

April 9, 2026

Quyana tailuci Lake and Peninsula School District Board,

Wiinga Atka Naucetaaq Trefon. Nuurillengami. Ipaka Michael Trefon. Taliman mikelngullraanka- Kiya, Kristen, Gabby, Aubree, Hayden-llu Nuurilleng Skooluami.

Hello. My name is Evelyn Trefon. I live in Newhalen. My husband is Michael Trefon and I have 5 children enrolled at Newhalen school- Kiya, Kristen, Gabby, Aubree, and Hayden. Thank you for the opportunity to speak today. I am speaking for myself and my family.

(Unpack food bank box.)

I come before you as someone who cares deeply about our schools, our children, and the future of our communities across this district. The decisions you are making right now — especially around how and what to fund in the budget — will have lasting impacts on every village, every family, and every student you serve.

First, I urge you to prioritize funding local jobs through the general fund and not the endowment fund. In Lake and Peninsula, our schools are more than places of learning — they are the backbone of our communities. Our schools are some of the largest employers in our communities. When we invest in local hires, we are investing in families, stability, and long-term commitment to our students. People who live here understand our culture, our very day challenges, and our strengths. Keeping those dollars local strengthens everything. When the board chooses to fund local positions through guaranteed funding, you are choosing to support families who live here year-round and who are invested in our kids beyond the classroom. Keeping those jobs local strengthens not just our schools, but the stability of our entire region. Funding them through the savings account destabilizes communities' members confidence in local jobs through the school.

Second, we must do a better job working with our communities to provide food for school meal programs. The state of Alaska provides a breakfast program that our district has the opportunity to apply for on behalf of school sites. food security is a real and daily concern. Our community doesn't have much left to give. We are being donated food bank of Alaska boxes. When we work together, we can create a system that feeds our kids reliably, respectfully, and in a way that reflects who we are and how we live.

Third, I strongly urge you to preserve funding for student activities and to reinstate dedicated leadership for them. The recent decision to pull away the Activities Director role from the current employee is not a fair way to treat such a dedicated individual and it doesn't benefit a district as large and complex as ours. That role requires focused attention. Activities are not optional for our communities — they are essential. They keep students engaged, connected, and motivated. Without strong leadership, those programs will suffer, and so will our kids.

Next, I also want to address concerns about the budget itself. We are seeing inflated line items and a lack of clear, consistent information. That needs to stop. Our communities deserve

transparency and accuracy. Clear, straightforward communication must come from the finance department so that board members and the public can make informed decisions with confidence. Without that clarity, trust erodes.

I also ask that you make it a priority to visit school sites across the district. Lake and Peninsula is vast, and each community is unique. Decisions made from afar cannot fully capture what is happening on the ground. Being present in our schools — seeing classrooms, talking with staff, and listening to students — leads to better decisions rooted in reality.

If we just shut things down such as meal programs, and schools, it doesn't serve anyone. We can't give up and need to have clear paths forward and not abandon dreams. Leaving villages, community members, and students out of conversations and decisions that directly effect us, should not be the standard mode of operation.

Please include all villages that Lake and Peninsula Borough represents on your official letterhead. The current letterhead doesn't not, and to the best of my knowledge has not included Iliamna on there.

And finally, I ask you to hire a superintendent who lives in the district. Leadership should not be remote. Our district deserves someone who is part of our communities, who understands the current realities of rural life, and who builds trust through presence and accessibility. Living here matters. It shows commitment, accountability, and respect for the people you serve.

These priorities are not about adding more — they are about focusing on what matters most and doing it well.

Invest in local people. Work with our communities to feed our children. Restore strong leadership for activities. Demand transparency in budgeting. Show up in our schools. And choose leadership that lives among us.

Lake and Peninsula is strong because of its people. Our schools should reflect that strength.

Thank you for your time and for your service to our district.