

KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

Homer High School

Homer, AK 99603

March 5, 2001

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:

Ms. Deborah Germano, President
Mrs. Sammy Crawford, Vice President
Mrs. Debra Mullins, Clerk
Mr. Joe Arness, Treasurer
Dr. Nels Anderson, Member
Mrs. Sandra Wassilie, Member
Mr. Al Poindexter, Member
Miss Sara Hart, Student Representative

STAFF PRESENT:

Dr. Donna Peterson, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Patrick Hickey, Assistant Superintendent, Operations and Business Management
Dr. Ed McLain, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction
Mr. Todd Syverson, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources

OTHERS PRESENT:

Mrs. Melody Douglas	Mr. Carlton Kuhns
Mr. Rick Ladd	Ms. Gail Thomas
Ms. Karen Wessel	Kurt Racicort
Dr. Ron Keffer	Mrs. Carolyn Venuti
Ms. Laura Norton	Ms. Ceil Manchester
Ms. Susan Bailey	Angela McKinney
Mr. Willy Dunn	Ms. Lisa Whip
Mr. Don Lane	Mrs. Bev Gillaspie
Mr. Geo Beach	Mrs. Ginny Espenshade
Ms. Susan Bailey	Judge Frances Neville
Others present not identified.	

CALL TO ORDER:

Ms. Germano called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Ms. Germano invited those present to participate in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Ms. Deborah Germano	Present
Mrs. Sammy Crawford	Present
Mrs. Debra Mullins	Present
Mr. Joe Arness	Present
Dr. Nels Anderson	Present
Mrs. Sandra Wassilie	Present
Mr. Al Poindexter	Present
Miss Sara Hart	Present

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The agenda was approved with the addition of Item 10i., Approval of BP 5030, School Discipline and Safety and BP 5040, AR 5040, Student Handbook; and revisions to Items 10a.(4), Approval of Resignation; 10b., Approval of Administrator Appointment; and 10c., Approval of Request for Sabbatical.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The School Board Minutes of February 19, 2001, were approved with a correction to the spelling of the name Ms. Penny Cardy on page 228.

SCHOOL REPORTS:

Mr. Rick Ladd, West Homer Elementary principal, reported that the school goal is to improve reading achievement through various motivational-type resources and activities. He reported that the school invited the Junior Great Books Foundation to conduct a two-day training for staff. He stated that the school continues to institute the Accelerated Reader Program and that the library now has 2,200 books with tests. He reported that the library has 10,000 books with a circulation of over 5,000 books per school year. He reviewed reading assessment scores. He announced that the 5/6 grade students won the District Battle of the Books. Mr. Ladd reported that the school instituted a listserve of 170 parents and community members who receive the school newsletter. He reported that the school website provides various information including schoolwide announcements, classroom instruction, daily lessons, guidelines, and school rules. He stated that the school also uses an electronic report card system. He stated that beginning March 8 through April 26, seven different computer classes will be offered in the evening for parents. He announced that West Homer Elementary was recently identified by *Family PC* magazine and *The Princeton Review* as one of the best 100 wired schools in the United States. He announced that in January, West Homer Elementary students received youth court training from Mrs. Ginny Espenshade, Kenai Peninsula Youth Court director, and training from Judge Frances Neville on how a courtroom functions.

Mrs. Espenshade and Dr. Peterson presented certificates for 36 West Homer Elementary students who had completed the Youth Court training. Judge Neville noted that the students have learned and were tested on the same laws and procedures that the Alaska Court System uses every day. She administered the oath during a brief swearing in ceremony.

Ms. Karen Wessel, Homer Flex principal/teacher, thanked the Board for the newly remodeled building to house Homer Flex students. She reported that reading is the school goal and that each student improved at least one grade level over last year. She reported that many students rediscovered the love of reading and that their comprehension scores have improved. She announced that last school year out of the 14 students that graduated 5 were parenting teens and 7 students enrolled in college. She stated that she expects 14 more students to graduate this year and invited those present to attend the ceremony on May 19. She read statements written by three Homer Flex students about their positive experiences at school and their anticipation of graduation.

Mr. Jeff Szarzi introduced Miss Taya Trago and Miss Nicole Jones who presented a Power Point presentation explaining the school's small furniture business called Flexwood. Miss Jones reported that Homer Flex students operate Flexwood and that recycled materials are used to create the furniture. She described the process of making the furniture and noted that \$5,000 of Carl Perkins grant money was used to purchase tools and supplies. She stated that Flexwood's future goal is to create a survey to help market their furniture and to update their website. She thanked the many people and organizations for their assistance in making the small business a success.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:

Ms. Susan Bailey, McNeil Canyon Elementary parent, stated that she opposes the elimination of two teaching positions at the school next year. She stated that the reduction will make it necessary to use the library and physical education teacher allocation in the classroom to maintain manageable class sizes and provide appropriate instruction. She noted that along with multi-age classrooms, McNeil Canyon Elementary School serves students who are primarily Russian speaking, are from low-income families, or are identified as at-risk. She stated that she has recently voiced her concerns for adequate educational funding and asked the Board to reconsider the proposed staff reduction.

Mr. Willy Dunne, McNeil Canyon Elementary parent, stated that he has chosen to enroll his child in public school because of the excellent programs offered at McNeil Canyon Elementary. He stated that he is concerned about the proposed staff reduction. He stated that the prediction is that the school will have 103 students next year (which is 24 less students) and will lose 2 teachers. He urged the Board to consider the impact that the reduction will have on the school. He stated that a loss of two teachers at McNeil Canyon Elementary would fuel parents' decision to home school their children. He stated that there are some great private schools available in the Homer area making it tough for public schools to compete. He urged the Board to prevent the 27% reduction in teaching staff.

Mr. Don Lane, Homer parent, explained that his son is in special education and that over the years the school has made progress. He stated that there may be many special education students from schools that do not qualify for Title I funds who do not pass the High School Qualifying Exam. He asked the Board to allocate money to special education programs from discretionary or Quality Schools Initiative funds.

Mr. Geo Beach, Homer resident, informed the Board that Homer community members have been informally discussing configuration options of area elementary schools. He stated that some of the topics that have been discussed are the importance of neighborhood schools, minimizing travel and transportation for students, and the value of continuity inherent in the traditional kindergarten through Grade 6 format. He stated that he expects the Board will hear formally from community members, parents, and children regarding the configuration of Homer area elementary schools. He thanked the Board in advance for considering their requests.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS:

Dr. Peterson stated that she received a letter from the Port Graham Site Council regarding lead in the water. She announced that information on working with the media regarding the High School Qualifying Exam from the Department of Education and Early Development is available on email.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE, SITE COUNCIL, AND/OR P.T.A., K.P.A.A., K.P.E.A., K.P.E.S.A.:

Mrs. Angela McKinney, Anchor Point resident, reported that she attended the Long Range Planning meeting and that the administration was open to recommendations from community members. She stated that she was impressed and is appreciative of the planning effort.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE, SITE COUNCIL, AND/OR P.T.A., K.P.A.A., K.P.E.A., K.P.E.S.A. (continued):

Ms. Lisa Whip, McNeil Canyon Site Council member, stated that she also attended the Long Range Planning meeting and felt that it was very productive and respectful and that the administration was wonderful to work with. She stated that she is concerned over the proposed reduction of two teaching positions at McNeil Canyon Elementary School. She stated that the proposed reduction will eliminate the library/physical education specialists by placing that teacher in the classroom. She stated that the Site Council feels there is only so far the teaching staff can be reduced before the program for each student is seriously compromised. She stated that the Council is fund raising and writing grants to enhance McNeil Elementary school programs. She added that the Council is urging the community to contact their legislators to voice their concern over educational funding. Ms. Whip asked the Board to make the staff reduction less severe. She submitted a petition to the Board with 59 signatures of individuals opposing the elimination of two teaching positions at McNeil Canyon Elementary School.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS:

The Board presented Golden Apple awards to Ms. Carolyn Venuti and Ms. Ceil Manchester for their dedication to students and to the District. The Board presented certificates of appreciation to Mr. Kurt Racicot for being selected the District Vocational Education Instructor of the Year and to Gail Thomas for being selected for the Barbara Berger Award for Excellence in Health Education.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Dr. Peterson reported that six students and a chaperone from the District attended the Democracy in Action Conference in Washington D.C. She stated that specific guidelines were used to select the students and that the trip included a meeting with Senator Stevens and other U.S. congressional officials. She announced that the Long Range Planning community meetings will begin on March 8 at Soldotna High; March 12, at Seward High; March 13 at Homer High; March 14 at Kenai Central High; and March 15 at Nikiski High. She announced that the meetings will begin at 7:00 p.m. (3:30 p.m. in Homer) and will provide another opportunity for public input. She announced that the administration has had several meetings with the Kenai Peninsula Borough legislative delegation and that prior to the Board meeting, the administration met with Senator Torgerson and Representative Lancaster. She announced that West Homer Elementary was recently identified as one of the best 100 wired schools in the United States. She announced that Mr. Malcolm Fleming, Seward Middle/High School principal, was chosen as the Middle/High School Principal of the Year.

Ms. Germano noted that the time for the Homer community Long Range Planning meeting was changed to 3:30 p.m. because it conflicted with a band concert.

2001-2002 BUDGET PRESENTATION:

Mr. Hickey presented the second draft of the 2001-2002 School District budget to the Board. He noted that the budget has been publicly presented to various District communities.

BOARD REPORTS:

Mr. Poindexter reported that last week the District Vocational Education Conference was held at Soldotna High and Kenai Peninsula College. He stated that approximately 80 students participated in 11 different vocational contests including cooking, welding, carpentry, technology, problem solving, speaking, and job interviewing. He added that each student competed in a contest out of his or her field. He noted that a number of District schools were not involved with the conference and would like to see the communication system improved to include more schools in the future. Mr. Poindexter distributed a unique highlighter marker to the Board members and administration.

Mrs. Mullins reported that the AASB Fly-In was positive and that legislators are discussing additional funding for education. She said that the amount is uncertain, but there are a number of bills that have been introduced regarding funding for education. She stated that the governor's funding plan does not look like it will pass the legislature because they are not willing to commit themselves for five years. She noted that she heard Mr. Hickey and Dr. McLain's names mentioned positively several times during her stay in Juneau and that the two are becoming venerated for their knowledge. She thanked the Board for the opportunity to attend the Fly-In.

Mrs. Crawford echoed Ms. Mullins comments regarding the AASB Legislative Fly-In. She noted that for the first time in many trips to Juneau, the conversations have all been about education. She noted that it was interesting to see the three freshman legislators doing so well.

Mr. Arness reported that he attended the Outsourcing Student Activities Task Force meeting on Thursday, March 1. He stated that the purpose of the first meeting was to decide what questions needed answers. He stated that it was a very productive meeting and that the next meeting is scheduled for Friday, March 9.

Miss Hart reported that she attended the AASB Youth Leadership Conference in Juneau and noted that it was a wonderful learning experience. She stated that she met students from all over Alaska. She stated that she also noticed the legislature's positive attitude towards education. She thanked the District for the opportunity to attend the Conference.

Ms. Germano thanked Miss Hart for her representation at the conference in Juneau. She stated that the Fly-In was productive and that she heard a lot of talk about the High School Qualifying Exam and whether to delay it. She reported that she attended a training on parliamentary procedures and noted that the presenter made the topic enjoyable. She stated that it was pleasant to work with the freshman legislators. She noted that Representative Drew Scalzi, Representative Ken Lancaster and Senator John Torgerson were in their offices during the weekend of the Fly-In, and she recognized them for their leadership.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Items presented on the Consent Agenda were Approval of New Teacher Assignments 2000-2001, Leave of Absence Request – Support, Long-Term Substitute Teacher Contract, Resignation, and Bond Package Project Designers.

New Teacher Assignments 2000-2001:

Mr. Syverson recommended the Board approve teacher assignments for Christopher Lau, generalist (temporary), Spring Creek School; and Sheryl Cook, Middle School Coordinator (temporary), Kenai Middle School.

Leave of Absence Request – Support:

Mr. Syverson recommended the Board approve a leave of absence request for Tom Hindman, custodian I, Nikiski Middle/High School.

Long-Term Substitute Teacher Contract:

Mr. Syverson recommended the Board approve a substitute teaching contract for Susan Hatch, special education/resource, North Star Elementary.

ResignationS:

Mr. Syverson recommended the Board approve resignations for Lloyd M. Tappana, science/photography, Soldotna High School; Fred Colvin, principal/teacher, Tebughna Elementary/High School; Kathryn Cross, school psychologist, districtwide special services; and Teresa Orr, principal/teacher, Cooper Landing Elementary School.

Bond Package Project Designers: Mr. Hickey recommended the Board approve authorization for the Borough Assembly to directly award services for consulting and design document development of school facilities to avoid the need for revisiting each individual project.

ACTION Mrs. Wassilie moved the Board approve Consent Agenda Items Numbers 1 through 5. Mrs. Mullins seconded.

Ms. Germano acknowledged the retirement of Mr. Wayne Clark and commended him for his work for the District.

Motion carried unanimously.

2000-01 Administrator Assignment: Mr. Syverson recommended the Board approve the appointment of Mr. Sam Stewart, curriculum and assessment director.

ACTION Mrs. Crawford moved the Board approve the appointment of Mr. Sam Stewart as curriculum and assessment director. Mrs. Mullins seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Request for Sabbatical: Mr. Syverson recommended the Board approve a request for an unpaid sabbatical without benefits for the 2001-2002 school year for Ms. Jennifer Tabor, home economics, Skyview High School.

ACTION Mrs. Crawford moved the Board approve a request for an unpaid sabbatical without benefits for the 2001-2002 school year for Ms. Jennifer Tabor, home economics, Skyview High School. Dr. Anderson seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

BP 4132, 4232, 4332, Publication or Creation of Materials: Mr. Hickey recommended the Board approve revisions to BP 4132, 4232, 4332, Publication or Creation of Materials. He stated that the revisions require that the development of copyrightable materials by employees or students during, or in part during, the work/school day must be approved by the superintendent or designee.

ACTION Mrs. Crawford moved the Board approve revisions to BP 4132, 4232, 4332, Publication or Creation of Materials. Mrs. Mullins seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

BP 3522.6, Violent and Aggressive Conduct: Mr. Hickey recommended the Board approve the adoption of BP 3522.6, Violent and Aggressive Conduct. He stated that the policy addresses behaviors categorized as violent and aggressive that will not be tolerated on school district property and will result in immediate corrective action. He explained that the policy will be included in the Operations Section, 3000.

ACTION Mrs. Mullins moved the Board approve the adoption of BP 3522.6, Violent and Aggressive Conduct. Mr. Arness seconded.

Mrs. Wassilie asked what procedures are used as preventative measures to avoid violent and aggressive behavior. Dr. Peterson responded that there is District training to address violent and aggressive behavior and District policies regarding intervention and threats. Mrs. Wassilie asked whether violent and aggressive behaviors are defined in the school student handbooks. Dr. Peterson responded that handbooks address the issue of violent and aggressive behavior. She noted that the District is progressing towards a District handbook for parents and students and that a definition will also be included.

Motion carried unanimously.

BP 3522.5, Campus Disturbances:

Mr. Hickey recommended the Board approve the adoption of BP and AR 3522.5, Campus Disturbances. He stated that the policy and administrative regulation require the development of a school plan to be implemented in the event of a campus disturbance. He noted that local authorities were collaboratively involved in the developing the plan.

ACTION

Mrs. Crawford moved the Board approve the adoption of BP and AR 3522.5, Campus Disturbances. Mrs. Mullins seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

BP 1313, Willful Disruption of the School:

Mr. Hickey recommended the Board approve the adoption of BP 1313, Willful Disruption of the School. He stated that the policy addresses situations in which adults who violate the safe learning environment and appropriate standards of conduct while on school district property are instructed to conduct themselves in a proper manner or leave school district property.

ACTION

Mrs. Mullins moved the Board approve the adoption of BP 1313, Willful Disruption of the School. Dr. Anderson seconded.

Mrs. Mullins noted that Board members received badges and asked whether other appropriate visitors will receive badges. Mr. Hickey reported that all visitors are asked to sign in at the office. He stated that the second phase of the badging process is to create badges for all District students and staff. He stated that the goal is to provide a badge for every staff member to use when they are visiting a school. He noted that Soldotna Middle School office staff wears their badges while at work so that parents and other visitors will know who they are.

Ms. Germano asked what process is used for a visitor who feels they have been denied access to the school unjustly. Mr. Hickey responded that the process is addressed in the Public Complaint Against the School policy and the Public Complaint Against School Personnel policy.

BP 1313, Willful Disruption of the School
(continued):

Motion carried unanimously.

BP 3313, Contracts, Leases and
Agreements:

Mr. Hickey recommended the Board approve the revision of BP 3313, Contracts, Leases and Agreements. He stated that the revision adds contracts, legal review of contracts, leases, and agreements where appropriate and includes a nondiscrimination clause. He noted that the first paragraph has been reworded based on comments by Mr. Arness at the February 19 meeting.

ACTION

Mr. Arness moved the Board approve the revision of BP 3313, Contracts, Leases and Agreements. Dr. Anderson seconded.

Mr. Arness clarified with Mr. Hickey that contracts or purchases of a large dollar amount are required to come to the School Board for approval.

Motion carried unanimously.

BP 5030, SCHOOL DISCIPLINE AND SAFETY; BP 5040, AR 5040, STUDENT HANDBOOK:

Ms. Germano explained that during the February 19 School Board meeting, the adoption of BP 5030, School Discipline and Safety and the revision of BP 5040, AR 5040, Student Handbook was postponed and was to be considered at the current meeting.

Dr. McLain reported that he does not yet have a response from the attorneys regarding the use of the term "community" in place of the word "school" in BP 5030. He stated that he would speak to the attorneys next week and return with their response.

ACTION

Mr. Arness moved the Board postpone action on the adoption of BP 5030, School Discipline and Safety and the revision of BP 5040, AR 5040, Student Handbook. Dr. Anderson seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:

Ms. Laura Norton, president of the Kenai Peninsula Orchestra Board of Directors, thanked the School District for supporting the Kenai Peninsula Orchestra and other community groups and for encouraging use of the school facilities.

Mrs. Espenshade announced that on April 5-7 the Kenai Peninsula Youth Court is hosting the Statewide Youth Justice Conference. She stated that the conference will include approximately 200 youth and adults from all over the state. She reported that on Thursday, April 5, Dr. Peterson will deliver a welcoming statement at the opening reception at the Kenai Senior Center. She invited the Board to attend. She stated that both keynote speakers are former District graduates who participated in the Youth Court Program. She stated that Alaska Supreme Court Chief Justice Dana Fabe will be present to introduce the keynote speakers. She thanked the District for their support.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Miss Hart thanked the Board for the opportunity to attend the Youth Leadership Conference in Juneau. She thanked West Homer and Homer Flex for their school presentations. She congratulated Mrs. Venuti for being selected to receive the District Golden Apple Award.

BOARD COMMENTS (continued):

Mrs. Mullins stated that she appreciated the West Homer Elementary School presentation and added that she was amazed at the number of students interested in youth court. She commended Homer Flex for their presentation and encouraged those present to attend the school's graduation ceremony. She commended Miss Hart for an outstanding job representing students of the District at the AASB Legislative Fly-In. She stated that the Peninsula has been fortunate to have students who can "hold their own" against powerful legislators. She noted that many legislators want a youth's opinion and will listen to them.

Dr. Anderson stated that he was moved by the comments made by the McNeil Canyon Elementary parents. He stated that other schools have been in the same staffing situation and added that the Board is not unsympathetic to the reduction problems. He stated that budget reduction decisions are made with great trepidation. He stated that the Board will give every consideration possible to make sure the schools get fair and equal representation, and if possible, review each special circumstance. He thanked Mrs. McKinney for her parent representative volunteerism.

Mr. Poindexter stated that he shared the concerns expressed by the McNeil Canyon Elementary parents. He stated that small schools districtwide tend to suffer by losing specialists when enrollment declines. He stated that he hopes the Board can figure out a way to deal with that problem. He stated that he enjoyed the school presentations and was impressed with West Homer Elementary. Mr. Poindexter reported that the Board spent two hours prior to the Board meeting working on the Long Range Plan. He commented that fewer youth are involved in community events because they are involved with too many school events. He stated that the District needs to encourage students to be involved in community events such as the Winter Carnival and Anchor Point Snow Rondy. He noted that that the purpose of the senior project is to get students involved in the community. He cited an example of low participation (4 students) in a recent speech contest sponsored by the Soil and Water Conservation District. He reported that winners of the speech contest were Savannah Bradley who won third place and \$50; Jennifer Poindexter who won second place and \$75; and Chase McKinney who won first place, \$100, and transportation to Anchorage to compete in the state contest. He stated that he would like to encourage more schools, teachers and students to be involved in community events.

Mrs. Crawford thanked McNeil Canyon Elementary parents for expressing their staffing concerns to the Board. She stated that she is hopeful the legislature will increase funding for education. She congratulated the four employees who received awards. She stated that she attended the foreign exchange student dinner and spoke to exchange students from six different countries who each said they were happy to be in the United States and attending schools in this District. She stated that the foreign exchange students told her that they enjoyed the activities, classes, teachers, and especially the mix of students from all social classes. She thanked West Homer Elementary and Homer Flex for their school presentations. She thanked Dr. McLain and Mr. Hickey for positively representing the District in Juneau.

BOARD COMMENTS (continued):

Mrs. Wassilie stated that she appreciated school presentations and noted that both schools have very supportive student climates and strong support for reading. She stated that she was impressed with the number of books in the West Homer Elementary library. She commented on the proposed loss of a librarian position at McNeil Canyon Elementary. She stated that Seward Middle experienced a loss of 3.5 teachers last school year and added that although it was not easy, she was impressed with the strong support of the school by the parents and community. She stated that she appreciated hearing the comments from parents.

Mr. Arness commented that he received a letter (postmarked in Soldotna) from Saturday Night Live requesting him to perform the Super Star dance after previewing a video-taped activity conducted during the last administrator meeting. He thanked the superintendent for sharing the video with his family and his employees.

ADJOURN: At 9:37 p.m., Mr. Arness moved the School Board Meeting be adjourned.
Mrs. Mullins seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ms. Deborah Germano, President

Mrs. Debra Mullins, Clerk

The Minutes of March 5, 2001,
were approved on April 2, 2001
as written.