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KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

KPBSD INFORMATION

Soldotna, January 24, 2013—Ten principals began meeting in March 2012—K-Beach Elementary School; Redoubt Elementary School; Skyview High School; River City Academy; Soldotna Elementary School; Soldotna Montessori Charter School; Soldotna High School; Soldotna Middle School; Sterling Elementary School; and Tustumena Elementary School. On January 24, 2013, all ten administrators, the KPBSD communications specialist, director of secondary education, and director of human resources met with assistant superintendent Dusek to discuss focus group input, reconfiguring options, and prepare for February 11, 2013, community meetings to be held at each of the ten schools.

Background: In the fall of 2011, SMS and Sterling Elementary independently began discussions with their respective site councils to explore pros and cons of 6-7-8 (SMS) and K-8 (Sterling El) reconfigurations. Concurrently, KPBSD began a district wide five-year strategic plan. As a result of SMS and Sterling El conversations, and the school district strategic planning, a meeting was held on March 29, 2012, to gain a Soldotna wide perspective. On April 29, and August 30, the group reconvened to discuss and update with feedback from site councils and staffs about the SMS 6-7-8 proposal, potential effects to other schools, and create an online survey. From September 18-28, 2012, a survey—online and available via paper—was provided to parents, students, and KPBSD employees from the ten schools. Survey results were analyzed at the October 11, 2012, meeting. At a November 27 meeting, the group reviewed enrollment projections and created scenarios for delivery of instruction for Soldotna area students by 2015-16 school year. On January 10, 2013, two focus groups met: Soldotna area elementary teachers, and business leaders and community members representing the ten schools. **At the January 24, 2013, meeting:**

1. Each administrator shared key points from on-going discussions with staff, families, and site-councils.
2. Reviewed reconfiguration options incorporating current school sites and maximum capacities with this configuration:
 - a. Redoubt, Soldotna Elementary, Soldotna Montessori (K-6) ⇒ SMS (7-9) ⇒ read c. for high school info.
 - b. K-Beach, Sterling, Tustumena (K-6) ⇒ new (7-9) middle school (Skyview) ⇒ read c. for high school info.
 - c. Both middle schools (7-9) described in a. and b. attend one high school in Soldotna
 - d. RCA (7-12) remains at Skyview campus
3. Discussed logistics and equitable opportunities for all middle and high school students with a reconfiguration option of a single high school and two schools (7-9). Revisited “Why not?...” ideas already discussed and considered.
4. Developed a PowerPoint and agenda for February 11 site meetings to be distributed in early February, prior to teacher conferences.
5. Engaged lengthy discussion about fall of 2014 or fall of 2015 implementation pros and cons.

Next steps:

1. **Convene community meetings at each of the ten school sites to review administrative recommendations on February 11, 2013, at 6:00 p.m.**
2. Reconvene work group February 12, 2013: review input and feedback; develop a one page Soldotna area schools instructional delivery model for school board consideration during a March 4, 2013, work session.
3. February 11-22, 2013: community feedback to principals and the district via online or paper feedback forms
4. March 4, 2013, school board work session
5. April 1, 2013, school board work session and possible board action

No individual school decisions were made.

KPBSD: ONE DISTRICT, FORTY-THREE DIVERSE SCHOOLS

ANCHOR POINT COOPER LANDING HOMER HOPE KACHEMAK SELO KENAI MOOSE PASS NANWALEK NIKISKI NIKOLAEVSK NINILCHIK
PORT GRAHAM RAZDOLNA SELDOVIA SEWARD SOLDOTNA STERLING TUSTUMENA TYONEK VOZNESENKA

FOR RELEASE JANUARY 29, 2013

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PREVIOUS POSTS:

KPBSD INFORMATION

Soldotna, January 10, 2013—Ten principals have been meeting since March 2012—K-Beach Elementary School; Redoubt Elementary School; Skyview High School; River City Academy; Soldotna Elementary School; Soldotna Montessori Charter School; Soldotna High School; Soldotna Middle School; Sterling Elementary School; Tustumena Elementary School. On January 10, nine administrators, the KPBSD communications specialist, director of secondary education, director of elementary education, superintendent Atwater, and assistant superintendent Dusek met with two focus groups: elementary teachers from Soldotna area schools, and community representatives from the ten schools.

Background: In the fall of 2011, SMS and Sterling Elementary independently began discussions with their respective site councils to explore pros and cons of 6-7-8 (SMS) and K-8 (Sterling El) reconfigurations. Concurrently, KPBSD began a district wide five-year strategic plan. As a result of SMS and Sterling El conversations, and the school district strategic planning, a meeting was held on March 29, 2012, to gain a Soldotna wide perspective. On April 29, and August 30, the group reconvened to discuss and update with feedback from site councils and staffs about the SMS 6-7-8 proposal, potential effects to other schools, and create an online survey. From September 18-28, 2012, a survey—online and available via paper—was provided to parents, students, and KPBSD employees from the ten schools. Survey results were analyzed at the October 11, 2012, meeting. At a November 27 meeting, the group reviewed enrollment projections and created scenarios for delivery of instruction for Soldotna area students by 2015-16 school year. **On January 10, 2013, two focus groups met: a morning session with Soldotna area elementary teachers, and an afternoon session with business leaders and community members representing the ten schools.**

6. Administration communicated the process to date
7. Presented reconfiguration options incorporating current school sites and maximum capacities; survey results; programs no longer able to be offered at high schools; and future enrollment projections for Soldotna area schools
8. Conveyed importance of equitable opportunities for all middle and high school students; reconfiguration option of a single high school; the need to provide current, relevant opportunities for students; fewer transitions for students at critical times; and configuration of a coherent feeder system for elementary schools to flow into two middle schools (7-9), feeding into one high school (10-12), utilizing current buildings, and implementation for 2015-16 school year.

Focus groups provided excellent questions, thoughts, and feedback.

1. Focus groups support reconfiguration of:
 - a. Redoubt, Soldotna Elementary, Soldotna Montessori (K-6) > SMS (7-9) > read c. for high school info.
 - b. K-Beach, Sterling, Tustumena (K-6) > new (7-9) middle school (Skyview) > read c. for high school info.
 - c. Both middle schools (7-9) described in a. and b. attend one high school in Soldotna
 - d. RCA (7-12) remains at Skyview
2. Focus groups recommend accelerated implementation for 2014-15 school year

Next steps:

6. Reconvene work group January 24, 2013: review input and feedback, and develop recommendations for community input
7. **Convene community meetings at each of the ten school sites to review administrative recommendations on February 11, 2013, at 6:00 p.m.**
 - a. Reconvene work group February 12, 2013: review input and feedback; develop a one page Soldotna area schools instructional delivery model for school board consideration during a March 4, 2013, work session.

No individual school decisions were made.

Soldotna, November 27, 2012—Ten principals have been meeting since March 2012—K-Beach Elementary School; Redoubt Elementary School; Skyview High School; River City Academy; Soldotna Elementary School; Soldotna Montessori Charter School; Soldotna High School; Soldotna Middle School; Sterling Elementary School; Tustumena Elementary School. On November 27, nine administrators, KPBSD communications specialist, and the director of
JANUARY 29, 2013

secondary education, met with assistant superintendent Sean Dusek to explore reconfiguring options, and survey results for Soldotna area schools.

Background: In the fall of 2011, SMS and Sterling Elementary independently began discussions with their respective site councils to explore pros and cons of 6-7-8 (SMS) and K-8 (Sterling El) reconfigurations. Concurrently, KPBSD began a district wide five-year strategic plan. As a result of SMS and Sterling El conversations, and the school district strategic planning, a meeting was held on March 29, 2012, at the KPBSD district office to gain a Soldotna wide perspective. On April 29, and August 30, the group reconvened to discuss and update with feedback from site councils and staffs about the SMS 6-7-8 proposal, potential effects to other schools, and create an online survey. From September 18-28, 2012, an online survey—online and available via paper—was provided to parents, students and KPBSD employees from these ten schools. The results from the survey were analyzed during the October 11, 2012, meeting. **On November 27 these items were discussed:**

1. Reviewed projected student enrollment through 2016-17 school year
2. Reviewed declining enrollment impact to Soldotna High School, Skyview High School, Soldotna Middle School
 - a. 2015-16 projected enrollment total of 773 students between both high schools
 - b. First year significantly below 800; with projected decline from there (declining from 1124 in 2001)
 - c. Year after SB 84 funding ends (CTE legislative funding)
3. Worked on Status Quo scenario (no changes to any school configurations)
4. Worked on reconfiguring secondary schools for delivery of instruction for Soldotna by 2015-16
5. Reviewed possibility of two junior high schools (grades 7–9) with one high school (grades 10–12)
6. Continue to seek input from a variety of stakeholders on next steps and any possible changes

Next steps:

8. Inform school staffs and community of current scenarios and updated calendar
9. Develop focus groups to guide formulation of possible responses to declining enrollment
 - a. January 10, 2013: Convene focus groups
 - b. Focus groups include Soldotna area business leaders, community members, various school staffs
10. Reconvene work group
 - a. January 24, 2013: review input and feedback
 - b. Develop possible recommendations for community input
11. Convene community meetings to review administrative recommendations
 - a. February 11, 2013: 6:00 pm
12. Reconvene work group
 - a. February 12, 2013: review input and feedback
 - b. Possibly develop one page recommendation for board consideration in March or April on instructional delivery model for Soldotna area schools

No individual school decisions were made.

Soldotna, October 11, 2012— Ten principals have been meeting since March 2012—K-Beach Elementary School; Redoubt Elementary School; Skyview High School; River City Academy; Soldotna Elementary School; Soldotna Montessori Charter School; Soldotna High School; Soldotna Middle School; Sterling Elementary School; Tustumena Elementary School. On October 11, eight administrators, KPBSD communications specialist, director of elementary education, director of secondary education, Dr. Atwater, superintendent, and school board member Penny Vadla met with assistant superintendent Sean Dusek to explore reconfiguring options, and survey results for Soldotna area schools.

Background: In the fall of 2011, SMS and Sterling Elementary independently began discussions with their respective site councils to explore pros and cons of 6-7-8 (SMS) and K-8 (Sterling El) reconfigurations. Concurrently, KPBSD began a district wide five-year strategic plan. As a result of SMS and Sterling El conversations, and the school district strategic planning, a meeting was held on March 29, 2012, at the KPBSD district office to gain a Soldotna wide perspective. On April 29, and August 30, the group reconvened to discuss and update with feedback from site councils and staffs about the SMS 6-7-8 proposal, potential effects to other schools, and create an online survey. **From September 18-28, 2012, an online survey—**

online and available via paper—was provided to parents, students and KPBSD employees from these ten schools. The results from the survey were analyzed during the October 11, 2012, meeting.

- Reviewed survey results that contained over 1,000 responses and 214 comments. KPBSD is thankful to all of the respondents and their important feedback
- From the survey results, many parents, students, and staff comments asked for more information about ideas and process
- Approximately 66% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed to support changing current configurations of the Soldotna area schools
- Approximately 56% of respondents preferred to keep current elementary school configurations with 44% selecting a change in configurations
- Approximately 43% of respondents preferred to keep the current middle school configuration with 57% selecting a change in configuration
- Approximately 43% of respondents preferred to keep two traditional high schools (current configuration), 57% selected a change in configuration
- The group focused on developing pros and cons to several different scenarios that were mentioned in the survey to meet the expressed needs from the comment section. This project should be completed by the group in November and will be shared with the public soon thereafter
- The group plans to develop a Soldotna area business and community survey to gain their perspective on this topic. The survey would be administered this winter
- There will be a school board work session on October 15, 2012, to go over the results of the survey and discuss next steps in this information gathering process
- Everyone unequivocally agreed that the needs and success of KPBSD students is the primary focus.

No individual school decisions were made.

Next action: Soldotna area administrators meet in late fall; October school board work session; community survey

Soldotna, August 30, 2012: Ten principals—K-Beach Elementary School; Redoubt Elementary School; Skyview High School; River City Academy; Soldotna Elementary School; Soldotna Montessori Charter School; Soldotna High School; Soldotna Middle School; Sterling Elementary School; Tustumena Elementary School—KPBSD Communications Specialist, Director of Elementary Education, Director of Secondary Education, Dr. Atwater, Superintendent, and School Board member Penny Vadla met with Assistant Superintendent Sean Dusek to explore reconfiguring options for Soldotna area schools.

Background: In the fall of 2011, SMS and Sterling Elementary independently began discussions with their respective site councils to explore pros and cons of 6-7-8 (SMS) and K-8 (Sterling El) reconfigurations. Concurrently, KPBSD began a district wide five-year strategic plan. As a result of SMS and Sterling El conversations, and the school district strategic planning, meetings were held on March 29 and April 29, 2012 at the KPBSD district office to gain a Soldotna and surrounding area-wide perspective. During the April 29 meeting the group discussed feedback from site councils and staffs about the SMS 6-7-8 proposal and potential effects to other schools.

At the August 30 meeting:

1. Previous meeting notes and insights were reviewed, framed by this question: How can we more effectively and efficiently meet the needs of Soldotna area students, especially as it relates to graduation rate, the future of education, and the long-range District strategic plan?
2. Discussed the current reality of declining enrollment projections for Soldotna and surrounding area schools and the future impact of this on schools and curricular and co-curricular opportunities.
3. Evaluated the current and potential school configurations that would best accomplish the goal of providing excellent education opportunities for every Soldotna and surrounding area student given the existing building space and occupant capacities, together with points in # 1 and # 2.

4. Designed a survey to gather a deeper level of data from current parents, students, and staff at the ten schools. The survey is intended to assess the educational wants and desires of targeted groups given the implications of declining enrollment, fiscal realities, and providing the best education for every KPBSD student.
5. Agreed on timeline:
 - 9/11/12: Printed survey and online live link sent to school administrators
 - 9/18/12: Online and printed survey available at school sites. Site administrator holds an informational meeting at each school on this date to answer and clarify any questions.
 - 9/28/12: Survey closes
 - 10/11/12: Soldotna area principals meet
 - 10/15/12: School board worksession
 - After BOE worksession: possible survey to local community members; ongoing analysis

Everyone in attendance unequivocally agreed that the needs and success of KPBSD students is the primary focus.

No decisions involving individual schools were made.

Soldotna, April 30, 2012— Ten principals—K-Beach Elementary School; Redoubt Elementary School; Skyview High School; River City Academy; Soldotna Elementary School; Soldotna Montessori Charter School; Soldotna High School; Soldotna Middle School; Sterling Elementary School; Tustumena Elementary School—KPBSD Communications Specialist, Director of Elementary Education, Director of Secondary Education, Dr. Atwater, Superintendent, and School Board member Bill Holt met with Assistant Superintendent Sean Dusek to explore reconfiguring options for Soldotna area schools.

Background: In the fall of 2011, SMS and Sterling Elementary independently began discussions with their respective site councils to explore pros and cons of 6-7-8 (SMS) and K-8 (Sterling El) reconfigurations. Concurrently, KPBSD began a district wide five-year strategic plan. As a result of SMS and Sterling El conversations, and the school district strategic planning, a meeting was held on March 29, 2012, at the KPBSD district office to gain a Soldotna wide perspective. On April 29, the group reconvened to discuss and update with feedback from site councils and staffs about the SMS 6-7-8 proposal and potential effects to other schools.

After the feedback was shared from each school, a thoughtful discussion encompassed these primary points:

1. How can we more effectively and efficiently meet the needs of Soldotna area students, especially as it relates to graduation rate, the future of education, and the long-range District strategic plan?
2. Discussed how any potential reconfiguration would fit within the long range District strategic plan
3. As a group (including input from schools and site-councils who met between 3/29 and 4/29) consensus is that a 6-7-8 reconfiguration would be good for students, and fit within the strategic plan. The conversation led to several questions and discussions including:
 - a. Is there adequate space at SMS to handle all elementary feeder schools' students?
 - b. What are the possible ramifications for feeder and receiving schools?
 - c. How effective and efficient is our current high school delivery model?
4. With all of the factors involved, the group proposed convening several work groups (to be determined at the start of the 2012-13 school year following more research and brainstorming by the administrative group) to discuss and develop recommendations for next steps in the following areas:
 - a. Space considerations
 - b. Effect on local high schools—including delivery model, configuration
 - c. Staffing
 - d. Special Education Pupil Services programs
 - e. State and Borough support
 - f. Financial implications

Everyone in attendance unequivocally agreed that the needs and success of KPBSD students is the primary focus.

Next action:

The group will meet again in August when the new school year begins. The culmination of the work groups' efforts will be to deliver information on the instructional delivery system for the Soldotna area to the Board of Education in early 2013, in order to determine a future course of action.

No decisions involving individual schools were made.

Soldotna, March 29, 2012: Ten principals—K-Beach Elementary School; Redoubt Elementary School; Skyview High School; River City Academy; Soldotna Elementary School; Soldotna Montessori Charter School; Soldotna High School; Soldotna Middle School; Sterling Elementary School; Tustumena Elementary School—KPBSD Communications Specialist, and the Director of Secondary Education met with Assistant Superintendent Sean Dusek to explore options for Soldotna area K-12 schools.

Background:

In the fall of 2011, SMS and Sterling Elementary independently began discussions with their respective site councils to explore pros and cons of 6-7-8 (SMS) and K-8 (Sterling El) reconfigurations. Concurrently, KPBSD began a district wide five-year strategic plan.

As a result of SMS and Sterling El conversations, and the school district strategic planning, a meeting was held on March 29, 2012, at the KPBSD district office to gain a Soldotna wide perspective. A realistic, lively discussion encompassed these primary points:

- Ramifications for all other Soldotna area schools K-12 (see above list) based on SMS and Sterling Elementary conversations.
- History of Soldotna area schools.
- How to provide a continuum of services for Soldotna area students that will positively impact graduation rate and make sense for the Soldotna area community.
- Important transition times for students between grade level school changes.
- Insights from strategic planning on March 28, 2012, with all KPBSD administrators and Leadership Team in attendance. Areas identified include (among others) the current drop-out rate, declining enrollment, funding, and facilities that are both over-utilized and under-utilized.
- Academics, core-curriculum, athletics, electives, extra-curricular activities, Special Needs programs, and the social/emotional health of students.

Everyone in attendance unequivocally agreed that the needs and success of KPBSD students is the primary focus. Everyone present contributed to a productive and important conversation.

No decisions involving individual schools were made.

Next action: Each site will continue to review research of a 6-7-8 Middle School configuration, and discuss ramifications for their school; Gather questions and feedback on a 6-7-8 middle school reconfiguration; The administrators will meet again in late April.

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