

**KETCHIKAN GATEWAY BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
REGULAR meeting of  
Wednesday, December 15, 2021  
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 15th day of December, 2021, in the Ketchikan Gateway Borough Assembly Chambers. Board President Stephen Bradford 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 President Stephen Bradford; Board Vice President Keenan Sanderson; Board Clerk-Treasurer Bridget Mattson; and Board Members Diane Gubatayao; Jordan Tabb; Paul Robbins Jr.; and Nicole Anderson. Student Board Member Braxton Zink was also present.

Administrative staff present included Interim Superintendent Melissa Johnson; Business Manager Katie Parrott; and Board Clerk Kerry Watson.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**Motion to approve the agenda for the regular meeting of December 15, 2021.**

Moved by: GUBATAYAO; Second by: TABB

**The agenda was approved by unanimous consent.**

**PUBLIC RECOGNITION**

Board Member Diane Gubatayao stated she was proud of Ketchikan High School and its students for hosting a Drama, Debate, Forensics competition the previous weekend. Six schools participated. She complimented DDF team member Braxton Zink for his informative speech, and noted that the tournament's debate topic was crypto currency.

Ms. Gubatayao also thanked principals Jason House and Sheri Boehlert for allowing the "Eskimo Ninja" (Nick Hanson) to visit their schools.

Board President Stephen Bradford added his compliments regarding the debate tournament; and said it was an excellent opportunity for the community to help the students. He had been one of the judges in the debate finals, he said.

Mr. Bradford also announced recognition from the Association of Alaska School Boards to several Board members for their participation in AASB Board training. Basic Boardmanship certificates were issued to Bridget Mattson, Jordan Tabb, and Diane Gubatayao.

Student Board Member Braxton Zink stated his appreciation of the debate teams participating in the recent meet, and to the judges and timers who volunteered to assist at the competition.

**CITIZEN REMARKS**

Christy Willis spoke about why continuing to require kids to wear masks didn't make sense to her and questioned what the district was trying to accomplish. She spoke about COVID not being an issue, especially as compared to the problems of drug abuse and suicide.

Louise Loretan questioned the point of students wearing masks at school, and asked that it be made optional. She also commented on using school COVID cases to determine the district's risk, instead of the community's risk level.

## **INFORMATION AND REPORTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS** - *including any Committee Reports*

Board Clerk-Treasurer Bridget Mattson, who was the liaison with the Association of Alaska School Boards regarding the permanent superintendent search process, gave a brief update. AASB proposed an increase to the advertised superintendent salary, determining it was too low to be competitive; and the district business manager confirmed that amount was viable, she said. The permanent superintendent job listing would open the next day, if the Board approved the updated agreement with AASB that evening, said Ms. Mattson.

Ms. Gubatayao had attended the Ketchikan Native Education Parent Committee meeting the previous evening. The committee will be encouraging parents of Alaska Native and American Indian students to fill out the 506 forms used to determine funding for the federal grant program, if they've not already done so.

She also suggested the Board consider receiving training in such areas as cultural standards training; and said the KNEPC could assist.

**CLAIMS FOR INFORMATION** - *Claims of November 12, 2021, November 24, 2021; and December 10, 2021.* Interim Superintendent Melissa Johnson answered a question regarding the Crisis Prevention Institute training referenced in several claims' listings.

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

### *Student Member's Report*

Student Member Braxton Zink reported that the final debates for the just-mentioned debate tournament were held at the Saxman Tribal House. He also reported that:

- Wrestling regionals were held in Wrangell, and now qualifying wrestlers were headed to state;
- The academic decathlon competed in Juneau last weekend;
- Boys' and girls' basketball players have started practicing; and
- the Kayhi theater class put on ELF.

Braxton also shared his observations of how teachers enforced COVID mitigations. Lastly, he said that Spirit Week during this last week before Christmas break has helped relieve stress, particularly on those seniors who are waiting for answers regarding early action applications to colleges and universities.

### *Superintendent's Report*

Interim Superintendent Johnson started her report with more details regarding the Kayhi wrestling team. She said that 24 wrestlers (boys and girls) were traveling to the state tournament.

She also reported that:

- Plans are being made to increase the capacity for teams and spectators for the upcoming Clarke Cochrane basketball tournament at the Kayhi gym tournament.
- The "Test to Stay" program had started;
- The survey regarding COVID mitigation would be launched the next day to be available until the first Friday in January; and meanwhile, the Strong Committee has held its last meeting.
- Human Resources Manager Tiffany Batura, who was in the audience and was introduced, would be on the job full-time in January.
- An "inclement weather team" had been meeting to plan for bad weather affecting school operations.

Business Manager Katie Parrott was then asked to report on several topics which had been postponed from previous meetings.

### *Business Manager's Report*

Business Manager Katie Parrott first explained how the district's student count, completed in October, factors into helping determine the state's funding to the district. Enrollment continues to trend down from projections, but due to qualifying for a state hold harmless provision, the district will not see a resulting decrease in funding, she said. The net result is about \$115,000 more in foundation funding to the district for the current year, said Ms. Parrott. However, she noted that for a \$40 million overall budget, this is a small amount. It will primarily be used for contractual obligations to the charter schools, she said. In addition, the district will not need to go to the Borough for an increase of its expenditure authority.

*FY 21 audit:* Ms. Parrott next reported on the recently concluded FY 21 audit , highlighting several areas in the audited financial statements and reports which she'd provided to the Board. The school district was given an "unmodified opinion," which essentially is a clean audit, she said. Areas she highlighted included:

- The district's "net position" (revenue/expenditures) at the end of the year was a negative \$17.3 million. This is mainly the liability for pensions and other post-employment benefits, which the state requires districts to track in their financial accounting, she said. This has been reflected ever since the state identified a significant unfunded liability in the state's pension program and required the district to start tracking these. The key thing is that the number is improving over time, she said.
- The district's total fund balance, which at \$1.5 million, is virtually unchanged since last year which Ms. Parrott stressed is very positive. This means the district is preserving a cash flow necessary to support the district financially.
- The balance of two special revenue funds - food service, and pupil transportation - were specifically noted. Much of the pupil transportation balance was spent down, said Ms. Parrott. Pupil transportation is a grant program in which the state provides funding based on enrollment, but with no hold harmless provision. With the enrollment dipping, the funding decreased. In addition, the district increased transportation services by providing transportation to school annex sites and also in conjunction with the food service program, she noted. Meanwhile, the food service special revenue fund's balance went up. Although in previous years there had been a deficit in this fund, Ms. Parrott attributed the revenue increase to: the free meal waiver program which has less administrative burden, higher rates of reimbursement and more students taking advantage of the program.

In conclusion, Ms. Parrott praised the work of district comptroller Vicki Wallace for handling all the nuts and bolts of the audit.

There were a few questions for Ms. Parrott and Ms. Johnson, including the actual enrollment number, which Ms. Parrott said she would provide to the Board.

**\*\*PUBLIC HEARING - POLICY** - *Procedure (1) Citizens may give public comment regarding the subject of the hearing; (2) the public hearing is closed; (3) opportunity for Board discussion and decision.*

**Motion to approve revisions to Board Policy 4030 - Nondiscrimination in first reading.**

Moved by: ROBBINS JR. Second by: GUBATAYAO

Public Hearing

No public commented.

Board Discussion

Policy Committee member Paul Robbins Jr. explained there had been multiple discussions with WISH representatives on a potential policy to address dealing with domestic violence, sexual violence or stalking. After consultation with Borough Attorney Glenn Brown, it was suggested that the best way to support those in the district dealing with these issues would be through a resolution. Language is being proposed to be added into this non-discrimination policy so that these affected persons are not retaliated against, said Mr. Robbins.

Mr. Sanderson commented that the proposed language was appropriate, according to some individuals he knows that work in the social services in those areas.

Ms. Gubatayao stated her appreciation to attorney Brown.

Policy Committee member Jordan Tabb noted that adding this language to the non-discrimination policy is a step to protect those affected individuals from discrimination or retaliation.

**ROLL CALL**

***Student Member Braxton Zink (preferential vote) - AYE***

**SANDERSON, GUBATAYAO, TABB, ANDERSON, ROBBINS JR., MATTSON, BRADFORD - ALL AYES**

***MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY***

**CONSENT CALENDAR of December 15, 2021.**

- a. Motion to approve the regular meeting minutes of November 10, 2021.
- b. Motion to approve the special meeting minutes of November 17, 2021.
- c. Motion to approve out-of-state travel for students to attend the Northwest American Choral Directors Association Honor Choir in Spokane, Washington in March 2022.
- d. Motion to approve out-of-state travel for students to attend the Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival in Moscow, Idaho in February 2022.

**Motion to approve the Consent Calendar of December 15, 2021.**

Moved by: TABB; Second by: SANDERSON

***APPROVED without objection.***

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Motion to approve the 10-year charter school contract with Ketchikan Charter School, as presented.**

Moved by: SANDERSON; Second by: GUBATAYAO

Discussion

Ms. Gubatayao asked about a section in the contract regarding what would occur if less than full funding was received from the Borough or state. Business Manager Parrott explained why district administrative staff and the school's Academic Policy Committee would work collaboratively in the event of that occurring.

Mr. Tabb asked if it was the intent of the charter school to continue using the Holy Name campus, in addition to its main location, beyond the COVID pandemic. KCS Principal Kayla Livingston answered affirmatively. She said that Holy Name had approached KCS about housing the school longer. The plan is to provide Pre-K through second grade at the Holy Name campus, said Ms. Livingston. There is a contract for three years with the intent to continue longer.

Principal Livingston also answered Mr. Bradford's question about whether preschool students count for funding purposes. She said that only those preschoolers requiring special education services are funded. However, they do count towards the school's maximum approved enrollment, she clarified. The school currently has 202 students and enrollment has been trending up, said Ms. Livingston.

**ROLL CALL**

***Student Member Braxton Zink (preferential vote) - AYE***

**ROBBINS JR., GUBATAYAO, ANDERSON, MATTSON, SANDERSON, TABB, BRADFORD - ALL AYES**

***MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY***

**Motion to approve a contract with Advanced Communications, Inc. for the fire panel replacement project in the amount of \$98,500**

Moved by: GUBATAYAO; Second by: ANDERSON

Discussion

There was no discussion.

**ROLL CALL**

***Student Member Braxton Zink (preferential vote) - AYE***

**ROBBINS JR., ANDERSON, SANDERSON, TABB, MATTSON, GUBATAYAO, BRADFORD - ALL AYES**

***MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY***

**Motion to approve a contract with Creekside Clinic for COVID testing services, in an amount not to exceed \$240,000**

Moved by: TABB; Second by: MATTSON

Discussion

Interim Superintendent Johnson confirmed that the cost of this testing program is provided for by a grant from the Department of Health and Social Services. She responded to a question on the staffing for the testing program. How many staff would work at any one time would depend on the circumstances, she said. She also said that district tests would be used before the clinic's tests to be fiscally responsible as they were cheaper.

Ms. Johnson and Business Manager Parrott provided more explanation and clarification on the contract. Ms. Parrott stated it was determined that a short-term contract should be executed initially to get the process started as soon as possible, but not to obligate the district too far out. The contract could be extended after its term ends at the end of January, or a bid process could take place to see if other vendors are interested. Ms. Parrott said that other funding sources for testing might emerge as well.

Ms. Johnson also pointed out that the contract covers "on call" testing for someone reporting being symptomatic at school. In addition, testing will be offered through a mobile unit on Sundays at Houghtaling Elementary starting after winter break.

Ms. Parrott responded to a question regarding the price difference between the Creekside tests and those of the district. She said some of the difference is due to what it costs for the district to purchase these products in an uncertain supply chain; and another difference is due to the reporting requirements for the clinic.

Board Member Mattson said she appreciates that it is the Superintendent who approves the test choice and cost.

Ms. Gubatayao asked if data could be provided on how many students test positive with the test to stay program. Board Member Tabb followed up by stating that any data from the testing program that could be provided to the Board without violating student confidentiality would be appreciated.

Mr. Bradford praised the work of the district administration in responding to the Board's direction to initiate the test to stay program as soon as possible. The district administration found the only clinic that could do it on a short time basis, with a cost limit, he said.

**ROLL CALL**

***Student Member Braxton Zink (preferential vote) - AYE***

**MATTSON, TABB, SANDERSON, ROBBINS JR, ANDERSON, GUBATAYAO, BRADFORD - ALL AYES**

***MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY***

**Motion to approve the updated Memorandum of Agreement with the Association of Alaska School Boards for the superintendent search process and the additional costs of approximately \$7,375.**

Moved by: MATTSON; Second by: GUBATAYAO

Discussion

Ms. Mattson provided a brief explanation on the need for the updated agreement for the resumption of the permanent superintendent search. The district has paid \$5,000 to date for the work already performed for the superintendent process, she said. The additional funds will resume the process and finish the search.

## **ROLL CALL**

***Student Member Braxton Zink (preferential vote) - AYE***

**ANDERSON, TABB, SANDERSON, ROBBINS JR., GUBATAYAO, MATTSON, BRADFORD - ALL AYES**

***MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY***

## **DISCUSSION**

***ALICE training*** - Interim Superintendent Johnson said she'd heard reference to the ALICE program in the district during a recent Board worksession. She asked for direction from the Board on whether it viewed the district being a full blown "ALICE district" or if only staff should be trained in the procedures. Board members shared their ideas regarding training of staff, and how and to what extent to prepare students for various safety concerns. It was suggested that the Safety Committee work on safety drills, and provide advice on the topic.

***Drug abuse/overdose issues*** - Local overdoses and drug use issues and community efforts were discussed, as well as what the district could do to address these problems. A suggestion was made to re-start the district's wellness committee.

### ***Other discussion***

Board President Bradford said he'd received a request for School Board members to report at the Borough Assembly meetings. It was suggested that it be a Board member from the Liaison committee might be an appropriate reporter.

## **BOARD COMMENTS**

Ms. Anderson said she was pleased that students would be attending the Lionel Hampton jazz festival in Idaho. She congratulated the drama club for presenting "Elf"; and also stated congratulations to the wrestling, debate, and basketball teams. She said she was glad the test to stay program had been initiated.

Ms. Gubatayao said she was excited about all the activity at Kayhi this past weekend; and expressed holiday wishes.

Student member Mr. Zink commented again about Spirit Week, saying it made Kayhi feel more like a community. He also stated his thanks to the adults who helped at the debate tournament and wished everyone happy holidays.

Mr. Sanderson noted he'd had fun helping at the debate tournament. He referred to the policy discussed that evening, and said that Ketchikan Indian Community offers services to anyone, regardless of race, who experiences domestic or sexual violence. He also reported that his Ocean Sciences Bowl teams are working hard writing papers.

Mr. Tabb shared encouragement to seniors with their early action decisions. He also commented on the wrestlers' competitions, and noted that in the last few years Kayhi has fielded both boys' and girls' teams.

Ms. Mattson first stated Merry Christmas wishes, but added comments regarding mental health issues especially with the approaching holidays. She said there are a lot of people who care; and encouraged anyone experiencing a mental health crisis or suicidal thoughts to reach out. The Alaska Care Line and 911 dispatchers are examples of resources, she said.

Mr. Robbins followed up on some of the previous Board member's comments, in part stating that men can also be victims of violence and it is okay for them to ask for help.

President Bradford recognized the wrestling team's accomplishments and stated their fund-raising raffle was very "Alaskan" with prizes such as a load of firewood.

**ADVANCE PLANNING**

It was noted that annual meetings with the two charter schools needed to be scheduled. Several dates were suggested.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Without objection, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:23 p.m.

*Minutes approved as distributed at the January 12, 2022 regular meeting of the Board of Education.*

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BOARD PRESIDENT  
Stephen Bradford