
Kenai Peninsula Borough School District Board of Education Meeting Minutes

February 20, 2006 – 7:00 p.m.
Regular Meeting

Borough Administration Building
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:

Mrs. Sharon Mook	Mrs. Norma Holmgaard
Mr. John Harro	Mr. Dave Carey
Mrs. Paula Christensen	Mr. Jim White
Mr. Keegan Birchfield	Mr. Quinn Bennett
Mr. Matt Meyers	Mr. Joe Nicks
Mr. Joel Burns	Mr. Ben Eveland
Ms. Shelli Church	Mr. Tim Peterson
	Mr. Rob Moore

Others present not identified.

CALL TO ORDER:

Mrs. Mullins called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m. A quorum of School Board members, Dr. Anderson, Mr. Hatch, Mr. Anderson, Mrs. Hilts, Mrs. Downing, and Mrs. Mullins were in attendance.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

At 2:31 p.m. Mr. Hatch 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. Mrs. Downing seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURN EXECUTIVE SESSION:

At 2:51 p.m., Dr. Anderson moved the executive session be adjourned. Mr. Anderson seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

CALL TO ORDER:

(7:00:13 PM)

Mrs. Mullins called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

(7:00:17 PM)

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

ROLL CALL:
(7:00:44 PM)

Mrs. Debra Mullins	Present
Mrs. Sammy Crawford	Present
Ms. Sandra Wassilie	Absent/Excused
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	Present

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:
(7:01:13 PM)

The agenda was approved with a revision to Item 11a.(3), Resignations, as written.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:
(7:01:37 PM)

The School Board Minutes of February 6, 2006, were approved as printed.

SCHOOL REPORT:
(7:02:08 PM)

Mrs. Sharon Moock, Soldotna Middle School principal, gave a PowerPoint presentation highlighting AYP results, course elective offerings, mission statement, goals (improve reading comprehension and improve math measurement as well as estimation and computation scores on the 2006 SBA tests), enrollment information, current and future pupil-teacher ratios, report card information, parent comments, and options for electives next year. Mr. John Harro, teacher, and Mr. Zachary Truesdell, Mr. Skyler Laber, Mr. Caleb Forbes, and Mr. Zack Misner, students from the digital storytelling class, presented a video clip containing helpful information for incoming seventh grade students about Soldotna Middle School. Mrs. Andrea Eggleston, teacher, and Mr. Chris Closson and Miss Shelby Nicole Smith, students from the graphic design class, printed a synopsis of the courses offered at SMS and presented a letter of appreciation to the Board in observance of School Board Appreciation Month.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS:
(7:20:44 PM)

Dr. Peterson reported that the administration has had communications from the Village of Tyonek and invited three School Board members to travel to Tyonek, sometime between March 20 and April 24 to participate in a conversation with Village Council Members and the Tribal Authority. She reported that she received a communication from the City of Soldotna regarding a resolution supporting a change to the area cost differential. She noted that the Board received a letter in the General Information packet regarding the accreditation of the Connections Homeschool Program. She reminded the Board of the joint Borough Assembly and School Board worksession on February 21, 2006 at 9:00 a.m. in the Borough Assembly Chambers. She displayed a copy of the Arctic Winter Games Education Resource Manual and noted that it is also available online.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE, SITE COUNCIL AND/OR P.T.A., K.P.A.A., K.P.E.A., K.P.E.S.A., BOROUGH ASSEMBLY:
(7:21:59 PM)

Ms. Terri Woodward, KPESA president, commended District employees and volunteers for the countless hours spent working to make the Arctic Winter Games a success. She asked the Board and administration to notify the Association if the issue of subcontracting custodial and maintenance services is considered.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT:*(7:28:58 PM)*

Dr. Peterson reported that on Wednesday, February 15 she attended the Caring for Kenai presentation during the Soldotna Chamber of Commerce meeting. She reported that she attended the DARE Graduation Ceremony in which 188 students from Soldotna area schools were recognized. She noted that an article written by Mrs. Douglas titled, "Shaping the Future", was featured in the School Business Affairs magazine. She noted that the administration will begin the hiring process for the K-Beach Elementary principal and Kenai Middle School assistant principal positions using the same process as last year. She presented the Board members with Certificates of Appreciation in recognition of School Board Appreciation Month.

FINANCIAL REPORT:*(7:28:50 PM)*

Mrs. Douglas presented the District financial report for the period ending January 31, 2006. She reported that almost half of the school year has passed and currently 45% of the electricity budget, 69% of the natural gas budget, and 65% of the fuel budget has been expended.

BOARD REPORTS:*(7:30:44 PM)*

Mr. Anderson reported that he attended the AASB Legislative Fly-In in Juneau and attended trainings and met with legislators. He stated that he and Mrs. Hilts spent a lot of time with other board members throughout the state and spoke to legislators about problems affecting all districts. He reported that the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District was labeled as the "poster child" for inadequate funding and an inadequate cost differential formula. He reported that meetings with legislators brought some hope and some disenchantment and added that most listened to Board requests and discussed possible solutions to correct the area cost differential formula. He stated that a few legislators did not understand the situation and reported on individual comments made by legislators. He stated that the House speaker was interested in resolving the District's funding problem. He thanked the Governor's administration and most of the legislators for their support of education funding. He stated that of the \$90.2 million increase to education proposed in the Governor's budget, \$40 million is dedicated to meet the PERS and TRS obligation, nearly \$30 million is allotted to meet rising fuel costs, transportation, rising healthcare and other inflationary items, and the \$20 million balance will actually be spent on classrooms statewide. He concluded by saying that the area cost differential is the Number 1 enemy of the District and upon comparison, is funded less than the Mat-Su School District and the North Star Borough in Fairbanks. He stated that with the proposed Governor's budget, Anchorage will face a \$2 million deficit of a \$460 million budget (equal to a .5% reduction), the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District will be faced with a \$6 million deficit from a \$97 million budget (equal to a 5.9% reduction), and the Valdez School District will face a \$600,000 deficit from an \$11 million budget (equal to a 5.4% reduction). He stated that if the area cost differential were fair and equitable all districts would be reducing their budgets by .5%.

Mrs. Hilts reported that she attended the AASB Legislative Fly-In and noted that the group discussed how to share the message that children should be the top priority in the State of Alaska. She stated that the group heard from legislators about pending legislation and added that the Governor has proposed an incentive bonus to the entire staff of schools that show improvement. She stated that the Commissioner of Labor reported that thousands of jobs will be available next year and encouraged the group to provide more vocational education. She stated that Board members were given a presentation on the

BOARD REPORTS:
(continued)

importance of computer technology. She noted that the KPBSD is years ahead of other districts because it is assumed that computer technology will be used by students and staff. She stated that unfortunately there has been no conversation about education and there will not be early funding. She stated that the many other districts spoke to legislators in support of equitable funding for the KPBSD. She stated that legislators did not make promises of assistance but gave some encouragement. She stated that many senators informed the Board members that there is no money and that they will not review the area cost differential. She reported that the representatives were more optimistic and told the group that education would not be funded less than the Governor's proposal. She stated that there was some discussion about the possibility of municipal relief but no specifics were given. She reported that on February 7 she attended the Title VII Committee meeting and suggested that members from the committee report to the Board. She noted that Alaskan Native students attend kindergarten at the same level as other students but by the fourth grade have declined in proficiency, which should not be acceptable.

Mrs. Brown reported that she traveled to Juneau at her own expense and spoke to several legislators and the Governor about education. She reported that she attended the Lincoln Day dinner and was able to speak further about education on the Kenai Peninsula. She reported that education is discussed continuously by legislators because it is generally the most expensive department that the government supports. She explained that she shared the District's priority list (with the exception of one item) with legislators. She stated that even though early funding may not happen this year there is a lot of hope for a revision to the area cost differential and for early funding in the future. She acknowledged that education will be a hot topic and hopes that people will continue to talk about it. She stated that the trip was worth her personal expenditure and suggested that others take advantage of constituent air fare to Juneau.

Mrs. Crawford reported that she attended the Recognition Committee meeting and noted that the Board will recognize employees and community members at the next several meetings. She reported that on February 24 she will attend the Project GRAD meeting in Homer, and February 25-27 she will attend the ASAA meeting in Anchorage.

Mrs. Mullins reported that the Board reviewed the Language Arts Curriculum; noted that a lot of work went into its development and it is easy to follow. She encouraged those present to review a copy. She reported that the Board considered several policy revisions, administrative regulations and exhibits (school based management and site councils, school closure criteria, video tape and photography forms, internet use, board meetings and open meetings, order of business, and board comments). She noted that the proposed revisions will come back for first and second readings. She reported that the Board held an executive session for an update on negotiations. She reported that representatives from the Arctic Winter Games provided an update and commented on the planning that has taken place over the last several years. She stated that the District has assisted with AWG planning in partnership with Kenai Peninsula cities. She reported that many District employees have given numerous hours of free time and will give more time once the games begin. She announced that the Board will attend a joint worksession with the Borough Assembly on February 21 at 9:00 a.m. in the Assembly Chambers to discuss the in-kind budget and the general fund budget.

CONSENT AGENDA:
(7:48:21 PM)

Items presented on the Consent Agenda were Approval of 2006-2007 Administrator Assignments; District Organizational Chart; Resignations; Requests for Leave of Absence-Certified; 2006-2007 Tentative Tenure Teacher Assignments; and Request for Leave of Absence-Support.

2006-2007 ADMINISTRATOR ASSIGNMENTS:

Mr. Szymoniak recommended the Board approve a list of administrator appointments for the 2006-2007 school year.

DISTRICT ORGANIZATIONAL CHART:

Dr. Peterson recommended the Board approve the 2006-2007 District organizational chart which identifies the lines of primary responsibility and relationships between administrative positions.

RESIGNATIONS:

Mr. Szymoniak recommended the Board approve resignations from Mark Norgren, regional principal at Cooper Landing Elementary, Hope Elementary and Moose Pass Elementary; Sylvia Reynolds, principal at K-Beach Elementary; Ron Hatcher, assistant principal at Kenai Middle; Mary Perry, special education/severe at Paul Banks Elementary; David "Chris" Schrier, industrial arts at Skyview High School; Paul Zobeck, physical education at Skyview High School; James Cammon, principal at Homer Middle; and Janet Fink, Grade 4 at West Homer Elementary.

REQUESTS FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE-CERTIFIED:

Mr. Szymoniak recommended the Board approve unpaid leave of absence requests effective for the 2006-07 school year for Rachel Roemhildt, Grades 6-8 at Soldotna Middle and Jennifer Chapple, Grade 1 at McNeil Canyon Elementary.

2006-2007 TENTATIVE TENURE TEACHER ASSIGNMENTS:

Mr. Szymoniak recommended the Board approve a list of tentative tenure teacher assignments for the 2006-2007 school year.

REQUEST FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE-SUPPORT:

Mr. Glen Szymoniak recommended the Board approve an unpaid leave of absence request from Eric Benson, head custodian III at Paul Banks Elementary, effective April 20, 2006 through November 3, 2006.

MOTION

Mrs. Crawford moved the Board approve Consent Agenda Items Numbers 1 through 6. Mrs. Hilts seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

STUDENT EXPULSION:
(7:49:06 PM)

MOTION

Dr. Anderson moved the Board approve the following decision of the Kenai Peninsula Borough School Board regarding student expulsion 2005-06-003, "DECISION: The student shall be allowed to continue to attend school at this School District subject to the following conditions, all of which shall be strictly enforced. Should the student fail to comply with any of these conditions, and after conducting a manifestation hearing if appropriate, the District administration may, in its sole discretion, refer the matter directly to the School Board for a hearing to consider expelling the student from the School District:

- a. The student must continue to attend weekly counseling sessions at the family's expense until the counselor submits a report in writing to the school district administration indicating that in his or her opinion the student's problems that led to the violations have been resolved.

STUDENT EXPULSION:
(continued)

- b. The student must submit to and pass random urinalysis tests given at the discretion of the school district or the counselor at any time and at the expense of the family until the end of the first semester of the 2006 – 2007 school year.
- c. The student must complete fifty hours of community service, approved in advance by the school district, on or before August 4, 2006.
- d. The student must not violate any KPBSD policies.

Additionally, the school board recommends that the student be transferred by the District to a different school within the School District, with transportation expenses to be paid by the student or his family.” Mrs. Downing seconded.

VOTE:

YES – Hilts, M. Anderson, Brown, N. Anderson, Downing
NO – Hatch, Crawford, Mullins

Motion carried.

BOARD COMMENTS:
(7:51:45 PM)

Miss King thanked the Soldotna Middle School students and staff for their presentation and commended them for the sixth grade orientation video clips. She commented that the Arctic Winter Games presentation was interesting and encouraged those present to attend the events.

Mrs. Crawford thanked Mrs. Moock and the Soldotna Middle School staff and students for the presentation and especially thanked them for sharing the orientation video clips. She thanked Mrs. Christensen and others who worked on the Language Arts Curriculum. She stated that the AWG presentation was incredible and added that she is looking forward to volunteering.

Mr. Hatch announced that he was invited to assist with the Battle of Books competition at Kenai Middle School and Kenai Central High School. He reported that it was exciting to see this type of academic competition and encouraged those present to learn more about it and to get involved.

Mrs. Hilts reported that Mr. Anderson represented the District and School Board admirably while in Juneau. She stated that she was encouraged that this year more legislators agreed that children are Alaska’s top priority and asked them to publicly speak out. She encouraged the Kenai Peninsula Borough to adopt the same message along with a resolution in support for a change in the area cost differential. She reported that several school boards throughout the state took copies of the Seldovia Chamber of Commerce resolution declaring children as Seldovia’s top priority as the theme for the 2006 Fourth of July celebration. She reported that several legislators expressed hope that they would receive resolutions statewide so that other legislators can see the support for making children Alaska’s top priority.

BOARD COMMENTS:
(continued)

Mr. Anderson reported that several school board members commented that he and Mrs. Hilts were a good team and thanked the District for sending him. He stated that while in Juneau he was delighted to meet with former District graduate Mr. Josh Temple (aide for Senator Huggins) who had recently returned from serving in the military in Iraq and had testified on behalf of the military.

Mrs. Downing congratulated Homer High students for their success in the Battle of the Books with the assistance of Mrs. Esther Webb. She commented that it is wonderful to see the quality of the graphic productions and the video productions from the Soldotna Middle School.

Dr. Anderson recognized Mr. Zack Meisner who was a student presenter during the Soldotna Middle School report and is a member of his boy scout troop. He stated that Zack and his fellow scouts will be setting up and taking down beds at Soldotna High School for the Arctic Winter Games. He expressed concern regarding an article in the Phi Delta Kappan magazine about the teaching of science. He stated that there has been decline in the number of boys attending universities (less than 44%) and added that 70% of science graduates are from foreign countries. He quoted a statement by John F. Kennedy during an address to congress challenging the nation to go to the moon before the end of the 1960s, "We choose to do this not because it's easy but because it's hard." He stated that at that time the nation had an incredible number of students studying science and engineering and that that national goal set the tone for the United States' current success in technology. He stated that people from that era are now retired and are being supported by people from foreign countries and added that 90% of the engineers in the world will be from third world countries by the year 2011. He cautioned that that trend does not bode well for the United States and added that he is not sure what to do about it at a school board level but felt that the United States needs another national goal to encourage students to pursue science and engineering degrees. He noted that developments in science builds the economy which is to the nation's advantage. He stated that the lack of United States science and engineering students is a major crisis for the nation.

Mrs. Brown expressed appreciation for the work of the support staff during events such as basketball tournaments. She commented that there were approximately 2,000 volunteers at the AWG orientation on Saturday, February 18, and noted that in spite of the confusion, people were friendly. She commended Mr. Robert Clucas, KCHS head custodian, for his work during the orientation and Mr. John McCombs, Ninilchik Elementary/High head custodian, for his work during a recent basketball tournament. She reminded those present that during the week of the AWG everyone will have to do their best to be polite and gracious hosts and hostesses. She noted that there is a lot of District staff who are giving up their spring break to assist with the games. She stated that she serves on the AWG Board of Directors for the Host Society and has enjoyed it so much that she would do it again. She announced that Mrs. Debbie Stewart can order AWG vests for Board members for \$48. She encouraged those present to support the games. She expressed appreciation to Mrs. Reynolds and Dr. Peterson for the development of the AWG Curriculum Guide and added that it is a wonderful tool for teachers. She expressed appreciation for Soldotna City Mayor Dave Carey for his work with the education committee and with schools. She noted that the District is in the process of

BOARD COMMENTS:

(continued)

negotiating labor contracts and added that it is important to have a sense of fair play, good sportsmanship, and community service. She stated that she will be watching and hoping that the negotiations process goes well, that there is good communication, and no mistakes are made. She stated that she will object to the proposed 3-minute time limit during Board comments because there is only a small amount of time that Board members can speak during the meetings.

Mrs. Mullins thanked the students in the audience for attending the Board meeting and added that it is important for students not to be afraid to talk to adults. She thanked the Soldotna Middle students for presenting the school report and thanked the parents for bringing the students. She reminded the Board members of the joint worksession with the Borough Assembly on Tuesday, February 21 at 9:00 a.m.

ADJOURN:

(8:08:25 PM)

At 8:08 p.m., Mrs. Crawford moved the School Board Meeting be adjourned. Mr. Anderson seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Debra Mullins, President

Ms. Sandra Wassilie, Clerk

The Minutes of February 20, 2006, were approved o March 20, 2006 as written.