

# Kenai Peninsula Borough Assembly

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## MEMORANDUM

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**TO:** Ryan Tunseth, Assembly President  
Members, KPB Assembly

**FROM:** Dale Eicher, Assembly Member *DE*

**DATE:** July 23, 2026

**RE:** Ordinance 2026-26, Amending KPB Code, KPB 1.20.100 and KPB 4.30.010, to Establish Term Limits for School Board Members Subject to Voter Approval (Eicher)

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The ordinance would place before the voters the question of whether school board members should be subject to the same basic term limit structure that currently applies to the borough mayor and assembly members: two consecutive full terms, followed by a 180-day break before being eligible to serve again.

In 2007, Kenai Peninsula Borough voters approved a citizen initiative placing term limits on school board members. In 2008, the Superior Court ruled the initiative invalid under then-existing state law. That ruling did not reject school board term limits as a policy choice. Rather, it recognized that state law did not then allow local imposition of school board term limits.

In 2023, the Assembly adopted Resolution 2023-060, recommending that the Alaska Legislature amend state law to allow local school board term limits. The resolution stated that the decision to adopt term limits for local school board members should be allowable under Alaska Statutes and should be a matter of local choice. That resolution passed unanimously.

The passage of Senate Bill 143 now returns this question back to local government. SB 143 amended state law to allow the governing body of a municipality to alter the terms of office for school board members by ordinance and, for municipal school districts, by ordinance approved by the voters. This ordinance uses that authority by allowing the people of the Kenai Peninsula Borough to decide the issue locally, rather than having the question controlled entirely by state statute.

School board members make decisions that directly affect students, parents, teachers, taxpayers, and communities throughout the borough. The school board helps guide education policy, district accountability, budget priorities, and long-term direction for public education. It is reasonable for voters to decide whether the same turnover and accountability principles that apply to the borough mayor and assembly should also apply to the school board.

Term limits can help prevent the long-term concentration of influence in any one elected office, create more regular opportunities for new candidates, and bring fresh perspectives into public decision-making. They can also encourage elected officials to remain responsive to the public, knowing that public office is service for a season, not a permanent parking spot.

Page -2-  
RE: O2026-26

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At the same time, this ordinance is measured. It does not shorten any current term, remove any current member from office mid-term, or permanently bar anyone from serving. A member who serves two consecutive full terms would simply be required to wait 180 days before being eligible for reelection to that office.

This approach balances continuity and accountability. School board seats are staggered, so the board would not turn over all at once. Experienced members may continue serving through their elected terms, and former members may return after the required break. The ordinance therefore provides a practical term limit without creating unnecessary disruption.

Most importantly, the ordinance trusts the voters. Borough voters previously approved school board term limits, but that vote was set aside because of the limits of state law at the time. With the Legislature now returning this authority to local government and local voters, the people of the Kenai Peninsula Borough should again have the opportunity to decide how their local elected school board offices are structured.

Your consideration is appreciated.