

Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Board of Education Meeting Minutes

November 15, 2004 – 7:00 p.m.
Regular Meeting

Borough Administration Building
148 N. Binkley, Soldotna, Alaska

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:

Mrs. Sammy Crawford, President
Ms. Sandra Wassilie, Vice President
Mrs. Debra Mullins, Clerk
Mrs. Margaret Gilman, Treasurer
Ms. Deborah Germano
Dr. Nels Anderson
Mrs. Debbie Brown
Mr. Marty Anderson
Mrs. Sunni Hilts
Mr. DJ Tyson, Student Representative

STAFF PRESENT:

Dr. Donna Peterson, Superintendent of Schools
Mrs. Melody Douglas, Chief Financial Officer
Mr. Sam Stewart, Assistant Superintendent
Mr. Guy Fisher, Assistant Superintendent

OTHERS PRESENT:

Mr. Ken Halverson	Mrs. Kathy Gensel
Mrs. Jan Halverson	Mr. Dan Gensel
Mr. Paul Lorenzo	Mr. Joe Nicks
Miss Karina Lorenzo	Dr. Roy Anderson
Mrs. Paula Christensen	Mr. Glenn Haupt
Mrs. Sarah Hepner	Mr. Layton Ehmke
Mr. Dan Chay	Mr. Dennis Dunn
Mr. Dave Stein	Ms. Teri Stickler

Others present not identified.

CALL TO ORDER:

(7:01:58 PM)

Mrs. Crawford called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

(7:02:01 PM)

Mrs. Crawford invited those present to participate in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

(7:02:20 PM)

Mrs. Sammy Crawford	Present
Ms. Deborah Germano	Absent/Excused
Mrs. Margaret Gilman	Present/Arrived at 7:30 p.m.
Mrs. Debra Mullins	Present
Dr. Nels Anderson	Present
Ms. Sandra Wassilie	Present
Mrs. Debbie Brown	Present
Mr. Marty Anderson	Present
Mrs. Sunni Hilts	Present
Mr. DJ Tyson	Present

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

(7:03:05 PM)

The agenda was approved as written.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
(7:03:15 PM)

The School Board Minutes of November 1, 2004 were approved with corrections to Ms. Griswold's comments in Item 4., Public Presentations.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS:
(7:04:06 PM)

The Board presented a Golden Apple Award to Mrs. Kathy Gensel, for her volunteer service to the District.

The Outstanding Service Award was presented to Mrs. Crawford by Mrs. Mullins on behalf of the National School Boards Association. The Excellence in Boardmanship Award was presented to Mrs. Mullins by Mrs. Crawford on behalf of the Association of Alaska School Boards.

SCHOOL REPORT:
(7:10:18 PM)

Mr. Ken Halverson, Tustumena Elementary principal, presented a computer-generated report created by students, Mr. Erik Skjold, Miss Cassie Sheridan, and Miss Kaitlyn VanMeter that highlighted the facility, staff, instruction program, academic competitions, band, the Quest Program, intramural activities, Love of Reading and Sea Week, book fairs, special programs, Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program, cross-country skiing, the Site Council and P.T.O. members, guest speakers, community service activities, student recognitions and student behavior rewards.

RECESS:
(7:27:04 PM)

At 7:27 p.m., Mrs. Crawford called a recess.

RECONVENE AFTER RECESS:
(7:29:14 PM)

At 7:29 p.m., the Board reconvened in regular session.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:
(7:29:15 PM)

Mr. Nelson Amen, Kenai parent, asked the Board to review the weighted grade point system used to calculate student grade point average and consider revisions that will not penalize students for taking Advanced Placement classes.

Ms. Teri Stickler, Nikiski parent, requested the Board review the Board Policy regarding due process for student discipline and to instruct school administrators on the process.

Mr. Paul Lorenzo, Nikiski parent, asked the Board for assistance in reinstating the band program at Nikiski Middle/High School.

Ms. Phoebe Love, stepparent, stated that she is confused by the District's rationale regarding student suspension as a punishment and asked for an explanation.

Miss Karina Lorenzo, Nikiski Middle/High School student, stated that she would like the school to offer band and asked the Board to reinstate the program.

Mrs. Crawford explained that although the Board cannot take action on items that are not on the agenda, the Board will probably direct the administration to investigate the topics of concern expressed by the public and report to the Board. She thanked those who spoke to the Board.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS:

(7:41:47 PM)

Dr. Peterson reported that she received a letter from the Governor containing educational funding comments and proposal that were made at the Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB) Annual Conference. She reported that she received a letter from Nikiski area parents regarding the band program issue. She noted that the administration is working on an equitable resolution and added that the Seward area has a similar issue. She reported that raw information from the latest Budget Review Committee meeting has been distributed. She noted that Mr. Haupt submitted a report to the Board in response to their request for information regarding competent parental instruction.

**Advisory Committee, Site Council
and/or P.T.A., K.P.A.A., K.P.E.A., K.
P.E.S.A, Borough Assembly:**

(7:43:34 PM)

Mrs. Cathy Carrow, KPEA President, noted that American Education Week provides a way to celebrate public education as a cornerstone in a strong democracy. She stated that the state needs to resolve issues within the teacher retirement and public employee retirement systems, to inflation-proof the funding formula, and to repair the deficiencies in education caused by inadequate funding during the past 20 years. She asked the Board to join with KPEA in lobbying legislators.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

(7:49:05 PM)

Dr. Peterson announced that November 14-20 is American Education Week. She reported on the recently held ACSA Annual Conference and noted that the focus of the group will be to cement relationships with other groups within the educational community. She reported on the Missing and Exploited Children Conference and quoted statistics relating to crimes against children over a one-year period. She reported on the Board goal to expand the use of Edline as a parent communication tool throughout the District and provided statistics regarding its use and compliance by the 38 schools that have Grades 4 through 7.

Financial Report:

(7:55:09 PM)

Mrs. Douglas presented the financial report of the District for the period ending October 31, 2004. She noted that a revision will be brought to the Board for approval at a future meeting.

Class Size Enrollment Report:

(7:55:36 PM)

Mr. Sam Stewart presented the Class Size Enrollment Report which included a comparison of pupil-teacher ratios throughout District schools.

Mrs. Crawford noted that the report listed the number of classes with over 30 students and observed that most of the classes were band, choir and physical education.

Mr. Stewart responded to a question from Mrs. Brown that the entire report is available on the District website.

Presentation of Enrollment Projections:

(7:57:04 PM)

Mrs. Melody Douglas presented the Six-Year Enrollment Projections (2005-06 through 2010-11) which reflects 9,591 students for FY 06. She explained that the projections are used in developing the FY06 budget and that the administration used a straight line model to calculate the projections, using a two-year average for kindergarten students.

Presentation of Enrollment Projections:

(Continued)

Ms. Wassilie asked if the administration will review the projections throughout the year and bring updates to the Board. Mrs. Douglas stated that if it becomes appropriate to change the projection, she will inform the Board.

Mrs. Brown asked when corrections are made to the projected enrollment. Mrs. Douglas responded that the enrollment projections for past years are the actual enrollment numbers of students. Mrs. Douglas stated that a straight line model was used to project enrollment (minus 2%) after it was discovered that future projections were off by 2% over a 5-year period.

BOARD REPORTS:

(8:01:51 PM)

Mrs. Gilman reported that she attended the 51st AASB Annual Conference. She highlighted the Governor's address to the group announcing a plan for more money for education, attorney Saul Friedman's history on pledge of allegiance, and Marshall Lind's 50-year history on education and educational funding in the State of Alaska. She commented that many ideas in education return, and added that hopefully each time they return they are refined and improved. She thanked the public for the opportunity to attend the conference.

Mrs. Hilts stated that she attended the AASB Annual Conference. She noted that the District was well-represented by Mrs. Mullins as AASB president. She noted that an award was given to Mrs. Crawford. She stated that she enjoyed former Commissioner Marshall Lind's 50-year history of education in Alaska and noted that she remembers most of it. She stated that she was inspired by listening to other districts who are finding ways to educate children, communities, and the state. She stated that they heard from districts who supply a laptop computer and digital camera to each student and a district who does not use a grading system and students are promoted when competency is demonstrated. She expressed appreciation for the opportunity to attend the conference.

Mr. DJ Tyson reported that he attended the AASB Annual Conference and participated in the Youth Leadership Institute sponsored by Alaska Initiative for Community Engagement (ICE). He stated that the institute put a huge emphasis on growth as a student leader in the community and school. He reported that approximately 50 students statewide participated (most of them were student representatives or held some type of leadership role). He reported that the students participated in various activities that put an emphasis on leadership skills, communication within the community and with other students. He reported that the group attended sessions with adult Board members. He noted that it was extremely helpful to meet other students who were Board representatives. He thanked the Board for encouraging him to attend.

BOARD REPORTS:

(Continued)

Mr. Anderson reported that he attended the AASB Annual Conference. He reported that he attended a session on School Construction and Maintenance, which was designed to help Board members understand cost control during the design and bid process and to consider replacement costs. He reported that he attended the Bullying session which is described as "peer abuse". He reported on the definition and identification of peer abuse as well as the mitigation processes that school districts are considering. He reported on the Future Teachers Organization teacher mentoring program in which future teachers are supported emotionally and financially throughout their college education so that they will return to rural Alaska to teach. He reported that the School Law session debated the Pledge of Allegiance and prayer in school and religious leaders who may attend graduation ceremonies. He thanked Mrs. Mullins and Ms. Germano for their service on the AASB Board of Directors and recognized the time commitment that is involved. He stated that he had the opportunity to personally meet Governor Murkowski.

Ms. Wassilie reported that the Policy Review Committee completed a review of Section 4000, Personnel, which will come to the Board for consideration at the next meeting. She reported that she attended the AASB Annual Conference and expressed appreciation to Mrs. Mullins, AASB President, for an organized and efficiently run meeting and noted that her representation reflects well on the District. She stated that her highlights were similar to those of other Board members. She expressed appreciation for the Governor's funding proposal and although no money will go into the classroom, it will at least keep the District at status quo. She expressed appreciation for the presentation by the Commissioner of Education, Roger Sampson, regarding the four goals set by the State Board of Education (principal mentoring, teacher mentoring, oral language proficiency, and teacher licensing tier system). She stated that she is particularly impressed with mentoring programs, especially when the state is facing a teacher shortage. She reported that she attended a round table session where Board members met with students who

were participating in the Leadership Institute. She stated that she attended the bullying session and noted that everyone at the school must address the issue. She thanked the District for the opportunity to attend.

Dr. Anderson reported that he attended the AASB Conference, and was impressed by the Internet Online demonstration and added that this technology will help when offering classes at various sites in the District. He stated that the main reason he attended the Conference was to promote the District's resolution regarding mandated accountability for all students in the state (not just public school students). He stated that he was gratified that both the Resolutions Committee and the general membership were in complete agreement that it was a high priority and will promote it at the legislative level. He stated that he intends to put forth his own time and resources to lobby the legislature in order to protect those students who are being inadequately home-schooled.

BOARD REPORTS:

(Continued)

Mrs. Mullins reported that she attended the AASB Annual Conference and told those present that although the oral reports may be monotonous, the Board must be accountable to the public for the time and money spent. She reported that former Commissioner of Education, Marshall Lind and two other former commissioners were present at the Conference. She stated that it was a privilege to introduce the Governor and added that she was pleased when he agreed to take questions from the audience. She stated that Commissioner Sampson gave an in-depth explanation of the proposed Principal Mentorship Program and the three-tiered teacher licensure proposal. She reported that the commissioner introduced the Alaska Teacher of the Year and added that she was on the selection committee who interviewed 5 other outstanding teachers from throughout the state. She reported that the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Board of Education was very vocal on the Resolutions Committee floor and received support from the membership. She reported that she spent the first 2 days of the Conference training 80 to 100 new board members. She stated that she participated in the District Policy Review Committee's review of Section 4000.

Mrs. Crawford reported that 8 of 9 Board members as well as the student representative, Mr. Tyson, were able to attend the AASB Annual Conference. She reported that the Governor and Commissioner of Education, Roger Sampson, spoke to the assembly and that the conference offered several outstanding sectionals. She noted that Mrs. Mullins presided over the meeting and added that Mrs. Hilts proposed a resolution to make students a number one priority in the state which passed unanimously.

Mrs. Brown reported that she attended the October 26 Budget Review Committee meeting and added that although the attendance was good, it was lacking in regular citizenry representation (not District staff or Board members). She stated that the work of the group was thorough and she was encouraged by the new ideas to help solve the District's budgetary problems. She stated that she has not had a chance to read the meeting summary and asked Mrs. Douglas if all Committee members will be provided a copy. Mrs. Douglas responded that the Committee meeting summary has already been distributed.

CONSENT AGENDA:

(8:26:21 PM)

Items presented on the Consent Agenda were Approval of New Teacher Assignments and Substitute Teacher Contracts.

New Teacher Assignments:

Mr. Fisher recommended the Board approve teacher assignments for Theresa M. Bush, special education occupational therapist (.50FTE) districtwide for Seward Area; Lucas Peless, secondary generalist at Tebughna Elementary/High; and Kristen R. Peless, elementary generalist at Tebughna Elementary/High.

Substitute Teacher Contracts:

Mr. Fisher recommended the Board approve substitute teacher contracts for Michelle Burnett, kindergarten, Sears Elementary and Cindy Robertson, Grades 5/6, West Homer Elementary.

MOTION

Ms. Wassilie moved the Board approve Consent Agenda Items Numbers 1 and 2. Mr. Anderson seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

REVISIONS TO BP 1321:

(8:26:53 PM)

Mrs. Douglas recommended the Board approve revisions to BP 1321, Solicitation of Funds from and by Students, in order to be in compliance with state regulations. She noted that the changes specifically deal with what happens to funds in a gaming account if any of the District schools were to be dissolved.

MOTION

Mrs. Mullins moved the Board approve revisions to BP 1321, Solicitation of Funds from and by Students. Mrs. Gilman seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

BOARD COMMENTS:

(8:28:43 PM)

Mrs. Mullins presented Mrs. Gilman with The Excellence in Boardmanship Award on behalf of the Association of Alaska School Boards. Mrs. Mullins thanked the Tustumena Elementary parents and students for the school report. She requested the parent who spoke to the Board regarding due process to speak with Dr. Peterson. She congratulated Mrs. Crawford for being elected to the AASB Board of Directors.

Mr. Anderson thanked the Tustumena Elementary staff, students and administrator for the school report. He reminded those present to continue advocating for adequate education funding and a stable funding

source to legislators. He noted that oil prices are good at the present but could easily drop in the future putting the District back into a financial crisis. He thanked the Board members who attended the AASB Annual Conference and noted that he learned more about being a Board member and more about his fellow Board members. He stated that he supports Dr. Anderson's views on educational accountability of all Alaska students and added that education is a civil liberty and that he will work to ensure that every student in the District has the opportunity for an education so that no child is left behind.

BOARD COMMENTS:

(Continued)

Mrs. Gilman reported that she received a number of phone calls regarding weighted grades. She gave a brief history of the weighted grades issue and subsequent policy adoption and noted that the Board's intention was to encourage academic excellence and to reward students who choose to take Advanced Placement classes. She reported that the weighted system has instead penalized students who take additional courses. She announced that the Board will conduct a worksession regarding weighted grades at the next Board meeting. She thanked Mr. Stewart for the Class Size Report and noted that not all of the 198 classes that have more than 30 students are band, choir and physical education classes. She stated that the large numbers include English classes, social studies classes, history classes, science classes, etc. She stated that she assumes that the Nikiski band problem will be resolved. She expressed appreciation for the comments regarding suspension. She stated that she supports the use of suspension as a punishment because attending school is a privilege and if a student's behavior endangers others, they should be suspended.

Mr. Tyson congratulated Mrs. Crawford, Mrs. Mullins and Mrs. Gilman for receiving Board-related awards. He thanked Mr. Halverson for the school presentation and added that it is wonderful to see how involved the Tustumena community is with the school. He stated that weighted grades is an important topic among students and will bring comments to the upcoming worksession.

Dr. Anderson encouraged the parent who spoke regarding due process to speak to the administration. He stated that he has mixed feelings about the suspension issue and noted that there are alternatives available. He explained that one option is that the parent can accompany the child to school and attend classes along with them. He stated that he was alarmed by the TRS and PERS information sent by the Governor's Office describing the situation. He stated that the participation rate could go up to 50% (TRS) and 35% to 40% (PERS) indefinitely which would mean the District would have to pay \$15 million from the District budget for retirees. He reported that the state has offered generous benefits for employees but it can not be continued and added that it is not a problem that will go away.

Mrs. Brown suggested that before January 10 (when the legislative session begins) the public write to legislators regarding No Child Left Behind otherwise they become inundated with other issues. She stated that she loves the Kenai Peninsula and added that there are lots of excellent and wonderful things to look forward to. She reported that the Governor has outlined a plan for funding education which will be decided by the legislature. She stated that she is looking forward to good things happening in the District. She stated that she was encouraged when Senator Stevens stated (prior to the election) that, should the Republicans win the election, oil exploration could be possible on the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge. She noted that if ANWR is opened for drilling, the School District may experience an influx of new residents into Peninsula communities and the District will need to be ready.

BOARD COMMENTS:

(Continued)

Mrs. Hilts reported that during the AASB Conference the membership considered a resolution regarding social security pension offset and added that a change is needed when districts recruit new teachers. She stated that she is glad to see communities deal with the issue of providing music instruction to their children. She stated that she agrees with the use of suspension as a discipline and recognized that it does not have the same effect on every student. She stated that she especially appreciated the Class Size Report and was struck by the fact that the District is so diverse that it is like multiple school districts in one. She stated that she is excited that people are trying to cope with the lack of funding, more regulations, higher expectations and higher standards. She recounted a meeting with Dr. Peterson and the parents of Susan B. English Elementary/High and noted that the meeting went well and people left feeling good even though nothing was promised. She reported that teachers at Moose Pass Elementary and Hope Elementary/High are coping with incredible problems and yet are doing a great job. She reported that AASB passed a resolution to make children a top priority and encouraged those present to ask legislators to do the same. She stated that if decisions are based on what is good for kids they will be good decisions for everyone. She stated that it is difficult to keep the legislature focused on children and encouraged those present to contact legislators, and ask them to make children a priority. She announced that November 13-20 is Youth Appreciation Week and suggested to those present that they make the effort to recognize a child for something that they did well.

Ms. Wassilie stated that she is heartened by the Governor's proposal to forward fund education and is also encouraged by the resolutions that were passed at the AASB Annual Conference. She stated she is pleased that the Association made a commitment to make children their first priority. She stated that she is pleased with the resolution that holds the public accountable for the education of all children. She stated that she is heartened that the public is going to start

properly taking care of its children. She stated that education is a right and a privilege and that parents do not have a right to keep their children from an education but should have the right to decide how they will be educated. She cautioned that the Class Size Report, although it is a valuable report, is only a snapshot of September 23. She announced that the Kenai Peninsula Borough Comprehensive Plan is currently being developed and that the Public Facilities section addresses education and urged the Board and those present to read and make comment. She thanked the parents who spoke to the Board about various issues and encouraged them to speak to the administration.

BOARD COMMENTS:

(Continued)

Mrs. Crawford thanked Mr. Halverson for the Tustumena Elementary School report. She thanked the parents for speaking to the Board about problems with the weighted grades point system for students who take Advanced Placement classes. She encouraged those present to consider nominating a student for the Spirit of Youth award. She reported that the Board recently revised Board Policy (BP 5126 Awards for Achievement) to include a student recognition element of the Recognition Committee and noted that Mr. Tyson will serve on the Committee. She reported that Mrs. Mullins will serve as a liaison to the Advocates for Alaska's Youth Network, a program sponsored by AASB to form a statewide youth network. She read a quote from the recent AASB board training, "Your opinions as an individual Board member matter but only to a certain point. The most effective boards accept differing viewpoints and then move forward cohesively as a single unit. The divided board cannot lead. We must uphold the body's decision. When we make a decision we've got to stay with that." She asked for an excused absence for the December 6 Board meeting and urged those who need to contact her to call her cell phone.

Mrs. Debbie Brown thanked Mr. and Mrs. Halverson and staff for the Tustumena Elementary School report. She stated that after careful research prior to moving to Alaska she decided to bring her family to the Kasilof area where her daughters attended Tustumena Elementary School. She credited her daughters' success to the outstanding school staff. She noted that the school is the hub of the community. Mrs. Brown explained that she became ill and was unable to attend the November 1 Seward Board meeting. Mrs. Crawford requested that Mrs. Brown call the administration office to be excused from future meetings. Mrs. Brown complimented Mrs. Crawford for doing a fine job presiding over the meeting.

ADJOURN:

(9:01:35 PM)

At 9:01 p.m., Dr. Anderson moved the School Board Meeting be adjourned. Mrs. Mullins seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Sammy Crawford, President

Mrs. Debra Mullins, Clerk

The Minutes of November 15, 2004,
were approved on November 19, 2004 with
connections.