

# Dr. Ken Haptonstall, Ph.D.

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March 12, 2019

Dear Superintendent Selection Committee Members,

It is with great enthusiasm that I submit my letter of application to Kenai Peninsula Borough School District to be considered for the position of superintendent of schools. Kenai Peninsula Borough School District is in an exciting time with the implementation of proficiency-based learning as a core instructional practice. As a system, Kenai Peninsula Borough School District has always been a leader in providing a quality public education for the citizens of Alaska. It is my belief that public education is both a fundamental right as well as a moral imperative for the success of our society.

I believe that my experiences and qualifications offer the potential to build upon the incredible work that Kenai Peninsula Borough School District' staff have been engaged in, with the intent to build upon the foundations of performance-based learning to see its continued implementation and refinement across the entire school system. I believe performance-based learning raises the expectation for stakeholders that ALL students can learn and WILL learn at high levels. All students deserve the opportunity to develop the skills necessary to accomplish whatever their individual path may hold. I also firmly believe that with the proper supports and tools, the staff of Kenai Peninsula Borough School District has an infinite capacity to provide a rich learning environment for every child in the system.

To be able to provide those supports I believe it will be necessary to look for potential funding sources to help augment the current state and local funding sources. I have experience with the successful passage of both mill levy and bond issues, as well as a strong capacity for writing and obtaining grant dollars. Along with funding sources, it is imperative to cultivate relationships with external partners who have significant expertise in the structures necessary to implement proficiency-based learning on the scale Kenai Peninsula Borough School District has been on the path accomplish. In my current role I have developed relationships with several key state and national leaders who are recognized as instrumental in supporting innovative practices. I have served on committees at the national level with Virgel Hammonds from KnowledgeWorks, and have a working relationship with Adam Rubin CEO of 2Revolutions. I also have a strong relationship with Dr. Robert Marzano, who served on my dissertation committee and has been an integral part of the RELCentral Board of Directors where I have served for the past five years. I believe these relationships can provide support to Kenai Peninsula Borough School District through implementation and sustainability over time.

As a long-time proponent of competency and personalized learning, I have a commitment to creating and establishing a sustainable culture of excellence in the district. Innovative work takes time and commitment on the part of all stakeholders. My record of employment demonstrates that I prefer to dig into a system and build lasting structures and not bounce from one system to another. I believe my familiarity with similar systems and key components of a personalized system allows me the opportunity to hit the ground running from day one.

The success of public education, and, the your school system is paramount to the success for the community as a whole. We have our nation's most precious resource in our children and it is my sincere belief that Kenai Peninsula Borough School District is on a path to provide an excellent education for the youth the district serves. I also believe that I am the best candidate to work with the Kenai Board of

Education in creating and sustaining a vision of excellence for the future. The administration, staff, and board have set an ambitious, innovative, student centered direction for the district. This forward thinking embodies the idea of a growth mindset, which is critical for everyone involved in the system to make the vision a reality. It is my sincerest hope that we can work together to continue to create the type of schools that support all children in their learning journey and help them fulfill their dreams by providing the highest quality of learning, in the safest and most nurturing environment we can muster.

I look forward to meeting with all of you and talking about how I can join your team and continue to build sustainable structures for the future of the children of Kenai Peninsula Borough School District.

Sincerely,

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Dr. Ken Haptonstall, Ph.D.

**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: Ken                      Middle Name: Glenn                      Last Name: Haptonstall

Mailing Address: [REDACTED]

Home Telephone: [REDACTED]                      Work/Message: [REDACTED]                      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:                      No: x (Will be applying by March 15, 2019)

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: Colorado River BOCES

Employer's Address: 0460 Stone Quarry Road, Parachute, Colorado 81635

Your Title/Position: Director of Alternative Licensure

# Years in Position: 6 months

Are you presently under contract? Yes:  No:

Present Salary: ██████████

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<br># TEACHERS./# STUDENTS |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|--|--|
| 7/2017-8/2018     | Superintendent of Schools       | Mesa County SD 51, 2115 Grand Ave, Grand Jct, CO 8503                              | 2000 teachers and 22,000 students              |
| 04/2008 – 06/2017 | Superintendent of Schools       | Garfield 16, 0460 Stone Quarry Road, Parachute CO 81635                            | 125 teachers and 1400 students                 |
| 07/2007 – 04/2008 | Asst. Superintendent of Schools | Garfield 16, 0460 Stone Quarry Road, Parachute, CO 81635                           | 125 teachers and 1400 students                 |
| 07/2000 – 06/2007 | Middle School Principal         | Mesa County SD 51 – Fruita Middle School, 2115 Grand Ave, Grand Junction, CO 81503 | 70 teachers and 900 students                   |
| 07/1999 – 06/2000 | Middle School Asst. Principal   | Mesa County SD 51, - Fruita Middle School, 2115 Grand Ave, Grand Junction CO 81503 | 70 teachers and 900 students                   |
| 07/1993 – 06/1999 | Middle School Computer Teacher  | Mesa County SD 51 – East Middle School, 2115 Grand Ave, Grand Junction, CO 81503   | 35 teachers and 400 students                   |

Please summarize your work experience in years as applicable:

|                       |                         |              |                    |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Superintendent:<br>10 | Asst. Superintendent: 1 | Principal: 7 | Asst. Principal: 1 |
| Teacher:              | Elem:                   | Mid: 6       | HS:                |
| Central Office:       | 11                      |              |                    |

#### IV. EDUCATIONAL HISTORY

(Please list on additional sheet if necessary.)

| INSTITUTION NAME              | MAJOR/MINOR                               | DATES ATTENDED  | DEGREE EARNED |
|-------------------------------|---|-----------------|---------------|
| Capella University            | Educational Leadership                    | 2/2006 – 3/2010 | Ph.D.         |
| University of Colorado Denver | Ed. Leadership and Curriculum Development | 9/1996 – 6/1998 | M.A.          |
| Mesa State College            | History                                   | 1/1987 – 5/1988 | B.A.          |
|                               |   |                 |               |
|                               |   |                 |               |

#### 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 that public education is alive and well in our country. There are millions of students who go through public education systems and go on to be very successful. I also feel that we have many kids who fall through the cracks and get lost in a system that is built for the "average" rather than built for each child to reach their own dreams and potential. Text books, lesson plans and budgets are built on meeting the needs of the general population of a school, but in the last few years, educators are moving towards competency-based and personalized classrooms that work to ensure every child meets expectations and teachers plan to reach a student where they are and where their interests are focused. By focusing on personalization, we have the capacity to demonstrate relevancy to the learner and to better engage them in their own learning, creating a situation where each student begins to guide and own their own learning.

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

I believe that the ideal approach personnel management is the authentic knowledge and appreciation for individual talents. To truly understand the staff you are responsible to, you must develop a quality relationship that allows leaders to help others realize their true potential and passions. It is a simple matter to delegate responsibilities, however to ensure someone is engaged in their work a servant leader will provide trinitities for individuals to pursue their goals, passions, and dreams through authentic responsibility. When individuals feel wanted and their opinions respected they will work harder and provide the organization with quality effort.

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

In my career as a building and district administrator I feel that I have an exemplary grasp of how to manage a budget, particularly when funding is limited and creates opportunities to

refine and reimagine how resources can be used effectively. During my tenure as a superintendent in Garfield County, the district suffered a 33% reduction in funds from decreases in state funding and the loss students. Through that time, we reduced staff and programs while increasing student learning outcomes and providing incentives for staff retention. When developing a budget, it is essential that the priorities of the district and goals for the board of education are recognized with budget allocations necessary reporting those priorities and goals. It is also essential that there are clear communications between departments and schools that provide clear and information for all stakeholders to ensure that critical voices are part of the budget development process. Review of student outcomes and budget on a quarterly basis will provide data necessary for refinement of resource utilization and development of both short and long-term budgeting.

**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?

I feel that I have developed effective means to communicate both internal and external stakeholders. Providing timely video updates for staff and external audiences allow for dissemination of information to local communities. Provide for two-way communication with both internal and external audiences, it is critical to be present at school and community functions where there are opportunities for individuals to bring forward ideas, problems, and potential solutions. Two-way communications are the most critical aspect of providing a quality communication process. When the public sees leaders as open, honest, and willing to follow through, they will be more able to develop trust with those leaders which creates a credible public image. I also feel that my capacity for public speaking, writing, persuasiveness, and media relations is at a proficient level and can provide the district with a sound and trusted voice representing the system as a whole.

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

In my roles as a building and district leader, I have had many incredible opportunities to work with different ethnic and cultural groups providing a sounding board and a conduit for change that has positively impacted learning outcomes, feeling of safety and security, development of positive relationships, and a sense of community with all groups who have been involved. The key to any great conversation is to listen and converse in a manner that respects the opinions and wishes of others creating potential for change within and across the system. I have worked with high minority, low social-economic-status populations, religious entities, social groups, and others over the course of my career, always finding common ground in developing common goals to support the students and communities we serve.

**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 not ever worked in Alaska, but I feel that having a keen eye on the needs of each school and community is essential regardless of which state we work and educate our youth. It is essential that I, as the superintendent, spend time getting to know each school and community, along with the Board of Education, to provide the necessary leadership to engage community stakeholders in meeting the needs of our children. Having worked on national committees and taking the time to research educational systems across our country, I feel I have the skills necessary to engage the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District in a thoughtful and proactive manner. Growing up and understanding small communities provides me with the background and skill set necessary to be successful in this environment.

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

Throughout my career as a teacher, building administrator, and district administrator I have continued to provide a classroom, school, and district setting that engages students and provides for a rigorous and relevant learning experience. Over the course of the last 10 years I have focused on creating competency and personalized learning for the systems I have served. In both Garfield County and Mesa County I have worked to develop systems that provide each student with a quality education in a manner that addresses their personal needs and aspirations. Measuring the outcome for these systems is complex in that there is no single test score that truly represents a student's success. I find that the coordination of multiple data points, including student perception and family perception data is as valuable as college entrance or state assessment data. When you look at the combination of multiple data sources you can clearly see when students performing at high levels and enjoying what their learning in a safe learning environment. Additionally, taking the time to speak with community members and other stakeholders provides for an external data set that can provide information about long-range outcomes for learners, including job retention, employer satisfaction, college matriculation, and family and community social wellness. While some of these data points may seem irrelevant to the mission of the school system, educators and leaders need tertiary data points to truly understand the effectiveness of the school system.

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

I have had the opportunity to work in a system that had no teacher's union, as well as a large system that had a robust teachers Association. Finding common ground with staff members and creating positive outcomes for staff leads to effective instructional outcomes for students. Whether meeting in a collective bargaining process or working directly teachers and Board of Education members to provide quality salaries and benefits, it is essential that clear and open communications are consistent component of relationship between staff and district leaders. I believe that the most role in any educational system is that of classroom teacher. It is the work of the leadership team and the rest of the staff to provide classroom teachers with the tools necessary to meet the needs of each student they serve. To that end it is critical that teachers are provided a true living wage, safe and secure

working conditions, and the materials necessary provide great education for all of our children.

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

Having served as a superintendent for 11 years, I have had the pleasure to work with many board members. While it is important that the superintendent is allowed to provide the day-to-day leadership and management of the school district, critical that the Board of Education and the superintendent have an open and honest communications process where board members can speak to superintendent about their concerns, hopes, and aspirations for the school district and their communities. Only when the superintendent develops a good and open relationship with board members will this be possible. So, it is incumbent upon the superintendent to provide opportunities and times where board members can meet and discuss their hopes and dreams in whatever manner is best for the board member as an individual. Collectively, as a Board of Education, it is superintendent's responsibility communicate clearly and consistently with the entire board, so they are never caught unaware or by surprise about any issue within school district. Also, communicating with the group about potential concerns, issues, or potential changes is essential in keeping the board informed as a group, which allows for the board to have the same information allowing them to make informed decisions concerning the district. I also feel that the board is responsible for developing policies that make the school system better for our children and it is essential that the superintendent works with the board in developing policies that can be implemented for the betterment of our system. Finally, the development of a balanced and focused budget is the responsibility of the superintendent and the board working in tandem to focus resources on the district's priorities and the board's goals.

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

In reviewing information about your district, it seems to me that you are looking for an experienced leader who has the ability to lead the system through the necessary steps to provide personalized learning for each student in the district. While defining personalized learning is not difficult, enacting the processes necessary to bring personalized learning to life can be complex. Providing support and direction for the teaching staff, including focusing limited resources on specific tools necessary to support classroom structures that are significantly different than traditional teaching methodologies will be challenging throughout the change process. I have moved a small and a large system through these processes and I am confident I can provide the leadership necessary to help your teachers and students engage in personalized learning in enabling the district to realize better student learning outcomes and more importantly helping students realize their individual dreams.

## 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.

March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2019

DATE

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APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE

# Dr. Ken Haptonstall, Ph.D.

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