

---

# Kenai Peninsula Borough School District

## Board of Education Meeting Minutes

---

May 2, 2005 – 7:00 p.m.  
Regular Meeting

**Seward High School**  
2100 Swetmann, Seward, Alaska

**SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:** Mrs. Sammy Crawford, President  
Ms. Sandra Wassilie, Vice President  
Mrs. Debra Mullins, Clerk  
Mrs. Margaret Gilman, Treasurer  
Ms. Deborah Germano  
Dr. Nels Anderson  
Mrs. Debbie Brown  
Mr. Marty Anderson  
Mrs. Sunni Hilts  
Mr. DJ Tyson, Student Representative

**STAFF PRESENT:** Dr. Donna Peterson, Superintendent of Schools  
Mrs. Melody Douglas, Chief Financial Officer  
Mr. Sam Stewart, Assistant Superintendent  
Mr. Guy Fisher, Assistant Superintendent

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Mr. David Kingsland	Mr. John Cote
Mrs. Vanta Shafer	Mrs. Cathy Carrow
Mrs. Jeanette Kimes	Miss Amy Collman
Mr. Gary Superman	Mr. Robin Collman
Mrs. Katie Turnbull	Mr. Jim White
Mr. Charlie Walsworth	Mrs. Paula Christensen
Mr. Chad Atkinson	Mrs. Norma Holmgaard
Mr. Steve Pautz	Mrs. Laura Beck
Ms. Lynn Hohl	

Others present not identified.

**CALL TO ORDER:** Mrs. Sammy Crawford called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:** Mrs. Crawford invited those present to participate in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**ROLL CALL:**

Mrs. Sammy Crawford	Present
Ms. Deborah Germano	Present
Mrs. Margaret Gilman	Present
Mrs. Debra Mullins	Present
Dr. Nels Anderson	Present
Ms. Sandra Wassilie	Present
Mrs. Debbie Brown	Present
Mr. Marty Anderson	Present
Mrs. Sunni Hilts	Present
Mr. DJ Tyson	Present

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** The agenda was approved with revisions to 10a.(4), Approval of Resignations, and 10a.(7), Approval of Teacher Terminations.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The School Board Minutes of April 18, 2005, were approved as printed.

**AWARDS AND  
PRESENTATIONS:**

The Board presented Mr. Chad Atkinson-Adams with the Spirit of Youth Award Nomination Certificate for volunteer hours spent adding a support structure to a multi-use bridge spanning Thacker Creek near Seward.

The Board presented Miss Amy Collman with the Boys and Girls Club Alaska Youth of the Year First Runner-Up Award.

**SCHOOL REPORT:**

Mr. David Kingsland, Seward Elementary principal, reported on the school's assessment scores, Title I tutoring program, reading program, and partnerships with other organizations. He gave a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the facility, staff, students, class projects, activities, and extended learning opportunities.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:**

Mr. Jerry Dixon, former District teacher, announced that he is considering enrolling his child in private school because the District has eliminated music, art, drama, exploratory classes, and reduced staff. He asked the Board to consider joining the lawsuit Moore versus the State of Alaska and announced that the Seward PTSA voted unanimously to join the lawsuit.

Dr. Shannon Atkinson expressed concern that the PSAT is an optional test for students and asked the Board to require that every child take the test. She asked the Board not to demolish the old Seward Middle School building.

Mrs. Janet Kimes expressed concern for early entrance exam deadline.

Mrs. Rhonda Hubbard, Seward Band and Choir Booster Association President, recapped the year's activities funded through the use of community memberships, grant funds, corporate sponsorships and local businesses. She stated that the community is demanding music in the schools and that the organization is trying to keep music alive in the schools until a music teacher can be hired.

**COMMUNICATIONS AND  
PETITIONS:**

Dr. Peterson noted that she received correspondence regarding housing for Fireweed Charter at West Homer Elementary and KPAA career development reports from administrators.

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

Dr. Marlin Atkinson, Seward PTSA president, noted that the group's enrollment is increasing and that communications to the membership are made by email and newsletters. He noted that the group is working with Seward schools and student councils to reduce the amount of sugar in vending machines. He reported that the PTSA unanimously voted to show interest in becoming involved in the lawsuit Moore et al versus the State of Alaska and noted that an adequacy survey will be mailed to the community and the results will determine whether the group will proceed.

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

Ms. Lynn Hohl, Alaska PTA representative, reported on the recent four-day annual convention and noted that several District students were selected as winners in the Reflections art competition and that Ms. Melissa Olver, Seward High art teacher, was chosen as the Alaska PTA Teacher of the Year. She reported on the business conducted at the convention and announced that she was reelected as the region IV vice president. She asked those present for pictures of PTA activities that can be used for the 50th anniversary celebration in two years.

Mr. Peter Sprague, Assembly Member, recognized Assembly President Gary Superman. He informed the Board about Resolution Number 2005-036 which determines the amount the Borough will contribute to the School District budget. He encouraged those present to speak to Assembly members in support of funding the District budget to the cap.

Mr. Gary Superman, Assembly President, stated that he does not expect the Assembly to vote on the Resolution 2005-036 on May 3 because there are a number of budget issues to discuss.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S  
REPORT:**

Dr. Peterson announced that Teacher Appreciation week is May 1 through 7 and asked the public to acknowledge and thank teachers. She announced that she will attend the Mt. View Site Council meeting to answer questions regarding consolidation. She reported that she will meet with U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski on Wednesday, May 4 and noted that it will provide a chance to talk about how the NCLB Act impacts the District. She announced that interviews for the Redoubt Elementary principal position are scheduled for Thursday, May 5 at 4:45 p.m. She stated that she will conduct a staffing conversation with the Seldovia community on Friday, May 6 at 3:00 p.m. She noted that the end of the legislative session will be May 10. She reminded the Board that the BP Teachers of Excellence recognition dinner will be held on May 16. She stated that she will conduct a staffing conversation with the Port Graham community on May 17 at 7:00 pm.

**BOARD REPORTS:**

Ms. Wassilie reported that she attended the NSBA Annual Convention in San Diego, April 15 through 19 and that a written report has been shared with the Board. She stated that parity in funding and narrowing of the curriculum are huge national issues. She reported that many schools around the country are losing arts and music programs. She stated that she attended the Career and Technical Education Advisory Committee meeting on April 26 and reported that the group is developing a five-year plan which includes several proposals to provide a more organized program in career and technical education particularly at grades 7-12.

**BOARD REPORTS:**  
(continued)

Mrs. Mullins reported that she attended the AASB Legislative Fly-in in Juneau. She reported that she and Mrs. Crawford had appointments with 33 legislators (members of House and Senate HESS and Finance Committees). She stated that although the legislators understand the funding problems on the Kenai Peninsula, they are unsure whether anything can be done. She reported that she spoke to legislators about the base student allocation, school construction and major maintenance, and state retirement system. She reported that while she was in Juneau the retirement bill was tied to base student allocation legislation and if the bill doesn't pass the base allocation will be reduced. She reported that the school construction and major maintenance bill was attached with the area cost study legislation. She told legislators that since SB36 the Kenai Peninsula has been short-funded by \$10 million each year. She stated that the Board does not want to harm children anywhere in the state but students on the Kenai Peninsula are being harmed and need to be made whole. She encouraged those present to send a note to all legislators regarding funding because legislators are not hearing from mothers and fathers or community members.

Mrs. Crawford reported that the AASB Legislative Fly-in was an intense and grueling experience. She thanked Representative Chenault for attaching the area cost study to the school construction and major maintenance bill and passing it through the House. She noted that deadlines are fast approaching since the legislature adjourns on May 10. She thanked Dr. Anderson for his guest editorial in the Anchorage Daily News and noted that many legislators made comments about it. She stated that she reminded legislators about the loss of state revenue sharing by boroughs and subsequent budget cuts. She stated that the help received from AASB in making the area cost study a top priority for lobbying efforts was tremendous.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Items presented on the Consent Agenda were Approval of High School Graduation Qualifying Exam Waiver No. 2005-06; Nontenure Teachers for Tenure, 2005-06; Tentative Nontenure Teacher Assignments, 2005-06; Resignations; Administrator Appointment; Teacher Assignment, 2004-05; and Terminations.

**APPROVAL OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION QUALIFYING EXAM WAIVER NO. 2005-06:**

Mr. Stewart recommended the Board approve a High School Graduation Qualifying Exam Waiver from student request Number 2005-06.

**NONTENURE TEACHERS FOR TENURE, 2005-06:**

Mr. Fisher recommended the Board approve Deborah Harris, Timothy McFarland, Janet Szajkowski, Suzanne Bishop, Dawn Brighton, Andrea Cacek, Christopher Towne, Augusta Lind, Lori Krier, Jennifer McDonald, Galen Brantley, Matthew Fischer, and Susan Larned, tentative nontenured teachers, for tenure.

**TENTATIVE NONTENURE  
TEACHER ASSIGNMENTS,  
2005-06:**

Mr. Fisher recommended the Board approve tentative nontenure teacher assignments for the 2005-2006 school year for Suzanne Phillips, Grade 8, Aurora Borealis; Nancy Kleine, (temporary) Homer Area/ATOSS, Connections; Anne E. Peel, Special Education emotionally handicapped, Homer Middle; Christine Faber, (temporary) Title I/Migrant/Special Education, Kachemak Selo; Ingrid McKinstry, (temporary) .50 FTE Migrant/Title I teacher, Razdolna; Barbara Baldwin, (temporary) Title I Reading teacher, Redoubt Elementary; MaryEllen Dalberg, (temporary) .60 FTE Title I teacher, Seward Elementary; Naomi Fischer, math/science teacher, Seward Middle; Mark Woodward, language arts/social studies, Seward Middle; Karl Kircher, (temporary) Title V reading teacher, Soldotna Middle School; Alissa Mattson, English, Soldotna High School; Kathleen Holt, Grades K-2, Soldotna Montessori; Ann McCabe, Grades 1-3, Soldotna Montessori; Michael Audette, music, Sterling Elementary; Leah Dubber, social studies/math, Susan B. English Elementary/High; Tamara Johnson, (.50 FTE permanent/.25 FTE temporary) Grades-K-6, Susan B. English Elementary/High; Timothy Winters, Grades 7-12, Susan B. English Elementary/High; Lucas Peless, secondary generalist, Tebughna Elementary/High; Kristen Peless, Grades K-8, Tebughna Elementary/High; and Linda Etzwiler, (temporary) Title I/Migrant teacher, Voznesenka.

**RESIGNATIONS:**

Mr. Fisher recommended the Board approve resignations for Stan J. Eller, biology, Homer High School; Danielle Thompson, speech language pathologist, Homer Middle; Hans Bilben, vocational education, Kenai Alternative; Charlotte Records, (currently on leave of absence for the 04-05 school year), Ninilchik Elementary/High; Jeanne Sorenson, Grades 1 and 2, Sears Elementary; Jeanne Frederickson, Grade 6, Seward Elementary; Janice Kristenson, kindergarten, Seward Elementary; and DeEtta Scarborough, Grade 3, Seward Elementary; Mark Devenney, special education/resource, Soldotna High; and Charity Winters, special education/resource, Susan B. English Elementary/High.

**ADMINISTRATOR  
APPOINTMENT:**

Dr. Peterson recommended the Board approve the appointment of Todd Syverson as Soldotna High School principal.

**TEACHER ASSIGNMENT,  
2004-2005:**

Mr. Fisher recommended the Board approve a teacher assignment for 2004-2005 for Christy Mulyca, (temporary) business/technology education at Seward High School.

**TERMINATIONS:**

Mr. Fisher recommended the Board approve the termination of 2 employees for failure to return a signed contract for the 2005-2006 school year.

**MOTION**

Ms. Germano moved the Board approve Consent Agenda Items Numbers 1 through 7. Ms. Wassilie seconded.

Ms. Germano requested that Item Number 10a.(2), Approval of Nontenure Teachers for Tenure, be removed.

Motion carried unanimously for Consent Agenda Items Numbers 1 and 3 through 7.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**  
(continued)

Ms. Germano stated that she does not support Number 10a.(2).

Mrs. Brown stated that she will abstain from voting on Number 10a.(2) since a family member is listed in the recommendation.

**VOTE ON ITEM 10a.(2)**

Advisory Vote – YES

YES – Hiltz, N. Anderson, M. Anderson, Gilman, Mullins, Wassilie, Crawford

NO – Germano

ABSTAIN - Brown

Motion carried.

Mrs. Brown asked how many resignations have been received from teachers and administrators. Dr. Peterson replied that she will supply the number at the next Board meeting.

**HOUSING FOR FIREWEED ACADEMY:**

Mr. Guy Fisher presented five options to be considered regarding growth options for Fireweed Academy Charter School for 2005-2006.

Mr. Charlie Walsworth, West Homer Elementary principal, reviewed the details of the Fireweed Charter School housing issues, and stated that the West Homer Elementary community is not in favor of the request for Fireweed Charter to move in and asked the Board for a one-year delay to study the unintended consequences.

Ms. Germano asked Mr. Walsworth how he would accommodate additional students. He stated that he would squeeze programs together which would compromise them.

Mrs. Crawford clarified that the capacity at West Homer Elementary School facility is 500 students. Mr. Walsworth responded that there are 20 classrooms that could hold 20 students.

Mr. Anderson asked how many special needs students are housed at West Homer Elementary. Mr. Walsworth replied that there are approximately 60 students on an IEP.

Mrs. Crawford welcomed the Homer audience who were listening and participating at Homer High School via videoconference connection.

Videoconference Participant: Ms. Janet Fink, teacher, requested the Board not move Fireweed Academy to West Homer Elementary School because it is not in the best interest of West Homer students.

Mr. Guy Fisher explained the difference between closing schools and the relocation of schools.

**HOUSING FOR FIREWEED  
ACADEMY:**  
(continued)

Videoconference Participant: Mr. Garry Betley, APC Committee Community Representative, stated that after a review of the five options provided by the administration, the move to West Homer Elementary makes the best sense and added that the Fireweed Academy Charter School is willing to work through the differences.

Mrs. Brown asked Mr. Betley about the possibility of moving Fireweed Academy to Homer Middle School. He replied that Fireweed Academy is not interested in moving younger students (Grades 3 through 6) with students in Grades 7 and 8.

Ms. Germano reminded the Board that the idea to consider classrooms at Homer Middle School was discussed during the April worksession. She added that the two classrooms that were offered were smaller than the portables currently being used by Fireweed Academy.

Mrs. Gilman asked why adding a third portable to Paul Banks Elementary would not be a viable solution. Mr. Betley replied that the third portable would be located on the opposite side of the school which is too long of a commute for students and teachers.

Videoconference Participant: Ms. Kris Owens, Fireweed Academy teacher, stated that the school needs to grow and does not have space and asked the Board to consider the most cost effective solution.

Videoconference Participant: Ms. Catie Bursch, Homer parent, stated that Fireweed Charter School has been housed in portables for eight years and added that parents from each school should be able to work through their differences in the interest of education for students.

Videoconference Participant: Mrs. Nell Gustafson, Homer parent, stated that if two schools are housed in the same building they should have equal PTR and asked the Board to give the community a year to examine the proposal in more detail.

Videoconference Participant: Mr. Brad Faulkner, Fireweed Charter School parent, compared the square footage for students in each school and then read from Chief Justice Warren Berger's comments regarding Brown versus the Board of Education.

Videoconference Participant: Mr. Brian Hirsch stated that students should be able to share public school buildings and asked the Board to consider moving Fireweed Charter School into classrooms at West Homer Elementary School.

Videoconference Participant: Ms. Heather Tonga, West Homer Elementary, stated that she supports the move of Fireweed Academy Charter School to West Homer because students at both schools are the same age and grade level and should be housed in similar quality buildings.

**HOUSING FOR FIREWEED  
ACADEMY:**  
(continued)

Videoconference Participant: Ms. Karen DeVaney, West Homer Elementary, summarized the school classroom space, recapped the size of the current classes for a total of 263 students, and explained that West Homer does not have 3 extra classrooms to give to Fireweed Charter School.

Videoconference Participant: Mr. Gary Ault, Fireweed Charter parent, stated that Fireweed Charter students are housed in substandard facilities and deserve a state of art facility and learning experience.

Videoconference Participant: Ms. Catrin Lovett, West Homer Elementary parent, asked the Board why the Fireweed housing issue was kept a secret. She suggested that the District may be exposed to lawsuits if student IEPs are not met because they are being crowded into smaller spaces and recommended that classrooms at McNeil Canyon Elementary School be considered.

Ms. Germano shared a letter from Mr. Walsworth dated January 31 summarizing the Fireweed Charter School housing discussion with dates beginning in January 2005 and noted that information was distributed to the community.

Videoconference Participant: Ms. Kiki Abrahamson, Fireweed Charter School lead teacher, summarized the history of the search for a larger facility for the school and added that it is unfortunate that the issue has become so emotionally charged.

Mrs. Brown asked Ms. Abrahamson to explain the Fireweed Charter School lottery system. Ms. Abrahamson responded that a lottery system is mandated by the State and that the Fireweed School charter states that siblings will have preference. She further explained that the charter allows for a balance of girls and boys and if the enrollment includes more than 2/3 of one gender the lottery can be used to balance the gender.

Videoconference Participant: Ms. Debra Cary, West Homer Elementary parent, responded to earlier comments made regarding inequality between the two schools and reported that her son is in a class of 29 students compared to the Fireweed Charter School pupil/teacher ratio of 1:14 and added that she has chosen to send her child to West Homer because of the nice large facility where there is room to spread out.

Videoconference Participant: Ms. Lisa Krebs, Fireweed Charter parent, would like to see the school continue to grow and need to be housed at West Homer and added that she believes that the students at each school will do well together.

Videoconference Participant: Ms. Susan Brass, West Homer Elementary teacher, summarized the uses of each room and asked the Board to have a public hearing regarding the Fireweed Charter School relocation to West Homer Elementary.



**HOUSING FOR FIREWEED  
ACADEMY:**  
(continued)

Videoconference Participant: Ms. Betsy Brennand, Fireweed Charter School parent, noted that the school does not have a bathroom and stated that her child should not have to go to school in a moldy classroom when there is a public school supported by tax money with available space just a few miles away.

Videoconference Participant: Ms. Jocelyn Shiro-Westphal, Fireweed Charter School parent, stated that it is disheartening for the Homer community to have animosity towards each other and asked why each group cannot work together to make the Fireweed Charter School relocation a reality.

Videoconference Participant: Ms. Bonnie Jason asked the Board to look to the opportunities of housing both schools together and expressed hope that parents and teachers of both schools can work together for the benefit of each student.

Videoconference Participant: Bonnie Powell, Fireweed Charter School parent, reported that in her work with Headstart throughout the state she has witnessed examples of collaboration in rural and urban areas and believes that it can happen in Homer.

Ms. Germano thanked Dr. Keffer for his assistance. Mrs. Crawford thanked Mr. Moon for setting up the technology.

**RECESS:**

At 9:23 p.m. Mrs. Crawford called a recess.

**RECONVENE AFTER  
RECESS:**

At 9:28 p.m. the Board reconvened in regular session.

**MOTION**

Dr. Anderson moved the Board approve Option 2 as presented by the administration, "Move Fireweed Academy to West Homer Elementary and house the program in three adjacent rooms." Mr. Anderson seconded.

Dr. Anderson stated that the Fireweed Charter School issue is a situation where parents wish to suppress opportunities of others because of perceived inequities. He noted that the pupil/teacher ratio comparisons are baseless because Fireweed Charter is configured with multi-age groups and noted that many of the Districts rural schools have comparable pupil/teacher ratios. He noted that there is a large difference between teaching in a multi-age classroom with 30 students than in a single-age classroom with 30 students. He stated that as a Board member he is responsible for the education of all of the students throughout the entire District and to suppress opportunities for some because of concern for unequal advantage for others is extremely bothersome. He stated that further meetings would rehash what has already been said and so the Board needs to make a decision and added that his decision is to move Fireweed Charter School to occupy rooms at West Homer Elementary.

**HOUSING FOR FIREWEED  
ACADEMY:**  
(continued)

Mrs. Hilts stated that she wished the Board had been involved with the Fireweed Charter relocation at the beginning and suggested that mediation might have helped resolve the situation. She stated that students should not have to attend school in physically inadequate facilities when there are adequate facilities available. She stated that if the Board approves Option 2 then an unbiased party will need to help the schools work through the problems addressing each issue. She stated that she will reluctantly support Option 2.

Mrs. Gilman stated that she has received over 50 emails and visited both facilities. She summarized the conditions of both Fireweed Charter School and West Homer Elementary. She stated that the Board has the responsibility to be the administrator for charter schools and noted that the Board needs to have a discussion about the relationship with the District's current charter schools and those to come in the future. She stated that the issue of equity has been mentioned by parents and related an example of inequity during the advertising and hiring of a Kenai Middle School teacher. She stated that comments have been made that the issue appears to be adult problems with petty things and noted that they become huge problems that need to be worked out, not only at West Homer, but at every charter school. She noted that the Board is not obligated to make a decision on the issue until the contract expires in 2006. She stated that both schools will fit in one building but before the Board forces the move there must be a bridge between the two communities otherwise the adults would fight with each other. She asked what would happen if the District were able to lower the pupil-teacher ratio and there were no classrooms available to house them. She stated that the Board needs to make decisions five years out. She stated that if West Homer grew to 400 students, the school would welcome all of them and noted that the Nikiski Elementary and North Star Elementary consolidation is not the same situation because the two schools operate under the same guidelines and staffing formula. She stated that at this time she cannot support the approval of Option 2 and suggested the Board approve Option 3 to add a portable at Fireweed Academy as a temporary situation. She stated that Option 3 would allow Fireweed Academy to expand and give the Board time to make decisions about its relationship with charter schools.

Mr. Anderson stated that the Board needs to make decisions now because students are in school right now. He stated that he would like to see how Nikiski North Star Elementary copes with 396 students and those that have special needs with the same amount of space. He stated that it is disturbing to hear parents say that they should not have to accommodate Fireweed Charter students at the expense of those at West Homer Elementary. He stated that it is difficult to plead for public money from legislators when public schools cannot share resources. He stated that during the past 20 years four area cost studies have been conducted, the pupil-teacher ratio has increased, and offerings have declined, and yet the Fireweed Charter School community has succeeded where the established system has not. He further explained that because the

**HOUSING FOR FIREWEED  
ACADEMY:**  
(continued)

charter school parents have found a way to meet their child's needs others wish to separate them. He stated that it was reported that Project GRAD and other programs not normally found at a school are being housed at West Homer Elementary. He asked those present to remember that children learn by the examples of others. He stated that he will support Option 2.

Ms. Wassilie explained that the Board has not explored the charter school contract relationships in depth. She clarified that if the Board approves Option 2 it will amend the contract. Ms. Wassilie asked whether the Fireweed Charter School agreement expires next year and whether the Board could force a de facto consolidation. Mr. Fisher replied that the Board can negotiate any type of contract with Fireweed Academy. Ms. Wassilie stated that the Board has failed to communicate partly because the charter school relationship is new to the Board. She stated that the Board is not involved in the day-to-day operations of charter schools which is why the Fireweed Charter School growth issue has only recently been brought to the Board. She stated that she is appalled to hear that in a large community students are in a building with no running water, bathroom facilities, or use of a cafeteria. She confirmed with Mr. Kingsland that with declining enrollment elementary schools have absorbed a number of community programs and have incorporated more space for special needs students and with increased enrollment, the space issue will surface. She stated that she is not sure that further discussion will change the public's opinion about where to house Fireweed Academy. She stated that if the school is relocated a plan must be developed outlining how the move will happen. She stated that she doesn't like forcing two schools together and would like Fireweed Academy to do some long range planning.

Ms. Germano stated that as charter schools grow the Board needs to manage them appropriately through policy. She stated that students should not have to pay the price for adult problems and when the Board chooses to study the issue further it is neglectful to the students. She stated that the Board has an obligation to look at the big picture and to accommodate the current students. She stated that although it will be a struggle, reasonable people can come to reasonable conclusions. She stated that she hopes that housing Fireweed Charter will be smooth and suggested that the issues be resolved through a third party. She stated that although there may be animosity she will do the right thing for all children.

Mrs. Brown stated that she may have to vote against the current motion because she does not understand the urgency of the decision when there is a contract with Fireweed Charter School. She stated that the Board has time to wait and suggested that the decision be postponed to the June meeting. She stated that she has read all of the information and correspondence and added that although she was not at the worksession, she thoroughly understands the issue. She stated that she has always supported the charter school concept but feels that the Board needs to maintain a balanced and professional view of how all needs of teachers and students are treated. She stated that she would prefer to postpone action because, in her experience, a lot of heartache can be avoided by allowing for one more public hearing.

**HOUSING FOR FIREWEED  
ACADEMY:**  
(continued)

Mrs. Crawford explained that Fireweed Charter School made a request to move to West Homer Elementary because they would like to prepare for school next fall and the enrollment season ends on May 13. Mr. Fisher noted that a move would affect both schools and they would need to have time to prepare.

Mrs. Brown asked whether a decision at the June 6 meeting would interfere drastically. Mr. Fisher stated that principals find it much easier to deal with future changes while students are still in school and parents are available. He stated that it would be more effective to give principals and teachers time to react to change before the end of the current school year.

Mrs. Mullins stated that she has received a number of phone calls and emails. She stated that she does not want to force the Fireweed Academy move until an agreement can be reached. She stated that she is saddened by the testimony and acknowledged that the move is probably the best decision for students but will not vote for the motion until she is assured that the parents of both schools can get along because it will create an explosive situation. She asked the Board to consider the option of assigning a working group comprised of administrators, parents and Board members to work on an agreement.

Mr. Tyson stated that as a student he would not want another separate program sharing the school facility because each group would feel as though they were intruding on the other. He expressed doubt that the students would blend because they are two separate entities.

Mrs. Crawford reminded those present that the buildings belong to the Borough and not to the staff at West Homer Elementary. She acknowledged that there are strong territorial feelings and added that she is glad that the community is proud of their school. She stated that it is frustrating that students are being housed in inadequate facilities and that students are paying for adult problems. She stated that she will vote for the motion and will direct all parties to work together to make the move a smooth transition. She suggested that the Board discuss charter school policy at the June 7 planning meeting. She stated that she is disappointed at the lack of professionalism that was exhibited by some of the people who testified.

Mrs. Gilman explained that she would like the Board to study the Fireweed Charter housing issue for one year. She asked Mr. Fisher how long the contract will be in effect if the motion passes. Mr. Fisher replied that changes to the contract would expire in a year with the original contract expiration. Mrs. Gilman confirmed with Mr. Fisher that the date of the contract would not be amended. She asked whether the Board is considering moving Fireweed Charter School into West Homer for one year or more. Mrs. Crawford stated that the information provided specified that the move would be for one year.

Mrs. Crawford asked for clarification of the pull-out programs. Mr. Stewart stated that the administration prefers that special programs be enrichment programs within the regular classroom.

**HOUSING FOR FIREWEED  
ACADEMY:**  
(continued)

Ms. Germano agreed that there are problems within the Homer community but that the Fireweed Charter School children should not pay the price. She stated that it is reasonable to move forward with conversations about future school space but continue to house the Fireweed Charter School students under the terms of the existing contract.

Mr. Anderson stated that the Board needs to be consistent and not postpone decisions that address the needs of students.

Dr. Anderson stated that he does not like to impose a solution upon a particular group but after careful consideration, he will base his decision on what is best for students.

**MOTION**

Mrs. Brown moved the Board postpone the motion until a working group can be formulated and a report brought back to the Board with an accompanying proposal and that the administration work with volunteer School Board members and volunteer members from the respective Homer area. Mrs. Mullins seconded.

Ms. Germano expressed frustration at the motion to postpone and reminded the Board that they have had a worksession along with discussion at the April meeting. She acknowledged that a couple of Board members were excused from the meetings but added that she resents the statement that there hasn't been discussion when an opportunity was missed by a Board member. She stated that it is a waste of the Board and public's time to postpone action after all of the discussion during the April worksession and prior to the Board meeting for more discussion is not a solution.

Mrs. Brown stated that the motion to postpone was made because she believes it is the best way to solve the problem. She stated that she feels that she has all of the information and that any question she asked was based on new information that was received in the packet.

**VOTE TO POSTPONE:**

Advisory Vote – NO

YES – Brown, Mullins

NO – N. Anderson, Hilts, Germano, M. Anderson, Gilman, Wassilie, Crawford

Motion to postpone failed.

**VOTE ON MAIN MOTION:**

Advisory Vote – NO

YES – Germano, M. Anderson, Wassilie, N. Anderson, Hilts, Crawford

NO – Mullins, Gilman, Brown

Main motion carried.

Mrs. Crawford directed the administration to revise the Fireweed Charter School contract to move the school location to West Homer Elementary and to work with deliberate speed and with the highest degree of professionalism so that it will be a smooth transition.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS/  
COMMENTS:**

Mrs. Lynn Hohl, Connections parent, asked the Board if they will have parent involvement for the Connections Program and noted that it is another program that the Board administers but does not pay a lot of attention.

**BOARD COMMENTS:**

Ms. Germano thanked Seward residents for attending the meeting and thanked the Homer residents for participating via videoconference. She acknowledged that the Fireweed Charter School move to West Homer Elementary will not be easy and offered help with the transition.

Mr. Tyson invited the Board to a pops concert on Tuesday, May 10, and noted that he will play 2 piano solos. He wished the mothers present a happy Mother's Day.

Mr. Anderson expressed his thanks for the Seward Elementary School presentation.

Mrs. Mullins thanked Board members for the debate. She expressed appreciation for the public comments and for the Board meeting webcast. She thanked those who testified before the Board.

Mrs. Brown thanked those who stayed for the entire meeting and thanked those who testified. She stated that it is good to be in Seward and noted that there are interesting things happening in the community as well as in the Homer area. She expressed appreciation to the Board for their time and to the administration for their hard work. She wished those present a happy Mother's Day.

Ms. Wassilie thanked Seward Elementary teachers, Kathy Fredrickson, Jan Kristenson, Kirstie Willea and DeEtta Scarborough for their service to the District and added that they will be missed. She congratulated Melissa Olver for being selected as the State PTA Teacher of the Year. She stated that she traveled to Washington, DC and spoke to the Alaska delegation regarding the difficulties of implementing the NCLB mandates and requested that the growth model be adopted. She stated that she was told that there will be no real changes until the reauthorization in 2007. She expressed appreciation for the comments of all Board members regarding the Fireweed Charter School situation. She stated that she has faith that the Homer schools will model what is best for students. She noted that the change will be in effect for one year and added that the Board is modeling for the public how public education is adapting to a changing world. She asked Seward residents to attend the Assembly meeting tomorrow.

Mrs. Hilts encouraged Homer residents and Mr. Walsworth to rise above the Board decision and added that she felt certain that Mr. Walsworth can provide the leadership necessary to make the transition run smoothly. She stated that although she doesn't feel good about the decision to move Fireweed Charter, students don't have a lot of time in school. She stated that she would like regular reports on the progress of the move.

**BOARD COMMENTS:**  
(continued)

Mrs. Gilman thanked the Borough Assembly in advance for their approval of full funding for the District. She reminded those present that 80% of the District budget is for salaries and added that when the budget is cut, teacher positions are eliminated which reduces opportunities for students. She made a plea to the Assembly for full funding even though certain members of the public do not want to pay taxes of any kind for anything. She stated that taxes are crucial in order to have money in the municipal government to make it run. She noted that Representative Chenault deserves a wholehearted expression of gratitude upon his return to the Peninsula for his speech to the House Finance Committee regarding funding for education and for advocating for the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District. She stated that although the Fireweed Charter School vote did not go in her favor she would like to make sure that every adult involved in the moving process puts children's needs first.

Mrs. Crawford thanked Mr. Kingsland for the Seward Elementary report. She reminded those present of the Assembly meeting on May 3 and again on May 17. She stated that she will miss the May 17 meeting due to family matters and encouraged Board members to be present to counteract the anti-tax groups. She reminded Board members that the Board will conduct a review of the self-evaluation, the superintendent evaluation and set goals for 2005-2006 school year on June 7. She asked Board members to complete the evaluation forms and return them via fax, email, or U.S. mail by June 1.

**ADJOURN:**

At 10:39 p.m., Mrs. Mullins moved the School Board Meeting be adjourned. Mr. Anderson seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

---

Mrs. Sammy Crawford, President

---

Mrs. Debra Mullins, Clerk

The Minutes of May 2, 2005,  
were approved on June 6, 2005  
as written.