

Dear NSB School Board,

My name is Jenna Stringer and I'm a current high school graduate from Barrow High School. I have lived in Barrow for 8 years and am currently interning with the wellness center as I'm pursuing a degree in nursing. What I've noticed from my time in Barrow is the sense of community and how uplifting all the community members are, whether they know you on a personal level or not. Going through the education system in Barrow has instilled a sense of confidence in me towards my academic / leadership abilities, all the while, exposing me to the resilient culture of the Inupiat people. Although I am 18 and would be the youngest member on the board, I see this as a strength, not a weakness. Being fresh out of the North Slope education system, coming right out of my student representative position on the board, gives me a fresh outlook on education as I have partaken in it. Instead of people speaking on issues and policies which affect students by referring back to their friend's experience or their child's experience with it, I am speaking from my personal experience and believe that that is the most powerful. I believe that life is a growing business in which you continually better yourself. So through my letter of intent I hope that we will be able to grow together in our goal to uplift students through academics.

During my time with the North Slope Borough School Board I was able to address issues affecting the youth. Some of which were: cultural preservation, mental wellbeing, substance abuse and others. While it's important that we address education, I think it's equally important to address the underlying issues which can prevent students from performing to their full extent. Although some of these issues may be specific to a certain group of people, if one is suffering then we all suffer. This is why it's important for us, as community members, to address the underlying issues impacting our students. Being a high school graduate from BHS I feel an obligation to uplift students who are currently enrolled in the slope as a way to give back. Although we have made many strides as a community towards solving academic barriers and internal setbacks, there is still plenty of work to be done and I would be honored to be a part of that process.

In learning about the many issues which my classmates and peers were facing, I knew I had to do something about it. With this mentality for change I was the student body president of BHS, the student representative of the NSBSD, and the secretary of the state student government association. Through all of these positions I was able to gain more exposure to the issues impacting the youth which allowed me to advocate better for students across the slope. While this venture is a big one, and I would be filling some big shoes, I do believe I have what it takes to create productive conversations, advocate for pressing issues, and give the youth a voice towards their education. It's fair to say that in this day in age we have become extremely separated due to our affiliations. However, I am confident that we can all come together through the topic of education and student advocacy.

Thank you all for your time,

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Jenna Stringer