

CITY AND BOROUGH OF JUNEAU SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD AGENDA ITEM

 INFORMATION

DEPARTMENT: Teaching and Learning Support 7.2

 X ACTION

TITLE: Sít' Eetí Shaanáx - Glacier Valley School Name Acknowledgement (FINAL READING)

STRATEGIC INITIATIVE:

Ensure that students feel safe and supported while at school and at school functions.

BACKGROUND:

In 2010, Glacier Valley School was presented with a Tlingit name by Mr. Hans Chester, who is currently a Tlingit language teacher in the Tlingit, Culture, Language and Literacy (TCLL) Program at Harborview Elementary School. At the time of the naming, Mr. Chester was a classroom teacher at Glacier Valley. The school received the Tlingit name Sít' Eetí Shaanáx on May 7, 2010 at the conclusion of a koo.éex' held in the school gymnasium. The name was sealed with a red mark above the gym's exterior doorway (east side of the house). There were also children who received Tlingit names at the time of the koo.éex'.

When asked about the “gifting” of the name to Glacier Valley, Mr. Chester commented that the name was not a gift. Rather, it IS the name of the school, as Sít' Eetí Shaanáx means “Glacier Valley,” following a construction of another place name in Glacier Bay. He stated recently that the name came from “...hours of thought about our language, culture and people and seeing the need for our identity to be represented in our school”. Mr. Chester suggested that if we must acknowledge the name as a gift, then it should be considered a gift from our ancestors.

CURRENT ISSUE BEFORE THE BOARD:

Acknowledgement of the Glacier Valley School Tlingit name would add an original place-name which was presented through a koo.éex' organized by Mr. Hans Chester and hosted by former principal Ted Wilson and the Glacier Valley Elementary School community (as well as many friends, including the TCLL community). When used in print, the name would read:
Sít' Eetí Shaanáx - Glacier Valley School

RECOMMENDATION:

The administration recommends official acknowledgement of the Tlingit name as a part of the school name: Sít' Eetí Shaanáx - Glacier Valley School.

PROS/CONS:

Pros:

- The presented name Sít' Eetí Shaanáx - Glacier Valley School will remind the local community of its heritage and history.
- Sít' Eetí Shaanáx - Glacier Valley School has been the recognized name of the school since 2010. This board action provides official district recognition.
- The name (an original, descriptive name) is in keeping with school naming practice.
- The name would not create any immediate monetary cost.

EQUITY ANALYSIS

(Resources; Facilities): (This section of the equity workbook does not directly address this topic)

Rated 3 of 4 Acknowledging the name Sít' Eetí Shaanáx - Glacier Valley School will remind GV students of their local history and heritage. It contributes to students' identity with local heritage, and their self-esteem.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS:

This will have minimal budget impacts. The building names as posted on signage would be updated if work was being done that required its replacement. Internal documentation and the website already acknowledge the Tlingit name.

NEXT STEPS:

When Sít' Eetí Shaanáx - Glacier Valley School is acknowledged by the board; various parties will be notified, among them:

- The GV school community--its students, faculty, staff, and parents
- Local Alaska Native tribes and organizations
- The Superintendent, School Board and school will communicate appreciation for the name.
- The augmented name Sít' Eetí Shaanáx - Glacier Valley School will be forwarded to DEED for official name change in their databases.

MOTION: I move that the Juneau Board of Education acknowledge Sít' Eetí Shaanáx - Glacier Valley School, as the site's complete and official school name on the behalf of the school, its community, and the Juneau School District.