

Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Board of Education Meeting Minutes

October 20, 2003 – 7:30 p.m.
Regular Meeting

Borough Administration Building
148 N. Binkley, Soldotna, Alaska

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:

Mrs. Sammy Crawford
Ms. Deborah Germano
Mrs. Margaret Gilman
Mrs. Debra Mullins
Dr. Nels Anderson
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:

Miss Jennifer Luckman	Mr. Bob Ermold
Mrs. Terri Woodward	Mr. Buck George
Mrs. Barbara George	Mr. Dave Larson
Mr. Jim Heim	Mr. Wayne Young
Mr. Tim Peterson	Mr. Dan Walker
Mr. Dave Carey	Mrs. Paula Christensen
Mrs. Norma Holmgaard	Mr. Al Howard
Dr. Roy Anderson	Miss Jenni Dillon
Mrs. Cathy Carrow	Mr. Paul Sorenson
Mrs. Sharon Moock	Mrs. Jean Dixon
Mrs. Laurie Olson	Mrs. Jill Ramponi
Mr. Matt Walton	Mr. Pete Sprague

Others present not identified.

CALL TO ORDER:

(7:30:10)

Mrs. Crawford called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

(7:30:14)

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

OATH OF OFFICE:

(7:30:30)

The Oath of Office was administered to newly-elected School Board members Mrs. Sammy Crawford, Ms. Deborah Germano, Mrs. Margaret Gilman, Mrs. Debra Mullins, Dr. Nels Anderson, Ms. Sandra Wassilie, Ms. Debbie Holle, Mr. Marty Anderson, Mrs. Sunni Hilts, by Notary Public, Mrs. Sally Tachick.

ROLL CALL:

(7:32:56)

Mrs. Sammy Crawford	Present
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	Present
Mrs. Sunni Hilts	Present
Mr. Patrick Tilbury	Present

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

(7:33:40)

The agenda was approved as written.

REORGANIZATION OF BOARD:

(7:33:54)

Mrs. Crawford announced that a reorganization of the Board was in order.

MOTION

Mrs. Mullins nominated Ms. Germano as president of the Board. Mrs. Mullins requested that nominations for president be closed. Dr. Anderson seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION

Dr. Anderson nominated Mrs. Crawford as vice president of the Board. Mrs. Mullins requested that nominations for vice president be closed. Dr. Anderson seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION

Mrs. Crawford nominated Dr. Anderson as clerk of the Board. Mrs. Crawford requested that nominations for clerk be closed. Mrs. Mullins seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION

Mrs. Crawford nominated Mrs. Gilman as treasurer of the Board. Mrs. Mullins requested that nominations for treasurer be closed. Dr. Anderson seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

**ESTABLISH MEETING TIME,
DATE AND PLACE:**

(7:35:57)

Mrs. Mullins moved the Board set its meeting time, date and place for 7:30 p.m. on the first and third Monday of each month at the Borough Administration Building, Soldotna (unless otherwise noted) and that two meetings be scheduled in Homer and Seward in the fall and spring. Dr. Anderson seconded.

MOTION

Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

(7:36:51)

The School Board Minutes of October 6, 2003, were approved as printed.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS: The Board presented Golden Apple awards to Mrs. Jean Dixon, Kenai Middle School teacher; Mrs. Jill Ramponi, Soldotna High School teacher; and Mr. Matt Walton, Soldotna High School teacher, for their service to the District.
(7:37:08)

SCHOOL REPORT: Mr. Wayne Young, Spring Creek School principal/teacher, distributed a handout and provided information about the Youth Offender Education Program. He displayed graphs that reported categories of crimes committed, length of sentence, age of offenders, ethnic background, and assessment information.
(7:44:40)

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS: Mr. Bob Richard, Sterling resident, asked the Board to change the bus route to include the transportation of a student who resides beyond the end of the Feuding Lane route.
(8:15:00)

Mr. Dave Carey, Skyview High School teacher, asked the Board to consider classroom square footage when making decisions about pupil/teacher ratios.

Mrs. Mathews, K-Beach Elementary parent, asked the Board to consider providing assistance for overcrowded classrooms at the school.

Mrs. Theresa Parsons, Soldotna High School parent, asked the Board to consider the use of weighted grades at the high school level.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS: Dr. Peterson reported that she received a memorandum from Commissioner of Education, Roger Sampson regarding a request for proposal for the Alaska statewide assessment program. She added that the State Department of Education is considering a review and complete overhaul of the statewide assessment program.
(8:27:59)

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. Terri Woodward, KPESA president, congratulated the Board members on their election, reported that she had a pleasant meeting with Dr. Peterson, and added that she would like to meet with Board members individually.
(8:28:42)

Mrs. Carrow, KPEA president, welcomed Board members; she thanked Dr. Peterson, and noted that as per the negotiated agreement, teachers will have a minimum day on Friday, October 24 to prepare for parent/teacher conferences the following week.

Mr. Pete Sprague, Borough Assembly President, welcomed the newly elected Board and asked that the lines of communications remain open between the Board and Assembly.

Representative Kelly Wolf congratulated the newly-elected Board members and wished them the best for the upcoming year.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

(8:36:42)

Dr. Peterson reported that last year the Board and administration conducted regular teleconferences with Kenai Peninsula Borough legislators throughout the legislative session and hopes to continue the practice during the upcoming session. She noted that she recently met with the presidents of KPEA and KPESA. She reminded the Board of the training session to be conducted by Carl Rose, AASB Executive Director, on Wednesday, October 22, from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Financial Report:

(8:38:36)

Mrs. Douglas presented the financial report of the District for the periods ending August 31 and September 30, 2003. She noted that health care costs for the last two months have been approximately \$1 million and added that previously the amount has been about \$750,000 to \$800,000. She explained that nationally, health care costs are rising and that the same trend is true in Alaska.

Budget Transfer Report:

(8:40:40)

Mrs. Douglas reported on budget transfers Numbers 1 through 46 for various schools and departments within the District.

Class size study:

(8:41:12)

Mr. Stewart presented the Class Size Enrollment Report which included staffing information at large high schools, middle schools, elementary and K-8 schools, small schools, and other schools.

Mrs. Crawford stated that she hoped that class sizes in the academic core subjects can be protected.

BOARD REPORTS:

(8:43:29)

Mrs. Mullins reported that she attended the NEA presentation of No Child Left Behind. She stated that she visited Nikiski Elementary, North Star Elementary, and Nikiski Middle/High School.

Dr. Anderson reported that he participated in a portion of the Math Committee meeting and noted that the group is making a good effort in coordinating math across all grade levels. He noted that the Board may want to modify requirements for advanced algebra and address the issue of credit for 8th grade students who take geometry at the high school.

Mrs. Crawford reported that she attended the No Child Left Behind presentation and thanked NEA for the presentation. She reported that she attended the Ionia open house and noted that 25 of the children in the community are enrolled in the Connections Program.

Ms. Wassilie reported that she participated in the AASB New Board Member Audio Conference and added that she appreciated the orientation to AASB and hearing about the new Board standards.

CONSENT AGENDA:

(8:48:04)

Items presented on the Consent Agenda were Approval of Administrator Appointment and Long-Term Substitute Contracts.

Administrator Appointment:

Dr. Whiteley recommended the Board approve an administrator appointment for the 2003-2004 school year for Rick McCrum. The appointment reflects a title change to Pupil Services coordinator.

Long-Term Substitute Contracts:

Dr. Whiteley recommended substitute teacher contracts be approved for Maureen Wilkinson, Grade 1, Paul Banks Elementary, and Lori Young, kindergarten, Redoubt Elementary.

MOTION

Mrs. Crawford moved the Board approve Consent Agenda Items Numbers 1 and 2. Mrs. Mullins seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Board of Education Budget Revisions:

(8:49:03)

Dr. Peterson recommended the Board approve a total of \$25,103.66 in budget revisions to the Board travel and salary accounts to cover the cost of two additional members.

MOTION

Mrs. Crawford moved the Board approve a total of \$25,103.66 in budget revisions to the Board travel and salary accounts. Dr. Anderson seconded.

mOTION

Mrs. Gilman moved the Board amend the motion to remove the allocation for three members to travel to Juneau and remove one additional member from travel to the NSBA National Conference. Ms. Holle seconded.

Mrs. Gilman stated that she proposed the amendment because it is a small but important symbolic area that needs to be cut and added that the job can be done with six trips to Juneau and two members attending the NSBA National Conference.

Ms. Holle encouraged the Board to support the amendment. She explained that a budget is a guideline and can always be amended as necessary. She stated that approving the amendment will reflect well on the Board and that the money can be used elsewhere.

Mrs. Crawford stated that the bulk of the District's funding comes from the state legislature and added that, in the past, the Board has been very effective by traveling to Juneau to lobby for education. She stated that professional development for any organization and, especially the Board of Education, is extremely important. She stated that individual members can reduce the Board budget by declining the health insurance or monthly salary.

Mrs. Mullins reported that in 1987 the Board salary was reduced from \$200 per month to \$180, where it has remained. She stated that travel costs have not increased (except for inflation), nor have the benefits. She stated that the Board has been stagnant as far as operating expenses. She stated that she would not deny any Board member the opportunity to improve themselves. She explained that individual Board members travel to Juneau to lobby the legislature for education because the District does not have a paid lobbyist. She stated that the opportunity to meet with statewide legislators is beneficial. She stated that when the public voted to increase the Board to 9 members they knew there would be a cost associated with the additional members.

**Board of Education Budget
Revisions:**
(continued)

Dr. Anderson stated that he feels that the NSBA National Conference is the most important meeting that any Board member can attend. He stated that to deny a member the opportunity to attend is a mistake and added that any member who does not take advantage of the Conference is also making a mistake.

Mr. Anderson stated that if the Board does not stay current with the education of their members, the students will suffer. He stated that the amendment looks good up front but is not good decision making.

Ms. Wassilie stated that she does not support the amendment and added that the Board should be making every effort to cut funds where possible. She stated that unfortunately, state and federal law requires the District to budget for benefits for everyone on the Board whether they choose them or not. She stated that she feels that the Board will be very conscientious about spending money for travel. She stated that the Board cannot be held back from doing its job. She reminded the Board that the public voted for a 9-member Board and added that it is important that the Board have the funds to carry out its duties.

Mrs. Hilts stated that she realizes that she has a lot of learning to do and will want every opportunity to educate herself so she can provide quality decisions for the students of the District. She stated that she will be reviewing everything in order to bring down the cost of education. She stated that the Board will continually be faced with decisions about how to keep up the quality of education while losing financial support.

Ms. Holle stated that the amendment does not have anything to do with health insurance or other benefits and so is not affected by law.

Ms. Germano stated that past practice has been to send a Board member to the NSBA National Conference one time during their 3-year term. She explained that during the second year of a 3-year term Board members are provided the opportunity to attend the National Conference and added that this way they have at least one year of experience before they attend. She stated that National Conference attendance is a valuable opportunity. She stated that if the budget revisions are approved, the Board will be able to send 3 members to the Conference. She reported that sometimes Board trips are paid for by other organizations. She stated that it is only equitable that the Board provide the opportunity for each member to attend the National Conference once during their 3-year term.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT:

Advisory Vote – NO
YES – Gilman, Holle
NO – Mullins, Crawford, Hilts, Wassilie, M. Anderson, N. Anderson, Germano

Amendment failed.

Board of Education Budget Revisions:
(continued)

VOTE:

Advisory Vote – YES
YES – Hilts, N. Anderson, Wassilie, M. Anderson, Crawford, Holle, Mullins, Germano
NO – Gilman

Motion carried.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS/ COMMENTS:
(9:04:54)

Mr. Dave Larson thanked Mrs. Crawford for supervising the student teacher assigned to his classroom, and extended an invitation to those present to visit his classroom. He congratulated the Board members on their election and remarked that it will be an interesting year.

BOARD COMMENTS:
(9:06:30)

Ms. Wassilie stated that she is pleased to return to the Board. She stated that moving to a districted Board is in keeping with the District's role of being on the cutting edge of doing business. She stated that she expects that a districted Board will be effective because one of the activities of the Board is to engage the community. She stated that one of the things the Board is bound to do is to seek systematic communications with the students, staff, parents and communities. She thanked the public who spoke to the Board. She commended Mr. Allan Miller for being chosen as a NASA finalist.

Mrs. Hilts stated that she is honored to serve on the School Board and added that children and education are very important to her. She stated that it is an honor to serve with people who care about quality education and responsible education. She expressed her appreciation for the other members and for the information she received during the day.

Mr. Tilbury expressed his appreciation for the openness that has been extended to him and added that he is looking forward to an interesting year.

Ms. Holle stated that she is looking forward to getting to know the other Board members. She thanked the public who spoke to the Board during the meeting and added that she would like to encourage and promote more public participation. She reported that she and 25 other volunteers from Love, Inc. serve breakfast to students each morning at Tustumena Elementary.

BOARD COMMENTS:
(continued)

Mrs. Gilman welcomed the newly elected Board members. She stated that the worksession conversations were productive and that all members come with various life experiences. She stated that she feels certain that the Board will be able to develop solutions for the challenges that lay ahead. She thanked Mr. Young for the Spring Creek Youth Offender Education Program presentation and added that she is jealous of the program's pupil/adult ratio. She stated that it upsets her to think that if you want the lowest pupil/teacher ratio you must commit a felony. She stated that she is encouraged by the work being accomplished by the Youth Offender Education Program. She stated that it is refreshing to hear parents express their concerns for pupil/teacher ratios rather than sports programs. She thanked Representative Wolf for attending. Mrs. Gilman asked the Board to reconsider the issue of weighted grades.

Dr. Anderson stated that it has been a pleasure to serve with members who genuinely care for each student in the School District. He warned the Board that the District will be considering a \$5 million deficit for the 2004-2005 school year.

Mrs. Mullins welcomed the newly-elected Board members and thanked the first-time members for their comments. In response to earlier comments by Mr. Richard regarding bus routes, she explained that the consolidation of bus routes was prompted by a reduction in state funding. She stated that it is nice to hear from parents regarding their concern for pupil/teacher ratios and hopes the Board can carry that message to the legislature during the upcoming session. She stated that the issue of weighted grades has been considered by the Board in the past but has not received community support. She stated that serving on the Board is not always fun, but is always worthwhile.

Mr. Anderson thanked the Board and administration for the warm welcome. He stated that there are lots of challenges ahead but feels certain that this particular Board will come up with solutions and added that there is a healthy diversity on the Board. He stated that he graduated from Soldotna High in 1982 and is proud of the District.

Mrs. Crawford extended a welcome to the newly-elected Board.

She stated that although the Board does not always agree, they always treat each other as professionals. She congratulated the teachers who were recognized with Golden Apple awards. She thanked Mr. Young for the Spring Creek presentation. Mrs. Crawford thanked Mrs. Parsons for requesting the Board reconsider the issue of weighted grades. She stated that she is looking forward to serving on the World Language Curriculum Committee. She stated that she hopes that the public will assist the Board in coming up with solutions to the reductions in funding.

Ms. Germano thanked the Board for electing her as president. She stated that she is looking forward to Board training session on Wednesday, October 22, 2003. She asked the Board to be prepared to discuss the issue of weighted grades during the Wednesday session as well as review other tasks for the year.

ADJOURN:
(9:24:05)

At 9:24 p.m., Mrs. Mullins moved the School Board Meeting be adjourned. Mrs. Crawford seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Ms. Deborah Germano, President

Dr. Nels Anderson, Clerk

The Minutes of October 20, 2003,
were approved on November 3, 2003
as written.