

MEMORANDUM

TO: NWABSD Board of Education
Members

DATE: January 24, 2024

NUMBER: 25-030

FR: Office of the Superintendent

SUBJECT: Adoption of
Memorandum 25-030.
Approval of letter to the
Governor and Legislators

ABSTRACT:

The administration requests approval of the letter written in support of the Governor rescinding the appointment of Kimberly Bergey and appointing a resident of the second judicial district to the State Board of Education.

ISSUE:

Governor Dunleavy has appointed Kimberly Bergey, a resident of Palmer, as the representative on the State Board of Education from the second judicial district. Kimberly Bergey does not live within the boundaries of the second judicial district. The second judicial district serves the boroughs of Nome, North Slope, and the Northwest Arctic and the school districts within those boundaries.

BACKGROUND AND/OR PERTINENT INFORMATION:

Since March, the seat had been vacant after the term of Unalakleet resident Jeffrey Erickson expired. The governor's website still does not mention that Bergey was appointed to the state school board at all, though it has been more than two months since she was named. Board members who are appointed to represent a specific judicial district should reside in that judicial district as required by law and to provide for adequate representation. Representation from each judicial district provides balanced representation from all school districts across the state and is important for equal and fair representation on a statewide board. Requiring board members to live in each judicial district allows the board members to hear directly from the region and its residents about each area's school funding, curriculum, culture, language, and infrastructure needs. As one of the largest states in the USA and with a diverse mix of residents and cultures, it is even more important that all school districts have regional representation.

ALTERNATIVES:

1. Approve Memorandum 25-030 in support of the letter to the Governor rescinding the appointment of Kimberly Bergey and appointing a resident of the second judicial district to the State Board of Education.
2. Do not approve Resolution 25-030 in support of the letter to the Governor rescinding the appointment of Kimberly Bergey and appointing a resident of the second judicial district to the State Board of Education.
3. Take no action.

ADMINISTRATION'S RECOMMENDATION:

The administration recommends the board approve Memorandum 25-030 in support of the letter to the Governor rescinding the appointment of Kimberly Bergey and appointing a resident of the second judicial district to the State Board of Education.

Re: Letter regarding State Board of Education Appointment

It has recently come to our attention that Governor Dunleavy appointed Kimberly Bergey, a resident of Palmer, as the representative on the State Board of Education from the second judicial district. The second judicial district serves the boroughs of Nome, North Slope and the Northwest Arctic and the school districts within those boundaries. Since March, the seat had been vacant after the term of Unalakleet resident, Jeffrey Erickson expired. The governor's website still does not mention that Bergey was appointed to the state school board at all, though it has been more than two months since she was named.

Appointments to the Alaska State Board of Education are clearly set forth in AS 14.07.085. AS 14.07.085 provides that members of the board shall be appointed by the governor subject to confirmation by a majority of the members of the legislature in joint session. Board members oversee the state's education system. One member shall be appointed from each of the four judicial districts and three from the state at large, with at least one member representing regional education attendance areas.

Board members that are appointed to represent a specific judicial district should reside in that judicial district as required by law and to provide for adequate representation. Representation from each judicial district provides balanced representation from all school districts across the state and is important for equal and fair representation on a statewide board. Requiring board members to live in each judicial district gives the board member the opportunity to hear directly from the region and its residents about each area's school funding, curriculum, cultural, language and infrastructure needs. As one of the largest states in the USA and with a diverse mix of residents and cultures it is even more important that all school districts have regional representation.

We urge Governor Dunleavy to rescind the appointment of Kimberly Bergey and appoint a resident of the second judicial district to the State Board of Education.

Northwest Arctic Borough School District

North Slope Borough

Bering Straits School District

Nome School District