

Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development
Approved Minutes
January 28, 2013
Juneau, AK

The meeting was called to order by Chair Merriner at noon via video/teleconference originating in the auxiliary board room, Department of Education & Early Development, 801 West 10th Street, Juneau, AK, and through the following phone number: 1-800-315-6338, using code 8578#. Video conference sites included: GCI Tower, 6th floor, 2550 Denali Street, Anchorage, AK; Fairbanks LIO office, 1292 Sadler Way #308, Fairbanks, AK; Juneau State Board Auxiliary Board Room, 801 West 10th Street, Juneau, AK; Kodiak District School Office, 722 Mill Bay Road, Kodiak, AK; Northwest Arctic School District, 774 Third Avenue, Kotzebue, AK; Lake & Peninsula District, Meshik High School, School Road, Pt. Heiden, AK; and Mat-Su School District, 501 North Gulkana, Palmer, AK.

All members were present except Pat Shier, who was excused. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The Chair asked if there were any disclosures to be made. There were none. The agenda was amended to include a work session and action item regarding a resolution about the 100th Anniversary of the Denali Centennial Climb, and setting an April meeting date. Esther Cox moved and Janel Keplinger seconded a motion to approve the agenda as amended. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Work Session

Public Comment

Peggy Cowan, Superintendent of the North Slope Borough School District, thanked the department for its support of AdvancED and said she supported the regulation change.

Gloria O'Neil, President of Cook Inlet Tribal, spoke about a unique 10-year partnership they have had with the Anchorage School District in the Dena'ina House. She proposed a public/private partnership to improve educational outcomes targeting the dropout rate using the partners program with the Anchorage School District. Esther Cox asked if the program was just for Anchorage. Ms. O'Neil said it would be in Anchorage but students have a habit of moving back and forth from rural to urban and back again. She said they already have a staff and the first house.

Legislative Report. Marcy Herman, Legislative Liaison, reviewed the new bills that have been filed since the December board meeting. She also indicated that Chair Merriner was scheduled to make the board's report to the legislature on February 8 at 8 a.m. She agreed that she would email the board with the names of the members of the House Finance Subcommittee and the Senate Education Committee. Esther Cox inquired about the constitutional curriculum house bill and how it would be different from what already exists. Deputy Commissioner Morse said it could be incorporated into a current civics course with a requirement to pass the unit for graduation.

Ms. Cox also asked about HB21, the 4-day school week proposal. Ms. Herman said the commissioner had an appointment with the bill sponsor that week to discuss it. Carol Schaeffer inquired about the digital devices that were mentioned in the legislative report. Commissioner Hanley said it would be left up to districts as to what devices they allowed. Chair Merriner asked that the AKLN portion be improved since it was in the governor's budget and the governor was an advocate. Ms. Herman said the final edited report would be sent to the legislature on Thursday, January 31.

Budget Report. Mark Lewis, Director of Administrative Services, was present to brief the board regarding the FY2014 department budget. He noted that \$1.7 billion goes through the department including school debt reimbursement. Mr. Schneider asked what the personal services consisted of. Mr. Lewis said it was all employee costs only. Mr. Lewis indicated that the increase in TLS was due to new programs like AKLN and Jobs for Alaska Graduates (JAG). He described JAG as a program that targets at risk 11th and 12th grade students with a specialist to help them graduate and become successful. They would meet an hour a day during the school year and help the student enter the job market. There would be 8-9 specialists around the state partnering with United Way. He said several districts were interested in housing specialists. Mr. Schneider asked about health insurance costs, and Mr. Lewis said bargaining unit negotiations were up this year, so those costs could come up later in budget talks. Esther Cox asked where the MEHS pool was in the budget. Mr. Lewis said it wasn't there, because it had been funded. Mr. Lewis reviewed the Operating Budget in some detail along with the projected state program allocations.

Regulations to go out for public comment.

Norm-Referenced Testing. Erik McCormick, Director of Assessments, was present to brief the board. The board was asked to open a period of public comment on proposed amendments to regulations concerning norm-referenced testing. The changes would include repealing the requirements for a standardized norm-referenced test, the reporting of norm-referenced test results, and a related student questionnaire. Mr. Morse said the department was trying to minimize the number of tests students take. Mr. McCormick said the test is given in grades 5 and 7, and this year there were 17 requests for waivers from the test. He said they hadn't used the student questionnaires in years. The commissioner said they were proposing a 60-day comment period to make sure that everyone had an opportunity to review the proposal.

Residential Programs. Elizabeth Nudelman, Director of School Finance, was present to brief the board. The board was being asked to open a period of public comment on proposed amendments to regulation regarding district-operated statewide residential educational programs, to include a new subsection allowing the operation of variable-term statewide residential educational programs. Ms. Nudelman said the proposal would clarify funding issues related to statewide programs to move multiple groups of students through the program. The student would still be counted in the home district, but could take courses of at least two weeks' duration.

Codes. Elizabeth Nudelman, Director of School Finance, was present to brief the board. The board is being asked to open a period of public comment on proposed amendments regarding

codes and regulations for school facilities. The proposal would address the creation of an energy-efficiency standard for school construction and major maintenance projects. Ms. Nudelman said the proposal creates new criteria for school construction and major maintenance. She noted that the Bond Reimbursement & Grant Review Committee recommended the American Association of Heating, Air-Conditioning and Refrigeration Engineers (ASHRAE) Standard 90.1 alternative.

Regulations to Adopt.

Accreditation. Paul Pressing, Deputy Director of TLS, was present to brief the board regarding the accreditation regulation, which proposed to adopt amendments to change the crediting agency to the Northwest Accreditation Commission and affiliate with the non-profit AdvancED.

100th Anniversary of the Denali Centennial Climb Resolution 01-2013. The resolution formally supports the 100th anniversary climb and the educational opportunity it represents. The event includes educational outreach via modern media about history, geography and indigenous culture. Chair Merriner said the commemorative climb will be in May. Walter Harper was the first person to reach the top in 1913. Carol Schaeffer said the event ties into the cultural standards nicely, and she encouraged people to log into the link to watch the actual climb.

April meeting date. The commissioner said the board would need to have a special meeting in April to discuss the norm-referenced test administration regulation adoption. It would be open for 60 days and the districts would need to plan for the result before June board meeting. The board chose April 18 at noon for a brief meeting via teleconference.

Business Meeting

Esther Cox moved and Janel Keplinger seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development open a period of public comment on amendments to 4 AAC 06.710, Statewide student assessment system; 4 AAC 06.730, Standardized norm referenced test administration; 4 AAC 06.735, Standardized norm referenced test results; 4 AAC 06.740, School questionnaire; 4 AAC 06.750, Student questionnaire; 4 AAC 06.765, Test security; consequences of breach. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Janel Keplinger 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 33.090, District-operated statewide residential educational programs. Carol Schaeffer asked when it would open. The commissioner said as soon as possible. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Phil Schneider moved and Janel Keplinger seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development open a period of public comment on amendments to regulation 4 AAC 31.014 (a), Codes and regulations for school facilities. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Janel Keplinger moved and Esther Cox seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development adopt the amendments to 4 AAC 04.300 (b) and (c), Standards for state accreditation of schools. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Consent Agenda. Esther Cox moved and Janel Keplinger seconded the following motion: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development approve the consent agenda consisting of the following: the approval of the department's FY 2014 Budget, and the appointment of Dr. Susan A. McCauley as the Director of Teaching & Learning Support, and the Denali Centennial Climb Resolution. The motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Board Comments

Jim Merriner noted that this was the final meeting for board members Geri Benshoof and Phil Schneider, who were not seeking reappointment. He thanked them both for their service. He also noted that Assistant Attorney General Neil Slotnick was leaving as the department's lead attorney and had accepted a job as a state hearing officer with the Department of Administration. Mr. Slotnick said he had been with EED for 10 years and with the Department of Law for 20 years.

Phil Schneider said it had been a pleasure working with the board and the department. He offered his support with the teacher evaluation regulation implementation.

Geri Benshoof said she appreciated the opportunity to be on the board and appreciated the opportunity to be on the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education. She wished everyone the best of luck.

Carly Williams thanked everyone for the welcome.

Madison Manning said that she would miss the March meeting as she would be in Washington, D.C.

Esther Cox said she had been invited to speak on the evaluation regulation at the retired teachers association meeting. She noted that there was a huge educational opportunity with the May 4th commissioning of the USS Anchorage. She thanked the department for the video conference set-up, saying it worked so well for her to see faces. She said good bye to Mr. Schneider, Ms. Benshoof and Mr. Slotnick.

Carol Schaeffer also said good bye to Mr. Schneider, Ms. Benshoof and Mr. Slotnick, and thanked Eric Fry and Dottie Knuth for their work on the resolution. She welcomed Carly and Dr. McCauley.

Ms. Cox asked for the next steps in the evaluation to be put into an upcoming update.

Mr. Merriner said that Mr. Shier was not at the meeting because he was in the process of moving to Anchorage to accept a new job with the University of Alaska Anchorage.

The Chair asked the commissioner what the board might expect on the March agenda. The commissioner gave a few highlights of what was on the draft agenda and said the MEHS tour would be on March 6.

Phil Schneider moved and Janel Keplinger seconded a motion to adjourn. The motion was unanimously passed by consent.