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# Kenai Peninsula Borough School District

## Board of Education Meeting Minutes

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March 4, 2013 – 7:00 p.m.  
Regular Meeting

Borough Administration Building  
148 N. Binkley, Soldotna, Alaska

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**SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS:**

Mr. Joe Arness, President  
Mrs. Liz Downing, Vice President  
Mrs. Penny Vadla, Clerk  
Ms. Lynn Hohl, Treasurer  
Mr. Marty Anderson  
Mrs. Sammy Crawford  
Mrs. Sunni Hilts  
Mr. Bill Holt  
Mr. Tim Navarre  
Mr. Hayden Beard, Student Representative

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Dr. Steve Atwater, Superintendent of Schools  
Mr. Sean Dusek, Assistant Superintendent  
Mr. Dave Jones, Assistant Superintendent

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Mr. Jim Skogstad	Mr. Tor Dahl
Ms. Tahneta Stroh	Mrs. Margie Warner
Mrs. Teri Diamond	Mrs. LaDawn Druce
Ms. Gail Moore	Mrs. Terri Tidwell
Mrs. Laurie Olson	Ms. Christa Cady
Mr. Brian Olson	Mrs. Michelle Gabriel
Mr. Casey Olson	Mrs. Tammy Dudley
Mr. Jeff Moore	Mrs. Cindy Schlung
Mr. James Gallagher	Ms. Mica Van Buskirk
Mr. Mike Gallagher	Mrs. Fenya Basargin
Mrs. Evdokaya Basargin	Ms. Domnika Basargin
Ms. Ariel Mercier	Mr. Austin Laber
Mr. Darren Jones	

Others present not identified.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

Mr. Arness called the meeting to order at 5:58 p.m. A quorum of School Board members, Mrs. Crawford, Mrs. Downing, Mrs. Hilts, Mr. Navarre, Mr. Holt, Ms. Hohl, and Mr. Arness were present.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

At 5:58 p.m., Mrs. Downing 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 District Finances. Mrs. Crawford seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Anderson joined the meeting at 6:06 p.m.

**ADJOURN EXECUTIVE  
SESSION:**

At 6:38 p.m., Mrs. Downing moved the executive session be adjourned. Mr. Navarre seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

At 6:38 p.m., Mr. Arness recessed the meeting until 7:00 p.m.

**CALL TO ORDER:**

(7:00:12 PM)

Mr. Arness called the meeting back to order at 7:00 p.m.

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

(7:00:35 PM)

Mr. Arness invited those present to participate in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**DISTRICT MISSION  
STATEMENT:**

(7:01:00 PM)

Mr. Navarre read the District's mission statement.

**ROLL CALL:**

(7:01:18 PM)

Mr. Joe Arness	Present
Mr. Marty Anderson	Present
Mrs. Sammy Crawford	Present
Mrs. Liz Downing	Present
Mrs. Sunni Hilts	Present
Ms. Lynn Hohl	Present
Mr. Bill Holt	Present
Mr. Tim Navarre	Present
Mrs. Penny Vadla	Absent/Excused
Mr. Hayden Beard	Absent/Excused

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

(7:01:52 PM)

The agenda was approved with revisions to 11a.(3) Approval of Resignations.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

(7:02:30 PM)

The School Board Minutes of February 11, 2013, were approved as printed.

**SCHOOL REPORT:**

(7:02:57 PM)

Mrs. Teri Diamond, Soldotna Elementary School principal, recognized the school staff members in attendance and expressed appreciation for the dedication and hard work of the entire school staff. She discussed the school's mission, the need for a team effort, partnerships with families and the community, good communication and fun. She explained the school's goals and stated that the focus this year is on collaboration and increasing family involvement. Miss Clara Moore, Mr. Tim Cashman, Miss Auree Sorensen, and Miss Cierra Ritchie (students), presented a video that they had designed that highlighted the school's sports, activities, After the Bell program, Disability Awareness Day, Science Night, Robotics, Reading Counts, community visitors and volunteers, Love of Reading month, foster grandparents program, and technology. Mrs. Diamond discussed opportunities for students including the music program, introduced Mr. Tor Dahl, music teacher, and the after school rhythm choir (composed of students from Soldotna Elementary and Soldotna Montessori schools) which sang the song *Doktor Eisenbart*. Mrs. Diamond concluded by thanking the Board for the opportunity to present.

**RECESS:**

Mr. Arness recessed the meeting at 7:19 p.m.

**RECONVENE AFTER  
RECESS:**

Mr. Arness called the meeting back to order at 7:25 p.m.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:**

*(7:25:50 PM)*

Ms. Tahneta Stroh, Hope School PTA President and parent, read a statement composed by the Hope School student body, parents and community members requesting an additional teacher for the school due to increased enrollment and the demands placed on the school's one teacher and one aide.

Mr. Jim Skogstad, community representative, presented a letter to the Board from his wife, Mrs. Patty Skogstad, discussed the District budget and staffing formulas and requested an additional teacher for Hope School based on the school's current and projected enrollments.

Mrs. Evdokaya Basargin, Razdolna School parent, spoke to request a Russian Language teacher for Razdolna School.

Mrs. Fenya Basargin, school secretary and parent at Razdolna School, and Ms. Domnika Basargin, discussed the need for immediate, additional classroom space, a permanent solution to overcrowding at the school, and requested a Russian Language teacher for Razdolna School.

Mr. James Gallagher spoke regarding the Soldotna area schools' reconfiguration, stated that he felt there was a lack of opportunity for community involvement in the process and asked the Board to allow for more community input before making a decision.

Mr. Mike Gallagher spoke regarding the Soldotna area schools' reconfiguration, requested the Board allow for more community input, and that District administration provide more information on the cost of the current plan proposed before making a decision.

Ms. Ariel Mercier spoke regarding the Soldotna area schools' reconfiguration, requested the Board consider the school options carefully, consider the best environment for students and spoke against the grades 7-9 school.

Ms. Mica Van Buskirk, Seward Elementary parent, spoke regarding staffing cuts at Seward Middle School and requested that recent district wide staffing and budget increases be reapportioned to Seward Middle School in order to allow elective courses to continue.

Mr. Austin Laber, Skyview High School student, spoke regarding the Soldotna area schools' reconfiguration, discussed the success of the two Soldotna high schools, the value of small schools and asked the Board to reconsider the proposal and to not combine Skyview and Soldotna High Schools into one large school.

**PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS:***(Continued)*

Mr. Jeff Moore, parent and Soldotna Middle School teacher, spoke regarding the Soldotna area schools' reconfiguration, and stated that he supports one 10-12<sup>th</sup> grade high school (housed at Soldotna High School), one 9<sup>th</sup> grade school (housed at Soldotna Middle School), and one 6-8<sup>th</sup> grade middle school (housed at Skyview High School).

Mr. Darren Jones, parent and Skyview High School teacher, spoke regarding the Soldotna area schools' reconfiguration, the 19 year, ongoing discussion over Skyview High School's future and requested that the District form a task force of interested parties from Skyview High School and Soldotna High School for the purpose of developing one, new high school that would represent both school communities.

**COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS:***(8:05:54 PM)*

Dr. Atwater reported that, upon final review, the Alaska Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) official 20 day enrollment count for the District increased by 6.5 students but that District enrollment has decreased 100 students since the fall report. He reported that the District applied to DEED for 39 new intensive needs students this year, stated that only 13 were initially approved, however, DEED will be approving all but 3 of the applications (bringing the total intensive student count for next year to 141) and discussed the importance of funding for these students.

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE,  
SITE COUNCIL AND/OR  
P.T.A., K.P.A.A., K.P.E.A.,  
K.P.E.S.A, BOROUGH  
ASSEMBLY:***(8:09:22 PM)*

Mrs. LaDawn Druce, KPEA president, thanked the Board for approving the tenure teacher list. She stated that a tentative agreement has been reached between KPEA and the District, discussed the steps remaining in the process including electronic member voting, and requested the Board schedule a special meeting to ratify the contracts. She stated that on February 21, she attended the Effective Instruction Committee Meeting. She reported that on Friday, March 1, she attended a State advisory committee meeting regarding the teacher evaluation process, discussed the committee make-up, and stated that the committee will meet again on March 29. She announced that she will be meeting with District site council groups to discuss House Joint Resolution (HJR) 1 and Senate Joint Resolution (SJR) 9, discussed Mrs. Downing's and her recent testimonies on HJR1, and stated that those still wishing to testify on HJR1 could do so on March 11, at the Kenai Legislative Information Office. She discussed the March 1, Senate Education Committee Hearing on SJR9 (regarding student vouchers) and stated that, on behalf of NEA, Ms. Diane Ravitch testified at the hearing. She expressed appreciation for public testimony at the meeting.

**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)*

Mrs. Margie Warner, KPESA president, thanked Soldotna Elementary School for the presentation. She spoke in support of agenda item #11a.(7) Resolution 12-13-5 Music in Our Schools Month that is on the agenda for approval. She thanked the Hope School and Hope community members for their testimonies. She encouraged those in attendance to be informed on current legislative issues. She stated that a tentative agreement has been reached between KPESA and the District and that she would like the process to be completed soon.

Ms. Mica Van Buskirk, Seward Site Council president, discussed two resolutions recently passed by the Seward Site Council regarding Seward Middle and High School staffing, requested a special formula be applied to the Seward schools to accommodate the schools' needs and to provide additional course choices. She noted that upon consideration of Resolution 12-13-5 Music in Our Schools Month, there is a need for adequate music instruction in Seward secondary schools.

**SUPERINTENDENT'S  
REPORT:**

*(8:20:41 PM)*

Dr. Atwater stated that tentative agreements have been reached with KPEA and KPESA. He thanked the District, teachers and support staff negotiation teams for their hard work and dedication (including Mrs. Terri Tidwell) and stated that he would like to work with the Board and the union representatives in order to explore ways to improve the negotiation process. He reported that the Seward Middle School community is currently discussing a reconfiguration that would move 6<sup>th</sup> grade students to the middle school. He announced that the District has entered into a contract with Mr. Tony Jefferson of Southern California, to be the District webmaster, stated that contracting these services will save the District money, that this process is working well, and thanked Mr. Jim White and Miss Pegge Erkeneff for their work during this process. He thanked the audience for attending, thanked those that testified and stated that, although there was some misinformation presented, he is hopeful that this will soon be corrected. He announced that four District students, [Mr. Dylan Faulkner (Homer High School), Mr. Samuel Reinert (Homer High School), Miss Annaleah Ernst (Nikiski Middle/High School), and Mr. David Swedberg (Soldotna High School)] are candidates for the United States Presidential Scholars Program. He congratulated Mr. Jersey Truesdell for winning the Elks Hoop Shoot competition for Alaska and for the Northwest Region for boys age 10-11, and stated that Mr. Truesdell will soon compete in the national competition.

**BOARD REPORTS:**

*(8:24:06 PM)*

Mrs. Downing reported that she attended the Wellness Committee Meeting on Feb. 19, where they discussed the committee goals and progress, physical activity, community partnerships, and heard a presentation from Mr. Dean Hamburg, Student Nutrition Services Coordinator, regarding student nutrition and the positive effects of new regulations. She stated that she attended the community meeting for the Homer Middle School principal hiring process, the Budget Forum Meeting at Homer High School and the principal interviews for Paul Banks Elementary School.

## **BOARD REPORTS:**

*(Continued)*

Mrs. Hilts reported that she attended the principal interviews for Paul Banks Elementary School, the Budget Forum Meeting at Homer High School, and visited Nanwalek School where she attended a Site Council meeting and participated in teacher collaboration and other school activities.

Ms. Hohl reported that she attended the Seward PTSA meeting, the Seward Community meeting regarding the possible Seward Middle School reconfiguration and the Seward Site Council meeting.

Mrs. Crawford reported that she attended the Budget Forum Meeting at Skyview High School. By invitation, she visited several elementary schools to read to students during "Love of Reading Week" and discussed a book she read entitled *I Wanna Iguana*.

Mr. Holt reported that he attended a Kenai Peninsula School Activities Association (KPSAA) meeting where they decided to continue borough tournaments for cross country running, Nordic skiing and track; discussed ways to improve music festivals; and reviewed the preference to use semester grades versus quarter grades in determining activity eligibility for high school students. He stated that he visited schools to read to students for Dr. Seuss' birthday.

## **BOARD WORKSESSION REPORT:**

*(8:29:38 PM)*

Mr. Arness reported that the Board held several worksessions prior to the formal business meeting on Board Policy, Budget/Staffing Update, Special Education Update, and Soldotna Area Schools. In addition, the Board held a conference call with Kenai Peninsula legislators and an executive session.

## **CONSENT AGENDA:**

*(8:39:07 PM)*

Items presented on the Consent Agenda were Approval of 2012-13 New Teacher Contracts, 2013-14 Tentative Tenure Teacher Contracts, Resignations, Administrative Recommendation Regarding Leave of Absence Request/Certified, 2012-2013 Long Term Substitute Contracts, Budget Transfer, Resolution 12-13-5 Music in Our Schools Month, and Leave of Absence Request/Support.

## **2012-13 NEW TEACHER CONTRACTS:**

Mr. Jones recommended the Board approve new teacher contracts for Tracy Brown, Temporary (.80 FTE) School Psychologist, Central Peninsula Area, and Jasmine Woodhead, Temporary Elementary Language Arts Teacher/Interventionist, Chapman School.

## **2013-14 TENTATIVE TENURE TEACHER CONTRACTS:**

Mr. Jones recommended the Board approve a list of tentative tenure teacher contracts for the 2013-14 school year.

## **RESIGNATIONS:**

Mr. Jones recommended the Board approve resignations from Pauline Demas, Nanwalek School; Adrian Hurst, Seward Elementary School; Sharon Schulz, Paul Banks Elementary School; and Amy Ware, Paul Banks Elementary School, effective at the end of the 2012-13 school year.

**ADMINISTRATIVE  
RECOMMENDATION  
REGARDING LEAVE OF  
ABSENCE  
REQUEST/CERTIFIED:**

Mr. Jones recommended the Board approve the administrative recommendation that the leave of absence request for Marianne Kasch, Kaleidoscope School of Arts and Science, be denied.

**2012-2013 LONG TERM  
SUBSTITUTE CONTRACTS:**

Mr. Jones recommended the Board approve long-term substitute contracts for Maria Chythlook, Sterling Elementary School and Carol Conant, Seward Elementary School.

**BUDGET TRANSFER:**

Mr. Jones recommended the Board approve budget transfer Number 805 in the amount of \$53,662, to move funds to the appropriate school accounts for the purchase of Language Arts and Health curriculum materials.

**RESOLUTION 12-13-5 MUSIC  
IN OUR SCHOOLS MONTH:**

Dr. Atwater recommended the Board approve Resolution 12-13-5 proclaiming March 2013 as Music in Our Schools Month.

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE  
REQUEST/SUPPORT:**

Mr. Jones recommended the Board approve an unpaid leave of absence request for Nancy Spooner, Transportation Coordinator, effective February 16, 2013 to May 15, 2013.

Ms. Christa Cady spoke in favor of Resolution 12-13-5 proclaiming March 2013 as Music in Our Schools Month and thanked the Board for endorsing the observance of this month.

**MOTION:**

Mrs. Crawford moved the Board approve Consent Agenda Items Numbers 1 through 8 as revised. Mr. Navarre seconded.

Motion carried unanimously.

**POLICY MANUAL REVISIONS:**  
(8:37:20PM)

Mr. Jones recommended the Board approve revisions to AR 0200 Goals for the School District, AR 0420 School Based Management/Site Councils, BP 3513 Tobacco-Free Schools/Tobacco Use, BP 5131.62 Tobacco, and BP 5141.21 Administering Medication.

Ms. Mica Van Buskirk spoke regarding AR 0420 School Based Management/Site Councils and requested that it be revised to state that school administrators will be non-voting members on school Site Based Councils.

**MOTION:**

Mr. Navarre moved the Board approve revisions to AR 0200 Goals for the School District, AR 0420 School Based Management/Site Councils, BP 3513 Tobacco-Free Schools/Tobacco Use, BP 5131.62 Tobacco, and BP 5141.21 Administering Medication. Mrs. Downing seconded.

Mr. Arness stated that, if desired, the Board could address each listed item separately.

Ms. Hohl removed AR 0420 School Based Management/Site Councils.

## **POLICY MANUAL REVISIONS:**

*(Continued)*

Motion carried unanimously for AR 0200 Goals for the School District, BP 3513 Tobacco-Free Schools/Tobacco Use, BP 5131.62 Tobacco, and BP 5141.21 Administering Medication.

### **MOTION:**

Ms. Hohl moved the Board approve an amendment to revise AR 0420 School Based Management/Site Councils, to include, in parenthesis, the word “non-voting” after “Principal” under “Council Composition.” Mr. Anderson seconded.

### **MOTION:**

Mrs. Downing moved the Board table AR 0420 School Based Management/Site Councils and remand it to the Board Policy Committee. Mr. Holt seconded.

### **VOTE ON MOTION TO POSTPONE AND REMAND:**

YES – Anderson, Downing, Navarre, Hilts, Holt, Hohl

NO – Crawford, Arness

Motion Carried.

## **BOARD COMMENTS:**

*(8:45:53 PM)*

Mr. Holt thanked Soldotna Elementary for their presentation. He expressed appreciation for the testimony given regarding the Soldotna area schools’ reconfiguration. He announced that Mr. Brent Knight and Ms. Aubrey Smith, two former District students, were winners of the Tour of Anchorage 50K race.

Mrs. Hilts expressed appreciation to those that testified regarding the Soldotna area schools reconfiguration and Razdolna School’s need for additional space.

Mrs. Crawford thanked Soldotna Elementary for their presentation. She encouraged members of the public to contact the State legislators during this current session. She expressed appreciation to those that testified regarding the Soldotna area schools’ reconfiguration, Razdolna School’s need for additional space, and Hope and Seward schools’ issues.

Mr. Navarre thanked all those that testified at the meeting. He stated that the State legislators appreciate comments from the public, encouraged the public to contact them, and to follow current legislation and testify. He thanked all Kenai Peninsula legislators for their work and dedication to the District. He announced that he attended the Kenai Performers recent production of “South Pacific” and expressed appreciation for the program.



**BOARD COMMENTS:**

*(Continued)*

Mr. Anderson expressed appreciation for the testimony given at the meeting and stated that reconfiguration affects the lives of our community and that the District must also be fiscally responsible. He stated that he supports providing a Russian teacher for the Russian village schools. He announced that the Alaska Workforce Investment Board will hold its tri-annual meeting in Kenai on May 20-21, 2013, discussed the meeting's purpose, schedule and the importance of District students being work ready.

Mrs. Downing congratulated the Drama, Debate, and Forensics Team from Homer High School for earning the 1-2-3A Academic and Sportsmanship awards at the year's State meet. She thanked Dr. Atwater for his report on the American Association of School Administrators National Conference, especially the data regarding test scores and poverty level students, and stated that he was recognized there as Alaska's Superintendent of the Year. She reported that she attended the Alaska Society for Technology in Education (ASTE) Conference on Feb. 25-26, as part of her work with the Kenai Peninsula College, discussed the value of the conference and reported that, while there, she had the opportunity to speak to three former State of Alaska Commissioners of Education. She congratulated Ms. Sharon Schulz on her retirement and expressed appreciation for her service to the District.

Ms. Hohl expressed appreciation for the testimony given by representatives of Razdolna and Hope schools. She thanked Soldotna Elementary for their presentation. She announced that she participated in the Seward Nordic Ski Club's Luminary Ski and Snowshoe Event. She stated she attended the Alaska PTA Legislative Fly-In with Miss Kara Knotek, Seward High School student, discussed Miss Knotek's experiences while there and commented on Senator Lisa Murkowski's annual address to the Legislature. She stated that current KPSAA regulations do not make borough tournaments mandatory and that the recently proposed changes would. She encouraged the Board members attending the March AASB Legislative Fly-In in Juneau to attend the Administrators Arts Symposium on March 22, 2013, regarding arts education.

Mr. Arness stated that he is pleased that KPEA and KPESA have reached tentative agreements with the District but, that he is not pleased that the approval time will be six weeks, may require a special Board meeting in order to expedite the processing of retroactive payments and discussed the additional demands that this process will place on the District's Finance Department.

**ADJOURN:**  
(9:01:29 PM)

At 9:01 p.m., Mr. Arness adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

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Mr. Joe Arness, President

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Mrs. Liz Downing, Vice President

The Minutes of March 4, 2013,  
have been approved as of  
April 1, 2013.