

KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

148 N. Binkley Street
Soldotna, AK 99669

September 11, 2000

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:

Ms. Deborah Germano, President
Mrs. Debra Mullins, Vice President
Mrs. Susan Larned, Clerk
Mrs. Sammy Crawford, Treasurer
Mrs. Mari-Anne Gross, Member
Dr. Nels Anderson, Member
Mr. Mike Chenault, Member

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. Sylvia Reynolds	Mrs. Elaine Larson
Mr. Sean Dusek	Mr. Buck George
Mrs. Sharon Moock	Ms. Barb Vogel
Mr. Phil Morin	Mr. Dave McCard
Mr. Red Smith	Ms. Reneé Henderson
Mr. Lance Peterson	

Others present not identified.

CALL TO ORDER:

Ms. Germano called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

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

ROLL CALL:

Ms. Deborah Germano	Present
Mrs. Debra Mullins	Present
Mrs. Susan Larned	Present
Mrs. Sammy Crawford	Present
Mrs. Mari-Anne Gross	Present
Dr. Nels Anderson	Present
Mr. Mike Chenault	Present

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The agenda was approved as written.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The School Board Minutes of August 21, 2000, were approved as printed.

SCHOOL REPORTS:

Ms. Sylvia Reynolds, Soldotna High principal, introduced her son, Micah Reynolds; Mr. Sean Dusek, assistant principal; and Ms. Sharon Moock, activities director. She gave a Power Point presentation highlighting student achievements and awards and student academics. She reported on the Discovery Class for students who were not successful at the middle school and Reconnecting Youth II for students who are involved with Central Peninsula Counseling Services. She reported on ACT, High School Qualifying Exam, and CAT scores. She noted that math computation scores are down at both Soldotna High and throughout the District; and she noted that as a result, calculators will be used less. She noted that 33 percent of the students at Soldotna High School who took the High School Qualifying Exam passed all three areas. Mrs. Reynolds explained that study skills are being taught by all teachers beginning with a pretest to determine each student's level.

SCHOOL REPORTS (continued):

She announced that the new Dell computers have arrived and are set up and that the transition is going smoothly. She explained that the homework hotline, Alaska Standards, e-mail, grade reports, teacher academic plans, school calendar, and web casts of specific student activities are available on the school web site. Mrs. Reynolds announced that the school offers a student activity card and a senior citizen activity card for \$10, which allows yearlong access to school athletic activities. She reported that each month the Soldotna Rotary Club members have lunch at the school to recognize the "Student of the Month". She reported that students at the high school operate the concession stand at the Soldotna Sports Center and that it has been a success. Mrs. Reynolds recounted a story concerning an intensive needs student who spoke for the first time last year and credited the school special services staff for the student's accomplishment. She reported that student remediation is available through the After the Bell Program and PEP Program.

Mrs. Reynolds reported that Soldotna High School has a strong athletic program and that "Coach of the Year" awards were given for volleyball and hockey and that the hockey team also received recognition for being all-academic. She thanked the school custodians for installing countertops and brackets for the new computer lab. She commended the student leadership class for addressing problems such as student parking, unaccompanied children at the homecoming bon fire and other matters. She concluded by announcing that a sailing curriculum is being developed for possible implementation during the summer of 2002; student assistance for the High School Qualifying Exam will be offered on the new web site; and a community musical will be produced by the school, which will include Soldotna Elementary, Redoubt Elementary and Soldotna Middle Schools.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:

Mr. Sherman (Red) Smith, Cooper Landing resident, described a section of the Sterling Highway and Bean Creek Road near Cooper Landing Elementary School that is scheduled to be improved and paved. He stated that the intersection of Bean Creek Road and Sterling highway needs to be made safe. He asked the Board to pass a resolution supporting the construction of a single intersection as safely as can reasonably be accomplished. He told the Board that Senator Torgerson will speak with Commissioner Perkins regarding the improvements. He stated that he has provided information to the commissioner of education and the governor. He asked the Board to understand that it is an opportunity to make the school and community a safer place. Mr. Hickey distributed a map of the area.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS:

Dr. Peterson reported that she received four communications: an invitation for the School Board student representative to attend the AASB Student Leadership Institution, a letter from AASB asking the Board to appoint a child/youth advocate, a package containing the District High School Qualifying Exam results, and a letter from the Department of Education and Early Development accepting the District FY01 operating budget.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Dr. Peterson reported that school is off to a great start. She stated that she has received word that the Department of Education and Early Development has approved the District bond projects. She announced that the District received a certificate of excellence in financial reporting from the International Association of School Business Officials. She reported that *Sports Illustrated* will be coming to the District to produce a photo essay on football in Alaska.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT
(continued):

Mr. Hickey stated that thanks to a herculean effort by the business office staff, the FY01 budget represents the first submission for international accreditation.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Items presented on the Consent Agenda were Revisions to AR 6153, School-Sponsored Trips, New Teacher Assignments, Leave of Absence Requests–Support, Resignations, Early Graduation Request, and Tentative Nontenure Teacher Assignments.

AR 6153, School-Sponsored Trips:

Mr. Hickey recommended the Board approve a revision to AR 6153, School-Sponsored Trips. He explained that the change would raise the insurance requirement for owners of commercial boats and planes who provide transportation to students from \$300,000 to \$1,000,000.

New Teacher Assignments:

Mr. Syverson recommended the Board approve teacher assignments for the 2000-2001 school year for Barbara Njaa, (temporary) reading specialist, Nikiski Middle/High; Mary Ellen Purcell, QUEST, Homer area; Cynthia Romberg, QUEST, Redoubt Elementary; and Jean Slankard, special education/resource, Spring Creek School.

Leave of Absence Requests–Support:

Mr. Syverson recommended the Board approve leave of absence requests from Juliana Martishev, bilingual instructor, Kachemak Selo; and Effimia Litvin, bilingual instructor, Kachemak Selo.

Resignations:

Mr. Syverson recommended the Board approve resignations from Dr. Donald Boehmer, director, Special Services; and Dr. Ed McLain, assistant superintendent, Instruction.

Early Graduation Request:

Dr. Ed McLain recommended the Board approve an early graduation request from a Seward Middle/High School student.

Tentative Nontenure Teacher Assignments:

Mr. Syverson recommended the Board approve a tentative nontenured teacher assignment for Mark Fraad, districtwide Career Pathways specialist, Alternative Education; Kristy Schmelzenbach, Gear Up (temporary) reading specialist, Kenai Middle School; and Virginia Bucher, (temporary) reading specialist, Homer High/Homer Middle.

ACTION

Mrs. Mullins moved the Board approve Consent Agenda Items Numbers 1 through 6. Mrs. Crawford seconded.

Dr. Anderson asked whether the additional insurance would be a burden on the local industry. Mr. Hickey replied that he spoke to personnel at Rainbow Connections who stated that \$1,000,000 was the amount of their liability limits. He stated he wasn't sure if the new liability amount was standard coverage among businesses but that the Borough risk manager felt it was necessary.

Motion carried unanimously.

AR 1330, Community Use of Auditorium:

Mr. Hickey recommended the Board approve revisions to AR 1330 that would revise the District auditorium fee schedule in Category I and increase the fees in Category II and Category III. Ms. Germano noted that the item was tabled at the February 7, 2000 meeting and therefore does not allow for public testimony.

ACTION

Mrs. Crawford moved the Board remove revisions to AR 1330, Community Use of Auditorium, from the table. Dr. Anderson seconded.

AR 1330, Community Use of Auditorium
(continued):

Motion carried unanimously.

ACTION

Mrs. Mullins moved the Board suspend the rules for the purpose of public discussion with a limit of 15 minutes. Dr. Anderson seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Germano notified the public that the Board will take testimony for 15 minutes and asked that comments be limited to 3 minutes each.

Mr. Hickey suggested that a task force be established to further examine and discuss changes to AR 1330.

Vergine Hedberg, dance studio owner, stated that she was overwhelmed by the prices recommended in the revisions to AR 1330. She stated that she cannot afford to pay the cost of student performances in the auditorium. She stated that in the past, she has paid \$1200 to \$1400; but if the fees double, she cannot afford it and does not feel that she can ask parents to pay for it either. She explained that parents want to see their children perform and that part of the dance studio fees include the cost of student performances. She stated that she produces quality dancers, but if they cannot perform, they will not excel. She asked the Board to think twice before raising the price for the use of the District auditoriums.

Mrs. Rosemary Bird, Kenai Middle School choral teacher, stated that for the past four years she has had to pay for the use of the KCHS auditorium. She stated that in the beginning, the charges covered custodial overtime and the use of the piano, which totaled approximately \$80 to \$130 each performance. She stated that last year she paid \$800 but did not have enough money to pay the rest of what was owed. She stated that she does not want the students to be forced to fund raise for the opportunity to perform. She explained that students already pay class fees to participate in choir and that all fund raising now goes towards the opportunity to sing.

Ms. Trena Richardson, K-Beach Elementary principal, stated that she is concerned that there is not enough space at the elementary school to perform a musical. She told the Board that she cannot seat all of the students and their parents in the school gymnasium. She stated that the school already pays for student transportation to the auditorium and that with tightened budgets, most of the fund raising is being put towards other efforts than the rental of a facility that was, in her opinion, built for all schools in the community. She expressed concern regarding Mr. Hickey's comparison of the music programs to charging for athletics because the students participating in athletics are participating by choice but the music program is a part of the regular curriculum. She asked the Board to reconsider the recommendation to raise the fees for the use of the District auditoriums.

AR 1330, Community Use of Auditorium
(continued):

Ms. Carol Ford, Kenai Performers director, explained that the reason the community doesn't have more theater and other artistic expression is because the theaters are too expensive. She reported that in 85 percent of the shows she has directed over the past 20 years, she has had to find a place to rehearse and perform. She said the community doesn't value the ability to share what it means to be human. She stated that she directed *Fiddler on the Roof*, which made a lot of money because it touched peoples' hearts in a way that can only be done with art. She stated that if space were available, theaters would pay for themselves. She asked the Board to consider how important it is for the community to have access to express their artistic talents.

Ms. Lane Means, Kenai Peninsula College instructor, told the Board that without art programs, children's hearts and souls will die. She stated that everything that is done in life is related to the arts. She added that schools that are highly successful throughout the nation have successful art programs. She thanked Mr. Griffin and his staff for their extra help with the college performance of *Jazz Iz*. She reported that *Jazz Iz* performances have included high school students so they could learn from older experienced dancers. She stated that three-fifths of the *Jazz Iz* budget went towards the use of the theater, and as a result, the group was not able to perform last year. She urged the Board to put people who are qualified artists from elementary through high school on the task force. She concluded by stating that when the arts suffer, so does the community, the state and the country.

Mr. Dan Thornton, Peninsula Grace Brethren Church pastor, stated that the church has had a great relationship with Mr. Griffin and his staff. He explained that the church has used the KCHS theater for Christmas and Easter productions. He stated that he applauds the idea of a task force because he feels that there is an answer. He reported that the cost of a past Christmas program was over \$5,000, which paid wages. He stated that the church has used the theaters enough that they have trained men and women in the congregation to operate the equipment, which has helped save money. He suggested that community volunteers be trained to operate the theater equipment under Mr. Griffin's direction. He noted that there is a need and a desire to use the auditoriums, but there are very few facilities.

Mr. Phil Morin, Nikiski Middle/High teacher, asked the Board whether he will have the support necessary to produce an upcoming dance show. Ms. Germano explained that no action has been taken on the proposed revisions to AR 1330. Mr. Hickey stated that there is no intent on the part of the administration to change the rules in the middle of the year. He stated that the District will offer the same level of support and that commitments have been made to the community and buildings. He suggested that unless the Board approves changes to AR 1330, Mr. Morin should proceed in the same manner as last year. Mr. Morin stated that last year there was an extra technician at Nikiski Middle/High, but this year the position was eliminated.

AR 1330, Community Use of Auditorium
(continued):

Mr. Gordon Griffin, theater director, stated that it was very difficult to receive an e-mail from Rosemary Bird stating that she had given all of the money earned to pay for theater fees. Mr. Griffin stated that he may be the biggest part of the theater use problem and if so, he is sorry. He stated that the theater problems have compounded over a 20-year period but could be solved through the appointment of a task force. He asked the Board to consider all of the problems that the \$50,000 deficit has solved as well as what it has done for everyone concerned (elementary schools and the community). He stated that the theater staff has done a fantastic job and succeeded at every level and provided good community, elementary and high school access to theaters, but the costs have become unmanageable.

Mr. Hickey recommended that the proposed revisions to AR 1330 be defeated and that a task force be created to solve the deficit issues of the theater. He explained that the deficit problem that has been building over twenty-years can be resolved by reasonable people.

Ms. Gross stated that she is in favor of the use of the auditoriums by the schools and added that she hoped the task force can come up with a reasonable cost to the schools and community. She stated that she would like to see the theaters used every night and that she has faith in the task force.

Ms. Mullins expressed appreciation for the opportunity to discuss the theater issue during a worksession earlier in the day. She stated that she will vote no on the proposal so that the task force can return a more suitable version for the schools and community. She stated she is interested in knowing who will be chosen for the task force. She stated that she would like to have the task force membership include community members who use the District theaters.

Ms. Germano thanked those present for the input expressed regarding revisions to AR 1330. She stated that she and other Board members have learned a lot about school productions and theater use. She stated that the Board needs to do what they can to support school performance activities. She noted that each person who spoke testified from the performance viewpoint and she would like to hear about the technical aspect of school performances and how students can learn by being involved.

Motion unanimously failed.

AASB Resolution 2.7, Funding for the High School Qualifying Examination:

Dr. Peterson read changes to AASB Resolution 2.7, Funding for the High School Qualifying Exam which were made during the August 21 Board worksession. After the word "support" in the first sentence, the Board added "directly incorporating into the foundation formula."

ACTION

Mr. Chenault moved the Board approve revisions to AASB Resolution 2.7, Funding for the High School Qualifying Exam. Mrs. Mullins seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Proposed AASB Resolution, Support of Accountability for Home-Schooled Students:

Dr. Peterson reported that during the August 21 worksession, the Board suggested a resolution be written to address accountability for home-schooled students.

Proposed AASB Resolution, Support of Accountability for Home-Schooled Students (continued):

ACTION

Mrs. Gross moved the Board approve the proposed AASB resolution supporting accountability for home-schooled students. Mrs. Larned seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

FIRST READING OF POLICY REVISIONS:

The Board heard a first reading of BB 9400, Board Self-Evaluation. Dr. Peterson recommended the Board approve the AASB model.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Mr. Chenault thanked the audience for their attendance. He thanked Mrs. Reynolds for the Soldotna High presentation.

Mrs. Crawford thanked Soldotna High for their outstanding and professional technical presentation and the public for expressing their concerns.

Mrs. Gross stated that she appreciated the people who came to speak regarding the theater issue. She reminded the Board of a time when much was accomplished through volunteers and suggested that parents be taught to operate the theater equipment and that students and audiences be asked to clean up and put away after each performance.

Mrs. Larned stated that she was interested in the Soldotna High School statistics and the concession stand being operated in cooperation with the Sports Center and City of Soldotna. She stated that it is a program that has worked well especially because it includes all students. She added that she is pleased that the program has continued to be a success. She stated that she supports the idea of a task force to work on a resolution to the theater problems and is anxious that it begin soon.

Mrs. Mullins thanked Mrs. Reynolds for the school report. She stated that she also enjoyed a previous Soldotna High School report when the Board was invited into the classrooms. She expressed appreciation for the work of the school staff. She called the Board's attention to the resignations of Dr. McLain and Dr. Boehmer and thanked Dr. McLain for his hard work. She stated that she appreciated the input regarding the community theater and added that she hoped the public will contact Mr. Hickey to express their concerns. She stated that she was pleased that the Board suspended the rules and gave the public an opportunity to express their opinions regarding the theater recommendations.

Ms. Germano acknowledged Dr. McLain's resignation and noted that he will complete the 2000-2001 school year. She announced that Mrs. Mullins will be the Board's KPSAA representative and that Mrs. Larned will be the AASB Youth Advocate provided she is reelected.

ADJOURN: At 8:53 p.m., Dr. Anderson moved the School Board Meeting be adjourned.
Mrs. Larned seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ms. Deborah Germano, President

Mrs. Susan Larned, Clerk

The Minutes of September 11, 2000,
were approved on October 2, 2000
as written.