

Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development
Approved Minutes
July 26, 2010
Anchorage, AK

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Work Session

The meeting was called to order via teleconference by Chair Esther Cox. All members were present except Donald Handeland, Student Advisor. The board recited the Pledge of Allegiance. The Chair asked if there were any disclosures, there were none. Motion was made by Jim Merriner to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Janel Keplinger and the motion was approved by unanimous roll call vote.

The Chair asked if there was any public comment. There was none.

Commissioner LeDoux introduced the first agenda item, the American Charter Academy Charter School saying the school was seeking approval for five years. Cyndy Curran, Director of Teaching & Learning Support was present to brief the board. She noted that the school was converting from a public school to a charter school to take advantage of the SIG grants. She said the school provided wrap around services. Mr. Shier asked what the change would do. Ms. Curran said it would stay with the RISK model and the reinforcement of services would help a great deal. She said the school has supported the RISK model and looks forward to having more tools to track progress. The will be offering new services like meals, transportation and health services.

Commissioner LeDoux introduced the second agenda item, the assessment regulations. Erik McCormick was present on line from Washington, DC to brief the board. Jim Merriner asked how peer review would work. Mr. McCormick said anytime the assessment regulations are changed, the superintendent has to conduct peer review to review the accountability work book and checks and balances. The proposed regulation proposes a new method for calculating the graduation rate, an annual goal and improvement target and edits definitions. There was a discussion regarding the 85% graduation rate and annual target rate of 2% for schools that do not meet the 85% - a federal requirement. Commissioner LeDoux said 85% is acceptable by the federal government, but Alaska wants to see 100% graduation rate. The board said it wanted to make a public statement or being on record, indicating that 100% was their graduation rate goal. Mr. McCormick said the schools districts had been advised of the new graduation rate and the department has done new calculations.

Commissioner LeDoux introduced the third agenda item, the Work ready/college ready transitional skills. Marci Olson was present to brief the board. The proposed regulation makes optional a requirement to test sixth-graders and eighth-graders in benchmark assessments of applied math, reading for information and locating information. Ms. Olson said the test can be taken multiple times; however, the state only pays for two times. She also concurred that the tests say nothing about career choice.

Business Meeting

Janel Keplinger moved and Geri Benshoof seconded the following motion. I move the State Board of Education & Early Development approve the American Charter Academy application for a period of five (5) years. The motion was passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

Pat Shier moved and Jim Merriner seconded the following motion. I move the State Board of Education & Early Development open a period of public comment on changes to 4 AAC 06.825 regarding Other academic indicators, 4 AAC 06.895 regarding Report card to the public and 4 AAC 06.899 regarding Definitions. The motion was passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

Jim Merriner moved and Janel Keplinger seconded the following motion. I move the State Board of Education & Early Development adopt amendments to 4 AAC 06.715(b), regarding Work ready/college ready transitional skills curriculum and benchmark assessments. The motion was passed by a unanimous roll call vote.

Board Comments.

Pat Shier thanked the board for his “leave time” spent with his family and said he was looking forward to the September meeting.

Janel Keplinger said it was great to hear everyone’s voices and was looking forward to September.

Bunny Schaeffer – no comments.

Phil Schneider – no comments.

Col. Sullivan said he was looking forward to the September meeting.

Jim Merriner thanked the department for keeping him informed while he was out fishing.

Geri Benshoof said she was in Spokane where it was 98 degrees. She said she liked the electronic packet.

Esther Cox said every meeting needs a full board to get its work done. She said she was interested in seeing the vocational high school when in Mat-Su for the September meeting.

Commissioner LeDoux said the department would continue with the paperless packets. Ms. Keplinger and Mr. Schneider both said they liked it as well. The commissioner said he attended the legislative task force meeting last week and commended Donald Handeland for his great presentation to the group. He said the task force will be meeting 4 or 5 more times in different locations around the state. The commissioner said the department was moving forward carefully with the Yupit School District and its improvement plan. He also noted that there is a new rural schools coalition (the frontier states), within CCSSO, who feel the framework of the ESEA is not flexible enough for the western states. They will be sending a letter to the US Department of

Education soon. He also noted that the scholarship regulations may have to be amended which would require a special meeting. He said the board would be notified soon.

Esther Cox thanked the staff for their work.

The meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent.