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# Kenai Peninsula Borough School District

## Board of Education Meeting Minutes

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September 9, 2013 – 7:00 p.m.  
Regular Meeting

Homer High School  
600 E. Fairview, Homer, Alaska

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**SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:** Mr. Joe Arness, President  
Mrs. Liz Downing, Vice President  
Mrs. Penny Vadla, Clerk  
Ms. Lynn Hohl, Treasurer  
Mr. Marty Anderson  
Mrs. Sammy Crawford  
Mrs. Sunni Hilts  
Mr. Bill Holt  
Mr. Tim Navarre

**STAFF PRESENT:** Dr. Steve Atwater, Superintendent of Schools  
Mr. Sean Dusek, Assistant Superintendent  
Mr. Dave Jones, Assistant Superintendent

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Dr. Christine Ermold	Ms. Pegge Erkeneff
Mr. Pete Swanson	Mr. Doug Waclawski
Ms. Yolanda Schrader	Ms. Naomi Walsworth
Mr. Shawn Hutchings	Ms. McKibben Jackinsky
Mr. Dan Castimore	Representative Paul Seaton
Mr. Jim White	Ms. Joann Riener
Mr. Andy Rothenberger	Mr. Tim Vlasak
Mrs. Mo Wilkinson	Mrs. Patty Sirois
Ms. Kendall Dellasperanza	Mrs. Keri Clark
Ms. Sunny Mall	Mr. Neil Denny
Mr. Eric Pederson	Mr. Conrad Woodhead
Ms. Ariel Van Cleave	Ms. Kari Dendurent

Others present not identified.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Arness called the meeting to order at 4:59 p.m.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:** At 5:00 p.m., Mr. Navarre moved the Board go into executive session to discuss matters involving consideration of government records that by law are not subject to public disclosure. Specifically, the executive session was to discuss Fireweed Academy. Mrs. Crawford seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

**ADJOURN EXECUTIVE SESSION:** At 6:05 p.m., Ms. Hohl moved the executive session be adjourned. Mrs. Crawford seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

At 6:05 p.m., Mr. Arness recessed the meeting until 7:00 p.m.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mr. Arness called the meeting back to order at 7:04 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Mr. Arness invited those present to participate in the Pledge of Allegiance.

<b>ROLL CALL:</b>	Mr. Joe Arness	Present
	Mr. Marty Anderson	Absent/Excused
	Mrs. Sammy Crawford	Present
	Mrs. Liz Downing	Present
	Mrs. Sunni Hilts	Present
	Ms. Lynn Hohl	Present
	Mr. Bill Holt	Present
	Mr. Tim Navarre	Present
	Mrs. Penny Vadla	Present

**DISTRICT MISSION STATEMENT:** Ms. Hohl read the District mission statement.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** The agenda was approved as written.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The School Board Minutes of August 5, 2013, were approved as printed.

**AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS:** The Board presented Ms. Yolanda Schrader the Golden Apple Award for her service to the District.

**SCHOOL REPORT:** Mr. Pete Swanson, McNeil Canyon Elementary School principal, introduced Mrs. Mo Wilkinson (student council advisor) who discussed the student council projects, including helping families in need, and providing soccer goals for the schools. She introduced the student council representatives who shared a computer presentation that highlighted the school’s past, and current school traditions such as field trips, Science Fair, school skating rink, school sports, art projects, the “Link-up” music program that includes students performing with the Kenai Peninsula Orchestra, student fun days, interviews with staff members, and finished with a school, staff, and student photo to commemorate the school’s 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Ms. Kendall Dellasperanza read a statement of “favorite memories” from Ms. Amy Budge, teacher. In closing, Mr. Swanson stated that McNeil Canyon has been rated a four star school by the Department of Education and Early Development, noted the school’s low rating in the attendance category, and the possibility of being rated a five star school if attendance were to be improved. He thanked the students for their work on the presentation.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:** Representative Paul Seaton discussed a resolution and accompanying studies that he shared with the Board regarding student school absenteeism due to illness and the benefits of increasing vitamin D levels to decrease instances of illness.

Mr. Al Poindexter, former Homer High teacher, discussed the National FFA Organization (formerly Future Farmers of America), Homer High School’s past participation in the program, offered two free tickets to the FFA National Convention in Louisville, KY in October, for any Board member that would like to attend, and encouraged the Board to include the National FFA in future District plans.

**COMMUNICATIONS AND  
PETITIONS:**

Dr. Atwater reported on the recent Department of Education and Early Development (D.E.E.D.) audit of the District's Kenai/Soldotna area special education programs and stated that the audit results are expected in the next week. He noted that the annual financial audit is complete, that there were no findings, and that the results will be included in the October Board packet. He stated that district office administration will meet with Soldotna secondary school principals and assistant principals on September 30, as part of the process to determine who will lead the reconfigured Soldotna schools. He announced that the Soldotna Schools Reconfiguration Advisory Committee has been chosen and they will meet for the first time at the Soldotna Middle School library on Tuesday, September 10, 2013, in order to discuss the specifics of the three schools. He stated that the District's American Productivity and Quality Center (A.P.Q.C.) trainings will begin on Wednesday, September 11, 2013, at the Kenai Library. He reported that he will be in Anchorage on Tuesday, September 10, 2013, in order to testify to the Senate Finance Subcommittee on Education regarding the state's new evaluation regulations and how they impact our district.

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE,  
SITE COUNCIL AND/OR  
P.T.A., K.P.A.A., K.P.E.A.,  
K.P.E.S.A, BOROUGH  
ASSEMBLY:**

Mrs. Patty Sirois, K.P.E.S.A president, discussed 12 recent site visits made by Mr. Neil Denny, Mrs. Keri Clark and her, and the information shared and received during these visits including the recent health care co-pay reduction. She announced that the unions sponsored booths at the Ninilchik Fair and Industry Appreciation Day to promote public education and the upcoming bond issue on the October ballot. She stated that the union mailed questionnaires to the school board and borough assembly candidates and expressed her desire that the questionnaires be returned.

Mr. Neil Denny, K.P.E.A president, stated that he enjoyed the recent school visits. He stated that, as planned, he is researching programs designed to improve student attendance and discussed one such program at Nanwalek School. He noted various comments from schools regarding their start up this year. He reported that he has extended invitations for local legislators to spend an entire day at a school, and discussed the benefits of this opportunity. He discussed the importance of and quality of communication during the Soldotna Schools reconfiguration and expressed appreciation for Doug Hayman's work on this project.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S  
REPORT:**

Dr. Atwater noted that the first school early release day will be Wednesday, Sept. 18, and schools will release 90 minutes early to allow for staff collaboration. He reported that the Information Services department has completed updating the operating system on District computers, and thanked Mr. Jim White and his staff for completing this project. He announced that, due to increase enrollment, staffing adjustments have been made at Soldotna High School, (adding a ½ time science and a ½ time language arts teachers) and at Sterling Elementary (increase the principal position to full time). He stated that Mrs. Michael Hanson will now be the principal of Cooper Landing School. He stated that (following the Board's decision to cut the FY15 budget by the fund balance amount used for operations in FY13) the amount the board will consider for budget cuts, at the October meeting, will be approximately \$1.2 million. With recent financial audit, he thanked Ms. Liz Hayes for her extraordinary and timely work in completing the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report.

**FINANCIAL REPORT:**

Mr. Jones presented financial reports of the District for the periods ending July 31, and August 31, 2013.

**BOARD REPORTS:**

Mrs. Hilts reported that she attended the National School Board Association (N.S.B.A.) leadership training for president elects, in Memphis, TN and discussed the training received and topics discussed. She attended the Alaska Oil and Gas Association's (A.O.G.A.) luncheon (August 19, 2013) and commented on the economic discussion held there.

Mrs. Downing reported that Legislative Committee met earlier in the day, where they discussed the Association of Alaska School Boards (A.A.S.B.) Resolutions in order to present the committee recommendations to the Board during the afternoon worksession. She explained the process for the approval of the resolutions by A.A.S.B. She stated that the committee also reviewed state and federal legislative priorities for the District.

Mrs. Crawford reported that on Monday, September 17, she will be in Anchorage to help select next year's "Alaska Teacher of the Year" as one of her final duties with A.A.S.B. She stated that she will also attend the A.A.S.B. Annual Conference in November as she will still be a member of the organization at that time.

Ms. Hohl reported that she attended the A.O.G.A. luncheon and the Sterling Elementary School Open House (both on August 19), and the Seward schools site council meeting.

Mrs. Vadla reported that she visited Ninilchik School earlier in the day, met Principal Jeff Ambrosier, and stated that she hopes to work with the school on the Caring for Kenai project. She stated that she will attend the Soldotna Schools Reconfiguration Advisory Committee meeting on September 10, as a Board representative.

**BOARD WORKSESSION  
REPORT:**

Mr. Arness reported that the Board Legislative, and Policy, Committees met and the Board held worksessions regarding Board Policy, iTouch in Schools, Annual Assessment Report, Curriculum/Social Studies and Science, State and Federal Legislative Priorities, and the Association of Alaska School Boards (A.A.S.B.) Resolutions, and held an executive session, all prior to the formal business meeting. All members at the meeting attended the worksessions.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Items presented on the Consent Agenda were Approval of Resignation, 2013-14 New Teacher Contracts, 2013-2014 Tentative Non-Tenure Teacher Contracts, Leave of Absence Request/Support, High School Graduation Qualifying Exam Waiver Request Number 2014-02, High School Graduation Qualifying Exam Waiver Request Number 2014-03, and AR 1330 Use of School Facilities and Properties, E 1330 Room and Building Use Application.

**RESIGNATION:**

Mr. Jones recommended the Board approve a resignation from Patrick Nolden, Soldotna High School, effective at the end of the 2013-14 school year.

**2013-2014 NEW TEACHER  
CONTRACTS:**

Mr. Jones recommended the Board approve new teacher contracts for Tiffany Carter, Math Teacher, Soldotna Middle School; Judith Eckert, Special Education Intensive Needs Teacher, West Homer Elementary School; Ellen Kenna, Speech Language Pathologist, Nikiski North Star Elementary; Emily Kornelis, Speech Language Pathologist, Central Peninsula Area; Heidi Renner, Elementary Physical Education/Health Teacher (.75 FTE), Kaleidoscope School of Arts and Science; Rand Seaton, Exploratory Teacher (.75 FTE), Homer Middle School; Samuel Tilly, Generalist Teacher (.50 FTE), Kenai Middle School; and Janae Van Slyke, Primary Grade Teacher, Sterling Elementary School.

**2013-2014 NON-TENURE  
TEACHER CONTRACTS:**

Mr. Jones recommended the Board approve tentative non-tenured teacher contracts for Adrienne Bostic, Teacher/Regular, Nikiski North Star Elementary School; Gerald Byrne, Teacher/Regular (.20 FTE), Soldotna High School; Marilee Johanson, Teacher/Regular (.20 FTE), Nikiski Middle/High School; and Judy Odhner, Teacher/Regular (.20 FTE), Seward High School.

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE  
REQUEST/SUPPORT:**

Mr. Jones recommended the Board approve a leave of absence request for Laura Norton, Secretary I, Homer Flex School, effective September 11, 2013, to December 20, 2013.

**HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION  
QUALIFYING EXAM WAIVER  
REQUEST NUMBER 2014-02:**

Mr. Dusek recommended the Board approve High School Graduation Qualifying Exam Waiver Request Number 2014-02.

**HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION  
QUALIFYING EXAM WAIVER  
REQUEST NUMBER 2014-03:**

Mr. Dusek recommended the Board approve High School Graduation Qualifying Exam Waiver Request Number 2014-03.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

*(Continued)*

**POLICY REVISIONS:**

Mr. Jones recommended the Board approve revisions to AR 1330 Use of School Facilities and Properties, E 1330 Room and Building Use Application.

Mr. Mike Illg spoke regarding the difficulty for the public to use school facilities due to the cost of the required liability insurance.

**MOTION:**

Mrs. Crawford moved the Board approve Consent Agenda Items Numbers 1 through 7. Mrs. Downing seconded.

Mr. Navarre removed Number 7 approval of revisions to AR 1330 Use of School Facilities and Properties, E 1330 Room and Building Use Application.

Motion carried unanimously for Numbers 1-6.

Motion carried unanimously for Number 7.

**ASSOCIATION OF ALASKA  
SCHOOL BOARDS (A.A.S.B.)  
CORE RESOLUTIONS:**

Dr. Atwater recommended the Board approve the 2013 Association of Alaska School Boards (A.A.S.B.) Core Resolutions as revised.

**MOTION:**

Mrs. Crawford moved the Board approve the 2013 Association of Alaska School Boards (A.A.S.B.) Core Resolutions as revised. Mrs. Vadla seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

**FIRST READING OF POLICY  
REVISIONS:**

The Board heard a first reading of revisions to BP 5138 Student Possession and Use of Personal Electronic Devices, Including Cellular Phones and BP 6172 Special Education.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS/  
COMMENTS:**

Mr. Bill Smith welcomed the Board to Homer. He stated that he hopes the District will save money with the natural gas conversions taking place in local schools.

**PRESENTATION:**

Mr. Arness spoke about Mrs. Crawford and her years of service to the District as a teacher and as a Board member beginning in 1968.

Mrs. Crawford discussed her first election to the Board, her experiences, and her 15 years as a Board member.

On behalf of the District, Dr. Atwater presented Mrs. Crawford with a gift and thanked her for her service to the District.

On behalf of the School Board, Mrs. Vadla presented Mrs. Crawford with a gift and thanked her for her service to the Board.

**BOARD COMMENTS:**

Mrs. Vadla thanked the Homer High School Culinary Arts students for dinner. She thanked Representative Paul Seaton for his presentation during the worksessions. She thanked Mrs. Linton for her presentation on the social studies and science curricula and Mr. Vlasak for his assessment presentation. She congratulated Ms. Schrader on her Golden Apple Award. She thanked McNeil Canyon Elementary for their presentation. She thanked Mr. Poindexter for his work with the FFA Organization. She told Mrs. Crawford that she would miss working with her.

Mrs. Hilts said farewell to Mrs. Crawford. She expressed appreciation for the condition of the Homer High School commons. She thanked McNeil Canyon Elementary for their presentation. She expressed appreciation for the day's work. She announced that today (September 9) is Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (F.A.S.D.) Awareness Day and discussed her personal experience with F.A.S.D in her family.

Mr. Navarre thanked Homer High School for their hospitality. He thanked Mr. Swanson and McNeil Canyon Elementary for their presentation. He thanked Mr. Sean Hutchings for attending the day's worksessions and meeting and Mr. Dan Castimore for attending the meeting. He discussed two resolutions that he plans to introduce at the October meeting. He announced that he attended "Paint the Kenai Community Mural Project" competition, congratulated those that submitted entries, and winner Ms. Fanny Ryland whose mural entitled "Kenai La Belle" will be reproduced at the Kenai Municipal Airport. He stated that he purchased the work of Miss Sarah Baktuit, Soldotna Middle School student, entitled "Peaceful Town," and will present it the District for display in the District Office entrance. He thanked Mrs. Crawford for her service as a teacher, her commitment to public service, and the difference she has made in students' lives, the district and the state.

Mrs. Downing expressed appreciation for the Homer meeting and those in attendance, especially Representative Seaton, Mr. Smith, Mr. Hutchings, Mr. Castimore and the local school administrators. She encouraged the public to vote in October and discussed the bond issue on the ballot. She reported that she attended the Kenai Peninsula College Open House, toured the new dormitory facilities, the new Career and Technical building and discussed the changes and growth of the college over the 25 years that she has worked there. She stated that she will attend the A.P.Q.C. workshops September 11-13. She estimated that board members spend an equivalent of 40-45 full days per year in service to the board. She discussed the Green Dot programs in Homer and Kenai. She stated that she is the advocacy chair for the Alaska Society for Technology in Education, (tied to the International Society for Technology) and discussed upcoming changes to E-Rate and other technology issues. She discussed her experiences working on the Board with Mrs. Crawford, and thanked her for her service to the District and the state.

**BOARD COMMENTS:**

*(Continued)*

Ms. Hohl expressed appreciation for Representative Seaton and Senator Gary Stevens. She thanked the Homer High School Culinary Arts students for dinner. She welcomed the new bargaining unit representatives. She reported that she attended the open houses for Seward Elementary and Seward Middle schools, and a Seward PTSA meeting where she spoke with Mayor Mike Navarre. She mentioned that, in years past, the Board met twice per year in Seward and in Homer. She discussed her experiences working on the Board with Mrs. Crawford, and wished her farewell. She thanked the Board for excusing her August meeting absence, and stated that her husband's back surgery was very successful. She noted the recent death of Seward resident Ms. Jessi Nelsen as the result of an airplane crash at Merrill Field, Anchorage, AK.

Mr. Holt discussed his experiences working on the Board with Mrs. Crawford, (including notes passed to him during the meetings) and thanked her for her service to the District. He thanked McNeil Canyon Elementary for their presentation. He noted the benefits of highlighting the students' favorite programs, and that often these extra programs (such as art) are the most memorable to the students and are important in preparing them to be successful in a dynamic world.

Mrs. Crawford thanked the District for the engraved plaque with clock and the Board for the raven decorated scarf and the art print entitled "Arctic Circle Dance" which includes nine people – as does the Board. She stated that she is honored to have served on the Board and to have been a teacher for a combined total of 45 years of service to public education. She expressed appreciation for and confidence in the District and the Board and their future work.

Mr. Arness thanked Mrs. Crawford for her service to the Board.

**ADJOURN:**

At 8:51 p.m., Mr. Arness adjourned the School Board Meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

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Mr. Joe Arness, President

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Mrs. Penny Vadla, Clerk

The Minutes of September 9, 2013, have been approved as of October 14, 2013.