

KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT
148 N. Binkley Street

Soldotna, AK 99669

November 15, 1999

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

Miss Melinda Haring, Student Representative

STAFF PRESENT:

Dr. Donna Peterson, Superintendent of Schools

Mrs. Melody Douglas, Finance Director

Mr. Ed McLain, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction

Mr. Todd Syverson, Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources

OTHERS PRESENT:

Mr. Scott Mengel	Mr. Dennis Dunn
Mrs. Debbie Dover	Mr. Dave Spence
Mr. Fred Deussing	Ms. Suzie Franklin
Mr. Rich Toymil	Mr. Pete Sprague
Ms. Heather Resz	Ms. Barb Vogel
Ms. Sandy Miller	Mr. Justin George
Mr. Bill Coghill	Mrs. Sue Liebner
Senator John Torgerson	Mr. Steve Wright

Others present not identified.

CALL TO ORDER:

Ms. Germano called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Miss Janelle Drown and Miss Alena Robson, K-Beach Elementary School students, led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance using sign language.

ROLL CALL:

Ms. Deborah Germano	Present
Mrs. Debra Mullins	Present
Mrs. Susan Larned	Present
Mrs. Sammy Crawford	Present
Mrs. Mari-Anne Gross	Absent/Excused
Dr. Nels Anderson	Present
Mr. Mike Chenault	Present
Miss Melinda Haring	Present

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The agenda was approved as written.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The School Board Minutes of November 1, 1999, were approved with a correction of the location of the meeting to Homer High School, Homer, Alaska.

SCHOOL REPORTS:

Mr. Scott Mengel, K-Beach Elementary principal, gave a computer-generated slide show that included pictures of staff and students. He stated that the school's main focus is on helping kids become better readers, writers, mathematicians, scientists, artists, musicians and learners. He stated that the bullyproofing project has been successful and that within three weeks of implementation, the staff has noticed a safer school environment. He noted that K-Beach Elementary is the largest elementary school in the District with 450 students. Mr. Mengel stated that he is proud of his talented teachers and smart students but feels the school is resource poor. He stated that the school just recently learned they are recipients of a remediation grant, which will be used to start an after-school reading tutorial program.

He introduced five students (Dylon Story, Christopher Nolden, Sarah Rife, Shelby Taylor, Mariah Howarth) from Mrs. Dover, Mrs. Peterson and Mrs. McCoy's class, who read from information they had researched on owls. In closing, he invited the Board to visit K-Beach Elementary School anytime.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:

Mr. Brandon Newbould and Miss Marisa Kimbrell, Soldotna High School students, told the Board about their government project to bring forth awareness about the condition of the Soldotna High School track and recommend a replacement. Miss Kimbrell suggested that the track be replaced with a polyurethane material, which would provide a comfortable, injury-free training surface. She stated that the replacement cost would be approximately \$250,000 and asked the Board to include the track replacement on the capital improvement projects list. Mr. Newbould distributed an information booklet regarding the current track, types of injuries caused by the current surface and a suggested replacement surface. He stated that four schools are currently training on Skyview High School's track because it is the only one in the area in good condition. He added that a new track would also benefit the community due to use by numerous recreational runners and as well as the Peninsula Running Team.

Ms. Germano asked the age of the Soldotna High School track. Mr. Newbould replied that the track was built at the same time as the school and that it was resurfaced approximately a year ago.

Mrs. Mullins asked the students how they arrived at the cost estimate. Mr. Newbould stated that they received an estimate from the Southwest Construction Company, who recently refinished the Anchorage School District tracks.

Miss Haring asked how many injuries were reported last year. Miss Kimbrell replied that she did not have injury statistics because the track has not been used in the past several years.

Mrs. Crawford asked how the Skyview High School track is different. Mr. Newbould explained that the Skyview track is made from a polyurethane surface, which contains bits of polymer (a rubber-like substance) that is much softer than asphalt.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS (Continued):

Dr. Anderson stated that a previous letter sent by Mr. Newbould and Miss Kimbrell was referred to the District administration who responded that the Soldotna High track was identical to the Kenai Central and Nikiski Middle/High School tracks. He added that the administration's response stated that the injuries incurred were a matter of training rather than composition of the track and pointed out that people run marathons on similar surfaces and are not affected. Dr. Anderson suggested that the students remove the statements concerning chondromalacia patella injuries caused by the current track from their brochure because it is very rare. He asked the students for their comments regarding the comparison between the local high school tracks.

Mr. Newbould replied that there are pieces of rubber in the Nikiski High School track but none in the Soldotna High School track. He stated that Nikiski Middle/High School's track is also falling apart and is not used for competition.

Dr. Anderson asked the students how Soldotna High School won so many state championships with such a poor track. Mr. Newbould stated that before the team began practicing at Skyview High School, they ran regardless of the pain and injuries. Miss Kimbrell stated that dedicated athletes will train regardless of the pain involved. She stated that Soldotna High School won state championships because they have a very dedicated coach with highly competitive team.

Ms. Germano asked if there is a replacement schedule for school tracks.

Mr. Spence stated that the Soldotna High School track was recently resealed and repainted. He stated that the District has a schedule for upgrading and resealing tracks but not a replacement schedule.

Ms. Denise Ogle, Chapman Elementary parent, referred to a letter she sent to Dr. Peterson and the Board regarding Chapman Elementary student class sizes. She stated that she has a child in a kindergarten-first grade class with 25 students and a child in a first-second grade class with 29 students. She stated that with these class sizes her children are not receiving a good learning experience. She stated that the rooms are noisy and crowded and that one of the classes has quite a few discipline problems. She told the Board that the teacher has reported spending 2/3 of her day disciplining students. She stated that with so many students, the teacher is forced to teach to the average students instead of meeting the individual needs of all students. She stated that she pulls one of her children out of the classroom each day to teach math. She stated that she and many other parents volunteer in the classroom but the children are still not getting the quality of education that they should. She asked the Board to consider some relief for the school and to plan for next year.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS (Continued): Ms. Germano stated that no one likes absolute change and that there will be a lot of education to go along with the new technology.

Mr. George, Soldotna High head custodian, stated that for the past three years the Soldotna High School track has been submitted on the major maintenance and capital repair list. He stated that it does need repair in order to be usable.

Mrs. Sue Leibner, parent, Soldotna High, reported that her daughter did not experience running injuries while training on the Skyview High School track. She stated that her son attends Soldotna High School and has incurred injuries as a result of training on the school track. She added that Soldotna High School has won several state cross-country and track championships and noted that it is a shame the school does not have a decent track to practice on.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS: Dr. Peterson stated that she received a letter from a Chapman Elementary parent concerning class size; a letter from school counselors requesting additional days prior to the startup of school; a letter from KPSAA requesting additional soccer coaches; and a letter from a student apologizing for wrong doing.

Ms. Germano asked how many days are allocated for each school for extra curricular activities. Dr. Peterson replied that eight days are given to each large high school to be divided up within the school.

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

Ms. Angela McKinney, Chapman Elementary site council, stated that the school enrollment is under projection by 30 students. She stated that as a result of the low enrollment, a teacher was transferred and classrooms at the kindergarten, first and second grade level were combined. She stated that since the beginning of the year fifteen students have returned to Grades K, 1, 2, 3, and have overloaded the split classes. She asked the Board to review the enrollment at Grades K through 3 and provide some help to the school. She stated that the parents are doing all they can.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Dr. Peterson thanked the Board for the invitation to attend the AASB Annual Conference. She reported that a District teacher has been selected to participate in the ARCTIC Program. She reported that the latest enrollment shows a loss of 55 students and that a quick investigation indicates that the students have moved away from the District.

ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT:

Mrs. Douglas, presented the District 1999 Comprehensive Annual Financial Report and Letter to Management and the Federal and State Single Audit Reports from Mikunda, Cottrell and Company. She thanked the Business Office staff for their hard work compiling the report. She noted that the District reported an undesignated fund balance of \$189,960 and a balance of \$507,409 designated for equipment expenditures. Mr. Bill Coghill of Mikunda, Cottrell and Company, commended the District Business and Finance Department for their excellence in financial reporting and noted that a certificate of achievement is included in the audit report for fiscal year 1998. He stated that in his firm's opinion, the District complied in all material aspects relevant to the reporting requirements for each of its federal and major state programs for the year ended June 30, 1999. Mr. Coghill urged the District to review its use of signature stamps for the approval of timesheets.

Mr. Coghill commended Brandy Morgan, an employee of Mikunda, Cottrell and Company who was one of the two main auditors for the District and is a former graduate of Kenai Central High School.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Mrs. Douglas presented the financial report of the District for the period ending October 31, 1999. She noted that the District will be closely monitoring health insurance costs.

BOARD REPORTS:

Mrs. Crawford stated that she attended the AASB Annual Conference and felt it was extremely worthwhile. She stated that the conference provided a great opportunity to talk to other Board members throughout the state. She congratulated Mrs. Mullins for being elected to the Board of Directors and to Mrs. Gross for being elected as president of AASB.

Dr. Anderson stated that Mr. Whiteley presented a report to the Certified Diploma Committee on improving reading abilities in kindergarten through third grade. He stated that he also attended the administrator's meeting and that concerns were raised regarding the types of computers and purchase of computer equipment; pressure from coaches to allow teams to miss classes on the day regional competitions are being held so that they can watch other teams or rest; eligibility requirements for participation in activities such as drama; and students selling yearbook advertising during school time.

Mrs. Larned reported that she attended the AASB Annual Conference and stated that there were a lot of good sessions and speakers. She stated that she was impressed with Ms. Sandra Covey's presentation regarding oral language at the kindergarten level. She congratulated Mrs. Mullins and Mrs. Gross for being elected to their new offices.

Mrs. Mullins reported that she attended the AASB conference and listened to an address by Governor Knowles on the state of children. She stated that his comments were positive and she was hopeful that his plans would be carried to fruition. She stated that Mr. Mark Hanson, University of Alaska president, also spoke and that it was very encouraging to hear his plan to persuade students to attend college in Alaska. She stated that she attended classes on the high school exit exam and school safety. She reported that she also attended a forum where similar problems facing large districts were discussed. Mrs. Mullins reported that the group held an auction which raised \$8,000 for youth scholarships. She noted that two District students received AASB scholarship money last year.

BOARD REPORTS (Continued):

Miss Haring thanked the Board for the opportunity to attend the AASB youth leadership conference. She cited Board standard 4.1, which referred to school boards recognizing students and others for accomplishments during their regularly scheduled meeting activities. Miss Haring asked the Board to allow her to organize this award activity.

Ms. Germano noted that Mrs. Mullins made 14 pounds of fudge that was sold for a total of approximately \$900. She stated that she felt that it was the best annual conference she has been to because the superintendent was able to attend. She congratulated Mrs. Mullins and Mrs. Gross on their recent elections.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Items presented on the Consent Agenda were Approval of Resignation, New Teacher Assignment, Primary Sponsor of Gaming Permit and Leave of Absence/Support.

Resignation:

Mr. Syverson recommended the Board approve a resignation effective the end of October for Michael Bergholtz, science, Nikiski Middle/High School.

New Teacher Assignment:

Mr. Syverson recommended the Board approve a teaching appointment for the 1999-2000 school year for Juventino Morin, Spanish, Homer High.

Primary Sponsor of Gaming Permit: By memorandum, Mr. Hickey recommended the Board approve a Primary and Alternative Member in Charge of Gaming for the K-Beach Elementary School for the 1999-2000 school year.

Leave of Absence/Support: Mr. Syverson recommended the Board approve a one-year, unpaid leave of absence effective 12/1/99 to 12/1/00 for John Dove, Head Custodian, Mt. View Elementary School.

Mrs. Larned moved the Board approve Consent Agenda items Numbers 1 and 4.
Mrs. Crawford seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

2000-2001 Certified Staffing Formula: By memorandum, Mr. Syverson presented the 2000-2001 regular education certified staffing formula and recommended approval. He stated that the staffing formulas are a guide for preparation of the FY 01 budget.

Mr. Dunn, Kenai Alternative High School principal, thanked the Board for the increasing support and recognition that the school has been receiving from the Board. He invited the Board members to the Kenai Alternative High School Thanksgiving dinner on November 16, at 12:00 p.m.

ACTION Mrs. Crawford moved the Board approve the 2000-2001 regular education certified staffing formula. Dr. Anderson seconded.

ACTION Mrs. Crawford moved the Board approve an amendment to adopt Scenario Number 8 with a pupil-teacher ratio of 1:18 in kindergarten through second grade, 1:24 in third and fourth grade, and 1:26 in fifth and sixth grade. Mrs. Larned seconded.

Mrs. Mullins clarified that the staffing ratio of 1:26 applied to fifth and sixth grade.

2000-2001 Certified Staffing Formula
(Continued):

Mrs. Crawford stated that she felt that it is important to lower class sizes in the lower grades.

Dr. Anderson explained that the amendment will put the District over budget by \$2 million and the Board will have to find the money somewhere. He stated that he will make a commitment to find the money even if it means adjusting pupil-teacher ratios at other grade levels.

Mrs. Mullins stated that she will be serving on the Budget Review Committee and expects that this action will bring up a lot of discussion. She stated that she hopes the Board can keep the proposed pupil-teacher ratio but that it may have to be adjusted later.

Ms. Germano stated that she is proud that class size is a Board priority.

Amendment carried unanimously.

Amended motion carried unanimously.

2000-2001 Support Staffing Formula:

By memorandum, Mr. Syverson presented the 2000-2001 regular support staffing formula and recommended approval. He stated that the staffing formulas are a guide for preparation of the FY 01 budget.

Mrs. Karen Mahurin, KPESA president, reported that this year food service employees have been working a tremendous amount of extra hours each day. She asked the Board to review Special Services support staff, certified teachers, nurses and custodians. She noted that in prior years, three eight-hour custodians cared for Sears Elementary and now two and a half custodians clean the same building as well as three portables.

Mr. Justin George, KPESA vice president, brought the Board's attention to the custodial allocation for Seward Elementary with 52,200 square feet as compared to West Homer Elementary with 52,500 square feet. He noted that the 300 square foot difference amounted to a .5 FTE custodian and asked the Board to readjust the density factor. Ms. Germano suggested that there may be changes to assist the situation.

Mr. Steve Wright, K-Beach head custodian, noted that in November 1995 twelve full time custodial positions were eliminated, and the square footage was increased and has continued to increase over subsequent years. He stated that custodian morale is low and that custodians have been struggling with continued changes for the past four years. He stated that he has tried numerous times to bring the custodial staffing issue to the attention of many groups including the School Board. He stated that each time he is told that there is not enough money and yet there is money for teachers, programs and activities. He stated that student enrollment may have decreased but use of school buildings has increased. He read a quote from the Kenai Peninsula Educational Support Association negotiated agreement which states, "Every possible effort shall be made not to reduce hours on days worked below the level of existence June 24, 1992." He asked the Board to honor that agreement and rehire the 12 custodial positions that were lost in 1992.

ACTION

Mrs. Mullins moved the Board approve the 2000-2001 regular support staffing formula as presented. Mrs. Larned seconded.

2000-2001 Support Staffing Formula:

Mrs. Mullins moved the Board approve an amendment to hold harmless the nursing staff at 19.5 FTE. Mrs. Crawford seconded.

ACTION

Ms. Germano noted that a slight increase in custodial staffing was included in the proposed formula. Mr. Syverson explained that schools that were considered frontier schools were recategorized, square footage was recalculated and adjustments were made for schools that have portables. He reported that the Kenai Alternative and Homer Flex Schools gained custodial staff and had not been included in prior staffing formulas.

Amendment carried unanimously.

Amended motion carried unanimously.

2000-2001 Special Education Certified Staffing Formula:

By memorandum, Mr. Syverson presented the 2000-2001 special education certified staffing formula and recommended approval. He stated that the staffing formulas are a guide for preparation of the FY 01 budget.

Ms. Barb Vogel, K-Beach Elementary teacher, noted that the enrollment used to calculate the special services support staffing formula did not include two deaf students at K-Beach Elementary. Mr. Syverson explained that the student data included in the staffing formula was information from last year and is only used to establish the formula.

Ms. Germano further explained that the Board is merely approving the method by which schools will be staffed and that before employees are assigned, current student data will be obtained. Mr. Syverson added that last year's numbers were used because the Special Services Department had not completed the paperwork necessary to supply current figures.

ACTION

Mrs. Larned moved the Board approve the 2000-2001 special education certified staffing formula. Mrs. Mullins seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

2000-2001 Special Education Support Staffing Formula:

By memorandum, Mr. Syverson presented the 2000-2001 special education support staffing formula and recommended approval. He stated that the staffing formulas are a guide for preparation of the FY 01 budget.

ACTION

Mrs. Crawford moved the Board approve the 2000-2001 special education support staffing formula. Mrs. Mullins seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Dr. Anderson stated that he was concerned regarding the condition of the Soldotna High School track and requested the Board revisit the issue. He suggested that it might be time to think about a single, central peninsula all-weather sports facility.

Mr. Chenault thanked the K-Beach Elementary students for their presentation. He reported that he attended the AASB Annual Conference and that he learned some interesting things. He congratulated Mrs. Mullins and Mrs. Gross for being elected to their new positions.

BOARD COMMENTS (Continued):

Mrs. Crawford congratulated Mrs. Douglas and the Business Department for a fine report and audit. She thanked Mr. Scott Mengel and the K-Beach Elementary students for their presentation. She noted that she visited five schools this past week and enjoyed talking to students and sitting in classrooms. Mrs. Crawford requested an excused absence from the December 6 Board meeting.

Miss Haring mentioned that the student council email addresses have not been working but that hopefully it will be corrected soon. She noted that Soldotna Elementary has been sending her the school newsletter. She noted that many District schools are conducting Thanksgiving food drives.

Mrs. Larned thanked Dr. Peterson for attending the AASB Annual Conference. She suggested that student accomplishments and awards be displayed in the Borough Administration building.

Mrs. Mullins thanked the students for their presentations and especially noted the students who signed the Pledge of Allegiance. She stated that she also appreciated the parents who attended the meeting to watch their children. She congratulated Mrs. Douglas for her successful audit report. Mrs. Mullins noted that the staffing worksession ran long and as a result the worksession on employee interactions was postponed. She thanked the Board members for her nomination and subsequent election to the AASB Board of Directors.

Ms. Germano thanked Dr. Peterson for attending the AASB Annual Conference. She thanked Mrs. Douglas and Mr. Hickey for the audit report. She acknowledged Dr. Anderson's concerns regarding the condition of the Soldotna High School track. She asked the Board to keep the Soldotna High School track concerns in perspective with the rest of the District and reminded them that Razdolna just received a merry-go-round for their playground. She thanked Melinda for her attendance and efforts at the conference.

Dr. Peterson noted that the School Board members worked long hours during the conference.

ADJOURN:

At 9:15 p.m., Mrs. Mullins moved the School Board Meeting be adjourned. Mrs. Crawford seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ms. Deborah Germano, President

Mrs. Susan Larned, Clerk

The Minutes of November 15, 1999,
were approved on December 6, 1999
with corrections.