

Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development
Approved Minutes
December 2 & 3 2010
Anchorage, AK

December 2, 2010

The meeting was called to order by Chair Cox at 8:00 a.m. All members were present except Pat Shier and Col. Sullivan. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The Chair asked if there were any disclosures. There were none. There were two changes to the agenda: 1) to allow Donald Handeland time to give the board a report from AASG conference, and 2) the Goldenview Middle School Chamber Choir would be entertaining the board later in the morning. The amended agenda was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Public Comment

Jim Smith, Superintendent of the Galena School District, was present to thank the board for its support, and to thank Commissioner LeDoux for his service to the state as commissioner. He said the district was looking into biomass fuels. They had filled up their fuel tank last summer when the prices were low. He said they were pairing down the amount of space that they heat, and they were converting the “hotel” rooms to classrooms, which is a \$14 million project – 240 students are now using the space. Commissioner LeDoux thanked Mr. Smith for his leadership in the state.

Posie Boggs, President of the International Dyslexia Alaska Branch, advocated for literacy and quality education and for the science of reading. She suggested advance certification programs.

Wayne Gerke, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction for the Fairbanks North Star School District, thanked Commissioner LeDoux for his work and guidance. He said he appreciated the grace period in the regulation pertaining to the scholarship and was concerned with the four units of social studies requirement.

Barbara Brown of Best Beginnings reported that the Imagination Library project, which gives free, age appropriate books for children, is doing well in Alaska. She said a community has to enroll their children. There are currently 11,632 children receiving new books each month in the state, 32% of those are under five years old.

Skye Rubideau Roberts from Best Beginnings, thanked Commissioner LeDoux for his service. Skye reminded the board that she was a student advisor to the board at one time. She advocated for the local decision making model with early learning partnerships. She thanked the board for its commitment to kids.

Bonnie Friedman, an Anchorage parent of a child with Dyslexia, said she will be applying for a charter school for students with Dyslexia, because she felt that the local schools didn't have the resources needed for students with multi-sensory needs.

Work Session

Library, Archives & Museums (LAM) Building Project. Linda Thibodeau, Director of the LAM was present to brief the board. Also present was Brian Meissner with the firm of ECI/Hyer Architecture and Interiors, and Kim Mahoney, with the Department of Transportation. They were present to brief the board on the LAM building project. They gave a brief history of the project, which is a 124, 000 sq. ft., two-story facility being proposed to be built in Juneau to replace the decaying archives building and the overcrowded state museum. The building will contain a paper and object conservation lab, the first in Alaska. The 30-day public comment begins on December 6 and goes through January 5, 2011. It is proposed that the construction will begin in the spring of 2012 and be complete in 2014, depending on partnership help. A public design workshop will be held on January 12, 2011. Project costs are around \$100 M. Mr. Jeans explained that his project gets billed as a “Juneau Project” not a state project.

Alaska State Science and Engineering Fair (ASSEF). Stephen Kranich, student liaison to the ASSEF Board of Directors from West High in Anchorage, was present to brief the board on the ASSEF and its need for publicity, benefits of the fair and problems with funding, participation, organization and support. He noted that scholarships are only available in the community where the fair is held. He advocated for a better and bigger statewide emphasis. The Commissioner noted that active leadership should come from the Department of Transportation who hire many engineers, the Department of Labor and the Alaska Workforce Development Board and it should be more active with the STEM science coordinators in the schools.

University of Alaska President Patrick Gamble. President Gamble was present to brief the board describing himself as an operations man. He said he was six months into the job and is still determining where the university is and where it needs to go. He said the university has had steady budget growth in the past decade, but is now facing a flat budget. There is a need for more emphasis in bringing more Alaskan students in and retention of first-year students. There is a great demand for engineers and health sciences and awarding a two-year AA degree in those two areas. He described facility planning and mission growth having the greatest impact. He said how to infuse learning without damaging culture is a challenge. The scholarship program needs to be one that gives back to the state and gets a return on its investment and he described a need for data tracking and merit based scholarships. Remediation and preparatory work has to be better for many of the programs so students don't have to spend the first year catching up to where they need to be. He noted that community campuses are a treasure of hard working people and are very flexible with dedicated personnel. In the future, President Gamble said the university cannot achieve potential if they remediate more than they matriculate which means they have to join with K-12 in developing more rigor in high schools. The silver bullet is being able to read and comprehend. He wished Commissioner LeDoux good luck in the future and thanked him for his counsel.

The board briefly discussed with President Gamble, how looking at standards might produce a better alignment, and how economy and scholarship programs could lead to better results. It was also noted that the GI Bill program is underdeveloped and not marketed in the state. Commissioner LeDoux noted that the department's assessment division was resetting EED standards and that UA was at the table for this discussion.

The Goldenview Middle School Chamber Choir with its director, Mr. Strumpler, treated the board and room participants to a holiday concert. This is the second year that this choir has entertained the board at its December meeting.

Ilisagvik College. President Beverly Grinage and Birgit Meany, Dean of Instruction, were present to brief the board. President Grinage described Ilisagvik as a two-year accredited community college under Native control and the only tribal college in Alaska. It is located in Barrow, AK. There is an 11 member Board of Trustees. They offer dual credits through the high school in partnership with the North Star Borough School District. One of the major programs is the Teachers for the Arctic, which aims to increase the local teacher population. They have a MOA with the school district where they talk with fifth graders about goals and dual credit, and they sponsor “College for a Day” with fifth graders, spending the entire day on campus. They share facilities and instructors with the school district. The successful Tunutchiat Summit was held last year where they explored how local students can better prepare for college and careers. 125 people attended, including Commissioner LeDoux. The target was health, education and resource development, language and culture. They also enjoy a partnership with the middle schools for hands on projects working with 10 students at a time and talking about career choices. Some interesting programs are: the “I know I can”, which is a reading program about careers and college choices, the GUYS Reading Project of volunteer readers who come into the schools to emphasize reading skills, and a summer camp for high school and young adults to learn about college and career opportunities.

Ilisagvik partners with Alaska General Contractors, they have a recruiter at Barrow HS once a week, its financial aid director travels to villages, they bring in village students for a day, and they have partnerships with BLM and the Tuzzy Library.

President Grinage says some students take up to five years to get their AA Degree, some students face many challenges at UA with remediation. Village students have the most difficulty. Commissioner LeDoux said there was a great need for Native teachers. President Grinage said they have considered moving to a four-year degree for teaching, but there would be much work to do to get accredited. President Grinage described obstacles in the programs. Some students work full time and it takes a long time to complete the requirements for the AA Degree. Some students just give up and don’t continue. She said they had six students in a paid teacher prep program and only one completed the course and became a teacher.

Middle School Career Guides. Shelly Berry from the Anchorage School District was present to brief the board on the progress of this program. The goal of the program is to increase the graduation rate, and was set up using ARRA money. The program aims at assisting students with answers to who they are, where they are going and how to get there. Through the program all seventh and eighth graders meet with a career guide and complete an individual learning career plan and are required to share it with an adult. Ms. Barry said that eighth grade is the best predictor of college and career ready. The program has proven to help collaboration with middle schools and they are hopeful they can continue through the current budget crisis. There has been great support from the district. There is quarterly training for the guides.

Bullying. Commissioner LeDoux briefed the board on steps the department has and is taking in this area. He said that the world of cyber means that children these days can't get away from bullying – that much is done in the Internet now. Alaska is one of 44 states that have laws that require school districts to have bullying-prevention policies in place. However, there is no statute or regulation that specifically reference bullying. Much of the Internet bullying occurs off the school grounds and is therefore not enforceable by schools. He presented policy materials and help from the Alaska Association of School Boards Policy Manual, the Anchorage School District, the Alaska State Library Internet Circle of Safety and the Yukon-Koyukuk School District. Assistant Attorney General Rebecca Hattan said that she had reviewed some recent cases, and felt current Alaska law was defensible. Commissioner LeDoux said the department would soon be bringing on a health and safety coordinator and bullying would one of their focuses. He cautioned that law enforcement doesn't work in villages where there is none.

Early Literacy Plan. Alyse Galvin was present to brief the board. She said the plan encompassed birth to age five and contains important skills in child development for the age range. It attempts to get the whole community involved. The plan contains many ideas and tools for families to promote early learning skills.

Family Engagement Plan. Alyse Galvin was present to brief the board. She said the plan was part of the Alaska Education Plan and addressed how to engage the family in education by being a partner. She described six strategies for successful family engagement: 1) welcoming, 2) two-way communication, 3) sharing power – being equal partners with the schools, 4) collaborating with the community, and 6) speaking for every child.

Anchorage School District Pre School Program. Ed Graff, Assistant Superintendent for the Anchorage School District, was present to brief the board. He spoke about benefits of this Title I supported program that builds strong foundations for school success. It is staffed by qualified teachers who support and encourage pre-school students by recognizing children as learners, and tracking growth and development. They provide health, vision and hearing screening, developmental screening and other services. Families are included by twice-yearly visits, class room participation, and parent training is provided and encouraged.

State Literacy Plan. Les Morse, Deputy Commissioner and Cyndy Curran, Director of Teaching & Learning Support, were present to brief the board. This plan includes a range of birth through 12th grade, and is based on current research and funded with federal planning grants, laying out a pattern about where literacy needs to be in our state. It is the first time such a plan has been attempted. Future funding rests with whether a state has a state literacy plan. Its purpose is to make sure kids can read. The committee used some of the work of the early literacy group in preparing the draft plan. They also worked with two contractors who are experts in the field and with Rhonda Gardner, previous assistant superintendent of the Anchorage School District. There will be more meetings in January followed by a period of public comment and a survey. The draft is due to the US Department of Education by February 1st. There will be a further briefing at the March board meeting.

Alaska Pacific University (APU) National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education NCATE Update. Cyndy Curran, Director of Teaching & Learning Support, was present to brief

the board. She said she had attended and participated in a focused visit with NCATE at APU in November. Briefly she said they needed more pieces to meet the standards. She said there was a new on-line assessment system. The board of examiners has submitted their report to NCATE. The report will be edited and then sent back to APU by December 10, APU can then make corrections, and then it goes back to NCATE one final time, and then they wait for notification. Ms. Curran said that the board of examiners felt that APU had met the standards. The advisory board will meet in April at which time they will learn the final determination.

The Board went into Executive Session for the purpose of interviewing student advisor-elect candidates by motion made by Geri Benshoof and seconded by Janel Keplinger. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

The Board came out of Executive Session by motion made by Geri Benshoof and seconded by Phil Schneider. The motion passed by unanimous consent. Chair Cox said the students were delightfully bright and smart and thanked them all for participating. Student interviewed were, Teresa Baldwin of Mt. Edgecumbe High School, Tiarna Fischler of Manokotak, Kritsti Lauwers of Anchorage, and Brenden Stanton of Ketchikan.

Carol Schaeffer moved and Phil Schneider seconded the following motion. I move the State Board of Education and Early Development appoint Tiarna Fischler as the Student Advisor-Elect. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

The board recessed until the following day.

December 3, 2010

The meeting was called back to order by Chair Cox at 8:00 a.m. All members were present. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The Chair asked if there were any disclosures. There were none. There were two changes to the agenda: 1) to move the Commissioner's report to before lunch, and 2) to add an executive session to discuss the appointment of a new Commissioner. The amended agenda was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Work Session Continued

Virtual Learning. The board participated in a virtual learning demonstration in the school district computer lab where they joined an Elluminate platform discussion for an interactive briefing session with the department staff in Juneau.

Regulations to adopt.

Alaska Performance Scholarship. Cyndy Curran, Director of Teaching & Learning Support, was present to brief the board. The board discussed concerns about how quickly this was moving and the expected rigor. Commissioner LeDoux said he had spoken to every school district superintendent, and they were all in favor of the regulation and support the rigor requirements. He said some indicated it would take longer, but they were willing to work toward the goal. It will require hard work. Much of the public comment had to do with social studies and the Commissioner said that requirement would require districts to do some shuffling with the

courses they already offer. Mr. Shier indicated that the Elluminate demonstration showed how courses could be delivered to rural communities and others.

Regulations to promulgate.

Work Ready. Erik McCormick, Director of Assessment, Accountability & Information Management, was present to brief the board. He announced that WorkKeys was now under the Assessment, Accountability & Information Management division and no longer in CTE. Mr. McCormick said the test is in three parts taking 40- 45 minutes each. He indicated that the test belonged to ACT and not the department. He said the department was working with ACT to streamline the process. Ms. Benshoof expressed concern with requiring another test. Eddy Jeans, Policy Coordinator, said that WorkKeys was one of the components of the scholarship and he considered it an opportunity. He said the board had already approved the test and this regulation clarifies its use for the scholarship. Mr. McCormick said the certificates go directly to the parent with descriptors about the different levels.

Fund Balance. Elizabeth Nudelman, Director of School Finance, was present to brief the board. She indicated that this regulation aligned language to the Government Accounting Standards Board. It still maintained the 10% carry over to the next year. She discussed the formula used to determine the 10% carry over. She said the only thing that changes is the reporting.

Alaska Association of Student Government Report. Donald Handeland, Student Advisor, briefed the board about resolutions passed at the annual meeting. One resolution specifically addressed suicide prevention. Commissioner LeDoux said there was training and awareness events going on throughout the state and EED does participate in those events. He indicated that Phyllis Carlson, Director of Rural Education, was on the Suicide Prevention Board and she could take the resolution and formally present it.

The board paused to go into the hall to listen to the Bartlett High School Singers who were entertaining in the district office with holiday music.

Business Meeting

Pat Shier moved and Jim Merriner seconded the following motion. I move the State Board of Education & Early Development adopt the proposed changes to 4 AAC 43, regarding the Alaska Performance Scholarship Program. The motion was passed by a 6-1 roll call vote. Carol Schaeffer voted nay.

Pat Shier moved and Phil Schneider seconded the following motion. I move the State Board of Education & Early Development open a period of public comment on amendments to 4 AAC 06.717, Work ready/college ready transitional skills assessment. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Jim Merriner moved and Pat Shier seconded the following motion. I move the State Board of Education & Early Development open a period of public comment on 4 AAC 09.160, regarding the Fund Balance. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Mt. Edgecumbe High School (MEHS) Report. Randy Hawk, Superintendent, was present to brief the board. The Commissioner said he was happy to report that both students and the administration are pleased with Mr. Hawk's leadership at MEHS. Mr. Hawk said the current enrollment was 399 students and it appeared that they were keeping more students this year. There are 15 students waiting in the wings to fill any slots that open up. He indicated that the new swimming pool will be a big plus for the students. A new student information system has been set up to better communicate with parents and students in an emergency. Everyone will be called within 15 minutes. The wireless project is moving along with the help of the department IT department. He said they had received a grant from IBM to look at technology issues. MEHS is participating in a new program called the Color of Justice which is an outreach program by the Alaska Supreme Court. The justices will be at MEHS in February. The new program compliments the cadet program. Concerning sports activities, the Boys Cross Country team came in second in the state, there has been a 56 game winning streak by the volleyball team who came in second at the regionals, 1/5 of the student body is participating in wrestling, and there is a new music program supporting an honor choir this year.

Geri Benshoof took the opportunity to introduce the new Fairbanks School District Superintendent, Pete Lewis, who was in the audience.

Carol Comeau, Anchorage School District Superintendent, was granted a Point of Privilege by Chair Cox. Ms. Comeau presented Commissioner LeDoux with a plaque commemorating his working relationship with the district and thanking him for his service to the state. She indicated that he had been instrumental in settling a lawsuit with the School for the Deaf.

Library, Archives & Museums (LAM) Report. Linda Thibodeau, Director of the Libraries, Archives & Museums, was present to brief the board. She asked the board if they wanted to do a resolution regarding the building project. Chair Cox said she wanted to go on record encouraging the process. Commissioner LeDoux indicated that the process should move along before intervening. Ms. Thibodeau said they were having a broadband meeting in January to address those issues. Ms. Thibodeau said that a determination regarding the repatriation of the *Leader of All Raven's Hat* had been rendered through a hearing held in Washington, DC, which found that the museum did not have the proper documentation signifying ownership of the hat. There may be more litigation concerning this issue. She noted that the purchase of the Stratton Library in Sitka, by the department, was moving along. The cost would be approximately \$2M. A new reference room has been opened at the state archives which is helping with research activities. Pat Shier thanked the LAM Division for its partnership with Retirement & Benefits for the data archiving project they were involved with.

Teaching & Learning support (TLS) Report. Cyndy Curran, Director of Teaching & Learning Support, was present to brief the board. She said the SIG grant distribution was complete and the Career and Technology plan was being implemented. She indicated that 70% of juniors across the state have enrolled to take the WorkKeys test. Ms. Curran said they would be bringing on a new position for a health and safety coordinator after the new-year. The Graduation Working Group did not get the grant they were seeking, but the group wants to continue its work, possibly through the use of Elluminate. The Teacher Quality Working Group understands that it needs to do a better job of educating the public about the new teacher

certification regulation. From the comments received, it was clear that people did not understand what was being affected. The group is currently developing criteria and a template for teacher evaluation and multi cultural requirements. In the following weeks, work will be done with smaller districts on evaluation. Ms. Curran said that the work with the regulation review was completed, and the department was waiting for some determinations from the Attorney General's office.

Commissioner's Report. Commissioner LeDoux was present to speak to the board. Commissioner LeDoux thanked the Governor for the opportunity to serve the students of Alaska for the past two and half years. He said he used to be a youth minister, but felt that education was his calling and he could "minister" to students. He indicated that there is a lot of good to say, but he is worried about the 1% who aren't making the grade. He said education is a pathway to dreams and dreams are a vision. He said he was leaving a copy of the Alaska Education Plan on his desk for the new commissioner. The plan needs to be reset, reviewed and moved forward. He encouraged the board and staff to stay true to the plan.

Chair Cox read a Resolution from the board citing the Commissioner's accomplishments and thanking him for his service. Commissioner LeDoux excused himself from the meeting. Deputy Commissioner Les Morse joined the board on the dais in his place.

Assessment, Accountability & Information Management Report. Erik McCormick, Director of Assessment, Accountability & Information, was present to brief the board. Mr. McCormick said the HSGQE results were posted on the web this date. He said they were preparing for the WorkKeys transition to their office and for test coordinator training. He indicated that the Data Interaction for Alaska Student Assessment (DIASA) was now aligned with the GLEs, and includes the SBA and HSGQE data. They are now looking into allowing districts to use it for their own data. Chair Cox inquired about the Tara Nova and MAPS, and if the department was doing anything with those. Mr. McCormick said that the commissioner has to set the norm reference tests. The department would have to rewrite the regulations to include other tests which could skew the state-wide results. Legislative intent would also have to be considered. He said the DIASA would allow districts to load other information into the system.

District Improvement. Deputy Commissioner Les Morse was present to brief the board. Mr. Morse noted that professional development work with staff was being done in the four intervention districts, along with webinars. In November a three-day literacy workshop was conducted with the intervention districts. In January, the department will use out-of-state and in-state experts for small schools – with six or fewer instructors. Mr. Morse said the SSOS team is helping with integrating art into schools. The department is working closely with the trustee who was appointed in the Yupiit School District, to finalize his report with the department. At that time a determination will be made about any adjustments.

School Finance Report. Elizabeth Nudelman, Director of School Finance, was present to brief the board. She indicated that the October count was completed for FY11 and enrollment was consistent with FY10. There was about a 100 student difference. Two schools have dropped below the required 10 ADM, and two schools have requested opening again because numbers

have increased about 10. In facilities, project scoring is done for the FY 12 budget. Sam Kito is working with the LAM on the building project and Stratton Library acquisition.

Rural Education Report. Phyllis Carlson, Director of Rural Education, was present to brief the board. She gave some highlights of her activities for the past two months. December 17, there will be a Native Educator's meeting to discuss best west coast practices with an expert from Education Northwest in Portland. She indicated that she had been weathered-out from Yupiit this past week and would be trying again to hold her meeting. She also indicated that the BIA held a conference this past week with Indian Health Services and took public comment on suicide prevention.

Attorney General's Report. Rebecca Hattan, Assistant Attorney General, was present to brief the board. She gave a report on the *Leader of all Raven's Hat*, saying the same as Ms. Thibodeau had said in her report. Concerning the *Moore* case, she said they had filed a Notice of Compliance in October outlining what State System of Support (SSOS) was doing in the five intervention districts. Opposition will most likely come by Christmas, with a reply due by January and then there would be a six-month waiting period again for the judge to rule.

Consent Agenda. Carol Schaeffer moved and Phil Schneider seconded the following motion. I move the State Board of Education & Early Development approve the consent agenda consisting of: 1) Approval of the minutes of the September 9 & 10, 2010, meeting; 2) Approval of the minutes of the October 25, 2010, meeting; 3) Approval of members appointed to the Museum Collections Advisory Committee; and 4) Approval of the appointment of Elizabeth Nudelman as the Federal Impact Aid Representative. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Board Comments

Donald Handeland said they had had excellent candidates for the student advisor position and had made a good decision. He said he was working with other state student reps through National Association of State Boards of Education (NASBE).

Col. Sullivan wished everyone happy holidays.

Phil Schneider said he was looking forward to the transition and new leadership.

Geri Benshoof said she had attended the November meeting of the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education in Barrow and toured the deaf and hard of hearing center with Mrs. Parnell while there. She thanked Cyndy Curran for her report, congratulated the new student representative, and said she was very proud of Donald and the work he was doing.

Carol Schaeffer wished everyone a happy holiday and clarified that the SFSF dollars awarded to the state were stimulus dollars to save jobs, re-employ and employ staff or to the benefit of instructional staff.

Janel Keplinger said the department had done a wonderful job and it was nice to be with a board that cares about kids and wished everyone a happy holiday.

Jim Merriner thanked the staff and the Anchorage School District for allowing the board to use the space. He said he very much appreciated President Gamble's words.

Les Morse ensured the board that EED would step up to the transition.

Esther Cox said she had sent congratulatory notes on behalf of the board to award winners that were mentioned in the Information Exchange. She recently spent a ½ day with the deaf and hard of hearing students in Mat-Su and had attended the Teacher Quality Working Group, the Graduation Working Group, and the Career Tech meeting. Concerning the scholarship, she said she would prefer the Alaska Advantage program to be the needs-based program and the scholarship to be merit-based. She complimented Donald Handeland on an excellent job in preparing for the student advisor interviews, and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Geri Benshoof moved and Phil Schneider seconded the following motion. I move that the State Board of Education & Early Development meet in executive session to discuss the appointment of a new commissioner. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Janel Keplinger moved and Carol Schaeffer seconded the following motion. I move the State Board of Education & Early Development move out of executive session. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Phil Schneider moved and Jim Merriner seconded the following motion. I move that, subject to the approval of the Governor, the State Board of Education & Early Development appoint Michael Hanley to serve as the Commissioner of Education & Early Development. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

The meeting was adjourned.