

KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
148 N. Binkley Street
Soldotna, AK 99669

April 19, 1999

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS: Mr. Joe Arness, President
Mrs. Debra Mullins, Vice President
Mrs. Susan Larned, Clerk
Ms. Deborah Germano, Treasurer
Mrs. Mari-Anne Gross, Member
Dr. Nels Anderson, Member
Mrs. Sammy Crawford, Member
Miss Charise Calvert, Student Representative

STAFF PRESENT: Mr. John Dahlgren, Superintendent of Schools
Mr. Patrick Hickey, Assistant Superintendent,
Operations and Business Management

OTHERS PRESENT: Ms. Trena Richardson Mr. Michael Lingenfelder
Mrs. Joan Kimball Dr. Donna Peterson
Mr. Christopher Kimball Mr. Sarge Truesdell
Mr. Gene Dyson Mrs. Heather Truesdell
Mrs. Karen Mahurin Mr. Gary Jackson
Mr. Wayne Pattison Mr. Todd Syverson
Ms. Terri Carter Mr. Mark Norgren
Mr. Jason Daniels Mr. Tim Peterson

Mrs. Jan Daniels

Ms. Dorothy Gray

Mr. Greg Daniels

Ms. Cathy Carrow

Mrs. Beth Martin

Ms. Ramona Paulk

Mrs. Judy Queen

Ms. GloryAnn Bailey

Others present not identified.

CALL TO ORDER:

Mr. Arness called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Mr. Arness invited those present to participate in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

Mr. Joe Arness

Present

Mrs. Debra Mullins

Absent/Excused

Mrs. Susan Larned

Present

Ms. Deborah Germano

Present

Mrs. Mari-Anne Gross

Present

Dr. Nels Anderson

Present

Mrs. Sammy Crawford

Present

Miss Charise Calvert

Present

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The agenda was approved as written. With concurrence of the Board, Mr. Arness suspended the rules to allow testimony to be given for Item 10c., Nikiski Reconfiguration.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The School Board Minutes of April 5, 1999, were approved with a correction.

SCHOOL REPORTS:

Mrs. Trena Richardson, Nikiski Elementary principal, thanked the central office staff for their support. She highlighted several school activities such as visits by guest authors and the art specialist, forensics meet, music, band, and the DARE Program. Ms. Richardson stated that the school's primary goal this year is to work on reading. She explained that the entire school instructional staff has dedicated a block of time each morning to work solely on reading and language arts. She explained that by including all instructional staff, students are divided into smaller multi-age performance groups at Grades 1-3 and at Grades 4-6.

Cathy Carrow explained that the school is using DIBELS and CBM to assess student reading abilities and to monitor progress. She provided a summary of the activities that are being accomplished in the reading program at each grade level. She reported that at-risk kindergarten students and their parents are taught activities that will assist with reading at home. Ms. Richardson stated that Ms. Carrow coordinates a community preschool program held every Friday which allows parents to learn activities to help their children get ready for school.

Lindy Cox, stated that The Language Program is used for students in Grades 4-6. She stated that the program is a nice continuum of skills that are taught in reading and language arts. She stated that Nikiski Elementary students are creative writers but lacked mechanical and grammatical knowledge. She stated that when grammar and writing mechanics knowledge increases, the students' creativity increases. Ms. Cox presented The Spelling Program and The Dictation Program which are also used to support The Language Program.

Wayne Floyd, teacher, and Brian Miller, student, provided a tour of the school web site showing the salmon egg-hatching project funded by the Alaska Science and Technology Foundation grant. Ms. Richardson stated that the salmon fry will be released in a lake near the school as soon as it thaws.

Ms. Richardson reported that Nikiski Elementary hosted the Districtwide Forensics meet, which included 200 students. Ms. Richardson introduced Taylor Moore who performed an excerpt from Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory, which she had used in the recent Districtwide forensics meet. Ms. Richardson concluded her report by inviting the Board to visit Nikiski Elementary anytime.

COMMUNICATIONS AND
PETITIONS:

Mr. Arness called the Board's attention to several letters included in the Board information packet. He stated that he received a certified letter and petition from several Nanwalek residents relating to a teacher.

AWARDS AND
PRESENTATIONS:

The Board presented awards of appreciation to Joan Kimball, North Star Elementary and Ramona Paulk, Soldotna High School for their outstanding service to education and the District. The Board presented awards of recognition to Jason Daniels, K-Beach Elementary and Sargeant Truesdell, Soldotna Middle School, for their nomination to the 1999 Alaska's Sallie Mae First Class Teacher award.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Mr. Dahlgren announced that Mr. Ralph Steeves, Moose Pass Elementary principal/teacher, was selected as the Alaska Association of Elementary School Principals' Principal/Teacher of the Year.

Mr. Dahlgren announced that KPESA and KPEA negotiations have been completed and that a tentative agreement has been reached. He stated that the agreement will be available very soon for public comment and review and will be brought to the Board for approval at the May 17 meeting.

Mr. Dahlgren stated that the District budget will be presented to the Assembly during their April 20 meeting.

Ms. Germano asked the cost of the tentative negotiated agreements. Mr. Dahlgren stated that it is within the confines of the budget and could provide more specific information at a later time.

Financial Report:

Mr. Hickey presented the financial report of the District for the period ending March 31, 1999.

Budget Transfer Report:

Mr. Hickey reported on budget transfers Numbers 165 through 322 for various schools and departments within the District.

Elementary School Program
Evaluation Report:

Mr. Dahlgren noted that a review of District elementary schools was included in the Board packet and that a worksession was conducted earlier in the day. He noted that survey results and recommendations were reviewed during the worksession.

Mrs. Crawford stated that she was hoping to see differences in assessment scores as related to pupil-teacher ratio in specials and reading classes.

BOARD REPORTS:

Mrs. Gross reported that she attended the National School Board Association conference in San Francisco as a representative of the Association of Alaska School Boards. She stated that she assisted in the presentation of the ASSET building model along with Derek Peterson, AASB Child Advocate, and a student. She stated that she participated as a member of the delegate assembly and voted on resolutions. She stated that there were several hundred sessions offered at the conference and added that she attended as many as she possibly could. She noted that many of the topics discussed are already in practice in this District.

Mrs. Larned reported that she also attended the National School Board Association Conference and came away feeling proud of the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District and the State of Alaska for being advanced in the areas of promising practices. She reported that many of the sessions stressed that, no matter what class is being taught, the arts need to be integrated across the curriculum. She reported that many sessions stressed the importance of the preschool years, and she praised Nikiski Elementary for their kindergarten program. She stated that she also heard some outstanding ideas relating to alternative schools.

Dr. Anderson stated that the National School Board Association Conference was a great learning opportunity. He stated that he attended as many sessions as possible on board governance, benchmark testing and standards on student achievement and found that there are improvements that can be made to District programs that don't cost money. He noted that nationwide benchmarks and standards for the arts have been established.

Mr. Arness reported that he, Ms. Germano, and Mrs. Mullins attended the Borough maintenance budget informational meeting. He stated that the Board members were told that Borough maintenance could spend a lot more or a lot less on District maintenance.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Items presented on the Consent Agenda were Request for Leave of Absence/Certified, Rescission of Request for Leave of Absence/Certified, Class Size Reduction Initiative Grant and Substitute Teacher Contract.

Request for Leave of Absence/
Certified:

By memorandum, Mrs. Radtke recommended the Board approve a leave of absence request from Susan Mathews, special education/occupational therapy, Sears Elementary; and a sabbatical request from Anne Pfitzner, third grade, Soldotna Elementary for the 1999-2000 school year.

Rescission of Request for Leave of Absence/Certified:	By memorandum, Mrs. Radtke recommended the Board approve a request to rescind an unpaid leave of absence for the 1999-2000 school year for Jackie Bock, special education/preschool, Sears Elementary.
Class Size Reduction Initiative Grant:	Mr. McLain recommended the Board approve the 1999-2000 Class Size Reduction Initiative grant for \$430,113. This grant is designed to lower class sizes in Grades 1-3 of the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District.
Substitute Teacher Contract:	By memorandum, Mrs. Radtke recommended the Board approve a 19-day substitute teaching contract for Fred Brewster, math, Nikiski Middle/Sr. High School.
ACTION	Mrs. Gross moved the Board approve Consent Agenda Items Numbers 1, 2, and 4. Mrs. Larned seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Germano asked how class sizes were determined to prepare the Class Size Reduction Initiative grant application. Mr. Dahlgren explained that staff is allocated at a 1:24 ratio in Grades 1-3. He explained in detail the class size calculation choices that were offered in the grant application.

Ms. Germano asked how the Class Size Reduction Initiative grant money would be spent at each school. Mr. Dahlgren explained that the administration will use the Board guidelines to change the staffing ratio in K-3 for elementary schools. He noted that reducing the pupil-teacher ratio from 1:24 to 1:23 generates 8.5 additional staff members.

Ms. Germano stated that she was disappointed with the grant application staffing list. She suggested that the staffing formula be reviewed and reconfigured because all elementary schools are impacted by the additional grant monies except McNeil Canyon Elementary. Ms. Germano stated that she felt McNeil Canyon should receive a pupil-teacher ratio reduction because of the multi-age classrooms. Mr. Dahlgren stated that the administration tries to treat all schools alike.

Ms. Germano asked whether the grant is written to a specific dollar amount. Mr. Dahlgren stated that it was not written to a specific amount and that the District fell short \$67,000.

Dr. Peterson explained that the State has directed districts to reduce staff in Grades 1-3 to 1:22 and that kindergarten would remain the same.

Consent Agenda Item 10a.(3) carried unanimously.

ADMINISTRATOR
APPOINTMENT:

Mr. Dahlgren recommended the Board approve the appointment of Mick Wykis, principal, Sears Elementary. Mrs. Gross expressed her concern that Mr. Wykis will be leaving as the Director of Assessment after a year of extensive training. Mr. Dahlgren concurred with Mrs. Gross's comments but added that the Sears Elementary Site Council would like Mr. Wykis as their principal and Mr. Wykis would like to accept the job.

ACTION

Ms. Germano moved the Board approve the appointment of Mick Wykis, principal, Sears Elementary. Mrs. Crawford seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

NIKISKI SCHOOLS
RECONFIGURATION:

Mr. Arness read the motion to postpone action on the Nikiski Schools Reconfiguration, "Mrs. Mullins moved the Board postpone action on the Nikiski reconfiguration to the April 19 meeting so that the results of the Nikiski PAC vote can be reported, Dr. Anderson seconded, motion passed unanimously." He called the Board's attention to a report from the Nikiski tri-council meeting on April 6, a letter from the Nikiski Middle/High School site council, and a memorandum from Mr. Don Glaze.

Ms. Lisa Quesnel, Nikiski area parent, expressed concern regarding the reconfiguration of the Nikiski area schools. She stated that she asked the Nikiski area tri-councils to show her the academic benefits from the reconfiguration and was not given an answer that she felt was adequate. She asked whether there would be split classes at the elementary level. She stated that the information provided to the community is misleading. She stated that she does not have enough information to make an informed decision regarding reconfiguration. She asked the Board to follow-up on the process if they vote for the reconfiguration.

Mr. Wayne Floyd, Nikiski Reconfiguration Committee member, stated that two years ago the reconfiguration issue was first brought up and the community was invited to participate. He stated that a survey was taken in the spring of 1998, and the students and community were in favor of the reconfiguration. He stated that the reconfiguration would allow more choices for placement of students. He stated that the numbers of students per class have been studied and projected. Mr. Floyd stated that he felt the reconfiguration would pull the community together and added that he supported the idea and urged the Board to move forward with the recommendation.

NIKISKI SCHOOLS
RECONFIGURATION
(Continued):

Ms. Germano asked whether the reconfiguration would cause the North Star Elementary School to be the largest elementary school in the District. Ms. Richardson stated that the projected enrollment in the fall of 2000 is 408 students. Ms. Germano asked whether the space was adequate.

Mr. Arness responded that North Star Elementary would be reconfigured to house kindergarten through 4th grade and Nikiski Elementary would house Grades 5-8. Mr. Arness explained that the original proposal was that the Nikiski schools would be reconfigured into Grades 1-5, 6-8 and 9-12, with the kindergarten students being housed at the middle or high school. He stated that with declining enrollments, the kindergarten students will now have room at the elementary school.

Mr. Arness asked when the capital improvements priority list would be submitted to the Board in FY 2000.

Mr. Hickey responded that the information may be available in July after the Assembly passes their budget.

VOTE ON NIKISKI RECONFIGURATION MOTION:

Advisory Vote: Abstain

Motion carried unanimously.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Miss Calvert thanked those who attended the worksession prior to the Board meeting and for the Nikiski Elementary report.

Miss Gross congratulated the Sallie Mae nominees and those who were recognized for their outstanding service to the District.

Mrs. Larned thanked Ms. Richardson for the Nikiski Elementary School report.

Mrs. Crawford congratulated the Sallie Mae nominees, and those who were recognized for their outstanding service. She thanked Ms. Richardson for the Nikiski Elementary School report. She announced that she and Mrs. Gross will be attending the AASB Legislative Fly-in this week in Juneau.

BOARD COMMENTS

(Continued):

Ms. Germano congratulated the State and District awardees. She called the Board's attention to letters in the Board information packet from the Paul Banks Elementary staff requesting additional staff. She stated that she would like to see staffing formulas change for the elementary and small schools. She added that McNeil Canyon Elementary School deserves staffing assistance the same as any other District School.

Dr. Anderson announced that the family of Tom Thorpe is urging friends and associates to send notes and e-mail messages to him on May 1. He stated that he attended sessions on board governance at the National School Boards Association Conference and would like to present the information to the Board at a future worksession or planning session.

Ms. Germano reported that she recently attended the Borough Mass Choir festival at Soldotna Middle School and that it was very enjoyable. She thanked the school for hosting the event.

Mr. Arness announced that public comment will be accepted regarding the Kenai Peninsula Administrators' Association contract at the May 3 School Board meeting. He stated that the meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m. to allow for comments ahead of the meeting.

Mr. Dahlgren verified that the School Board Planning Session is scheduled for June 8.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

At 9:10 p.m., Dr. Anderson moved the Board go into executive session to discuss matters, the immediate knowledge of which would clearly have an adverse effect upon the finances of the Borough. Specifically, the executive session was to discuss administrator contracts. Ms. Germano seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURN EXECUTIVE SESSION:

At 10:04 p.m., Dr. Anderson moved the executive session be adjourned. Mrs. Crawford seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

At 10:05 p.m., Mrs. Crawford moved the School Board Meeting be adjourned. Dr. Anderson seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Joe Arness, President

Mrs. Susan Larned, Clerk

The Minutes of April 19, 1999,
were approved on May 3, 1999
as written.