

3/12/19

Dear Kenai Borough School Community,

It is with great excitement and trepidation that I submit my application for the position of Superintendent of KPBSD. I am in the process of relocating to Kenai and will arrive the beginning of April. I have spoken to administrators in the district and have learned of the great challenges the district will be facing due to the upcoming budget cuts. KPBSD has been a model for the state of Alaska with its innovative programming and creative staffing for remote schools. I am empathetic to the struggles and uncertainty coming to the Alaska School Systems and the unique challenges already facing the borough.

I bring to the profession a different lens on the situation, and a strong desire to be part of the team as they navigate the next few years. I believe the role of Superintendent is to build a strong collaborative team, and together with all stakeholders think creatively of how to protect our schools, students, and communities from the fallout of budget cuts. At the same time, we as a team would embrace innovation as we prepare our children for unpredictable futures.

While my resume may fall short on formal leadership roles and titles, I have had a great deal of leadership experience in and outside of public education that has prepared me for this role. I have participated actively in my community by supporting disabled combat veterans through American Heroes in Action, a non-profit that helps veterans experience the outdoors. I have led community-school events such as an annual spring carnival fundraiser, a community-school movie night program. I have collaborated with businesses to create partnerships with schools and been on the ground floor of developing a character trait-based positive behavior system. I have had extensive experience with budget and decision making at the school level, and led many staff learning sessions on social-emotional needs of students and mindfulness.

I am in the process of filling out my Alaska teacher, principal, and administrative credentials and will finalize those once I arrive in Kenai. I currently possess my Colorado principal license and have filed for my Superintendent License with Colorado Department of Education. While licenses alone do not guarantee success in leadership roles, the learning I experienced in my graduate program offered unique real world learning such as designing theoretical school from the ground up, and budget negotiations and planning with a team-all through digital learning. My program at Western State Colorado University also was a model for blended learning at the adult level, and offered new and innovative approaches to distance collaboration. I believe this experience would be of value for many of our students as well as teachers and leaders.

I have creative ideas that I bring with me, but the first step I would take if I move further in the selection process would be to tour every school possible and speak with students, staff, and leaders to hear about their needs and hopes. I recognize that there will be a steep learning curve, and look forward to the challenge, whether it be in this role or another in the school district. I look forward to meeting everyone.

Thank you,

Jason Gilbert

**AASB Superintendent Search  
APPLICATION FORM**

If you are applying for more than one position, it is *not* necessary to complete a separate application. If you desire, AASB will duplicate this completed form for any subsequent position applications.

**I. PERSONAL INFORMATION**

First Name: Jason                      Middle Name: Ryan                      Last Name: Gilbert

Mailing Address:                      [REDACTED]                      [REDACTED]

Home Telephone:                      Work/Message:                      Cell phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

List any other name under which application materials may be received:

Have you ever been convicted of, or pled guilty to, a misdemeanor or a felony? If yes, please give details and attach to application:                      NO

Have you ever been convicted of, or pled guilty to, a DWI?                      NO

**CERTIFICATION**

The superintendent position requires an Alaska Type B certificate with a superintendent endorsement. Do you hold a current Alaska Type B Administrative Certificate with a Superintendent Endorsement?

Yes:                      No: X

If yes, expiration date is:

If No, have you applied for a Type B certificate with a superintendent endorsement with the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development?

Yes:    In PROGRESS, Colorado Principal License attached, Superintendent/Administrator Filed No:

Information on requirements for the specified certificate may be obtained from:

*Alaska Department of Education & Early Development*

Teacher Certification

801 W. 10th, Suite 200

Juneau, AK 99801-1894

Tel. 907-465-2857

Alaska law requires at least six semester hours of college academic credit in the last five years in order to receive a Superintendent's Certificate in Alaska. Do you meet these qualifications?

Yes: X                      No:

In what other states do you hold a Superintendent's Certificate?                      COLORADO

**II. PRESENT EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION**

Present Employer: Jeffco Public Schools  
 Employer's Address: 1829 Denver West Parkway  
 Your Title/Position: Elementary Learning Specialist  
 # Years in Position: 0.8

Are you presently under contract? Yes: No: X (Last day March 15<sup>th</sup> due to relocation)

Present Salary: [REDACTED]

Does your employer know of this application? Yes: X 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.)

<b>DATES OF SERVICE</b>	<b>POSITION/DUTIES</b>	<b>ORGANIZATION ADDRESS</b>	<b>SIZE OF ORGANIZATION # TEACHERS./# STUDENTS</b>
8/8/18-3/15/19	Elementary Learning Specialist	Bergen Valley Elementary Evergreen, CO 80439	2 schools k-6
8/2010-5/2018	Affective Needs Center Teacher	Grant Beacon Middle School Kepner Beacon Middle School	100-150 Staff 600-900 Students Depending on the year
11/2009-5/2010	Severe Special Needs Teacher	Thimig Elementary	

Please summarize your work experience in years as applicable:

Superintendent:	Asst. Superintendent: 0	Principal: 0	Asst. Principal: 1 (intern)
Teacher:	Elem: 1.5	Mid: 8	HS: 1 (Coaching)
Central Office:			

**IV. EDUCATIONAL HISTORY**  
 (Please list on additional sheet if necessary.)

<b>INSTITUTION NAME</b>	<b>MAJOR/MINOR</b>	<b>DATES ATTENDED</b>	<b>DEGREE EARNED</b>
Western State Colorado University	Educational Administration/Leadership	8/2015-5/2017	Masters, Principal License, Superintendent License
Western State Colorado University	Teacher Licensure	2009-2010	Teacher License
Fort Lewis College	Exercise Science-Fitness and Leisure	1996-2001 2003	Bachelors

## 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.

The current status of public education is not keeping up with the world we are living in. In general, we are prioritizing standardized programs and test scores over student learning and student success. I believe at a national level, the challenges that lie ahead are around prioritizing students over corporations. Test makers sell their curriculum to schools to prepare them for the test they created. Our students have more and more access to information, and over the next ten years, our students will need to be empowered with decision making and critical thinking to process and sort the overabundance of content, while at the same time, the need for traditional literacy opportunities is decreasing because of text to speech, audio, and other media. The challenge will be to shift our approach to what success means.

Teachers and leaders will have to stay at the forefront of the needs in industry and the economy to ensure that our students are gaining the right types of literacy to function. For example, students no longer need to balance a checkbook, and many adults have never had to do this because of online banking. By looking at community needs and building programs to support those community needs, this is a start toward addressing the challenges in a unique place like KPBSD. Not only do we have unmet social, medical, educational, and industry needs, but we don't have many pathways for our young students to continue their education on the peninsula. If we partner with our community members and design our programs align with local needs, we ensure our students will have many options locally or wherever they choose to go.

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

When it comes to personnel management, I believe the way to bring out the best in people is to tap into their strengths to build their capacity as individuals and as teams. I maintain a growth mindset with folks, and offer pinpoint specific growth-producing feedback, and make sure to celebrate. However, when difficult situations arise, I am very procedural about following steps to make certain staff members have time to improve, but if they are not the right fit for the team, or they are not being effective with students, I will document carefully and communicate throughout the process so that if a separation is necessary, it is not a surprise. I have had to proceed with dismissal of a member of my team in the middle of the school year to do what was best for the students who needed a more predictable and stable adult.

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

While it is not on the scale of a school district, as the fundraiser coordinator for my school, and sister school, I grew from one small annual fundraising carnival to a community wide series of fundraising events, each year making enough seed money for the next year's event, and money for several school initiatives. Developing a budget required an understanding of needs, non-negotiables, consistent prioritization, constant attention to spending, pricing, delegation and training, and the reminder to not go overboard on spending-even when it seemed like there would be enough left over. It also required planning for the next year before the current events had finished and gathering feedback and input from team members and community members throughout this process.

**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?

Whether it be leading a social emotional calming activity on the floor for a room for adults or speaking with the governor of Colorado about the state of education, I am in my element in high pressure situations. I am careful in new situations to learn my audience and can be a bit introverted. As evidenced by my "[Patriotic Gorilla](#)" [Instagram account](#), and numerous videos of me competing at Worlds Toughest

Mudder, my integrity drives me to ensure that I act with ethics whether someone is watching or not. The reality these days is that what may be intended to be internal communication must always be treated like it were public.

Here is a video I created as I was applying for a [History Chanel Television Show](#).

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

As a teacher of students with behavioral disabilities for nearly a decade-all of which were in a Title I school, with extremely high mobility, poverty, and sixty to seventy percent English Language Learners, I would say that my experience is deep. From speaking through interpreters to angry disempowered parents to coaching teachers about why a Somali student was acting culturally appropriately when he got in a fight, I have seen a great deal of inequity, trauma, and struggle. But I have also seen how a school community can be a safe haven for students. It can also be an opportunity to teach all learners how to work together with their differences, not in spite of them.

**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 have had limited work or background on the many groups of students who attend KPBSD and am excited to take the Alaska Studies course as I also get to learn new languages. I have been researching the schools, and while I have only visited one, I hope to visit every school possible to learn about the students, programs, and staff. What I have learned is that we need to build a partnership with parents and communities, and help be the community hub where all students and their families feel welcome, and where teachers know how to value and honor the children who they teach. With the social-emotional issues facing our students, and I have visited a couple of schools, and know that the key to success on the peninsula is relationships with students. There are complexities and constraints that also offer unique partnership opportunities.

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

In my role at Grant Beacon Middle School, I held the official title of Affective Needs teacher, but that does not describe the leadership role I played. In eight years of teaching students with severe emotional disabilities, our school transitioned from a typical neighborhood school to a blended learning innovation school. We then added a second school to our Beacon network. Being part of this process allowed me to be on the ground floor as our organization grew into two and began to thrive. It also allowed me the opportunity to be part of designing and growing our own program from scratch. One big lesson I was able to learn and share was how each school and community has its own needs and constraints. While the underlying framework was successful, each school needed the ability to apply their priorities to this framework.

I was on the team that led the onboarding process for our second school. I helped not only train the new staff into the Beacon Network ways, but help grow a school culture across two buildings, and monitor through continuous improvement processes we designed. Our blended learning approach allowed teachers to focus on student relationships while together as a community, learn how to use learning management systems and digital resources to enhance the learning. Our after-school enrichment programs for all students and extended school day were critical to the success of our learners. My desire to be in the role of superintendent centers around wanting to empower schools to do more to help meet the needs of students, and to maximize our resources and time. Throughout this entire process, we gathered data, analyzed it in detail as staff, and continually monitored and adjusted based on that data.

One more big area that I spearheaded and ran in my building was designing our MTSS Process. I believe in KPBSD, it is called RTI. I created the system, designed the tracking forms, outlined the process teachers would follow, and held them accountable for following that process. Once established, I effectively ran the system for a five-year period. It was so successful that I had other school districts borrowing my process for their schools.

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

I have seen many leaders who when resources get scarce, they rely on the goodness of teachers to give more, and have many unspoken expectations about how teachers should be expected to donate hours upon hours to their jobs, while setting aside family and personal needs. Because of this, I believe that the key to fair labor practices is to have a teacher contract that is explicit, fair, and understood by all parties. Recently I was involved in a situation where one leader in a retaliatory situation defended her position of mandating that teachers work more by stating that “no one follows the contract”. When one person chooses to ignore the safeguards, everyone is at risk, and trust is lost. My approach is to bring people together to understand our constraints, and to work as a team to think creatively about how to meet student need while honoring a sustainable reasonable workload.

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

In my mind, they are one team, but come with different lenses. The role of the school board is to advise and make policy based on the needs of their stakeholders. It is the role of the superintendent to be a sense maker, and help be the spokesperson for the decisions of the team. This role also requires the ability to bring people together on difficult issues, and to help advise the board of the constraints and ramifications of the decisions being made. It is also the job of the superintendent to help the board speak with one voice and gain consensus through collaboration before high stakes decisions are made.

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

-Please see the attached article I recently wrote entitled;

**Leadership Cook Book: How to Make Stone Soup**

My most recent School Picture:



## **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
- Confidential placement file (if it is current)
- College transcripts (graduate work in administration only)
- AASB Reference forms (3)
- Alaska Superintendent Certificate (copy)

Up-to-date Resume  
Other items of your choice  
Photo (optional)

I certify that the foregoing statements are true and correct and authorize you to investigate all references listed and to secure additional information if necessary. I also agree to waive my right to a public discussion of my candidacy as provided in AS 44.62.310©, thereby permitting a board or committee formed by the board to screen application files and/or interview finalists in executive session.

\_\_\_\_\_

DATE

\_\_\_\_\_ *Jason Ryan Gilbert* \_\_\_\_\_

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE



Thimmig Elementary                      December 09-August '10                      Special Education Teacher  
-Teach SSN students in inclusive and self-contained classrooms  
-Write and enforce IEP's  
-Supervise and evaluate Para-educators

Wheat Ridge Middle School                      August '07-December '09                      PARA-Educator  
-Teach science, math, and Social studies curriculum in self-contained SIED lab  
-Coach after-school programs in fitness and health  
-Help enforce student IEPs  
-Teach AVID, Trained in Wilson, Read 180 and Systems 44.

Budget Blue Prints                      January 2004-Summer 2007                      Lead Bike Courier  
- Deliver blue prints in the downtown area, Train new couriers

San Juan College                      September 2003- December 2003                      Climbing Instructor  
-Taught Beginning Gym Climbing, Develop New Climbing Routes, Teach about the environmental impact of climbing, -Facilitate group climbing sessions

Whitlock Recreation Center                      October 2002-September 2003                      Climbing Wall Facilitator  
-Supervise climbing on indoor wall, Teach all ages, Teach and Enforce climbing safety rules

**Additoinal Experience and Training**

- Water rescue, -Fire safety, Emergency medical response, CPR and First Aid
- Outdoor guiding and instructing, Wilderness survival, Avalanche Beacon Search and Rescue
- Event planning and organization, fund raising and non-profit work