
Kenai Peninsula Borough School District

Board of Education Meeting Minutes

March 5, 2007 – 7:00 p.m.
Regular Meeting

Homer High School
600 E. Fairview, Homer, Alaska

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:

Mrs. Debra Mullins, President
Mrs. Sammy Crawford, Vice President
Mr. Marty Anderson, Treasurer
Mrs. Liz Downing, Clerk
Dr. Nels Anderson
Mrs. Debbie Brown
Ms. Lynn Hohl
Mr. Bill Hatch
Mrs. Sunni Hilts
Miss Lydia Ames, 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. Sean Dusek	Mr. Tim Peterson
Mrs. Jamie Harper	Mr. Jim White
Mrs. Rayna Duenas	Mr. Pete Swanson
Ms. Deborah Germano	Ms. Karen Wessel
Ms. Kiki Abrahamson	Mr. Dan Beck
Mrs. Millie Martin	Mr. Mike Mason
Mr. Charlie Walsworth	

Others present not identified.

CALL TO ORDER:

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

Mrs. Mullins explained that the Board meeting was being held in the school library instead of the theater because of a scheduling conflict.

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
Mr. Marty Anderson	Absent/Excused
Dr. Nels Anderson	Present
Mrs. Debbie Brown	Absent/Excused
Mrs. Liz Downing	Present
Mr. Bill Hatch	Absent/Excused
Ms. Lynn Hohl	Present
Mrs. Sunni Hilts	Present
Miss Lydia Ames	Present

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

The agenda was approved as written.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The School Board Minutes of February 19, 2007 were approved as printed.

Mrs. Mullins presented Miss Lydia Ames, Student Representative to the Board, with a certificate of completion for her participation in the Association of Alaska School Board Youth Leadership Institute.

SCHOOL REPORT:

Ms. Kiki Abrahamson, Fireweed Academy lead teacher, gave a short video presentation highlighting students participating in classroom activities, literacy activities, science lessons, guest speakers in the classroom, Reader's Theater, applied mathematics, music and dance activities, hands on science, and Artists-in-the-Schools. Three students concluded the report with an invention presentation and an invitation to the Invention Convention.

Ms. Karen Wessel, Homer Flex High School principal/teacher, explained the concept of the standards-based performance model which is used at the high school. Mr. Jeff Szarzi explained how the standards-based concept is used in his classroom. Miss Brionna Campbell, Miss Katrina Kearney, Miss Megan Anderson, Miss Jess Franklin, Mr. Broc Whetter, and Mr. Patrick Payne explained that they like the standards-based teaching method because students teach each other, help each other, and can work at their own pace.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:

Ms. Gina Creedon, Connections Program parent, asked the Board to make home schooled children feel welcome in public school facilities. She asked the Board to fund and support the Future Farmer's of America (FFA) Organization and sports activities.

Ms. Cathy Knott, Connections Program and Fireweed Charter parent, praised the students and staff at both schools and asked the Board for their continued support of the charter school and to allow it to expand.

Miss Megan Anderson, Homer Flex School student, asked the Board to continue offering the power mechanics class at Homer High School and presented a list of signatures from students and others who feel the same.

Miss Lindsay Henkleman, Homer High School student, spoke in support of the power mechanics class and asked the Board to continue offering the class in the future.

Miss Katie Connor, Homer Flex student, asked the Board for their support of wrestling and athletics, the FFA Organization and vocational education classes.

Mrs. Pavla Tyson, Nikolaevsk Elementary/High School teacher, listed her teaching duties and expressed concern for the proposed budget cuts and staff reductions at the school.

Mrs. Natalia Basargin, Razdolna School, expressed concern for the proposed staffing reductions for the 2007-2008 school year and asked the Board for more teaching time.

PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:
(continued)

Miss Lilly Connor, Homer Flex High student, asked the Board for their support and promotion of the FFA Organization.

Mr. Emerson Quarton, Homer High School student, expressed concern for the proposed reduction in elective classes and reduction of teachers for the 2007-2008 school year.

Mr. Zaharey Martushev, Razdolna village, spoke against the proposed budget cuts for the 2007-2008 school year.

**COMMUNICATIONS AND
PETITIONS:**

Dr. Peterson reminded School Board members that she is collecting their school visitation reports and that not all of them have been submitted. She reported that a letter was included in the Board General Information packet regarding Karen Ruebsamen, Homeless Liaison for the District, and that she has received correspondence that is usual and customary during the legislative session.

Mrs. Mullins reported that the Board received a thank you card from the Seward Softball and Baseball teams, letters from students at the Soldotna Montessori Charter School recognizing Board members for their work in honor of Board Appreciation Month, and a poster from Tebughna Elementary/High School recognizing Board members for their work in honor of Board Appreciation Month.

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

Mrs. Martin welcomed the Board to Homer.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S
REPORT:**

Dr. Peterson announced that principal interviews will be held in Seward for Seward Middle School on Thursday, March 8; in Nikolaevsk for Nikolaevsk Elementary/High School on Monday, March 12; and in Seldovia for Susan B. English Elementary/High School on Thursday March 15. She reported that she will attend the Alaska Superintendent Association Legislative Fly-In in Juneau, March 18 through 23.

FISCAL YEAR 2008 BUDGET:

Mrs. Douglas presented the 2007-2008 Preliminary Draft School District budget of \$113,434,399 for the General Fund and a total of \$131,136,419 for all funds. She announced that action is scheduled for the April 2 Board meeting. She stated that she is hopeful that additional funding will be available from the legislature. She noted that additional budget issues to be discussed are PERS/TRS employer rates, utilities, E-rate adjustment, school configurations, pupil transportation, staffing formula changes, and expenditure in-kind budget adjustments.

BOARD REPORTS:

Mrs. Downing reported that the Charter School Oversight Committee met and discussed cost accounting versus governmental accounting of charter school operation expenditures, which will help provide a clear understanding of costs to operate individual charter schools. She added that the group also discussed standardization of enrollment and waiting list procedures. She announced that the group rescheduled a meeting with the West Homer Elementary Site Council from March 12 to April 9.

Mrs. Crawford reported that she judged the Districtwide Forensics Meet and read books to Redoubt Elementary students in honor of Dr. Seuss' birthday. She reported that she also observed some of the competitions held as part of the Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO) Conference and visited Nanwalek Elementary/High School.

**BOARD WORKSESSION
REPORT:**

Mrs. Mullins reported that the Board reviewed and discussed proposed revisions to Board Policy regarding school sponsored field trips. She reported that the Board discussed 2007-2008 Board meeting dates and the FY08 budget. She reported that the Board held a conference call with legislators to discuss funding and education related legislation.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Items presented on the Consent Agenda were Approval of Long-Term Substitute Teacher contracts; 2007-2008 Special Education Tentative Nontenure Teaching Assignments; 2007-2008 Special Education Nontenured Teachers for Tenure; and Resignations.

**LONG-TERM SUBSTITUTE
TEACHER CONTRACTS:**

Mr. Szymoniak recommended that the Board approve long-term substitute contracts for Paul Zobeck, Jennifer Carr, Linda Vroman, and Deborah Michael.

**2007-2008 SPECIAL
EDUCATION TENTATIVE
NONTENURE TEACHING
ASSIGNMENTS:**

Mr. Szymoniak recommended that the Board approve nontenured Pupil Services teacher assignments for the 2007-2008 school year for Tammy Flanders, resource, Districtwide Pupil Services; Deidre Jenson, behavior transitions, Districtwide Pupil Services; Joel Jenson, primary, behavior teacher, Districtwide Pupil Services; Hope Kmetz-Casseri, intensive needs, Homer High; Paul Gutzler, resource, Homer High; Elizabeth Lennon, speech, Homer Middle; Anne Peel, emotionally handicapped, Homer Middle; Barbara Croxford, school psychologist, K-Beach; Lisa Ferguson, resource, K-Beach; Jacob Munyer, resource, Kenai Central High; Mary Glynn, occupational therapist, Mt. View Elementary; Jason Steadman, speech, Mt. View Elementary; Robanne Stading, resource, Nikolaevsk Elementary/High; Ben Alexander, resource, Ninilchik Elementary/High; Katherine Van Saun, speech, Ninilchik Elementary/High; Amy Alexander, intensive, Paul Banks Elementary; Joanne Frey, intensive, Seward Elementary; Ann Knofel, school psychologist, Seward Elementary; Kathy Sandoval, behavior teacher, Seward Elementary; Nicole Lyon, resource, Seward High; Robin Castleman, resource, Skyview High; Tammy Elyea, resource, Skyview High; Elisabeth Feeley, resource, Soldotna

**2007-2008 SPECIAL
EDUCATION TENTATIVE
NONTENURE TEACHING
ASSIGNMENTS:**

(continued)

Elementary; Stephanie Burns, resource, Soldotna High; David Justice, resource, Soldotna High; Shannon Riley, resource, Susan B. English; Douglas O'Brien, resource, West Homer Elementary; and Kriste Simonson, school psychologist, West Homer Elementary.

**2007-2008 SPECIAL
EDUCATION NONTENURED
TEACHERS FOR TENURE:**

Mr. Szymoniak recommended that the Board approve Jennifer Harvey-Kindred, Lucinda Holland, Katie Biegert, Terese Kashi, Judy Graham, Donna Huguelet, Daniel Kaasa, and Nell Denny, nontenure teachers, for tenure.

RESIGNATIONS:

Mr. Szymoniak recommended that the Board approve resignations from Herb Wottlin, elementary teacher, Seward Elementary and Jennifer Chapple, McNeil Canyon Elementary (on sabbatical for the 2006-2007 school year).

MOTION

Mrs. Crawford moved the Board approve Consent Agenda Items Numbers 1 through 4. Dr. Anderson seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS/
COMMENTS:**

Ms. Kiki Abrahamson, Fireweed Charter School, expressed appreciation for Board support of alternative education choices within the District. She thanked Ms. Downing for serving on the Charter School Oversight Committee. She thanked Mr. Szymoniak for facilitating the group and Mrs. Douglas for her work on behalf of charter schools.

Ms. Ginnie Espenshade expressed support for the Borough Assembly lawsuit against the state regarding inadequate funding of education for the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District.

Mrs. Pepper Martushef, Nikolaevsk resident, expressed concern for staffing issues at small schools and for the proposed loss of two teachers at Nikolaevsk Elementary/High for the 2007-2008 school year.

Ms. Deborah Germano, Assembly Member and former Board Member, thanked the Board for holding their meeting in Homer, and added that she hopes the Board will continue the practice of conducting two meetings in Homer and two meetings in Seward each school year.

Ms. Millie Martin, Assembly Member and former Board Member, reminded those present of the history of School District budget cuts and added that there is nothing else to cut. She reported that the public does not understand the problems the Borough Assembly and School Board are facing and that one constituent threatened a tax payer revolt. She stated that the Borough lawsuit may be the only way to get the attention of the legislature.

BOARD COMMENTS:

Mrs. Hilts told those present that there is nothing left for the Board to cut from the 2007-2008 budget and that the Board will have to wait for a decision from the Legislature. She thanked Mrs. Espenshade for her comments. She stated that the most important gift to give children is a good community and added that she does not want to live in an uneducated community. She encouraged those present to contact state legislators about support for adequate funding for education because they are not hearing from the public. She suggested to those who wish to write to the School Board that they also write letters to the governor.

Miss Ames thanked those who testified to the Board in support of education and reassured them that the Board is on their side. She recommended that the public keep pressure on the legislature to provide adequate funding for education and to get involved.

Dr. Anderson summarized the District's budget cut history and noted that cuts have been made for many years, gradually nibbling away at programs. He stated that the public attitude has been that the Board will recover the teachers who have been cut. He noted that this year's budget was formulated on the best assessment of what the District might get for funding. He stated that realistically the District is facing a \$7 million deficit for the 2007-2008 budget which is the highest yet. He asked why the legislature can't adopt the full recommendation of the Institute of Social and Economic Research (ISER) Study to increase the area cost differential. He reported that it was clear during the conference call with legislators that they did not understand the magnitude of the deficit the District is facing but they do now.

Mrs. Downing stated that she was pleased to be in Homer for the Board meeting. She expressed appreciation for the Fireweed Charter School and Homer Flex School reports. She stated that she was pleased with the number of students who spoke. She reported that she visited Homer Flex School and added that students were engaged in performance-based learning. She stated that the Board wants to be able to offer lots of elective courses and to keep the pupil-teacher ratio status quo. She urged those present to contact legislators regarding educational funding and when writing to the Board to also copy Kenai Peninsula legislators.

Ms. Hohl stated that she enjoyed Fireweed Academy Charter School and Homer Flex School reports. She reported that she gave the School District report at the Seward City Council meeting. She thanked Dr. Peterson for information regarding the out-of-area attendance policies. She compared quotes by Thurgood Marshall and Chief Justice Warren from a movie titled *Separate but Equal*, with the Borough lawsuit.

Mrs. Crawford thanked Fireweed Academy Charter School and Homer Flex School for the reports. She thanked the public for their attendance. She encouraged those present to help when corresponding with the Board by sending copies of budget ideas and concerns to the legislature and governor.

BOARD COMMENTS:

(continued)

Mrs. Mullins stated that she was impressed with the student speakers and added that she is proud of how well they speak. She reassured those present, that although the Board cannot respond to questions during the meeting, they have heard the public testimony and that they read emails. She remembered the tragic budget cuts of 1986 and 1987 and noted that the current budget cuts are past the point of tragic. She asked those present to partner with the Board by contacting state legislators in support of adequate funding for education.

ADJOURN:

At 8:46 p.m., Dr. Anderson moved the School Board Meeting be adjourned. Mrs. Crawford seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Mrs. Debra Mullins, President

Mrs. Liz Downing, Clerk

The Minutes of March 5, 2007,
were approved on April 2, 2007
with a correction.