

# Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Board of Education Meeting Minutes

April 19, 2004 – 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:** Donna Peterson, Superintendent of Schools  
Mrs. Melody Douglas, Chief Financial Officer  
Dr. Gary Whiteley, Assistant Superintendent  
Mr. Sam Stewart, Assistant Superintendent

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Mrs. Carolyn Cannava	Mrs. Kelly Vassilie
Miss Jenni Dillon	Mrs. Lori Lingafelt
Mr. Bob VanDerWege	Mrs. Cathy Foster
Mrs. Jenni Hammond	Mrs. Norma Holmgaard
Mr. Jim White	Mrs. Paula Christensen
Mrs. Patty Rich	Mr. Dave Larson
Mr. Jim Heim	Mrs. Vicky Hollingsworth
Mr. Glenn Haupt	Mrs. Laura Mohorcich
Mr. Palmer Bailey	Mrs. LaDawn Druce
Ms. Martine Dikes	Mrs. Cathy Carrow

Others present not identified.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Germano called the meeting to order at 7:31 p.m.  
(7:31:02 PM)

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Ms. Germano invited those present to participate in the Pledge of Allegiance.  
(7:31:08 PM)

**ROLL CALL:**

Mrs. Sammy Crawford	Present
Ms. Deborah Germano	Present
Mrs. Margaret Gilman	Present/Arrived at 8:11 p.m.
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:**

*(7:32:08 PM)*

The agenda was approved with a revision to Item Number 10 a.(4), Approval of Resignations, and the addition of Item Number 10a.(7), Approval of Request to Rescind a Sabbatical Application.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

*(7:32:48 PM)*

The School Board Minutes of April 5, 2004 were approved with a correction.

**AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS:**

*(7:33:43 PM)*

The Board presented a Golden Apple award to Palmer Bailey for his volunteer service to the Nikolaevsk Elementary/High School.

**SCHOOL REPORT:**

*(7:36:34 PM)*

Mr. Tim Jacobson, Nikolaevsk Elementary/High teacher, introduced Miss Sara Bailey and Mr. Anecta Kalugin and credited them with the creation of the presentation video, which highlighted the school demographics, programs, courses, goals, student activities, student council, assessment information, and staff.

**RECESS**

*(7:50:02 PM)*

At 7:50 p.m. Ms. Germano called a recess.

**RECONVENE:**

*(7:51:53 PM)*

At 7:51 p.m., the Board reconvened in regular session.

The Soldotna Elementary Tone Chime Bell Choir played two songs under the direction of Ms. Erin Southwick. Mrs. Carolyn Cannava, Soldotna Elementary principal, gave a PowerPoint presentation that highlighted the facility, its special features and the additions that have been made to it. Ms. Southwick explained techniques used in teaching music and reading and related them to higher assessment scores.

**RECESS:**

*(8:07:47 PM)*

At 8:07 p.m. Ms. Germano called a recess.

Mrs. Gilman arrived at 8:11 p.m.

**RECONVENE:**

*(8:11:05 PM)*

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

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:**

*(8:11:26 PM)*

Ms. Gail Moore, K-Beach Elementary Quest teacher, stated that the focus on the Quest Program has shifted towards whether it is being delivered appropriately and asked if the program would receive the added attention if the District were not in a budget crisis.

Miss Kendra Steiner, Kenai Central High student, stated that extracurricular activities bring communities together and are the reason many students come to school, and asked the Board to continue to fund cocurricular activities.

Mrs. Theresa Parsons, parent, asked the Board to consider the use of weighted grades to motivate students to take harder classes. She stated that the District must provide school sports on the Peninsula because there is not enough for students to do.

Mr. David Hoisington, KCHS student, asked the Board to implement a weighted grade system, otherwise students will not challenge themselves.

**COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS:** Dr. Peterson reported that she received a survey from the Division of Retirement and Benefits regarding the possible implementation of a Tier 4 retirement program for new employees participating in TRS or PERS Programs. She announced that the District received a certificate of excellence in financial reporting from the International Association of School Business Officials.  
*(8:19:43 PM)*

**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. Cathy Carrow asked the Board to make people a priority and choose to hire a teacher over spending money on facilities or equipment. She stated that Quest students need a trained specialist to teach them and asked the Board to give the highest priority to the Quest Program and the District Media Center when considering budget add-backs.  
*(8:20:45 PM)*

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:** Dr. Peterson reported that she attended the Masonic awards ceremony on April 15. She announced that the Caring for the Kenai presentations will be given for final judging on Friday, April 23 at 6:00 p.m. in the Kenai Central High School Little Theater. She reported that Ms. Donna Foxley, representative from the U.S. Office of the Secretary of Education, will shadow her on May 3 and 4 to see how the District delivers education to students on the Peninsula. She stated that she will escort Ms. Foxley to as many schools as possible in two days.  
*(8:24:41 PM)*

**Financial Report:** Mrs. Douglas presented the financial report of the District for the period ending March 31, 2004.  
*(8:26:50 PM)*

**Quarterly Budget Transfer Report:** Mrs. Douglas reported on third quarter budget transfers Numbers 133 through 298 for various schools and departments within the District.  
*(8:27:12 PM)*

Mrs. Gilman asked if the cost of sanding playgrounds and parking lots is the responsibility of the school. Mrs. Douglas responded that sanding parking lots is paid for by the Borough and sanding playgrounds is a school responsibility. Mrs. Gilman asked why the Borough does not pay for playground sanding. Mr. Stewart replied that there is a limited amount of sand and Borough maintenance time so schools are required to make their own arrangements for sanding playgrounds. Mrs. Gilman asked if sanding expenses are paid out of the in-kind contribution from the Borough. Mrs. Douglas replied that parking lot expenses come out of the Borough's in-kind contribution and that playground expenses come from the District budget.

Ms. Germano noted that with the implementation of Edline (the web-based student grade/progress parent notification program) postage expenses should be decreasing.

**BOARD REPORTS:**

*(8:31:05 PM)*

Mrs. Crawford reported that she attended the Project GRAD Committee meeting. She reported that recently a "College Days" activity was organized by students and held at the schools. She stated that the activity was an excellent way to raise expectations and get students thinking about their future plans.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

*(8:32:15 PM)*

Items presented on the Consent Agenda were Approval of Recommendation for Tenure, Nontenure Teaching Assignment, Long-Term Substitute Teacher Contracts, Resignations, High School Graduation Qualifying Exam Waiver, Budget Transfers, and Rescission of Action on an Unpaid Sabbatical Request.

**Recommendation for Tenure:**

Dr. Whiteley recommended the Board approve Louise Heite, a tentative nontenured teacher, for tenure.

**Nontenure Teaching Assignment:**

Dr. Whiteley recommended the Board approve a nontenure teacher assignment for the 2004-2005 school year for Lois Bisset, Soldotna Middle, special education/intensive needs.

**Long-Term Substitute Teacher Contracts:**

Dr. Whiteley recommended the Board approve long-term substitute teacher contracts for Megan Wohlers, special education/intensive needs, K-Beach Elementary; Kelly Johnson, Title I teacher, North Star Elementary; and Rita Geller, physical education, Soldotna Middle School.

**Resignations:**

Dr. Whiteley recommended the Board approve resignations (effective at the end of the 2003-2004 school year) from Yvonne A. Emery, music, Redoubt Elementary; Virginia W. Glenn, Grades 3-6, Nanwalek School; Vicki Harrison, Grade 1, Sterling Elementary; Trudy Petersen, English/choir, Soldotna Middle/Soldotna High School; Marjory Wiley, Child Find, Pupil Services; Don Weller, physical education, Sears Elementary; and Mary Kathryn Vesel, kindergarten, Seward Elementary.

**High School Graduation Qualifying Exam Waiver:**

Mr. Stewart recommended the Board approve a High School Graduation Qualifying Exam Waiver for student request Number 2004-04.

**Budget Transfers:**

Mrs. Douglas recommended the Board approve budget transfer Number 317 for \$11,130 to purchase 200 site licenses for a curriculum mapping program for teachers and transfer Number 342 for \$10,400 to purchase equipment.

**rescission of ACTION ON an unpaid sabbatical request:**

Dr. Whiteley recommended the Board approve the rescission of a request for an unpaid sabbatical without benefits for the 2004-2005 school year from Kim Blommel, Grade 4 teacher at Seward Elementary.

**MOTION:**

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

Mrs. Crawford expressed regret that there were so many resignations from experienced teachers.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

(Continued)

Ms. Holle asked for an explanation of the process for teachers to achieve tenure. Dr. Whiteley explained that tenure is addressed in Alaska State Statute and is achieved on the first day of a teachers' fourth year of teaching and does not affect salary. Ms. Holle asked how a teacher might not achieve tenure. Dr. Whiteley explained that teachers must teach a specific number of days and receive good evaluations to receive tenure. Ms. Germano added that tenure recommendations are approved by the Board.

Motion carried unanimously.

**FIRST READING OF POLICY REVISIONS:**

(8:35:39 PM)

The Board heard a first reading of revisions to Section 3000 (Business and Noninstructional Operations) and a proposed revision to B 9320 (Board Meetings).

Mrs. Crawford reported that the Policy Review Committee spent one day reviewing each policy in Section 3000 and prior to the Board meeting, conducted an hour-long worksession with the whole Board clarifying the proposed changes.

Ms. Holle commented that while she appreciates a portion of the process, she struggles with the fact that the public does not know what changes are in Section 3000 unless they pick up a copy or read them online. She stated that there are important policies to be considered and urged those present to pick up a copy and communicate suggestions to the Board. She noted that final approval will occur at the May 3 School Board in Seward.

Mrs. Mullins clarified that the recommended change to BB 9320 (Board Meetings) is as a result of earlier Board action in which the time of the meetings were changed to 7:00 p.m. effective at the July 12 meeting. Dr. Peterson asked for clarification from the Board about whether to begin the change in meeting time at the July meeting.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS/  
COMMENTS:**

*(8:42:43 PM)*

Mrs. Jenni Hammond, parent, asked the Board to consider what would impact students the most when deciding what items to add back to the budget. She asked the Board to consider using any additional money to update the District curriculum and increase course offerings at the high school level. She asked for budget information for cocurricular activities. She asked the Board to establish a Transportation Task Force, to conduct area informational meetings, and to publish more articles for parents to keep them better informed.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS/  
COMMENTS:**

*(Continued)*

Mr. Dave Larson, KCHS teacher, recognized a number of government students in attendance. He suggested that the Board seriously investigate specific kinds of professional development for secondary school teachers in an effort to deal with problems in trying to continue to provide an excellent education at small school. Mrs. Hilts asked Mr. Larson if he knew of anyone who would be prepared to offer professional development training. Mr. Larson stated that he did not know of any immediate solutions but would like to have a discussion about creative ways to provide training for teachers and a top-quality education for students. Mrs. Hilts commented that some of the best resources are available in Alaska. She suggested that Mrs. Mullins might explore the training issue through the Association of Alaska School Boards.

**BOARD COMMENTS:**

*(8:51:38 PM)*

Mr. Patrick Tilbury stated that when considering items to add back to the budget, most students will focus on cocurricular activities whereas, some students are concerned with the Quest Program and pupil-teacher ratios as they relate to the number of course offerings.

Mrs. Wassilie stated she is looking forward to having the Board come to Seward, and added that it will be an honor to have Ms. Donna Foxley from the U.S. Department of Education in Seward as well. She stated that she appreciated the school reports from Nikolaevsk Elementary/High and Soldotna Elementary. She stated that she was especially interested in Ms. Southwick's teaching techniques and added that music is a powerful medium for teaching language expression. She thanked those who attended and spoke to the Board. She responded to Mr. Larson's comments regarding secondary education teacher training and stated that the Board should review the manner in which education is delivered at the secondary level. She thanked Mrs. Carrow for reminding the Board that people are the most important ingredient in educating children. She stated that a person who really wants to teach will motivate students to learn.

Dr. Anderson reported that the Board had a lively discussion regarding weighted grades and will have another worksession in the future.

Ms. Holle asked for an explanation of the process for rehiring nontenured teachers. Dr. Whiteley explained that because of

declining enrollment, the District is losing teaching positions and as a result, tenured teachers will be assigned first and then nontenured teachers will be rehired. Ms. Holle asked whether nontenured teachers can apply for any available position. He explained that positions will be advertised and nontenured teachers will be considered based on their credentials and endorsements.

**BOARD COMMENTS:**

(Continued)

Ms. Holle commented that she regrets that more people are not able to attend the Board worksessions. She stated that she believes it would be in the best interest of more of the public to hear what goes on during a worksession. She suggested that the Board broadcast Board meetings and possibly worksessions on the radio. She stated that the consideration of taxes is being discussed at many government levels and added that the public may be interested in what is being said during worksessions.

Mrs. Gilman explained that she was late to the Board meeting because she was attending the KCHS freshman orientation. She stated that she is highly concerned about the number of course offerings available next school year. She noted that her daughter is being offered less than half of the course choices that were available when she and her husband attended Kenai Central High. She noted that she will share that information next week with legislators when the Board travels to Juneau to attend the AASB Fly-In. She stated that the Board had a good discussion prior to the Board meeting regarding weighted grades. She reported that, at the present, there no money in the budget for cocurricular activities, but added that she would support adding it back into the budget, if additional money is allocated by the legislature with the provision that other methods of delivery be considered for upcoming years. She stated that the Board will be in the same financial position every year and the Board cannot afford the cost of activities. She suggested that students contact the legislature to ask for additional funding. She stated that she is looking forward to the Quest Program discussion on April 20. She commended Mrs. Jenni Hammond for her continuous advocacy on behalf of the District.

Mrs. Mullins welcomed the government students and asked for their perspective regarding the Board meeting. She thanked the students from Nikolaevsk Elementary/High and Soldotna Elementary for the reports. She congratulated Mrs. Douglas for the award recognition on the budget document. She recognized Mrs. Tachick in honor of Secretaries' Week.

Mrs. Hilts expressed appreciation for the Soldotna Elementary and Nikolaevsk Elementary/High School reports. She reminded those present that graduation ceremonies are fast approaching and added that she will be asking herself if she has done everything possible to give the 2004 graduates a quality education. She noted that the Board continually

struggles with balancing money and changing times. She stated that the Board is going to have to start thinking in a different way because the District is in new times with new resources. She stated that she agreed with the comment that it is always the teacher in front of students that is important in education. She stated that there are more challenges in education today and that it will take the teacher, combined with technology and new ideas, to be successful. She encouraged the government students present to pursue School Board service in the future.

**BOARD COMMENTS:**

(Continued)

Mrs. Crawford thanked Nikolaevsk Elementary/High and Soldotna Elementary staff for the reports. She stated that she attended the play, *The Secret Affairs of Mildred Wild*, at Soldotna High School, directed by Mr. Mike Druce. She noted that she included a one-page summary report from her attendance at the NSBA Convention. She noted that research supports that nonfiction writing with editing and rewriting is the most powerful strategy teachers can use to improve achievements in all areas. She stated that the use of weighted grades is a great way to teach writing and to motivate students to take difficult courses. She stated that the review committee is recommending that weighted grades be offered for students who take advanced placement courses and only if they take the national test.

Ms. Germano thanked Mrs. Tachick for her work as the School Board secretary. She thanked Mrs. Hammond for her positive support for the District. She encouraged Board members to sign up to attend the upcoming graduation ceremony. She noted that the Quest Task Force will meet on April 20. She thanked the public for their comments and the email messages. She responded to Mr. Larson's comments regarding support for high school teachers. She acknowledged that times have changed and that students have educational choices and added that the District must become the "best show in town". She noted that the essay question for the AASB scholarship was, "If you could design a school, what does it look like?". She stated that the scholarship usually attracts about 150 to 200 applicants and added that she is looking forward to reading them. She stated that AASB awards 10 scholarships.

**ADJOURN:**

(9:17:46 PM)

At 9:17 p.m., Mrs. Crawford moved the School Board Meeting be adjourned. Mrs. Mullins 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 April 19, 2004,  
were approved on May 3, 2004  
as written.