

Superintendent Report

The North Slope Borough School District is transitioning district leadership and will be selecting a new superintendent. The Board met on April 3 and 4, 2019 and approved Alaska Association of School Boards to facilitate the superintendent search. In addition, the school board required the superintendent to identify leadership transition authority identified in BP2210. The following memo will summarize the status of the district and tasks which require attention until the new superintendent is identified and given the authority to assume district responsibilities. This memo was updated due to changes in scheduled calendar events and the superintendent search process.

Report:

The primary purpose of this report is to inform and prepare a new superintendent with ability to select and build a team to lead the district. It is the outgoing superintendent's intention to first balance the budget, then leave maximum ability for a new superintendent to recommend changes to reorganize around a new vision and a successful team of his or her choosing.

Revised BP2210 Superintendent Designee

At the April 3, 2019 Work Session/Special Meeting and April 4, 2019 Regular meeting, the school board identified Kathy Ahgeak as the interim superintendent and then later acknowledged administrative authority according to BP2210. In the absence of the superintendent, Assistant Superintendent, Chris Aguirre, will serve as acting superintendent. In the event the Assistant Superintendent cannot serve, then Interim Director of Teaching and Learning Kathy Ahgeak will serve as acting superintendent. In the event that neither of these administrators can serve, the Director of Human Resources Robyn Burke will serve as the Chief Operating Officer and fill the role of acting superintendent.

In order to allow for a smooth transition for the next Superintendent, the following is established:

Kathy Ahgeak will be included at all levels of district leadership to facilitate a good transition. This will include working with the administrator transition team until the selection process has been completed.

- On May 1, 2019, Kathy Ahgeak was identified as one of two superintendent finalists.

Chris Aguirre finalized his decision to resign at the end of June 2019. Chris will act as a transition facilitator and facilitate a transition team of executive administrators to be selected by the identified leaders in BP2210.

Budget Status

The board passed scenario H to balance to budget for the 2019-20 school-year. Scenario H was designed to keep cuts as far from the classroom and schools as possible. The district employees effected were made up of different job classifications: tenured certificated, non-tenured certificated, classified salaried, and classified hourly. All personnel notified that the 2018-19 assignments were eliminated were given the option to apply for positions in which they were qualified and interested. The tenured certificated personnel were given a temporary assignment in a currently vacant position. All of these personnel will either accept their new assignments or wait for a new superintendent to be hired and seek a transfer. At the end of the budget process to balance revenue with expenditures, the district has a financial plan to both afford appropriate raises for all personnel and maintain the resources to meet the district strategic goals and student needs.

The Board will have a clean annotated copy of the budget passed April 4, 2019 in the May 8, 2019 meeting packet. The budget book will not be presented for revisions again until changes are finalized by the borough or state funding decisions. It is anticipated that an additional \$615,000 will be approved from the state at the end of May or in June. If this occurs, the board will need to conduct a special meeting to make final budget adjustments. The administrative team and the new superintendent will be charged with making final recommendations for the board to consider and approve.

Budget Management and Grant Changes

Until more money is appropriated or a new superintendent is selected by the school board, no further changes to the budget will be proposed without board action. Similarly, no changes in grant writing or activities will be approved until the new superintendent is able to review all aspects of personnel and budget impact. Please support this budget management for the end of the 2019-20 school year to allow a new superintendent maximum flexibility and opportunity for success.

Anticipated Additional Funds and Organization Changes Under New Superintendent Leadership

The Forward Team made of executive level administrators are working on organizational change proposals after the new superintendent is selected. These proposals will be presented once additional funds are confirmed by the state and/or borough. These proposals will include changes to in-service delivery to support efficiencies.

There Is No Reduction in Force

There has been some confusion from a few tenured certificated personnel about the district administrator budget cuts. The confusion is in a special condition of employment law around a state provision called Reduction in Force (RIF). A RIF can only be considered in a very narrow set of circumstances which have not occurred during this budget session. A RIF means that tenured personnel can be non-retained without the offer of any contract for the following school year. In the event that tenured personnel non-retained due to budget issues, then a board approved RIF plan must be put in place. NSBSD did not RIF any tenured employee. With or without budget issues, the state of Alaska and board policy allows for the superintendent to assign a certified employee any position including administrator of teacher assignment. If this complaint is presented to the board it will be necessary to consult the school law attorney to appropriately follow personnel requirements for NSBSD and Alaska.

Budget Cut Scenarios Considered

Consolidation and elimination of district positions were based on seeking efficiencies. For example, Assessment and Curriculum/Instruction Departments both are connected in all data collection, instructional assessment, and professional development among many other functions. These are not two separate departments but functions of the same work. These two departments were combined. Iñupiaq Education and Federal Programs Departments similarly operated separately yet served the same population of students. Federal programs are less of a standalone department and more of a set of rules, funding sources and access to competitive grants. Combining these two departments blends all effort for Indian Education and Iñupiaq Education efforts.

Maintenance and Operations (M&O) Department historically managed the borough's obligations of construction and major maintenance through MOAs and the personnel benefits of housing assignments and management. Recent changes in the Human Resources Department and the North Slope Borough eliminated both of these responsibilities from M&O. A position was reduced and the primary focus of M&O is now on preventative maintenance and developing the 6-year CIP needs list through the CIP committee and working with the NSB. This change will allow for this M&O to be responsive and focused. The NSB CIPM project managers will work with NSBSD and report to the school board on project status and priority setting.

A Fair Labor Standard Act analysis of non-exempt employees' overtime was conducted. It was determined that some positions needed to be reclassified as exempt to reduce unbudgeted overtime costs. The analysis included salary amount, type of work, supervisory responsibility, ability to make hiring recommendations or decisions, discretion and independent judgment. Overall these changes will need to be reviewed with the new superintendent and administrative team once new leadership is selected.

Principal Vacancies

Where ever possible the school sites will conduct a principal search and look for a positive community fit for local leadership. The final decision must be made by the superintendent of schools. The outgoing superintendent will not finalize any of these assignments. The new superintendent will work with the administrative team to ensure a good fit and focus for each of these new hires.

As of the posting of this memo (May 2, 2019), the following principal positions are vacant:

PHO: Both principal and assistant principal are vacant.

PIZ: Principal position is vacant.

AIN: Principal position is vacant.

ATQ: Principal position is vacant.

All other principal positions have been offered contracts at this time.

Transitional Organization Chart Status

A 2019-20 leadership organization chart has been prepared to support the balanced budget. This chart will not be published and made official until a new superintendent and administrative team can review and adjust it to meet leadership needs and expectations. The board must provide oversight that the budget balances. Adding positions without balancing the budget will decrease the possible success rate of new leadership. Please seek a board report in August 2019 to communicate both leadership reorganization and reflect a balanced budget.

Education Summit and Strategic Planning

The education summit is planned for May 20-21, 2019. This event follows the conclusion of the new superintendent selection. It will be important that school board members and the new superintendent participate in this crucial district and community engagement. This even does not take the place of strategic planning. OnStrategy remains the board's facilitators for further development of the district's planning. OnStrategy has requested that the next revision of the plan not be scheduled until the board and new superintendent have developed a communication plan. As soon as the board selects a new superintendent, the board and new superintendent need to contact OnStrategy and discuss a plan to move forward.

Department and School Scope of Work Initiatives

Each school principal and department director has been charged with documenting an active list of work in progress that must be completed by the end of the school year. These administrators will be ready to meet with a new superintendent and school board president to review work status for a smooth transition. There will be an end of year administrator team meeting the first week of June to finalize all work status and fully inform the new superintendent of the status of all work of the district.

Master Scheduling

Teacher Classroom Assignments

Student needs

Course offerings

Material inventory

Summer Purchase Orders

Summer CIP lists

Professional Development Plan

Recruiting progress

Audit process

Grant end of year reporting

New grant proposals

Student Activities Schedule

Other department or school specific tasks will be listed

NSB Proposal to Share Auditors

The NSB has proposed that the borough and district share auditors. This is a reasonable request. The borough and district should enter into an agreement to begin this shared service for the audit year 2019-20 which will take place summer of the 2020-21 school year. It is too late in the audit season to make the switch this summer and fall. The NSBSD is currently already working with our auditors and any change for this year's audit will substantially delay the audit for the fall reporting and deadlines. A meeting will be held between administrator teams of NSB and NSBSD on May 7, 2019 to set the discussion in motion.

Capital Improvement Project Management

Only 3 of the summer projects are on hold from the NSB Mayor's office regarding the departure of our M&O director to work for UIC. Acting M&O Director and M&O Coordinator Kit Barnett will present a brief update the NSB CIPM project status at the May 9, 2019 meeting. All other projects are on schedule and should be completed. The six-year CIP list is available for review, this is the same document presented to the board earlier this winter. Progress updates from the North Slope Borough Capital Improvement Management will need to be requested by the school board to the assembly and mayor's office to ensure communication.

NSBSD/NSBEA Negotiations Status

The board's negotiations spokesperson, John Sedor, will provide a negotiations update May 9, 2019. At this time, the two parties are looking for a mutually agreed upon date tentatively set on May 14, 2019.