

KENAI PENINSULA BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

148 N. Binkley Street  
Soldotna, AK 99669

January 21, 2002

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:

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

STAFF PRESENT:

Dr. Donna Peterson, Superintendent of Schools  
Mrs. Melody Douglas, Chief Financial Officer  
Dr. Gary Whiteley, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction  
Mr. Todd Syverson, Assistant Superintendent, Administrative Services

OTHERS PRESENT:

Ms. Liana Bigham	Mr. Sohail Marey
Mr. Terry McBee	Mr. Mark Larson
Mr. Max Best	Mrs. Lynne Dusek
Mrs. Connie Best	Mrs. Jeanna Carver
Mr. Ken Meacham	Mr. Jim White
Mrs. Mary Dougherty	Mrs. Tracie Withrow
Mrs. Laurie Olson	Mrs. Debbie Stewart
Mrs. Lassie Nelson	Mrs. Sara Moore
Mrs. Paula Christenson	Mrs. Marnie Bartolini
Mr. John Christenson	Mrs. Zada Friedersdorf
Mrs. Cyndi Romberg	Mrs. McKay
Mr. Dave McCard	Mrs. Shana Loshbaugh
Mrs. Julie Ball	Mr. Zack Kornfield
Mr. Grigori Vaisenberg	Mr. Bill Newberry
Mr. Charlie Stevens	Mr. Tim Peterson
Mrs. Penny Vadla	Mr. Hans Bilben
Mr. Bruce Rife	Mr. Tim Navarre

Others present not identified.

CALL TO ORDER:

Dr. Anderson called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. A quorum of School Board members, Dr. Anderson, Ms. Germano, Mr. Arness, Mrs. Mullins, Mrs. Gilman, Mrs. Crawford and Mr. Poindexter were in attendance.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

At 5:01 p.m., Mrs. Crawford moved the Board go into executive session to discuss matters, the immediate knowledge of which would clearly have an adverse effect upon the finances of the Borough. Specifically, the executive session was to discuss finances and litigation. Mr. Poindexter seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURN EXECUTIVE SESSION:

At 7:29 p.m., Mrs. Mullins moved the executive session be adjourned. Mrs. Crawford seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

NATIONAL ANTHEM: The Skyview High School swing choir sang the *Star Spangled Banner*, directed by Mrs. Miriam McKay.

ROLL CALL:	Dr. Nels Anderson	Present
	Ms. Deborah Germano	Present
	Mrs. Sammy Crawford	Present
	Mr. Joe Arness	Present
	Mrs. Debra Mullins	Present
	Mrs. Margaret Gilman	Present
	Mr. Al Poindexter	Present
	Miss Katie Lockwood	Present

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: The agenda was approved with the addition of Awards and Presentation directly after Item 1d., Approval of Agenda.

SUSPEND RULES The Board approved a suspension of the rules to remove the time limit of Item 4., Public Presentations.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS: Mr. Zack Kornfield and other students from the Kenai Central High School Student Council Executive Board presented Board members with a pin and a card in observance of School Board Recognition month.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: The School Board Minutes of January 7, 2002, were approved as printed.

The School Board Minutes of November 5, 2002 and December 3, 2002 were corrected to replace the name of Ms. Sandra Wassilie with the name of Mrs. Margaret Gilman.

SCHOOL REPORTS: Mr. Ken Meacham, Redoubt Elementary principal, provided the Board with enrollment, testing, and student transient information. He reported that Mrs. Lynne Elliott is sponsoring a group that is gathering assessment information to support and improve the full-day kindergarten program. He reported that seven teachers participated in the Quality Institute in August 2001 in which standards and standards-based instruction was discussed. He stated that as a result of the Institute, the staff is developing a K-6 math performance assessment that will help determine the needs of students as they prepare for benchmark tests and the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam. Mr. Meacham commended Mrs. Diane Bush for her volunteer work in organizing a breakfast program, supported totally by donations, that provides over 800 meals monthly. Mr. Meacham reported that more than ninety students participate in the After the Bell Program and added that the school also participates in the Title I Program which assists students in the area of math, reading, and language arts. He presented a computer-generated video produced by Ms. Katrina Adams that highlighted student interviews and the Alaska State Standards. Miss Rachel Goldstein, Soldotna High School student, assisted several students in presenting a play in Russian called, *The Turnip*, with Mrs. Zada Friedersdorf interpreting in English. Mrs. Cyndi Romberg facilitated a student presentation by students of facts about the ancient City of Rome. The students concluded their presentation with a demonstration of their German language skills.

RECESS: At 7:56 p.m., Dr. Anderson called a recess.

## RECONVENE AFTER RECESS:

At 8:03 p.m. The Board reconvened in regular session.

## PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:

Dr. Anderson gave a short history of the budget decline and budget reductions and acknowledged that the reductions have hurt programs, students and employees. He stated that each year when the budget process begins he worries about what the Board can cut and do the least amount of damage to the District. He stated that every budget cut that is made affects all employees. He recognized that inflation and health care costs have cut into employee salaries and that the salary scale has made it impossible to attract candidates in key positions. He stated that on the average, teachers nationwide earn about two-thirds less than the average college graduate. He stated that he finds it unfair that some of the students who fail or barely pass their high school classes can make more money in the community than the teachers who have tried to prepare them. He stated that his children have received an excellent education in the District. He asked the public for some suggestions to help make the system more efficient so that more money can be put into salaries and benefits. He stated that the Board considers themselves friends and not adversaries to District employees. He noted that each person will be allowed to speak for three minutes and assured those present that each person will be given the opportunity to speak one time.

Mr. Dave Carey identified himself as a Soldotna Elementary graduate and taxpayer. He reminded the Board of a sales tax waiver idea that he proposed at the January 7 Board meeting and noted that it was an example of “thinking outside of the box.” He stated that after discussing his idea with Mr. Arness and sharing it with others, he modified the idea to apply only to tier two teachers. He explained that sales tax would only be remitted once a year by keeping receipts and that it would not involve additional paperwork for local businesses, it would promote buying local, and it would assist lower paid teachers. He stated that his idea was an example of a School Board member working with local citizens. He stated that employees are faced with a hired mercenary that would rather refer to the teachers and staff members as biologic organisms rather than by name. He stated that the hired mercenary is a waste of tax money who is trying to put salt in the wounds of those employees that live in the District and plan to stay, unlike him. He requested that negotiations be open to the news media so that the tactics of the “hired gun” brought in to kill the Association bargaining team spirit can be brought to light and good faith discussions might be addressed. Mr. Carey asked the administration how many teachers they plan to see go to jail as a result of the senseless heavy-handed methods being used. He quoted Mr. Luther King, Jr. by saying, “We do have a dream and we shall overcome.”

## PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS (continued):

Mr. David Daniel, paraphrased an article in the *New York Times* which cited a report released by the *Journal Education Week* that reported teacher salaries continue to lag far behind that of other college education professionals by an average of nearly \$8,000 a year at the start of their careers and by almost \$24,000 by the time they reach fifty years old. He stated that the gap was greatest when teachers with masters degrees (ages 44-50) were compared with other professionals of the same age and educational level. He stated that the difference in pay was \$13,511 annually and that the average salary for masters degree recipients outside of teaching increased by \$17,505 between 1984 and 1998 while the average salary for teachers with masters

degrees rose by less than \$200. He stated that he was raised on the Kenai Peninsula and graduated from Seward High School in 1979 and added that his parents were educators. He stated that he earned a degree in psychology and a teaching certificate at the University of Washington which was paid for by the Alaska Student Loan Program. He stated that he applied for jobs all over Alaska so he could earn the 50% forgiveness provided as an incentive to students to return to Alaska after college. He stated that it was not an easy choice since his wife was unsure about living in Alaska and he had a job offer in Washington. He stated that as much as he loves the Kenai Peninsula and his family (who still lives here), he is not sure living in the District is worth it today since the state no longer forgives student loans, employees now copy substantial health insurance costs, the cost of living is higher, and the salary scale is eroded. He asked those present what could be done to ensure the future of education for the children of the Peninsula. He stated that the nation is about to face the greatest teacher shortage in history and that the demand for teachers is real and by the year 2005 the nation will need two million more teachers. He reported that schools are not supplying what is needed and today's children, as well as the economy, will suffer for it.

Ms. Lindy Cox, Nikiski Elementary special services teacher, summarized her teaching career and education and told the Board that she investigated the possibility of retirement and discovered that her retirement benefits, after twenty-two years in Alaska, would qualify her for Women and Infant Care (WIC) and for the free and reduced lunch program. She stated that the ramifications of the lack of pay raises over the past seventeen years have made it impossible for her to retire.

Mrs. Pam Burns stated that she graduated from Soldotna Elementary, Soldotna Junior High and Soldotna High. She stated that she was raised by educators and noted that her father was a former superintendent in the District for ten years. She stated that she received a quality education in the District. Mrs. Burns announced that she will be expecting her first child in May and hopes that her child will also receive a quality education. She stated that she hoped the administration and teachers can work together during the negotiations process and be able to treat each other civilly so that an agreement can be reached that is fair for teachers and students.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS (continued):** Ms. Casey Cooper, Tustumena Elementary parent, stated that it is a travesty that the District is beginning to lose quality teachers. She stated that class sizes continue to increase and teachers are being asked to do more. She reported that teachers receive less special services assistance because the District is lacking in speech pathologists, psychologists, and special education teachers. She stated that classroom teachers are rising to the challenge but cannot continue without it affecting students. She stated that a .5 teaching position was added ten weeks into the school year to assist with overcrowded classroom conditions. She stated that the teachers worked hard to reconfigure the classes and accommodate the extra twenty-six students. Ms. Cooper stated that teachers are gifted, educated, and devoted and yet they are treated poorly. She suggested that the District find ways to make the legislature aware of the funding situation. She asked the Board how the District can pay a negotiator \$90,000 a year but can't pay the teachers a decent salary. She stated that if administrator salaries are better than teacher salaries then the District can find money for teacher salaries. She stated that without good teachers, students will not have a quality education.

Ms. Susan Engels stated that she represents the West Homer Elementary School staff. She stated that the teaching profession also has "three Rs" which are the basic

needs that contribute to its success. She suggested that in order to keep and attract quality teachers the overall level of respect must be strengthened, resources must be provided, and teachers must adequately be remunerated. She stated that Alaska recently dipped to fortieth for overall teacher compensation nationwide. She asked the Board to help the teachers address the needs of their students by recognizing the “Three Rs.”

Mr. Gary VanHooser stated that he is a parent of three children who graduated from Kenai Peninsula schools, is a taxpayer, and is a staff member at Chapman Elementary. He stated that teachers are spending their own money to purchase supplies for students. He stated that he is aware of the support the District receives from the Borough. He acknowledged that the Board members support education but felt that the legislature does not. He stated that the legislature has not provided for the cost of living increases over the past five to seven years. Mr. VanHooser urged those present to contact legislators and ask them to find a way to fund education and the cost of Alaskan government. He thanked the Board for listening to his comments and for the work they have done for District teachers and his children.

Mrs. Marnie Bartolini, stated that she has lived in Alaska for twenty-five years. She stated that when her husband was transferred they were given a choice of five places to live and that after doing some research, they relocated on the Kenai Peninsula because the schools were the best. She introduced her three year old grandson Caleb, who attends the special needs program at Soldotna Elementary. She recounted a story about a visit from her grandson and his love for school and credited the Soldotna Elementary teachers for his enthusiasm. She stated that District teachers need to be the best of the best and asked the Board to make them the first priority in the budget and not the last.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS (continued):** Mrs. Maggie Corbisier, Homer Middle School speech/language specialist, stated she has worked in the District for fourteen years. She stated that when she was first hired the Kenai Peninsula was known as the premier district. She stated that now the District is having a difficult time filling special education positions because the salary is inadequate. She stated that when she began working in the District she served three schools but now serves five and three are across Kachemak Bay. She urged the District to continue to support NEA-Alaska’s “Alaska’s Children, Alaska’s Future” campaign. Ms. Corbisier stated that she is serving on the Association negotiating team and stated that she was appalled at the actions she witnessed at the Ground Rules meeting on Friday, January 18. She stated that she hopes that the posturing, theatrics, juvenile behavior, and demeaning attitudes will be left at the door for the next meeting and that the group can negotiate like intelligent adults.

Mr. Dave McCard, stated that he has worked for the District for twenty-four years and is currently teaching 6<sup>th</sup> grade at Sterling Elementary. He stated that Board goals call for strengthening relationships with staff and that the Long Range Plan calls for high quality in all personnel, facilities relationships and partnerships. He read from the Long Range Plan and then asked the Board how the District negotiating team is meeting the Board goals and the Long Range Plan action steps. He stated that he believed that this would be the year that teachers and support staff would join forces with parents, PTAs, PTSAs, principals, administration and Board members to lobby the legislature with the message, “Demand excellence but be willing to pay for it.”

Mrs. Terry Zopf-Shoessler, parent, teacher, and taxpayer, stated that she appreciated

Dr. Anderson's comments. She stated that teachers like what they do and make a difference and that quality education costs money. She explained that the District bargaining team is not "giving" teachers anything, they are negotiating wage benefit packages for the services and expertise provided by teachers. She stated that teachers can no longer continue to negotiate as adversaries. She stated that teachers are negotiating for the maintenance of student programs and curriculum, quality contact time with students, adequate preparation and assessment time, security to do the job well, and for respect. She stated that the Board is the first line of defense for students, programs and teachers. She stated that teachers are doing their jobs and respectfully asked the Board to do their job.

Ms. Carmen Stephl, registered dental hygienist, stated that she has the opportunity to work with teachers and school nurses to teach dental education. She provided a list of ten priorities for teachers and compared them to the dental profession. The list included reasonable work hours, parents as partners, adequate preparation time, money for resources, support of PTAs and PTOs, less time disciplining students, parental support, incentives and improvement of public schools.

Mr. Terry McBee stated that he was born and raised in Fairbanks and moved to the Kenai Peninsula because of the quality education system. He stated that for many years teams of educators throughout the state and nation visited the District to observe the quality education programs. He stated that as the quality declined the teams of educators stopped coming. He stated that as student-teacher ratios increased the quality of foundational skills that students received dwindled and now the District is an educational system that is loaded with children that have underdeveloped educational foundations. Mr. McBee stated that for many years the District has been graduating students that perform poorly. He told of former students who found it necessary to take writing courses after graduation to meet expectations in college.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS (continued):** Miss Gabby Merry, stated that teachers make a huge difference in a student's life. She stated that school is a lot of fun and interesting and that if the District could afford to hire better teachers more students would enjoy school and, as a result, would be smarter.

Ms. Megan O'Neill, parent, stated that she supports public schools. She stated that the School Board has not acted in good faith bargaining with the staff. She stated that the staff is angry and does not feel that the Board supports them. She acknowledged that there are hard decisions to make, but added that teachers do not feel they are being met half way. She suggested that the Board travel to Juneau to seek additional funding from the legislature. She suggested the Board consider alternatives to health care systems. She stated that the administration must decide that the negotiations process is not a war, and realize that the District has fine teachers and will lose them if they don't support them.

Mr. Stewart McDonald, stated the he is a professional and doesn't just work a contract day. He stated he doesn't think about how much he is being paid but instead does the work that his heart has called him to do. He stated that he works on the weekend because the job is not done and, as a professional, he serves the parents and children of the District at the expense of his family. He asked the Board to take care of him in good faith the way he spends time and money in the community – wholly invested, without regret.

Miss Kimberly Martin, Skyview High School junior, stated that her mother is a kindergarten teacher at Sterling Elementary. She explained that when she was younger her mother taught at Port Graham Elementary/High School and noted that her mother would work long hours. Miss Martin reported that after listening to her mother's stories about teaching, she is not interested in being a teacher. She stated that she would not work for the low salary or put in the long hours. She stated that she is disappointed that there are some classes that are not offered because there are not enough teachers to teach them.

Mrs. Tracy Withrow, parent, former District student, stated that she was hired as the Districtwide Technology mentor. She stated that she came to show support for Redoubt Elementary School where her son is a student. She stated that she and her husband met elsewhere but were raised on the Kenai Peninsula and decided to return because they loved growing up here and wanted their children to have the same experience. She noted that many people move to the Kenai Peninsula because it is a great place for kids and that it needs to remain that way.

Miss Jozlyn Reynolds, complimented her teacher, Mr. Zorbas, for getting her interested in current events. Miss Reynolds complimented the middle school teachers for their ability to teach difficult students and that teachers' salaries do not compare with the amount of work they do. She stated that the low pay scale for teachers is giving Alaska a bad name and, as a result, teachers do not want to come. She stated that she is upset that teachers are not getting paid what they deserve.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS (continued):** Mrs. Jodie Hipsman, support employee, expressed her appreciation for the work of the School Board. She stated that she has been with the District for fifteen years, has lived in the community for eighteen years, and is a lifelong Alaskan. She stated that she has not seen one teacher who does not earn their salary. She stated that her children grew up in the District and that it was a good experience. She stated that her daughter is now a teacher and works long hours. She stated that teachers care about students, take work home on the weekends, and work over the summer preparing for the upcoming year. She stated that custodians also have a large impact on students and stated that when she was in elementary school a custodian made a significant impact on her life. She stated that secretaries, food service employees and teachers' aides work long hours in order to get their job done. She stated that there are teacher's aides who supplement their income by working two jobs to support their families and that the District has a large turnover rate because employees find better paying jobs elsewhere.

Mr. Matt Boyle stated that he attended school in Nikiski and now teaches at Nikiski Elementary. He stated that when he chose to be a teacher he didn't plan to get rich but believed that he would be able to earn a modest living. He stated that he has four children and a mortgage and that it is becoming tough to manage. He stated that if the trend continues, he may have to look for another job. He stated that he is willing to fight with the teachers and the District for more funding for education from the legislature.

Mrs. Donna Bartman stated that she has been teaching at Soldotna High for two years and would enjoy her job a lot more if her husband could join her. She stated that he has a master of arts in teaching from the University of Alaska and noted that the District does not recognize his degree as a higher education degree. She stated that it has been a hardship for her family and asked the Board and administration to take the

matter into consideration. She noted that there are many other people affected by the same issue.

Mr. Franklin Adams, retired teacher, college professor, and husband of a Skyview High School teacher, suggested that the School Board send a delegation of School Board members and teaching staff to Juneau to lobby for more funding for education.

Ms. Elaine Chalup, Voznesenka Elementary School building representative, stated that the school has no gymnasium, the children play in streets because there is no playground, the staff to drive to work on dangerous roads, and 80% of the teaching staff is paid on the tier two scale. She requested that the Board go to the legislature and ask for equality of education for all students by providing teachers with adequate facilities, resources and salaries.

Mrs. Judy Downs, stated that she works in the Alternative Stages Foundations Program and the Alternative To Out of School Suspension (ATOSS) Program, and loves the students and their parents. She stated that research shows that children need at least five significant adults in their life to be successful. She stated that she has facilitated many groups of children and adults and has asked them who the significant adult in their life was. She stated that they often respond that the significant adult was a teacher, librarian, custodian, school nurse, or school secretary. She stated that people often say that a significant adult made them feel special, believed in them, encouraged them, challenged them, and loved them, and that they will never forget them. Mrs. Downs stated that the District staff, parents, and community at-large are ready for the Board to “walk the talk” and asked the Board to do it now before it is too late.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS (continued):** Mr. Rob Moore, Soldotna Middle School teacher, stated that he has been teaching for twenty-one years in Alaska. He stated that if the Board does not go to Juneau to lobby for more money then the community and the District children will lose. He stated that he was in California as a student teacher when Proposition 13 was enacted. He stated that Alaska pays out money to its residents in the form of dividends but hesitates to fully fund education. He stated California is just now recovering from the effects of Proposition 13 and that the District will be facing the same problem in the future.

Mrs. Penny Vadla, Ninilchik Elementary/High teacher, thanked Dr. Anderson for his kind words. She stated that she makes a difference in many students’ lives and knows that other teachers do also. She stated that she gets angry because she got into teaching to educate and make the world a better place and added that if she were today’s youth she would not make the same choice because the salary is too low. She stated that she is at the top of the District salary schedule and has not had a pay raise in a number of years and with the inflation rate, is making less money than ten years ago. Mrs. Vadla stated that she gives up a lot of family time, which is difficult. She asked the Board to provide appropriate health benefits and to remove the tier two salary schedule. She asked the Board to pay teachers what they are worth.

Mr. Troy Minogue, Skyview High School teacher, stated that he graduated from Soldotna High School. He stated that he noticed many District graduates in the audience who are now teachers and noted that the reason is because it is a great school district. He stated that he realizes that the money is not available like it was in

the 1980s but priorities must be made. He reminded those present of Dr. Peterson's comments at the Districtwide inservice about "making the kids feel at home" he added that the District should "make the staff feel at home." He recounted a story about feeling displaced at school because he is a roving teacher and does not have a classroom. He stated that making a teacher feel at home is by providing the necessities of an income, a place to work, materials to work with, and the means to get the job done.

RECESS: At 9:13 p.m., Dr. Anderson called a recess.

RECONVENE AFTER RECESS: At 9:24 p.m. the Board reconvened in regular session.

Mr. Darren Jones, Skyview high teacher, stated he was born in Soldotna. He stated that he was excited to be hired in the District and did not apply anywhere else in the state. He stated that during his first year of teaching he coached three sports and supervised the school yearbook. He stated that even with the additional coaching salary, he qualified for the free and reduced lunch program. He stated that after eight years and seventy-two credits he still qualifies for free and reduced lunch and that his children qualify for Denali Kid Care. He stated that he works in construction in his spare time to make ends meet. He stated that his brothers, who have less education, earn \$20,000 to \$30,000 more a year. He stated that for most teachers, money is not the only priority, but that they owe it to their children to provide them a good home. He stated that each summer he receives recruitment letters from other Districts but he does not want to leave.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS (continued): Mrs. Jackie Ansotegui, stated that for anyone in the public who says that teachers do not deserve what they get paid have not spent time in a classroom. She stated that she is speaking as a parent and is also a District employee. She stated that she likes her job because it allows her the freedom to be a mother and participate in her children's school activities. She stated that she has mixed feelings about the amount of school fund raisers that are held, even though they are necessary. She stated that the District needs to be operated like a business. She stated that the District should lobby the legislature for more funding for education. She stated that teachers teach more than reading, writing and arithmetic, they also teach health education, values, morals, courtesy, hygiene, and make sure that their students have a meal every day. She stated that for some children, school is the only safe place to go.

Mrs. Lisa Sanyk, itinerant special education teacher at Voznesenka School, Kachemak Selo Elementary, and Razdolna Elementary, stated that she serves Russian Old Believer students and expressed concerned for the safety of the schools because they are overcrowded by 400%. She stated that the roads are incredibly slippery and treacherous and extremely stressful commuting to school. She stated that many teachers are at school when the weather is bad and they are allowed a two-hour delayed start. She stated that the schools she serves should have the same quality of facilities as other District schools. She stated that she is thrilled to teach in bilingual schools. She stated she is concerned about equal facilities and the safety and asked the Board not to forget about the head-of-the-bay schools.

Mr. Paul Zobeck, recounted his teaching career throughout the District noting that he is currently teaching at Skyview High School. He stated that there is a teacher shortage in Alaska and that teachers teaching elsewhere in Alaska would be foolish to consider transferring to the Kenai Peninsula because they would take a reduction

in salary. He stated that his daughter graduated from the District and was considering a teaching career but has since changed her mind. He stated that Costco checkers make more money than a teacher in their third year of teaching. He stated that many teachers joined together to try to get an educational referendum to use the Permanent Fund to fund education but they could not get enough signatures to bring the issue to the voters. He stated that former Governor Cower tried to propose use of the Permanent Fund for educational purposes but the idea was vetoed. He stated that the District has decided not to offer early retirement which would provide a three-year buy out and save the District money. He reminded those present that Alaskans do not pay a state income tax and do not want to use Permanent Fund money. He quoted Mrs. Marlene Byerly, former Skyview High principal, who said, "if you want everything to stay the same, don't change a thing." He stated that he has raised his family on the Kenai Peninsula and has made a huge commitment to his profession and to the community and noted that he does not want his family or profession affected in a negative way by a hostile Cheechako negotiator.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS (continued):** Mrs. Terry Woodward, Skyview High School head custodian, stated that her children graduated in the District. She stated that she was humiliated and felt belittled and not appreciated as an employee at the Ground Rules meeting on Friday, January 18. She asked the Board and administration to consider good ergonomics for employees and added that it is a simple inexpensive way to allow employees to be comfortable during the many hours they are at work. She stated that she loves her job and is devoted to it. She stated that every employee is extremely valuable and dedicated. She expressed concern for two custodians who are trying to exist on a single income and noted that it will be more difficult since the health insurance copay amount has increased. She stated that custodial work loads and responsibilities have increased immensely.

Miss Emily Berezin, Skyview High School student, expressed concern for the cost of class fees for materials making it more difficult for some students to afford. She stated that special education teachers are now expected to serve several schools and teachers are being asked to teach larger classes. She complimented the District teachers and asked the Board to give the teachers and students what they need and deserve.

Mrs. Liz Burck, teacher, stated that she models respect for her profession, for education, for knowledge, for her fellow human beings, and for directives given to her by superiors. She states that she also teaches respect and that to have respect it must be modeled. She stated that the District has great teachers who want respect. She stated that part of respect includes compensation. She suggested that a delegation be sent to lobby the legislature for more funding for education. She stated that there is too much frustration and that respect is being lost. She stated that teachers need to be compensated for their hard work.

Mr. Richard Bartolowits, stated that he was born on the Kenai Peninsula, attended school in Ninilchik, graduated from high school in the District and is a teacher at Kenai Central High. He stated that he is paid on the tier two salary scale and was aware of that when he signed the contract. He stated that he naively believed that such a substandard pay schedule would not withstand another contract negotiation. He stated that this year he thought things would get better but after hearing about the first meeting with the negotiating team, he doesn't feel as though there is good faith going into the process. He stated that if he works for another twenty years he will

have earned the right to retire into poverty. He stated that he likes his job and enjoys coaching students. He stated that teachers don't mind working extra hours as long as they are paid for it. Mr. Bartolowits stated that he would like to build a house someday and does not think it will happen as long as he is a teacher. He stated that without significant gains, he cannot afford to continue to work in the District. He stated that he has been exploring other options since the outlook is not very encouraging. He stated that he will not leave the area but currently there is no incentive to continue working for the District. He stated that there is no respect from the administration on down but that there is respect from the parents and students.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS (continued):** Mrs. Zada Friedersdorff, stated that she has worked for the District for twenty-four years. She stated that her daughter graduated from the District and is now a first-year teacher in Tyonek. She stated that she would like to see the District run like a business. She noted that her classroom enrollment has increased by 50% over the past fifteen years and that when a business experiences a 50% increase in clientele they also see an increase in income. She stated that she has not received a pay raise in eight years. She stated that there is a problem when people say that she can teach thirty students as quickly as she can teach twenty students, especially when less than half of her time is actually spent instructing. She states that much of her time is spent meeting individual differences, making 50% more phone calls to parents, making 50% more conferences with students. She stated that if the District were run like a business, she would expect to receive 50% more in compensation. She reported that at the time she became the KPEA president the teachers had worked twenty-four months without a contract and there was distrust and hatred between the Association groups and administration. She stated that it was not a good time and that the teachers picketed joined by the teamsters. Mrs. Friedersdorff stated she also served on the committee that developed the District's first five-year Strategic Plan and that one of the things to come from the meeting was the building of trust. She stated that she did not attend the January 18 meeting but the horror stories she has heard is not what the District needs. She stated that the District has just spent more than ten years building trust and that it will be lost in thirty days with one lone voice speaking for the District.

Mr. Mike Boyle stated that he has a child in each of the Kenai schools. He stated that he was recently told by a member of the public that he has the best job in the world. He stated that in five years he is qualified to retire, although retirement is not feasible. He stated that he is thinking about changing careers since he would like to afford to send his children through college and can not do it as a teacher.

Mrs. Barb George stated that her husband is a spokesperson on the teacher's bargaining team and went into the January 18 session with high hopes and a positive outlook. She stated that when he returned from the Friday session he couldn't sleep that night or relax all weekend. Mrs. George stated that as a kindergarten teacher she will not allow her students to speak to each other disrespectfully or throw temper tantrums and hopes that the Board won't allow the District spokesperson to continue the abusive, immature behavior. She stated that she hopes that the Board will ask the spokesperson to represent the District as a mature adult.

Mr. Dave Carpenter expressed his respect for Mr. Hans Bilben and the leadership that he has provided. He stated that he does not trust the NEA and often questions their leadership. He stated that he is not sure that he trusts the District. He stated that he was not at the January 18 meeting but has heard stories from both sides and is

confused. He suggested that the negotiation meetings be open to the public. He stated that he is a teacher and a parent and, as a parent, he wants to know what happened at the Friday meeting and why insults were thrown, and why District money was used for this purpose.

Mr. Kent Sanders, Nikiski High science teacher, stated that he firmly believes the legislature thinks that the teachers are going to “roll over and die.” He stated that that won’t happen or at least he hopes it won’t.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS (continued):** Mr. David Larson, spokesperson for the teacher’s bargaining team, thanked those in the audience for their attendance and complimented the teachers on their eloquent speeches. He stated that as the state requires mandates such as the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam where schools will be rated by the pass or fail rate of their students, he is concerned about the direction and forward thinking by the Board and administration in preparing the staff to prepare the students. He stated that if the District ends up in a position where teachers are forced to consider employment elsewhere, how will that enable teachers to accomplish what is necessary in classrooms to pass the exam. He suggested that the District make plans to take care of state mandates by retaining excellence in teaching. He stated that the District has many staff members who have won awards which speaks to the excellence available in the District.

Mr. Bruce Rife, stated that six years ago he signed a tier two contract and was told that the District would do away with the tier two salary schedule as soon as possible. He stated that he has always been left with the stigma that he is second rate. He stated that he has won several awards and credited the recognition to working with excellent teachers. He stated that he chose to teach because of the students but that the primary reason is for his own children and must earn a living for them first. He stated that he will seek out the best opportunities for his children. He told a story of a note his son wrote telling him he wished he could play with him instead of grading papers. He stated that although he loves teaching, the sacrifice of family time is difficult. He stated that he would like to have respect and was extremely dismayed to hear that his bargaining representative was referred to as a worm or a hydra. He asked the Board to adopt a team approach and lobby the legislature together to seek assistance and recognize that the staff is the number one value of the District.

Mr. Ben Eveland, stated that the issue of teacher salaries will not be an easy problem to solve and that it has been an issue for the past twenty-one years of his employment. He stated that he has two children attending school in the District whose education have been impacted. He stated that if the compensation isn’t adequate, teachers will choose to teach elsewhere. He stated that a state legislator held a meeting to brainstorm ideas for incentives (not money) to encourage teachers to come to Alaska. He stated that intrinsic incentives cannot buy food for a family.

Dr. Anderson stated that he appreciated the comments and added that the Board shares in most of the hopes and aspirations that were expressed.

**RECESS:** At 10:10 p.m., Dr. Anderson called a recess.

**RECONVENE AFTER RECESS:** At 10:17 p.m., the Board reconvened in regular session.

**COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS:** Dr. Peterson reported that a letter was included in the Board information packet

concerning access to the Voznesenka School. She stated that she received a letter from the Division of Public Health outlining the school audit schedule for immunizations.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE, SITE  
COUNCIL, AND/OR P.T.A., K.P.A.A., K.  
P.E.A., K.P.E.S.A.:

Mrs. Mahurin, KPESA president, stated that she did not attend the January 18 negotiations meeting because she did not want to leave school for a short meeting to discuss ground rules. She stated that she has read the notes from the meeting and talked with each of the bargaining team members. She stated that for the past twenty years she has been a member of the bargaining team or have attended bargaining sessions as president. She stated that she can't believe that after meeting for seven to eight hours the teams did not agree to one ground rule. She stated that the same ground rules have been used for the past contracts. She stated that the team will meet at night and on the weekends and will meet in a neutral place where both teams will feel comfortable. She stated that she is most upset by the treatment of the bargaining team by the District spokesperson. She stated that in the past the Association and the District have always agreed to disagree and have treated each other with respect. She stated that the District hired a person from outside of Alaska who does not understand the culture and has no regard for members of the team. She stated that she is deeply offended by the remarks of Mr. Richard Putney who repeatedly referred to the Association spokespeople as hydras. She stated that she does not have respect for Mr. Putney. She stated that the Association team was screamed and yelled at and she strongly objects to that type of treatment. She stated that the Association does not approve of or need a spokesperson who must "beat his chest" to make a point. She stated that the Association team is made up of quality employees and that she deeply resents the patronizing, demoralizing and degrading way in which the Association was addressed. She stated that she has instructed the team in future meetings not to sit there if they are being treated poorly. She stated that if this is the climate under which negotiations will proceed then there is no doubt that the proceedings have gone downhill rapidly and will be most adversarial and negative. She stated that she trusts and respects most of the District bargaining team and can't believe that they were comfortable with the manner in which the Association team was treated. She stated that the Association team will not be providing the District with a copy of the KPESA constitution and bylaws since it is an internal document that belongs to the private Association. She stated that the ratification process will be the same as it has been in the past and is strictly the business of the Association. She stated that when the teams exchange bargaining proposals that both teams will present complete packages which will include financial proposals. She stated that one of the reasons the Association did not choose a member of KPESA or an employee of the District as spokesperson because she knew it would be difficult. She encouraged the District spokesperson to learn the contract and to learn Alaska State Labor Law. She asked the District team to come to the next meeting in good faith so that an agreement on ground rules can be reached and to begin the negotiation process. She stated that KPESA will continue to bargain in good faith with integrity and ethics and asked the District team to do the same.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE, SITE  
COUNCIL, AND/OR P.T.A., K.P.A.A., K.  
P.E.A., K.P.E.S.A. (continued):

Hans Bilben, KPEA president, stated that he feels proud to be a teacher. He stated that the job of a teacher is an unbelievable task and that he has worked in many occupations and none can compare to the work of teachers. He stated that the Association team arrived at the January 18 meeting prepared and on time. He stated that the District team was not prepared or on time. He stated that within two minutes

of Mr. Putney's tirades he wondered what was going on since people normally do not speak to each other in that manner. He stated that the Association's cause is just and that the desire is to promote the future of education. He stated that there is no future in public education if people don't work together to change the trend of budget cutting. He stated that teachers talk about the fun place that the District used to be which is why they chose to be teachers. He noted that things started to fall apart in 1990 and noted that there are not very many teachers in the District who attended school during that time period. He thanked the Board and administration for listening and added that he is proud to work with such an excellent group of people.

Mr. Larry Basargin, Voznesenka School Parent Advisory Committee president, stated that the school continues to be overcrowded and understaffed. He expressed concern for issues that haven't been solved by the District and stated that it is time for the Board and District to take the complaints seriously. He asked the District to provide Voznesenka students with an education equal to other schools in the District. He quoted President Bush's mandate that "No child left behind" and added that in Voznesenka a whole generation is being left behind. Mr. Basargin distributed some information to the Board and administration and asked them to review it and added that he would speak again at a future Board meeting.

Dr. Anderson stated that he has heard some preliminary news that the East End Road may be extended though federal funding.

#### SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:

Dr. Peterson reported that the second semester began Monday, January 21. She thanked the Board and presented each member with a key chain in honor of School Board Recognition month.

#### FINANCIAL REPORTS:

Mrs. Douglas presented the financial report of the District for the period ending December 31, 2001. She noted that the year-to-date health care costs are exceeding FY01 costs by 9% on an annual basis and utilities costs will exceed the amount budgeted if the current trend continues.

#### BUDGET TRANSFER REPORT:

Mrs. Douglas reported on quarterly budget transfers Numbers 38 through 170 for various schools and departments within the District.

#### CONSENT AGENDA:

Items presented on the Consent Agenda were Approval of Resignation; Warehouse Truck Replacement; and New Teacher Appointment.

#### Resignation:

Mr. Syverson recommended the Board approve a resignation from Jacqueline D. Bock, special education/preschool (unpaid leave of absence 2001-2002 school year), Sears Elementary.

#### Warehouse Truck Replacement:

Mrs. Douglas recommended the Board request the Kenai Peninsula Borough to amend the Equipment Replacement Fund Policy to include equipment acquisitions for the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, and request the Kenai Peninsula Borough to appropriate funds in an amount not to exceed \$85,000 for the acquisition of a tandem axle truck for local deliveries between the District warehouse and schools.

#### New Teacher Appointment:

Mr. Syverson recommended the Board approve a teacher assignment for the 2001-2002 school year for Elizabeth DeVold, (temporary) librarian/third grade, Sterling Elementary.

Ms. Germano moved the Board approve Consent Agenda Items Numbers 1 through 3. Mrs. Crawford seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

POLICY REVISION:

Dr. Whiteley recommended the Board approve revisions to BP 6146 (Graduation Requirements/Standards of Proficiency - The Certified Diploma). Dr. Whiteley reminded the Board that the revisions bring the District in compliance with state statutes regarding the High School Graduation Qualifying Exam.

Ms. Germano moved the Board approve revisions to BP 6146 (Graduation Requirements/Standards of Proficiency - The Certified Diploma). Mr. Poindexter seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

FIRST READING OF POLICY REVISIONS:

The Board heard a first reading of AR 5141.4 (Students – Child Abuse and Neglect). The revision clarifies the reporting and filing procedures for suspected child abuse or neglect.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Miss Lockwood stated that her overall comment was “wow” and observed that many people attended who have strong emotional feelings. She noted that hearing the comments was good experience for her.

Mr. Poindexter stated that he was impressed with the testimony and shared most of the feelings that were expressed. He stated that while he was teaching he averaged twelve to fourteen hours per day at school, spent his own money, and noted that his retirement income qualifies his children for free lunch. He stated that he has been a substitute custodian, a coach, and has driven school busses. He stated that he is on the Board to make a difference. He stated that he taught in the days when the District had money and noted that his two younger children are not receiving the same opportunities that his two older children received. He attributes the difference in his children’s education to the dwindling dollars and the two-tier system. Mr. Poindexter stated that his oldest daughter has a teaching degree from the University of Idaho and really wants to teach but was offered a job with the federal government and after five years of working, will earn approximately \$60,000 annually. He stated that she could not earn that amount of money after twenty years as a teacher. He stated that originally he had decided not to go to the Association of Alaska School Boards (AASB) Legislative Fly-In in Juneau because he did not think the Board’s budget could afford the trip, but may reconsider after hearing the testimony. He stated that he would like to have an executive session to talk about negotiation philosophy.

BOARD COMMENTS (continued):

Mrs. Gilman thanked the Skyview choir for singing the *Star Spangled Banner*. She thanked those who attended and added that the comments made by Mrs. Withrow about growing up on the Kenai Peninsula reminded her of why she is serving on the Board. She stated that she also grew up on the Kenai Peninsula, graduated from high school in the District, attended college to become a teacher, and loves children. She stated that her husband also grew up on the Kenai Peninsula, became an attorney and moved back to take advantage of the student loan forgiveness program. She stated that she and her husband talked seriously about moving to a larger city to earn more

money but felt that the Kenai Peninsula is a great place to raise children. She stated that the Board and administration needs to pay attention to the comments that were made and travel to Juneau along with parents, teachers, students and community members to explain to legislators that the District needs money. She stated that the group should go with a single voice. She pointed out that the state is in a fiscal gap and that there should be a cap on state spending but expected that education will be at the top of the priority list. She stated that unfortunately, the state should impose an income tax and that the community should be prepared to “give from our own pockets” because education is important.

Ms. Germano thanked the Skyview High swing choir for singing and Redoubt Elementary for the school report. She thanked those present for staying to hear the Board comments and for the respect of allowing the Board to speak. She stated that each year the School Board members travel to Juneau to lobby the legislature along with the Association of Alaska School Boards. She stated that Board members are the usual suspects and cannot lobby the legislature alone. She stated that the Board needs the help of parents and teachers to affect the change that is necessary. She stated that legislators tend to hear from the same groups and encouraged all communities to get involved and help with the lobbying effort. She stated that staff development is an issue the Board struggles with during the budget process. She stated that teachers must be compensated and good staff development must be available as well as materials and that utilities must be paid, which is difficult. She stated that her family moved to the Kenai Peninsula when her children were young and that her daughter’s class had twenty-six students. She reiterated that all members of the community needed to help.

Mr. Arness expressed his appreciation for the Skyview High swing choir’s singing of the *Star Spangled Banner* and the Redoubt Elementary school presentation. He stated that many of the people in attendance are friends that he has known for a long time. He stated that he hopes they will still be friends next year. He stated he attended the January 18 Ground Rules meeting and has his own version of what happened. He stated that he did not like being “kicked about” over what happened at the Friday meeting. He stated that he really does not like the fact that this year, for the first time, the Association has leadership that has made no effort to get along with the District team and made no effort to contact the team. He stated that it is a different year and he is apprehensive. He stated that the Board will have an executive session to talk about negotiations and admitted that he was somewhat squeamish on Friday. He stated that it is absolutely his intent that the District will go back to the ground rules table in good faith and believes that the problems will be solved. He stated that he hopes he does not lose friends over the negotiations process. He stated that it is very discouraging.

#### BOARD COMMENTS (continued)

Mrs. Crawford, stated that she enjoyed hearing the Skyview High swing choir and the Redoubt Elementary School report. She stated that it was interesting to be a part of the conference call with the legislature prior to the meeting and to hear their “well, we don’t know”, “we are not sure” and “we can’t promise adequate funding” responses and then to hear forty-four different people testify for more funding. She stated that the Board has a big job ahead and the biggest part of the solution will have to come from the legislature. She stated that it is an uphill battle and that the District will have to work together along with parents and teachers. She stated that she hopes that negotiations doesn’t tear the District apart.

Mrs. Mullins thanked the Skyview High swing choir for singing the *Star Spangled Banner*. She thanked the Kenai Central High School student council executive board for the recognition. She expressed her appreciation for the Redoubt Elementary School report and added that she wished that bilingual education could be offered at the elementary level. She stated that she listened to the public comments and heard everything that was said and noted that it felt like *deja vu* from 1986 and 1987. She stated that she agreed with 95% of the comments and disagreed with 5% of the comments. She stated that she wished that there was something in her power to eliminate the conflict. She stated that respect is a two-way street.

Dr. Anderson stated that he appreciated the presentations from Ms. McKay, Mrs. Romberg and Mr. Meacham and considers them good friends. He stated that he enjoyed the Redoubt Elementary school report. He informed the public that the Board has been lobbying the legislature about every two weeks and that the Board met with legislators via conference phone prior to the Board meeting. He stated that Senator Jerry Ward actually talked to the Board for the very first time since he has been a Board member and made some positive comments. He reported that Senator Ward did not promise adequate funding but wanted to get early funding. He reported that Senator Ward stated that his committee would consider the A+ Study and talked about an educational endowment fund. He stated that the Kenai Peninsula legislators have been very supportive of education, unlike other legislators. He reported that Mr. Navarre approached the Board during a break in the Board meeting and recognized that the District does not have any money and offered to try to locate money to send people (other than School Board members) to Juneau to lobby the legislature. He stated that he agreed with 95% of what was said and the rest of the comments he may not agree with. He stated that the main concern is not only well-being of the employees but the well-being of the children.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

At 10:54 p.m., Germano moved the Board go into executive session to discuss matters, the immediate knowledge of which would clearly have an adverse effect upon the finances of the Borough. Specifically, the executive session was to discuss negotiations. Mr. Arness seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURN EXECUTIVE SESSION:

At 12:02 a.m., Ms. Germano moved the executive session be adjourned. Mr. Poindexter seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURN:

At 12:03 a.m., Mr. Arness moved the School Board Meeting be adjourned. Mr. Poindexter seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dr. Nels Anderson, President

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Mrs. Sammy Crawford, Clerk

The Minutes of January 21, 2002,  
were approved as on February 4, 2002  
as written.