

Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Board of Education Meeting Minutes

September 8, 2003 - 7:30 p.m.
Regular Meeting

Borough Administration Building
148 N. Binkley, Soldotna, Alaska

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:

Mr. Joe Arness, President
Mrs. Sammy Crawford, Vice President
Ms. Deborah Germano, Clerk
Mrs. Margaret Gilman, Treasurer
Mrs. Debra Mullins, Member
Dr. Nels Anderson, Member
Mr. Al Poindexter, Member

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:

Ms. Debbie Tressler	Ms. Jenni Dillon
Mr. Dave Carey	Mrs. Lana King
Mr. Shane Tachick	Mrs. Paula Christensen
Mr. Spencer Litzenberger	Mrs. Cathy Carrow
Mrs. Jean Gdula	Dr. Roy Anderson
Mr. Paul Kubena	Mr. Dave Spence
Mrs. Debbie Stewart	Mr. Jim Heim
Mr. Mike Wetherbee	Mrs. Laurie Olson
Mr. Jimmy Love	Mr. Brian Olson
Mrs. Heather Love	Mrs. Norma Holmgaard
Mrs. Linell McCrum	Mrs. Tina Kreiger
Mrs. Lisa Dehlbom	Mr. Steve Wright
Mr. Glenn Haupt	Mr. Jim White
Mr. Tim Peterson	Mrs. Barbara George

Others present not identified.

CALL TO ORDER:

(Tape 1, 74)

Mr. Arness called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

(Tape 1, 76)

Mr. Arness invited those present to participate in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL:

(Tape 1, 96)

Dr. Nels Anderson	Present
Ms. Deborah Germano	Present/Arrived 7:33 p.m.
Mrs. Sammy Crawford	Present
Mr. Joe Arness	Present
Mrs. Debra Mullins	Present
Mrs. Margaret Gilman	Present
Mr. Al Poindexter	Present

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

(Tape 1, 121)

The agenda was approved with the addition of Item 10d., Approval of AASB Core Resolutions.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

(Tape 1, 170)

The School Board Minutes of August 18, 2003 were approved as printed.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS:

(Tape 1, 188)

The Board presented Golden Apple awards to Mrs. Debbie Tressler (K-Beach Elementary secretary), Mrs. Lana King (payroll specialist), Mr. Jimmy Love, (payroll specialist), and Mrs. Laurie Olson (Accountant) for their service to the District.

Mrs. Janet Clark (retired Ninilchik Elementary/High School secretary), and Mr. Bernie Clark (retired Ninilchik Elementary/High School teacher) also received Golden Apple awards but were not present.

Mr. Paul Kubena read a complimentary letter regarding Mrs. Janet Clark and her service to Ninilchik Elementary/High School.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:

(Tape 1, 1250)

Soldotna Mayor Carey thanked the community for their participation in the letter-writing campaign to active-duty members of the military. He invited those present to attend the Twin City Mayor's Salute to Community Service on Thursday, September 11, at 7:30 p.m., at the Soldotna Sports Center. He noted that a blood drive will be held just prior to the event from 2:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS:

(Tape 1, 1456)

Dr. Peterson noted that the Board received information regarding the employee internet use and asked that each member sign and return the agreement. She noted that the Board received information from Senator Wilkin regarding borough consolidation throughout the State of Alaska. She read a positive message from Mr. Harry Gamble, Department of Education and Early Development Public Relations, regarding the District's explanation to the public and news media about where the District stands in relation to the federal No Child Left Behind Act Adequate Yearly Progress.

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

(Tape 1, 1534)

Mrs. Cathy Carrow, Redoubt Elementary and KPEA President, stated that teacher morale is low because of overcrowded classrooms and asked the Board to reconsider the staffing formula and lower the pupil-teacher ratio. She invited those present to attend presentations sponsored by KPEA regarding the No Child Left Behind Act. She thanked the Board for inviting her to attend a portion of the Board Planning Retreat.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

(Tape 1, 2140)

Dr. Peterson reported that a Board candidate orientation was held on August 25. She noted that a new format is being used for school visits this year which includes informal and formal visits with staff members. She reported that the administration is conducting a daily review of the enrollment at each school. She reported that, as part of the administrator evaluation process, she and the assistant superintendents are personally meeting with each principal before October 1.

BOARD REPORTS:

(Tape 1, 2230)

Ms. Germano reported that the process for hiring an executive director for Project GRAD is ongoing and added that three candidates will be interviewed next week.

CONSENT AGENDA:

(Tape 1, 2273)

Items presented on the Consent Agenda were Approval of Nontenure Teaching Assignments, New Teacher Assignments, Requests for Leave of Absence-Support, Resignation, and Budget Transfer.

Nontenure Teaching Assignments:

Dr. Gary Whiteley recommended the Board approve tentative nontenure teacher assignments for Renee Merkes, math teacher, Skyview High School; Emily Sims, home economics, Skyview High School; Matthew Widaman, athletic director/teacher, Skyview High School; Stephanie Zuniga, specialist/teacher, McNeil Canyon; Carol Boehmler, Grade 4/intermediate, Mountain View; John DeVolld, Grades 3-4 teacher, Mountain View; Tanya Erwin, Title I teacher, Grades 3-6, Mountain View; Mary Alice Allman, generalist, Spring Creek High; Gary Blount, generalist, Spring Creek High; and Karen Tolman, Title 1 teacher, Razdolna School.

New Teacher Assignments:

Dr. Whiteley recommended the Board approve teacher assignments for the 2003-2004 school year for Michael Wood, Vocational Education/Technology (temporary), Homer High School; Lois E. Bisset, teacher (temporary), special education/resource, Kenai Central High; Darlene Stoddard, (temporary) Title I reading teacher, Nanwalek School; Kristine Barnes, Grade 4 teacher, North Star Elementary; Christian Black, upper elementary (.50 FTE permanent and .50 FTE temporary), Port Graham; Jaimee Coon, language arts teacher, Skyview High School; Vicki Hollingsworth, Title I reading (temporary), Soldotna Elementary; and Michelle Gormanous, school psychologist districtwide, Pupil Services.

Requests for Leave of Absence-Support:

Dr. Whiteley recommended the Board approve unpaid leave of absence requests for Robert Duesman, head custodian II, Seward Middle School (effective September 5, 2003 through October 3, 2003) and Kim Hiler, school secretary III, Soldotna High School (effective September 13, 2003 through September 13, 2004).

Resignation:

Dr. Whiteley recommended the Board approve resignations from Matthew Neagley, generalist, Nanwalek Elementary/High (effective at the end of the 2002-2003 school year), and Jane Teller, Grade 3, currently on unpaid leave of absence from K-Beach Elementary (effective August 29, 2003).

Budget Transfer:

Mrs. Douglas recommended the Board approve Budget Transfer Number 17 in the amount of \$50,000 to establish a budget for the District's contribution to the Project GRAD Program.

Mrs. Gilman asked to remove Item 10a.(5) from the Consent Agenda.

MOTION

Mrs. Crawford moved the Board approve Consent Agenda Items Numbers 1 through 4. Mrs. Mullins seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Budget Transfer
(continued):

Ms. Gilman stated that she understood that the District contribution to Project GRAD was an in-kind contribution. Dr. Whiteley reported that the District was assigned 30% of the costs of Project GRAD. He stated that the start-up costs covered five staff members, offices, desks, computers, and copiers. He stated that \$50,000 from LOG funds were used to pay for staff materials. Mrs. Gilman asked how the \$50,000 would have been used. Mrs. Douglas responded that the money was originally budgeted for summer school. She stated that there is a complex mechanism that is in place for allocating LOG money which rolls down into the fund balance. Dr. Peterson explained that part of the rationale is that the summer institutes offered by Project GRAD will take preference over summer school.

VOTE ON ITEM 10a(5.):

YES - Poindexer, Crawford, Germano, Anderson, Mullins,
Arness
NO - Gilman

Motion carried.

**Designation of Fund Balance for
PERS/TRS Rate Increases:**
(Tape 1, 2571)

Mrs. Douglas recommended the Board approve an administrative recommendation to establish a fund balance designation of \$1,600,000 to cover the approximate amount for expected FY05 PERS and TRS employer rate increases.

She explained that the recommendation came as a result of the auditor inquiry about how the District will address the PERS and TRS rate increases totaling \$1.9 million. She explained that the proposed recommendation on dealing with the increase is to designate a portion of the undesignated fund balance.

Ms. Germano asked whether the District Incentive Fund is school money. Mrs. Douglas replied that last year the Board established a fund which created an incentive for school administrators not to fully expend money in their budgets. She added that the fund provided a way for administrators to save their money for future needs.

Mrs. Gilman asked Mrs. Douglas to explain the charter school account and the potential interest shortfall. Mrs. Douglas stated that the balance of funds that Charter Schools have at the end of the school year is reserved by law and must be treated separately. She explained that the interest shortfall is the amount of money that the District will need to have in reserve in the event that interest earnings do not reach the amount projected.

Mrs. Gilman asked Mrs. Douglas to explain the difference between the term “undesignated” and “unallocated”. Mrs. Douglas explained that “undesignated” refers to fund balance, which appears on the balance sheet assets, liabilities, fund balance. She stated that “unallocated” appears in the expenditure budget and is a portion of funding set aside to deal with staffing needs.

Designation of Fund Balance for PERS/TRS Rate Increases

(continued) :

Mr. Poindexter noted that the amount of increase totals \$1.9 million and yet the District is only requesting \$1.6. He asked where the remaining \$300,000 will come from. Mrs. Douglas stated that it will be a challenge for the Board to decide where the money will come from and added that she could not recommend reducing the undesignated fund balance lower than \$500,000. She stated that she is not sure how the District will pay for the rest of the cost of the rate increase. Mr. Arness reminded the Board that the increase will be effective in the school year of 2004-2005.

Mrs. Gilman clarified that the TRS and PERS rate increases will become effective during the 2003-2004 school year but the \$1.2 million difference between revenue and expenditures came from the FY2003 budget. She noted that the District saved money during the FY2003 school year but will face an increase in the FY2005 budget.

Mrs. Crawford asked how many teachers the District could purchase with \$1.9 million if the money was not spent on the TRS and PERS rate increases. Mrs. Douglas replied that \$1.9 million equals approximately 30 certified teachers.

Mrs. Gilman asked whether the recommendation for unallocated funds pertains to the amount in the FY2004 budget. Mrs. Douglas stated that the unallocated amount in the FY2004 budget is completely unrelated to the recommendation for fund balance designation for PERS/TRS rate increases.

MOTION

Mrs. Crawford moved the Board approve the designation of fund balance for PERS and TRS rate increases. Mrs. Mullins seconded.

Ms. Germano acknowledged that designating funds to pay for PERS and TRS rate increases is, fiscally, the right thing to do and added that she has a problem with setting aside the money because the students will pay for it.

Mrs. Crawford agreed with Ms. Germano’s statement regarding the Board doing the right thing fiscally and added that she hopes the legislature will provide some relief because the money would be better spent in the classroom.

Mrs. Gilman suggested that the Board not be so responsible. She acknowledged that designating funds to pay for PERS and TRS rate increases is financially, the sensible choice to make. She asked when the PERS and TRS payments are due. Mrs. Douglas explained that the payment process is handled monthly throughout the school year and coincides with payroll. Mrs. Douglas stated that the bigger issue is that the District does not have funds on reserve and the auditors are asking what the District plans to do.

Designation of Fund Balance for PERS/TRS Rate Increases

(continued):

VOTE:

YES – Anderson, Gilman, Crawford, Mullins, Poindexter, Arness

NO – Germano

Motion carried.

Approval of Professional and Design Services Recommendation for Seward Middle School Project:

(Tape 1, 3467)

Mr. Stewart recommended that the firm of Architects Alaska be forwarded to the Borough Assembly for approval to receive the contract award for professional and design services for the new Seward Middle School project.

Al Poindexter asked where the home office for Architects Alaska is located. Mr. Spence explained that Architects Alaska is comprised of a team of local architects and some who are located in Anchorage.

MOTION

Mrs. Mullins moved the Board approve the professional and design services recommendation for the Seward Middle School project be awarded to Architects Alaska. Ms. Germano seconded.

Mrs. Gilman asked whether the scores are kept confidential for this type of award. Mr. Stewart replied that the scores are kept confidential on the chance that there is a challenge to the scores in the future.

Ms. Germano noted that information about the proposed architect would be helpful.

Motion carried unanimously.

AASB RESOLUTIONS:

(Tape 1, 3720)

Mrs. Crawford explained that the Board conducted two worksessions regarding the AASB Core Resolutions and added that the resolutions must be submitted to AASB by October 1, 2003.

MOTION

Mrs. Crawford moved the Board approve support for AASB Resolutions 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.9, 1.10, 1.11, 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7, 2.9, 2.10, 2.12, 2.13, 2.15, 2.16, 2.18, 2.22, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2 and 5.5. Ms. Germano seconded.

MOTION

Dr. Anderson moved the Board amend Resolution 2.4 (Education Funding Formula Rewrite) and eliminate everything after "...new District Cost Factors." Ms. Germano seconded.

Amendment carried unanimously.

MOTION

Dr. Anderson moved the Board amend Resolution 2.4 (Education Funding Formula Rewrite) and add a final sentence that states, "Any new district cost factor study should be impartially determined after adequate parameters are set and should be adopted in its entirety". Mrs. Crawford seconded.

AASB RESOLUTIONS

(continued):

Mrs. Gilman asked for an explanation of the intent of the amended language, "after adequate parameters are set". Dr. Anderson explained that after the determination has been made regarding what constitutes a fair and adequate cost differential study, it should be voted on rather than allow each district to lobby and change their individual cost factors.

Mrs. Mullins cited an example of the last area cost differential study which caused much controversy and was "shelved" and asked whether the intent of the amendment is to say that the results of the cost factor study be recognized or adopted by the legislature by a vote.

Ms. Germano stated that the words "adequate impartial study" requires the study to be considered as a whole.

Amendment carried unanimously.

MOTION

Ms. Germano moved the Board approve an amendment to Resolution 4.4 (Addressing the Teacher, Specialist, and Administrator Shortage) to add the words "and reciprocity" at the end of the sentence "Flexibility in certification requirements." Dr. Anderson seconded.

Ms. Germano explained that the purpose of the amendment is to ensure that there will be flexibility in securing certification and honoring the certification between other states. She stated that this language will help districts locate and keep good teacher specialists and administrators.

Amendment carried unanimously.

MOTION

Ms. Germano moved the Board approve the deletion of Resolution 5.5 (Increasing Student Contact Time). Dr. Anderson seconded.

Amendment carried unanimously.

MOTION

Ms. Germano moved the Board approve support for new resolutions proposed by the AASB Board of Directors regarding financial exigency and full funding for full accountability. Mrs. Crawford seconded.

Amendment carried unanimously.

MOTION

Ms. Germano moved the Board approve a proposed resolution from the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Board of Education regarding legislative financial relief for impending TRS and PERS employer rate increases. Dr. Anderson seconded.

Amendment carried unanimously.

Amended motion carried unanimously.

FIRST READING OF POLICY REVISIONS:

(Tape 1, 5377)

The Board heard a first reading of BP 6183, Alternative High Schools and BP 6184, Secondary Program and Adaptation.

Mrs. Gilman asked what will happen if the Board changes the wording in BP 6183 from Alternative Schools to Alternative Programs. Dr. Whiteley explained that the proposed change gives the administration the ability to create an administrative regulation to address programs at the alternative schools, Spring Creek, or the Youth Detention Facility. He noted that these schools will be staffed according to administrative regulation.

Mr. Arness suggested that the final sentence in BP 6184 belongs as the final sentence for BP 6183. He stated that after the change is made, the word "optional" should replace the word "alternative" in the last sentence of BP 6184 and the words "with Board approval" be inserted after the word "regulation" in the last sentence of BP 6183.

BOARD COMMENTS:

(Tape 1, 5776)

Mrs. Mullins congratulated the golden apple awardees, especially the finance employees, and extended the Board's heartfelt thanks for their hard work. She reported that she had the opportunity to assist with kindergarten screening at North Star Elementary during the first two days of school. She stated that she received some phone calls regarding bussing and students playing football on Sunday. She stated that it is not District policy to allow school events to occur on Sunday but added that unusual circumstances caused a football game to be played on a Sunday.

Dr. Anderson announced that funding allocations for next year are grim and will likely cause the District to lose 100 to 120 more teachers over a two-year period unless substantial additional funding is received from the legislature. He stated that the Board would be thrilled to have anyone contribute who can help solve the District's budget problems.

Mrs. Gilman thanked Mrs. Carrow for her comments regarding staffing and added that for her, the staffing issue is a number one concern. She thanked the administration for the staffing worksession. She stated that

the District should consider expediting the consolidation of schools before increasing the pupil-teacher ratio. She stated that there is no doubt that the District needs more money but, in the meantime, the District needs to use the unallocated money to reduce the pupil-teacher ratio. She explained that, although she voted "No" on the Project GRAD budget transfer, she is absolutely in favor of the organization and the assistance it will provide students. She stated that she was under the impression that Project GRAD was supported by the District through in-kind services. She asked for an excused absence from the October 6 Board meeting.

BOARD COMMENTS

(continued):

Mr. Poindexter reported that the Soil and Water Conservation District is sponsoring a program called Natural Resources Technology which is part of the District curriculum. He noted that the courses are being sponsored in three schools at no cost to the District. He stated that it is an environmental science course and teaches students about how to use Alaska's natural resources in a sustaining way.

Mrs. Crawford stated that it is fun to be around schools at the beginning of the school year. She stated that she has heard many good things about what is going on in the schools and thanked the administration for visiting the schools. She thanked all District employees who work to make the schools successful. She stated that she is pleased that the Board has reviewed, revised and approved the AASB resolutions to be considered at the AASB Annual Conference. She stated that she is particularly pleased with the resolution urging the legislature to work towards resolving rate increase issues with TRS and PERS. She clarified that the District has \$400,000 in unallocated funds and is currently facing a drop of enrollment of 44 students equaling \$500,000 leaving a deficit of \$100,000.

Mr. Arness stated that Mrs. Carrow's comments have given him a reason for not being sorry for not filing for School Board election. He stated that her comments were most discouraging, especially after last school year's difficult negotiations processes. He stated that the Board had warned the teachers that classroom sizes would be larger. He told Mrs. Carrow that if teachers really want to help they need to approach the classroom size issue from a positive direction and be willing to help solve the problem rather than by attacking the Board.

ADJOURN:

(Tape 1, 7198)

At 9:02 p.m., Mrs. Mullins moved the School Board Meeting be adjourned. Mr. Poindexter seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Joe Arness, President

Mrs. Deborah Germano, Clerk

The Minutes of September 8, 2003
were approved on October 6, 2003
with a correction.