

Dear School Board Members and Administration,

I am writing this letter to inform you of my decision to decline my teacher contract in Kokhanok for the upcoming 2023-2024 school year. This decision does not come easily, and it is with a heavy heart that I make this choice. I appreciate the opportunity to start my teaching career in such a supportive district that offered me experiences I would never have experienced anywhere else. It is hard to write this letter, as I will miss my coworkers and all the wonderful friends I have made in my community. Kokhanok will forever hold a special place in my heart. It will be hard to leave, but the time has come for me to step into the next chapter of my life.

Over the past 5 years, teaching for Lake and Peninsula has provided me with the experiences of a lifetime. I have had the chance to fly to almost every village. The views and different landscapes that each village offers are incredible to witness. I have had the opportunity to fish and hunt and explore one of the most pristine and beautiful places in the world. Without Lake and Peninsula and the opportunity I was given to teach here, I would have never met my future wife, and for that, I am forever grateful. Working and teaching in Alaska has given me the opportunity to meet so many amazing people. Not only from Kokhanok but from around the region.

The thing I will miss the most is the students and the community that I have grown so close with. I have watched these kids grow up over the years. I have celebrated their successes and consoled them with their failures. I have watched their interests spark and ideas fly. I have heard countless stories and belly laughs. I have seen smiles and tears, peaks and valleys, joys and heartbreaks, and I wouldn't trade those experiences for anything. The students of Kokhanok are the reason I have stayed all these years, and they are the reason it will be so hard to leave. The future is bright, and I am excited to hear how far these kiddos go.

I want to thank the Administration team for all of their hard work and dedication. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to live and teach in Alaska. I appreciate all the support you have given, all the opportunities to grow as a professional, your willingness to be creative to meet the needs of our students, and how you listen to staff recommendations to make LPSD the best it can be. Thank you to the School Board for giving me the privilege of teaching at LPSD. Thank you for your unyielding support and advocacy for our students. I can say that my time in Alaska has been the best 5 years of my life, and it has helped me grow so much as an educator and also a person.

Sincerely,  
Josh Jenks