Sitka School District Mission:
The Sitka School District will intentionally develop
Haa Latseení
(Our Strength of Mind, Body, and Spirit)
to inspire and prepare students to be compassionate, empowered,
and equipped critical thinkers within a global community.

School Board Meeting

Wednesday, September 2, 2026 | 5:45 PM | Sitka High School Library, 1000 Lake Street, Sitka, AK 99835

Proposed Agenda

1. **Recognitions - 5:45 - 6:00 p.m.**
    - **Bridgette Reynolds - SHI's Distinguished Educator Award**
2. **Call to Order - 6:00 p.m.**
3. **Flag Salute**
4. **Land Acknowledgment**
5. **Roll Call**
6. **Approval of the Proposed Agenda and Consent Agenda**
    6.a. Minutes from August 12, 2026 School Board Meeting
    6.b. Personnel Report
    6.c. Revision to AR 3290 Gifts, Grants, and Bequests
7. **Persons to be Heard**
8. **Special Reports: Government to Government**
9. **School Highlights - Sitka High School**
10. **Reports and Presentations**
11. **Board Member Reports**
12. **Administrative Reports**
    12.a. Business Manager Report
    12.b. Enrollment Update
    12.c. Superintendent Update
13. **New Business**
    13.a. Approve Resolution Regarding Artificial Intelligence
    13.b. Approve Resolution Regarding Dyslexia
    13.c. Approve Resolution Regarding Reconsideration of Instructional and Library Materials
    13.d. Approve Resolution Regarding Data
    13.e. Approve Resolution Regarding Absenteeism
    13.f. Approve Resolution Regarding Homeless
    13.g. Approve Resolution Regarding Threat Assessment
    13.h. Executive Session - Superintendent Jenson's Mid-Year Evaluation Review
14. **Future Agenda Items/Upcoming Events**
    14.a. September 9, 2026 - Policy Committee Meeting | 5:00 p.m. | DO Boardroom

14.b. September 12-13, 2026 - AASB Fall Boardsmanship Academy - Anchorage

14.c. October 7, 2026 - Next Regular School Board Meeting | 5:45 p.m. | Harrigan Centennial Hall

15. **Final Comments from the Public**
16. **Final Comments from the Board**
17. **Adjournment**

Note: All items listed under Agenda & Consent Agenda are considered routine by the School Board and will be approved in one motion. Items may be removed at the request of a School Board Member.

Note: Meetings will adjourn by 10:30 p.m. Alaska Standard Time (or Alaska Daylight Standard Time) unless by a majority vote of the board the meeting is extended 30 minutes to 11:00 p.m. Further 30-minute extensions will require each a separate motion that will require a unanimous vote of those members present and constituting a quorum.

Note: The School Board reserves the right to go into executive session as and to the extent permitted by AS 44.62.310 and Board Bylaw 9321. An executive session may be called to consider the following subjects: (1) matters, the immediate knowledge of which would clearly have an adverse effect upon the finances of the District; (2) subjects that tend to prejudice the reputation and character of any person, provided the person may request a public discussion; (3) matters which by law, municipal charter, or ordinance are required to be confidential; and (4) matters involving consideration of government records that by law are not subject to public disclosure. The motion to go into executive session must clearly specify the subject of the proposed session without defeating the purpose of addressing the subject in executive session.

SITKA SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
August 12, 2026 – 5:45 p.m.
District Office Boardroom

Sitka School District

Superintendent: Dr. Deidre Jenson

1. RECOGNITIONS

- Cindy Duncan – KGH Microsoft Pathway School
- New Teaching Staff

2. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 p.m. by School Board President Phil Burdick.

3. FLAG SALUTE

4. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

5. ROLL CALL

In attendance were Kat Richards, Matt Potter, Courtney Amundson, Paul Rioux (via Zoom), and Board President Phil Burdick. The meeting was quorate.

6. APPROVAL OF THE PROPOSED AGENDA AND CONSENT AGENDA

a. **MINUTES FROM JUNE 16, 2026 (MEETING CANCELLED)**
b. **MINUTES FROM JUNE 30, 2026 SPECIAL SCHOOL BOARD MEETING**
c. **PERSONNEL REPORT**
d. **REVIEW STUDENT HANDBOOKS**

Ms. Amnundson moved, and **Ms. Richards** seconded to approve the proposed agenda and consent agenda, as presented.

The motion PASSED without opposition.

7. PERSONS TO BE HEARD

There were no persons to be heard at this meeting.

8. SPECIAL REPORTS: GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT

There was no Government to Government report at this meeting.

9. SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS

Cultural Director Jule LeBlanc shared with the board regarding her department's summer programming.

10. REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

a. DISTRICT GRADING PRESENTATION

Lois Ballard-Stephenson, of 49th Star Consulting reported to the board regarding the progress made in upgrading the district grading policies and procedures during the district inservice.

11. BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Mr. Rioux shared that he had been engaged in policy work and the resolutions process, cross-referencing AASB resolutions with resolutions around the state to find gaps.
Mr. Potter stated that he has been familiarizing himself with meeting minutes, agendas, and board policies.
Mr. Burdick reported that he had been to Delta Junction to take part in the AASB board's summer meeting.

12. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Business Manager Kathrynn Hollis-Buchanan informed the board of the following:

- The business office has transitioned to a new payroll system, and has a planned finance system conversion scheduled for July of 2027.
- The district will receive an estimated $880,965 in Secure Rural Schools funds and $44,000 in Impact Aid.

Superintendent Jenson reported on several topics:

- Professional development during district-wide inservice included: a full day of administrator training, revising district grading practices, and secretary training.
- School meal prices will be unchanged.
- The district is piloting two ELA curriculum.
- Update on education legislation.

13. NEW BUSINESS

a. APPROVAL OF THE TECH REFRESH PLAN

Ms. Richards moved, and **Mr. Potter** seconded to approve the 2026 Tech Refresh plan, as presented.

There was no public comment.

The board asked clarifying questions regarding the purchase of technology. Dr. Jenson explained to the

board that the purchase of technology, as laid out in this plan, would be contingent upon funding.

Following a roll call vote, the motion PASSED unanimously.

b. INCREASE SUBSTITUTE PAY RATES

Ms. Amundson moved, and **Ms. Richards** seconded to approve the increase in substitute pay, as presented.

There was no public comment.

The board asked some clarifying questions regarding the current sub rate.

Following a roll call vote, the motion PASSED unanimously.

14. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS/UPCOMING EVENTS

- **a. AUGUST 19, 2026 – FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL**
- **b. SEPTEMBER 2, 2026 – SCHOOL BOARD WORK SESSION – SHS LIBRARY**
- **c. SEPTEMBER 2, 2026 – NEXT REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MEETING – SHS LIBRARY**
- **d. SEPTEMBER 9, 2026 – POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING**

15. FINAL COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

There were no final comments from the public.

16. FINAL COMMENTS FROM THE BOARD

There were no final comments from the board.

17. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:39 p.m.

Phil Burdick, President

Courtney Amundson, Clerk

Sitka School District Personnel Report

as of 9/2/26

Certified Employees Recommended for Employment		
Name	Current Position	Date Effective
Certified Employees Left Employment		
Name	Current Position	Date Effective
Classified Employees Recommended for Employment		
Name	Current Position	Date Effective
Patrick Padelford	PARA	8/26
Alex Bayne	PARA	8/26
Kenneth Bradley	PARA	8/26
JoAnn Debell	PS PARA	8/26
Classified Employees Left Employment		
Name	Current Position	Date Effective
Dan Corduan (expected to return)	BMS Para	5/23/26
		5/23/26
Employees Changed Positions		
Name	Current Position/New Position	Date Effective

~~AR 3290 GIFTS, GRANTS AND BEQUESTS~~

AR 3290 – Student Activity Sponsorship and Donor Recognition

When a memorial scholarship fund is created, the District will administer the fund in the following manner:

1. Bequests that provide a scholarship of $1,000/year or less will be administered separately for up to five years at which time the remaining balance will be placed in a general memorial scholarship fund.
2. Bequests that provide a scholarship of $1,000 to $5,000/year will be administered separately for up to ten years at which time the remaining balance will be placed in a general memorial scholarship fund.
3. Bequests that provide a scholarship in excess of $5,000/year will be administered for as long as the family desires.
4. The District will maintain in perpetuity a Memorial Scholarship Fund containing any of the proceeds identified herein.
5. The High School Principal or designee shall develop a process for the awarding of any memorial scholarship funds.

Purpose

To clarify acceptable practices regarding recognition of sponsors and donors in connection with school programs and student activities, including the role of booster clubs, while maintaining compliance with BP 3290 and avoiding the appearance of district endorsement.

1. General Principles

The Sitka School District encourages community support through sponsorships and donations that benefit student activities.
Recognition of sponsors is permitted as long as it does not imply endorsement, promote commercial products, or conflict with educational goals or district policy.

2. Booster Clubs

Booster clubs are independent organizations and may solicit sponsorships to support district activities.
When sponsorship results in public recognition on district property or at district events, the following guidelines apply.

3. Recognition Guidelines

Recognition (e.g., banners, printed programs, PA announcements) must:

- Be limited to the name, logo, and/or slogan of the sponsoring business.
- Not include promotional language, pricing, or calls to action (e.g., "Buy now!" or "Visit our website for deals!").
- Be clearly labeled as recognition, not advertising (e.g., "Proud supporter of Sitka Wolves athletics").
- Avoid references that suggest district or school endorsement, such as "official sponsor of Sitka High School."

4. Signage on School Property

Banners or signage must be:

- Pre-approved by the school principal or designee.
- Limited in duration (e.g., for the season or event sponsored).
- Maintained in good condition and removed promptly after the agreed period.

No signage promoting alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, political candidates/issues, or any message inconsistent with the district's values will be permitted.

5. Use of Funds

All funds raised or donated for student activities must be:

- Deposited into appropriate district or student activity accounts.
- Spent in accordance with district financial procedures and guidelines.

6. Oversight and Exceptions

The Superintendent or designee may develop further guidance or forms to assist in the approval and management of sponsorships.
Any exceptions must be approved by the Superintendent in writing.

Adoption Date: June 8, 1995

Sitka School District

SITKA
SCHOOL DISTRICT
DISCOVER | NURTURE | INSPIRE

300 Kostrometinoff Street
Sitka, Alaska 99835
Phone: (907) 621-8080
Fax: (907) 917-5419
www.sitkaschools.org

Kathrynn Hollis-Buchanan
District Business Manager
09/02/2026 Board Meeting Finance Report

REPORT COVERAGE:
For this board meeting, I am presenting the financial summary through end of day on 8/28/2026.

FY27 BUDGET:

- There is little FY27 budget activity at this time. Prepaid insurances have been expended, which are large portions of our early fiscal year expenditures.
- Budget revision for FY27 revenue will be adjusted when the count is confirmed by the state of Alaska's Department of Education.

Our audit is scheduled for September 14-18, 2026. We are well prepared but have some accruals to finish up before they arrive.

We are in the midst of a transition from Linq payroll to ADP, and that is all consuming. We will be running our first payroll for a pay date of 9/4/26. This transition will provide employees with much better access and control over their personal financial information, pay statements and tax documents. It will help our department to be more efficient and effective as we look towards the transition to a new finance system in the next fiscal year.

I will not be attending the meeting, as the Gorge and Dave Matthews are calling my name, but please don't hesitate to reach out if you have questions about anything presented here.

Sitka School District

August 29, 2026

Monthly Revenue Report

Account No	Account Description	Current Budget	YTD Revenues	Remaining Balance	Percent Outstanding
27-100-000-000-000-011	CITY/BORO APPROPRIATION	0.00	1,366,985.34	-1,366,985.34	#DIV/0
27-100-000-000-000-040	MISC. LOCAL REVENUE	0.00	141.07	-141.07	#DIV/0
27-100-000-000-000-051	FOUNDATION	0.00	2,125,224.00	-2,125,224.00	#DIV/0
Report Total		**0.00**	**3,492,350.41**	**-3,492,350.41**	

Monthly Expense Report

Accounts Summarized By Function	Current Budget	YTD Expenditures	Remaining Balance	Percent Available
100 - REGULAR INSTRUCTION	8,907,729.00	419,444.52	8,488,284.48	95.29%
120 - BILINGUAL/BICULTURAL	273,490.00	997.60	272,492.40	99.64%
130 - ENRICHMENT	2,522.00	0.00	2,522.00	100.00%
140 - CORRESPONDENCE STUDY	370,256.00	4,658.47	365,597.53	98.74%
160 - VOCATIONAL EDUCATION	404,404.00	2,947.58	401,456.42	99.27%
200 - SPECIAL ED INSTRUCTION	5,326,392.00	66,125.96	5,260,266.04	98.76%
220 - SPECIAL ED SUPPORT	1,280,816.00	25,618.38	1,255,197.62	98.00%
300 - PUPIL SUPPORT	9,669.00	0.00	9,669.00	100.00%
320 - GUIDANCE	712,775.00	2,643.68	710,131.32	99.63%
330 - HEALTH SERVICES	145,136.00	2,426.94	142,709.06	98.33%
350 - SUPPORT SERVICES	63,800.00	8,028.93	55,771.07	87.42%
352 - LIBRARY SERVICE	8,000.00	0.00	8,000.00	100.00%
400 - SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION	1,364,352.00	7,289.14	1,357,062.86	99.47%
450 - SCHOOL ADMIN. SERVICES	813,628.00	8,729.84	804,898.16	98.93%
510 - DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION	157,052.00	57,005.09	100,046.91	63.70%
511 - SCHOOL BOARD	134,113.00	12,686.78	121,426.22	90.54%
512 - SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE	459,343.00	25,240.45	434,102.55	94.51%
518 - SAFETY AND SECURITY	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	100.00%
550 - DISTRICT ADMIN. SUPPORT	803,089.00	189,194.70	613,894.30	76.44%
556 - TECHNOLOGY SERVICE	188,830.00	156,622.04	32,207.96	17.06%
600 - MAINTENANCE/OPERATIONS	1,888,146.00	362,271.36	1,525,874.64	80.81%
700 - Athletics	305,287.00	0.00	305,287.00	100.00%
900 - FUND TRANSFERS	200,000.00	0.00	200,000.00	100.00%
Report Total	**23,819,829.00**	**1,351,931.46**	**22,467,897.54**	
		Percentage of School Year Remaining		**88.89%**
		Percentage of Fiscal Year Remaining		**83.33%**

*The State has required all Districts to recognize and report on their financial statements their portion of the TRS/PERS relief as passed by 2008 Legislature appropriation. This causes the total budget to appear inflated by 2,404,470 from the approved 2011 budget due to this recognition. The value is represented in the Revenue section as TRS On-Behalf (2,270,918) and PERS On-Behalf (133,552) and the Expenditure section it is included in the various functions as a portion of benefits (2,404,470). No actual dollars pass through the District.

Enrollment (Headcount) Summary
As of 8/28/2026

	XTS	KGH	BMS	SHS	PHS	RCH	Total
PK	30					0	30
KG	53					8	61
1	61					4	65
2		55				4	59
3		65				10	75
4		79				4	83
5		69				7	76
6			61			7	68
7			71			10	81
8			59			5	64
9				84	6	3	93
10				80	8	8	96
11				63	11	5	79
12				85	9	5	99
Bldg Total	144	268	191	312	34	80	1029

SITKA SCHOOL DISTRICT
DISCOVER | NURTURE | INSPIRE

Dr. Deidre Jenson
Superintendent Report
9/2/26 Board Meeting

Professional Development: Strategy 1: We will identify strategies to close learning gaps and Strategy 5: We will develop an internal and external District communication plan.

- August In-service was very busy this year. We were one day shorter than we usually are due to the calendar that we adopted. This plan was made due to the way holidays land, but also allowing us two in-service days in April because we are hosting music fest which will fill the high school with students from around the region.
- Topics consisted of several initiatives: Grading for both elementary and secondary; which the board heard about last meeting, Project Transform; a grant opportunity from AASB, Schoolinks with our secondary staff; which provides post-secondary planning communication for our students and their families, ELA pilot curriculum training at the elementary schools.

School Start up: Students are happy to be back in the buildings, and staff are also happy to have students in the building. The first few weeks have been very busy, but relatively smooth.

ADP (Automatic Data Processing): Strategy 5: We will develop an internal and external District communication plan.

- We are currently implementing a new payroll system through ADP. As with any major system transition, we have experienced a few bumps along the way, but we are working through those issues and continuing to refine our processes. One of the reasons for making this transition now is that the District will be implementing a new finance system in July 2027. Moving payroll first gives us the opportunity to work through implementation challenges and establish new processes before undertaking the larger finance system transition.

Superintendent Travel: AASB Fall Boardsmanship Academy September 12th and 13th, SERRC board meeting Sept. 21st, followed by the Fall Superintendent's conference from the 23rd-26th and taking one personal day off at the end, returning to the office on Tuesday, September 29th.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN SCHOOLS

AASB urges the Alaska Legislature and the Department of Education and Early Development to provide districts with funding, model policy guidance, and professional development to support responsible AI adoption, with particular attention to the needs of small and rural districts that may lack dedicated technology staff. AASB supports integrating AI literacy — including its capabilities, limitations, and ethical use — into student instruction, so that students are prepared to use these tools responsibly rather than encountering them without guidance.

Rationale. Generative AI tools are already in widespread use by students and teachers, often faster than districts have been able to develop policy to guide that use. Without clear local policy, districts face inconsistent practice around plagiarism and academic integrity, uneven protection of student data shared with AI platforms, and wide gaps between students who receive guided instruction in using these tools and those who do not. A growing number of states have moved to require or strongly encourage local AI policies, recognizing that guidance developed at the state level can help districts move faster and avoid duplicating effort, while leaving room for local boards to adapt policy to their own community and staffing capacity. Given the pace of change in this area, districts and the state should expect this policy area to require regular review and updates rather than a fixed, one-time framework.

UNIVERSAL DYSLEXIA SCREENING AND EARLY LITERACY INTERVENTION

AASB urges the Alaska Legislature and the Department of Education and Early Development to require and fund universal screening for dyslexia and other reading difficulties for all students in kindergarten through grade 2, using evidence-based screening instruments approved by the state. AASB urges that screening results trigger timely, structured literacy intervention for identified students, along with clear parent notification when a student shows characteristics of dyslexia. AASB further urges the state to fund training for classroom teachers and reading specialists in evidence-based, structured literacy instruction, recognizing that screening alone does not improve outcomes without staff prepared to act on the results.

Rationale. Reading difficulties, including dyslexia, are most effectively addressed when identified early, yet without a universal, state-supported screening requirement, identification can vary widely from district to district and even school to school. Structured literacy approaches — grounded in explicit, systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, and language structure — have a strong evidence base for supporting students with dyslexia and benefit struggling readers generally. Screening without follow-through is not sufficient: districts need funded intervention time, trained staff, and materials to act on what screening identifies, particularly in small and rural districts where a reading specialist may not be available in every building. This resolution builds on AASB's existing support for the Alaska Reads Act (2.6) by addressing the identification and instructional piece that complements that funding.

RECONSIDERATION OF INSTRUCTIONAL AND LIBRARY MATERIALS

AASB affirms the authority and responsibility of local school boards to adopt clear, written policies governing the selection and reconsideration of instructional and library materials. AASB opposes state mandates that remove this decision-making authority from local boards or that impose statewide reading lists, removal lists, or review processes in place of local reconsideration procedures.

Rationale. Challenges to classroom and library materials have become more frequent and, in some districts, more contentious in recent years, often without a clear or consistently applied local process for handling them. A well-defined reconsideration policy protects both the rights of parents and community members to raise concerns and the professional judgment of educators and librarians in building a collection that serves the whole student body, while preventing individual challenges from disrupting access to materials for all students during an extended review. Because Alaska school boards are best positioned to reflect the values and priorities of their own communities, AASB believes reconsideration processes should remain a matter of local board policy rather than uniform state law.

STUDENT DATA PRIVACY AND SCHOOL DISTRICT CYBERSECURITY

AASB urges the Alaska Legislature and the Department of Education and Early Development to provide dedicated funding and technical assistance to help school districts prevent, detect, and respond to cybersecurity incidents affecting student, staff, and district data. AASB further urges the Legislature to establish clear, workable requirements for reporting data breaches to a designated state authority and for notifying affected families and employees within a reasonable timeframe, and to ensure that any new privacy or monitoring requirements account for the operational and financial realities of small and rural districts.

AASB urges the Alaska Legislature and the Department of Education and Early Development to support school districts in implementing tiered, non-punitive intervention systems for chronically absent students, including early identification, family engagement, and coordination with community and social service partners. AASB further urges the state to provide dedicated funding for attendance support staff, data systems capable of flagging at-risk students in a timely manner, and professional development for staff on root causes of chronic absence. AASB opposes approaches that rely primarily on punitive or exclusionary discipline, such as expulsion, as a response to absenteeism.

Rationale. Recognizing and measuring chronic absenteeism, as addressed in Resolution 1.9, is only the first step; districts also need the resources and systems to act on that data before students fall behind. Effective practice nationally has shifted toward tiered support models — universal prevention for all students, targeted outreach for students showing early signs of disengagement, and intensive, individualized support for students who are already chronically absent — paired with attendance review teams that bring together educators, counselors, and families to identify and address underlying causes such as health, housing, transportation, or mental health barriers. Given Alaska's rural geography, weather-related disruptions, and the distances many students travel to attend school, districts need both flexibility and dedicated resources to build these systems rather than a one-size-fits-all state mandate.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

AASB urges the Alaska Legislature and the Department of Education and Early Development to provide dedicated funding and technical support to help districts meet their obligations to identify, enroll, and support students experiencing homelessness, including students living in shelters, temporary housing, motels, or doubled up with other families. AASB urges the state to ensure districts have adequate resources for school-of-origin transportation, immediate enrollment without normally required records, and coordination between district homeless liaisons and community, housing, and social service agencies. AASB further urges the state to recognize the particular challenges rural and boarding-school districts face in identifying and supporting students facing housing instability, given the added complexity of coordinating support across long distances and multiple communities.

Rationale. Federal law already requires districts to remove barriers to enrollment and to provide stability and support for students experiencing homelessness, but districts often lack the staffing and funding to fully meet these obligations, particularly in identifying students whose housing situation is not immediately visible to school staff. Housing instability is strongly linked to chronic absenteeism, lower academic achievement, and higher mobility between schools, compounding the very disruptions these students most need help to overcome. Alaska's rural geography, high cost of housing, and reliance on boarding programs create added layers of complexity not faced by every state, making a well-supported, locally coordinated liaison system especially important here.

SCHOOL THREAT ASSESSMENT AND EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

AASB urges the Alaska Legislature and the Department of Education and Early Development to provide dedicated funding, training, and technical assistance to help districts establish and maintain these teams, conduct regular multi-agency emergency drills, and keep building-level emergency response plans current. AASB further urges that any state requirements in this area account for the added logistical and financial burden on small and rural districts, where dedicated counseling, mental health, and law enforcement resources are often limited or unavailable locally.

Rationale. Threat assessment — identifying and intervening with a student of concern before an incident occurs — is increasingly recognized as a more effective and less disruptive approach to school safety than physical security measures alone. Districts need both trained personnel and a defined process to evaluate concerning behavior consistently, coordinate with families and outside agencies, and document decisions in a way that protects student rights, including for students with IEPs or 504 plans. Given Alaska's geography, many districts cannot rely on nearby law enforcement or mental health providers to staff a team the way an urban district might, making state-level funding and regional coordination support essential rather than optional.