

**Galena City School District
Board of Education Meeting
Anchorage IDEA Office
Wednesday, November 8, 2023**

1) CALL TO ORDER

President Bryant called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

a) Introduction of Guests

Staff Members: Jim Merriner, Chris Javier, Sally Javier, Dean O'Dell, Jessie Towarak, Adrian Johnson, Kaitlin Applegate, Scott Gingrich, Jacintha Mezzetti, Pam Pianalto, Jolene Kinsland, Stacy Ivers, Sonya Vaughn, Dean O'Dell, Tirsa Myler, Cary Myler, Jennifer Regoord, Valerie Owens, Heather Amgwert, Lisa Short, Lila Shoemaker, Jen Shoemaker, Cherie Taylor, Deb Mackie, Tracy Tiggs, Katie Garcia, Corrie Hruby, Nathan Lewis, Cory Stringer, Heather Stringer, Naomi Winters, Scott Betterton, Lisa Shelby, Ben Blasco, Lavern Demoski and Jason Johnson.

b) Roll Call

Fred Huntington – present

Shirley Cleaver – present

Karin Bodony – present

Marylee Kauffman – present

Jenny Bryant – present

Alissa Peter – present

A quorum was established.

2) PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance is recited by all.

3) VISION/MISSION/CORE VALUES

The Vision, Mission, and Core Values were read aloud by all Board Members.

4) AGENDA APPROVAL

a) Agenda

Board member Bodony made a motion to approve the agenda.

Board member Huntington seconded the motion.

Motion carries. Board (5/0) Student Rep (1/0)

5) STUDENT/STAFF PRESENTATIONS

Eagle River PAC parents Sonya Vaughn and Stacy Ivers welcomed the Board to the big city. They provided an update on the Eagle River expansion with the addition of the Creative Corner. We thank the Board so much for investing in the community of Eagle River. Back in February, we had 480 students, and we are currently at 560 students for our region. We have had PAC photo events, a costume parade, a Chess club, an ACL class, a LEGO League, a Teen Night, a Science club, a Baking club, an Art club, and many more things in the works. Thank you so much for providing the Creative Corner; we greatly appreciate it.

Deb Mackie, Assistant Director for IDEA, presented on Agenda item: Close Up DC Travel Request. This year we have more interest in the past years.

6) STUDENT/STAFF COMMENTS

Jason Johnson, the Superintendent, welcomed Alissa Peter to the School Board. The Board introduced themselves to the meeting attendees.

7) COMMUNITY COMMENTS

No Comments

8) REPORTS

Board member Cleaver made a motion to approve the agenda.

Board member Bodony seconded the motion.

Motion carries. Board (5/0) Student Rep (1/0)

a. **Secretary's Report**

October 18, 2023, Board Meeting Minutes

b. **Financial Report** – Jason Johnson reported the only change in the financials was the two-week cycle of payroll. We are working through the audit and hoping to be done by the middle of December.

c. **Principals' and Directors' Reports**

Technology Director – Chris Javier

- A shout-out to Charles Wright for a speedy recovery.
- As part of our tech cloud migration improvements, tech is addressing our medical information storage. This server storage was previously located at the dorms (housed on outdated hardware) and as this is highly important data relating to allowed medications and allergy student information, we have upgraded and secured to a cloud server. The licensing agreement has been signed and our migration will be in progress over the holidays. We have also recently learned there might be an application plugin to PowerSchool with this licensing, so tech will be looking into the interface possibilities.
- Tech is now starting our annual rollover work on changes for the new enrollment database. These enhancements are based on input tech has collected from the team that works year-round to improve this process. Tech will be receiving changes from this past year and seeking out any of the latest feedback in order to work together with PowerSchool on customizations to the enrollment workspace. Every year, it just keeps getting better and better!
- As our equipment ordering season is now closing out, tech will be shifting attention to inventory management and audit tasks. This year, we ended up rolling things out early (rather than our usual holiday schedule) for certain staff due to unforeseen compatibility issues with Microsoft's new Windows 11 operating system. Tech will also be ensuring that we go back and make sure everything is working for those upgraded this summer as part of this year-end process. There are still many staff upgrades slotted for the next few weeks, so we appreciate the patience of those still waiting their turn.

IDEA Director – Dean O'Dell

- In IDEA's Year of Gratitude, we are very grateful to be able to serve more than 7,340 students this year, which is approximately 8% growth over last year. Stability and growth are among the ways that we can measure our success in serving families, and our commitment to our core values. Families also continue to appreciate the increase in the allotment that came this year.
- We celebrate the opening of our Palmer office and the Anchor Point (Homer) office in the last two months. Adding two new facilities to the existing six regional offices was a major undertaking and a request championed by our Parent Advisory Committees. The spaces are already seeing regular use, and are providing access to families who might otherwise miss the opportunity to visit our offices. The Anchorage office is the next space to need our attention, and we have a committee ready to explore options and collaborate with our local PAC on the project.
- We are grateful to the School Board and Dr. Johnson for looking ahead this year at how the Alaska Reads Act would affect IDEA. The additional staff that we were able to add have allowed us not only to maintain great service to families in light of additional responsibilities but to take advantage of doing more for families: Providing new options and instructional strategies that certainly meet literacy needs, as well as other individualized needs, more post-secondary supports and more opportunities for clubs and groups.
- We look forward to our statewide November in-service from November 13 – 17. Among many goals for tech training, special needs training, curriculum research, event planning, process improvements – and more, we look forward to learning from Denise Eide, the creator of the Logic of English. Ms. Eide has become

nationally known for her insights into the Science of Reading – and has a history with IDEA and in supporting IDEA families.

- Among other small and large victories in improvements this year are: Teams Texting, a wide variety of tech equipment options for families, upgraded systems and internet for staff, an increase in allotment spending limits that take into account the high inflation rates of the last few years, and new ways of sharing information among our staff and with our families.
- We are thankful for working with a counselor to directly support families in need, to build resources for Social Emotional Learning, to collaborate with our high school specialist on post-secondary resources, to train staff in these resources and strategies, and to even celebrate all aspects of IDEA, of homeschool, of learning strategies, of clubs and groups – all in a podcast that brings voices of staff, parents, and students into the limelight. Outlined the importance of the new Homer and Palmer offices in best serving our students, families, and the communities we serve within.
- Finally, within our Year of Gratitude, we continue to spotlight the people who make IDEA a positive, successful, servant-hearted organization. We have shared our thanks with our tech department, our business office, our district leadership, and most recently our Field Representatives. Today seems most appropriate to thank the people who are at the core of everything we do: Our families – our parents and students. IDEA exists to serve our families in supporting their educational choices. I would like to offer a special thank you to our Parent Advisory Committees, who volunteer their time in support of the program and other families. They often build and lead some of the field trips, clubs and other activities that we do. They provide valuable feedback on behalf of all of our families, and in fact, very soon, our PACs will survey the families in each of their regions. Following that survey, regional PACs will send a representative to a PAC retreat to refine that feedback into the most essential recommendations and commendations that, in turn, drive so much of our continuous improvement. This year, we are tentatively looking at a February visit to Galena to share those results with the School Board.

Special Education Director – Jessie Towarak

- On-going intentional Special Education teacher support check-ins are occurring every other week. Weekly Administrative Assistants and Leadership Meetings. Monthly virtual meetings for IDEA Special Education staff.
- Nov 1-3 trip to Galena for Child Find coordinated efforts with TCC
- Completion of the State Audit-awaiting results.
- In Galena, all certified Special Education vacancies have been filled. One classified position is open currently. Welcome Cosette Moore, as a short-term Special Education substitute.
- We anticipate welcoming Krisabelle Pelayo and Suzie Parcon Bonafacio in the next few weeks. They will be our new Special Educators in Galena.
- November- 505 total GCSD students in Special Education. 478 Active IDEA, 27 Active Galena, 19 in the enrollment process, and 27 in the referral process.

SHS Principal – Cory Stringer

- Working with Janessa Miller and Loudon, we are gathering names of Veterans in an attempt to honor them during a Veteran Day assembly to be held on November 10th in the SHS gym. We are in the preliminary stages of gathering the information and putting it together but feel we can make it happen.
- The Halloween carnival was a success. Thank you to Elizabeth Hawley for taking on this task in organizing the program. We would also like to thank all the teachers who participated in making the event happen.
- We hope to keep the momentum going with the literacy nights that are scheduled to take place on November 11th and December 2nd. Dates may change since these are currently Saturday nights if we can find a weeknight that does not conflict with other meetings, but at this time Saturdays seem to be the safest bet for success.
- Parent-teacher conferences had a 90% participation in the elementary school, even with the extra city meeting.

GILA Principal – Naomi Winters

- The end of the year is swiftly approaching! The end of the quarter saw report cards being sent home and

GILA teachers participating in parent-teacher conferences by phone with GILA parents and in person with local families.

- Dr. McGill spent some time at GILA this month to support students and staff and to help with planning for tackling the Stronger Connections (Peer Mentor) grant. The students and staff found great value in the AFN trip as part of that grant. One of the chaperones reported, "This trip provided students with cultural opportunities, including networking, family, and symposium seminars while promoting GILA in a great, positive light." We look forward to building our Peer Mentoring program as we work through the grant and anticipate a positive impact on the student population.

Residence Life Director – Ben Blasco

- We currently have 179 (97 female & 82 males). We have had 21 students withdraw from GILA this semester. The majority of students left for personal reasons. We have 14 GILA students with all A's, in the first quarter.
- We had Grandma's House coming out last month, they passed out jackets and winter gear.
- Billiards tournament, ping pong tournament, vision board making, tabletop games, dance, Haunted House, and bonfires. November's programs have not all been set yet. We do have dances, fires, thanksgiving activities, and open house. Students are also working on sewing kuspuks.

- d. **Maintenance** – Jason Johnson presented the main points associated with the report included in the packet. They are currently working on the SHS air-handler system which should be installed in 2-3 weeks. We are adding a substantial number of emergency lighting at SHS. I've asked Chief Green to work with Loudon on purchasing backup emergency generators.

e. **Activity Director – Cory Stringer**

- Waiting for final confirmation of the games from YKSD for who will come and when, but the tentative schedule has us hosting a JV tournament the first week back at school and JV games on weekends we host conference games. Once everything is confirmed, a poster will be created to be hung, before Christmas break.
- Coach Sokaitis will be returning to Galena to do a basketball clinic from December 7th to December 9th. A tentative schedule will be to work with the junior high students from 4:00 to 5:00 then with the boys and girls high school teams during their practice.
- ASAA - Policies and amendments that are of interest to Galena.
Sanctioning of Powerlifting: discussed a request to sanction powerlifting as an ASAA activity. A committee will be formed to determine the best season or seasons to offer the activity and rules adoptions.
Sunday Contest Bylaw: currently ASAA's bylaw allows for the Executive Director to approve waivers to the bylaw forbidding events or contests to be held on Sundays. Discussed the need to keep the rule but to allow schools to proceed with administrative approval from both schools in the event the Executive Director cannot be contacted.

f. **SEGA Report** – no report

g. **Assistant Superintendent Report** – Lisa Shelby

- We received the license for the early childcare center.
- Our CQIP (Continuous Quality Improvement Plan) is complete for Pre-K.
- Facilitated the arrival of our international teachers and would like to welcome them all to Galena and GCSD. This is quite a change for them and we will remain focused on the needs of all staff (housing resources standardization, internet in Iditarod, welcome information and transition to Galena information, etc.) to ensure we are providing all they need to be their best for students. These teachers are already making an impact on students and instruction, and we are so pleased they are here!

- Indian Ed PAC is set to meet on Thursday, Nov 9 at SHS at 5:30 PM.
- We are just beginning work on CTE pathways. Naomi, Cory, and I will be diving into this work in earnest in the November/December.
- We will target our Early Childhood Education pathway as we begin this work, as this (along with SEED registry for students), is a function of grant funding we received for Early Childhood.
- We have a meeting on the calendar this week to begin the work of creating one Secondary Handbook (exact title TBD) – which will have all information for graduation requirements, approved courses, dual credit opportunities, course descriptions, if courses count for AK Performance scholarships, CTE pathways, etc all in one place, in one comprehensive and easy to navigate handbook that will be accessible on our website. We will have this work completed in early to mid-spring, if not before.

Superintendents Report – Dr. Jason Johnson

- In order to ensure that our team’s collective efforts are directly aligned with the determined goals/outcomes of the Board approved strategic plan, please note that the Assistant Superintendent, Directors, Principals and those in Administrative/Managerial positions have a new evaluation tool, which directly focuses upon leadership, performance and the Strategic Plan. Beginning in September, the majority of board reports (As applicable) will have definitive information aligned in this manner.
- Composite Building Renovation – Outside of some minor change orders associated with fire codes, re-routing ductwork and facility compliance with state/federal laws, the project is still progressing as planned. As of the time of this writing, we still believe that we will have a completion date aligned with the original agreement and access to the facility in January. Dead drop date is December 8th and students should be in there the 2nd semester.

h. Correspondence

None

9) OLD BUSINESS - None

10) NEW BUSINESS

a. SEGA Fuel Sales Agreement

Board member Bodony made the motion.

Board member Huntington seconded the motion.

MOTION: I move to approve the attached fuel sales agreement with SEGA for the harvest and delivery of birch during the 2023-24 winter for the GILA campus. This fuel will be available for the 2024-25 school year with a total cost for felling, decking, transporting, and chipping at \$605,500.

Discussion:

1. **BP 3312 Contracts** is attached that provides guidance for the ratification of all contracts by the GCSD School Board.
2. SEGA has identified approximately 63,000 cubic feet of paper birch. The cost per cubic foot of paper birch will be \$9.61 per cubic foot for a total of \$605,500; the fuel sales agreement that was approved by the GCSD school board last year identified approximately 63,000 cubic feet of paper birch at the cost of \$9.10 per cubic foot for a total of \$573,000. According to Tim Kalke, SEGA General Manager, “this year’s agreement will experience a cost increase of 5.5%. Contributing factors have unfortunately become common; we continue to experience an increase in cost for equipment parts, petroleum-based products, freight and other necessary items. Notable category increases for this year’s budget include:
 - a. Insurance premiums increased overall by \$27,000. Specifically, the Heavy Equipment policy increased \$13,215 from last year. We have also been notified that the carrier is implementing a new

- policy for next year, requiring all policies to have a minimum premium of \$50,000. This action will bring an additional increase of \$14,000 and has prompted exploring an alternate carrier.
- b. The City of Galena increased our rent by 11% and has implemented a fee for heat. Please note, based on our FY23 biomass related expenses versus overall organizational revenue, we are able to shelter GCSD from any further increase by utilizing funds generated from construction activities to subsidize the overall budget by approximately 4%.”
 3. Tim Kalke shared with District leadership that burning biomass equates to approximately 100,000 gallons of fuel. At \$8.26/gallon (what Crowley is charging SEGA this 2023-24 school year), 100,000 gallons of fuel = \$826,000.
 4. To make this arrangement work and to continue supporting a sustainable energy resource for Galena City School District, the following fuel sales agreement has been collaboratively established by SEGA and GCSD.
 - a. Payment of \$96,880 no later than December 1, 2023 for production standard criteria identified in Figure 2 of the Fuel Sales Agreement.
 - b. Payment of \$163,370 prior to January 15, 2024 for production standard criteria identified in Figure 3 of the Fuel Sales Agreement.
 - c. Payment of \$163,370 prior to March 1, 2024 for production standard criteria identified in Figure 4 of the Fuel Sales Agreement.
 - d. Payment of \$181,880 no later than April 15, 2024 for production standard criteria identified in Figure 5 of the Fuel Sales Agreement.
 - e. Payment amounts will be based on percentage of the production standard identified. Figure 6 of the Fuel Sales Agreement provides an example.
 5. This mutually beneficial arrangement provides SEGA the necessary operating capital to continue woody biomass harvesting work during the winter of 2023-24. It also provides GCSD security and ultimately ensures that GCSD is paying on the actual amount of woody biomass (measured by cubic foot) that is delivered to the GILA campus.
 6. Included with this agenda item are the following documents:
 - a. Fuel Sales Agreement between SEGA and Galena City School District for 63,000 cf (approximately one year’s supply) of paper birch woody biomass timber for heating the GILA campus.

ROLL CALL

Shirley Cleaver – Yes	Fred Huntington – Yes	Karin Bodony – Yes
Marylee Kauffman – Yes	Jenny Bryant – Yes	Alissa Peter – Yes

Motion carries. Board (5/0) Students (1/0)

b. Close Up DC Travel Request

Board member Cleaver made the motion.
Board member Kaufmann seconded the motion.

MOTION: I move I move to approve out-of-state IDEA Close Up DC travel in April 2024.

DISCUSSION:

1. **BP 6153** (enclosed) states that the GCSD School Board shall approve all school-sponsored trips involving out-of-state travel.
2. Please see attached letter from GCSD chaperone Suzanne Alioto requesting Board-approval for this out-of-state educational travel opportunity.

Motion carries. Board (5/0) Student (1/0)

c. Staff Adjustments

Board member Bodony made the motion.

Board member Cleaver seconded the motion.

MOTION: I move to approve the following hires:

- GILA Custodian – Nathan Fennimore
- IDEA iGrad Coach (Region MS) – Josiah Galatt
- IDEA Contact Teacher (Eagle River) – Ann Lisa Williams
- GILA RA – Curtis Ambrose
- GILA Dorm Aide – Jordan Fredriksson
- GILA Kitchen Helper – Rhea Linus

DISCUSSION:

1. Included within the Board packet.

Motion carries. Board (5/0) Student Rep (1/0)

11) **BOARD COMMENTS:**

Bodony: I started thinking back to the beginning of the Pandemic in 2020 ... it was so moving to hear the growth with IDEA. So happy to be here and to see everyone here.

Huntington: I've been on the School Board the longest with this group. And this is the first time we ever had a meeting outside of Galena. It is good to see everyone here. Tomorrow we will go and visit some of the other IDEA offices.

Peter: I want to get back the Native Dancing group that stopped meeting after the last facilitator left.

Cleaver: Regarding tonight's meeting in Anchorage, I come from a corporate background so I travel a lot. Last month I got to visit three villages in the Doyon region, all small schools. So I count my blessing for the education my kids get in Galena and for what IDEA offers. I'm glad Fred is able to travel to the IDEA graduations. Thank you all very much!

Kauffman: I didn't know as much about the IDEA program before tonight; I am just really amazed at what IDEA offers. I really proud to be a member of the School Board and really enjoyed hearing about the IDEA program growing.

Bryant: I am so glad to be here and to meet you all. Like Marylee said ... the more I learn about IDEA, the more I meet IDEA families, the more impressed and proud of the IDEA program I am. I got to meet a State Representative a couple weeks ago who shared that all his kids went through the IDEA program. Thank you to the staff and parents.

12) **ADJOURNMENT**

President Bryant adjourned the regular meeting of the GCSD Board of Education at 8:23 P.M.

Next meeting: December 13, 2023

Respectfully submitted,

Fred Huntington, Board Secretary

Date Minutes Approved