# Kenai Peninsula Borough School District
## Board of Education Meeting Minutes

December 5, 2005 – 7:00 p.m. | Borough Administration Building
Regular Meeting | 148 N. Binkley, Soldotna, Alaska

**SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:**
Mrs. Debra Mullins, President
Mrs. Sammy Crawford, Vice President
Ms. Sandra Wassilie, Clerk
Mr. Marty Anderson, Treasurer
Dr. Nels Anderson
Mrs. Debbie Brown
Mrs. Liz Downing
Mr. Bill Hatch
Mrs. Sunni Hilts
Miss Kelly King, Student Representative

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

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

| | |
|---|---|
| Mr. Jim White | Mrs. Lori Manion |
| Mr. Tim Peterson | Ms. Lindy Cox |
| Mrs. Jenny Hammond | Mrs. Terry Durant |
| Ms. Jennifer Hazlett | Mr. Wally Hufford |
| Mr. Tim Johnson | Ms. McKibben Jackinsky |
| Mrs. Teresa Zinck | Ms. Lisa Traxinger |
| Ms. Ann Krongseng | Mrs. Samantha Moore |
| Ms. Chrissy Griffith | Mr. Travis Moore |
| Ms. Rena Kornstad | Mrs. Norma Holmgaard |
| Mrs. Terri Stickler | Miss Leana Stickler |
| Mrs. Sharon Moock | Mr. Joe Nicks |
| Mr. John O'Brien | Mr. Sean Dusek |
| Mrs. Paula Christensen | Mr. Dave Spence |
| Mrs. Cathy Carrow | Ms. Jeanne Burger |

Others present not identified.

**CALL TO ORDER:**
Mrs. Mullins called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. A quorum of School Board members, Mr. Anderson, Dr. Anderson, Mrs. Brown, Mrs. Downing, Mr. Hatch, Mrs. Hilts, Ms. Wassilie and Mrs. Mullins were in attendance.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**
At 5:01 p.m. Dr. Anderson 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. Anderson seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

**ADJOURN EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

At 5:43 p.m., Dr. Anderson moved the executive session be adjourned. Mr. Anderson seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

**CALL TO ORDER:**
*(6:59:00 PM)*

Mrs. Mullins called the meeting to order at 6:59 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**
*(6:59:30 PM)*

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

**ROLL CALL:**
*(6:59:55 PM)*

| | |
|---|---|
| Mrs. Debra Mullins | Present |
| Mrs. Sammy Crawford | Absent/Excused |
| Ms. Sandra Wassilie | Present |
| Mr. Marty Anderson | Present |
| Dr. Nels Anderson | Present |
| Mrs. Debbie Brown | Present |
| Mrs. Liz Downing | Present |
| Mr. Bill Hatch | Present |
| Mrs. Sunni Hilts | Present |
| Miss Kelly King | Absent/Excused |

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**
*(7:00:27 PM)*

The agenda was approved as written.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**
*(7:00:49 PM)*

The School Board Minutes of November 21, 2005, were approved as printed.

**AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS:**
*(7:01:12 PM)*

The Board presented Miss Leana Stickler, Nikiski Middle/High School student, with the Spirit of Youth Award Nomination Certificate for her participation in the World Changers Community Project.

**SCHOOL REPORT:**
*(7:03:35 PM)*

Mrs. Lori Manion, Nikiski North Star principal, along with several students, recited the Character Counts pledge. The students presented information about the Six Pillars to the Character Counts Program. The pre-kindergarten students demonstrated school readiness skills by singing *Be a Good Friend Because* and *This Little Light of Mine*. Mrs. Chris Watkins, parent, gave a parent perspective of the pre-kindergarten program and expressed appreciation for the skills being taught and for being housed at the school. Several students provided information about the NASA Explorer School Partnership Program.

**RECESS:**
*(7:19:55 PM)*

At 7:19 p.m. Mrs. Mullins called a recess.

**RECONVENE AFTER RECESS:**
*(7:24:33 PM)*

At 7:24 p.m. the Board reconvened in regular session.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:**
*(7:24:36 PM)*

Ms. Jeanne Burger read a statement by Angie Motoyama, explained reasons for raising her family in Hope and explained that if the school closes they will have to sell their home and move elsewhere, and added that she is personally trying to recruit young families with elementary aged students to relocate to Hope.

Mrs. April Skaaren, Hope Community resident, explained why she and her husband moved to Hope, and added that she would have no other educational options if the Hope School closes and asked the Board to carefully consider the closure issue and to provide a timeline of events prior to a closure.

Ms. Michelle Stewart, Cooper Landing resident, stated that many people in her community have a stake in the possible closure of the Cooper Landing School and asked the Board to look past the following two or three years to children who are too young to be in school and to do everything possible to keep the school open.

Mrs. Brown asked Ms. Stewart if there are community discussions taking place in Cooper Landing, or conversations with the Assembly Member representative. Ms. Stewart stated the community is speaking about the issue and that a questionnaire has been circulated and submitted to the school. She added that the Cooper Landing School has provided an excellent education for her children and noted that most of the students who move on to the Central Peninsula high school program receive good grades.

**COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS:**
*(7:34:28 PM)*

Dr. Peterson reported that the updated Fast Facts have been printed, and that she received a letter from the Center for Alaskan Coastal Studies announcing $3,500 in scholarships to six District teachers participating in field trips in Homer next spring.

Mrs. Mullins reported that she received a thank you note from Mrs. Gilman, former Board member.

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE, SITE COUNCIL AND/OR P.T.A., K.P.A.A., K.P.E.A., K.P.E.S.A, BOROUGH ASSEMBLY:**
*(7:35:23 PM)*

Mrs. Jeanne Burger, Hope School PTA President, reported that there are 50 dues-paying PTA members and added that the school is a vital part of the community. She noted that many of the residents would like to speak to the Board but the 200-mile round trip limits their attendance. She stated that the Hope PTA requests that the Board use the polycom system of interactive telecommunication to hold future School Board meetings to allow more inclusion.

Ms. Wassilie asked how many Hope Elementary/High School PTA members are not parents. Mrs. Burger responded that she is unsure of the exact number but reported that there are 11 children enrolled in school.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:**
*(7:38:59 PM)*

Dr. Peterson reported that she will be a guest speaker at the Nikiski Chamber of Commerce meeting on Thursday, December 8 at Fire Station 1. She cautioned that District Office services may be limited during the Holiday break. She announced that the grand opening of Seward Middle School will be Friday, January 6, at 7:00 p.m.

**BOARD REPORTS:**
*(7:40:12 PM)*

Ms. Wassilie reported that she attended the Language Arts Curriculum meeting on November 29 and noted that the final meeting will be held on December 6. She stated that the curriculum will come to the Board for approval at a future meeting and that it is a comprehensive plan which will be helpful to teachers. She complimented Paula Christensen for her leadership, and Sherry Matson and Michael Hanson for their hard work, especially since the whole curriculum was created from scratch.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**
*(7:41:30 PM)*

Items presented on the Consent Agenda were Approval of New Teacher Assignments; School Calendars; and Six-Year Plan and School Construction Needs.

**NEW TEACHER ASSIGNMENTS:**

Mr. Glen Szymoniak recommended the Board approve teacher assignments for Matthew Stineff, science teacher at Homer High; Breanna Bloom, special education/intensive needs teacher at K-Beach Elementary; Paul D. Gutzler, special education/resource teacher at Kenai Central High; Andrea H. Joachim, secondary generalist at Tebughna Elementary/High; and Donny P. Joachim, elementary generalist at Tebughna Elementary/High.

**SCHOOL CALENDARS:**

Mr. Stewart recommended the Board approve the revised 2006-2007 school calendar and the proposed 2007-2008 calendar.

**SIX-YEAR PLAN AND SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION NEEDS:**

Mr. Szymoniak recommended the Board approve the proposed Six-Year Plan and list of major maintenance and capital improvement projects through FY13.

**MOTION:**

Ms. Wassilie moved the Board approve Consent Agenda Items Numbers 1 through 3. Mrs. Hilts seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

**FYO6 BUDGET REVISION:**
*(7:42:14 PM)*

Mrs. Douglas recommended the Board approve a revised FY06 general fund budget of $88,982,642.

Mr. Anderson moved the Board approve a revised FY06 general fund budget of $88,982,642. Mrs. Downing seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

**FIRST READING OF POLICY REVISIONS:**
*(7:44:53 PM)*

The Board heard a first reading of proposed changes and adoptions to Section 6000 of the Policy Manual.

Mrs. Mullins announced that public testimony will be taken on the proposed changes and adoptions to Section 6000 of the Policy Manual.

Mrs. Carrow, KPEA President, called the Board's attention to the proposed change in BP 6180, Dual Credit, and for the deterioration of course offerings at the high school level, the integrity and rigor of the high school program versus college courses and grade point average calculation, and gave examples for each objection.

**FIRST READING OF POLICY REVISIONS:**
(continued)

Mrs. Carrow asked the Board to carefully consider alternatives to BP 6161.13, Student Fees For Instructional Materials, because the reality of shrinking budgets has created a situation where the same opportunities (cooking projects and arts and craft projects) cannot be made available without a materials fee.

Dr. Anderson left at 7:53 p.m. At 7:54 p.m. Dr. Anderson returned.

Mrs. Hilts asked Mrs. Carrow for examples of high school courses that are not being offered because students are taking college courses. Mrs. Carrow explained that the previous Board Policy stated that if a college class were offered on school campus then students could take it. Mrs. Carrow stated that smaller schools were not able to offer classes at school and so students were allowed to take college courses at the college. Mrs. Carrow stated that most of the humanities courses are not offered at Soldotna High School anymore so students take the course at the college.

Mrs. LaDawn Druce, former high school teacher, cautioned the Board that there may be some unintended consequences by changing the dual credit policy. She stated that the biggest concern is the rigor of Advanced Placement classes as compared to the college level courses and encouraged the Board to investigate the issue further.

Mrs. Druce suggested the Board consider a compromise to the proposed changes to the materials fee policy as long as the school provides a method for students who cannot pay anything. She stated that to eliminate fees totally would be a mistake and may cause some inadvertent consequences.

**BOARD COMMENTS:**
*(8:01:57 PM)*

Ms. Wassilie noted that the *Board and Administrator* article, titled "Board and Superintendent Roles" thoroughly explains the Board's function. She reminded those present that although Board members are elected by district, they represent all KPBSD students. She stated that members should make sure that constituent needs are met through the vision, mission statement, and goals. She stated that the October 2005 edition of Leadership Insider (which is published on the NSBA website) includes information on school consolidation and closings and small schools. She stated that research information was included regarding the value of small schools and she read an excerpt from the pluses of small schools. She stated that the Board must abide by state law which only addresses numbers, and added that she feels that the State of Alaska has an obligation to provide a free public education to all of its students no matter where they live. She complimented the administration for the new website and noted that it is more flexible and easier to navigate. She expressed appreciation for the work involved and added that the new site will enhance communication. She asked what the Borough is doing to attract young families with children to the Kenai Peninsula. She stated that she enjoyed the Nikiski North Star School report. She wished those present a Merry Christmas. She asked for an excused absence for the January 16 meeting.

**BOARD COMMENTS:**
(continued)

Mrs. Hilts reported that she enjoyed the Nikiski North Star report. She expressed appreciation for the education discussion prior to the Board meeting. She stated that all small Alaskan communities could find themselves in the same situation as Hope. She stated that she is pleased that the community is actively looking for ways to solve the problem. She stated that the new website presentation was excellent. She stated that she has enjoyed the educational discussions as they relate to the Board Policy revision process. She stated that she especially likes the District mission statement and read the statement for the benefit of those present. She recognized the concerns that were expressed regarding college courses and material fees but stated that she is not convinced that the Board will advance the cause of creative productive learners by limiting their choices. She stated that the Board must be careful to find ways to stimulate and challenge students and reminded the Board that high school students did not get involved in Quest because it meant additional work. She stated that she is not sure if students are deciding to take college classes instead of AP classes because the coursework is easier and added that she hopes families are encouraging good choices. She expressed appreciation for all of the extra educational opportunities that the District can make available for students. She stated that she hopes the Board can find a way to work in partnership to continue to develop creative, productive learners in all District communities in spite of the incredible financial constraints. She wished those present a Merry Christmas.

Mrs. Downing stated that she thoroughly enjoyed the Nikiski North Star report. She summarized a conversation she overheard among students who were taking college classes and thoroughly enjoying them. She stated the Board cannot make decisions to encourage students to go elsewhere for educational services without having documentation about its effects. She wished those present a Happy Holidays.

Mrs. Brown encouraged the Hope community to have a dialog with everyone, including the Borough. She suggested that the Hope School facility could be shared with another compatible organization so that expenses could be shared. She offered to speak to the community to help brainstorm ideas. She commented that there could be a conflict with the date for the Ninilchik Elementary/High graduation ceremony. She noted that the ceremony falls on one of the biggest King Salmon fishing days of the season and will likely be a conflict for area residents. She stated that she was curious about the number of hits the Board Minutes Website receives. She noted that Section 6000, which is scheduled to be adopted at the next meeting, is the heart of the Policy Manual and covers a lot of extremely important topics. She encouraged those present to read through it carefully.

At 8:18 p.m. Dr. Anderson left the meeting. Dr. Anderson returned to the meeting at 8:19 p.m.

Mr. Hatch stated that he is looking forward to using the new website, and that he enjoyed the Nikiski North Star School report.

**BOARD COMMENTS:**
(continued)

Mr. Anderson thanked Mrs. Manion for the Nikiski North Star School report and added that he was especially pleased to hear about the preschool program. He thanked the administration for the updated website presentation. He thanked Board members for another year of service, and wished those present a Merry Christmas.

Dr. Anderson recognized the Soldotna High School students from Mr. Harbison's government class in the audience. Dr. Anderson explained that school staffing is determined by the numbers of students and is not changed by the fact that students take college courses. He stated that reducing or eliminating classes is a local building decision. He stated that Mrs. Carrow and Mrs. Druce made some convincing arguments regarding free public education versus the cost of instructional materials and added that the Board needs to carefully consider the issue. He stated that he is distressed by the Hope and Cooper Landing declining enrollment situation and recognized that in small towns the schools are the center of the community and when they are closed it is a big issue. He assured those present that he will carefully consider the matter if a decision becomes necessary.

Mrs. Mullins explained that testimony was taken for the first reading of adoptions and revisions to Section 6000 of the Policy Manual so that the Board could hear the public's comments. She stated that another worksession will be held at the January 16, 2006 meeting. She thanked the Nikiski North Star Elementary School students for the presentation. She reported that during the past month she has visit the school during the Character Counts Program and added that students from Kenai Middle School also came to act as role models. She expressed appreciation for Mrs. Manion and the teachers for their work with the students. She expressed appreciation for the work by the administration and Board on Section 6000 and noted that the review has been a long process. She wished those present a Merry Christmas and great holiday with family.

**ADJOURN:**
*(8:26:24 PM)*

At 8:26 p.m., Mrs. Brown moved the School Board Meeting be adjourned. Mr. Hatch seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

_____
Mrs. Debra Mullins, President

_____
Ms. Sandra Wassilie, Clerk

The Minutes of December 5, 2005,
were approved on January 16, 2006,
as written.