

Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Board of Education Meeting Minutes

February 17, 2003 – 7:30 p.m.

Regular Meeting – 148 N. Binkley, Soldotna, Alaska

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:

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

STAFF PRESENT:

Dr. Donna Peterson, Superintendent of Schools
 Mrs. Melody Douglas, Chief Financial Officer
 Dr. Gary Whiteley, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction

OTHERS PRESENT:

Mrs. Angie Richardson	Miss Jenni Dillon
Mrs. Christine Ermold	Mrs. Teresa Brown
Mr. Jim White	Mrs. Lauri Lingafelt
Mr. Sam Stewart	Mr. Dave Spence
Mr. Rick Matiya	Mr. Gene Dyson
Mr. Bob Ermold	Ms. Terri Woodward
Mr. Hans Bilben	Mr. Tim Peterson
Mrs. Cheryl Sotello	Mrs. Jackie Ansotegui
Mr. Ed Sotello	Mr. Ty Mann-Schweigert
Mr. Dave Carey	

Others present not identified.

CALL TO ORDER:

Mrs. Crawford called the meeting to order at 7:32 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

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

ROLL CALL:

(Tape 1, 80)

Dr. Nels Anderson	Present
Ms. Deborah Germano	Present
Mrs. Sammy Crawford	Present
Mr. Joe Arness	Absent/excused
Mrs. Debra Mullins	Present
Mrs. Margaret Gilman	Present
Mr. Al Poindexter	Present
Mr. Cameron Poindexter	Present

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

(Tape 1, 104)

The agenda was approved as written.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

(Tape 1, 118)

The School Board Minutes of February 3, 2003, were approved as printed.

SCHOOL REPORT:

(Tape 1, 133)

Mrs. Christine Ermold, Cooper Landing regional principal, gave a history of the school, explained multi-grade instruction, listed the challenges of teaching at a small school, reviewed school test scores, outlined the school goals, and provided quotes from students.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:

(Tape 2, 746)

Mrs. Shellie Worsfold, Montessori Charter School parent, explained that the Montessori Charter School would like to expand and asked the Board for support in locating additional classroom space within the Soldotna Elementary facility.

Mr. Dennis Shaeffer, Montessori Charter School parent, stated that the school would like to grow and still be able to use the resources at Soldotna Elementary and asked the Board not to consider use of school space for administration office space.

Mrs. Brenda Johnson, Montessori Charter School parent, encouraged the Board to provide a place for her daughter's Montessori education program.

Mrs. Melissa Eby, Montessori Charter School parent, expressed appreciation that her daughter can attend school in a familiar and safe school facility.

Mrs. Laurie Shaeffer, Montessori Charter School parent, stated that her son's needs are being met through the school and asked the Board to allow the Charter School to continue with plans for expansion.

Mr. Timothy Reed, Montessori Charter School parent, stated that the Soldotna Elementary School building is better kept as a school or for use by the Boys and Girls Club and not for office space.

Mr. Rick Nelson, Montessori Charter School parent, explained that Montessori education is a unique way of teaching and learning that provides an alternative for parents.

Mr. Dave Carey, City of Soldotna mayor and Skyview High School teacher, explained that the City of Soldotna is participating in the Red, White and Blue Program that encourages citizens to write weekly letters to those who are stationed in the military outside of the United States.

Mrs. Gilman asked Mr. Carey how students can get more information about the Red, White and Blue Program. Mr. Carey explained that information will be available on the City of Soldotna website.

Mr. Gregory Zorbas introduced his two children and stated that he and his family do not want to be transferred to Seward because they have built a home and have established a life in the Central Peninsula area.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS: Dr. Peterson reported that a variety of correspondence was included in the Board's information packet related to items on the agenda and the 2003-2004 budget. She stated that the District website is featured in the January issue of the Innovative Teaching Newsletter.
(Tape 2, 1358)

ADVISORY COMMITTEE, SITE COUNCIL, AND/OR P.T.A., K.P.A.A., K.P.E.A., K.P.E.S.A.:
(Tape 2, 1404)

Ms. Terri Woodward, KPESA president, asked the Board to inform employees that their position is being eliminated before the information is posted on the District website.

Ms. Germano explained that the Board packet information is a public document and is posted on the District website before she receives it in the mail. She stated that efforts were made to notify employees about reductions in force or involuntary transfers beforehand.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:
(Tape 2, 1681)

Dr. Peterson announced that there will be a joint budget worksession with the Assembly, February 18 at 1:00 p.m. She reported that Mr. Syverson is attending a class on risk management, Mrs. Douglas will testify to the legislature regarding the Area Cost Study, and that the Board will attend the AASB Legislative Fly-In, February 21-25.

Financial Report:
(Tape 2, 1740)

Mrs. Douglas presented the financial report of the District for the period ending January 31, 2003.

BOARD REPORTS:
(Tape 2, 1766)

Mr. Poindexter reported that he was recently a guest speaker at the Anchor Point Chamber of Commerce. He stated that he updated the community about the District's budget concerns.

Ms. Germano reported that she shared information about the District's budget problems during a Homer City Council meeting and added that the community seemed interested in providing assistance.

Mrs. Crawford reported that the job shadowing program at Kenai Central High was featured at the Kenai Chamber of Commerce meeting on Wednesday, February 12. She stated that the partnership between the school, local businesses, and the State of Alaska Job Center involved 100 juniors shadowing employees of many different businesses throughout the area. She stated that she attended the K-Beach Elementary School Board recognition activity.

CONSENT AGENDA:
(Tape 2, 1901)

Items presented on the Consent Agenda were Approval of Request for Leave of Absence - Certified, Outsourcing for Homer High School Baseball and Softball, and Resignation.

Request for Leave of Absence - Certified:

Mr. Syverson recommended the Board approve an unpaid leave of absence request for the 2003-2004 school year for Britt Praker, school psychologist, Soldotna Elementary.

**Outsourcing for Homer High School
Baseball and Softball:**

Mr. Syverson recommended the Board approve an outsource agreement from General Buckner Post #16/Auxiliary Unit #16 for the Homer High School Baseball and Softball Club 2002-2003 spring activity season.

Resignation:

Mr. Syverson recommended the Board approve a resignation (effective February 10, 2003) from David Little, assistive technology specialist, Kenai Central High School.

MOTION:

Ms. Germano moved the Board approve Consent Agenda Items Numbers 1 through 3. Dr. Anderson seconded.

Ms. Germano commented that the Homer community has worked hard to provide money to sponsor the baseball and softball programs and added that more programs throughout the District could be provided in the same manner.

Motion carried unanimously.

2003-2004 Administrator Contracts:
(Tape 2, 1996)

On behalf of Mr. Syverson, Dr. Peterson recommended the Board approve a list of building administrator and Central Office contracts for the 2003-2004 school year. She noted that this is the first time in four years that the list did not contain vacancies.

MOTION:

Ms. Germano moved the Board approve the 2003-2004 administrator contracts. Mrs. Gilman seconded.

Ms. Gilman asked whether there was an increase in the number of administrators over last year. Dr. Peterson replied that there were no increases in the number of administrator positions.

Motion carried unanimously.

**2003-2004 Tentative Tenure
Teacher Assignments:**
(Tape 2, 2085)

On behalf of Mr. Syverson, Dr. Peterson recommended the Board approve a list of tentative tenure teacher assignments for the 2003-2004 school year. Dr. Peterson explained that the District has an obligation to approve the tenure teacher list in February but not by location. She stated that involuntary transfer meetings with teachers will be scheduled as soon as the plan for the process is approved. She stated that the administrators were informed about the teacher assignments on Wednesday, February 12.

Mrs. Maria Goins, Ninilchik resident, pointed out that 69 students are projected for Ninilchik Elementary with only two elementary teachers listed on the tentative tenure teacher assignments list and expressed concern that the students would be divided among only two teachers. Dr. Peterson explained that the list before the Board is only those teachers who have achieved tenure. Dr. Whiteley further explained that one of the elementary teachers is on a leave of absence and another is on sabbatical leave.

Mr. Ed Sotello, Cooper Landing Elementary teacher, suggested the administration ask teachers to volunteer to transfer first before making involuntary transfers.

MOTION:

Ms. Germano moved the Board approve the list of 2003-2004 tentative tenure teacher assignments. Mrs. Mullins seconded.

**2003-2004 Tentative Tenure
Teacher Assignments:**

(continued)

Mrs. Gilman asked if the Board is also considering the approval of site locations for each teacher on the tentative tenure list. Dr. Peterson responded that the Board is considering the approval of a list of teachers who have employment with the District. She stated that some of the location assignments have already been made but that the list is a fluid document. She stated that requests for transfers are not due to Central Office until April 15. She stated that there are opportunities for teachers to step forward and volunteer to move. She explained that the administration is proceeding with the transfer of teachers to the locations where they are listed on the 2003-2004 tentative tenure teacher assignments list. She stated that there is a process outlined in the bargaining agreement for teachers who refuse to be transferred.

Mrs. Gilman stated that she feels that the District has a responsibility to personally speak to each teacher who is being transferred before the information is made public.

Motion carried unanimously.

Staff Reduction Plan:

(Tape 2, 2648)

On behalf of Mr. Syverson, Dr. Peterson recommended the Board approve a staff reduction plan that includes the components of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation.

MOTION:

Ms. Germano moved the Board approve the proposed staff reduction plan. Mrs. Mullins seconded.

Dr. Anderson asked Dr. Peterson whether the staff reduction plan had to be approved before other portions of the plan could be approved which made it difficult to notify teachers about potential transfers. He agreed with Mrs. Gilman that the Board should notify teachers prior to a change in their assignment but recognized that the plan had not been approved yet. Dr. Peterson stated that it would have been better to publicize the tentative tenure teacher list without the assignments.

Mrs. Crawford explained that for the first time, tenure teacher assignments are a challenge because of the No Child Left Behind certification requirements. Dr. Peterson stated that the District will be audited in April 2003 and must show progress towards the certification requirement. She added that the District does not have to be fully in compliance with the certification mandates until January 2006 (fall of 2005).

Ms. Germano asked that future tentative tenure teacher lists include the certifications for each teacher.

Mrs. Gilman asked the administration to preface all information regarding teacher assignments with an explanation that these decisions are strictly made in order to be in compliance with federal government mandates and are not requirements of the District. Dr. Peterson noted that the NCLB certificate mandates affect every certificated person and added that her own teaching certificate is worthless in 2008.

Motion carried unanimously.

Science Curriculum:

(Tape 2, 2949)

Dr. Whiteley recommended the Board approve the science curriculum. He noted that the changes recommended by the Board at the February 3 worksession have been incorporated into the document.

MOTION:

Mr. Poindexter moved the Board approve the science curriculum. Dr. Anderson seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS/
COMMENTS:**

(Tape 2, 3023)

Mr. Hans Bilben suggested that the District provide training opportunities for teachers to become compliant with the NCLB certification requirement. He wished Dr. Peterson good luck at the National Superintendent's conference.

Dr. Whiteley stated that the District intends to offer classes and training to support teachers in becoming "highly qualified." He stated that many secondary teachers do not have endorsements in the areas they are teaching. He stated that the administration was just recently informed that one way for a teacher to become considered "highly qualified" is to successfully take the PRAXIS II content area subtest in the area they are teaching.

Mrs. Connie Ferguson asked if there was an Alaskan commission established to review the special needs necessary for Alaska regarding the

NCLB legislation.

Dr. Peterson explained that two members of the NCLB Alaskan committee are from the Kenai Peninsula. She stated that the waiver report (to be submitted to the federal government) has already been prepared and will be defended by Dr. Whiteley and others. Dr Whiteley stated that the peer review report will be presented on March 12 and 13 in Juneau. He stated that the state will be requesting some flexibility from the federal government.

Mrs. Laurie Schaeffer expressed support for Mrs. Zorbas and noted that she was a significant positive influence in her children's lives.

Mrs. Jackie Ansotegui reported on the K-Beach Elementary School's participation in the Artists-in-Residence Program and called attention to student artwork hanging on the walls of the Borough Administration Building Assembly Chambers.

BOARD COMMENTS:

(Tape 2, 3605)

Mr. Poindexter thanked Mrs. Ermold for an excellent presentation regarding Cooper Landing Elementary and noted that she is an accomplished public speaker. He thanked the parents from the Montessori Charter School for their comments. He commended Mr. Carey for his participation in the Red, White and Blue Program. He explained that state law specifies that if a District implements a reduction in staff, the Board must release nontenure teachers first. He stated that in order to fill the gaps created by the loss of nontenured teachers, the District must first use tenured teachers. He stated that District administrators are trying very hard to accommodate teachers and match certifications with job vacancies. He stated that hopefully the legislature will help with additional funding for education.

BOARD COMMENTS:

(continued)

Mrs. Mullins stated that the Board participated in a depressing worksession to discuss staff reduction and the FY04 budget. She stated that the Board will have a meeting with the Borough Assembly on February 18 at 1:00 p.m. to hopefully develop some solutions. She expressed appreciation for Mrs. Ermold's school presentation. She stated that she hopes the Board can come to a conclusion regarding classroom space for the students at the Montessori Charter School. She apologized for the involuntary transfer process and noted that the District must abide by state law and the negotiated agreements. She stated that it is agonizing for the Board to make decisions that affect employee lives, especially when there is little support from the state and federal government.

Mrs. Gilman stated that it is absurd and absolutely incredible that according to NCLB legislation, Dr. Peterson will soon not be qualified to teach seventh grade and yet she holds a teaching certificate, principal certificate, and is the district superintendent. She thanked Mrs. Ermold for the Cooper Landing School report and noted that she is a talented public speaker. She noted that Board decisions are not made lightly and that members agonize deeply about them. She suggested to those present to attend the community production of *The*

Wiz. She stated that it is an awesome show with amazing special effects. She noted that school district staff and students are in the performance.

Ms. Germano noted that Homer High is performing *Les Miserables* February 20-23, which includes 95 students and the Kenai Peninsula Orchestra.

Dr. Whiteley explained that 13 months ago the administration notified Mrs. Larned that there probably would not be additional space at Soldotna Elementary School for the Montessori Charter School because of current needs. He explained that although the Charter agreement did suggest growth, the original Charter contract specifies two classrooms for the next five years.

Ms. Germano asked whether doubling the size of a charter school in one year would be cause for concern. Dr. Whiteley stated that if the Charter School grows to four classrooms, they will probably need a part-time administrator because Central Office staff already performs quite a bit of support.

Mrs. Crawford explained that the District is now seeing the results and the faces of the people who are impacted by the decision to increase the pupil-teacher ratio. She stated that this is a very difficult time and expressed appreciation for the positive comments and suggestions offered by the public. She thanked Mrs. Ermold for the school report and Mr. Carey for his work promoting the Red, White and Blue Program. She thanked the Montessori Charter School parents for their attendance. She asked Board members to sign up on the high school graduation ceremony list. She reminded Board members to attend the joint FY04 budget worksession with the Borough Assembly.

ADJOURN:
(Tape 2, 4828)

At 9:01 p.m., Mrs. Mullins moved the School Board Meeting be adjourned. Ms. Germano seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Joe Arness, President

Mrs. Deborah Germano, Clerk

were approved on March 3, 2003
as written.