

Alaska State Board of Education & Early Development
Approved Minutes
Juneau, AK
April 23, 2014

Chair Merriner called to order the meeting at noon via a video/teleconference originating in the auxiliary board room at the Department of Education & Early Development in Juneau. Kathleen Yarr was not present for the roll call but attended later in the meeting.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited. No members declared a conflict of interest.

There were no changes to the agenda. Approval of the agenda was moved by Barbara Thompson, seconded by Kenny Gallahorn, and approved by unanimous roll call vote.

There was no public comment.

WORK SESSION

Messaging about Education Evaluations. Commissioner Hanley said Governor Parnell had challenged the board to help with messaging the state's new educator evaluation system.

Dr. Susan McCauley, Director of Teaching & Learning Support, reviewed the department's steps to inform districts about the new system. Dr. McCauley said the department works with an advisory committee from seven districts, which provides statewide direction on districts' needs regarding the new system.

The department has given many presentations to districts, clarifying the system and correcting misperceptions. Districts understand the system; the issue now is how to implement it, Dr. McCauley said. It is important for the department to continue to serve as a convener of districts, she said. The department also offers online resources.

Dr. McCauley suggested that board members encourage people to sign up for the Teaching & Learning Support newsletter, direct people to the department's website, and be aware of professional learning opportunities publicized in the newsletter.

Board members discussed how they could participate in messaging the educator evaluation system beyond what the department is doing, such as communicating with superintendents and local school boards.

Joint meeting with University of Alaska regents. Chair Merriner referred to an email he sent to the board from UA Vice President of Academic Affairs Dana Thomas. Dr. Thomas suggested four topics for the joint meeting, which Chair Merriner thought the board could reduce to two or three. Dr. Thomas's suggested topics were: 1) Align UA with K-12 such as through dual-enrollment courses and improving eligibility rates for the Alaska Performance Scholarship and

improving the usefulness of Alaska's Learning Network; 2) choice of a college-ready assessment in high school; 3) improve teacher mentoring; and 4) recruit more Alaskans to be K-12 teachers.

Board members focused on teacher preparation, both pre-service and in-service. Dr. McCauley said there isn't a tight alignment between teacher preparation and the recent shifts in K-12 education in Alaska. Chair Merriner said his two main issues for the joint meeting are teacher preparation and dual enrollment.

University of Alaska Southeast superintendent endorsement program. Dr. McCauley said the university is asking the board to approve the concept of a superintendent endorsement program that is under development. The board would consider officially approving the program at its June meeting.

Dr. Deborah Lo, Dean of the UAS School of Education, said the University of Alaska Anchorage has suspended admissions to its superintendent endorsement program, leaving the state with no such program. Meanwhile, Alaska has an unprecedented number of upcoming vacancies in superintendent positions. UAS would like to fill the void, starting with a one-credit summer orientation course for new superintendents before they start work, she said.

Dr. Martin Laster, UAS Educational Leadership Program Coordinator, cited the university's success with its program for principals. He said the superintendent endorsement program has an extraordinary planning team, which needs time to do its work. UAS wants the board to approve the program's concept so that it can recruit students and adjunct faculty.

Board members expressed reservations about the unusual nature of the university's request for conceptual approval. They also raised concerns about the program's leadership standards, which are the district-level standards of the Educational Leadership Constituent Council.

At this time, Esther Cox left the meeting for a prior commitment.

Legislative and budget report. Deputy Commissioner Les Morse said the legislature was still working on House Bill 278, the Governor's education bill. In response to a question from Carly Williams, Mr. Morse said the A-F school grading provision is not a priority of legislators and may not pass. The Alaska Association of Student Government does not support the A-F provision. Mr. Morse said the state's operating budget has passed; but the capital budget, contained in Senate Bill 119, is not final.

Heidi Teshner, Director of Administrative Services, referred to a budget document and reviewed reductions in the department's budget, including to Alaska's Learning Network, the Alaska Teacher Mentor Program, and the Governor's Alaska Digital Teaching Initiative; a requirement that the Professional Teaching Practices Commission be funded through fees on teachers by fiscal year 2016; and final funding for the SLAM (State Library, Archives and Museum) building project.

BUSINESS MEETING

University of Alaska Southeast superintendent endorsement program. Kathleen Yarr moved: I move the State Board of Education & Early Development approve the initial concept for the superintendent endorsement program at the University of Alaska Southeast; it is anticipated that after further planning UAS will come back before the board for final program approval. Sue Hull seconded the motion. The board approved the motion in a unanimous roll call vote, with Esther Cox absent.

Board Comments.

There were none.

The meeting adjourned at 1:55 p.m. by unanimous consent.