relationships. Sanderson emphasized the importance of maintaining a positive relationship while addressing debt repayment options. There were discussions about a potential joint resolution for an increase (BSA). There were suggestions made for school board representatives to attend borough assembly meetings to share positive updates and challenges from the schools, which would promote better communication.

Member Katherine Tatsuda shared that she had testified on Monday, January 27 in front of the House Education Committee, during a regular full committee meeting. Tatsuda shared the story of what's happening in Ketchikan, what the impact has been and what the plan is moving forward with the committee.

### **REPORTS FOR INFORMATION:**

a. Claims of January 10, 2025

**M/S:** Tatsuda/Sanderson

### **ROLL CALL**

YES - Pader (preferential), Guthrie, Tatsuda, Tabb, Ginter, Heutte, Sanderson, O'Brien

### **(8-0) CLAIMS APPROVED**

### **REPORTS**

#### **Student Report**

Student member Pader shared current events from Ketchikan High School. Last week, the Kayhi dance team and boys basketball team went to Anchorage for the Alaska Airlines Classic Tournament, while the girls team

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played against Juneau Douglas. This week, both girls and boys will play Sitka at Kayhi, along with performances from the cheer squad, dance team, and pep band. Next week, girls basketball will go to the Diamond Tournament, and the boys will play Rangel at home. The academic decathlon team did well at the state scrimmage and will compete at the state level in two weeks. The environmental club has a field trip to a hydroponics farm, and the rotary interact club helped with the wearable art show. Rotary is planning a family dance, and the Kayhi service committee is starting a fundraiser called Cash for a Cause to benefit Wish. They are also making Valentine's Day cards for residents at the Pioneer Home. Last week, representatives from the American Legion visited to discuss a free educational experience, and some students are interested in attending next summer.

#### Superintendent Report

Superintendent Robbins spoke about House Bill HB 69, which aims to increase the base student allocation (BSA) based on inflation. Robbins shared the budget process at the State level and how it impacts the School District funding, and stressed that advocating for better funding from local legislators is crucial.

#### CONSENT CALENDAR

- ~~a. Motion to approve Change Order #1 with Stagecraft Industries, Inc. regarding adding complete stage curtain replacement as a part of the rigging replacement project at Ketchikan High School auditorium stage.~~
- ~~b. Motion to approve a long-term substitute contract with Dan Ortiz at Ketchikan High School.~~

Member Ginter pulled both items off of the consent calendar and asked them to be placed under unfinished business for further discussion.

#### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- a. Motion to approve Change Order #1 with Stagecraft Industries, Inc. regarding adding complete stage curtain replacement as a part of the rigging replacement project at Ketchikan High School auditorium stage.

M/S: Heutte/Tatsuda

Discussion: Ginter asked clarifying questions about where the funds are coming from that would be used for the project at the High School Auditorium. Al Jacobson, maintenance director, explained where the funds would be coming from, and explained the process of the project to the board.

#### ROLL CALL:

Pader (Preferential), Ginter, Tatsuda, Heutte, Sanderson, Tabb, Guthrie, O'Brien

#### **(8-0) MOTION PASSES**

- b. Motion to approve a long-term substitute contract with Dan Ortiz at Ketchikan High School.

M/S: Heutte/Guthrie

Discussion: Ginter clarified how Mr. Ortiz was placed on the payscale, and Superintendent Robbins explained the process of placing staff on the payscale, and the process of hiring a long term substitute.

#### ROLL CALL:

YES - Pader (Preferential), Heutte, Guthrie, Tatsuda, Tabb, Sanderson, O'Brien YES  
NO - Ginter

## **(7-1) MOTION PASSES**

The Board entered into a recess from 7:27 p.m. - 7:38 p.m.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

b. Motion to approve the Annual Financial Audit prepared by Altman, Rogers & Co

**M/S:** Tabb/Sanderson

**DISCUSSION:** Grant Todd, audit partner with all Alderman Rogers and Company, gave a presentation on the Annual Financial Audit the company had prepared. The financial audit report for the Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District as of June 30, 2024, indicates that the financial statements accurately reflect the district's financial position. The report outlined the role of auditors, the findings from the audit, details from the financial statements, and future considerations for the district's financial management.

### **ROLL CALL:**

YES - Tabb, Ginter, Guthrie, Sanderson, Tatsuda, Heutte, O'Brien

## **(7-0) MOTION PASSES**

a. Motion to approve the restructuring of grade levels K-6 at Houghtaling Elementary, Point Higgins Elementary and Fawn Mountain Elementary for School Year 2025-2026.

**M/S:** Tabb/Guthrie

**DISCUSSION:** The Board entered into a discussion on the proposed restructuring of grade levels K-6 at local elementary schools. The Board discussed the listening sessions held by KEA for faculty and parents. Board members felt that it is best to delay this decision for at least two weeks to thoughtfully review the comments and gather more information.

### **Subsidiary Motion to postpone to the meeting of February 12, 2025**

**M/S:** Tatsuda/Guthrie

### **ROLL CALL:**

YES- Ginter, Tatsuda, Heutte, Sanderson, Guthrie, O'Brien

NO - Tabb

## **(6-1) MOTION PASSES**

c. Motion to approve the transition of the ELL Task Force into a School Board Committee

**M/S:** Guthrie/Ginter

**DISCUSSION:** Member Heutte gave an update on the English Language Learners Task Force, sharing that the Task Force had met on January 27, and Mr. Garlick, Vice Principal at Kayhi, is now involved as a staff member. Discussions focused on updates to the district website, and updating the current plan of service. The task force aims to support and improve services for English language Learners, while collaborating with the administration and community members. Recommendations have been made to transform the Task Force into an official committee of the Board.

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**ROLL CALL:**

YES- Ginter, Tabb, Sanderson, Guthrie, Tatsuda, Heutte, O'Brien

**(7-0) MOTION PASSES**

**DISCUSSION**

a. KNEPC Draft MOA

Member Keenan Sanderson gave an overview of the MOA presented between Ketchikan Native Education Parent Committee and the Ketchikan Gateway Borough School District. Sanderson shared the document to give the board time to review and provide their recommendations.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

a. Motion to revise BP 3440 Capitalization, in the second reading.

**M/S:** HEUTTE,/SANDERSON

President O'Brien gave the opportunity for the public to speak and no one came forward.

**ROLL CALL:**

YES - Tabb, Ginter, Heutte, Sanderson, Tatsuda, Guthrie, O'Brien

**(7,0) MOTION PASSES**

b. Motion to revise BP 3460 Periodic Financial Reports, in the second reading.

**M/S:** Heutte/Ginter

President O'Brien gave the opportunity for the public to speak and no one came forward.

**ROLL CALL:**

YES - Tatsuda, Heutte, Guthrie, Sanderson, Tabb, Ginter, O'Brien

**(7,0) MOTION PASSES**

c. Motion to revise BP4262.8 Bereavement Leave, in the second reading.

**M/S:** Heutte/Sanderson

President O'Brien gave the opportunity for the public to speak and no one came forward.

**ROLL CALL:**

YES - Guthrie, Tatsuda, Tabb, Ginter, Heutte, Sanderson, O'Brien

**(7,0) MOTION PASSES**

**BOARD COMMENTS**

Member Tatsuda thanked everyone for showing up and speaking, and thanked district staff for all of their hard work.

Sanderson does not want to delay a decision any longer than February 12 and emphasizes the need for quick

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action. Sanderson requested a brief summary explaining why alternative options might not work, and thanked Superintendent Robbins efforts in managing the situation, acknowledging the challenges.

Tabb shared for informational purposes, There have been public comments about personnel actions and questions about the board's ability to intervene. Board policy 4218 outlines how and when the board can get involved. Please review this policy first, and if you have further questions, speak to a board member.

Heutte thanked Superintendent Robbins and business manager Daniel Schuler, sharing he believes they are professionals, doing their best with limited resources, money, and staff. Heutte asked the public to assume good intent on their part.

Ginter shared thanks to Superintendent Robbins, Mr. Schuler, and the whole board. Ginter shared that as the newest board member, she is learning to ask questions and follow Robert's Rules and appreciates everyone's help.

Guthrie expressed her appreciation to Mr. Robbins and Mr. Schuler for their work on the two options. Guthrie shared that she knows there are hard conversations to be had, but she looks forward to the work.


### **ADVANCE PLANNING**

School Board Policy committee meeting Tuesday February 11, 2025, 11:00 A.M. in the Borough Assembly Chambers

School Board Regular meeting Wednesday February 12 & 26, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. in the Borough Assembly Chambers

School Board ELL Committee meeting Tuesday February 18, 2025 at 4:00 p.m. at Ketchikan High School  
Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly/School Board Liaison Committee meeting Tuesday, February 25, 2025 at 12:00:00 p.m. in the Borough Assembly Chambers

ADJOURNMENT at 9:46 p.m.



BOARD PRESIDENT  
Katherine Tatsuda



Board Vice President  
Jordan Tabb



Clerk Treasurer  
Tom Heutte