

II. PRESENT EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

Present Employer: Kenai Peninsula Borough School District

Employer's Address: 148 N. Binkley Street Soldotna, AK 99669

Your Title/Position: Director, Human Resources & Professional Development

Years in Position: 3

Are you presently under contract? Yes: No:

Present Salary: \$129,606

Does your employer know of this application? Yes: No:

III. EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Please list all FULL TIME experience. List present employment above and all others here, beginning with the most recent, and work backward in chronological order. (Please list on additional sheet if necessary.)

DATES OF SERVICE	POSITION/DUTIES	ORGANIZATION ADDRESS	SIZE OF ORGANIZATION # TEACHERS./ # STUDENTS
April 2016-present	Director, Human Resources & Professional Development- Supervise two departments with a total of ten immediate employees who together meet the HR and PD needs of 1200 employees, 400 substitutes, and 4000 volunteers annually. Serve on the Superintendent's Leadership Team and work in close partnership with other district administrators, the district's various legal counsels, and the other district departments to support excellent and equitable education opportunities across 43 school sites. Provide for all recruitment, retention, and advancement needs of certified staff, and manage the Title IIA federal grant that supports those activities. Collect and analyze data to monitor department impacts and deploy resources to maximize department success and support of schools.	Kenai Peninsula Borough School District 148 N. Binkley Street Soldotna, AK 99669	Approximately 650 teachers / 8,000 students
July 2013- June 2016	Director, Elementary Education & Professional Development- Provided leadership for all PreK-6 elementary schools and programs, including districtwide curriculum and instruction tools. Worked closely with the district's K-12 curriculum processes, and supervised both the Title I PreK program, and all elementary level services and programs. Served as the district point of contact for elementary-level parent concerns, provide guidance and support to school administrators in delivering a comprehensive and well-rounded elementary program. Held regular Skype sessions for elementary teachers on topics of concern to keep them informed and gather input. Facilitated the annual collection and analysis of data and subsequent professional development planning process, while overseeing instructional coaches, technology coaches, and coordinators.	Kenai Peninsula Borough School District 148 N. Binkley Street Soldotna, AK 99669	Approximately 650 teachers / 8,000 students

July 2004- June 2013	Principal, Sterling Elementary School- Led the renewal of a neighborhood school that resulted in increased enrollment, the addition of new programs to meet community needs, and strengthened existing programs. Established a Title I funded PreK program and an onsite school program for children significantly impacted by disabilities. Taught art K-6 to enrich the school's program for students and wrote multiple grants to bring in practicing artists in various disciplines. School recognitions included NASA Explorer School, 2005; AK Department of Education's Public School Incentive reward, 2007 & 2008; Nationally Distinguished Title I School, 2010; Inclusive Practices Award from the Governor's Council for Individuals with Disabilities, 2011.	Kenai Peninsula Borough School District 148 N. Binkley Street Soldotna, AK 99669	Approximately 650 teachers / 8,000 students
July 2001- June 2004	Principal Teacher and then Regional Principal for Cooper Landing School, Moose Pass School, and Hope School- Taught 16 K-2 students in a multi-grade setting while also managing school administration duties for one site. Subsequently provided instructional leadership and administration for three rural schools in ways that honored the community's priorities for their schools. Established school/community partnerships that included service-learning projects, meaningfully engaged school volunteers, and established cross-school partnerships that utilized technology to increase student opportunities in both academics and extra-curricular areas. Led the implementation of a curriculum mapping process to guarantee all students in small multi-grade classes received access to the appropriate content standards in a reliable and meaningful manner. Guided each school community through substantial reductions in staffing, and worked with the district to establish a minimum staffing level for small schools.	Kenai Peninsula Borough School District 148 N. Binkley Street Soldotna, AK 99669	Approximately 650 teachers / 8,000 students
August 1998- May 2001	Teacher, Mountain View Elementary School and Summer School Credit Recovery- Taught a fifth grade general education classroom and Language Arts credit recovery summer school course for students in grades ten through twelve. Provided learning experiences designed to capitalize upon student strengths while building up areas of weakness. Integrated school-to-career content across all areas. Accommodated students significantly impacted by disabilities along with Gifted and Talented students within the setting. Provided leadership for school-wide activities including spelling bees, speech and drama meets, and health fairs.	Kenai Peninsula Borough School District 148 N. Binkley Street Soldotna, AK 99669	Approximately 650 teachers / 8,000 students
August 1997-May 1998	Teacher, Wonder Park Elementary School - Provided instruction in all academic areas to students in grade five, most of whom were English Language Learners and had no English-speaking family at home. Modified the general curriculum to couch all academic skill development within the context of employability and life skills, and provided exposure to experiences uncommon to the low socioeconomic inner-city setting, such as hatching ducks and going downhill skiing. Served on the school's School-to-Career leadership committee, who designed and delivered professional learning to assist teachers in teaching rigorous academic content through employability skills while also promoting the exploration of careers.	Anchorage School District 5530 E. Northern Lights Blvd. Anchorage, AK 99504	Approximately 3,500 teachers / 45,000 students

August 1996-May 1997	Substitute Teacher & Student Teacher, MatSu Borough School District – Provided emergency coverage for absent teachers of grades K-8, including longer coverage for teachers on medical leave. Successfully completed student teaching in a self-contained third grade classroom of 28 students and volunteered as a the Alaska Studies teacher at the Academy Charter School.	Matanuska Susitna Borough School District 501 N. Gulkana Street Palmer, AK 99645	Approximately 1,200 teachers / 16,000 students
August 1995-May 1997	Cheerleading Coach, Anchorage School District - Responsible for conducting team try-outs and training students in safe practices and techniques for varsity level cheer leading. Organized fund-raising activities, coordinated schedules, arranged for team travel, and supervised students on multi-day trips to sporting events.	Anchorage School District 5530 E. Northern Lights Blvd. Anchorage, AK 99504	Approximately 3,500 teachers / 45,000 students
August 1993-May 1996	Intensive Needs Aide and Peer Mentor, Anchorage School District- Worked under the direction of a certified teacher to engage profoundly impacted students in age-appropriate activities focused on prosocial interactions, communication using American Sign Language and other methods, personal grooming, and work jobs.	Anchorage School District 5530 E. Northern Lights Blvd. Anchorage, AK 99504	Approximately 3,500 teachers / 45,000 students
July 1991- July 1997	Teacher, John Robert Powers Finishing School- Taught courses for 3-5 year olds, 9-12 year olds, and teens in a private school setting focusing on age-appropriate manners, grooming, etiquette, and interview skills.	John Robert Powers Modeling Agency and Finishing School 300 E. Dimond Blvd. # 201A, Anchorage, AK 99515	Approximately 12 teachers / 500 students

Please summarize your work experience in years as applicable:

Superintendent:	Asst. Superintendent:	Principal: 12	Asst. Principal:
Teacher:	Elem: 10	Mid:	HS:
Central Office:	6		

IV. EDUCATIONAL HISTORY

(Please list on additional sheet if necessary.)

INSTITUTION NAME	MAJOR/MINOR	DATES ATTENDED	DEGREE EARNED
University of Alaska	Elementary Education, Alaska Native Studies	8/92-5/98	Bachelor in Elementary Education with a K-8 endorsement
University of Alaska	Educational Leadership	1/99-5/01	Master in Education with a K-12 administration endorsement
Walden University	Administrative Leadership for Teaching and Learning	4/07-8/11	Doctorate in Education
University of Alaska	Various Professional Coursework	8/98-present	Not degree seeking

V. APPLICANT'S STATEMENT

1. *Philosophy/Orientation:* Summarize your general philosophy of the status of public education in the U.S.- what is working and what challenges lie ahead in the next 10 years, and some of your best ideas for addressing that challenge.

I believe the system of public education is a profoundly important part of our nation's history and our nation's future. I am proud that our system guarantees every child a free and appropriate public education, and I believe public school employees excel in welcoming every child who comes through the doors. Of particular challenge to our nation's public schools is the pressing need to evolve the methods of instruction to meet the needs of today's students. Since nearly everyone has their own personal experience with school, everyone has their own corresponding opinion about what schools should teach and look like, that may have no actual resemblance to the needs of today's students and tomorrow's communities. This presence of strong opinions presents both a challenge and a tool, in that many who are in positions of power over resources for schools may believe the schools of the past are adequate for meeting the needs of the leaders of tomorrow, while others may see the need for preparing America's youth for a future that is in many ways, unimaginable.

As a result, harnessing the support of communities for the schools serving them, is the most important aspect of managing these – and all other challenges – that our public schools face. Schools have sought involvement by parents, families, and the community for decades. What would it look like if schools sought involvement IN communities, instead? What would happen if our most vulnerable seniors benefitted from the problem-solving technology used by students in CTE courses? What would happen if our food banks were supported by the science and gardening of our elementary students? How would our communities be stronger, healthier, safer, when our public schools contribute to the communities in ways beyond those fostered in traditional schooling processes? The health and wellbeing of our nation has a substantial impact on the public schools we fund. What would happen if the public schools seek to have a different kind of impact on the communities they serve? My own experiences as a teacher and principal suggest that if this shift occurs, it could make it possible for others to support changes in schools that educators recognize are needed, and it could shift the challenges from being an us-against-them to just US.

2. *Personnel Management:* Describe your approach to personnel management and your ability to utilize staff effectively.

Personnel management and deployment of human resources should be driven by priorities, data, and common sense. While formulas provide a sound and defensible starting point for decisions, consideration of the actual factors involved in every unique scenario must occur. Management of personnel in matters involving children is infinitely more complex than in any other field, and it therefore should not be trusted solely to mathematical formulas, despite the usefulness such formulas deliver.

Helping each person become his or her best is a key part of building a strong level of loyalty and commitment to a shared mission that forms the basis of my approach to personnel management. Building relationships, knowing people by name, remembering their family details whenever they're disclosed, all contribute to my ongoing efforts to help each person know that they truly matter. People on my team know they are valued, and they bring their own unique and irreplaceable way of thinking and doing that helps make our organization better.

When I start a new position, I invest the time and energy to learn what each person I supervise really *does* and how they do it. This allows me to be intentional in the allocation of resources, and make changes that support the achievement of our shared goals in ways that build the confidence needed to take action. People know changes will be well researched, well informed, and purposeful; this clarity builds both buy-in and support. When mistakes are made, as they inevitably will be, ownership of errors and transparent changes in direction are communicated clearly with an acknowledgement of where and how the errors occurred. This all allows me to provide performance feedback that is relevant and actionable. I work hard and expect the same of my team, and I wouldn't ever ask someone to do something I'm not willing to do myself. I also encourage and support employees in making use of their paid leave benefits to rest and recharge, and to nurture their own interests and family, which promotes a healthy balance of work and play that helps avoid burnout among the best employees.

As a result of all of this, I find that people who aren't good at what they're doing finally find the confidence to choose a new path, while those who are already good at their work truly excel and commit to continuous improvements for the benefit of the organization. This approach to personnel management has served me extremely well over the years, and the relationships I've built as a result would be very valuable in managing the current decline of resources faced within the district that are necessitating change.

3. *Fiscal Management:* Appraise your approach to developing a budget, managing budget implementation, and your ability to utilize scarce resources effectively.

Budget creation and management, like personnel management, should be well informed by actionable data entered into formulas that are tempered with critical thinking and common sense. Having grown up in Alaska with a father who commercial fished and worked for a school district, I have strong opinions about the importance of having a deep savings account, roll over fund, or fund balance, to cover non-adjustable costs and sustain programs through lean years. Identification of essential expenditures, followed by prioritization of resources that are keys for goal achievement, provide a solid framework from which to work when building a budget. Once the budget is built, monitoring progress and making necessary adjustments is essential, as a budget provides a plan that must be adjusted, within reason. Ongoing analysis of expenditures and needs must continue throughout the budget cycle, until the fiscal year is completed and the opportunity to reflect on the accuracy and success of one's budget occurs.

While I am fearful that the current budget reality may force the reduction of essential programs, I also see the budget reality as an opportunity for refining our priorities and focusing our efforts with more laser-like intentions. Continuing to seek improvements despite declining resources is something I am very experienced and skillful in, and I genuinely welcome the opportunity to lead our district through this difficult time with the goals of mothballing some items for possible future use and also making decisions that will help leverage positive change for the future for our students. The budget reality presents an opportunity for a major disruption in a field that has been slow to change. While it will not be pretty, nor easy, I am confident that with the right leadership, we can come out of this situation stronger than when we entered it.

4. *Communications:* Appraise your ability in public speaking, writing, persuasiveness, media relations, and capacity to develop a credible public image. What are your approaches to internal communications? To public communications?

Public speaking and writing are areas of particular strength, and combined with a systems-thinking approach, contribute to a high capacity for managing media relations and developing a credible public image. My public image helped me to revitalize an elementary school plagued by declining enrollment and waning community support. By being accessible, connecting with people personally when possible, and by seeking input, using it, and giving credit where due, I developed an image as a reliable and trustworthy leader. As a result, parents were willing to reconsider their neighborhood elementary school because of the changes they saw and the fact they could trust the school's leadership to provide a healthy, safe, and supportive school that would meet their children's academic needs. In my current role, my credibility is also an essential part of my success. I have become known for fully researching and investigating issues, and both union presidents have spoken to their employees in my presence about the fact that they trust my thoroughness, accuracy, and fairness.

With both internal and external communications, clarity and honesty are key. Being specific about where and how input will be sought and ensuring transparency by providing both background and factual information, as available, is also important in my approach. Internally, I generally prefer face to face communications that are more frequent. Externally, I generally prefer regularly scheduled methods of communication so that people know when and where to look for information. However, those preferences often have to be put aside when dealing with the many unexpected incidents that occur when working with such large numbers of children and adults. In those instances, well-vetted and timely communication is essential to support the ever-present goals of clarity and honesty.

5. *Experience with ethnic and cultural groups:* What experiences have you had in working with groups with varied ethnic, cultural and economic backgrounds?

In addition to my personal experiences traveling internationally and having a mixed-race and varied-ability family, I was fortunate in being able to spend time with friends during college in rural Alaska in their homes and at fish camp on the Kuskokwim River. As a result of my interests, I chose to minor in Alaska Native Studies, and I also benefitted from the opportunity to take an Inupiaq language course as part of my undergraduate studies.

In my professional work, I've been fortunate to work with colleagues from around the state, as well as stakeholders from our villages. This has informed both my understanding and appreciation for the diversity of cultures represented throughout our state and district. Additionally, I've worked in schools with a high percentage of students from low socio-economic households, and have learned a tremendous amount about and from families that have welcomed me into their lives as part of my work with their children. Appreciation for the values represented by our stakeholders who choose to live in more remote locations is an essential component for effective leadership, as is the understanding that "success" for students may be defined differently in different communities. Respect for these different communities and the ability to work together successfully for the benefit of the children they share with us, is essential for the health and wellbeing of all our communities.

6. *Alaska knowledge and experience:* Describe the nature of your experience in education in Alaska. Explain how this experience and perspective would contribute to your qualifications for this position.

I am a lifelong Alaskan, product of the Anchorage School District, and graduate of the University of Alaska system. I was raised in a family where community service was as expected as breathing. Although I worked briefly in both Mat-Su and Anchorage, I've known since I was a child that the Kenai Peninsula was my home. Summers were largely spent on my dad's boat in Homer and the surrounding bays where despite my young age, I somehow knew I was growing up in a truly special place. Enrollment in a magnet program in the Anchorage School District provided me with unexpected learning opportunities that I referred back to when planning field trips for my own students, decades later. Volunteer work in both a charter school and a private school, further informed my perspectives about education in Alaska, and those ideas were fleshed out as a result of my experience living in Japan for a summer and visiting South Korea. As an early career teacher, I was surprised to discover that despite the media trumpeting America's comparatively poor test scores, the nurturing of creative thinking and problem solving was a remarkably untested and unreported strength of our nation's public education system.

Alaska is my home and is the home of my family. My interest in serving as the leader of our district is founded in a deep belief that what we do matters, and despite dire financial circumstances, what we do will make a difference; it's up to us to make sure that difference is a positive one. Difficult decisions are something I have wrestled with personally and professionally, and have learned a great deal from. I welcome the opportunity to be considered for the leadership role for our district, and to facilitate the community conversations and decisions that must be made for the future of our children.

7. *Educational achievement:* What have you done to upgrade the educational program in schools under your supervision? How have you evaluated the results?

Evaluation of educational programs is an area I've deeply worked in at both the school and district level. At the school level, I led the implementation of data-driven interventions before "intervention" was a concept widely known in the field, resulted in receiving the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development's growth performance incentive for *both* of the schools for which I was responsible, in 2007 and 2008. Analysis of student level data in comparison to the learning standards provided actionable information for both remediation *and* acceleration, which later led to the recognition of Sterling Elementary School as a Nationally Distinguished Title I School. The philosophy of scheduling based on student needs and instructional priorities became a model used by other schools, as the achievement gaps for both our students with disabilities and our low socio-economic students shrank substantially during my leadership tenure. Consideration of data beyond academics was also important in my leadership, and it was data related to the numbers of students with disabilities being bussed from Sterling to Soldotna, that prompted me to take action to establish a program that could serve student needs at Sterling

Elementary, so students didn't have to travel to Soldotna, for school. This, and other related actions, resulted in the school's recognition with the Governor's Council on Disabilities recognizing our school with the Inclusive Practices Award in 2011.

At the district level, the curriculum revision process always begins with a review of data to identify strengths and weaknesses in the existing instructional program. As the Director of Elementary Education, ongoing analysis of the early literacy data for the district was of particular importance, as was the discipline data for each school. Based on the observable trends in the data, I would reach out to the school's principal to discuss what I saw to learn more about what was happening in the school. As a result of those conversations, other data would often be sought to make sure our subsequent professional development or collaboration activities were focusing on the right things. Data such as student performance on universal screenings, office discipline referral rates, or the numbers of teachers requesting voluntary transfers were just some of the sources of data considered when evaluating needs or impacts of program improvement efforts.

8. *Labor Relations:* Describe your experiences in the area of labor relations.

I am currently responsible for the administration of negotiated agreements with all employee groups in the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District. I am proud of the fact that relationships with employee groups have been more productive and more positive than in any time prior in my tenure with the district, as exhibited by the low number of grievances and high numbers of issues resolved to our mutual satisfaction. Additionally, I am proud of the fact that disputes are regularly being resolved through communication and conversation, with an emphasis on logical and sound practices and with minimal legal engagement. Throughout these efforts, I have maintained excellent notes and then turned those notes into internal "practice guides" that I share with relevant administrators to help ensure consistency in future actions. These guides are proving to increase the consistency and reliability with which our building administrators engage in labor-related practices, while also supporting the unions in knowing what to expect in given situations. I am subsequently finding that these guides help me to be more efficient, since administrators have access to tools they can review and use, without me having to re-explain something when the same situation reoccurs across multiple sites.

As a teacher, I was an active member of AFT (while in the Anchorage School District) and then NEA (while in the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District). I then became active at the state and national level with the National Association of Elementary School Principals. I sat on the negotiating team for the local principals' group three bargaining sessions ago, and am now at the table for the district in all group negotiations this year. As a result, my understanding of labor relation issues is well informed from experience at multiple levels. and it is further complimented by professional training through high quality programs with the Society of Human Resource Managers, Cornell University's Institute of Labor Relations, and the American Association for Employment in Education.

9. *Board/superintendent relations:* In your view, what is the proper or appropriate relationship between the school board and its superintendent?

Although state statute and board policy provide a great deal of guidance on the roles of the board and superintendent, the relationship between these two bodies is more complex than statute suggests. There is a separation of powers, in that the board serves as a final appeal body for decisions the superintendent or designees have made. There is also an interdependence, in which the success of one depends on the success of the other. Within the spectrum between these two, the relationship of the board and superintendent dances back and forth, depending upon the task at hand. Of utmost importance, however, is the presence of honesty and trust between the two. In the absence of trust, the board is prone to micromanaging, which defeats the purpose of the hiring a superintendent. Conversely, when a superintendent cannot trust his/her board to hold appropriate information in confidence, or to allow the superintendent the leeway to lead, unnecessary energy is expended towards managing the board/superintendent relationship, which draws away energy that should be expended in support of achievement of shared goals.

It is my hope that if selected, the relationship will be characterized by honest conversations where all parties seek to learn and understand various approaches or viewpoints. I have seen situations where board

members make comments based on limited information that subsequently creates a great deal more work for the superintendent and other administrators. With already limited resources, energy expenditure needs to be purposeful rather than reactionary. Providing information in a timely manner is essential to keep the board well informed and confident in the leadership of the superintendent. I believe that everyone on the board was elected to be there due to their different strengths. Those perspectives and experiences have the power to strengthen the board and district greatly, and it is my belief that the perspectives of the board members should help inform the superintendent's positions for the ultimate benefit of the district's students. I don't believe I have all of the answers, but I do believe that together, we can tap into the right resources, ask the right questions, and create the right plan that can get us all moving in the same direction together.

10. Other: Any other points or comments you would like to make which could aid in the selection process?

My family has three generations living on the Peninsula, with two generations of children currently enrolled in the district. As a result, I have a long term vested interest in the future success of the Peninsula and our district that is likely unparalleled by other candidates. I have worked diligently to do all that I can to ensure there are amazing educational opportunities for all children on the Peninsula, and despite my very vested interest, I also do well at appropriately separating my family from my work. For example, my husband works at district office, and many people initially assumed he'd have an inside set of knowledge about HR matters. It took about a year before people realized that we do not discuss confidential work matters in our family and personal settings. When our son started school at Sterling while I was the principal, it didn't take him too long before he understood that because of my role at the school, I would have to hold him to a higher standard. If I didn't, people could assume wrongly that he was benefitting from some special leniency or permission. We've worked hard to make sure he earned opportunities he's had in school, and to be clear when we communicate with his teachers and principals that we're there "wearing a parent hat." The point of this information is to illustrate that I can be counted upon to keep appropriate lines of distinction and help others do the same in a manner that is also nurturing to their family and their career, in healthy ways.

While I have not previously completed the coursework for my superintendent's endorsement, the University of Alaska, Southeast, has a program that begins this summer that I can have completed by July 2020. I chose not to enroll in the program now because I am still paying off student loans for my doctoral degree. Additionally, I would not pursue an endorsement to be a superintendent for any other school district, as it isn't just the job of superintendent I'm after; it's the job of superintendent in *our district* that calls to me. As I researched the endorsement coursework, and the credentials of other superintendents across the state, I learned that neither MatSu nor Anchorage have superintendents with a superintendent endorsement, as the endorsement itself is often eclipsed by experience, practical knowledge, and personality, which is why I chose to apply despite not having the endorsement.

In closing, I have a deep vested interest in the success of our district. The relationships and experiences I have developed and maintained over the last 20 years have brought me to a point that I want very much to take the leadership reins of our district to help steer us through the storm in which we currently find ourselves. Throughout my professional experiences, I have held roles at various levels and in areas that are not commonly found all in one candidate. I believe my learning and experience has all been in preparation for this point in time when state funding, borough funding, the increasing politicization of public schools by the media, and a competitive schooling environment are all challenges we currently face. While I certainly don't have all the answers, I believe we have an incredible team that can be marshalled to devise solutions and approaches to continue to move the district forward, despite our difficult circumstances.

VI. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Your file with the Association of Alaska School Boards must contain the following items for your candidacy to be considered:

Formal letter indicating interest in the position
Completed application

