

# Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Board of Education Meeting Minutes

December 1, 2003 – 7:30 p.m.  
Regular Meeting

Borough Administration Building  
148 N. Binkley, Soldotna, Alaska

**SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:**

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

**STAFF PRESENT:**

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

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Mrs. Laurie Olson	Mr. Tim Peterson
Mrs. Rosemary Bird	Mrs. Patty Rich
Miss Elena Bird	Mrs. Anita LeDoux
Mr. Dennis Dunn	Mrs. Debbie Stewart
Miss Jenni Dillon	Mr. Alan Fields
Ms. Connie Meyer	Mrs. Mary Kennedy
Judge Charles Cranston	Ms. Reneé Henderson
Mrs. Nancy Cranston	Mrs. Melissa Frates
Mr. Jon Lillevik	Mr. Brad Frates
Mr. Todd Syverson	Mr. Jim White
Mrs. Colette Thompson	Mrs. Connie Jung
Dr. Roy Anderson	Mr. Craig Jung
Mr. Shane Tachick	Mr. Dave Spence
Mr. Glenn Haupt	Mr. Bob VanDerWege
Miss Emma Seggerman	Mr. Dan Ghormley
	Miss Brandy Denna

Others present not identified.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

*(7:32:08 PM)*

Ms. Germano called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

**NATIONAL ANTHEM:**

*(7:32:26 PM)*

Miss Danielle Milliron, Kenai Central High senior, performed the "Star Spangled Banner" on the flute.

**ROLL CALL:**

(7:34:35 PM)

Mrs. Sammy Crawford	Absent/Excused
Ms. Deborah Germano	Present
Mrs. Margaret Gilman	Present
Mrs. Debra Mullins	Present
Dr. Nels Anderson	Present
Ms. Sandra Wassilie	Present
Ms. Debbie Holle	Present
Mr. Marty Anderson	Absent/Excused
Mrs. Sunni Hilts	Present
Mr. Patrick Tilbury	Present

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

(7:35:11 PM)

The agenda was approved as written.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

(7:35:29 PM)

The School Board Minutes of November 17, 2003, were approved with the correction of the spelling of the name "Klauder".

**AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS:**

(7:35:58 PM)

The Board presented Golden Apple awards to Judge Charles Cranston, community volunteer; Mrs. Connie Jung, KCHS school secretary; Mrs. Connie Meyer, speech pathologist; and Mrs. Lassie Nelson, Central Office administrative secretary, for their service to the District. Ms. Germano presented a certificate on behalf of the Association of Alaska School Boards to Mr. Patrick Tilbury, student representative, for successful completion of the Youth Institute Training.

**SCHOOL REPORT:**

(7:48:33 PM)

Mr. Dennis Dunn, Kenai Central High principal, commented on the positive relationships that students have with each other, the relationships between the students and the staff, and the relationship between the school and the community. He noted that the school goal is to decrease the number of students on the ineligibility list (those who are failing classes) and to improve parent involvement. He presented a video infomercial created by students and narrated by Mr. Dunn. The choir concluded the report by singing, *Sleep Little Holy Child*, accompanied on the keyboard by Ms. Reneé Henderson, choir teacher.

**RECESS:**

(8:06:55 PM)

At 8:06 p.m., Ms. Germano called a recess.

**RECONVENE AFTER RECESS:**

(8:11:55 PM)

At 8:11 pm., the Board reconvened in regular session.

Ms. Germano welcomed government students from Kenai Central High and Soldotna High.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:**

(8:12:50 PM)

Miss Brandy Denna, Soldotna High School student, listed reasons why arts are important to education and asked the Board to continue the requirement of fine arts and practical arts for high school graduation.

Mr. Bill Carlson, Soldotna High teacher and former District graduate, expressed concern for the proposed changes to BP 6146.1 (High School Graduation Requirements) and stated that if practical and creative arts are no longer required, then schools could eliminate the classes.

Mr. Rocky Dean, Soldotna High School student, stated that the only reason he goes to school each day is for the art program, and added that without it, the school will suffer, and he would have no incentive to attend school.

**COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS:**  
(8:22:36 PM)

Dr. Peterson reported that a copy of a public and employee survey soliciting help in the budget process was included in the Board's general information packet. She noted that the survey provides another method for the public and employees to assist the administration in setting priorities and to allow for sharing of ideas during the budget process. She noted that the administration has finally learned the amount of Title I money the District will be receiving for the 2003-2004 school year.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:**  
(8:24:18 PM)

Dr. Peterson noted that Mrs. Lassie Nelson is being cross-trained to act as a back up for the Board secretary. She noted that the Administrator Meeting is December 3 at the Kenai Merit Inn. She reported that she currently has completed 22 school building visits as well as a visit with the Seward Schools Site Council.

**BOARD REPORTS:**  
(8:25:34 PM)

Mrs. Mullins reported that she participated in the Education Week celebration by spending time in two classrooms at North Star Elementary. She reported that she assisted in a phonics lesson in Mrs. Bingham's kindergarten class, participated in some individual reading activities and assisted with a math lesson. She reported that in the afternoon she spent time in Mrs. Matson's fifth grade class and assisted with a science lesson and a math lesson, and assisted students with research. She stated that at the end of the day she assisted with bus duty. She reported that it was a delightful day and noted that she learned quite a bit about what teachers go through in a day.

Mrs. Gilman reported that she visited Redoubt Elementary School and was given a tour of facility by Mr. Syverson. She reported that she visited with Mr. Dean Hamburg and staff at the Student Nutrition Services office. She reported that she participated along with other Board members in the Educational Forum and added that she wished there had been more public participation. She stated that there was great feedback from the legislators who were present (Senator Wagoner, Representative Chenault, Representative Wolf) and added that the legislators were willing to agree to fund education at \$4500 per student in the foundation formula.

Mrs. Hilts reported that she visited Kachemak Selo and Voznesenka School along with Dr. Peterson, Mr. Stewart, and Assembly Member Milli Martin. She explained that in order to travel to Kachemak Selo the group drove 22 miles on East End Road to the end and then traveled a mile down a steep hill and then a mile down the beach. She stated that the trip was worth the adventure because it is a most delightful school.

She stated that the staff is enthusiastic and supportive of the students. She stated that the staff is coping with some difficult issues as well as the challenge to get to school each day. She reported that she was given a four-wheeler ride from Kachemak Selo to Voznesenka School. She reported that the principal is very proud of his staff and gave a tour of the school. She noted that circumstances are not ideal at the Kachemak Selo School or Voznesenka School and both are facing different challenges. She invited those present to

## **BOARD REPORTS:**

*(Continued)*

visit both schools and noted that it is wonderful to see positive attitudes among the students and staff at both schools. She reported that she tried for two and a half hours to leave Seldovia to attend the Board meeting but the weather conditions were poor.

Mr. Tilbury reported that he attended the Educational Forum at Soldotna High School and then spoke to the eighth grade leadership class at Kenai Middle School the following day. He reported that he explained the duties of the Board of Education to the leadership students and then answered questions.

Ms. Wassilie thanked Mr. Dave Larson for coordinating KPEA's observance of Education Week by inviting Board Members and legislators to spend time in a District classroom. She reported that she spent the morning in both third grade classrooms and then in the fifth grade in the afternoon at Seward Elementary. She stated that she ate the school lunch, participated in the fire drill, and then debriefed with the teachers at the end of the day. She stated that the children were well-behaved but too many need individualized help. She reported that in one of the third grade classrooms 14 of the 24 students need special help. She reported that in one specific classroom a Title I teacher assisted a number of students, a Title VII tutor assisted one student, two parents were volunteering and she helped four students with math and writing skills. She noted that the teacher was continually providing assistance to students while trying to cover the curriculum and bring new students up to a point where they can pass the benchmark exam. She expressed concern that students who come to the District from poor performing schools throughout the state will have assessment scores reflected in the school scores. She stated that there is a higher level of anxiety among staff than two years ago. She stated that she was pleased to see that students had the choice of a salad for lunch and expressed concern for the general health of students. She questioned the

nutrition of school lunches and suggested that the Board continue to review food selections. She noted that teachers are spending too much time trying to raise money and told the Board about a Seward teacher who was planning to take students to the Challenger Learning Center but had to cancel because there was not have enough money to go and now would likely be charged a cancellation fee. She stated that a teacher's time is precious and added that they should not be required to raise money for activities that should be an important part of the curriculum. She stated that her visit to the school was sobering and brought home what she already knew and added that it is unacceptable that the District does not have adequate teaching resources. She reported that she was impressed with the orderliness of the school fire drill. She reported that she attended the Educational Forum and was impressed with the Soldotna High School student council students who sponsored the event. She noted that the three legislators who were in attendance were willing to support \$4500 as base for the education foundation funding formula. She stated that she was disappointed that more people were not at the forum. She stated that the students involved in planning the Educational Forum exemplify what the Board is trying to accomplish in the District mission statement; to create students who have the skills, knowledge and attitudes to meet life's challenges.

**BOARD REPORTS:**

*(Continued)*

Ms. Holle thanked Mr. Ryan Walton and Miss Kaitlin Vadla for coordinating the Educational Forum. She stated that the Forum was well organized. She stated that she was pleased to hear legislators say that they would bring forward \$4500 per student with the concurrence of the legislature and governor. She reported that the possibility of raising the Borough funding cap a few percentage points was mentioned at the Forum. She noted that the School Board was well represented at the Forum and that Mr. Stewart from the administration and Borough President Pete Sprague was also in attendance. She stated that the approximately 100 people who attended the Forum benefited greatly. She stated that everyone must do their part to get help from the state.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

*(8:42:02 PM)*

Items presented on the Consent Agenda were Approval of Long Term Substitute Teacher Contracts, Resignation; and New Teacher Assignment.

**Long Term Substitute Teacher Contracts:**

Dr. Whiteley recommended the Board approve substitute teacher contracts for Tony Jackson, speech, Nikiski Elementary; Sherry Nauta, Grades 1/2, Nikiski Elementary; and William Rolph, social studies, Soldotna Middle School.

**Resignation:**

Dr. Whiteley recommended the Board approve a resignation from Jill Showman, Voznesenka School, (currently on an unpaid leave of absence for the 2003-2004 school year).

**New Teacher Assignment:**

Dr. Whiteley recommended the Board approve teacher assignments for Tina M. Skaalerud, special education/resource, Soldotna Elementary.

**MOTION**

Mrs. Mullins moved the Board approve Consent Agenda Items Numbers 1 through 3. Dr. Anderson seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

**KPSAA Hearing Decision:**

*(8:42:51 PM)*

**MOTION**

Mrs. Mullins moved the Board approve the following:  
"Findings: After listening to the arguments and weighing the evidence presented, including that described above and other evidence presented at the hearing, the Board finds that the preponderance of the evidence does not establish that the student in question violated the above KPSAA rule by being in possession of alcohol. Under the specific facts and circumstances unique to this case, the Board finds that presence in the vicinity of alcohol does not constitute possession of alcohol in violation of KPSAA rule and Board policy.

Conclusions: Based on the above finding, the Board hereby reverses the decision of KPSAA board and orders that the suspension from cocurricular activities be permanently expunged from the student's record." Dr. Anderson seconded.

**KPSAA Hearing Decision:**

*(Continued)*

VOTE:

YES - Anderson, Gilman, Hilts, Holle, Mullins, Germano  
ABSTAIN - Wassilie

Motion carried.

**Policy revisions (various):**

*(8:44:40PM)*

Mr. Stewart recommended the Board approve revisions to various policies in order to be in compliance with the No Child Left Behind Act, the USA Patriot Act, and Alaska Statutes.

**MOTION**

Ms. Gilman moved the Board approve revisions to Board Policies; BP 5030 (School Discipline and Safety), BP 5125 (Student Records), BP 5145.2 (Freedom of Speech/Expression), BP 4131 (Staff Development), BP 5111 (Admission), BP 5125.1 (Release of Directory Information), BP 5127 (Graduation Ceremonies and Activities), BP 5141.3 (Health Examinations), BP 5131 (Conduct), BP 6141.2 (Recognition of Religious Beliefs and Customs), BP 6164.2 (Guidance and Counseling Services). Mrs. Mullins seconded.

**MOTION**

Mrs. Wassilie moved the Board amend BP 6164.2 (Guidance and Counseling Services); delete the words "without regard to sex" in the first sentence of the third paragraph; replace the word "higher" with the word "postsecondary" in the second sentence of the fourth paragraph; and to add the words "technical training institutions" before the word "colleges" in the second sentence of the fourth paragraph. Mrs. Mullins seconded.

Ms. Wassilie considered the deletion of the words "without regard to sex" a housekeeping revision because the issue is addressed in paragraph five. She stated that the words "higher education" generally refers to colleges and universities and added that the Board wants to advise students on all postsecondary education opportunities. She stated that the Board should be advising students on technical training opportunities particularly since most of the economy is based on good technical skills.

Amendment carried unanimously

Mrs. Gilman asked whether the District provides student physicals according to BP 5141.3 (Health Examinations). Dr. Whiteley explained that state statute requires that school districts either provide or have students have a physical upon entering school (beginning school age). He stated that the District recommend that parents take their children to their family physician and/or a public health nurse. He stated that the physicals do not substitute for a thorough health examination by a medical doctor. Dr. Whiteley clarified that the District is not providing student physicals.

**Policy revisions (various):**  
*(Continued)*

Mrs. Wassilie noted that revisions to BP 5127 (Graduation Ceremonies and Activities) allow students who meet District graduation requirements but have not passed the state required competency exam may participate in graduation exercises.

Amended motion carried unanimously.

**FIRST READING OF POLICY REVISIONS:**  
*(8:52:05PM)*

Mr. Stewart presented the Board with a first reading of BP 6146.1 (Graduation Requirements) and noted that another worksession will be held on January 5, 2004.

Mrs. Gilman expressed concern that the proposed policy revision lowers the District graduation requirements and added that it sends the wrong message to the public. She stated that the Board should impose stringent graduation requirements in order to receive a diploma from the District. She expressed concern that if certain courses are not required to earn a high school diploma, those courses will be the first to be dropped when budget cuts are made and added that that trend is not acceptable. She stated that there are many

students who do not realize that art is one of their strengths until they are required to take it. She stated that by not requiring students to take creative and practical arts courses they will miss opportunities rather than gain opportunities.

Mr. Tilbury stated that he would not like to see the District lose creative or practical arts courses just because they are not required. He stated that he does not think it is right to force students to take practical or creative arts courses if they know that they are not interested in them. He stated that he is undecided about the recommendation to change the physical education requirement to a .5 credit. He stated that it is good for students to be active but also acknowledged that there are many students who apply for a waiver.

Ms. Holle stated that when there is a complete lack of money the Board does not have much of a budgeting process and makes it necessary for something to go. She stated that as the Board searches for ways to balance the budget they will be debating what to do. She stated that it is hard to argue with young people who will potentially earn a living with practical art or creative art skills. She stated that the Board must first fund core programs relating to the high school graduation qualifying exam so that all students will graduate. Students must first be able to read well, calculate well, understand ideas well and think critically. She stated that after that students can pursue anything else. She noted that if 75% of the District's graduates will be pursuing vocational education and practical arts after graduation that Board may want to analyze the graduation requirements more carefully before making revisions.

**FIRST READING OF POLICY  
REVISIONS:**

*(Continued)*

Dr. Anderson stated that the Board is trying to provide a well-rounded education for students, not vocational education training. He stated that if high school is the last academic training a student receives, then it is important for them to be able to reason. He stated that it is also important for students to receive a smattering of practical arts and creative arts courses. He stated that the Board should decide what constitutes a basic fundamental education that allows students to be able to function in society rather than steering them towards college or vocational education.

**BOARD COMMENTS:**

*(9:01:34 PM)*

Mrs. Mullins wished those present an enjoyable holidays.

Mrs. Gilman thanked the Board for their reports, especially Mrs. Hilts. She encouraged Mrs. Hilts to write her comments in a story for publishing in a magazine. She stated that Secretary of Education Rod Paige needs to get the message about education in Alaska. She reported that Senator Murkowski stated at the AASB Annual Conference that even people who live in Alaska do not know what it takes to travel to the village of Kachemak Selo. She wished those present a happy holiday.

Mr. Tilbury thanked Ms. Germano for presenting him with the AASB certificate and wished those present a happy Christmas and happy New



Year.

Ms. Wassilie thanked Mr. Dunn for the school presentation and expressed appreciation for the emphasis on the importance of relationships that add to the learning process. She stated that small schools are successful because of the relationship with the community even though they do not have access to diverse programming. She wished those present a happy holiday.

Ms. Holle reported that the Board participated in a very interesting discussion regarding the public hearing process. She encouraged those who are interested in the manner in which the Board handles the public hearing process to let the Board know how they might envision a better process. She wished those present a happy holiday.

Mrs. Hilts stated that budgetary conditions are very discouraging. She stated that she was glad to hear that the legislators changed their stand regarding education funding. She stated that the Board will be facing difficult decisions that will affect each community. She read from the Association of Alaska School Boards handbook regarding the issue of schools and communities working together. She reminded those present that somehow communities and schools must work together so that people believe they have the ability to influence the Board's policy decisions. She wished those present a happy holiday and noted that the Russian Orthodox Christmas holiday is in January.

Ms. Germano thanked Mr. Dunn for the school presentation. She thanked the students who spoke and added that she would not have graduated from high school if it weren't for the art programs. She wished those present a happy holiday.

**ADJOURN:**  
(9:08:32 PM)

At 9:08 p.m., Mrs. Mullins moved the School Board Meeting be adjourned. Mrs. Gilman seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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Ms. Deborah Germano, President

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Dr. Nels Anderson, Clerk

The Minutes of December 1,  
were approved on January 5, 2004  
with corrections.