

# Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Board of Education Meeting Minutes

January 5, 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:** 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 Jenni Dillon	Mr. Dan Walker
Mr. Jim White	Mr. Jim Heim
Mr. Glenn Haupt	Miss Jennifer Luckman
Mrs. Paula Christensen	Mr. J. J. Sullivan
Mr. Tim Peterson	Mrs. Barb George
Mr. Mike Wetherbee	Mr. John Pothast
Mr. Bob VanDerWege	Mr. Ryan Myers
Mrs. Penny Vadla	Dr. Roy Anderson
Mrs. Debbie Harris	Mrs. Celia Anderson

Others present not identified.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Ms. Germano called the meeting to order at 7:29 p.m.  
(7:29:54 PM)

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Ms. Germano invited the Ninilchik High School students to lead those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.  
(7:29:58 PM)

**ROLL CALL:**

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

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** The agenda was approved as written.  
(7:30:58 PM)

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**  
(7:31:15 PM)

The School Board Minutes of December 1, 2003, were approved with corrections.

**AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS:**  
(7:34:45 PM)

Ms. Germano announced that since Mr. Dan Leman was unable attend the meeting to accept the Golden Apple award, the presentation will be rescheduled.

**SCHOOL REPORT:**  
(7:35:11 PM)

Mr. Mike Wetherbee, Ninilchik Elementary/High School principal, narrated a student-created PowerPoint computer slide show highlighting the school staff, facility, programs, students, alumni, and cocurricular and academic activities. He noted that the school has a six-hour-a-day volunteer librarian. Students Miss Lindsay Schnabl, Mr. Adam Byrne, Miss Heidi Skjold, Mr. Brendan Cuffe, Mr. Tony Nakjua, and Miss Katie Moerlein gave their reasons why they liked Ninilchik Elementary/High School and listed their future educational and career plans. Mrs. Vadla highlighted student academics and sports accomplishments and displayed posters featuring student work. She noted that Ninilchik High School graduates will become doctors, lawyers, cooks or anything they want to be because of their outstanding education.

Dr. Anderson acknowledged Miss Moerlein and commented that Mr. Moerlein (her father) assisted Dr. Anderson when he prepared for and raced in the Iditarod Sled Dog Race.

Mrs. Gilman asked whether the Ninilchik School volunteer librarian is being considered for a Golden Apple Award. Mr. Wetherbee responded that her nomination is currently being processed.

**RECESS:**  
(7:55:34 PM)

At 7:55 p.m., Ms. Germano called a recess.

**RECONVENE AFTER RECESS:**  
(8:01:12 PM)

8:01 p.m., the Board reconvened in regular session.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:**  
(8:01:14 PM)

Miss Michele Weaver, Skyview High School student, asked the Board to revoke the high school qualifying exam because this year's seniors have not had four full years to prepare for it.

Ms. Germano agreed that the timeline to require the passage of the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam is short and further explained that the exam requirement is contained in state statute and must be changed by the legislature.

Ms. Sarah Riley, District physical therapist, told the Board that Mr. Jeff Tucker, Soldotna Fire Chief, donated a chair stretcher to Skyview High School which will allow the safe and expedited evacuation of wheelchair-bound students from the second floor of the school.

**COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS:**

*(8:04:45 PM)*

Dr. Peterson noted that she has received the usual communications from the Department of Education and Early Development and legislative offices. She noted that the Board received copies of correspondence regarding proposed changes to the graduation requirements. Ms. Germano noted that she received two Christmas cards from District schools. Ms. Wassilie noted that she received a thank you note from Mr. Jerry Dixon along with a magazine article titled, "Going to Extremes", which features his outdoor adventures.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:**

*(8:06:22 PM)*

Dr. Peterson reminded the Board that the Budget Review Committee meetings will be held January 8 at 1:00 p.m. and January 12 at 9:00 a.m., and that the public budget hearings will be held at Kenai Central High on January 14, in Seward on January 15, and in Homer on January 20 (all hearings will be at 7:00 p.m.). She noted that she will conduct a training session for all parents and site council members to be held at the Kenai Merit Inn on January 13, at 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**Financial Report:**

*(8:07:47 PM)*

Mrs. Douglas presented the financial report of the District for the period ending November 30, 2003.

**Quarterly Lease Financial Report:**

*(8:08:10 PM)*

Mr. Stewart presented a quarterly report of leases or agreements for the 2003-2004 school year.

Ms. Germano asked whether the lease with the North Peninsula Service Area involves the exchange of any money. Mr. Stewart explained that the memorandum of agreement allows use of the facilities. He stated that the Service Area is charged if custodial costs are incurred.

Ms. Holle asked what kinds of investments are included under the financial report column heading, "Earnings on Investments". Mrs. Douglas explained that the District is a member of the central treasury (managed by the Borough) and the amount represents the District's share of the interest.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

*(8:10:38 PM)*

Items presented on the Consent Agenda were Approval of AR 5125 (Student Records), New Teacher Assignments, Leave of Absence Request – Support, and Long Term Substitute Teacher Contract.

**AR 5125 (Student Records):**

Mr. Stewart recommended the Board approve revisions to AR 5125 to become in compliance with the USA Patriot Act.

**New Teacher Assignments:**

Dr. Whiteley recommended the Board approve teacher assignments for the 2003-2004 school year for Damara Burnett, secondary teacher (temporary), Susan B. English School; Debra R. Blossom, generalist (temporary), Connections Program; and Catherine M. Bethune, Title I teacher (temporary), Kenai Alternative High School.

**Leave of Absence Request – Support:** Dr. Whiteley recommended the Board approve the extension of an unpaid leave of absence for the remainder of the 2003-2004 school year for Jane Ann Finley, school nurse, (currently on approved leave from K-Beach Elementary).

**Long Term Substitute Teacher Contract:**

Dr. Whiteley recommended the Board approve a substitute teacher contract for Mary Ellen Summer, special education/resource, Soldotna Middle School.

**MOTION**

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

Ms. Wassilie asked to remove item Number 10a.(1) from the Consent Agenda.

Motion to approve Consent Agenda Numbers 2 through 4 carried unanimously.

Ms. Wassilie acknowledged that the recommended changes to AR 5125 (Student Records) are required as part of the Patriot Act. She asked whether a record would be noted if the US Attorney General issued an ex parte order. Mr. Stewart stated that the student would not be notified that a request has been made to investigate their school records. Mr. Stewart stated that the order would be recorded in the student's records.

Ms. Wassilie stated that according to the proposed revisions in the student records regulation, records of access do not have to be kept for authorized parties or when disclosure is pursuant to an ex parte order in connection with the investigation or prosecution of terrorism crimes by the US Attorney General and asked for an explanation. Mr. Stewart stated that the District would keep a record that would only be available on the record of access to the parent or an eligible student.

Ms. Germano noted that the policy states that a record does not have to be kept for authorized parties which is contradicted by the statement that, "such record of access shall be available only to the parent or eligible student." Mr. Stewart stated that the District's practice is that a record is made when a request is made of student records. He stated that the intent of the regulation language is that disclosure is not made to anyone except the parents or eligible student. He stated that as an example, the US Attorney General might make a request of student records and the District would not be able to disclose the request until released to do so.

Ms. Germano reiterated that the regulation language contradicts itself. Mr. Stewart suggested that the administration review the regulation further.

Ms. Gilman clarified that the only time that the US Attorney General can make a request for student records is when a terrorist crime is being investigated.

Ms. Wassilie stated that she would like a record to be made for all government officials who request to view student records.

Mr. Stewart noted that the revision language came directly from the Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB).

## **MOTION**

Ms. Wassilie moved the Board postpone action on revisions to AR 5125 (Student Records) to the February 2 meeting. Ms. Holle seconded.

Ms. Holle stated that in her opinion the Patriot Act is an illegal act and does not feel that the District should comply. She stated that she will not support compliance with the Act.

Ms. Wassilie asked what the term “parties” refers to in the first complete paragraph, second sentence, on page K of AR 5125. Mr. Stewart explained that occasionally, the court system, a judge, or the district attorney may request student information. He noted that the new language would allow the District to share student information.

Ms. Holle stated that if the District is subpoenaed to supply the court with information, we would have to comply. She stated that adopting the proposed revisions to the student records regulation flies in the face of freedom. She cautioned the Board to be careful and to protect student records as a duty to freedom and privacy rights.

Ms. Wassilie stated that she does not have a problem sharing information with the juvenile justice system but felt that it should be done with parent consent or by a court order.

Dr. Anderson noted that the proposed revisions are to an administrative regulation and not Board policy.

Ms. Wassilie stated that the Board is being asked to approve the regulation and therefore must have some responsibility to ensure that the regulation does comply with policy.

VOTE ON MOTION TO POSTPONE:

Advisory Vote – YES

NO – Holle

YES – M. Anderson, N. Anderson, Gilman, Mullins, Wassilie,  
Germano

Motion carried.

**FY04 Budget Revision:**

*(8:25:48 PM)*

**MOTION**

Mrs. Douglas recommended the Board approve a revised general fund budget of \$75,667,914 and an appropriation of fund balance for \$476,539.

Mrs. Mullins moved the Board approve a revised general fund budget of \$75,667,914 and an appropriation of fund balance for \$476,539. Ms. Wassilie seconded.

**FY04 Budget Revision:**

*(continued)*

Mrs. Gilman stated that although she may vote for the budget revision, she is uncomfortable with the reduction of unallocated budget by \$600,000. She stated during the last budget revision she voted to keep the unallocated amount because she assumed the money would be used to relieve overcrowded classrooms. She stated that there are still overcrowded classrooms that have not been addressed and, therefore, will be hesitant to add any more money to the unallocated account. She stated that the increase in health care costs of \$559,000 is the District's share and noted that that amount will continue to rise. She stated that the community will need to come up with a solution to the problem. She stated that regretfully, she will vote for the budget revision.

Motion carried unanimously.

**Student Suspension Hearing:**

*(8:30:08 PM)*

**MOTION**

Dr. Anderson moved the Board approve the following: "Based upon the above findings the Board upholds the 15-day suspension. For the reasons discussed above, the Board declines to rule on the claims relating to equal protection and due process." Mrs. Mullins seconded.

**VOTE ON STUDENT SUSPENSION:**

ABSTAIN - Germano

YES - M. Anderson, N. Anderson, Gilman, Holle, Mullins, Wassilie

Motion carried.

**BP 6146.1 (Graduation Requirements)**

*(8:31:37 PM)*

Mr. Stewart recommended the Board approve revisions to policy BP 6146.1, High School Graduation, which simplify the graduation requirements and more closely reflect the state requirements as outlined in the Alaska Administrative Code 04 AAC 06.075. He noted that additional changes have been made since the Board's first reading.

Ms. Megan O'Neill, Kenai Middle School parent, expressed concern for the proposed revisions to the math, physical education, and practical and creative arts requirements for high school graduation.

Mrs. Celia Anderson, KPC assistant professor of art and Ms. Debbie Harris, District art specialist, noted that they represent the Alaska Alliance for Art Education and expressed concern about the possible elimination of the creative arts credit requirement. Mrs. Anderson read a letter from the Alliance for Arts Education supporting art education and asking the Board not to eliminate the arts from schools. In response to a question from Ms. Holle, Ms. Harris responded that a reference was made to Section 14.03.015 of the Alaska State Constitution.

Mrs. Sara Moore, Soldotna High School counselor, asked the Board to require .5 credit each in practical and creative arts and 3 credits in math for high school graduation.

**FY04 Budget Revision:**  
*(continued)*

Mrs. Penny Vadla, Ninilchik Elementary/High teacher, asked the Board to require 3 credits in practical and creative arts (with a minimum of .5 practical arts and .5 creative arts credit), and to require 3 credits in math, and to require .5 credit in physical education.

**MOTION**

Mrs. Gilman moved the Board approve revisions to policy BP 6146.1, High School Graduation. Mrs. Mullins seconded.

**MOTION**

Mrs. Gilman moved the Board approve an amendment to delete all proposed changes to policy BP 6146.1 with the exception of changes to the science credit (Science - 3.0 credits [(the class of 2007 and beyond must include 1.0 credit life science and 1.0 credit physical science.)). Mr. Anderson seconded.

Ms. Wassilie stated that she agreed with the amendment and added that high school students need consistency. She stated that the current requirements are good and would not like to see them weakened or compromised.

Mrs. Gilman stated that the Board should provide a quality education regardless of the budget situation. She reiterated Mrs. Vadla's statement that students are owed an education of at least equal the value as their parents.

Ms. Holle stated that she hoped the Board would consider another version or another review of BP 6146.1, and take into consideration public comment. She recommended the Board not adopt any portion of the policy revision and instead, put the decision off until a reconfiguration can be made of each credit requirement. She stated that she will vote against the policy revisions because she would like to consider the entire policy all at one time.

Mr. Tilbury asked whether the science portion of BP 6146.1 was the only subject area that needed to be passed soon. Mr. Stewart stated that last year the administration informed school counselors that the curriculum committee recommended the proposed changes to the science portion of the graduation requirements policy. He stated that the science credit change will affect this year's freshmen.

Ms. Germano summarized two previous discussions regarding BP 6146.1. She stated that the discussion held prior to the Board meeting centered on the entire graduation requirements policy and certified diplomas, as well as citizenship and ethics. She stated that the Board will continue to review the graduation requirements in the future.

**VOTE ON AMENDMENT:**

Advisory Vote – YES

NO – Holle

YES – M. Anderson, N. Anderson, Gilman, Mullins, Wassilie,  
Germano

Amendment carried.

**FY04 Budget Revision:**

*(continued)*

**VOTE ON AMENDED MOTION:**

Advisory Vote – YES

NO – Holle

YES – M. Anderson, N. Anderson, Gilman, Mullins, Wassilie,  
Germano

Amended motion carried.

**Tyonek Teacher Housing:**

*(8:57:09 PM)*

Mr. Stewart recommended that the Board approve a motion to request the mayor and/or Borough Assembly to negotiate a sole source contract with the Village of Tyonek for the express purpose of providing two 'turn-key' teacher housing units for the 2004-2005 school year.

**MOTION**

Mrs. Gilman moved the Board approve a motion to request the mayor and/or Borough Assembly to negotiate a sole source contract with the Village of Tyonek for the express purpose of providing two 'turn-key' teacher housing units for the 2004-2005 school year. Mrs. Mullins seconded.



Mrs. Gilman asked if the Tyonek Village will give the District property for teacher housing for \$1 a year. Mr. Stewart explained that the Village will lease the land for the teacher housing for \$1 year since the District cannot own property in the Village. Mr. Stewart explained that the Village will complete all ground work necessary to accommodate the portable housing units and make them ready to occupy and then the District will take over possession of the units after they are approved by the Borough. He stated that the District will have the units for 30 years for \$1 per year. He noted that the cost of the units are \$300,000 and will be paid for by money set aside by the Borough specifically for teacher housing.

Mr. Anderson clarified with Mr. Stewart that the District cannot own property in the Village because all of the land belongs to the Village Corporation.

Ms. Germano confirmed with Mr. Stewart that the Borough has been involved with the Tyonek teacher housing issue. Mr. Stewart stated that the District will make a formal request after Board approval.

Motion carried unanimously.

**Resolution 03-04-2:**

*(9:00:12 PM)*

Dr. Peterson recommended the Board adopt Resolution 03-04-2 supporting mandated fiscal impact notes for all legislation or administrative actions that affect school districts and local governments.

**MOTION**

Ms. Gilman moved the Board approve Resolution 03-04-2, Fiscal Impact Notes on Legislation. Mrs. Mullins seconded.

Ms. Holle stated that Resolution 03-04-2 is appropriate and makes good sense at any level of government.

**Resolution 03-04-2:**

*(continued)*

Ms. Wassilie asked where the resolution will be sent if passed. Ms. Germano stated that District legislators would receive a copy of the resolution. Dr. Peterson stated that the administration will take copies to Juneau and share them with other school districts during the various fly-in trips. Ms. Holle suggested that the governor be sent a copy.

Motion carried unanimously.

**Resolution 03-04-3:**

*(9:02:47 PM)*

Dr. Peterson recommended the Board adopt Resolution 03-04-3 supporting early funding in the amount of \$4,500. She noted that the issue of early funding is a controversial topic and added that the District's stand is that the state should provide early, adequate funding. She noted that with a base allocation amount of \$4,500 per student the District could continue programs at status quo for next school year.

## **MOTION**

Mrs. Gilman moved the Board approve Resolution 03-04-3, Support Early Funding of K-12 Education. Ms. Holle seconded.

Mrs. Mullins stated that early funding sounds good but that a base allocation of \$4,500 would just meet the needs of the District which is not adequate and added that "better than adequate" is what is needed. She stated that the District needs money to reinstate some of the horrible reductions that have been made over the past several years. She stated that she cannot support an early funding limit of \$4,500.

Mrs. Gilman stated that the resolution is a good marriage of early funding and a request for \$4,500 base allocation. She stated that she was encouraged when District legislators publicly stated during the Soldotna High School Educational Forum that they would support early funding of \$4,500 per student. She stated that early funding is helpful because it allows the District to develop a budget on actual numbers. She stated that if the funding is not adequate, the Board can explain to the legislature why it is not adequate. She stated that the Governor has been clear that he will not authorize a draw from the constitutional budget reserve. She stated that she would rather take the chance on early funding and have concrete evidence to hold legislators responsible than "play the shell game" at the end of the legislative session.

Ms. Wassilie stated that she is afraid that the legislature will agree to early funding but not a base allocation of \$4,500. She stated that parents may present a good case for adequate funding but with early funding it will be too easy for the legislature to dismiss the appeal.

Mr. Anderson stated that Resolution 03-04-3 is well written and that Dr. Peterson captured the Board's thoughts. He stated that if the funding amount is accepted up front, there is no recourse if it is not adequate. He stated that for those reasons he cannot support the resolution.

### **Resolution 03-04-3:** *(continued)*

Ms. Holle stated that she does not want to play politics all of the time. She stated that the most practical way to approach budgeting is to know the dollar amount ahead of time and not six months later. She stated that it is reasonable to ask for \$4,500. She stated that she does not believe that the governor or any legislator could argue otherwise. She stated that the legislature will ultimately decide on the educational funding amount and added that it would be nice to know what it will be ahead of time. She stated that the Board can always present rationale showing why the amount is not adequate. She stated that early funding is reasonable and urged Board members to pass the resolution.

Ms. Germano passed the gavel to Dr. Anderson.

**MOTION**

Ms. Germano moved the Board amend Resolution 03-04-3 to say "Supporting Early Funding at \$4,500 Base Student Allocation of K-12 Education for FY 2005" as the title, and to add the sentence, "\$4,500 would provide the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District with a status quo budget in the 2004-2005 budget." in the first bullet after the second sentence. Mr. Anderson seconded.

Ms. Germano stated that she is opposed to early funding that is not adequate. She stated that the District should wait until the end of the legislative session in hopes that money for education will be restored. She stated that the Constitutional Budget Reserve is only part of the issue of adequate funding and added that hopefully, legislators will be working on a state fiscal plan. She stated that her concern is that early funding removes the issue from the legislature's consideration because there will be too many other issues to deal with at the end of the session. She stated that although she does not like the idea of early funding, she could support early funding for the 2004-2005 school year in the amount of \$4,500 which would provide a status quo budget. She stated that it should be clear in the title of the resolution that the District is referring to only one year of early funding.

Ms Wassilie told the Board that the District can request early funding of \$4,500 but the legislature will likely lower the amount and yet the District would still receive early funding.

Ms. Holle stated her objection to the change in the resolution title.

Mrs. Gilman stated that she supported the title change because the title will draw the attention of the legislators who read the resolution. She stated that the opportunity of early funding will keep the District from having to make drastic last-minute budget cuts in May that would possibly be restored in June after the legislative session concludes.

Mr. Anderson stated that he did not support the original resolution but with the current amendments, he will support it.

**Resolution 03-04-3:**

*(continued)*

**VOTE ON AMENDMENT:**

Advisory Vote - YES

NO - Wassilie

YES - M. Anderson, N. Anderson, Gilman, Holle, Mullins, Germano

Amendment carried.

Dr. Anderson returned the gavel to Ms. Germano.

VOTE ON AMENDED MOTION:

Advisory Vote – YES

NO – Wassilie, N. Anderson

YES – M. Anderson, Gilman, Holle, Mullins, Germano

Amended motion carried.

**BOARD COMMENTS:**

*(9:26:34 PM)*

Dr. Anderson stated that during an earlier worksession the Board was notified that the projected budget will be \$6.774 million short for FY 2005 rather than \$5.174 million as earlier thought. He stated that the news is very grim and that the Board does not have a good solution for the problem and asked the public for help.

Ms. Holle thanked Mr. Jeff Tucker at Central Emergency Services and the emergency response people for the donation of the stretcher to the Skyview High School. She stated that the discussions during the earlier worksessions were rewarding. She suggested that the Board slow down and take the time needed to discuss each issue. She stated that she has recently changed her opinion regarding high school graduation and agrees with the District's requirement of 22 credits. She stated that District policies remind members that the Board serves the public. She stated that she intends to communicate to the Governor that she feels it is inappropriate for the State of Alaska to provide additional funding to the University of Alaska system when K-12 public education is not being adequately funded. She stated that the public needs to be persistent and to write numerous letters of support to state legislators. She stated that there is a perception that the District does not hire locally qualified applicants and added that the Board should be promoting local hire.

**BOARD COMMENTS:**

*(continued)*

Mrs. Gilman reported that she attended Christmas programs at Sears Elementary School and Soldotna Elementary School. She stated that she is amazed at the student and teacher talent within the District. She noted that the KPAA career development report submitted by Karen Wessel was the best report she has read. She stated that Ms. Wessel has a tremendous passion for writing which she will obviously impart to her students. She expressed appreciation for the Ninilchik Elementary/High School report and for the quote used in the report, "We train, we teach and we love." She thanked Miss Michele Weaver, Skyview High School student for speaking to the Board about the high school graduation qualifying exam. She suggested that extra credit be awarded to students who are willing to speak during a Board meeting. She noted that the Anchorage Daily News published an article regarding districts throughout the state (including the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District) that are offering home school programs to students who are also enrolled in private school. She noted that the article reported that home school funding is used to pay for student activities such as ballet lessons, dance lessons, ice skating lessons, etc. She stated that she objects to the practice of enrolling students in the District Connections Program who are also private school students and the practice of paying for student lessons.

Mrs. Mullins thanked Mr. Wetherbee and the students from Ninilchik Elementary/High School for the school report. She expressed appreciation for the information packet and additional information provided for the meeting and for the earlier discussions during the worksession. She stated that she does not like to make a decision without listening to all of the discussions. She expressed her condolences for the two absent Board members who are dealing with family health issues. She asked for an excused absence for the next two meetings (February 2, 16).

Mr. Tilbury thanked the Board for their helpful insight that changed his perspective on a couple of issues. He acknowledged comments made by his Ninilchik High School classmates. He thanked the Board for the discussions conducted prior to the Board meeting.

Mr. Anderson stated that he is pleased to see that there is a real push within the community to try to assist the Board with the budget problem. He stated that there are some very hard decisions yet to make and added that the Board needs to get started on them. He stated that the Board must be noisy and persistent on behalf of education. He thanked the Ninilchik Elementary/High School staff and students for the school report. He asked for an excused absence for the February 2 meeting.

**BOARD COMMENTS:**  
(continued)

Ms. Wassilie thanked Mr. Wetherbee and the students for the Ninilchik Elementary/High School report. She stated that she was pleased to hear that the Ninilchik School, as well as other District schools, are involved in the Ocean Bowl through the University of Alaska-Fairbanks and the Institute of Marine Science in Seward. She expressed appreciation for the student comments regarding the high school graduation qualifying exam and noted that two prefiled legislative bills require the exam but not as a condition for graduation. She noted that she has had a number of people speak to her about the District's graduation requirements. She stated that she agrees with Mrs. O'Neill about what constitutes a basic education. She stated that she is not opposed to the concept of early funding and added that she would like the entire state budget to be forward funded.

Ms. Germano stated that she is optimistic that money will come from the legislature to assist the District with budget issues. She reported that the Borough Assembly will consider the issue of funding cocurricular activities outside the cap. She reported that she spent some time at Paul Banks Elementary in Ms. McDaniel's first grade classroom and listened to every child read. She stated that the District has made impressive progress in the area of reading and expressed appreciation for all of the work of the teachers. She asked Board members to be sure to sign up to attend the upcoming public hearings.

**ADJOURN:**  
(9:46:17 PM)

At 9:46 p.m., Mrs. Mullins moved the School Board meeting be adjourned. Dr. Anderson 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 January 6, 2004,  
have not been approved as of  
January 13, 2004.