

SCOMM

125:11

Northwest Arctic Borough School District

Meeting Location: School District Board Room
Kotzebue

Meeting Time: 123:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Directions: The NWARB School District Van will handle transportation for the committee.

**Northwest Arctic Borough
Expected Participants**

In Person:

Lincoln Saito, Executive Director for Chukchi University Campus
Charles Mason, Chief Executive Officer, NWAB School District
Bobby Schaeffer, School Board Member
Jennifer Davis, NAEA Representative

Via Teleconference:

Lisa Weber, NAEA President
Possibly other teachers from Kotzebue

Written Testimony:

Andy Baker, community member, former Assembly President
Ross Schaeffer, NWAB Mayor

Other education professionals and community members from NWAB School District may participate. Those names were not available when the packets were sent out.

Scheduled School District Participants

Notes

Suggestions for Teacher Recruitment and Retention in Rural Alaska

Recruitment

***Rural school districts need to staff a full time recruiter position.** This person would recruit at job fairs, make personal visits to selected colleges and universities that offer specific programs of study that are of critical need to rural Alaska. Schedule and facilitate onsite conference interviews at campuses, attend teacher related conventions such as NEA, New Teachers' Convention, and act as liaison with the Alaska Teacher Placement at UAF and the Alaska tourism industry. The recruiter would disseminate school district and community information. The recruiter would make personal contacts while on campuses with education departments, career centers, outdoor sports clubs and wild life oriented clubs/organizations in order to attract and make contact with those individuals who are interested in Alaska's unique lifestyle.

***Create a "Future Teachers of Alaska" organization/club at the high school level.** This organization would serve to attract high school students to the teaching field by offering experience working with elementary and middle school students as volunteers with possible credit toward HS graduation. Regular meetings would take place in which members discuss ongoing education related issues with a faculty advisor. **Future Teachers of Alaska** would also provide assistance for members with; college/university selection, grant and scholarship applications, loan applications, professional organizations, as well as locating student teaching positions within their home community schools.

Recruitment Incentives

***Student Loan Assumptions**

Permit teachers who are newly hired by rural Alaska school districts to apply to have their student loans from financial institutions to be "refinanced" by the Alaska Student Loan Corporation as "Alaska Student /Teacher Loans". After five years of verifiable Alaska service the loan is forgiven as with the current system in place.

***Teacher Savings Plan**

Create an employee savings plan as many businesses and as the NSBSD had in place years ago in which teachers may contribute up to 6% of their salary before taxes and the school district contributes 3%. Teachers must remain with the district for a minimum of five years before they will be eligible to withdraw the school district's contribution.

Housing and Teacher Retention

***Offer Low Interest Mortgages**

Housing shortages and teacher retention are critical concerns for the Bush communities. It is well known in the rural areas that teachers who invest in housing, or "put down roots", are most likely going to become part of the community for several or more years.

Most teachers however do not have the funds or the incentives to invest in housing in rural Alaska.

The Alaska Housing Finance Corporation could work in partnership with Alaska's rural school districts to offer an incentive that would encourage a partial solution to both teacher retention and to address the severe housing shortages.

The Alaska Housing Finance Corporation could offer "low interest, zero down, no-qualifying new construction loans" to teachers who would be eligible for "tenure" status with their district and are a first time "rural community home buyer". The teacher would qualify through income and tenure with the school district.

The school district would then **guarantee** the loan for the first three years. During this time the teacher must occupy the home, continue to be employed by the school district, and remain in good standing. After three years the school district would release any lien and the teacher would only be obligated to the mortgage company.

Teacher Certification

***Previously tenured Alaska teachers who have left the profession and let their certificates lapse past one year should be eligible for re-certification without the Praxis requirement. Those teachers having taught with districts "outside" and hold valid certificates with another state should not be required to retake the Praxis.**

***UAA, UAF, University of Alaska Pacific, and Sheldon Jackson College could offer Praxis preparation courses and workshops, including distance delivery, to those teachers and students who are required to take and pass the Praxis.**

***Emergency certificates and one-year conditional certificates should be "renewable" by the state for an additional year at the request of the rural superintendent through some sort of "good cause exception".**

Advantages

Funding for recruitment positions, Praxis preparation course of study, and a pre-professional organization/club creation at the high school level such as "Future Teachers of Alaska" could be financed with State and Federal grants.

The Alaska Student Loan Corporation is already in place.

The Alaska Housing Finance Corporation is already in place.

**Northwest Arctic Borough School District
Bullet Points on Teacher Shortage**

- **More money for:**
 - **Adequate teacher housing**
 - **Competitive Salaries**
 - **Benefits**
 - **Staff Development**
 - **Incentives**
- **Public safety, VPSO & Troopers**
- **Allow RIP'ed personnel to return without a penalty**
- **Retirement – Return to Tier I**
- **Invest in teacher preparation programs**
- **Upgrade the University of Alaska programs**
- **Forgiveness on student loans**
- **More scholarship \$\$'s for teacher candidates**
- **INS – Expediting procedures to hire Canadian applicants**
- ✓ • **Allowing personnel to file unemployment claims when they leave to work in another state**

Suggestions from Rep. Joule's office regarding cultural expectations of Kotzebue area community members.

Casual dress is probably better than business dress. Recommend slacks with a button down shirt or sweater, no tie and no jacket.

Elders often speak at length on a subject and cutting them off is considered very rude, as is walking out on a person who is speaking.

Since you have limited time I am not sure of the best way to handle that, Reggie may be of help in that area.

Also of note is that if people have gloves on they should take them off for introduction purposes and shaking hands.

Alaska School District Profiles



Below is the information you have requested.

Northwest Arctic Borough Schools

P.O. Box 51
Kotzebue, AK 99752-0000

Phone: (907) 442-3472 x233

Fax: (907) 442-2392

District E-Mail: cmason@nwarctic.org

Website: www.nwabsd.schoolzone.net

Superintendent: Charles Mason, Chief Executive Officer

E-Mail: cmason@nwarctic.org

School Board President: Sophie Ferguson

E-mail the Webmaster



Northwest Arctic Borough School District

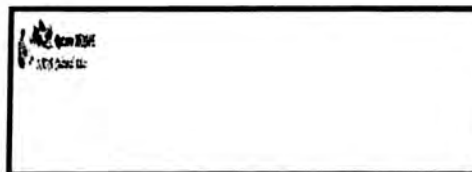


"Leading the Way"

We will develop the most precious resource of the Arctic, our children's minds, by providing a quality education.

-Vision Statement

Visit the Cultural Atlas created by Northwest Arctic Borough School District students and staff from Kiana, Kotzebue, and Selawik. The Cultural Atlas is being developed to share resources that will help people understand the relationship between the past, present and future of the People and culture of the NANA region. We would like to share our traditions, stories, and methods using the technology we have today.



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P.O. Box 51, Kotzebue, Alaska 99752

Telephone: 907-442-3472 Fax: 907-442-2392

Web Manager



Northwest Arctic Borough School District

School Board

Vision Statement:

We are developing the most precious resource of the Arctic, our children's minds, by providing a well-rounded quality education.

School Board Members:**Sophie Ferguson, President**

(3 Year Term) 1999 - 2000

Elsie Bahr, Secretary

(3 Year Term) 1998 - 2001

Rena Brown, Parliamentarian

(3 Year Term) 1998 - 2001

Miles Cleveland, Sr.

(3 Year Term) 1997 - 2000

Marcy Fairbanks, Vice-President

(3 Year Term) 1999 - 2002

Kenny Gallahorn

(3 Year Term) 1998 - 2001

Gia Hanna

(3 Year Term) 1999 - 2002

Paula Mills

(3 Year Term) 1997 - 2000

Ron Moto, Treasurer

(3 Year Term) 1998 - 2001

Bobby Schaeffer, Parliamentarian

(3 Year Term) 1999 - 2002

Vince Schuerch

(3 Year Term) 1997 - 2000

Contact Information:

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Home (907) 484-2308

P.O. Box 105, Ambler, AK 99786

Home (907) 445-2185 Fax (907) 445-2141

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Message (907) 442-3701 FAX (907) 442-2770

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P.O. Box 1043, Kotzebue, AK 99752

Work (907) 442-3301 Toll Free (800) 478-3301

(907) 442-2866 - Fax

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P.O. Box 15, Deering, AK 99736

Home (907) 363-2118

P.O. Box 1148, Kotzebue, AK 99752

Home (907) 442-6019

P.O. Box 29, Kiana, AK 99749

Home (907) 475-2188