



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**March 21, 2018**

### **Three New Members Join the State Board of Education**

JUNEAU -- Governor Bill Walker appointed to the State Board of Education & Early Development Lorri Van Diest of Palmer, Sandy Kowalski of Fairbanks, and Tiffany Scott of Kotzebue, and reappointed James Fields of Glennallen. The three new members and Chair Fields were sworn into office at the board's meeting in Juneau on March 19.

Ms. Van Diest was appointed January 29 to fill the seat for the Third Judicial District, replacing John Harmon, who resigned. Ms. Van Diest's term expires March 1, 2020. Ms. Van Diest is a licensed professional counselor and retired educator and school counselor from the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School District. She holds a master of science degree in guidance and counseling from Oregon State University and a bachelor of science degree in mathematics from Seattle Pacific University.

Ms. Kowalski was appointed March 1 to fill the seat for the Fourth Judicial District, replacing Sue Hull, whose term expired. Ms. Kowalski's term expires March 1, 2023. Ms. Kowalski currently serves as the Director of Indigenous Programs for the Office of Rural Native and Community Education at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. She holds a master of science degree in educational leadership from National University, and a bachelor of arts degree in Iñupiaq language and a bachelor of arts degree in English from the University of Alaska Fairbanks. She previously served as the Assistant Superintendent for Elementary Education in the Fairbanks North Star Borough School District.

Ms. Scott was appointed March 2 to fill the seat for the Second Judicial District, replacing Kenneth Gallahorn, who resigned. Ms. Scott's term expires March 1, 2019. Ms. Scott is employed by the Maniilaq Health Center as a registered nurse in the emergency department. She holds an associate of applied science degree in nursing from the University of Alaska Anchorage and a bachelor of liberal arts degree in extension studies from Harvard University. Ms. Scott is a former member of the Matanuska-Susitna Borough School Board.

Mr. Fields was reappointed March 1, 2018 to fill the seat for the regional educational attendance areas, the school districts in the unorganized borough. Mr. Field's term expires March 1, 2023. Mr. Fields owns The Hub of Alaska and Copper Valley IGA as well as other buildings in the Glennallen area, and serves as the head high school boys basketball coach and is a member of the Copper River School Board.

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