



KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Office of Superintendent

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May 18, 2016

Conference Committee on HB256 and HB257
State Capitol
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Kelly, Senator MacKinnon, Senator Hoffman, Representative Neuman, Representative Thompson, and Representative Gara:

I am writing you to express my concern and dissatisfaction with the actions taken by the Conference Committee on the Operating and Mental Health Budgets: [HB 256 and HB 257](#) late on May 17, 2016.

The Kenai Peninsula Borough School District has worked diligently and in good faith with the Alaska State Legislature to develop an appropriate budget that does our part to support our state in meeting the current fiscal realities. While I understand the financial situation the state is in, it is very troubling for the legislature to make the equivalent of a \$50 BSA cut—on the last day of school. We spent nine months developing our budget which includes over \$3 million in reductions, worked closely with legislators, and have made a commitment to teacher contracts for the school year beginning in August.

At our May 2016 school board meeting, based on the inclusion of the BSA increase in our FY17 budget, the district finally took steps to move forward to provide for staff and student stability and issue all contracts for the 2016-2017 school year. I had been surprised that there were no funding reductions by the legislature to K-12 education, and only took this action after the Governor and both bodies in the legislature had already affirmed the statutory increase to the base student allocation.

We have worked on our budget in a rigorous and transparent manner since August of 2015. The action the Conference Committee took late on the evening of May 17, 2016, and the day before the constitutional limit on the legislative session, is less than transparent, and did not allow for a public input process.

Today is the last day of school in our district. Our district has issued contracts that cannot be withdrawn. At this late date, KPBSD has limited options to reduce our budget, and it is now too late to make staffing adjustments. The Conference Committee's actions create new turmoil very late in the entire process.

I strongly encourage you to honor the statutory increase to the BSA as was done much earlier in the session by both bodies. We have committed and will continue to be committed to working with you on how best to deal with the fiscal challenges in this state, but strongly urge you to include school districts early in the process and continue working closely with us throughout the entire process.

Respectfully,



Sean Dusek
Superintendent of Schools

cc: Representative Mike Chenault
Representative Kurt Olson
Representative Paul Seaton
Representative Louise Stutes
Senator Peter Micciche
Senator Gary Stevens