

**Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development**  
**Approved Minutes**  
**Juneau, AK**  
**March 8 & 9, 2012**

*Thursday, March 8, 2012*

The meeting was called to order by Chair Cox at 8:00 a.m. in the board meeting room at the Department of Education & Early Development in Juneau. A quorum was present. Janel Keplinger and Tiarna Fischler were on video conference. Col Sullivan was excused. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The Chair asked if anyone had any disclosures. There were none. The Chair asked if there were any changes to the agenda. Because the board had met with the Governor the day before, a photo session for the reading posters was inserted in its place. The amended agenda was moved by Jim Merriner, seconded by Pat Shier, and approved by unanimous roll call vote.

Ms. Cox indicated that the board had a great tour of the Alaska State Museum the day before and commended the museum staff on their fine work. It was noted that those board members who missed the tour could take it on Friday, after the meeting is adjourned.

***Public Comments***

Andi Story, vice-president of the Juneau School Board, welcomed the board to Juneau. She said she was thrilled that the board would be entertained by the Tlingit Culture Class the following day. She thanked the board for its leadership on the standards, and said it was important for everyone to work together. She advocated for more funding for the district.

Laury Scandling, Juneau School District (JSD), felt the new standards were putting education ahead; she said that JSD had an increasing graduation rate and a decreasing dropout rate. She advocated using research to drive data. She was pleased to see Alaska's Learning Network come to fruition, which reaches outside of the classroom and brings students into the larger world. She said the trend was now.

Bruce Johnson, Executive Director of the Alaska Council of School Administrators, thanked the Governor for his wisdom in putting money in the budget for pupil transportation and energy; however, he indicated that more was needed and there was more than a one-time need. He advocated for more funding all around.

Pat Race and Aaron Suring were present on behalf of the Alaska Humanities Forum for History and Cultural Studies, and spoke about their new web site and encouraged feedback. Forum

member Larry Campbell in the Anchorage LIO office said the forum was looking for a new CEO with the departure of Dr. Greg Kimura.

### **Work Session**

**Alaska Performance Scholarship.** Brian Rae, Assistant Director of Research & Analysis for the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education, was present to review the Outcomes Report. The APS legislation requires an annual report to the Governor, the legislature and the public no later than 10 days after the start of each legislative session.

The report is based, to a large degree, on the work of representatives from Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DOLWD), Education & Early Development (EED), the Governor's Office of Management & Budget, University of Alaska (UA) and the Anchorage School District (ASD), who met during fall 2010 and identified seven higher-level questions to answer in the inaugural APS Outcomes Report.

EED and the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education (ACPE) worked closely during summer 2011 to share the information required to administer the scholarships, and this information also provided student information included in the APS Outcomes Report.

At the same time, staff in the research shops of the four lead agencies (EED, UA, DOLWD, and ACPE) met to determine what information was available during this first year of the scholarship, and how it could be used to measure the scholarship's effects on students. The result of these discussions was a set of specific questions that were adopted as the framework for the Outcomes Report, and that determined what types of information needed to be shared among the lead agencies to answer them.

In mid-November, the agencies began the data-sharing process, linking records across their own databases, compiling and analyzing them in order to answer the previously agreed upon questions. This included incorporating data from the Permanent Fund Dividend files to more accurately link students' records across the systems, and from the National Student Clearinghouse to identify students attending postsecondary institutions outside of Alaska.

Mr. Schneider remarked that the report was very comprehensive. He asked if there was enough being done to let students know they can use this money for certificated programs. Mr. Rae agreed that there needed to be more marketing of the program. The commissioner noted that SAT/ACS scores prevent some students from applying.

**Capital Improvement List (CIP).** Elizabeth Nudelman, Director of School Finance & Facilities, was present to brief the board. She said that the CIP list was created annually from information submitted by the school districts.

Mr. Shier inquired about the timeline of creating the list. Mr. Morse said in part, EED looks at the amount of money that can be spent and makes sure that EED has followed the statutes and regulations in preparing the lists. Districts also have the opportunity to protest and get reconsideration. Mr. Shier asked if the amount of money spent in rural Alaska was difficult to support. He said he'd like to encourage design to examine alternative co-locations, like the post office or the washeteria. Mr. Schneider asked if there were more projects for efficiencies and asked if the department encourages that concept and wanted to know how student health, safety, and education outcomes fit into the prioritization. Sam Kito, school architect, explained that there is a category of points in scoring for all projects that covers all three of those concerns, and energy conservation is encouraged. Once the list is approved it turns into a multi-year process, and is usually in the design process by the time the project gets to the top of the list. After the cut-off, the next project does not automatically move up to the top; there are a lot of variables to consider, such as urgency and safety. All state projects have to go to the lowest bidder, being advertised and awarded on a competitive basis. Alternative procurement methods control the quality of the product. Cost is still a factor, but we can use 40%-50% for alternative bids for better quality. Mr. Kito said all statutes and regulations are followed, and there are questions about past claims and excessive over-runs for each bidder, and of course, reference calls – all considered before a bid is awarded.

**Babies on Track.** Abbe Hensley, Executive Director of Best Beginnings, was present to brief the board. She showed a 14-minute video called *Babies on Track*. It showed how wordless books can be used to more effectively interact with the youngest of children. Many different languages can be used and the reader can develop his/her own descriptions. She said she was appreciative of the help she has gotten from EED. She noted that nearly 17,000 children are receiving books from the Imagination Library.

**Audited School District Budget Waivers.** Elizabeth Nudelman, Director of School Finance & Facilities, was present to brief the board. John Sanbei, from Core Inc., was present for Kashunamiut School District, and Howard Diamond, Superintendent for Yupiit, was online. No one was present from Lower Yukon. Ms. Nudelman said the reason for Kashunamiut's waiver request and not making the 70% for instruction was teacher retention and professional services. The reason Lower Yukon did not make the 70% was the need for capital expenditures, maintenance on facilities and not using grant funds effectively. The reason Yupiit did not meet the 70% was travel expenses and energy costs. Mr. Shier said he was very curious about what caused Yupiit to have a \$1.4M deficit. Mr. Diamond said when grants increase it doesn't become part of the 70/30 split. He said the School Improvement Grant (SIG) wasn't included. He said the district had very high energy costs and some high legal fees. Mr. Shier said SIG grants were to be used for instruction to supplement, not to supplant. Several concerns were expressed regarding the decreases of dollars spent on instruction. Questions were asked regarding high administration costs and the operations and maintenance costs. Mr. Diamond said they have 450 students in three schools off the road system. They have two assistant

superintendents, one handling the SIG grant and one who handles migrant education, Title I, Special Education and federal programs. They also have a curriculum director. Ms. Cox asked why the school board expense wasn't its own line in the budget. Ms. Schaeffer asked if the school board received a stipend. Mr. Diamond said, yes, \$500 a meeting and \$200 a day if they travel to an AASB meeting. He said they meet once a month for a full day and there was a high cost for air travel for charter aircraft. Mr. Diamond spoke about teacher retention, saying there was a high turnover in FY10 of 42%, but FY 11 was lower. Ms. Nudelman explained that waivers are budgets vs. accomplishment for one fiscal year, and looking at what happened to change things is a way to understand. Ms. Cox asked what happened to cause the district from having a 71% for instruction three years ago to today's 63%. Mr. Diamond said the E-rate got funded but was not approved, which was \$682,000 and wasn't spent, there was an increase in district administration, energy expenses were very high, and legal issues have plagued the district concerning the Tuluksak gym floor.

Regarding the Kashunamiut School District waiver request, Mr. Sanbei said reasons for the district not making the 70% requirement for instructions were: the vacuum sewer system froze and some teachers left the district because they couldn't deal with honey buckets, the finance server needed repair, and the cost of air freight and audit costs. Mr. Schneider asked Mr. Sanbei what was the biggest challenge in meeting the 70% requirement. Mr. Sanbei said he works from Southeast to Barrow and he sees all different reasons such as freight, staffing, weather, and rural life challenges. He said the 70/30 requirement is flawed because districts have different challenges, the timeline is long and circumstances change, and he feels once a facility is built, there is no money allocated for maintenance. Mr. Shier said he'd like to have a larger discussion on how grants affect line items (chart of accounts) and to be able to brainstorm solutions and come up with alternatives. He said he'd like a better understanding of this whole process.

Regarding Lower Yukon School District waiver request, Ms. Schaeffer inquired what the extra 1% for student activities was, why it went up and what was it spent on. Ms. Nudelman said she didn't know but would find out.

**Charter School Renewals.** Cyndy Curran, Director of Teaching & Learning Support, said there were three charter schools requesting renewals on the board's agenda: Soldotna Montessori, Fireweed Academy, and Aurora Borealis.

Regarding Soldotna Montessori, Mo Sanders was present to brief the board. She said they operate like any good school, recognizing self-learners, doing lots of hands-on, lots of technology and using little seat time. She indicated that 163 students was its maximum enrollment, and there was very little turnover in students or teachers. They have a lottery and a waitlist for spaces that open up. Ms. Benshoof asked what sort of community service they did. Ms. Sanders said they clean city parks in the fall, they work with the food bank, and they have a

hunger banquet and raise money to attend the annual Montessori conference each year. They have a music teacher and a PE (movement) teacher and share busing with the school district.

Regarding Fireweed Academy, Ki Ki Abrahamson was present to brief the board. She said to be fiscally solvent their goal was to get to 150 students but they were struggling with facilities and drawing from smaller populations. She said arts and music are integrated into the curriculum and they use Artists in the Schools program. Transportation is currently provided by the district when space is available. She said they have the second-highest level of poverty in the district so they struggle with providing families with food, after school activities and special needs.

Regarding Aurora Borealis, Scott Koffman and Larry Nauta were present to brief the board. Mr. Merriner asked if the school had uniforms. Mr. Nauta said they have a dress code, not uniforms. Mr. Koffman said the dress code for boys consisted of khakis and polo shirts (with collars), shades of blue or red. Girls could wear skorts, khakis, but no dyed hair or open-toed or open-heeled shoes, and shoes could only have a one-inch lift. They are housed in a building with the Kenai Alternative Boys & Girls Club. Mr. Nauta described the school academics as high-quality, they have high standardized test scores, and over the summer staff meets with the lowest-performing students for tutoring once a week. There are 194 students enrolled with an extensive wait list.

**Moore v. State Settlement.** Assistant Attorney General Neil Slotnick was present to brief the board. He generally reviewed the Settlement Agreement for the case. He said there are accountability measures on both sides. There will be a seven-member collaboration committee formed, consisting of three members from EED, three members from SEAAC, and one more as agreed upon. Their task will be to rank and award the \$18M called for in the settlement. First the legislature has to appropriate the money. Mr. Schneider thanked the commissioner for his work in arriving at the settlement. Mr. Slotnick noted that it was March 2004 when the papers were first served upon the state.

**Teacher Quality Working Group.** Cyndy Curran, Director of Teaching & Learning Support, was present to brief the board. She said the group was formed as a result of the November 2009 Statewide Education Summit. Their major focus currently has been how the new teacher evaluation will look. The board can expect regulations in June regarding teacher evaluation, and the department will be asking for an extended period of public comment. Ms. Curran reviewed the committee recommendations, how the suggested regulation might look, and the timeline for the work to proceed. There was an extensive list of all the committee members in the packet also. Ms. Benshoof thanked Ms. Curran for her work with this committee and asked her to extend that thank you to the whole committee.

**Career & Technical Education (CTE).** Cyndy Curran, Director of Teaching & Learning Support, was present to brief the board. Ms. Curran introduced Phil Loseby from the Juneau School District; Dr. Deanna Schultz from UA was online; and Helen Mehrkens, CTE Administrator for EED, was present. Together, they briefed the board on the Department of Labor and Workforce Development, UA and EED partnership. They reviewed the CTE Education Plan, reviewed the goals and the six strategies, and discussed how data was collected. They also gave an overview of the CTE FY12 Implementation Grant Report. There were 15 school districts that had received grants from the \$625,000 appropriated by the legislature, and were using them for various CTE projects. Deanna Schultz from UAA spoke about her dissertation regarding student participation in WorkKeys. She did her study at Bartlett High School, where 364 students took the test and 178 responded to her survey.

The meeting was recessed until the next day.

***Friday, March 9, 2012***

Chair Cox called the meeting back to order; all members were present except Col. Sullivan. The Chair asked if there were any disclosures. Carol Schaeffer said that she worked for the Northwest Arctic Borough School District and the district was mentioned in the Attorney General's Report. The Chair ruled she could participate. The agenda was amended to add a discussion about the Commissioner's evaluation. The amended agenda was moved by Pat Shier, seconded by Jim Merriner, and accepted by unanimous roll call vote.

**Joint Board of Regents meeting.** The board has asked to have a joint meeting with the University of Alaska Board of Regents in June. The following topics were suggested as agenda items:

ACPE Presentation

Teacher Quality, National Review Report

Teacher Preparation

Unprepared students who enter the university

Real issues, how they are transmitted

How students are doing with the new standards, how the Regents feel about the new standards

College of Rural Education, outreach to high schools, status

Special skills being taught, like technology in teacher preparation

Guidance programs, related to HB104

Six-year university completion vs. four-year

Student mentor program for new students

A way to mesh testing

Dual credit, how receptive, how are they getting the information out

Transferring credits between campuses

UA hockey team  
Praxis cut scores

The board secretary will work with the Board of Regents' secretary to develop a final agenda for the June joint meeting.

It was determined that Jenny Martens, business manager from Lower Yukon, was available on the phone to discuss the Lower Yukon audited budget waiver request. Ms. Schaeffer asked why there was an increase in the student activities. Ms. Martens said it was due to \$68,000 being coded as supplies and materials, and then \$154,000 in travel for a retreat, Juneau career connections, and charter air service. Mr. Shier asked why it was put into instructional. Ms. Martens said she was new to the district in FY11 and found stimulus money unspent. There was \$1.8 M health care cost and a 36% increase in fuel. They used grant funds to fund the health cost rather than rely on state funds. Mr. Shier said that concerned him very much. He said he notes that the reserves have grown and now they are asking for an additional \$744,487. There also had been \$1M designated for teacher upgrades that wasn't needed because the stimulus funded it. Mr. Shier asked if they had unencumbered reserve; Ms. Nudelman said she did not know but could provide that information later in the meeting.

### **Regulations to go out for public comment**

**Teacher Certification Praxis II.** Cyndy Curran, Director of Teaching & Learning Support, was present to brief the board. She indicated that Educational Testing Services had notified states that names of tests and required scores had changed; therefore, the board was being asked to comply with new guidelines. Ms. Curran reviewed Praxis I as being a basic skills test and Praxis II as a content knowledge test, and reviewed Alaska scores in comparison to other states, saying that Alaska had not adjusted its scores for a while. Mr. Merriner said this information was very helpful. Ms. Benshoof asked if there was a practice test. Ms. Curran said it's on the web site at [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org). Ms. Curran said the test was given during teacher preparation. NCATE requires teacher candidates to have content knowledge. Alaska does accept content tests from other states. Teachers from out-of-state without a content test can get an initial certification by taking the Praxis I, then they have up to three years to take the multi-cultural and other requirements and then take the Praxis II to move to professional certification. Ms. Keplinger said she was frustrated with the disparity between students who do well at the university and then can't pass the Praxis I exam. Mr. Shier said the assumption is if you pass the exam you are highly qualified. Does the relationship prove this, is there any research? Ms. Curran said she hadn't done that research and that it was a federal overlay; one test doesn't prove what you know.

**Special Education.** Cyndy Curran, Director of Teaching & Learning Support, was present to brief the board. She indicated that this regulation change was to combine the timeline for

completion of the eligibility evaluation with the timeline for the completion of the IEP. This would make 90 days for both, with the IEP completion still being 30 days by statute. Ms. Keplinger said she thought 90 days was too long and would make for a long time when student services were not provided.

**WorkKeys/Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS) qualification scores.** Cyndy Curran, Director of Teaching & Learning Support, was present to brief the board. She indicated that the proposal would alter the score a student must obtain on the WorkKeys exam in order to qualify for the APS using that option. There was a lot of discussion on how the scores would play out for the reading, applied math and locating information. The board originally set the scores at 5, 5, 5 each. The final numbers agreed upon were 5, 5, and 4.

**District Improvement Plan.** The commissioner said that this proposal would incorporate the Moore v. State Settlement. Mr. Slotnick said it was not unusual to put a settlement agreement into regulation since it was specific to 40 schools and four different districts. He noted that the old Noon case had pages and pages of regulations attached to it. He said all depended on appropriation from the legislature.

### **Regulations to adopt**

**Certification of Professional Teachers.** Cyndy Curran, Director of Teaching & Learning Support, was present to brief the board. Ms. Curran said the proposed amendments repeal inconsistent and repetitious language, update the standards, and put the standards for preparation programs in one clear regulation. These amendments maintain all existing pathways, including alternative pathways, for acceptance of educator preparation programs. In addition, because some states do not always formally accept some preparation programs, these amendments would broaden when a program is considered accepted. Public comment was favorable.

**Pupil Transportation.** Elizabeth Nudelman, Director of School Finance & Facilities, was present to brief the board. She said this proposal adopts the most current national standards, and aligns state standards with federal standards, keeping school buses safe. She noted that school buses are required to meet the standard for the year they were built. Public comment was favorable.

**Plan of Service for LEP students.** Erik McCormick, Director of Assessment, Accountability & Information Management, was present to brief the board. He said all public comments have been positive. The proposal would establish scores for students with Limited English Proficiency to be eligible for services. The scores are aligned with the WIDA guidelines and were vetted through the English Language Learner Task Force.

## **Business Meeting**

The following motion was made by Pat Shier and seconded by Carol Schaeffer: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development open a period of public comment on amendments to 4 AAC 04.210, highly qualified teachers. The motion was passed by unanimous roll call vote.

The following motion was made by Geri Benshoof and seconded by Pat Shier: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development open a period of public comment on 4 AAC 52.115-Timelines, and 4 AAC 52.180(a)-Reevaluation. The motion was passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Concerning the WorkKeys/APS scores, there was additional discussion regarding the individual scores. Jim Merriner suggested an overall score of 14 (5, 5, 4) and made a motion to that effect. The motion was seconded by Ms. Keplinger. Mr. Shier said he was not comfortable raising the scores suggested by the department. Ms. Benshoof said she wanted to leave it at 13. Ms. Cox reminded everyone that this was a scholarship and rigor was wanted. Mr. Shier said he was reluctant to depart from the O-net scores. Mr. Schneider noted that the proposal was going out for public comment and they would see what the public thought in June, when it came back for adoption. The motion failed 4-3.

The following motion was made by Pat Shier and seconded by Geri Benshoof: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development open a period of public comment on amendments to AAC 43.020, regarding the required score on the WorkKeys assessment for the Alaska Performance Scholarship. The motion was passed by unanimous roll call vote.

The following motion was made by Pat Shier and seconded by Jim Merriner: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development open a period of public comment on regulations regarding district improvement plan, 4 AAC 06.850. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

The following motion was made by Carol Schaeffer and seconded by Pat Shier: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development adopt amendments to 4 AAC 12.305(b)(4) & 12.305(e) Teacher certificate (initial, professional, master);

4 AAC 12.307 Acceptance of educator preparation programs; 4 AAC 12.318 Approval of in-state educator preparation programs; 4 AAC 12.330(a) Endorsement requirements for teachers providing special education; 4 AAC 12.345(a)(2) Administrative certificate Type B; provisional certificate (provisional Type B); 4 AAC 12.347(a)(2) Special education administrator certificate (Type F); provisional certificate (provisional Type F). The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Regarding the pupil transportation proposal, a question was asked about seat belts on school buses. Ms. Nudelman said the discussion continues statewide, and the present theory is the safety in the design of the seats is enough. The following motion was made by Pat Shier and seconded by Phil Schneider: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development adopt the proposed amendments to 4 AAC 27.110 regarding Pupil Transportation. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

The following motion was made by Carol Schaeffer and seconded by Pat Shier: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development adopt the amendments to 4 AAC 34.055, Plan of Service. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

The board broke for lunch and was entertained by the Juneau School District's Tlingit Culture Language and Literacy Classes, a program at Harborview Elementary School. The students were dressed in Native costumes and sang and danced and told stories in song and dance and Tlingit language.

Ms. Nudelman presented a statement of revenue for year-end 2011 for Lower Yukon School District as previously asked for by the board in the morning session. The information included the amount of unreserved fund balance broken out by general (\$19,286,458), capital projects (\$5,020,869), non-major governmental funds (\$1,434,643), and total governmental funds (\$25,741,970). Mr. Shier commented that it appeared that instruction took place using other funds and a \$19M reserve. He asked if the question was to send more money to its reserve fund.

**Teaching & Learning Support Division Report.** Cyndy Curran, Director of Teaching & Learning Support, was present to brief the board. She gave a comprehensive report on all sections within her division. She indicated that the department and ACPE were getting information out regarding the Alaska Performance Scholarship (APS). Madison Manning said she would see that APS information was distributed at the upcoming student government meeting. Ms. Cox said she had received no recent complaints about teacher certification. Roxy Mourant was present to discuss Alaska's Learning Network (AKLN). She said the purpose was to provide extended online learning to students who needed more course time, and they were working on a case-by-case basis. A clearing house was being built and the organizational structure/development was moving along. A lot depended on funding by the legislature.

**Assessment, Accountability & Information Management Report.** Erik McCormick, Director, was present to brief the board. He reviewed the upcoming test schedule for spring. He said there were no calendar conflicts that he knew of. He generally reviewed the roll out regarding the standards that were already out for public comment, a period that runs through mid-May. He noted that there had been 225 stakeholders in the drafting group. Mr. McCormick said the department was about to begin a series of business and industry public meetings to discuss the standards and get feedback. He said that Rhonda Gardner would be facilitating meetings, which would occur in Juneau, Anchorage, Mat-Su, Fairbanks, and Bethel. Mr. McCormick said the

SBAAs would be accessed through 2015 and that there was an active contract through that time. He indicated that the department would be helping districts align curriculum to the new standards. Ms. Keplinger said a very important piece is staff development for the new standards.

**Rural Education Report.** Phyllis Carlson, Director of Rural Education, was present to brief the board. Ms. Carlson said she thoroughly enjoyed the noontime entertainment by the Tlingit Culture class. She commented on the joy of the dance. Ms. Carlson reviewed her recent activities, including her work on the statewide suicide prevention council. She also spoke about her recent visit to the Yupiit School District and to Bethel. She noted that the district is offering advanced math and science so students can qualify for the ANSEP program at the university. She said there was a lot of APS awareness in the district, and they were doing a radio program about suicide prevention. Ms. Schaeffer asked if Bethel tried to get more Native teachers. Ms. Carlson said the old Exceed Program worked well in getting Native teachers from Southwest. Ms. Cox said the program was great.

**Budget & Legislative Report.** Mark Lewis, Acting Administrative Services Director, and Marcy Herman, Legislative Liaison, were present to brief the board on activities to date. They reported that House Finance Subcommittee had closed out and they were expecting the Senate Finance subcommittee to close out the following week. Mr. Lewis said there was a \$1M supplemental request for assessment contracts, and that the Governor had added \$30M for pupil transportation and energy costs. Mr. Shier asked if there was an underlying current regarding the mentor program that the legislature wasn't hearing. Mr. Lewis said he hears that the legislators feel the districts should be paying for the program. When asked how to report the efficiencies of the mentor program to the legislature, Mr. Lewis said he's tracking the teacher retention piece, which was a federal program that the state didn't pick up until it was a successful program. The commissioner said prior to the mentor program, retention rate was 60%; now it's 84%. Student learning has also risen. Several districts do their own version of the program, but it's not as intensive or deliberate as when there is a dedicated mentor. Ms. Cox asked if cutting mentors and the trustee didn't fly in the face of the Moore settlement. The commissioner said there was a lot of political friction around the trustee, but not so much with the coaches. Coaches are recognized as a good thing.

Ms. Herman reviewed the legislative bills pertinent to education that were moving as of this date.

**Mt. Edgecumbe High School (MEHS) Report.** Randy Hawk, Director of MEHS, was present to brief the board. Mr. Hawk said they brought in 15 new students after the Christmas break due to students not coming back, and have already lost two of those because of homesickness. Their new data system is up and there will be formal training. During Founder's Week, they will be celebrating multi-cultures. They will have speakers and performances each night. The staff will be attending the Response to Intervention (RTI) conference. Two students were worthy of mention. Teresa Baldwin was invited to attend the Governor's State of the State address to recognize her work with suicide prevention. Baxter Bond was invited to Washington, D.C., to

meet with President Obama (as one of 100) for his involvement with the UAF Summer Research Academy (science) program for the past four summers.

Mr. Merriner asked when the board was going to hear about the ad-hoc committee. Mr. Hawk said they still have a couple of meetings and the board would hear a report in June. Mr. Shier inquired as to when applications begin coming in, to which Mr. Hawk replied that they were posted on the web site in January and they already had about 100 for next year as of this date. He said current students roll over and do not have to reapply.

**Assistant Attorney General Report.** Neil Slotnick, Assistant Attorney General, was present to brief the board. He reviewed the current pending cases regarding the department. He noted that the moon rocks, in *Anderson v. State* had been found and were currently at NASA, and trial would begin in February 2013. He said that Northwest Arctic Borough School District had challenged the Impact Aid certification and disparity test.

**Library, Archives & Museums (LAM) Report.** Bob Banghart, the Acting Deputy Director and the Alaska State Museum Curator, was present to brief the board. He said they expected the final construction documents by mid-April, and by May the contracts would be signed. He said there was a new MOA for the removal of the existing building. Concerning the Raven Hat issue, the LAM will sign a new MOA with the original clan for joint ownership of the hat allowing the hat to be “signed out” and used for ceremonial events. There is also a new MOA with the Sheldon Jackson trustees for the custody of the materials and records of the museum. They will “live” at the Sheldon Jackson museum in Sitka. Mr. Banghart said they were hard at work to develop exhibits for the Princess Cruise line. This is the third year of doing this. There are several on-going programs: Alaska Native libraries is training for practical skills, they are expanding the board band grant, and on-going facility development for historic preservation. Ms. Benshoof asked if the Sheldon Jackson archives were from the Sheldon Jackson College. Mr. Banghart said they were and they will “live” at the Stratton Library in Sitka, which is connected to the Sheldon Jackson Museum. Ms. Cox said the governor included \$20M in his budget for the new SLAM building and wondered how much more they needed. Mr. Banghart said they needed \$75M added to that to complete the job.

**Commissioner’s Report.** Commissioner Hanley was present to brief the board. He said during this legislative quarter, January-April, there was a need for education at all levels. He is working directly with superintendents encouraging them to put a face on education. The operation of the department was at the highest level, and he could justify every penny that comes in or goes out, saying he had a great team to work with. He said he had been working with Yupiit School District, which is in intervention, and Superintendent Diamond. It is a district with a trustee, and he is working to set obtainable goals but the process was relatively slow. The feedback from the district is that they miss the trustee as he has been gone during March. The Commissioner said the timber receipts will continue for one more year.

Concerning NCLB, he said the department needs college and career standards in order to request a waiver. USDOE said we could freeze our AMOs to get a waiver and he is working with the Governor on that aspect. The last deadline was February 28; the next deadline is September 6 and the state may or may not apply. The new teacher evaluation system is also a waiver requirement. The department is moving forward.

The Commissioner said he had been in the department a bit over a year now, and was more comfortable than a year ago and appreciated the great support from his staff. He noted that he was attending a Justice Summit in Washington, D.C., as part of a team with Alaska Chief Justice Walter Carpeneti. He thanked the board for its conversations and the student advisors.

**Commissioner Evaluation.** Chair Cox said the commissioner's evaluation was coming up in the June board meeting. She handed out a list of questions that she would like returned to her by April 3 so she could compile them.

The commissioner also gave a brief overview of the white powder letters from a Texas postmark that some school districts had been receiving. He said the FBI had been notified, and the department is in daily contact with the FBI and other officials regarding follow up as each letter is received.

### **Consent Agenda**

Mr. Merriner pulled items 22E, the waiver request for Yupiit School District, and Mr. Shier pulled 22F, the waiver requests for Lower Yukon School District. 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: the minutes December 15 & 16, 2011, meeting; the minutes of the January 23, 2012, meeting; approval of the Capital Improvement Project (CIP) List; approval of the Audited District Waiver for Kashunamiut School District; approval of the renewal for the Soldotna Montessori Charter School for five years; approval of renewal for the Fireweed Academy Charter School for five years; approval of renewal for the Aurora Borealis Charter School for five years; and the approval of the Mt. Edgecumbe High School Activity Fee Structure increase of \$25.00, effective 2012-2013 school year. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

There was discussion regarding the two pulled items. Mr. Schneider asked why they were pulled. Mr. Shier said he wanted more information from Lower Yukon on what transpired with the SIG grant funds and reserve. And he wanted more information on what happens if they are not approved. Ms. Cox said Yupiit was not prepared for the board's discussion today. She wanted to know more about the high or low teacher turnover, the administration staff, and why they dropped so far in making the 70% requirement for instruction, down to 63%. She said those questions were not answered well enough. Ms. Benshoof said the districts need to be frugal with their money and tell the board what they are doing with their money. Ms. Cox said she was also interested in hearing more about local school board costs from both districts. A time to have a

special meeting was discussed. Ms. Cox said she wanted to see personnel, physically, at the meeting.

The following motion was made by Jim Merriner and seconded by Pat Shier: I move that the State Board of Education & Early Development take no action at this time on the requests of the Lower Yukon School District and the Yupiit School District for a waiver under AS 14.17.520 pending the following: 1) a detailed request for additional information regarding district expenses be sent by EED staff to the Lower Yukon School District and the Yupiit School District no later than March 14, 2012; 2) a response from the Lower Yukon School District and the Yupiit School District submitted to EED staff no later than March 28, 2012; 3) an analysis of the responses be done by EED staff and submitted to the board no later than April 6, 2012; and 4) a teleconference meeting of the board be set to consider the applications for these waivers to occur on April 13, 2012 at 10:00 a.m. The motion was passed by unanimous roll call vote.

### **Board Comments**

Madison Manning said she missed Tiarna and was looking forward to AASG.

Tiarna Fischler apologized for missing the meeting due to weather, but was happy to be able to attend using video conferencing, and thanked Madison.

Pat Shier thanked the staff for its work and said the meeting had good arguments. He congratulated the commissioner on his first year on the job. He said he was rethinking delivery of services, what it took to learn in the current environment. He said there were great things available online in curriculum, and was excited about what's out there, the future being here today.

Geri Benshoof said that Mr. Shier had hit on the future of education. She congratulated the commissioner on his first year, she thanked Roxy Maurant and Dottie Knuth for the video conferencing arrangements, and said she was impressed with the charter school presentations.

Phil Schneider said it was a good meeting. He enjoyed the presentation on Babies on Track, being a dad of small children, and wondered how to get the early childhood message out to more people. He gave great kudos to the commissioner, saying that big change doesn't happen without big leadership and was thankful that the Moore case was finally settled. He said he was still advocating for financial literacy and thanked the staff for its work.

Carol Schaeffer thanked Dottie Knuth for getting the packets out earlier. Regarding the waivers, she said if nothing else happens, it sends a message that the board doesn't just rubber stamp them. She indicated that she was concerned with the lack of Native students qualifying for the APS.

Jim Merriner said he enjoyed the museum tour and the time with the Governor. He thanked Chair Cox and the commissioner and said he appreciated the respectful conversation. He reminded board members that the APOC filing deadline was soon.

Esther Cox said she had written notes to several people on behalf of the board for accomplishments and had attended two meetings of the Voyage to Excellence Advisory Board, and had met with Education Northwest. She said she and Mr. Merriner had attended the Anchorage Education Summit follow-up community meetings. She also sent e-mails to legislators regarding HB 330. She gave the annual report to the legislature, and met with the House Education Committee and the Senate Finance Committee on February 2 and 3.

She noted that the June agenda would include the commissioner's evaluation, and reminded board members to bring their calendars as they would be selecting meeting dates and locations for the next fiscal year. She thanked the commissioner for his first year of leadership, thanked the staff for its work and its good preparation for the meeting, and thanked the secretary for the early board packet.

Phil Schneider moved and Pat Shier seconded a motion for adjournment. Motion passed by unanimous consent.