

EDUCATION ON THE KENAI PENINSULA



Volume 3

School Years 2009-2019

Superintendent Sean Dusek

Published June 2019

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Education on the Kenai Peninsula

SCHOOL YEARS 2009-2019

PREFACE

The Kenai Peninsula Borough School District has 43 schools and, at 25,600 square miles, covers a land area roughly the size of West Virginia. Each community is unique in its diversity and culture, including four Alaska Native villages with no road access and four Russian village schools.

Every school day, more than 4,400 students are transported a total of nearly 7,741 miles on school buses throughout the district.

In 1984, the district published “Schooling on the Kenai Peninsula” as a written record of education on the Kenai beginning with the formation of the Kenai Borough and the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District in 1964.

In 2009, “Education on the Kenai Peninsula” continued the historical record from 1986 to 2009.

“Education on the Kenai Peninsula Volume 3” will bring the record up to date through June of 2019. The district has worked hard to keep up with an ever-changing world. KPBSD has focused on building personalized learning to serve every type of learner.

Written and Compiled by Superintendent Sean Dusek
June 2019

Section 1 Board of Education

School Board Membership 2009-2019

Date	Name	Position
2009-2010	Joe Arness (Seat 3)	President
	Liz Downing* (Seat 8)	Vice President
	Edith Helen "Sunni" Hilts (Seat 9)	Clerk
	Sammy Crawford (Seat 1)	Treasurer
	Marty Anderson* (Seat 5)	
	Lynn Hohl (Seat 6)	
	Bill Holt (Seat 7)	
	Tim Navarre* (Seat 2)	
	Penny (Karen) Vadla (Seat 4)	
Destini Riley	Student Representative	
2010-2011	Joe Arness (Seat 3)	President
	Liz Downing (Seat 8)	Vice President
	Sammy Crawford* (Seat 1)	Clerk
	Edith Helen "Sunni" Hilts* (Seat 9)	Treasurer
	Marty Anderson (Seat 5)	
	Lynn Hohl* (Seat 6)	
	Bill Holt (Seat 7)	
	Tim Navarre (Seat 2)	
	Penny (Karen) Vadla (Seat 4)	
Julie Rang	Student Representative	
2011-2012	Joe Arness* (Seat 3)	President
	Liz Downing (Seat 8)	Vice President
	Penny (Karen) Vadla* (Seat 4)	Clerk
	Edith Helen "Sunni" Hilts* (Seat 9)	Treasurer
	Lynn Hohl* (Seat 6)	
	Marty Anderson (Seat 5)	
	Sammy Crawford* (Seat 1)	
	Bill Holt* (Seat 7)	
	Tim Navarre (Seat 2)	
Annaleah Ernst	Student Representative	
2012-2013	Joe Arness (Seat 3)	President
	Liz Downing* (Seat 8)	Vice President
	Penny (Karen) Vadla (Seat 4)	Clerk
	Edith Helen "Sunni" Hilts (Seat 9)	Treasurer
	Marty Anderson* (Seat 5)	
	Sammy Crawford (Seat 1)	
	Bill Holt (Seat 7)	
	Lynn Hohl (Seat 6)	
	Tim Navarre* (Seat 2)	
Hayden Beard	Student Representative	

* Year Elected

School Board Membership 2009-2019 (Continued)

Date	Name	Position
2013-2014	Joe Arness (District 3)	President
	Liz Downing (District 8)	Vice President
	Penny (Karen) Vadla (District 4)	Clerk
	Edith Helen "Sunni" Hilts* (District 9)	Treasurer
	Marty Anderson (District 5)	
	Dan Castimore* (District 1)	
	Bill Holt (District 7)	
	Lynn Hohl* (District 6)	
	Tim Navarre (District 2)	
	Evan Boyer	Student Representative
2014-2015	Joe Arness* (District 3)	President
	Edith Helen "Sunni" Hilts (District 9)	Vice President
	Penny (Karen) Vadla* (District 4)	Clerk
	Dan Castimore (District 1)	Treasurer
	Marty Anderson (District 5)	
	Liz Downing (District 8)	
	Bill Holt* (District 7)	
	Lynn Hohl (District 6)	
	Tim Navarre (District 2)	
	Maria Kulikov	Student Representative
2015-2016	Joe Arness (District 3)	President
	Bill Holt (District 7)	Vice President
	Penny (Karen) Vadla (District 4)	Clerk
	Tim Navarre* (District 2)	Treasurer
	Marty Anderson* (District 5)	
	Dan Castimore (District 1)	
	Liz Downing* (District 8) (Resigned Sept. 30, 2016; Mike Illg was appointed on Oct. 3, 2016)	
	Edith Helen "Sunni" Hilts (District 9) Resigned Dec. 15, 2015.	
	Zen (John) Kelly* was appointed on Feb. 1, 2016, elected Oct. 2016.	
	Lynn Hohl (District 6)	
Brian Dusek	Student Representative	

* Year Elected

School Board Membership 2009-2019 (Continued)

Date	Name	Position
2016-2017	Joe Arness (District 3)	President
	Penny (Karen) Vadla (District 4)	Vice President
	Bill Holt (District 7)	Clerk
	Zen (John) Kelly* (District 9)	Treasurer
	Marty Anderson (District 5)	
	Dan Castimore* (District 1)	
	Mike Illg (District 8)	
	Tim Navarre (District 2)	
	Lynn Hohl* (District 6)	
	Brian Dusek	Student Representative
2017-2018	Penny (Karen) Vadla* (District 4)	President
	Zen (John) Kelly (District 9)	Vice President
	Dan Castimore (District 1)	Clerk
	Mike Illg (District 8) * one year term	Treasurer
	Marty Anderson (District 5)	
	Debbie Cary* (District 7)	
	Lynn Hohl (District 6)	
	Tim Navarre (District 2)	
	Jason Tauriainen* (District 3)	
	Calvin Mitzel	Student Representative
2018-2019	Penny (Karen) Vadla (District 4)	President
	Zen (John) Kelly (District 9)	Vice President
	Dan Castimore (District 1)	Clerk
	Mike Illg* (District 8)	Treasurer
	Greg Madden* (District 5)	
	Debbie Cary (District 7)	
	Lynn Hohl (District 6)	
	Matt Morse* (District 2)	
	Jason Tauriainen (District 3)	
	Tanis Lorring	Student Representative

* Year Elected

Section 2 Leadership Teams

Superintendents

Dr. Steve Atwater
Sean Dusek

July 2009 through November 2014
December 2014 through June 2019

Leadership Teams

2009-2010	
Superintendent of Schools	Steve Atwater
Assistant Superintendent, Instruction	Sean Dusek
Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services	Dave Jones
Director of Elementary Education & K-12 Curriculum	Doris Cannon
Director of Federal Programs & K-12 Schools	Norma Holmgaard
Director of Finance	Laurie Olson
Director of Human Resources	Tim Peterson
Director of Information Services	Jim White
Director of Planning & Operations	Dave Spence
Director of Pupil Services	Clayton Holland
Director of Secondary Education & K-12 Assessment	Tim Vlasak

2010-2011	
Superintendent of Schools	Steve Atwater
Assistant Superintendent, Instruction	Sean Dusek
Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services	Dave Jones
Director of Elementary Education & K-12 Curriculum	Doris Cannon
Director of Federal Programs & K-12 Schools	Norma Holmgaard
Director of Finance	Laurie Olson
Director of Human Resources	Tim Peterson
Director of Information Services	Jim White
Director of Planning & Operations	Dave Spence
Director of Pupil Services	Clayton Holland
Director of Secondary Education & K-12 Assessment	Tim Vlasak

Leadership Teams (Continued)

2011-2012	
Superintendent of Schools	Steve Atwater
Associate Superintendent, Instructional Services	Sean Dusek
Associate Superintendent, Instructional Support	Dave Jones
Director of Finance	Laurie Olson
Director of Human Resources	Tim Peterson
Director of Information Services	Jim White
Director of Planning and Operations	Dave Spence
Director of Pupil Services	Clayton Holland
Director of Secondary Education & Student Activities	John O'Brien
Director of Elementary Education & K-12 Curriculum	Doris Cannon
Director of Assessment, Federal Programs, K-12 Schools	Tim Vlasak
Communications	Pegge Erkeneff

2012-2013	
Superintendent of Schools	Steve Atwater
Associate Superintendent, Instructional Services	Sean Dusek
Associate Superintendent, Instructional Support	Dave Jones
Director of Finance	Laurie Olson
Director of Human Resources	Tim Peterson
Director of Information Services	Jim White
Director of Planning and Operations	Dave Tressler
Director of Pupil Services	Clayton Holland
Director of Secondary Education & Student Activities	John O'Brien
Director of Elementary Education & K-12 Curriculum	Doris Cannon
Director of Assessment, Federal Programs, K-12 Schools	Tim Vlasak
Communications	Pegge Erkeneff

Leadership Teams (Continued)

2013-2014	
Superintendent of Schools	Steve Atwater
Associate Superintendent, Instructional Services	Sean Dusek
Associate Superintendent, Instructional Support	Dave Jones
Director of Finance	Laurie Olson
Director of Human Resources	Joann Riener
Director of Information Services	Jim White
Director of Planning and Operations	Dave Tressler
Director of Pupil Services	Clayton Holland
Director of Secondary Education & Student Activities	John O'Brien
Director of Elementary Education & Professional Development	Christine Ermold
Director of Assessment, Federal Programs, K-12 Schools	Tim Vlasak
Communications	Pegge Erkeneff

2014-2015	
Superintendent of Schools	Steve Atwater Sean Dusek (Dec.)
Associate Superintendent, Instructional Services	Sean Dusek
Associate Superintendent, Instructional Support	Dave Jones
Director of Finance	Laurie Olson
Director of Human Resources	Joann Riener
Director of Information Services	Jim White
Director of Planning and Operations	Julie Cisco
Director of Pupil Services	Clayton Holland
Director of Secondary Education & Student Activities	John O'Brien
Director of Elementary Education & Professional Development	Christine Ermold
Director of Assessment, Federal Programs, K-12 Schools	Tim Vlasak
Communications	Pegge Erkeneff

Leadership Teams (Continued)

2015-2016	
Superintendent of Schools	Sean Dusek
Associate Superintendent, Instructional Services	John O'Brien
Associate Superintendent, Instructional Support	Dave Jones
Director of Finance	Laurie Olson
Director of Human Resources & Professional Development	Christine Ermold
Director of Information Services	Eric Soderquist
Director of Planning and Operations	Julie Cisco
Director of Pupil Services	Clayton Holland
Director of Secondary Education & Student Activities	John Pothast
Director of Assessment, Federal Programs, K-12 Schools	Tim Vlasak
Communications	Pegge Erkeneff

2016-2017	
Position	
Superintendent of Schools	Sean Dusek
Associate Superintendent, Instructional Services	John O'Brien
Associate Superintendent, Instructional Support	Dave Jones
Director of Finance	Liz Hayes
Director of Human Resources & Professional Development	Christine Ermold
Director of Information Services	Eric Soderquist
Director of Planning and Operations	David May
Director of Pupil Services	Clayton Holland
Director of Secondary Education & Student Activities	John Pothast
Director of Assessment, Federal Programs, K-12 Schools	Tim Vlasak
Communications	Pegge Erkeneff

Leadership Teams (Continued)

2017-2018	
Superintendent of Schools	Sean Dusek
Associate Superintendent, Instructional Services	John O'Brien
Associate Superintendent, Instructional Support	Dave Jones
Director of Finance	Liz Hayes
Director of Human Resources & Professional Development	Christine Ermold
Director of Information Services	Eric Soderquist
Director of Planning and Operations	David May
Director of Pupil Services	Clayton Holland
Director of Elementary & Secondary Education	John Pothast
Director of Assessment, Federal Programs, K-12 Schools	Tim Vlasak
Communications	Pegge Erkeneff

2018-2019	
Superintendent of Schools	Sean Dusek
Associate Superintendent, Instructional Services	John O'Brien
Associate Superintendent, Instructional Support	Dave Jones
Director of Finance	Liz Hayes
Director of Human Resources & Professional Development	Christine Ermold
Director of Information Services	Eric Soderquist
Director of Planning and Operations	David May Kevin Lyon (May)
Director of Pupil Services	Clayton Holland
Director of Elementary & Secondary Education	John Pothast
Director of Assessment, Federal Programs, K-12 Schools	Tim Vlasak
Communications	Pegge Erkeneff

Section 3

School Administrators

School Administrators School Years 2009-10 through 2018-19

Aurora Borealis Charter				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2016	Larry Nauta			
2016-2019	Cody McCanna			

Chapman				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2012	Sharon Trout			
2012-2019	Conrad Woodhead			

Connections				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2015	Lee Young			
2015-2019	Rich Bartolowits			

Cooper Landing				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2011	Jim Dawson			
2011-2013	Christine Ermold			
2013-2015	Michael Hanson			
2015-2019	Doug Hayman			

Fireweed Academy				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2012-2015	Kiki Abrahamson			
2015-2019	Todd Hindman			

Homer Flex				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2015	Karen Wessel			
2015-2019	Chris Brown			

School Administrators 2009-2019 (Continued)

Homer High			
Years	Principal		Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2013	Dennis Gee		2009-2010 David Larson
2013-2019	Doug Waclawski		2010-2013 Doug Waclawski
			2013-2019 Alison Mall

Homer Middle			
Years	Principal		Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2010	Lisa Callahan		
2010-2014	David Larson		
2014-2019	Kari Dendurent		

Hope			
Years	Principal		Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2011	Jim Dawson		
2011-2012	Monica Hinders		
2012-2016	Michael Hanson		
2016-2019	Doug Hayman		

Kachemak-Selo			
Years	Principal		Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2010	Randy Creamer		
2010-2015	Andy Rothenberger		
2015-2018	Tim Whip		
2018-2019	Michael Wojciak		

Kaleidoscope School of Arts and Science			
Years	Principal		Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2012	Mick Wykis		
2012-2018	Robin Dahlman		
2018-2019	Dawn Grimm		

School Administrators 2009-2019 (Continued)

Kalifornsky (K-Beach) Beach Elementary				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2013	Melissa Linton		2009-2013	Jennifer Dowd
2013-2019	Nate Crabtree			

Kenai Alternative High				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2019	Loren Reese			

Kenai Central High				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2019	Alan Fields		2009-2014	Jim Beeson
			2014-2019	Briana Randle

Kenai Middle				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2011	Paul Sorenson		2009-2011	Vaughn Dosko
2011-2019	Vaughn Dosko		2011-2019	Dan Beck

Marathon School				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2011	Norma Holmgaard			
2011-2013	Randy Neill			
2013-2014	Michael Hanson			
2014-2016	Dan Beck			
2016-2019	Melissa Linton			

McNeil Canyon Elementary				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2019	Pete Swanson			

School Administrators 2009-2019 (Continued)

Moose Pass				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2011	Jim Dawson			
2011-2015	Jason Bickling			
2015-2017	Andy Rothenberger			
2017-2019	Doug Hayman			

Mt. View Elementary				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2011	John Cook		2009-2011	Teri Diamond
2011-2014	Norma Holmgaard		2011-2012	Michael Hanson
2014-2019	Karl Kircher		2012-2014	Karl Kircher
			2014-2015	William Withrow
			2015-2017	John DeVold
			2017-2019	Jenna Fabian

Nanwalek				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2012	Scott Handley			
2012-2018	Nancy Kleine			
2018-2019	Michael Crain			

Nikiski Middle/High				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2011	John O'Brien		2009-2012	Dan Carstens
2011-2019	Dan Carstens		2012-2019	Shane Bostic

Nikiski North Star Elementary				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2010	Lori Manion			
2010-2013	Lisa Callahan			
2013-2019	Margaret Gilman			

School Administrators 2009-2019 (Continued)

Nikolaevsk				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2019	Mike Sellers			

Ninilchik				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2011	Terry Martin			
2011-2019	Jeff Ambrosier			

Paul Banks Elementary				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2013	Benny Abraham			
2013-2019	Eric Pederson			

Port Graham				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2010	Sheryl Hingley			
2010-2011	Daniel Hill			
2011-2013	Sheryl Hingley			
2013-2018	Nancy Kleine			
2018-2019	Josh Hinds			

Razdolna				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2010	Doug Waclawski			
2010-2018	Tim Whip			
2018-2019	Greg Melvin			

Redoubt Elementary				
Years	Principal		Years	Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2015	John Pothast		2012-2013	Jen Dowd
2015-2019	William Withrow			

School Administrators 2009-2019 (Continued)

River City Academy			
Years	Principal		Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2010	Greg Wilbanks		
2010-2019	Dawn Edwards-Smith		

Formerly Peninsula Optional. Moved to the Skyview Middle School facility June 2019.

Seward Elementary			
Years	Principal		Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2017	David Kingsland		
2017-2019	Alan Haskins		

Seward High			
Years	Principal		Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2019	Trevan Walker		

Seward Middle			
Years	Principal		Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2010	John Hersrud		
2010-2015	Jason Bickling		
2015-2017	Andy Rothenberger		
2017-2019	Jenny Martin		

Skyview High			
Years	Principal		Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2014	Randy Neill	2009-2011	Curt Schmidt
		2011-2013	Johnnie Cotton

This school closed in June 2014 and merged with Soldotna High School.

Skyview Middle			
Years	Principal		Asst./Vice Principal
2014-2019	Sarge Truesdell	2014-2015	Tony Graham
		2015-2019	Jill DuFloth

This school opened the Fall of 2014 in the previous Skyview High School facility.

School Administrators 2009-2019 (Continued)

Soldotna Elementary			
Years	Principal		Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2011	Carolyn Cannava		
2011-2016	Teri Diamond		
2016-2019	Austin Stevenson		

Soldotna High			
Years	Principal		Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2015	Todd Syverson		2009-2014 Tony Graham
2015-2019	Tony Graham		2014-2019 Randy Neill

Soldotna Middle			
Years	Principal		Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2011	Sharon Mook		2009-2011 Sarge Truesdell
2011-2014	Sarge Truesdell		2011-2014 Curt Schmidt
<i>This school was closed June 2014.</i>			

Soldotna Montessori			
Years	Principal		Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2017	Mo Sanders		
2017-2019	John DeVold		

Soldotna Prep			
Years	Principal		Asst./Vice Principal
2014-2019	Curt Schmidt		
<i>This school was opened the Fall of 2014 in the previous Soldotna Middle School facility.</i>			
<i>This school was closed June 2019 and merged with Soldotna High School.</i>			

Sterling Elementary			
Years	Principal		Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2013	Christine Ermold		
2013-2019	Denise Kelly		

School Administrators 2009-2019 (Continued)

Susan B. English			
Years	Principal		Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2013	Sheryl Hingley		
2013-2014	Judy Standafer		
2014-2017	Alan Haskins		
2017-2019	Josh Hinds		

Tebughna			
Years	Principal		Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2010	Donald Frashier		
2010-2015	Marilyn Johnson		
2015-2016	Richard Breske		
2016-2018	Pam Potter		
2018-2019	Michael Allen		

Tustumena Elementary			
Years	Principal		Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2012	Bob VanDerwege		
2013-2019	Doug Hayman		

Voznesenka			
Years	Principal		Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2011	Alex Trout		
2011-2019	Michael Wojciak		

West Homer Elementary			
Years	Principal		Asst./Vice Principal
2009-2010	John Hurley		
2011-2016	Ray Marshall		
2016-2019	Eric Waltenbaugh		

Section 4

Steve Atwater 2009-2014

Dr. Steve Atwater was hired as superintendent of the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District beginning July 2009. This was after successfully transitioning from his role as Superintendent of the Lake and Peninsula School District to KPBSD in 2008-09 as the Assistant Superintendent of Instruction. His tenure as superintendent began the transition from Dr. Donna Peterson who held the superintendent's position for 10 years.

Dr. Atwater led the district toward a comprehensive instructional approach that included timely and accurate assessments to support collaborative efforts by school staff. The development of a long-term strategic plan supported these efforts through a focus on Academic Success, Organizational Excellence and Community/Family Engagement. The approach to strategic planning included refined quality processes that solicited a wide variety of input from all stakeholders. This approach was new to the district and allowed for a comprehensive plan that shifted the focus of instruction to the individual student in a research-based manner.

The district experienced great success and significant changes during Dr. Atwater's years. Dr. Atwater was recognized as the Alaska Superintendent of the Year in 2013 for all his improvement efforts at KPBSD. As the strategic plan was implemented, the district experienced growth in the graduation rate and crossed the 80% mark for the first time. In the 2010-2011 school year, the district's presence on digital platforms expanded to include Facebook and Twitter, a mobile app, and Dr. Atwater's weekly blog posts. Dr. Atwater met with site councils, parents and community partners through the new district Key Communicator program. The district implemented six early release days for students throughout the 2012-13 school year to provide the necessary time for staff to collaborate. This innovative practice allowed a systematic approach to collaborative practices to benefit overall student learning.

In 2014, the district celebrated 50 years in existence. KPBSD had grown to 44 schools serving 8,800 students.

Some other significant events in KPBSD included the reconfiguration of the Soldotna area secondary schools. Instead of two high schools serving the area, the district implemented an innovative approach to supporting 9th graders through a "freshmen house" concept. The Skyview facility was reconfigured to the area's middle school serving grades 7 and 8, the original Soldotna Middle school became the 9th grade school while, Soldotna High School was reconfigured to serve grades 10-12. These reconfigurations generated additional academic opportunities for the secondary students in the Soldotna area.

After a focus on instruction and organizational excellence in KPBSD, Dr. Atwater retired in the fall of 2014. He provided a new perspective on improvement that benefited all schools in the district and he definitely left the district better than he found it.

Section 5

Sean Dusek 2014-2019

Sean Dusek assumed the role of Superintendent of the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District as an interim in December of 2014 and on a permanent basis starting in the fall of 2015. He held the role of Assistant Superintendent of Instruction during Dr. Atwater's tenure and held a number of positions in KPBSD throughout his entire career, which began at Skyview High School in 1993 as a math teacher. This background allowed Mr. Dusek to be well grounded in the history of KPBSD and to work with some of the most innovative leaders KPBSD has ever known.

Mr. Dusek was able to see the completion of Dr. Atwater's strategic plan that supported efforts in the next steps to move KPBSD into the world of personalization of student learning that promoted opportunities for students 24/7. Distance education, internships, concurrent credit and personalized learning were the hallmarks of this era. This set the stage for performance-based learning that is based on learning growth of the individual student, not seat-time in a classroom.

The district continued to experience success in a number of areas academically including significant gains in the graduation rate. The district crossed the mid-80% range during this time, primarily due to improvements with Alaska Native students. The district directed efforts to ensure achievement gaps were eliminated through designated oversight that promoted collaboration with key stakeholders and community organizations. An emphasis on bringing in and promoting outside cultural opportunities for all students positively impacted the closing of student achievement gaps.

The strategic plan emphasized a rigorous curriculum, a relevant learning experience and a highly responsive learning environment to ensure those behind were supported and those ahead were challenged. The basis of the entire instructional model was high quality, positive student relationships with staff. Every student must have an adult advocate that cares about them as a person and can support them through their school-age challenges. Kids truly come first.

Communications through multiple digital platforms grew, as schools shared their stories of success on school social media sites, and a new platform for district wide emergency communications was put in place. Superintendent Dusek engaged with our communities through his district Twitter account, Facebook Live, and coffee with the superintendent events.

Some events that impacted the school district during this time were significant state budget issues, a very strong earthquake that impacted the Southcentral region, the hopes of a natural gas pipeline from the North Slope with a terminus on the Kenai Peninsula and a plethora of state awards for staff and students.

Sean Dusek (Continued)

The budget issue has had the most significant impact on the district and has become a huge challenge. When the district experienced forward funding in the late 2000's programs were implemented that continue to bare academic fruit. At this time, significant reductions are being made in KPBSD (starting at the district level) which include school consolidations (with several more on the horizon), increased pupil-teacher ratios, and a reduction in programs.

While there are several challenges, the district has become more efficient through technology, better utilization of district staff, more community partnerships to allow for learning outside of the classroom, and a view toward maximizing space in our existing schools.

Mr. Dusek was able to advance the concept of meeting the needs of the individual child, which expanded learning opportunities beyond the classroom. The approach of relationships first has become a focal point at all of the schools and will drive improvements in the foreseeable future.

Section 6 Looking Forward

Looking forward, the next decade will be challenging and exciting. Upon Mr. Dusek's retirement, the district will proceed under the leadership of Mr. John O'Brien. Mr. O'Brien began working for KPBSD as the Principal of Nikiski Middle-High School from 2005-2011. From 2011-2015, he served as Director of Secondary Education & Student Activities and then, as the Assistant Superintendent of Instruction from 2015-2019. In April of 2019, the Board of Education appointed Mr. O'Brien as the interim superintendent for the 2019-2020 school year.

With excellent people and students, the district will confidently move forward. Education and the world are changing rapidly. KPBSD stands ready to meet the challenges and continue to provide its students with a world-class education and to prepare them for their futures.