

Dear KPBSD Board,

Thank you for the creation of the small schools committee and delving into what would truly make substantial changes for our small schools. We, the principals from the small schools, are writing to advocate for a reduction in the teacher-to-student ratio (PTR) at our small K-12 schools within the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District. This initiative is aimed at providing a more equitable educational experience for our students, enhancing staff well-being, and fostering stronger ties with the community. It is also the number one thing you can do to support your K-12 schools.

Here are the key benefits that reducing PTR can bring to our schools:

- Individualized Attention: Lower PTR will enable more personalized instruction, attention, and support for students, leading to improved academic performance and deeper understanding of content.
- Diverse Expertise: A lower PTR can bring a range of skills and expertise, enriching the educational experience with diverse teaching methods, engagement strategies, and knowledge areas.
- Expanded Curriculum: Reduced PTR can support a wider range of subjects and extracurricular activities, allowing students to explore their interests and talents beyond the basics. The new curriculum is geared more towards whole-grade instruction, providing teachers with a more manageable workload and allowing for greater dedication to art, music, and quality physical education instruction.
- Enhanced Community Engagement: Lower PTR can facilitate stronger connections between the school and the local community, leading to collaborative initiatives and shared resources that benefit families and students.
- Teacher Well-Being: Decreased PTR can reduce stress and burnout among teachers, promoting a positive work environment and ultimately benefiting both staff and students.
- Retention and Recruitment: A lower PTR makes the school more attractive to current and potential teachers, resulting in higher retention rates and better recruitment prospects for the school.

Additionally, We would like to highlight other important issues that need attention alongside PTR reduction. In our recent small school committee meeting, the K-12 principals emphasized that the following improvements will provide the biggest impact for small schools:

- Rebuilding Community Confidence in the School.
- Priority in posting and recruiting for positions.

- Improving breakfast and lunch programs.
- Enhancing distance education capabilities.
- Supporting student leadership and community service initiatives.

We also echo the sentiments shared by Mike Druce and Wojciak regarding the ability to offer elective opportunities, provide interventions, tailor instruction to individual student needs, reduce dependence on distance options, manage professional development effectively, and ensure adequate access to certified staff.

Thank you for considering our proposals. We believe that reducing the teacher-to-student ratio will have a lasting and positive impact on our schools, staff, students, and community.

Sincerely,

Dr. Michael A. Sturm - Razdolna School

Michael Wojciak - Voznesenka and Kachemak Selo Schools

Christy Gomez - Tebughna School

Penny Bearden - Nanwalek School

Cindy McKibben - Cooper Landing and Hope Schools