

KUSPUK SCHOOL DISTRICT

P.O. Box 49
Aniak, Alaska 99557
(907) 675-4250
Fax (907) 675 4305

Bernard Grieve
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
(907) 675-4250, Ext.#222

Teresa M. Simeon-Hunter
PO Box CHU
Chuathbaluk, AK 99557

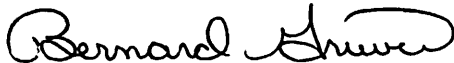
Dear Mrs. Simeon-Hunter,

Congratulations on your decision to run for the school board. School boards insure that the schools are truly part of the community and that we keep the schools close to the people and the people close to the schools. The local board of education has an important responsibility to provide an educational program for each school age child. People who serve on school boards give their time and talent in order to build better schools.

The Association of Alaska School Boards has made a brochure available regarding school board service and we are pleased to share it with you. The brochure should give you more insight on what the job entails. Also enclosed is "A Framework for School Board Standards." This publication is designed to help you better understand the board's role and expectations of the public.

I would be happy to provide you with information about our district. Please feel free to contact me if you would like to visit our schools, the district office or if you would like more information.

Sincerely,



Bernard Grieve,
Superintendent

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Phyllis Evan
PO Box 42
Lower Kalskag, AK 99626

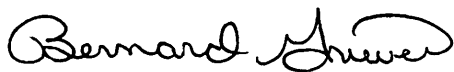
Dear Mrs. Evan,

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Dwayne M. Hoffman
PO Box 48
Kalskag, AK 99607

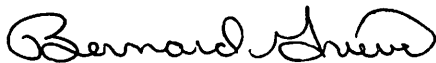
Dear Mr. Hoffman,

Congratulations on your decision to run for the school board. School boards insure that the schools are truly part of the community and that we keep the schools close to the people and the people close to the schools. The local board of education has an important responsibility to provide an educational program for each school age child. People who serve on school boards give their time and talent in order to build better schools.

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Bernard Grieve". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Bernard" being more prominent and the last name "Grieve" following in a similar style.

Bernard Grieve,
Superintendent



A message from the Association of Alaska School Boards

What to look for in a School Board Candidate

It's summer. It seems like it was just the other day when last year's citizens were beginning their campaigns for local school board races. The wheels are turning in the minds of hundreds of citizens who think they may want to be local school board members. What should voters look for as they assess the qualifications of school board candidates? What skills and commitments are important to school board success? These are some of the things we believe to be important:

• Time

Serving on a local school board requires lots of it. No longer is it reasonable to expect board service to take one night per month. Public education has become far too complex and community expectations far too great, for the leisurely pace of yesteryear to be the rule today. Today's board members say they can easily spend 30 or more hours per month on school issues: negotiating contracts, planning, work sessions, community meetings-not to mention personal phone calls and other contacts made.

• Commitment to teamwork

Individual school board members, by themselves, are not empowered to make district wide changes, but, by working well with board colleagues, the superintendent and with other groups who are shaping public schools, virtually anything is possible. Occasionally a board will find itself embroiled in controversy and turmoil.

Reasonable adults should be able to disagree agreeably, then move to the next level without chewing up themselves-and the district-by creating lasting divisions that assure loss of public confidence.

• Strong interpersonal skills

School board members' ideas may be wonderful, but if they lack the skills to persuade their colleagues and the public of their value, they will be less effective. If only one set of skills were available for an effective school board member, I would choose solid interpersonal skills and attributes, including communication, trustworthiness, honesty, confidentiality, consistency, and other such traits that cause interpersonal relationships to blossom.

• Concern for the entire school district not for a special interest or a narrow philosophy.

Most of us have a "favorite" concern about schools. It may be sports, fine arts, "the basics," special education, or something else. And that's okay. However, an elected school board member must keep a broad view of the district and see a wide horizon. Every program offered by the district has value, or it should not be offered. Good board members recognize that, and try to build them all to their highest level of quality.



The other dimension of this point, philosophy, is more subtle. More and more, narrowly focused organizations are helping candidates get elected so that their commonly held philosophical views will influence board action. Of course, this is all very legal. In fact, such organizations are to be applauded for their commitment. However, a voter must take the time and make the effort to learn as much about school board candidates as possible in order to know the philosophy of the person they elect.

• Willingness to learn

State law requires few qualifications for service as a school board member. Some individuals are elected with more immediate knowledge and skills than others. But no one, regardless of occupation, intelligence or personal skills, comes in knowing all he or she needed upon election. Those who approach their jobs with a desire to be more knowledgeable and skilled become more effective school board members.

Serving on a local school board can be one of the most rewarding challenges any citizen could hope for. The system works best when able and committed people step forward and serve their communities. If ever there was a time when quality leadership was needed, it is now.

Adapted from Randy Quinn,
Colorado School Boards Association.

A Guide for School Board Candidates in Alaska

Published by the Association of Alaska School Boards, this brochure is available free of charge. It gives an overview of roles and responsibilities, board functions, policy making, planning, performance and interpreting school needs. Call AASB at (907) 463-1660 for your free brochure. Visit the AASB website (<http://www.aasb.org>) for more information about school boards and Alaska Education.

Election Dates

• REAA School Board elections: **October 2, 2017.**

• Most Municipal School Board elections: **October 2, 2017.**

Municipal election dates are determined locally. Contact your local municipality to find out the school board candidate filing deadline in your community!

Recruiting New Board Members

By Timi Tullis, AASB Director of Membership Services

(originally posted in AASB Commentary, August 2014)

This summer while helping a board develop a **board self improvement plan** one of the members asked me if we had anything in writing to encourage citizens to become interested and ultimately run for their board. Our website, www.aasb.org, has some information for potential candidates, but I thought I could reach more members by writing about the process here.

The first step is to **let individuals know early** that there will be seats open in the fall election. It doesn't hurt to start sharing this information as early as May or June, if you know that soon. Looking for individuals that already are somewhat active in the work you do, individuals that support events at the schools, and people you know care about kids is a great place to start. It's a bonus if they are or have been active on other boards and know a bit about working on a team or board with others.

Make sure you remain open-minded and **don't discard anyone from consideration**. Younger candidates, who potentially graduated from the school recently, could bring a lot of first hand knowledge to the board. More mature candidates who may be active on other boards and have knowledge of how a board governs could also benefit your team. Parents or grandparents of students are not the only individuals who care about kids in your community; there are many 'non-parents' that make great board members.

To ensure that your board remains diverse, be sure to **encourage individuals from a variety of backgrounds**, experiences and occupations. We love that in Alaska we have grandmas, aunties, fishermen, whaling captains, doctors, lawyers, uncles and mushers serving as board members/ Regardless of the label, our school board members have one thing in common -- they care about ALL kids in their district and they are representative of our state.

Be sure to remember that **your excitement and enjoyment for your position on the board will be noticed by others**. As often as possible publically share your passion for that work as a board member. Speak

positively about being on the board rather than whine about how much “work” it is. No one will want the job if you are unable to highlight the positive aspects of being on the board and making a positive difference for the students in your district.

As current members it is great if you can **individually encourage others** to run for the board. However, you want to be careful not to publicly support or, on the flip side, bad mouth any particular candidate because depending on the outcome you may or may not be working with said individuals.

While encouraging individuals to run for open seats be sure that candidates understand what the work of the board involves and help them see that the most important aspects of good board members are to:

- Focus on improvement of ALL students,
- Care deeply about the work of the board and share it with different aspects of the community, other civic groups or simply in their circle of supporters,
- Work with the team including the administration to ensure the best educational programs for your district,
- Become an informed and professional board member, be willing to attend all meetings, trainings and board work retreats.

When encouraging community members to consider running for a seat **invite them to a board meeting** (if they have not been to one) and take time after the meeting to debrief with them about the work that the board accomplished. Honestly explain the time commitments as well as the rewards from being on the board.

So in the end, current board can play a role in encouraging potential candidates to run for open seats. Board members and superintendent might consider the following Ideas to help get the word out about open seats:

- Face to face discussions encouraging involvement
- Newspaper or newsletter ad or an informative article
- Radio interviews encouraging community members to consider running

- Give potential candidates information on the actual work of the board, possibly the yearly calendar and,
- Hold a work session to describe the work of the board.

About AASB

The Association of Alaska School Boards is an organization representing local school boards in Alaska. Its membership consists of more than 330 individual board members, responsible for the students who attend Alaska's public schools.

Formed in 1954 by four districts, AASB has expanded over the years to include more than 50 school boards as members in cities, boroughs, and REAAs. Today the Association is a source of assistance, information, and liaison for these boards and the districts they represent. Services and Initiatives include:

- State and Federal Representation
- Information through Publications and websites
- Board Member Education Programs, Conferences, and In-district workshops
- Policy Development
- Superintendent Searches
- Strategic Planning
- Child Advocacy
- Community Engagement
- 1 to 1 Laptop Initiative for Schools

AASB is governed by a 15 member Board of Directors, consisting of 11 directors and four officers. Representation comes from all regions of the state. The Board is elected by the membership at the Annual Conference. The membership as a whole pass the resolutions which establish the positions taken by the Association before the legislature and other agencies throughout the year.

Member boards pay dues to the Association based on the size of the district to help support the functions of the organization.

AASB & Child Advocacy

Alaska's education policy makers and educators struggle with the complex challenge of providing a quality education to all students across our vast state, particularly when there are so many other factors that impact children's lives and, therefore, their education. Because increasing numbers of children come to school with problems caused by poverty, drug use, teenage pregnancies, and child abuse, schools can no longer limit themselves to only academics. We also recognize that schools cannot act in isolation to overcome such obstacles to learning. Schools, families, and communities must share responsibility for children's development and learning. Since education is a continual process occurring both in and out of school, school is just one institution that can educate children. We ALL must shoulder the responsibility for public education.

The advocacy role of school board members is to promote parental, public, and social service commitment to the shared responsibility of educating all public school children.

AASB's Board of Directors has adopted a Child Advocacy Agenda which recognizes that "PARENTS are the child's first teachers - loving and nurturing; that SCHOOL opens the mind to the excitement of learning and sharing; that SOCIETY helps a child to appreciate the world and his/her place in it; and that FAITH gives a child a set of beliefs to live by."

Our advocacy agenda is supported by a detailed action plan, which addresses legislation, education, public relations and collaboration with other agencies.

Association of Alaska School Boards

1111 West 9th Street, Juneau,
Alaska 99801

Tel: (907) 463-1660 Fax: (907) 586-2995

Email: aasb@aasb.org

Web site: <http://www.aasb.org>

A guide for School Board Candidates in Alaska

As a candidate for your local school board, you have taken a step towards becoming involved in strengthening the quality of life through good schools in your community. You have indicated an interest in serving and devoting the time necessary to meet the challenge of boardsmanship by seeking election to your local school board. This guide will provide you with some basic information about school boards.



ASSOCIATION OF
ALASKA
SCHOOL BOARDS



Roles and Responsibilities of Board Members

As you consider the prospect of running for your local school board, there are a few things you should know about the responsibilities that role involves.

If you are elected, you and your fellow board members' actions will have far-reaching results. The policies you set will shape the education of tomorrow's leaders. The guidelines you create will direct the superintendent in navigating the problems your school district faces daily. Your decisions will affect the families of hundreds of students and employees, now and in the future.

School board authority rests with the board as a whole, not each member individually. School board decisions can only be made by a majority of the members at a public meeting.

From the moment school board members begin service, they are accountable to the public, to the state government, and to the courts.

Broad Functions of a School Board

School Boards *create a shared vision for the district, develop a structure to support that vision, establish accountability, **and** advocate for students and schools.*

Vision School board, on behalf of and with extensive participation by the community, creates a shared vision to enhance student achievement.

Structure To achieve its mission the board establishes a structure and creates an environment designed to ensure all students the opportunity to attain their maximum potential through a sound organizational framework.

Accountability Because the board is accountable to the local community, it causes the continuous assessment and reporting of all conditions affecting education.

Advocacy The board serves as education's advocate on behalf of students and their schools in order to advance the community's vision for its schools, pursue its goals, encourage progress, energize systemic change, and deal with children as whole persons in a diversified society.

What Does a School Board Do?

A board performs its functions through:

Policy Making A school board sets school district policies. The board hires a superintendent and district staff to put that policy into practice. The superintendent is accountable to the school board for managing the district according to board policies.

The local school board must develop and adopt policy that governs the operation of the schools. This includes acting on the superintendent's recommendations in such areas as employment of personnel, administration of student services, adoption of educational programs, selection of instructional materials and allocation of funds.

Planning School boards must provide vital leadership in establishing current and long-range educational plans and programs for school districts. The school board is responsible for providing a financial plan to carry out the educational programs by adopting an annual budget. Working closely with the community and the school administration, the board sets goals and adopts policies on which instructional programs are based.

Professional Performance One of the critical responsibilities of a school board is to select a superintendent. The school board exercises authority primarily through its superintendent. The board must be kept informed by the superintendent of the needs, conditions, achievements and progress of the school system.

As public employers, the board establishes the policies that govern the recruiting, hiring, employment, supervision, evaluation and dismissal of employees. This is an especially vital role, for the school district is frequently one of the community's largest employers.

Interpreting Needs School board members serve as the citizens' link to the school district and must interpret the school district's needs, programs and accomplishments for the community and interpret the community's needs and aspirations to the superintendent and staff.

School boards serve a dual role of representing both the schools and the community. As a public trust, the local school board must look into the community, find out what citizens want and provide clear channels of communication between the community and its schools. Boards need to sense and influence public opinion about the direction and function of their schools.

Needed improvements cannot be made until people are aware of those needs. Problems will not be solved until people become aware of the problems. It is important to discuss openly the strengths and weaknesses of the schools. Since decisions made about the schools can have an impact on the whole community, it is important to involve local citizens.

Board Service is Time and Commitment

School board service can be both rewarding and frustrating. At times board members feel the long hours they spend struggling with complex problems are all in vain. No matter what their decision, there will always be someone who complains.

These frustrations are offset, however, by reports of students going on to achieve further academic or other kinds of success. There is satisfaction in helping provide students with the education they need to live happy and productive lives.

Being a board member you are required to set aside 'single issues' and work with the other members of your board to set policies for your schools that are in the best interest of all students, all employees and the entire community.

