Kenai Peninsula Borough School District
Board of Education Meeting Minutes

March 20, 2006 – 7:00 p.m. | Homer High School
Regular Meeting | 600 E. Fairview, Homer, 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. Ray Hillman
Mr. Benny Abraham
Mr. Tim Peterson
Dr. Ron Keffer
Mrs. Terri Woodward
Mrs. Patty Rich
Mrs. Laurie Lingafelt
Mrs. Vicky Peters
Mrs. Debbie Piper
Mrs. Heather Pancratz
Mr. Pete Swanson
Mrs. Sharon Conley
Mr. Charlie Walsworth

Others present not identified.

CALL TO ORDER:
Mrs. Mullins called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. A quorum of School Board members, Dr. Anderson, Mrs. Hilts, Mrs. Downing, Mrs. Mullins and Mr. Hatch were in attendance.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:
At 3:01 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. Dr. Anderson seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

ADJOURN EXECUTIVE SESSION:
At 3:32 p.m., Mrs. Hilts moved the executive session be adjourned. Mrs. Downing seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

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

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

ROLL CALL:

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

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The agenda was approved with a revision to Item 11b(2) Seward Middle Facility Recommendation.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The School Board Minutes of February 20, 2006, were approved as printed.

AWARDS AND PRESENTATIONS:

The Board presented Golden Apple awards to Mrs. Deborah Piper, McNeil Canyon teacher and Mrs. Vicky Peters, McNeil Canyon tutor/library aide for their service to the District.

SCHOOL REPORTS:

Mr. Benny Abraham, Paul Banks Elementary School principal, gave a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the school early intervention process, assessment information, Title I program, parent involvement, resource program, full-day kindergarten, PTA support, after-school activities, strong parent and community volunteers.

Mr. Ray Hillman, Voznesenka School principal, reported that the school staff was featured at the No Child Left Behind Conference in Anchorage. With the assistance of Ms. Elaine Chalup, Grade 3/4 teacher, and Ms. Krista Etzwiler, K-2 teacher, Mr. Hillman gave a PowerPoint presentation highlighting the facility, school staff, assessment information, Project GRAD, an increase in the number of graduations, Consistency Management and Cooperative Discipline Program, Success for All Literacy Program, full-day kindergarten program, salmon project, marine safety program, wrestling program, and the Close Up Program.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:

Mr. Richard Bremicker, Homer High School parent, stated that although he does not object to military recruiters on high school campuses, students should be provided with many opportunities to help them make decisions regarding their future and suggested the Board allow alternative viewpoints to be expressed on campus.

Mr. Barrett Fletcher, Homer resident, asked the Board to change KPSAA eligibility rules and allow home school students to compete in cocurricular activities and cautioned the Board that if a change is not made he will be forced to sue the District.

Mrs. Polly Reutov, Kachemak Selo parent, explained that kindergarten students enter school only speaking Russian and that it is important they have Russian instruction for a minimum of half the school day and asked the Board to reconsider the decision to reduce the amount of Russian instruction.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:
(continued)

Miss Claire Thorington, Homer High student, stated that inadequate funding for education will cause the District to lose newly hired teachers and suggested the State use the Permanent Fund Dividend money to hire more teachers and to fund scholarships and reminded those present that the PFD is not an entitlement and should not be treated as such.

Mrs. Antonida Reutov asked the Board not to remove Russian aides from the classroom even though they are not considered highly qualified.

Mrs. Agafia Reutov, Kachemak Selo resident, stated that parents are pleased with the Russian aides and asked the Board to allow them to continue Russian language instruction even though they are not considered highly qualified.

Mr. Frank Martushev, Kachemak Selo resident, stated that it is important to be bilingual and asked the Board to continue Russian instruction. He thanked Mr. Creamer and Mr. Moore for their support for Russian language instruction.

Mr. Sergei Serebrekov, Razdolna School representative, reported that student enrollment will double in the next two years. He stated that Russian-speaking students progress slowly and then catch up in the upper grades. He commended the Project GRAD program. He stated that many schools offer two languages and noted that there are advantages to offering language instruction and asked the Board to help the school retain Russian language instruction.

Father Michael, Port Graham resident, read a letter from Mrs. Violet Yeaton who was unable to attend. Mrs. Yeaton stated that staffing Port Graham Elementary/High School with one teacher is not realistic and should not be considered as an option. Mrs. Yeaton stated that a majority of the Port Graham parents are opposed to the school's transition from a K-10 program to a K-12 program and asked the Board to participate in a discussion with the Village Council regarding the matter.

Mr. Art Koeninger, Homer resident, asked the Board to allow students to have access to both sides of a controversial issue especially in the area of military recruitment in schools.

Mrs. Mullins asked those in the audience for a show of hands of those who were in support of the Kachemak Selo Russian instruction issue.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS:

Dr. Peterson reported that she received correspondence from Kachemak Selo parents voicing their concerns regarding Russian instruction. She reported that a copy of the AASB sample resolution declaring children as Alaska's top priority was shared in the Board Information packet.

Mrs. Mullins requested that a resolution declaring children as Alaska's top priority be brought to the next Board meeting for approval.

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT: Dr. Peterson reported that the Community Action Coalition reported that they received 764 surveys with parental permission out of a total 1861 students in the target grades. She noted that the completed surveys were forwarded for analysis. She announced that the staff involvement and the number of community volunteers during the Arctic Winter Games was incredible and the stories being reported have been positive.

FINANCIAL REPORT: Mrs. Douglas presented the financial report of the District for the period ending February 28, 2006.

FISCAL YEAR 2007 BUDGET: Mrs. Douglas presented the 2006-2007 Preliminary School District Budget. She noted that the administration transmitted the budget to the borough administration who recommended that it be funded a status quo level. She announced that action is scheduled for the April 3 Board meeting.

BOARD REPORTS: Mrs. Crawford reported that she attended two Project GRAD meetings and noted that because of the loss of earmark funds from the federal government the group has financial concerns which will be addressed during the April 3 worksession. She stated that Project GRAD is a wonderful program and added that she hopes it can continue.

Mrs. Mullins reported that the Board held a worksession to discuss the FY07 Budget and noted that the Board decided to ask the Assembly to fund the District to the cap. She reported that the Board held a worksession on the proposed wellness policy and noted that candy and soft drink vending machines will be removed from schools. She stated that the Board wants to allow birthday party treats and has asked the administration for language to allow for special occasions. She reported that the Board reviewed proposed changes to the charter school policy that would align the District with state statutes and allow for clean-up of contracts. She reported that the Board held a short executive session to be updated on negotiations. She reported that the Board heard a Level III grievance. She stated that the Board held a teleconference call with Representative Seaton and Representative Chenault and noted that the legislators told the Board that oil is the topic that is consuming their attention and that education funding will be considered during the last days of the session. She stated that hopefully the Board will have time to help Kenai Peninsula legislators understand the problems of the lack of adequate educational funding. She asked those present to talk to legislators regarding a change to the area cost differential because it is not getting much attention and was equivalent to $10 million last school year.

CONSENT AGENDA: Items presented on the Consent Agenda were Approval of Tentative Tenured Teaching Assignment; 2006-2007 Nontenured Pupil Services Teachers for Tenure; 2006-2007 Nontenured Pupil Services Teacher Assignments; Resignations; Requests for Sabbatical Leave; and Substitute Teacher Contract.

TENTATIVE TENURED-TEACHING ASSIGNMENT: Mr. Szymoniak recommended that the Board approve a tentative tenured teaching assignment for the 2005-2006 school year for Ken Felchle, Grade 7, Kenai Middle School.

2006-2007 NONTENURED PUPIL SERVICES TEACHERS FOR TENURE:

Mr. Szymoniak recommended that the Board approve Lois Bisset, David "Chris" Standley, Stephanie Coolman, Angela Nelson, Mary Roed, Steve Evans, Tina Skaalerud, John Clare, and Elizabeth Lennon, nontenure teachers, for tenure.

2006-2007 NONTENURED PUPIL SERVICES TEACHER ASSIGNMENTS:

Mr. Szymoniak recommended that the Board approve nontenured pupil services teacher assignments for the 2006-2007 school year for Hope Kmetz-Casseri, intensive needs, Homer High; Jason Steadman, speech, Homer Middle; Breanna Bloom, intensive needs, K-Beach Elementary; Lisa Ferguson, resource, K-Beach Elementary; Lana Putman, school psychologist, K-Beach Elementary; Paul Gutzler, resource, Kenai Central High; Katherine VanSaun, speech, Mountain View Elementary; Shannon Riley, resource, Nanwalek; Kate Biegert, resource, Nikiski Middle/High; Gerald Olson, resource, Nikiski Middle/High; Ben Alexander, resource, Ninilchik; Tammy Flanders, resource, Redoubt; Jennifer Harvey-Kindred, resource, Sears Elementary; Lucinda Holland, resource, Sears Elementary; Robert Vernon, occupational therapist, Sears Elementary; Nicole Lyon, resource, Seward High; Amy Williams, resource, Skyview High; Judy Graham, emotionally handicapped, Soldotna Middle; Donna Huguelet, intensive needs, Soldotna Middle; Daniel Kaasa, assistive technology specialist, Soldotna Middle; Kristie Simonson, school psychologist, Soldotna Middle; Jennifer Tyler, intensive needs, Soldotna Middle; Therese Amos, school psychologist, Soldotna High; Stephanie Burns, resource, Soldotna High; and Neil Denny, emotionally handicapped, West Homer Elementary.

RESIGNATIONS:

Mr. Szymoniak recommended the Board approve resignations effective at the end of the 2005-2006 school year for Mary Alice Durman, Grade 3/4, Chapman Elementary; Duncan Wanamaker, science/health, Homer Middle School; Barbara N. Lodge, kindergarten, Nikiski North Star Elementary; Gloria J. Hensen, Grade 2, Paul Banks Elementary; Jerry Olive, special education resource, Seward Elementary; Janet Holdt, music, Seward Middle/Seward Elementary; Maureen Stoner, Grades 1/2, Sterling Elementary; Catherine A. O'Neil, intervention teacher, Tebughna Elementary/High; John W. O'Neil, generalist, Tebughna Elementary/High; and Caroline Venuti, Grade 3, West Homer Elementary. Mr. Szymoniak also recommended the Board approve a resignation effective immediately from Dale Moon, vocational education (currently on unpaid leave of absence for the 2005-2006 school year).

REQUESTS FOR SABBATICAL LEAVE:

Mr. Szymoniak recommended that the Board approve unpaid sabbatical leave requests from Allan Miller, Grade 6, Sterling Elementary, and Jennifer Chapple, Grade 1, McNeil Canyon Elementary.

SUBSTITUTE TEACHER CONTRACT:

Mr. Szymoniak recommended that the Board approve a substitute teacher contract for Reubin Payne, Grade 6, Redoubt Elementary.

MOTION

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

CONSENT AGENDA:
(continued)

Motion carried unanimously.

PERMANENT RETURN OF NIKISKI ELEMENTARY TO BOROUGH:

Mr. Szymoniak recommended the Board approve the permanent return of the Nikiski Elementary School building to the Borough, as of August 31, 2006.

MOTION

Mrs. Hilts moved the Board approve the permanent return of the Nikiski Elementary School building to the Borough, as of August 31, 2006. Mr. Hatch seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

FORMER SEWARD MIDDLE FACILITY RECOMMENDATION:

Mr. Szymoniak recommended the Board surplus the former Seward Middle School facility and turn over control to the Kenai Peninsula Borough effective June 30, 2006.

MOTION

Mrs. Crawford moved the Board approve the surplus of the former Seward Middle School facility and turn over control to the Kenai Peninsula Borough effective June 30, 2006. Dr. Anderson seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF LANGUAGE ARTS CURRICULUM:

Mr. Stewart recommended the Board approve the Elementary Language Arts/Reading Curriculum as presented at the February 20 worksession.

MOTION

Mr. Hatch moved the Board approve the Elementary Language Arts/Reading Curriculum as presented at the February 20 worksession. Mrs. Downing seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

FIRST READING OF POLICY REVISIONS:

The Board heard a first reading of AR 0420, School Based Management/Site Councils; BP 0530, Criteria for Closing Schools; BP 6162.71 and AR 6162.71, Internet Use; BB 9130, Board Committees; BB 9310, Policy Manual; AR 6145, Cocurricular Activities, BP 5141.6 and AR 5141.6, Student Nutrition and Physical Activity and BP 6187 and AR 6187, Charter Schools.

Mrs. Edna Conkel applauded the Board for becoming more stringent with food that is served to students at school. She stated that she operates a home daycare and follows federal food guidelines and noted that homemade desserts that are made with enriched grains can be served up to two times a week.

Ms. Kate Finn applauded the Board for making nutritional changes and asked the Board to remove diet soft drinks from school because they contain aspartame which is a poison.

FIRST READING OF POLICY REVISIONS:
(continued)

Ms. Kiki Abrahamson, Fireweed Academy teacher, reported that the biggest problem facing Charter Schools is the issue of shared facilities. She objected to new language in the first paragraph of AR 6187 regarding alternative approaches to the existing state laws and regulations governing public schools and recommended that it be deleted and insert, "meeting state education standards." She stated that the proposed changes to the charter school policy does not give equal access to public school facilities and added that she will forward more detailed suggestions. She provided copies of the state charter school guidelines.

Mrs. Edna Conkel, Fireweed Charter School parent and custodian, asked the Board to ensure that the number of students in shared facilities equals the amount of allocated space (work space, storage space, gymnasium usage, art room usage) and utility costs. She stated that she would like the revised policy to state that all of the staff and students in shared facilities are recognized as members of the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District and have equal rights and responsibilities.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS/ COMMENTS:

Mr. Bob Moore, former principal and teacher, spoke in favor of Project GRAD and noted the positive change in school climate, attitude among staff, students and parents. He spoke in support of bilingual instruction. He expressed concern for the large amount of turn-over in staff especially in remote schools and suggested the Board ask the legislature for forward funding.

Ms. Kate Finn objected to the presence of military recruiters in District high schools and asked that they only be allowed in school on designated Career Days.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Dr. Anderson stated that he does not object to the presence of military recruiters in the high schools although he opposed the United States' invasion of Iraq. He explained that the No Child Left Behind Act requires that public schools accommodate military recruiters. He stated that students are old enough to make their own decisions regarding military service. He stated that he supports the option for people to maintain their culture and for Russian to be taught and added that the administration is trying to resolve the problem and still be in compliance with federal law requiring Russian language teachers to be highly qualified. He reported that bilingual instruction is detrimental, not helpful, to student learning as shown by a California study. He reported that a comment was made that if the School Board expects a change to the area cost differential, it will have to sue. He reported that in a recent newspaper article and again on CNN comments were made regarding big gaps between federal testing and statewide testing. He reported that Alaska test scores showed 78% of students were proficient in reading, 69% were proficient in math with federal standards at 27% proficient in reading and 34% proficient in math. He observed that the District enrollment has dropped by 200 students from high school and asked where the families have gone.

BOARD COMMENTS:
(continued)

Mrs. Downing thanked the community members who testified and assured those present that emails and letters are read. She expressed concern that the 2007 Budget is based on an increase to the pupil-teacher ratio by 3 students. She urged those present to contact legislators regarding adequate funding for education. She expressed appreciation for the work of the Charter School Committee and for the parents who attended the worksession. She thanked the staff at Voznesenka School and Paul Banks Elementary School for the reports. She invited those present to the College Career Day on Friday, March 31 from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and noted that the event is a joint effort by many agencies.

Mrs. Hilts thanked those who attended the Board meeting, especially those from Kachemak Selo. She stated that she was pleased that fathers testified for their children. She stated that it is important to find the best solution for educating children. She reported that she volunteered at the Arctic Winter Games and was pleased that it was a success and noted that many School District employees volunteered.

Mr. Hatch stated that he appreciated hearing from so many people who are passionate about education.

Mrs. Crawford thanked those present for staying for the entire meeting and to those who testified. She thanked the staff of Paul Banks Elementary School and Voznesenka School for the presentations. She expressed appreciation for the work of the Charter School Committee. She reported that she was a volunteer for the AWG and noted that the best comment came from a representative from the Northwest Territory group who told her that Donna Peterson was an amazing person and should be the president of the United States.

Mrs. Mullins reported that she had the opportunity to testify before the Borough Assembly regarding funding for the District. She reported that the Assembly tabled action on the issue until the Board approves the FY 2007 Budget. She reported that she also testified before the House Finance Committee and expressed appreciation for the legislators who listened to all of the testimony throughout the state. She reported that she was an AWG volunteer in three different areas and added that she enjoyed watching the interaction between the adults and the youth participants. She expressed appreciation for those who testified during the meeting and for those who showed support by attending the meeting. She noted that there are adults who care about the education of the youth in their community and don't have children in school. She stated that it was nice to hear from former teacher and administrator, Mr. Bob Moore. She requested an excused absence from the April 3 meeting.

ADJOURN: At 9:22 p.m., Mrs. Crawford moved the School Board Meeting be adjourned. Mr. Hatch seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

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Mrs. Debra Mullins, President

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Ms. Sandra Wassilie, Clerk

The Minutes of March 20, 2006, were approved on April 4, 2006 with corrections.