

April 1, 2026

Dear Ms Luke, Mrs. Stenson, President and Members of the School Board,

I am writing in support of Kacy Lou Leyba, Counselor and Student Services Coordinator with the Lake and Peninsula School District (LPSD), and the continuation of her contract with LPSD into the next school year 2026-2027.

As a public health nurse serving your region from 2021-2025, I was able to see first-hand the many benefits, innovations, and love Kacy Lou brings to the district. She has been and continues to be so important to your students and your staff

- in her travels to the schools;
- by providing in-person and remote counseling services;
- establishing programs benefitting the mental, physical, and social wellbeing and growth of students of all ages; and
- working with teachers, community members and leaders and other providers to care for children and teens in LPSD.

There are many challenges the district faces in serving students across such a large geographic area accessible only by plane, as well as unique challenges students and families have in accessing services including social-emotional support and behavioral health services. In my conversations with community members, clinics, tribal and city councils - the emotional well-being of children and youth was consistently a top priority in every community throughout the region. A critical piece of a child's well-being is having a handful of trusted adults they can turn to. When I was in the classroom talking with kids about who their trusted adults were, Kacy Lou's name often came up. She has been an important part of many children's lives when there can be significant changes among caregivers at home, turnover in local teachers, or lack of mental health staffing in remote communities.

I know that Kacy Lou is moving to a community outside of LPSD and near Anchorage. However, I feel that Kacy Lou's dedication to LPSD students and staff, her proven ability to provide remote services, her leaning in everywhere she is needed and at all hours, and her strong connections with students, families, staff, and community members cannot be replaced.

I hope I am not overstepping here, and I know that the district has difficult decisions to make, but a soft transition, particularly for such a vital role and for continuing the work of such an impactful person on your staff may really help your students and staff succeed in the new school year as you look to continue counseling services within LPSD.

Please consider this letter among your decision for staffing next year. I truly miss being able to travel to your communities, but please know that I will continue to send resources to your team and will continue to champion your region from where I am now.

Thank you,
Kumi



Kumi Rattenbury, Nurse Consultant 2

Alaska Department of Health | Division of Public Health
Section of Epidemiology | Infectious Disease Program

P: 907.269.8000 | F: 907.563.7868

3601 C St, Suite 540, Anchorage, AK 99503

Kumi.Rattenbury@alaska.gov